

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: February 22, 2021
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Microsoft Teams

Members Present

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| B. Agnew | J. Lim |
| M. Arteaga | A. Louca-Ricci |
| D. Bardon | M. Lourenco |
| R. Barreiro | P. Moran |
| N. Guzzo | R. Quesnel |
| D. Hotopeleanu | D. Rabenda |
| H. Karabela | T. Veale |

Staff Present

J. Acheson, Chief Social Worker
S. Balogh, Superintendent of Special Education Services
P. Daly, Director of Education
O. Foese, Chief Psychologist
A. Jones, Manager, Educational Assistants
D. Kollee, Chief Speech Language Pathologist
K. McCarthy, Special Education Consultant
J. O'Reilly, Special Education Coordinator
M. Pickett, Special Education Staff
L. Vacca, Special Education Consultant

Members Excused M. Duarte

Members Absent C. Parreira

Recording Secretary A. Hughes

1. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order.

1.1 Opening Prayer

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with a prayer led by the Chair.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Moved by: N. Guzzo

Seconded by: P. Moran

RESOLVED, that the agenda be accepted as received. **CARRIED**

2. Presentations

2.1 Project Search Presentation (L. Vacca and M. Pickett)

B. Agnew introduced Special Education staff L. Vacca and M. Pickett who presented on Project Search. Project Search is a one-year, school to work program for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are in their final year of secondary school. The presentation explained the program, it's goals and benefits. Staff concluded with answering questions. The presentation is attached.

2.2 After School Skills Development Program (J. O'Reilly and K. McCarthy)

B. Agnew introduced J. O'Reilly, Special Education Coordinator and K. McCarthy, Special Education Consultant who presented on the After School Skills Development Program. It is a 2 year funded program from the Ministry of Education that supports students with Autism Spectrum Disorder as well as students with other special education needs. The program focusses on social, communication, self-regulation and life-planning skills. Staff concluded with answering questions. The presentation is attached.

3. Action to be Taken

3.1 Minutes of the January 25, 2021 SEAC Meeting

Moved by: N. Guzzo

Seconded by: D. Bardon

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the January 25, 2021 SEAC Meeting be approved as presented.

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

4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest reported.

5. Business Arising from Previous Meetings (Chair)

The PAAC on SEAC survey key points were summarized by M. Lourenco and provided to members before the meeting. Members were asked to review the summary and prepare feedback notes for the next meeting. Time will be added to the March agenda to discuss the identified items and priorities.

A discussion occurred on Item #4 on the Business Arising Chart, Transition Planning Sub-Committee. B. Agnew will arrange a Transition Planning Sub-Committee meeting and send a meeting invite.

6. Special Education Board Policy Review

There were no Board policies to be reviewed.

7. Action and Information Items

7.1 SEAC Goal Setting Chart Updates (Chair)

B. Agnew discussed the SEAC Soundbytes. Members were emailed Soundbytes from past years on February 11th to review. M. Lourenco revised the first Soundbyte to be released, "What is SEAC" and sent it to members for feedback. Members were reminded to send their feedback to M. Lourenco as soon as possible so that it can be released to schools and shared on Twitter. The shared file will be sent to members after the meeting. B. Agnew would like to assign one to each member and members were encouraged to volunteer to edit a Soundbyte or create a new one, with the intent of sending them out twice a month. "Who is at the SEAC Table" will be the next one to be released.

Members were sent a survey on February 10, 2021 requesting input on suggested topics for staff presentations for future SEAC meetings over the course of this year and the 2021-2022 school year. S. Balogh reviewed the results of the Staff Presentations to SEAC survey. Topics that are timely and generated the most interest will be added to upcoming agendas.

Item #4 on the Goal Setting Chart, review the results of the PAAC on SEAC Survey, has been completed and a Stop/Start/Continue will be created in Microsoft Forms and sent to members before the next meeting.

7.2 Special Education Plan Review Discussion (Chair)

B. Agnew proposed that a Special Education Plan sub-committee be created with SEAC members and staff. Special Education staff will go through the plan first and then submit it to the subcommittee. S. Balogh suggested a form for all members to submit feedback on areas of the plan they would like the subcommittee to review. The subcommittee would then bring the revised plan back to the entire committee. Members will be sent an email inviting anyone who would like to volunteer for the subcommittee to send their name to the Chair. S. Balogh suggested an infographic to go with the plan and presented a sample.

7.3 Budget Priorities Discussion (Chair)

Members were asked to email their budget priority suggestions to the chair and A. Hughes. Suggestions will be shared with members.

