

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: March 25, 2019
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Catholic Education Centre - Board Room
802 Drury Lane
Burlington, Ontario

Members Present	B. Agnew (Chair)	A. Louca-Ricci
	M. Arteaga	M. Lourenco
	R. Barreiro	C. Parreira
	T. Beattie	D. Rabenda
	N. Guzzo	L. Stephenson
	D. Hotopoleanu (Vice Chair)	Y. Taylor
	H. Karabela	T. Veale
	J. Lim	

Staff Present

C. Cipriano, Superintendent of Special Education Services
P. Daly, Director of Education
W. Reid-Purcell, Special Education Coordinator
L. Keating, Chief Officer Research and Development

Members Excused

M. Arnold
D. Bardon
M. Duarte
P. Moran
R. Quesnel

Members Absent

Recording Secretary J. Crew

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order.

1.1 Opening Prayer

The meeting opened at 7:02 p.m. with a prayer led by the Chair.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Moved by: D. Rabenda

Seconded by: T. Beattie

RESOLVED, that the agenda be accepted as received.

CARRIED

2. Presentations

2.1 Spirit of Inclusion Award Presentations

B. Agnew welcomed the Spirit of Inclusion recipients, their families, and school staff.

B. Agnew explained that the Spirit of Inclusion Award selection committee had a challenging task in selecting this year's recipients. After careful deliberation, co-recipients were selected for this year's elementary award.

B. Agnew shared some nomination information describing the many attributes and qualities that led to Leia of St. Raphael Catholic Elementary School and Ashley of St. Andrew Catholic Elementary School being selected

as co-recipients of the Spirit of Inclusion elementary award. Each student was presented with a gift and a shared school plaque.

B. Agnew shared nomination information describing the attributes and qualities that led to Jamie, a student at Notre Dame Catholic Secondary school, being chosen as **this year's secondary recipient** of the Spirit of Inclusion award. A school plaque and a gift were presented.

Recipients will also be recognized at the Student Awards of Excellence Ceremony on April 29.

2.2 SEAC Meetings/Question Norms (C. Cipriano)

C. Cipriano discussed the need to **be respectful of SEAC members' time and the need for efficient and productive meetings, noting that all members are volunteers and this year's committee will be together for four years.** Moving forward we will intentionally be more cognisant of times allotted; have questions on presentations held until the end; and intentionally work toward keeping the meetings within the 2 hour timeframe.

2.3 Gifted Programming Survey (L. Keating)

L. Keating presented on a Gifted Survey for Parents. The survey is being prepared to comply with a Board motion passed at the November 20, 2018 Board meeting. The presentation is attached.

L. Keating agreed that information and suggestions could be emailed for review, noting that partners wanting specific data that is not being collected can apply as an external researcher.

3. Actions to be taken

A motion was put forth to amend the minutes, there was no seconder for the motion.

3.1 Minutes of the February 25, 2019 SEAC Meeting

Moved by: D. Rabenda

Seconded by: L. Stephenson

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the February 25, 2019 SEAC Meeting be approved as presented.

The Chair called for a vote and the motion *CARRIED*.

4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

5. Business Arising from Previous Meetings

5.1 Title Change for Regional Contained Classes (W. Reid-Purcell)

Members reviewed and discussed suggestions that had been submitted. The Chair asked if members had any other suggestions or input. Members were invited to continue to submit other suggestions. A survey will be sent out in a week or so, for members to rank their preferences to help determine the new title for regional classrooms.

6. Action and Information Items

6.1 SEAC Goals and Priorities / Budget Priorities (B. Agnew)

B. Agnew thanked everyone for sending feedback. The suggestions provided fell into a number of themes, subsets incorporated into those themes were discussed.

It was noted that suggestions included requests to continue learning for the next while for the benefit of new committee members to support them in making informed decisions on priorities **over SEAC's four year term.**

The information provided will be distilled into themes and shared with members.

6.2 Special Education Plan (introduction)

Ways to review the Special Education Plan (SEP) were discussed. It was determined that this year's review will take place during the April and May SEAC meetings.

Beginning in April the SEP review will include: dividing the plan into 4 sections; a subcommittee will be assigned to each section; members will break out into groups to review their section and mark any changes/suggestions; questions that arise will be written on post-it notes and placed on a chart. Following the April meeting, members are welcome to continue reviewing any section of the SEP; additional feedback can be provided at the May meeting; questions gathered from the April meeting will be addressed at the May meeting; additional time will also be added to the May agenda for the SEP review.

