

**Halton Catholic District School Board**

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

Monday, January 28, 2008  
7:00 p.m. – Board Room,  
Catholic Education Centre

**Members/Alternates Present:** Ms. M. Hastings; P. Houlahan; Ms. M. Kohler (via teleconference); Ms. L. Kovalchek (Chair); Mr. C. Learn; Ms. J. Matters; Mr. B. Rivera; Mr. J. Trovato; Ms. R. Quesnel;

**Members Excused:** Ms. K. Drexler; Ms. C. McCarney

**Staff Present:** Mr. G. Mahoney, Superintendent of Special Education Services  
Mr. J. Langill, Superintendent of Education  
Ms. J. Parisi, Consultant, Special Education Services  
Ms. K. Slomka, Special Education Consultant  
Ms. M. Martino, Consultant, Curriculum Services  
Ms. T. Wilson, Chief Social Worker

**Also Present:** OECTA Special Education Course Participants

**Recording Secretary:** Ms. A. Swinden

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**1.1 Opening Prayer and Welcome**

The meeting opened at 7:10 p.m. with a prayer.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<i>Moved by: P. Houlahan</i>
	<i>Seconded by: R. Quesnel</i>
<b>THAT, the agenda be approved as amended.</b>	
<b>CARRIED</b>	

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**3.1 Approval of SEAC Minutes – November 26, 2007**

The minutes of the November 26, 2007 SEAC Meeting were reviewed. Some minor revisions were made to the minutes.

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<i>Moved by: P. Houlahan</i>
	<i>Seconded by: J. Matters</i>
<b>THAT, the minutes for the November 26, 2007 SEAC meetings be approved as amended.</b>	
<b>CARRIED</b>	

**4. PRESENTATIONS**

**4.1 Safe Schools**

*J. Langill*

As a follow up to his presentation to SEAC at the October 29<sup>th</sup> Meeting, J. Langill, Superintendent of Education with responsibilities for Safe Schools, provided SEAC members with a copy of the Board's Operating Policy II-39, *Progressive Discipline & Safety in Schools Code of Conduct – Suspensions & Expulsions*, as well as a copy of the Administrative Procedure related to Progressive Discipline and Safety in Schools. SEAC members were also provided with a copy of a document entitled *Halton Catholic District School Board Safe Schools Action Committee Progressive Discipline and School Safety Act – Frequently Asked Questions*.

J. Langill noted that *mandatory* suspension no longer exists under the Progressive Discipline and School Safety Act (which comes into effect on February 1, 2008), and accordingly, principals will be required to review each situation on an individual basis, taking into account mitigating factors when considering a student's suspension. He highlighted the section within the Administrative Procedure that outlines the factors to be considered in situations involving Special Needs students (page 4 of the procedure, under *Other Factors to be Considered* – item 6).

Further questions and/or concerns related to Bill 212 may be directed to J. Langill via email at [langilli@hcdsb.org](mailto:langilli@hcdsb.org), or by telephone at 905-632-6314, ext. 181.

#### 4.2 DD Review

*M. Braida/V. Goodwin-Duncan*

Michele Braida, Principal of St. James Catholic Elementary School, and Victoria Goodwin-Duncan, Special Education Consultant, addressed the review of the standards for students identified with Developmental Disabilities (DD), which was undertaken by the Developmental Disability Standards Review Committee in order to establish priority recommendations for future programming necessary to optimize learning for students with DD in our Board. Data was gathered through a system-wide survey of parents whose children are currently identified with DD.

Dr. E. van Roosmalen, Chief Officer of Research Services, provided an overview of the Special Needs Placement Survey results. She noted that 92 of the 147 surveys distributed were returned (a 63% response rate), and that 65% of parents who responded to the survey indicated not wanting to see any change in their child's placement; 16% wanted less integration; 10% wanted more integration.

M. Braida and V. Goodwin-Duncan provided through the use of a PowerPoint presentation, an overview of the analysis undertaken by the Developmental Disability Standards Review Committee. They highlighted the following four (4) priority recommendations of the Committee:

1. *That the HCDSB establish a classroom consistent with the range of placement option for students identified with the exceptionality of Developmental Disabilities (in addition to the existing Elementary Community Living Classrooms for Students who are medically fragile);*
2. *That the HCDSB develop a comprehensive professional development Plan specific to the needs of staff who serve students identified with Developmental Disabilities.*
3. *That the HCDSB redefine the roles and job descriptions of Special Education Staff in support of the Range of Placement Options 4 and 5, relevant and student profiles, changes in documentation requirements and assistive technology requirements.*
  - a) *Re-define the role of the Elementary School Special education Resource Teacher (SERT)*
  - b) *The compliment of SERTs should be determined based on the needs of the identified students within a school and no longer based solely on the number of identified students in that school;*
  - c) *Re-define the role of the Elementary Itinerant SERT (DD).*
  - d) *Re-define the role of the Special Education Teacher (SET). Establish full time SET positions consistent with the number of Range of Placement options to be established.*
  - e) *Establish a full time (1.0) position Itinerant Special Education Resource Teacher for Assistive Technology (I/SERT AT)*
  - f) *Establish support personnel for management and tracking of SEA (Special equipment Amount) equipment.*
  - g) *Establish a calendar plan for Regional IPRCs for the Superintendent, Principals, and Special education Consultants responsible for these placements.*
4. *That the HCDSB acquire additional resources specific to the needs of students identified*

*with Developmental Disabilities.*

The Chair thanked the speakers for their presentation, and expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by the Developmental Disability Standards Review Committee.

