

Halton Catholic District School Board

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

November 26, 2007 - 7:00 p.m.
Board Room
Catholic Education Centre

Members/Alternates Present: Ms. K. Drexler, Ms. P. Houlahan, Ms. M. Kohler, Ms. L. Kovalchek, Ms. J. Matters, Ms. C. McCarney, Ms. R. Quesnel, Mr. B. Rivera, Mr. J. Trovato,

Members Excused: Ms. M. Hastings, Mr. C. Learn, Ms. L. Volkers

Staff Present: Mr. G. Mahoney, Superintendent, Special Education Services
Ms. V. Goodwin-Duncan, Consultant, Special Education Services
Ms. S. Miller, SERT
Ms. J. Hands, SERT
Ms. A. Bator, I/SERT
Ms. O. Dilay, I/SERT
Mr. P. Harper, I/SERT

Recording Secretary: Ms. M. MacLellan

1. Call to Order

1.1 Opening Prayer and Welcome

The meeting opened with a prayer at 7:06 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by: C. McCarney

Seconded by: R. Quesnel

THAT, the agenda for the November 29, 2007, SEAC meeting be approved. CARRIED

3. Actions to be taken

3.1 Approval of SEAC Minutes – April 30, 2007

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by: C. McCarney

Seconded by: R. Quesnel

THAT, the minutes for the October 29, 2007, SEAC meetings be approved. CARRIED

4. Presentation

4.1 LDLC

Victoria Goodwin-Duncan

V. Goodwin-Duncan, the co-ordinator of the CODE Project, introduced her team and informed the membership that all the goals of the original LD Review have been met given that we now have three Centres. This year is a capacity building year. There will be a new employee working on assistance technology capacity development through the Centres and across Board schools.

The entire CODE Project is based on the document, "Education for All", which was issued by the Ministry three years ago. The SERTs run workshops and in-services, approximately every two weeks. It is found that the communication is essential to keep everyone aware of what is happening. To that end, there is an Open House at the beginning of each session and an observation day for the parents to come in and see what the students are doing all day.

Each of the Centres has a Child & Youth Counsellor, for a half day/week who helps the teacher and Educational Assistant work with the students on self-advocacy, self-confidence, as well as academics. This year, students from Grades 4 – 8 are included at the Centres.

4.2 Premier Technology*Victoria Goodwin-Duncan*

The Premier Assistive Technology, Literacy Productivity Pack is a suite of software program which incorporates many of the functions of better known programs such as Dragon Naturally Speaking, Kwizweil, Word Q, Speak Q, etc... Along with graphic organizer software such as Kidspiration and Smart Ideas, this suite of programs is available not only for special education but across the system for use by all students. It is a system-wide purchase made collaboratively by Special Education but across the system for use by all students. It is a system-wide purchase made collaboratively by Special Education Services, Curriculum Services and Student Success. It serves as an excellent example of the application of Universal design for learning principle i.e. tool or resource made available to learners with identified leaning challenges that is also an asset for all learners who do not have those same learning challenges.

Premier Technology can be accessed at home as well as at school (www.premierathome.com). We have already held a number of Information Sessions for parents, as well as professional development for staff. The staff is noticing that much of what they learn at the LDLCs, they can use in their classroom for a variety of students.

4.3 Alternative Dispute Resolution*Gary Mahoney*

Using the Ministry of Education's Framework and Purpose of Dispute Resolution Pilot, six school boards are collecting data and bringing results to the Ministry. They are attempting to address resolution at the earliest possible stages to program and services based disputes.

G. Mahoney will send the whole document to SEAC members shortly. The Ministry is looking at accredited mediators, in order to have neutrality and the utmost confidentiality and professionalism.

5. Reports/Updates/Discussion**5.1 Focus on SEAC***Lori Kovalchek*

L. Kovalchek shared information about Focus on SEAC and encouraged feedback from SEAC members. Miranda suggested that we set goals and objectives, timelines, parent books and guides, annual special education plan, orientation packages for SEAC members. It is felt that communication with parents is a big issue which needs to be addressed.

G. Mahoney offered an up-date regarding the Special Education Parent Guide. The staff is working on this parent guide, but is awaiting the third reading of the Inclusion Policy by the Board. It will be shared with SEAC before it goes to print.

It was agreed that an orientation manual for SEAC members would be beneficial. M. Kohler, P. Houlahan, R. Quesnel and J. Trovato all offered to gather and read over the books/manuals and to work on a brief insert for the school newsletters.

6. Action Items**6.1 Revised Board Report on Gifted Education***Gary Mahoney*

Second Reading approval was given for the Range of Placement and Inclusion Policy. We are now awaiting the third and final reading. Trustees supported this policy. A second Staff Report was to go to the next Board meeting of December 4, 2007. The key issue is the costs involved and there is considerable deliberation on how to get the funds we need.

The Board does not yet have a site in mind for any of the gifted classes.

7. Information**8. Agency Updates**

9. Future Agenda Items

- 9.1 Transformation Paper
- 9.2 Mental Health Issues
- 9.3 Revisions to the Special Education Parent Guide
- 9.4 Safety Rooms
- 9.5 Up-date on New Secondary School in Burlington

10. Date of Next Meeting

Christmas Dinner - December 17, 2007, Hampton Restaurant, Quality Inn on Bronte Road

11. Adjournment

11.1 Motion for Absenteeism

RECOMMENDATION	<i>Moved by: C. McCarney</i>
	<i>Seconded by: J. Matters</i>
THAT, M. Hastings, L. Kovalchek, C. Learn and L. Volkens be excused.	CARRIED

11.2 Motion for Adjournment

RECOMMENDATION	<i>Moved by: P. Houlahan</i>
	<i>Seconded by: J. Trovato</i>
THAT, the meeting adjourn.	CARRIED

11.3 Closing Prayer

The meeting adjourned with a prayer at 9:39 p.m.