

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, September 28, 2016 (Room 181 A/B, Education Centre)**

**Those present:**

Lita Barrie, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children and SEAC Vice-Chair  
 Judy Colantino, Down Syndrome Association of Hamilton and SEAC Chair  
 Christine Davidson (new member)  
 Jenny McEwen-Hill, McMaster Children’s Hospital Developmental Pediatric & Rehabilitation  
 Catherine McFarland, Hamilton FASD Parent & Caregiver Support Group (alternate)  
 Susi Owen, CNIB Hamilton  
 Mary Orlik, Autism Ontario (H-W Chapter)  
 Tracy Sherriff, P.A.L.S. – Parent Advocacy Learning and Support Network  
 Cathy Soules (new member)

**In attendance:**

John Whitwell, Principal of Special Education Services  
 Shelley Woon, Superintendent of Leadership and Learning: Specialized Services

**Regrets:**

Jeremy Abrahams, Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation, District 21  
 Mark Courtepatte, Hamilton FASD Parent & Caregiver Support Group  
 Fran Doodeman, Community Living Hamilton  
 Alex Johnstone, Trustee  
 Tania Kerr, Hamilton-Wentworth Elementary Teachers’ Local  
 Brent Monkley, Hamilton-Wentworth Principals’ Council – Secondary  
 Bernadine Nabuurs, Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Community Care Access Centre  
 Barbara Reeves, Autism Ontario (H-W Chapter)  
 Jennifer Robertson-Heath, Hamilton-Wentworth Principals’ Council - Elementary  
 John Sanges, Down Syndrome Association of Hamilton and SEAC Chair (alternate)  
 Lorraine Sayles, The Children’s Aid Society of Hamilton  
 Lynn Vanderbrug, Lynwood Charlton Centre

**1. Call to Order/Welcome**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. welcoming everyone.

Item	Discussion/Decision
<b>2. Approval of Agenda</b>	On the motion of T. Sherriff seconded by J. McEwen-Hill the Committee <b>RECOMMENDS that the agenda be approved. CARRIED.</b>
<b>3. Approval of Minutes</b>	Noted that Christine Davidson was not included in the list of attendees on June 15, 2016.  On the motion of C. Davidson, seconded by J. McEwen-Hill, the Committee <b>RECOMMENDS that the minutes of the June 15, 2016 meeting be approved CARRIED.</b>
<b>4. Business Arising from the Minutes</b>	As approved from June 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2016, SEAC Chair J. Colantino has composed a letter to Hon. Mitzie Hunter, Minister of Education reaffirming the need for support. Other boards in the province are doing so as well. With the Minister being new to the portfolio, we are trying to appeal for understanding of needs as well as

	<p>funding. The letter spoke to student and system needs, not specific exceptionalities so as not to inadvertently miss one.</p>
<p>5. Members' Update</p>	
<p>6. Superintendent's Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Educational Assistant Process</li> <li>b) Funds for Autism</li> <li>c) Syrian Refugees</li> <li>d) Strategic Directions</li> <li>e) Special Education Plan</li> </ul>	<p>Superintendent Woon's update included the following:</p> <p><b><u>Educational Assistant Process</u></b>          Currently we are engaged in the Educational Assistant Moderation Process and introduction of new process for obtaining EA support. Re-evaluation of current staff in schools will be done this week.</p> <p><b><u>Funds for Autism</u></b>          Additional funds have been received for Autism and more money can be requested from the Ministry of Education for students transitioning out of IBI. We will spend the funds in a way that addresses our need for staffing expertise to support students with Autism as well as provide professional development to the staff supporting them.</p> <p><b><u>Syrian Refugees</u></b>          In winter of 2016, students coming into the HWDSB were provided the supports they needed, then we applied for the funds back from the Ministry. Some students had significant needs, therefore, school placement was considered and transportation provided. Psychoeducational Assessments would not be completed due to the language barrier and the understanding that this was the very first time some students had attended school. We do expect to welcome more refugees next year. S. Woon will connect with S. Stephanian to get her input regarding funding and entrance to school, and then report for the next meeting.</p> <p><b><u>Strategic Directions</u></b>          S. Woon presented a visual overview available on the Board's website of the HWDSB's Strategic Directions introduced across HWDSB in September 2016. "Reimagined" is based on feedback from our community through the process started in January 2016.</p> <p><b><u>Special Education Plan</u></b>          The updated Special Education Plan was shared and posted on the board site this summer. Still time to submit feedback. S. Woon will check with Union Representatives for their input.</p>
<p>7. Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Peel District School Board – Implementation of the Ontario Autism Program</li> <li>b) Toronto Catholic District School Board – Special Education High Needs Amount (HNA) Grants</li> </ul>	<p>Correspondence was acknowledged as received.</p>

<b>B. Other Business</b>	Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, October 28 <sup>th</sup> , Room 308

**Adjournment:**

On the motion of J. McEwen-Hill seconded by T. Sherriff the Committee **RECOMMENDS** that the meeting be adjourned, this being done at **8:20 p.m.**

**CARRIED.**