8. Communications to SEAC

8.1 Superintendent's Report

S. Balogh provided updates on:

10th Annual Solutions for Learning Conference: will be on March 5 and 6th hosted by the Learning Disabilities Association of Halton-Hamilton. A number of teachers will be attending including teachers from elementary and secondary, as well as itinerants.

IEPs: term two IEPs will be going home this week for elementary students and by March 12th for secondary students. IEPs will be sent home electronically.

Summer Learning Program: we have received notice that there will be additional learning opportunities to support special education and mental health for the summer. More information will be communicated in the future in the form of a presentation.

World Autism Day: is recognized in April. A memo is going out to all schools this week regarding the Raise the Flag Campaign. The memo includes how schools can register for a flag and provides access to the Educator toolkits.

Mental Health and Wellbeing: Behaviour Analysts, Child and Youth Counsellors and Chaplains participated in a webinar delivered by School Mental Health Ontario. The webinar focused on mental health promotion, specifically creating caring conditions for learning in-person and virtually, with a focus on social-emotional skill building. School Mental Health Ontario resources were shared, as well as specific board examples. Two HCDSB CYCs, T. Henry and E. Rolfe were both asked to share their ideas at the provincial webinar and recognized for their great work.

Educational Assistants: participated in online sessions in ABA interventions as well as a template and guiding questions to develop a self-care plan on the February 5th PA day. All 11 Itinerant EAs have participated in the 6 sessions of FASD training over the last couple of weeks. There are 5 EAs who are supporting the After School Skills Development Program.

PRO Grant Update: we received notice that funds are available for SEAC and will be addressed further in the SEAC Discussion.

8.2 Trustee Reports

N. Guzzo reported on:

- At the February 2, 2021 Board of Trustees meeting, an action item passed on the Milton # 9 elementary school and the capital planning process was approved.
- The Equity and Inclusion policy was referred back to the policy committee and will be going out for stakeholder feedback.

- The multi-year strategic planning committee had its first meeting. Trustee Duarte is the Chair of the committee and sent an email to stakeholders asking for feedback on changes on the mission and the vision.
- The Ministry has brought Asymptomatic testing into the schools. More details will be shared once information is received.

8.3 Association Report – Autism Ontario (D. Barden)

D. Barden provided an overview of the Raise the Flag event celebrating World Autism day. Information was distributed to all HCDSB schools. Members were reminded of the Autism Ontario newsletter and new virtual initiatives were highlighted. Details are outlined in the attached Autism Ontario association report.

8.4 Association Report – Learning Disabilities Association of Halton-Hamilton (S. Sweet)

B. Agnew welcomed S. Sweet to her first SEAC meeting as the LDAHH representative. S. Sweet provided an overview of the 10th Annual Solutions for Learning virtual conference. A new executive functioning program for students was outlined, in-person programming will be restarting and recruitment for the Youth Ambassador program is underway. Details are outlined in the attached LDAHH association report.

M. Lourenco mentioned that ABC Ontario is having a virtual event on March 7th with a guest speaker and she will send the information to members.

9. SEAC Discussion

B. Agnew informed members that the Spirit of Inclusion sub-committee met and chose this year's recipients. Recipients and their families and Administrators will be invited to the March meeting.

B. Agnew and S. Balogh informed members that SEAC did receive Pro Grant Funds. The speaker list from last year's proposed event will be reviewed and availability will be looked into by the SEAC Communications sub-committee.

10. Meeting Summary and Next Steps

A Transition sub-committee meeting will be set, a speakers list for the PRO Grant event will be compiled, a start stop continue will be sent to members and the Soundbytes will be reviewed.

11. Next Agenda: Meeting Monday, March 22, 2021

The agenda will include the Spirit of Inclusion Awards, Policy II-29 Inclusion & Range of Placement Options for Identified Students, a presentation by Pat Daly.

12. Adjournment

12.1 Resolution re Absentees (Chair)

Moved by: P. Moran

Seconded by: M. Lourenco

RESOLVED, that M. Duarte be excused. **CARRIED**

12.2 Adjournment and Closing Prayer (Chair)

Moved by: D. Rabenda

Seconded by: D. Bardon

RESOLVED, that the meeting adjourn. **CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m. with a prayer led by the Chair.



Project SEARCH: What's It All About?

