

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, FEBRUARY 8, 2023

PRESENT:

Trustees:

F. D'Amico – In person and Virtual
A. Kennedy
M. Rizzo

External Members:

G. Wedge, Chair
G. Feldman, Vice-Chair
M. Battaglia
R. De Belchior
L. Mason - Virtual
T. Munro
D. Nightingale
M. Pugh - Virtual

Staff:

A. Della Mora
R. Putnam
C. Fernandes
M. Meehan
V. Cocco
B. Doan
M. Gendron
M. Hanlon
P. Klim-Conforti
D. Reid
P. Stachiw
S. Vlahos

S. Hinds-Barnett, Acting Recording Secretary

External Guest: Alasdair Robertson (Parliamentarian)

3. Roll Call and Apologies

Apology was extended on behalf of Lori Mastrogiuseppe.

4. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED by Geoffrey Feldman, seconded by Deborah Nightingale, that the Agenda, as amended to include the Addendum, be approved.

MOVED in AMENDMENT by Deborah Nightingale, seconded by Trustee Rizzo, that questions regarding the Ministry of Education Special Education in Ontario – Provincial Parent Associations Advisory Committee (PAAC) on Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), November 28, 2022 and Items 16a), 16b), and 16c) be deferred to the March 8, 2023 SEAC meeting, and that the following items be added to the Agenda:

9a) Notice of Motion from Trustee Rizzo regarding Closing the Equity Gap in Before and After School Programs for Students with Special Needs.

Inquiries from Trustee Rizzo regarding:

18a) Strategies to Retain Full-time Psychologists;

18b) Removing Staff from Multiple Exceptionalities/Developmentally Delayed (MEDD) classes to provide for Classroom Support to a Child with Two Percent (2%) Vision;

18c) Before and After School Programs for Special Needs Students;

Inquiries from Geoffrey Feldman regarding:

18d) How the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) deals with Students with Low and Blind Vision;

18e) Measuring Inclusive Education;

Inquiries from Richelle de Belchior regarding:

18f) Skills and requirements for an Early Childhood Educator;

18g) Teachers' coping skills with children in Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten classes who may be suspected of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) but not yet identified in terms of the following: That not every child learns while sitting still and that students learn when success is defined just for them;

18h) What is being done to support teachers who need extra time to support children with ADHD;

18i) What kind of training is provided to teachers with respect to inattentive ADHD;

18j) Whether or not the Board encourages input from Junior Kindergarten teachers who state that certain children in their class need extra attention or help due to possible ADHD or Autism;

18k) What is being done to provide help to Junior Kindergarten teachers who feel certain kids need extra attention due to hyperactivity behaviors;

18l) Whether or not parents of Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten kids have reported observations such as a change in their child's behavior due only to seeing behaviours from their own families as a result of the COVID 19 self-isolation requirement and now observing a new repertoire of behaviors from other children;

18m) What supports the TCDSB provide to parents who have to deal with changes in their child's behavior;

18n) The plans in place by the TCDSB to measure children in Junior kindergarten and Senior kindergarten's social and learning behavior as they progress to Grade One; and

18o) How much funding is being used to prepare the teachers in Grade One with kids coming in from Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten who only experienced the COVID pandemic.

On the Vote being taken, the AMENDMENT was declared

CARRIED

On the Vote being taken, the Motion, as amended, was declared

CARRIED

5. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

6. Approval and Signing of the Minutes

MOVED by Trustee Rizzo, seconded by Geoffrey Feldman, that the Minutes of the Meeting held January 18, 2023 be approved with the following amendments:

1) Item 18b) – Revise to read: *From Trustee Rizzo regarding Strategies to Retain Full-time Psychologists; and*

2) Item 18c) – Revise to read: *From Trustee Rizzo regarding Supports in the Classroom for a Child with Low Vision and Supporting a Child from Multiple Exceptionalities/ Developmentally Delayed (M.E.D.D) Classes.*

On the Vote being taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

8. Presentations

MOVED by Deborah Nightingale, seconded by Geoffrey Feldman, that Item 8a) be adopted as follows:

8a) Toronto Catholic District School Board's Community Engagement Policy - S. Vlahos, Chief of Communications and Government Relations

The Chair declared a five- minute recess due to technical difficulties.

The Meeting resumed with George Wedge in the Chair. Attendance remained unchanged.

8a) Toronto Catholic District School Board's Community Engagement Policy - S. Vlahos, Chief of Communications and Government Relations (continued)
received.

Trustees Rizzo and Kennedy left the horseshoe at 8:12 p.m. and returned at 8:29 p.m.

On the Vote being taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Trustee Rizzo, seconded by Geoffrey Feldman, that Item 8b) be adopted as follows:

8b) Annual Chief Financial Officer Overview - R. Putnam, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer received.

Trustee Kennedy left the horseshoe at 9:19 p.m. and returned at 9:21 p.m.

On the Vote being taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

The Chair declared a five-minute recess.

PRESENT (Following Recess):

- Trustees:** F. D’Amico - Virtual
A. Kennedy
M. Rizzo
- External Members:** G. Wedge, Chair
G. Feldman, Vice-Chair
R. De Belchior
L. Mason - Virtual
T. Munro
D. Nightingale

The Meeting resumed with George Wedge in the Chair.

