

## OUR MISSION

*The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.  
We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.*

## OUR VISION

*At Toronto Catholic we transform the world  
through witness, faith, innovation and action.*



# MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE PUBLIC SESSION

**HELD WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2019**

## **PRESENT:**

### **External**

**Members:** Ashleigh Molloy, Chair  
Sandra Mastronardi, Vice-Chair  
Melanie Battaglia  
Lori Mastrogiuseppe  
Tyler Munro  
Mary Pugh  
George Wedge – via Teleconference

**Trustees:** N. Crawford  
D. Di Giorgio  
A. Kennedy

**Staff:** D. Koenig  
L. Maselli-Jackman  
A. Coke  
V. Cocco  
R. Macchia  
M. Hanlon  
J. Mirabella  
D. Reid  
P. Stachiw  
  
S. Harris, Recording Secretary

**External Guest:** A. Robertson, Parliamentarian

**1. Roll Call & Apologies**

An apology was extended on behalf of Lori Ciccolini, Gizelle Paine and Glenn Webster.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Trustee Di Giorgio, that the Agenda, as amended to include Item 13c) Inquiry from Sandra Mastronardi regarding Accessibility at one of the Toronto Catholic District School Board schools, be approved.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Trustee Kennedy declared an interest in Item 9f) Budget Approval (Verbal Update) as she has family members who are employees of this Board.

Trustee Kennedy indicated that she would neither vote nor participate in the discussion regarding the item.

**4. Approval & Signing of the Minutes of the Meeting**

MOVED by Trustee Crawford, seconded by Lori Mastrogiuseppe, that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held February 20, 2019 be approved.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

**9. Communications**

MOVED by Trustee Crawford, seconded by Mary Pugh, that Items 9a), 9b), 9d) and 9e) be adopted as follows:

- 9a) SEAC Monthly Calendar Review** received;
- 9b) Special Services Superintendent Update** received;
- 9d) Safe Schools Committee (Verbal Update)** received and that the report (refer Attachment I) be included in the Minutes to Board; and
- 9e) Mental Health Committee (Verbal Update)** received and that the report (refer Attachment II) be included in the Minutes to Board.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

**CARRIED**

MOVED by Mary Pugh, seconded by Trustee Crawford, that Item 9c) be adopted as follows:

- 9c) Thank-You Message from Marilyn Taylor (Verbal)** received.

George Wedge joined the meeting via Teleconference at 7:48 pm.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

**CARRIED**

Trustee Kennedy left the table due to a Declaration of Interest, as earlier indicated, in the following Item.

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Mary Pugh, that Item 9f) be adopted as follows:

- 9f) Budget Approval (Verbal Update)** that SEAC form a sub-committee for the purpose of advising SEAC at its next meeting about appropriate recommendations to Board regarding budget.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

Sandra Mastronardi, Tyler Munro and George Wedge volunteered to sit on the sub-committee;

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Mary Pugh, that the Chair of the Board and SEAC send a letter to the Ontario Ministry of Education to oppose the proposed changes to class sizes, e-learning requirements and budgetary cuts based on the grounds that the changes contravene the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified in Canada in 1991, and that they are particularly discriminatory towards students with Special Education needs.

With the consent of the Committee, Sandra Mastronardi withdrew her motion.

MOVED by Trustee Di Giorgio, seconded by Sandra Mastronardi, that SEAC recommend to Board that the funding currently allocated to Special Education at least be maintained, and the funding be exempt from any reduction during the Board's 2019/2020 budgetary process.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Tyler Munro, seconded by Sandra Mastronardi, that SEAC recommend to Board that annually, prior to the beginning of the budget cycle, SEAC receive a detailed timeline of the steps in the budget process, estimated dates and pre-requisite steps identified.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Melanie Battaglia, seconded by Sandra Mastronardi, that SEAC's monthly calendar be updated to include a priority budget setting for discussion in January or February.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

Trustee Kennedy returned to the table.