SEAC Presentation

February 22, 2021

Lisa Vacca and Martha Pickett

Project SEARCH In The News



Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH Transition Model

Project SEARCH is a one-year, school-to-work program for young people in their final year of high school with intellectual and developmental disabilities:

- Goal of competitive employment
- Total workplace immersion
- Internship rotations for career exploration and job skills acquisition
- Customized job-search assistance

Project SEARCH Description

- 10-12 students with a variety of intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Certified instructor and skills trainers
- Immersed in host business culture
- Rotations through unpaid internships with continual feedback
- Outcome of employment in the community

Project SEARCH Eligibility Criteria

- 18 – 21 years old (High School Program)
- Appropriate hygiene, social, and communication skills
- Ability to take direction and change behavior
- Access to public transportation
- Pass drug screen, background check
- Desire to Work!

Project SEARCH Successful Outcomes

75% of Project SEARCH graduates from 600 sites get jobs within a year after they graduate...

The Project SEARCH definition of a successful outcome:

- Competitive employment in an integrated setting
- Year-round work
- 16 hours/week or more (average is 27 hour work week)
- Minimum wage or higher

Project SEARCH Curriculum

- . Team Building
- . Workplace Safety
- . Technology
- . Self-Advocacy
- . Maintaining Employment
- . Financial Literacy



Latest Updates:

- ▶ Milton Hospital identified as potential Project SEARCH site for Fall of 2021
- ▶ Six potential placements as a start, with the potential to grow to 12. Initial start-up would require one teacher (provided by school board) and two skills trainers (provided by CLNH)
- ▶ License to be held jointly by CLNH and HCDSB funded partially by Ministry project initiative.
- ▶ Next steps would entail teacher selection, publicity regarding program, parent communication, student selection, staff training, site preparation

Additional Benefits of the Program

- Program model aligns with provincial mandates to work collaboratively with community partners—in this case CLNH-- regarding transitions (i.e. Integrated transition planning process, PPM156)
- Program has potential to expand to other sites and employers within Halton - Serves as a model for community businesses to acquire and train employees
- Resources can inform co-op practices within HCDSB and function as capacity building for school staff

After School Skills Development Program

Presented by Jodi O'Reilly & Karen McCarthy

What is the ASSDP?

- Two year funding from the Ministry of Education.
- ***The After School Skills Development Program*** supports students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as well as students with other special education needs.

Program Focus:

- Social skills
- Communication skills
- Self-regulation
- Life-planning skills

Programs Running:

Children's Friendship Training (CFT)

- An evidenced based program that focuses on social skills development for elementary aged children.

The Program for the Education and Enrichment of Skills (PEERS)

- An evidenced based program that focuses on social skills for adolescents.

PEERS

16 week virtual session

1 session per week – 4:30 – 6:00pm

Target audience – higher functioning ASD students in secondary

Approx. 10 students per group

Parent engagement throughout the program

PEERS

Participation Requirements

- Students who struggle making and/or maintaining friendships
- Students in high school
- Must be interested in attending the program, participate voluntarily and consistently attend
- Must have verbal communication skills
- Must be able to participate in a virtual group setting without additional support
- Parent must be willing to participate

PEERS

Topics of Instruction:

- How to use appropriate conversational skills
- How to find common interests by trading information
- How to appropriately use humour
- How to enter and exit conversations between peers
- How to handle rejection, teasing, and bullying
- How to handle rumours and gossip
- How to be a good host during get-togethers
- How to make phone calls to friends
- How to choose appropriate friends
- How to be a good sport
- How to handle arguments and disagreements
- How to change a bad reputation

Children's Friendship Training

12 week virtual program

1 session per week – 4:30 – 5:30pm

Approx. 10 students per group

Parent engagement throughout the program

Children's Friendship Training

Participation Requirements:

- A diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or have other social challenges (e.g. ADHD etc.) in grades 2-8
- Requires support to establish and/or maintain friendships
- Must have verbal communication skills
- Must be able to participate in a virtual group setting with minimal support
- Must be motivated to learn ways to make friends and interested in attending
- Must demonstrate emerging social skills (interest in engaging with peers, plays simple games, etc.) and have an interest in building relationships with same-aged peers
- Parent must be willing to participate

Children's Friendship Training

Topics of Instruction:

- How to 'play detective' to find common interests
- How to join a group of kids at play
- How to handle rejection, teasing, and bullying
- How to be a good host on a playdate
- How to be a good winner
- How to be a good sport
- How to show respect to adults
- How to make phone calls to friends

Staff Involved

- Each program includes multi-disciplinary collaboration
- Current staff includes: Communicative Disorders Assistants, Behaviour Analysts, Child and Youth Counsellors, Educational Assistants and Teachers with Special Education Qualifications.