Members agreed to a 6:30 pm start time for both the April and May meetings to allow additional time for the SEP review. Teams will be assigned to sub-sections of the SEP; information will be sent out a least one week prior to the meeting.

7. Communications to SEAC

7.1 **Superintendent's Report**

C. Cipriano provide updates on:

Chief of Mental Health Programming: Glenda Brown was welcomed to the role on March 4th, Glenda brings significant experience to this role in both mental health programming and education.

HCDSB Best Buddies Life Skills Semi-Formal Dinner Dance: will take place Thursday, May 23, 2019 6:00 to 9:30 pm at Jean Vanier CSS in Milton. Please let us know if you would like to attend.

SEA Technology Parent Showcase Evenings: the IGNITE grant awards were given out to student recipients in both elementary and secondary; many pictures were sent on social media when the award cheques were present to the students. Student recipients of the awards included a range of exceptionalities across the system. Recipients will be showcasing their projects at the SEA Technology Showcase Parent Night in their region. The showcases takes place at Corpus Christi CSS on March 27th and at Jean Vanier CSS on April 3rd. LDAH will also be participating at the showcases. All SEAC members are welcome to attend.

This year's INSPIRE AccessAbility Showcase: takes place on Saturday, May 4th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm, hosted by HCDSB, at Jean Vanier Catholic Secondary School. Information flyers were sent out to SEAC members on March 22nd.

New SERT Catholic Learning Community (CLC): was held on March 18th. The CLC focused on the role of the Educational Assistant and Safe Management best practices; IEPs; how to run a successful transition meeting and/or case conference; and the process for referrals and considerations for our regional classes

Gifted Open Houses: for parents and appropriate candidates will take place during Catholic Education Week at St. Andrew CES on May 8th at 9:15; Canadian Martyrs CES on May 10th at 9:15; and Our Lady of Victory on May 7th at 9:00 am

Special Education Consultants and Itinerant Team CLC: will take place on Friday, supported by our two EA Managers, to address consistent practice regarding the use of SE 17 Physical Restraint - Incident Reports, Safety Rooms and other alternative sites; and creation of Indicator Response Plans (IRPs) and/or Safety Plans

Registered Behaviour Technician (RBT): itinerant teams are working to complete their 40 hours of professional development in RBT. The learning has been robust and that they have been able to make very good use of their increased ABA knowledge in their schools. A celebration of completion will be hosted for them in June

IEP Engine: in consultation with Cardinal and LEARNStyle, HCDSB will be converting to the IEP Writer. Piloting will begin in mid-April at two schools; plans are to implement system wide in May 2019 to allow SERTs the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the new system prior to September. The many benefits of the new system were outlined. HCDSB will engage SEAC during an IEP review, once the new system is up and running.

The Administrative Assistant for Special Education will be retiring this year; a large number of applications have been received for the position.

7.2 Trustee Reports

N. Guzzo reported that trustees participating in a conflict of interest session and a budget training session. At the last CPIC meeting, they elected a Co-Chair and the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) presented and invited parents to their conference on April 5 & 6 (a flyer can be circulated for those interested); CPIC meetings are open to the public and they would like to invite a representative from SEAC to attend an upcoming meeting. There were discussions on uniforms and Autism funding changes at the last Board meeting.

7.3 Association Reports

Autism Ontario (L. Stephenson)

L. Stephenson informed members of the upcoming Autism Ontario Kids Charity Golf classic, a link for registration and details are included in the attached report. Tuesday April 2nd is World Autism Awareness Day, a flag raising ceremony will take place at Burlington City Hall. Details are outlined in the attached Autism Ontario association report for March.

Autism Ontario (AO) Association Report (deferred from February 25th SEAC meeting): L. Stephenson referred **members to AO's pre-budget submission dated January 15, sent to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs; AO's response to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services regarding changes announced to the Ontario Autism Program on February 6; and AO's clarification on their response to the announcement, dated February 12.** Details are outlined in the attached AO association report for February.

Learning Disabilities Association of Halton (T. Beattie)

T. Beattie informed members of LDAH's **lecture series: Introduction to Advocacy, Your Child's IEP and an Overview of Other Important Topics for Parents.** Details are outlined in the attached LDAH association report.