G. Mahoney, Superintendent of Special Education Services, explained that the next steps would be for SEAC members to engage in a more thorough review of the nature of the recommendations, requesting further clarification/elaboration from the DD Review Committee as required. Following the comprehensive review of the report, SEAC will put together a plan for taking ahead the priority recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

In response to a question raised regarding the potential financial implications of implementing the recommendations, G. Mahoney indicated that upon presentation of the final plan and priority recommendations to the Board, SEAC will have fulfilled its requirement to provide the Board of Trustees with an action plan. The extent of the implementation of the recommendations will be determined by staff and approved by the Board in view of budgetary constraints.

SEAC members were requested to forward (via e-mail) any questions or comments related to the DD Review to G. Mahoney. Input from SEAC members will be published as part of the next meeting agenda. Staff will respond to these questions at the SEAC Meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### 4.3 **DD Review – Secondary**

*K. Slomka/J. Kochanka*

K. Slomka, Special Education Consultant, and J. Kochanka, Itinerant SERT (Secondary Team), provided SEAC members with an overview of the five (5) recommendations. A hardcopy outlining said recommendations was provided to each member. The Chair thanked them for their presentation.

### 5. **REPORTS/UPDATES/DISCUSSION**

#### 5.1 **Special Education Plan**

*K. Slomka*

G. Mahoney indicated that the Ministry of Education will soon require that school boards include their Special Education Plans as a component of the Board's Improvement Plan. K. Slomka reviewed the changes within the document. She noted that she would send an electronic version of the revised document (which includes highlighted revisions) to SEAC members. Yellow highlights indicate that changes have already been implemented; red highlights indicate that revisions are forthcoming. SEAC members were asked to email G. Mahoney with any questions or concerns related to the Annual Plan. All comments received will be compiled and sent out with the next agenda.

### 6. **ACTION ITEMS**

There were no Action items.

### 7. **INFORMATION**

#### 7.1 **P.A. Days**

*J. Parisi*

J. Parisi, Special Education Consultant, provided SEAC members with information regarding the February 1<sup>st</sup> PA Day. SEAC members were invited to contact Monika MacLellan via email at [maclellanm@hcdsb.org](mailto:maclellanm@hcdsb.org) if interested in attending any of the six (6) planned sessions.

*\*POST-NOTE: The P.A. Day Sessions organized for February 1, 2008, were cancelled due to inclement weather conditions.*

#### 7.2 **Gifted Program Update**

*G. Mahoney*

G. Mahoney informed the SEAC members that he has had a preliminary meeting with the Director of Education and the Superintendent of Business Services to discuss (prior to the commencement of the budget building process) potential proposals that will make it feasible to go ahead with expansion of the Gifted Program in September 2008. They will meet again in March or April to discuss further options.

**7.3 Parent Guide Distribution***K. Laforet*

K. Laforet, Special Education Consultant, provided a draft format of the Parent Guide, highlighting some of the changes within the document. Some discrepancies and inaccuracies were detected within the draft document; SEAC members were asked to forward any revisions to contact information to K. Laforet.

It was noted that as additional information becomes available, it will be included with the Parent Guide as supplementary material, and will also be provided to SEAC members.

It was also noted that the Parent Guide will be available in different languages and formats (including Braille). Once it has been updated, it will be posted on the Board's website.

**7.4 Parent Information Night ~ Corpus Christi Catholic Secondary School***L**Kovalchek*

L. Kovalchek informed the Committee that she attended a parent information night for Corpus Christi Catholic Secondary School, noting that it was clarified at this meeting that the Community Living Program will remain at Notre Dame. The specific Special Education programs to be offered at Corpus Christi have not yet been determined and will depend on student enrolment.

**8. AGENCY UPDATES**

There were no updates.

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

9.1 Parent Guide - Discussion

9.2 DD Review - Discussion

9.3 Donation – Community Living Program at Notre Dame – Update

9.4 Special Education Plan – Discussion

9.5 Gifted Update

9.6 PPM 140 (Applied Behaviour Analysis) Implementation

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Monday, February 25, 2008**11. ADJOURNMENT****11.1 Motion for Absenteeism****RECOMMENDATION**

*Moved by: J. Trovato*

*Seconded by: P. Houlahan*

**THAT, K. Drexler, C. McCarney be excused.**

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

*Moved by: R. Quesnel*

*Seconded by: C. Learn*

**THAT, the meeting adjourn.**

**CARRIED****11.3 Closing Prayer**

The meeting adjourned with a prayer at 9:20 p.m.