5 Groups Running:

- 1 PEERS group – 2 BAs, 1 Teacher, 1 CYC, 1 EA
- CFT Gr. 2/3 – 1 Teacher, 1 CDA, 1 EA, 1 CYC
- CFT Gr. 4 – 1 Teacher, 2 CYCs, 1 EA
- CFT Gr. 4/5/6 – 1 Teacher, 2 CYCs, 1EA
- CFT Gr. 7/8 – 1 Teacher, 2 CYCs, 1 EA

Data Collection

- Students and/or Parents will complete a pre and post survey to measure growth over the course of the program.
- A feedback survey will be given to staff and parents regarding the program to help inform future ASSD Programs.

HALTON CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS – February 22, 2021

| SEAC MEETING DATE | AGENDA ITEM | ACTION REQUIRED | RESPONSIBILITY | STATUS |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------|
| October 5, 2020 | SEAC Discussion | Development of Sub-Committees | All | Ongoing/As Needed |
| October 26, 2020 | Business Arising | Letter to the Ministry of Education regarding Special Education Funding model | M. Lourenco and SEAC members | February 22, 2021 |
| October 26, 2020 | Business Arising | Community Consultation Section of the Special Education Plan | Special Education Staff and SEAC members | March 22, 2021 |
| December 14, 2020 January 25, 2021 | Association Report-ABC Association Report: Transition Planning | A sub-committee was proposed to discuss recommendations and to seek other SEAC member's input. Members are to bring feedback and next steps back at January meeting. Invitation to be sent to all SEAC members for first sub-committee meeting. | SEAC Transition Planning Sub-Committee members are: B. Agnew, M. Lourenco and D. Bardon. B. Agnew will send a meeting invite for the first sub-committee meeting to all SEAC members. An update will be provided after the first sub-committee meeting. | Ongoing |

SEAC Goals 2021

Suggestions from the December 14, 2020 SEAC Goal Setting Exercise.



Reviewed and updated during January meeting and assigned tasks and timelines.

| ITEM NO. | ITEM | SUGGESTED ACTIONS | RESPONSIBILITY | TARGET DATES |
|----------|--|---|--|---|
| 1 | Board Wide Special Education Parent Survey for all Exceptionalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the purpose/intent of the survey and the data we want to collect and possibly embed a Special Education question in the strategic plan survey to parents. • Communicate with Research Department. Provide input on question for the survey. • Develop a Sub-Committee | Sub-Committee B. Agnew N. Guzzo M. Lourenco | Start the process. Proposed to have the Sub-committee to meet mid-February. |
| 2 | Self assessment process on SEAC meetings to measure effectiveness of the meetings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process at end of meeting to see what is working and next steps. Set up a self assessment process for the committee. • Do another start, stop and continue. Review of effectiveness of meetings. • Identify one or two achievable goals that SEAC own or control. Specific with dates, an achievable plan and a report. • Review SEAC goals and measure how did against the goals • Create a matrix. Measure how we did each year against our goals. • Set up a sub-committee. | All SEAC Members P. Moran agreed to lead and to discuss further with members and provide a draft outline. | Ongoing |
| 3 | Calendar for SEAC plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a calendar that outlines every month what our plan is to see what is coming up and what to prepare. | Chair | Calendar emailed to all members December 17, 2020 |
| 4 | Review the results of the PAAC on SEAC survey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the results once they are received and then do a stop, start, continue. Review all comments and keep comment anonymous. Review PAAC on SEAC recommendation for agenda items. | All | Completed on January 25, 2021 |

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| 5 | Community Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring back SEAC Soundbytes and promote on Twitter • Each Association can provide an update • Create a sub-committee for writers | Sub-Committee/All SEAC. A. Hughes emailed past SEAC Soundbytes to members on February 11 th for review. | Ongoing |
| 6 | Association Reports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associations could report on how different Associations are coping with COVID-19 and adapting (i.e.: online games, parties, activities, etc). Association representatives can share their experiences and goals. | All Associations are encouraged to share information at the monthly meetings or to provide information to share on Twitter. | Ongoing |
| 7 | Information from Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather requests for Staff Presentations • Survey SEAC members on what presentations they would like to have from staff and what information they want in the presentation. | Staff/SEAC Members | <p>A survey will be sent to members in February with suggested topics and to provide feedback on presentations they would like to see.</p> <p>Survey results presented at February 22nd meeting.</p> |
| 8 | SEAC Meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide time in SEAC meetings to have working groups/discussions | All SEAC Members | Ongoing |