Halton Down Syndrome Association (D. Hotopeleanu)

D. Hotopeleanu informed members that World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) was celebrated on March 21st; Halton schools are participating in a WDSD contest; further information on the contest winners will be shared. Further details are outlined in the attached HDSA association report.

ABC Ontario (M. Lourenco)

M. Lourenco informed members that the ABC Ontario Annual General Meeting and Family Day takes place on April 14th at Tiff Festival Tower. **"2e: Twice Exceptional"**: through ABC Ontario, London Chapter, Screening and Panel Discussion takes place on Sunday, May 5th at the Wolf Performance Hall in London. Details of both events are outlined in the attached ABC association report.

Hardcopies of a flyer for ABC Ontario's Annual Provincial Family Event were also provided.

7.4 SEAC Discussion – Student Exceptionalities:

As requested from LDAH, and also ABC Ontario, C. Cipriano distributed data on exceptionalities and placements for the school years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018

Clarification on multiple exceptionalities as it relates to students identified gifted, will be provided.

7.5 Communications to SEAC

The Chair displayed a sample letter received from another SEAC committee to the Ministry of Education. These type of communication letters from other SEAC committees are received from time to time, generally they are not a call to action, but rather a sharing of information. Moving forward all letters received from other **board's** SEACs will be shared as they arrive; members can determine if they are something they might like to act on.

If associations receive additional letters that have not been shared with our Board, they are encouraged to share with all members.

Three SEAC communications that have been recently received, will be shared with members via email.

8. Next Agenda: Meeting Wednesday, April 24, 2019

The agenda will include the Special Education Plan; a Gifted Presentation and a VOICE presentation.

9. Adjournment

9.1 Resolution re Absentees (Chair)

Moved by: N. Guzzo

Seconded by: M. Lourenco

RESOLVED, that M. Arnold, D. Bardon, M. Duarte, P. Moran, R. Quesnel be excused. CARRIED

9.2 Adjournment and Closing Prayer (Chair)

Moved by: D. Rabenda

Seconded by: D. Hotopeleanu

RESOLVED, that the meeting adjourn. CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 p.m. with a prayer led by the Chair.



Gifted Survey for Parents

Laura Keating, PhD
March 25, 2019
SEAC meeting

Parents of Gifted Students Survey 2019

The purpose of this survey is to:

- 1) Comply with a board motion passed on November 20, 2018
- 2) Measure parents' satisfaction with current gifted programming, and
- 3) Determine, within the restrictions of what is reasonable and feasible within our board, areas of gifted programming that can be modified to improve student achievement

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Halton Catholic District School Board request Senior Staff to conduct a survey of the parents of students currently enrolled or identified as gifted at our Board as to their satisfaction of programming available to their students.

**Motion approved by the Board of Trustees,
November 20, 2019**

Survey Development

- The survey was developed by Research & Development Services and included:
 - ✓ Literature review
 - ✓ Consultation with Spec Ed staff
 - ✓ Consideration of results from the 2018 survey of gifted students
- Questions developed in compliance with:
 - ✓ The board motion
 - ✓ Internal policies and procedures
 - ✓ Survey development best practices

Survey Questions

- Basic demographics including programs
 - Current for secondary students
 - Possible/planned for elementary students
- Satisfaction with current program options
- Exploring interest in possible new/modified placement options

Sharing the Survey

- Sharing the survey in advance could:
 - Compromise the integrity of the data collection
 - Increase the risk of bias and ultimately



**Threaten the validity
of the results**

Therefore, all parents will
be invited to complete the
survey at the same time



Stakeholder consultation

Stakeholder consultation can be useful for survey development

- Discussion groups
- All stakeholders have equal opportunity to participate

Information gathered is used to generate questions

Results from this survey will provide useful information to board staff regarding gifted programming for secondary students in the HCDSB

Community Partners

HCDSB will share information with collaborators, providing data requested:

- Aligns with board goals and processes and
- Minimizes the impact of survey fatigue

Partners who want specific data that we are not collecting can apply as an external researcher

- Submit application and survey materials
- Proposals are reviewed quarterly by our Research Advisory Committee

