



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 30, 2025
Room 308, Education Centre

Present

Association Representatives – voting members

Danielle Dion-Broadley, FASD Parent & Caregiver Support Group
Judy Colantino, Down Syndrome Association of Hamilton, SEAC Chair
Julie Armstrong, Centre for Diverse Learners
Lynn Vanderbrug, Lynwood Charlton Centre
Nancy Silva Khan, Autism Ontario (Central West Chapter)
Sarah Pennington, Community Living Hamilton
Susi Owen, CNIB Hamilton and Niagara

Regrets

Dawn Danko, Trustee Ward 7
Lindsay Bray, McMaster Children's Hospital Developmental Pediatrics and Rehabilitation Portfolio, SEAC Vice Chair
Maria Felix Miller, HWDSB Chair, Trustee Ward 3
Melanie Roberts, Association for Bright Children of Ontario

Staff

Jennifer Bibby, COPE 527
John Manzin, System Principal, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity: Transition Navigation
Julie Anderson, System Principal, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity
Kimberly Chute, System Principal, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity
Krista Brodersen, Hamilton-Wentworth Principals' Council – Elementary
Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity

Guests

Abby Zaitley, HWDSB Trustee, Ward 4
Chris Tondreau, Interim HWETL Vice President
Dale Hill, Principal, Glenwood

Item	Discussion/Decision
1. Welcome and Call to Order	Judy Colantino called the meeting to order at 5:36 pm welcoming everyone
2. Land Acknowledgement	Judy Colantino, Chair of SEAC
3. Approval of Agenda	On the motion of Julie Armstrong, seconded by Susi Owen, the Committee recommends that the agenda be approved CARRIED.
4. Council for Exceptional Children – Yes I Can Update	Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent of Special Education, Inclusion & Equity <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Committee visited the planning team that was preparing award packages for student winners who will be recognized for their achievements within their school community

<p>5. Introduction to System Navigation, Human Rights Office</p>	<p>Fayrouz Fakhereddin, System Navigator, Human Rights Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief overview of the Human Rights Office (HRO) was provided outlining key points of the office • The HRO is guided by the Ontario Human Rights Code and HWDSB's Human Rights Policy • The HRO supports HWDSB in fostering a culture of respect for human rights in all HWDSB learning and working environments • The mandate is to promote and protect the human rights of students, families, staff and the broader HWDSB community • System Navigation is a collaboration between the HRO and Equity and Well-Being Departments to prevent and address inequities and/or possible human rights issues
<p>6. Special Education, Inclusion & Equity – Summer Programs</p>	<p>Kimberly Chute, System Principal, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview highlighting the proposed upcoming summer programs was presented - Centre 4 Success, AIM Transitions, Empower Reading, ASD/DD Social Communication, ULS, Personal Hygiene and Building Independence • Programs are held throughout the summer in various schools, and are intended to provide additional support as students transition from summer to regular routine • Centre 4 Success: program provides support for students with or without learning disabilities in using assistive technology as essential accommodation to access the Ontario Curriculum • AIM Transitions: program is designed to support in-school transitions with a range of strategies and practice in problem solving, social communication and self-regulation • Empower Reading: in collaboration with Program Department – students will benefit from a review of key Empower strategies and skill consolidation - this approach strengthens foundational literacy skills—such as decoding, comprehension, and spelling • ASD/DD Social Communication: program supports in-school transitions, skills development strategies and Universal Life Skills (ULS) linking grade 8 students with secondary peers • Building Independence and Personal Hygiene: pilot program for kindergarten to grade one students to build skill sets required for personal hygiene
<p>7. Approval of the Minutes ▪ March 26, 2025</p>	<p>On the motion of Nancy Silva Khan, seconded by Lynn Vanderbrug, the Committee recommends the minutes be approved</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p>
<p>8. Business Arising from the Minutes a) Review of letter to the Ministry of Education regarding the IPRC Criteria</p>	<p>On the motion of Nancy Silva Khan, seconded by Sarah Pennington, the Committee recommends the letter be approved and forwarded to the Ministry</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p>
<p>9. Updates a) Trustees b) Local Association Representatives c) Superintendent</p>	<p>b) Danielle Dion-Broadley, FASD Parent & Caregiver Support Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hamilton FASD Collaborative will be administering the Hamilton FASD Parent & Caregiver Support group starting in May • Our first session will be Thursday, May 29th at 10am. Sessions will be held monthly from September-June, on the last Thursday of each month, rotating between morning sessions and evening sessions

	<p>Lynn Vanderbrug, Lynwood Charlton Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lynn announced her resignation from the Committee. A new representative will be announced once the association elects one. Chair Colantino expressed gratitude for Lynn's valuable contributions to the Committee and wished her all the best in her future endeavors <p>c) Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) is hosting an event for parents and caregivers on May 31st at Sherwood Secondary School, featuring a variety of wellness workshops The Special Education, Inclusion & Equity team is continuing to host monthly professional learning workshops for Learning Resource Teachers and Special Education Class Teachers. These sessions provide valuable opportunities to deepen understanding, share best practices, and support inclusive education for all learners Access Athletics will take place June 4th (elementary) and June 5th (secondary) at Nora Henderson Secondary School, for students in Grade 3-12. For students in kindergarten to Grade 2, a special activity package will be provided for schools to facilitate their own events at a time that best suits their school community Schools host Welcome to Kindergarten events during the second week of May to support families and children as they begin their school journey. We have coordinated 150 entry-to-school meetings for students with extensive special education needs. These meetings help ensure a smooth and supportive transition by facilitating collaboration between families, educators, and support teams Next round of our student-centered photo campaign will be launching soon, featuring students from Glenwood School. These photos celebrate the student voice, identity, and inclusion, highlighting the vibrant and diverse community within our schools
<p>10. Correspondence</p> <p>a) Ottawa Catholic School Board on behalf of Ontario SEAC Chairs</p>	<p>On the motion of Lynn Vanderbrug, seconded by Nancy Silva Khan, the Committee recommends that the correspondence be received and filed</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p>
11. Other Business	
12. Adjournment	<p>On the motion of Lynn Vanderbrug, seconded by Susi Owen, the Committee recommends that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p>