

Halton Catholic District School Board

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Monday, May 1, 2006
7:30 p.m. – Board Room,
Catholic Education Centre

Members/Alternates Present: Ms. M. Bursey; Mr. D. Goch; Mr. C. Learn;
Mrs. A.A. LeMay; Mrs. L. Kovalchek, Mrs. R.A. McAuley, Chair;
Mrs. R. Quesnel;

Members Excused: Mrs. M. Forhan; Mrs. M. Hastings, Mrs. G. Pearce, Ms. H. Ross;
Mrs. L. Stanciulescu, Ms. L. Volkers

Staff Present: Mr. G. Mahoney, Superintendent of Special Education Services
Mrs. K. Lowicki, Co-ordinating Principal, Curriculum Services
Mrs. N. Banton & Mrs. R. Boyle, I/SERTs, Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Mrs. D. Kattlus, Manager, Educational Assistants

Recording Secretary: Mrs. M. MacLellan

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1. **Call to Order**
 - 1.1 **Opening Prayer and Welcome**

The meeting opened with a prayer.

2. **Approval of the Agenda**

RECOMMENDATION	<i>Moved by: R. Quesnel</i>
	<i>Seconded by: A. A. LeMay</i>
THAT, the agenda for the May 1, 2006 SEAC meeting be approved..	
CARRIED	

3. **Actions to be taken**
 - 3.1 **Approval of SEAC Minutes – March 27, 2006**

RECOMMENDATION	<i>Moved by: R. Quesnel</i>
	<i>Seconded by: C. Learn</i>
THAT, the minutes for the March 27, 2006 SEAC meetings be approved as presented.	
CARRIED	

4. **Presentation**

- 4.1 **Students at Risk, Students Success**

Kathy Lowicki

Kathy Lowicki, Co-ordinating Principal, Curriculum Services, provided extensive insight into "Students at Risk, Students Success". In 1999, the Secondary School Curriculum began increasing standards. Literacy and numeracy tests were implemented and the results showed that many students were not passing the tests. The Education Minister appointed a committee to work on improved literacy and numeracy levels, which led to the establishment of many new programs, including Literacy, Numeracy and Program Pathways. The goals were to reduce the number of drop-outs, provide school-to-work and school-to-apprenticeship programs and increase the graduation rate.

To help facilitate a successful pathway for every student, the Board has a school-to-career website which all students are encouraged to view.

Concerns were addressed by school Boards regarding their focus on students planning to attend universities, as opposed to those going to colleges, apprenticeships or directly into the work-force. "Efforts have been made to make every student and their endeavour equally important; students must feel they belong because, if they don't, it won't matter how good the courses are," said Kathy.

4.2 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Parent Information Night *Natalie Banton, Ronda Boyle*

A Parent Information Night was presented at Mother Teresa School on April 11, 2006, whose purpose was to bring awareness about the transitions from elementary school to secondary, and from secondary school to post-secondary. Representatives from George Brown College and McMaster University were there to outline their courses and services available to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing students, including interpreters, special equipment, tutors, FM systems, vibrating alarm clocks and closed-captioned videos.

Students were strongly encouraged to be aware of their rights and responsibilities and where to access the help they need.

4.3 The role of Educational Assistants *Debby Kattlus*

The capsulated role of Educational Assistants is to support students with special needs, mostly in classrooms. The Board employs approximately 400 E.A.s and is presently in the process of hiring a Supervisor to assist Debby.

Educational Assistants' placement of schools is determined by Special Education Services; in turn, the Principal in each school determines where, within the school, E.A. will work.

Ongoing training is offered to all Educational Assistants through the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training and various workshops and in-services.

Concerns were shared regarding aggressive incidents; Debby explained that all such incidents are to be reported using a SE17 form, which give us data to ensure that proper support is given to both student and staff.

5. Action Items

There were no action items.

6. Reports/Updates/Discussion

6.1 Response to LD Minority Report

Gary Mahoney

Feedback regarding any of the Minority Reports was solicited by Gary. Comments will be addressed at a future meeting. The LD Minority Report was set up by taking each of the standards for the Special Education Annual Plan and addressing it. Revisions to the Annual Plan may come from the concerns SEAC members raise.

Janet Foster and Mary Tessari are reviewing the Range of Placement and plan to complete this task by the end of 2006; they prefer to be thorough than rushing to complete it by end of school year.

7. Information

7.1

8. Agency Updates

Easter Seals Society

Lori Kovalchek

Lori advised that St. Paul the Apostle Parish distributed an amazing prayer book to the schools in its area.

Special Olympics*Maureen Burse*

Special Olympic Basketball at St. Catherine of Alexandria and the Special Olympics held in Montreal this past weekend, were both a wonderful success.

VOICE for Hearing-impaired Children*Rhonda Quesnel*

Rhonda reminded SEAC about the up-coming Voice Annual Conference at Guelph University.

Gary Mahoney advised that a review for students who are developmentally delayed is presently being undertaken by Michele Braida, Principal of St. James School.

The date for the committee meeting regarding the Brian P. Fichaud Spirit of Inclusion Award will be set by Gary and sent to the committee members.

Gary also explained, with all modesty, that he is being honoured with the Council of Exceptional Children's Educational Leader of the Year Award, to be presented on May 16, 2006.

9. Future Agenda Items**10. Date of Next Meeting**

May 23, 2006

11. Adjournment**11.1 Motion for Absenteeism****RECOMMENDATION**

Moved by: A. A. LeMay

Seconded by: L. Kovalchek

THAT, M. Forhan; M. Hastings, L. Stanciulescu, L. Volkers; G. Pearce; and H. Ross be excused.

CARRIED**11.2 Motion for Adjournment****RECOMMENDATION**

Moved by: M. Burse

Seconded by: L. Kovalchek

THAT, the meeting adjourn.

CARRIED**11.3 Closing Prayer**

The meeting adjourned with a prayer at 10:07 p.m.