TIMELINES

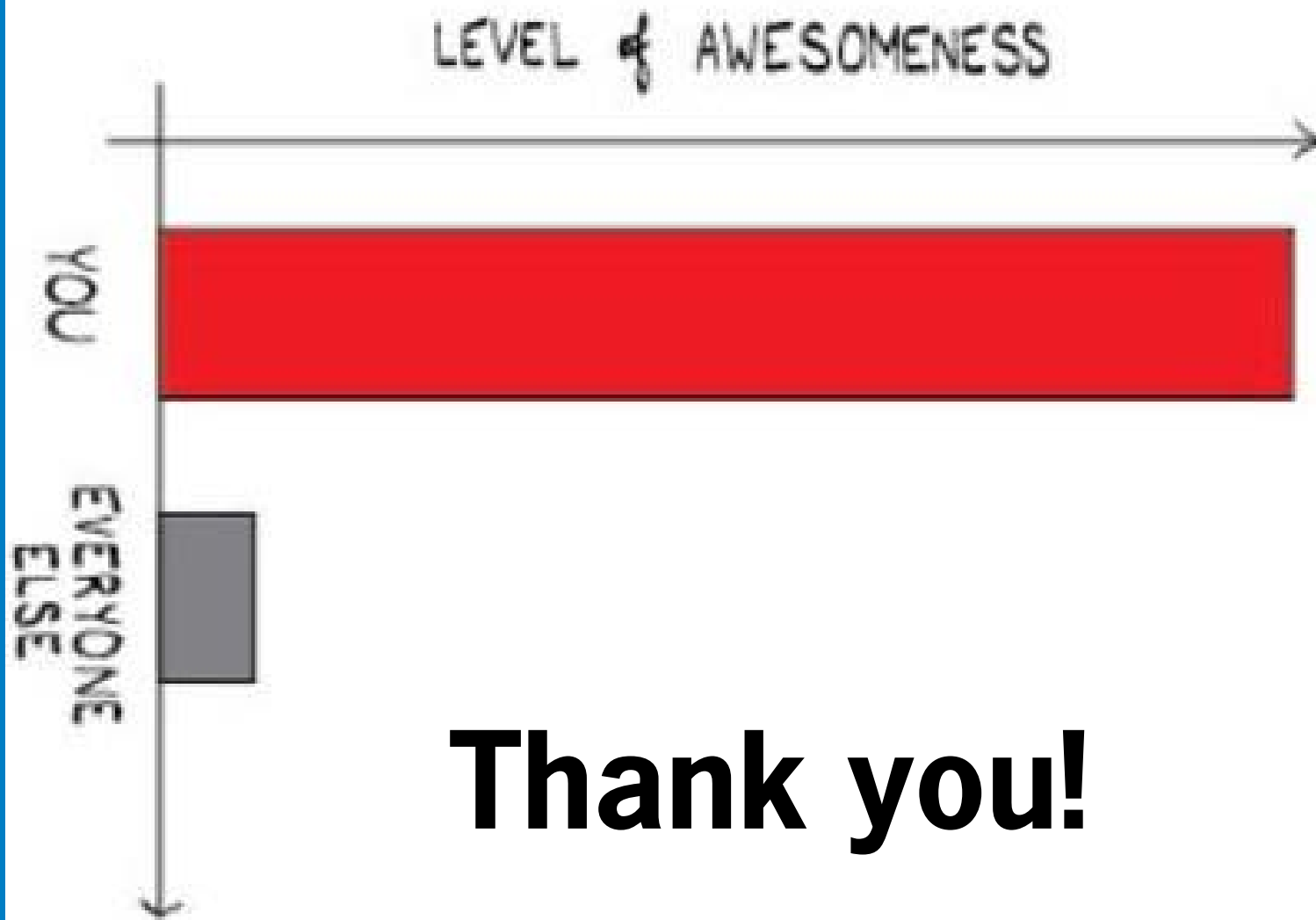
November 2018: Motion of the Board

January-March 2019: Survey development

April 2019: Survey administration

May 2019: Analyses and report

May/June 2019: Report to the Board



Thank you!