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Tyler Munro, that Item 9g) be adopted as follows:

- 9g) Draft Parent Voice Survey for SEAC Consultation received.**

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

**10. Matters Referred/Deferred to the Committee by the Board and Other Committees**

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Trustee Di Giorgio, that Item 10a) be adopted as follows:

**From the February 20, 2019 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Meeting:**

- 10a) A Policy Primer - Ontario Human Rights Commission - Guide to Developing Human Rights Policies and Procedures received.**

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Melanie Battaglia, seconded by Sandra Mastronardi, that Item 10b) be adopted as follows:

- 10b) Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) Freedom of Information Request (FOIR) Exclusions** that SEAC recommend to Board that staff be asked to provide SEAC with a copy of the template letter created for school principals to adapt and send to parents/guardians in cases where Section 265(1)(m) of the Education Act has been invoked.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Melanie Battaglia, seconded by Sandra Mastronardi, that SEAC recommend to Board that they direct staff to provide a report with respect to the following Items and report back to Board:

- 1) Whether the exclusions listed were documented as "safety" exclusions or "disciplinary" exclusions, in light of page 5 of the Report, excerpted below:

"The Annual Safe School Report is directly linked to Safe School Legislation. However, Safety Exclusions under 265 (1)m of the Education Act are not tracked by the Safe School department as they are not associated with Safe Schools legislation; nor is there any requirement for the Board to report those to the Ministry of Education. Safety exclusions are not considered disciplinary and also include Police exclusions which school Principals are mandated to adhere to until an active police investigation is complete. In any event, there is an expectation that the student will return to a school of the TCDSB. Exclusions are thus not a metric that is linked to the Safe Schools Annual Report. Instead, Safety Exclusions deal with programming alternatives that support a successful academic and social-emotional transition back to a school." (p. 5);

- 2) Whether the students with the listed exclusions had a history of discipline issues prior to the exclusion, including but not limited to warnings, suspensions and expulsions;
- 3) The subcategory of students listed as excluded from December 2013 to and including February 2016 as follows: (i) students not in receipt of Special Education services; (ii) students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP); (iii) by exceptionality (using the Ministry's 14 categories of exceptionalities); and (iv) whether the exclusion was due to police direction/court order or the principal's discretion;
- 4) Whether the parents/guardians of the students listed as excluded were provided with a Written Appeal Hearing Policy and/or procedure (the "Policy") regarding the Appeal Hearing Information identified in the chart, and if so (i) to provide a copy of the Policy to SEAC; and (ii) to advise whether the Policy is publicly available on the school Board's website and, if so, to provide a copy of the web page;

- 5) The number of students excluded from March 2016 up to and including December 2018, subcategorized as follows: (i) students not in receipt of Special Education services; (ii) students with an IEP; (iii) by exceptionality (using the Ministry's 14 categories of exceptionalities); (iv) whether the exclusion was due to police direction/court order or the principal's discretion; and (v) whether the excluded students had a history of discipline issues prior to the exclusion, including but not limited to warnings, suspensions and expulsions;
- 6) Whether the TCDSB has a written policy and/or procedure on when and for how long the Board and/or principal may exclude a student under Section 265(1)(m) of the Education Act, and, if so, (i) to provide a copy of the Policy to SEAC; and (ii) to advise whether the Policy is publicly available on the school Board's website and, if so, to provide a copy of the web page;
- 7) How a teacher marks a student absent for attendance when the student has been excluded from school for all or part of a school day; and
- 8) Where and with what service provider(s) an excluded student continues to receive access to their education and uninterrupted learning during the period of exclusion and for how long, i.e. how many hours of academic instruction per day.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

**CARRIED**

The Chair declared a five-minute recess.

The meeting continued with Ashleigh Molloy in the Chair.