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Association Report

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|---|--|
| Association: | Autism Ontario |
| Representative: | Debra Bardon |
| Meeting Date: | February 22, 2021 |
| Upcoming Events or Conferences | <p>World Autism Awareness Day is April 2, 2021 (Good Friday) Autism Ontario will be celebrating Raise the Flag on April 6, 2021. No in-person events this year due to covid-19.</p> <p>Through the simple act of raising a flag, unites families, schools, communities, government and professionals in recognizing World Autism Day, and celebrates autistic people while bringing to light the systemic barriers that must be removed to create a more supportive and inclusive Ontario for them.</p> <p>Please register by Tuesday, March 10th, 2021 if you require a flag.</p> <p>Schools: *Register and have access to our Educator Toolkits which include activities and educational videos. *You can share your school’s stories of inclusion and acceptance. *Share your creativity by entering our flag colouring contest (with prizes) starting on March 6th! – check Facebook for details and registration. → https://raisetheflagforautism.com/</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> |
| Website links/Brochure /Flyer attachments: | <p>Website: https://www.autismontario.com/ → Find a Chapter drop down menu to search for regional chapters throughout the province.</p> <p>Newsletter: register to receive email updates about news and events. → https://www.autismontario.com/newsletter</p> |

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| | <p>Halton Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/AutismOntarioCW/ → Halton falls within the “Central West Chapter” of Autism Ontario. This region covers the areas of Peel, Waterloo, Wellington, Hamilton, and Halton.</p> |
| <p>New Initiatives:</p> | <p>Transitioning many of Autism Ontario’s programs & services to online/virtual formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent & Sibling Support groups - Educational & Training Seminars - Leisure & Social Programs – virtual classes for yoga, martial arts, cooking, art - Activity packages delivered to homes from local businesses – arts & crafts, sensory-related items - Twists on fundraising initiatives – virtual wine tasting & cooking with all items delivered to your door, online auctions <p>*All events require pre-registration. Typically, events & services are free of charge to registrants, occasionally there is a small cost.</p> |
| <p>Other Information:</p> | <p>Respite services not available at this time for any events.</p> <p>Website tools: guidance for caregivers, family, friends & educators regarding managing various aspects of life when living with Autism. Includes helpful information for holidays, school & therapy, life stages or transitions. Service navigation and funding (OAP). Autism Ontario research, reports & surveys. Stories of real-life inspiration.</p> <p>-</p> |

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Association Report

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|---|---|
| Association: | Learning Disabilities Association of Halton-Hamilton |
| Representative: | Samantha Sweet |
| Meeting Date: | February 22 nd , 2021 |
| Upcoming Events or Conferences | LDAHh's 10th Annual Educator's Conference is coming up on March 5th/6th. This is an online event with expert speakers from across Canada and the US. We have 4 keynote speakers and 12 breakout sessions in four streams (literacy, mathematics, AT and social-emotional wellbeing). All speaker sessions will be recorded and available to registrants for 30 days, allowing them to access all content from the event. Tickets are currently on sale at an EARLY BIRD price which finishes on February 14th . We encourage anyone interested in education for students with learning disabilities to attend or register to receive exclusive access to the recordings. |
| Website links/Brochure /Flyer attachments: | www.ldahh.ca |
| New Initiatives: | <p>LDAHh is also proud to announce that it is launching two new Executive Functioning programs for students in February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One program will be offered for students in Grades 8-12, twice a week for four weeks. This is focused on building intrinsic motivation towards school success and helping students identify which learning strategies and tools will assist them with their unique learning needs. This program starts on February 15th online • We will also be starting a program this month for parents of students in the younger grades, helping them to reinforce successful learning, organizational and engagement strategies to support their children at home. <p>As soon as Public Health allows, LDAHh will be restarting its in-person Social Skills program. This is an 8-week program with one session each week for students and one-session each week for follow-up with parents. The aim of the program is to encourage friendship, positive social/emotional behaviours, active listening, effective communication, and understanding of social norms. These skills will be taught through group discussion, play-based activities, team building games, and role-playing, and children will benefit from working together with other children that have similarities to them. This program is partially funded by a community donor and is offered at just \$125 for all 16 sessions.</p> |

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|---------------------------|---|
| | <p>Finally, LDAHH is currently recruiting Youth Ambassadors for its Y2Y Program, funded by the Gaylea Foundation. Youth must be aged 15 to 24 and have a learning disability and/or ADHD. They will be involved in organizing monthly workshops for other youth with the support and involvement of LDAHH staff. These Ambassadors will speak about their lived experience with an LD to other youth and will help give our youth a voice in the community, and reduce the stigma associated with learning disabilities. We are looking for applicants from all segments of the community, and who demonstrate different versions of 'success' in life. Applications can be made online at www.ldahh.ca and are open until February 14th.</p> |
| Other Information: | |