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Association Report

Association:	Autism Ontario
Representative:	Lisa Stephenson
Meeting Date:	Monday, February 25, 2019
Upcoming Events or Conferences	Autism Ontario will be holding their 19th annual Kids Charity Golf Classic on Wednesday May 29th at Glen Eagle Golf Club in Caledon.
Website links/Brochure /Flyer attachments:	<p>Registration for Charity Golf Classic: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/autism-ontario-19th-annual-kids-charity-golf-classic-for-autism-2019-registration-55308974632?mc_cid=1ad7695978&mc_eid=889184f336 Link to Charity Golf Classic: https://mailchi.mp/254acb0dd575/autism-ontario-19th-annual-kids-charity-golf-classic-for-autism-2019?e=889184f336</p> <p>ATTACHED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Presentation to Standing Committee for Pre-Budget Consultations 2) Autism Ontario response to OAP program changes 3) Autism Ontario February 12 clarifying statement
New Initiatives:	
Other Information:	A discussion of changes to the Ontario Autism Program announced February 6

January 15, 2019



**To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
regarding Pre-Budget Consultations 2019, Government of Ontario**

Autism Ontario Presenters:

- **Katharine Buchan, Manager of Communications and Development**
 - **Margaret Spoelstra, Executive Director**
-

Dear Committee Members,

Now entering our 46th year, Autism Ontario has envisioned *acceptance and opportunities for people on the autism spectrum*. The families who formed Autism Ontario in 1973 would never have imagined the prevalence rates for autism to grow to 1 in 66 children in Canada. In Ontario that represents 135,000 citizens.

Autism Ontario continues to envision a Province that offers seamless supports across the lifespan that reflect the wide range of expression in autism, the constantly changing needs of this able, yet vulnerable population and which addresses the needs of caregivers and families who bear both the joys and the substantial weight of care and advocacy for their children from infancy to and throughout adulthood.

Thank you for the support that is provided in support of families through our Potential Programme and with March Break and Summer funding. Surveyed families have told us over and over that these funds matter to them. Combined, these programs directly support over 20,000 people in Ontario.

In 2018, Autism Ontario conducted a province-wide survey, resulting in 10 top areas identified by caregivers and autistic adults. Those non-prioritized top 10 are the following:

Service barriers for adults – According to autistic adults, the largest barrier to accessing services is the lack of trained professionals who understand autism.

Education support – According to caregivers, the top area of need for a child with autism in their communities is support within the education system.

School transitions – The majority of caregivers of high school aged children do not feel well supported and ready to transition their child out of school and into adulthood.

Societal attitudes and perceptions – Autistic adults and caregivers both report that societal attitudes and perceptions about ASD have been a large or very large source of stress in the past year.

Financial hardship – A majority of caregivers say that finances have been a large or very large source of stress in the past year.

Waitlists – The majority of caregivers find long waitlists to be a large or very large barrier to accessing services.

Service needs for young children – According to caregivers, the top service needs for children aged 4 and under, are behavioural intervention and speech language pathology.

Crisis status – Most caregivers are between a three and a five out of ten, in terms of crisis level.

Mentorship and support – There is large scale interest in receiving peer support via a parent to parent mentorship program.

Mental Health – Autistic adults identified their top service need as psychological or psychiatric support.

In November 2018 we asked our survey respondents to rate these top ten items in order of priority and these top 5 emerged:

1. Education Support

About ten years ago the Ministry of Education reported that there were about 7,000 students with ASD in Ontario's schools. Today that number has tripled to over 20,000 students. Educational supports that were implemented for students with autism years ago are now insufficient in scope and effectiveness. Part of the current challenges with ABA implementation and parent satisfaction will not be addressed without a focus on improved school supports and transition planning that has meaning and achievable outcomes and opportunities for adult life.



#1 Education Support

According to caregivers, the **#1 area** of need for a child with autism is support within the education system, even though **77.8%** of caregivers of high school aged children feel listened to by their child's school.

Thank you for the additional investment into OAP services in this current year's budget.

However, the over 20,000 children and youth on the waiting lists for OAP services are currently not able to be served in timely and equitable fashion. Additionally, unless increased evidence-based supports and implementation supervision by qualified professionals are available in all Ontario schools, it will be impossible to meet the educational needs of students with ASD. The Ministry of Health is also noticeably absent in providing necessary health supports for people with autism across the lifespan.

We recommend:

- Creating an employment category in schools of Registered Behaviour Technician, supervised by Board employed BCBAs or Behaviour trained Psychologists;
- Increased ABA supervision in schools,
- Collaboration across Ministries with the emphasis on the child's learning and mental health needs over silo-ed systems,
- Mandatory Pre-service training in Evidence-Based Practice and Applied Behaviour Analysis for all educators.

2. Long Wait Lists



Families are waiting for everything. Waiting for:

- A diagnosis/diagnoses that determines eligibility/access to services
- the Ontario Autism Program,
- an educational assistant,
- informed school personnel,
- health and mental health supports,
- adaptive program supports and Passport Funding
- job opportunities, and
- housing.