MOVED by Trustee Di Giorgio, seconded by Trustee Kennedy, that the Chair do a Consent and Review of the Order Paper.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

The Chair reviewed the Order Paper and the following Items were held:

10c) Sandra Mastronardi

10d) Held

13b) George Wedge

13c) Sandra Mastronardi

14a) Sandra Mastronardi

14b) Sandra Mastronardi

14c) Sandra Mastronardi

14d) Sandra Mastronardi

MOVED by Trustee Di Giorgio, seconded by Trustee Kennedy, that the Items not held be received.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

**ITEMS AS CAPTURED IN THE ABOVE MOTION**

- 13 a) Easter Seals Month, March (posted on Board website);
- 14e) World Down Syndrome Day - March 21, 2019 (Verbal);
- 14f) Easter Seals Ontario - 2019 Fact Sheet;
- 14g) Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) - 3rd Review: Report by the Honourable David D. Onley, former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario;
- 14h) Teaching a Child with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) - National Organization for Foetal Alcohol Syndrome - United Kingdom (UK);
- 14i) Ontario Autism Coalition: Minister of Education's "Autism Announcement" is Too Little, Too Late (March 11, 2019);
- 14j) Autism Ontario Responds to Ontario Ministry of Education's News Release "Enhancing Education Support: A Plan for Students with Autism" (March 11, 2019); and
- 14k) Response from Autism Ontario regarding Ministry Announcement "Ontario Financing Support for Children with Autism"

MOVED by Trustee Crawford, seconded by Lori Mastrogiuseppe, that all Items held be deferred to the April 23, 2019 SEAC Meeting.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

**CARRIED**

**ITEMS AS CAPTURED IN THE ABOVE MOTION**

- 10c) Annual Report on the Accessibility Standards Policy (A.35);
- 10d) From the March 18, 2019 Special Board Meeting: Motion from Trustee Li Preti regarding Emergency Plan for Accommodating Special Education Students and/or Students with a Physical Disability that may be excused from regular hours of School;
- 13b) Inquiry from George Wedge regarding Educational Assistants (EAs) and Child and Youth Workers (CYWs);
- 13c) Inquiry from Sandra Mastronardi regarding Accessibility at a TCDSB School;
- 14a) Ministry of Education (MOE) 2019: SB01 Update: Special Education Funding in 2018-19;
- 14b) MOE 2019: B07 Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder;
- 14c) MOE 2019: B08 New Vision for Education; and
- 14d) Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services News Release: Ontario Enhancing Support for Children with Autism, March 21, 2019

**17. Adjournment**

MOVED by Tyler Munro, seconded by Trustee Kennedy, that the meeting be adjourned.

On the Vote taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

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SECRETARY

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CHAIR

**ATTACHMENT I**

**Updated School Messenger script regarding Threats to School Safety Procedures regarding Agenda Item 9d) Safe Schools Committee.**

**Parent Communication (Script)****Lockdown:**

(School Name) is currently in a Lockdown. Please be assured that staff are doing everything possible to keep your child safe. Staff hold various lockdown practices throughout the school year to prepare for these situations. **For the safety of everyone, we request that you do not report to the school, or call the school office.** You may wish to go to the staging area at (add location) where Toronto Police Officers can respond to any questions. We will advise once the lockdown has been lifted.

**Hold and Secure:**

(School Name) is currently in a Hold and Secure which is initiated when there is a safety concern in the neighbourhood. Students and staff will continue with regular indoor routines. All outside activities are cancelled. Exterior doors are locked and monitored by assigned designated staff. For your own safety we request that you do not report to the school. We will advise once the Hold and Secure has been lifted.

**Shelter in Place:**

(School Name) is currently in a Shelter in Place which is initiated when there is a possible environmental danger in the school neighbourhood. Students and staff will continue with regular indoor routines. All outside activities are cancelled. Exterior doors are monitored by assigned designated staff. For your own safety we request that you do not report to the school. We will advise once the Shelter in Place has been lifted.

**Bomb Threat:**

There is currently a report of a possible bomb threat at (School Name). Student and staff safety is our first priority in these situations. Please be assured that staff

are doing everything possible to keep your child safe. For your own safety, we request that you do not report to the school. We will advise once the bomb threat emergency response has been lifted.

### **Update Message Regarding Lockdown/Hold and Secure/Shelter in Place:**

The situation at (School Name) has not yet been resolved, and the school remains in (shelter in place/hold and secure/lockdown) until Toronto Police advise that it is safe to resume our normal daily procedures. Unfortunately this means that there will be a delay with our dismissal time. School bus transportation providers have been advised of the delay. Please be assured that everyone in the school remains safe. We will update you again once the (shelter in place/hold and secure/lockdown) is lifted.