We are concerned about rumours that this government is considering substantive changes to the Ontario Autism Program. Our survey in 2017 indicated that one third of parents are single caregivers and that one third favoured the option of Direct Service provision while 2/3rds preferred Direct Funding. We urge the government to consider offering choice to families based on assessed needs of both the child and the family's needs. Children should also receive these services where they spend the majority of their day, which is in school during school-aged years.

3. Financial Hardship

We know that **the burden of care on families is both stressful and costly.**

We have attached a 2014 research paper entitled “The Value of Caregiver Time: Costs of Support and Care for Individuals Living with Autism Spectrum Disorder”, by Carolyn Dudley and J.C. Herbert Emery†. In it they describe what costs are attributed to families who raise children with autism in Canada, including Ontario data sources. The numbers are both startling and sobering. But there are solutions. Autism Ontario welcomes the opportunity to be part of the dialogue and shaping new opportunities for people with ASD and their families.



4. School Transitions



Autism's prevalence rates are not only an alarming statistic for children and youth, but we are now seeing these numbers grow along with the children as they become teens and adults. More importantly, **these students are now beginning to exit high school unprepared and unsupported for life as adults in higher numbers than ever.**

The majority of these graduates are sitting at their parents' homes doing little, are under or unemployed and over half are or will be struggling

with additional mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression. With approximately 15,000 people with Developmental Disabilities (including autism) waiting for Passport Funding, we know that those families have few options to assist their now young adult children towards a promising future. Having those young adults at home means that at least one care-giver is also at home and not earning through employment or investing in their own retirement, while their children with ASD, who could also be working, participating in meaningful day-time activities or attending post-secondary education, are not.

Many of these adults could have **meaningful employment** if employers saw that hiring people with autism is good for business rather than a charitable act. Autism Ontario has been involved in several projects (e.g. Specialisterne Canada's employment program and Integrated Autism Consulting's "Transition to Life" program) over the past few years that directly support the successful employment of adults on the autism spectrum. Investing in these types of programs and others would have an impact on the Ontario economy and the lives of adults with autism and their families.

5. Adult Services

Eligibility: At least half of adults on the autism spectrum are deemed ineligible for Passport funding. This must change to eligibility based on assessed needs and not paid for out of the pockets of caregivers.

We encourage the continued implementation of recommendations identified by the Ontario Ombudsman's office in its "No Where to Turn" report.

Housing: Autism Ontario is gratified to have seen a second round of funding for unique housing proposals through the former MCSS' Housing Task Force. This must be the first in many future steps that will assist people with Developmental Disabilities, including ASD, to create or find affordable housing options.

In the absence of increasing supportive housing options, the number of adults with autism who are in crisis will continue to grow. And supporting a model that is primarily crisis driven is a far more costly proposition than focusing on prevention of the circumstances that result in more restrictive responses. We also worry about a new trend of seeing children with disabilities, including autism, in long-term care facilities, effectively replicating an institutional model of care which is neither appropriate nor necessary.

In a recent TVO "Agenda" program, a parent and her autistic adult son remarked that they are not looking for pity, but for respect and opportunities as caregivers and as citizens who have much to offer society. Autism Ontario strongly supports this notion in its vision of "acceptance and opportunities for all people on the autism spectrum".





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Toronto, Ontario, February 6, 2019

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services announces plan to clear Ontario Autism Program waitlists

Autism Ontario is committed to supporting families through this province-wide program change and will work with the Autistic community to find solutions to this process.

Today's announcement from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services represents another change to children's programming across our province and the program direction will mean different things to different families.

Much of today's announcement echoes what Autism Ontario hears from families across the province. Long waitlists are one of the [largest barriers to accessing diagnostic and required services](#). Right now, Ontario families wait over a year for a diagnosis and the proposed increase in funding to expand the province's five diagnostic hubs would help to eliminate this barrier.

Once diagnosed, under the current program, families continue to experience barriers to accessing behavioural services. There is no one-size-fits all solution to this problem as some of these barriers are waitlist related, some are financial and some are related to our provincial capacity to provide access to high-quality ABA professionals. These challenges also continue to be shaped by geographic, language or cultural barriers, and a provincial system that continues to operate in a siloed fashion.