### **Lockdown/Hold and Secure/Shelter in Place Lifted**

Please be advised that the lockdown/hold and secure/shelter in place at (school name) has been lifted and we have resumed our normal daily routines.

## **Parent Communication (Procedure)**

### **Lockdown and Bomb Threat:**

Communications Department issues parent communications—initial notice, any updates that are needed, and at the conclusion of the matter a notice that the lockdown is lifted.

A more detailed follow up letter may be recommended in most circumstances.

### **Hold & Secure and Shelter in Place:**

School principal issues parent communication—initial notice, any updates that are needed, and at the conclusion of the matter a notice that the hold and secure/shelter in place is lifted.

A more detailed follow up letter may be recommended in many circumstances.

**ATTACHMENT II****Mental Health Verbal Update – Melissa Hanlon regarding Agenda Item 9e)**  
**Mental Health Committee****TCDSB Mental Health Update SEAC, March 27, 2019****Mental Health Strategy:**

- In consultation with the Mental Health Steering and Advisory Committees, a new Mental Health Strategy is currently being drafted, to be implemented in September 2019.

**MH Professional Workers:**

- Currently in hiring process for 6 Mental Health Professionals, funded by the Ministry;
- In process of selecting 6 secondary schools, where the MH professionals will work alongside existing school social work and psychology staff;
- Implementation of mental health promotion and prevention programming at the classroom level (i.e. Stress Lessons);
- Implementation of individual student counseling based on identified student needs.

**Faith and Wellness: A Daily Mental Health Resource:**

- Pilot project in Catholic elementary classrooms across Ontario (3 within TCDSB);
- Resource currently only available to those involved in the pilot;
- Kindergarten to Grade 8 resource that supports the development of social emotional learning and builds student resiliency;
- Co-developed by OECTA and School Mental Health ASSIST;
- Consists of brief mental health practices that teachers can incorporate into daily routines.

### **Suicide Prevention and Intervention Training:**

- Delivery of suicide awareness (SafeTalk) and suicide intervention (ASIST) training workshops to different staff groups (both developed by Livingworks Education);
- Five SafeTalk workshops have been delivered thus far this school year, with two more planned for May and June;
- Two ASIST workshops were delivered this school year;
- SafeTalk Learning goals and objectives, as outlined by Livingworks Education:
  - Notice and respond to situations where suicide thoughts might be present;
  - Recognize that invitations for help are often overlooked;
  - Move beyond the common tendency to miss, dismiss, and avoid suicide;
  - Apply the TALK steps: Tell, Ask, Listen, and KeepSafe;
  - Know community resources and how to connect someone with thoughts of suicide to them for further help.
  
- ASIST Learning goals and objectives, as outlined by Livingworks Education:
  - Understand the ways that personal and societal attitudes affect views on suicide and interventions;
  - Provide guidance and suicide first aid to a person at risk in ways that meet their individual safety needs;
  - Identify the key elements of an effective suicide safety plan and the actions required to implement it;
  - Appreciate the value of improving and integrating suicide prevention resources in the community at large;
  - Recognize other important aspects of suicide prevention including lifepromotion and self-care.

### **Other Professional Development Offerings:**

- Mental Health learning modules that complement the Supporting Minds document continue to be available to facilitate professional learning for different staff groups;

- All principals were in-serviced on the TCDSB Mental Health Policy and its associated guidelines, as well as the mental health decision making tool;
- All guidance counselors were in-serviced on the Mental Health policy and its associated guidelines;
- Future Mental Health PD planned for delivery to elementary guidance as well as student success teachers.

**Stop the Stigma Update:**

- Elementary and Secondary symposiums both occurred earlier in the school year;
- This year the number of elementary schools participating increased from 32 to 54; ▪ On-boarding workshops were provided for the teams that joined this school year; ▪ All secondary schools continue to participate.

**Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) Mental Health Advisory:**

- This new advisory provides information to assist teachers in identifying students who may be at risk of a mental health concern, supporting students on the pathway to care, and creating a learning environment that promotes well-being for all.
- The advisory can be found on the OCT website:  
<https://www.oct.ca/Home/Resources/Advisories/Mental%20Health>