The efficacy and success of our autism programming must not fall solely on the shoulders of children's programming. To support people on the spectrum, we need a commitment across all ministries, including adult services, education, health, mental health, post-secondary, and employment sectors. Without this, families will continue to struggle for support and our society will continue to fail Autistic people and their families across their lifespan.

We surveyed Ontario families and Autistic adults in 2018, notably, 66.4% of Ontario families told us they wanted a Direct Funding model in Ontario. Families wanted the ability to choose their own service provider and control the timing and the location of their treatment. This new program addresses that expressed desire.

With that in mind, the proposed funding options, up until the age of 18 will suit the needs of some families, but not all. This does not address the varied support needs. Some families pay anywhere from \$60,000 to \$80,000 dollars a year for evidence-based intervention. For Northern, Indigenous, rural or Francophone families, there are currently few professionals, and little to no

programs or supports on which to spend this funding. The challenge remains that families who experience geographical, cultural, or linguistic barriers are still unable to access equitable service in contrast to areas that are more resourced.

Establishing a list of qualified providers is welcomed news. Helping families access qualified clinical supervisors for behavioural services has been a long-standing issue in the autism community, with behavior professionals, parents and organizations advocating for the regulation of behavior services in Ontario.

We will work with families and this government through the challenges and opportunities that will be present with this new approach. This expanded role will allow us to pay close attention to a family's ability to use these funds or to help families to create new responses that make sense for them locally.

About Autism Ontario: Autism Ontario has a 46 year history of representing thousands of families and people with ASD across Ontario. We are the only organization in Ontario that has formal parent representation in all areas of the province through our 25 Chapters. We advocate on behalf of all people with ASD and their families – at all ages and stages of life, reflecting a wide range of expression and abilities. To connect with us, visit www.autismontario.com

Vision: Acceptance and Opportunities for all people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Mission: To ensure that each individual with ASD is provided the means to achieve quality of life as a respected member of society.

New to Autism? Find help for navigating the system after a diagnosis, school issues, and other ASD information; please contact your local **Family Support Coordinator** [here](#).

CONTACT:

Jeff Bomben, Communications Coordinator 416-246-9592 ext. 232
jeff at autismontario dot com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Toronto, Ontario, February 12, 2019

Statement from Autism Ontario

On February 07, 2019 the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services made an announcement about the changes being made to the Ontario Autism Program. Given our communications with various stakeholders and in reviewing various comments on social media since the announcement, it became clear that there were a number of misunderstandings or assumptions about Autism Ontario's views or actions that we wish to address.

- Autism Ontario neither proposed nor endorsed the announced changes to the OAP and is concerned about the impact these changes will have on children and families accessing the program.

Autism Ontario spoke with multiple media outlets in response to the announcement and also released our own [statement](#) on February 08, 2019. Autism Ontario's input to the Ontario Government regarding the OAP since Fall 2018:

- As a host of [ABACUS](#) website, we report quarterly to MCCSS about the numbers of self-listed ABA providers and trends regarding communications with providers and caregivers accessing the site.
- We have shared the results of our 2017 and 2018 Annual Province-wide Survey with MCCSS. Key highlights of the 2017 survey have been available on our website in [an infographic](#) and shared widely through social media and in our magazine Autism Matters.
- On January 15, 2019 we presented an oral and [written submission](#) to the Minister of Finance at its pre-budget consultations regarding a range of issues facing autistic children and adults and their families and highlighted 10 top areas of concern identified by caregivers and autistic adults who responded to our 2018 province-wide survey. This presentation also included our views regarding rumoured changes to the OAP.

In keeping with its support to families through its 25 Chapters for 46 years and through MCCSS funded Family Support Coordinators for the past 12 years, Autism Ontario has agreed to:

- Expand our supports to assist families in navigating the changes to the OAP beginning April 2019 as they use their funding in local communities across Ontario.

We will not be managing intake into the OAP or making decisions about eligibility or funding levels for individual families, or managing OAP financing.

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Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Association Report

Association:	Autism Ontario
Representative:	Lisa Stephenson
Meeting Date:	Monday, March 25, 2019
Upcoming Events or Conferences	<p>Autism Ontario will be holding their 19th annual Kids Charity Golf Classic on Wednesday May 29th at Glen Eagle Golf Club in Caledon.</p> <p>On Tuesday April 2nd, 2019 Autism Ontario will be celebrating World Autism Awareness Day. This year, we've once again partnered with Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services to organize the Flag Raising Ceremony and WAAD celebration lunchtime event at the City of Burlington. This event will take place on Tuesday April 2nd, 2019 from 12:00-1:00pm at Burlington City Hall Atrium. This is an informal ceremony where we will come together and celebrate, and bring awareness to our local community!</p>
Website links/Brochure /Flyer attachments:	<p>Registration for Charity Golf Classic: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/autism-ontario-19th-annual-kids-charity-golf-classic-for-autism-2019-registration-55308974632?mc_cid=1ad7695978&mc_eid=889184f336</p> <p>Link to Charity Golf Classic: https://mailchi.mp/254acb0dd575/autism-ontario-19th-annual-kids-charity-golf-classic-for-autism-2019?e=889184f336</p> <p>The link for the Flag Raising Ceremony and WAAD event: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/raise-the-flag-for-world-autism-awareness-day-burlington-registration-57426704820</p> <p>ATTACHED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Presentation to Standing Committee for Pre-Budget Consultations 2) Autism Ontario response to OAP program changes 3) Autism Ontario February 12 clarifying statement
New Initiatives:	
Other Information:	A discussion of changes to the Ontario Autism Program announced February 6

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

LDAH Association Report

Association:	Learning Disabilities Association of Halton
Representative:	Tammy Beattie
Meeting Date:	March 25 th , 2019
Upcoming Events or Conferences	<p><u>Thursday, April 25th, 2019, at 7:00pm</u></p> <p>Lecture Series - Introduction to Advocacy, your child's I.E.P. and an overview of other important topics for parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a broad overview for parents looking to receive information and support. • Our subject matter experts will cover basics on navigating the school system, provide details on the I.E.P. (Individualized Education Program), the IPRC (Identification, Placement and Review Committee) and suggest practical tips and ideas for parents who are looking to be the best advocates for their school-aged child. • This session is ideal for new members of LDAH or parents who are starting their advocacy journey. • Date & Time: Location: LDAH Resource Center at 560 Guelph Line, Burlington – "Rotary Youth Centre" • Workshop is Free
Website links/Brochure /Flyer attachments:	https://ldahalton.ca/solutions-learning-lecture-series/
New Initiatives:	

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Association Report

Association:	Halton Down Syndrome Association
Representative:	Dan Hotopeleanu
Meeting Date:	March 25, 2019
Upcoming Events or Conferences	
Website links/Brochure /Flyer attachments:	
New Initiatives:	
Other Information:	<p>World Down Syndrome Day celebrated on March 21st. Schools in Halton are participating in Fifth Annual World Down Syndrome Day School Contest organized by HDSA and we are looking forward for the digital media, essay, artwork and poetry to be submitted by participating schools.</p> <p>HDSA's 2019 World Down Syndrome Day celebration held on March 23rd at the Holiday Inn – sold out event . This is a fun family event where our VIPs and their families can enjoy a buffet dinner and dance the night away all decked out in blue and yellow</p>

**Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
Association Report**

Association:	Association for Bright Children (ABC) Ontario
Representative:	Maria Lourenco
Meeting Date:	March 25, 2019
Upcoming Events or Conferences	<p><u>ABC Ontario Annual General Meeting and Family Day</u> April 14, 2019, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, TIFF Festival Tower, 80 John Street, Toronto ON, M5V 3X4</p> <p><i>See below for further details.</i></p> <p><u>“2e: Twice Exceptional”, ABC Ontario, London Chapter, Screening and Panel Discussion</u> Sunday, May 5, 2019 1-4pm Wolf Performance Hall, Central Library London, Ontario</p>
Website links/Brochure /Flyer attachments:	<p>www.abcontario.ca</p> <p>www.abclondon.ca/upcoming-events.html</p>
New Initiatives:	n/a
Other Information:	<p><u>ABC Ontario Annual General Meeting and Family Day</u></p> <p>In addition to the business of the annual general meeting (11:30 am – noon), parents and other adults will enjoy four hours of programming including speakers, information sessions, networking and discussion groups.</p> <p>The programme for children and youth will be “Film in a Day”, an exciting four hour hands-on filmmaking workshop organized in conjunction with the Toronto International Film Festival.</p> <p><i>Thanks to our generous sponsors and donors and the effort of our team of volunteers, we are able to offer this program to families free of charge.</i></p>