9. Notices of Motion

MOVED by Trustee Rizzo, seconded by Deborah Nightingale, that Item 9a) be adopted as follows:

- 9a) From Trustee Rizzo regarding Closing the Equity Gap in Before and After School Programs for Students with Special Needs** that this item be considered at the March 8, 2023 SEAC Meeting

It is vital to elevate equity, diversity, and inclusion for students with special needs in Before and After School programming;

WHEREAS: Before and After School programs focus on recreational, child development and youth development;

WHEREAS: The success of students in more inclusive settings depends on meeting both their academic and social and emotional needs;

WHEREAS: Critical engagement around equity, diversity, and inclusion on the need for Before and After School programs for students with special needs is required;

WHEREAS: School boards must offer Before and After School programs for children four to 12 years old where there is sufficient demand from parents and families;

WHEREAS: There is very little information on the criteria and definition of “sufficient demand” or how the information is ascertained;

WHEREAS: Surveys are only sent to kindergarten registrants on an annual basis and not all families are surveyed;

WHEREAS: The TCDSB website reads: The TCDSB uses data collected from annual surveys at the time of Kindergarten Registration as well as local information to assess demand and viability of programs;

WHEREAS: Before and After School programs may not be equipped or willing to include children with special needs in programs;

WHEREAS: Students with special needs should have access to Before and After School programs that take place in school communities; and

WHEREAS: School boards must encourage reasonable accommodations to the highest degree possible.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: SEAC recommend to Board the following:

- 1) To develop and implement an inclusive policy on Before and After School programs that is equitable for all students;
- 2) To survey families of children aged 4 to 12 regarding need for Before and After School programs for special need students to ascertain need for Before and After School programs;
- 3) To promote and level access and opportunities to students with special needs to address the gap in Before and After School programs; and
- 4) To collect a comprehensive resource list of community and government agencies that provide accessible recreational enrichment programs outside of the school day.

13. Consent and Review

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

- 11b) Report from the Informal Working Group to (TCDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) – Tyler Munro;
- 11c) Education Quality Accountability Office (EQAO) 2021-2022 - M. Meehan, Superintendent of Special Services and B. Doan, Chief of Educational Research – Deborah Nightingale;
- 12a) Special Services Superintendent Update – February 2023 – Trustee Kennedy;
- 12b) Mental Health and Well-Being Annual Report 2021-2022 – Trustee Kennedy;
- 13a) Consideration of Motion from Richelle de Belchior, Community Representative regarding Details of Professional Development Workshops – Tyler Munro

Inquiries from Trustee Rizzo regarding:

- 18a) Strategies to Retain Full-time Psychologists – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18b) Removing Staff from Multiple Exceptionalities/Developmentally Delayed (MEDD) classes to provide for Classroom Support to a Child with Two Percent (2%) Vision – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18c) Before and After School Programs for Special Needs Students – Trustee Rizzo

Inquiries from Geoffrey Feldman regarding:

- 18d) How the TCDSB deals with Students with Low and Blind Vision – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18e) Measuring Inclusive Education – Trustee Rizzo;

Inquiries from Richelle de Belchior regarding:

- 18f) Skills and requirements for an Early Childhood Educator – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18g) Teachers' coping skills with children in Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten classes who may be suspected of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

but not yet identified in terms of the following: That not every child learns while sitting still and that students learn when success is defined just for them – Trustee Rizzo;

- 18h) What is being done to support teachers who need extra time to support children with ADHD – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18i) What kind of training is provided to teachers with respect to inattentive ADHD – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18j) Whether or not the Board encourages input from Junior Kindergarten teachers who state that certain children in their class need extra attention or help due to possible ADHD or Autism – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18k) What is being done to provide help to Junior Kindergarten teachers who feel certain kids need extra attention due to hyperactivity behaviors – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18l) Whether or not parents of Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten kids have reported observations such as a change in their child's behavior due only to seeing behaviours from their own families as a result of the COVID 19 self-isolation requirement and now observing a new repertoire of behaviors from other children – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18m) What supports the TCDSB provide to parents who have to deal with changes in their child's behavior – Trustee Rizzo;
- 18n) The plans in place by the TCDSB to measure children in Junior kindergarten and Senior kindergarten's social and learning behavior as they progress to Grade One – Trustee Rizzo; and
- 18o) How much funding is being used to prepare the teachers in Grade One with kids coming in from Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten who only experienced the COVID pandemic – Trustee Rizzo.

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

On the Vote being taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

ITEMS NOT HELD AS CAPTURED IN ABOVE MOTION

- 11a) Special Education Advisory Committee Annual Calendar (Draft) as of February 8, 2023; and
- 17a) Ontario Disability Coalition Report – February 2023

MOVED by Tyler Munro, seconded by Trustee Kennedy, that Item 11b) be adopted as follows:

- 11b) Report from the Informal Working Group to Toronto Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) received and referred to Staff.**

MOVED in AMENDMENT by Deborah Nightingale, seconded by Trustee Rizzo, that all the recommendations be received and referred to Staff with the exception of the following:

5.b. iv - *Although not required, there is no statement to include support of Catholic Values, Pontifical statements, the Board's mission statement and relevant scientific pedagogical research regarding educating special needs students; and*

5.c.vi - *The compliance statement should be expanded to reflect support of Catholic Values, Pontifical statements, the Board's mission statement and relevant scientific and pedagogical research regarding educating special needs students.*

On the Vote being taken, the AMENDMENT was declared

FAILED

On the Vote being taken, the Main Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Trustee Rizzo that the Meeting extends to 11:30 p.m. There was no Second.

MOVED by Geoffrey Feldman, seconded by Tyler Munro, that all items not discussed be deferred to the March 8, 2023 SEAC Meeting.

On the Vote being taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

ITEMS AS CAPTURED IN ABOVE MOTION

- 11c) Education Quality Accountability Office (EQAO) 2021-2022 - M. Meehan, Superintendent of Special Services and B. Doan, Chief of Educational Research;
- 12a) Special Services Superintendent Update – February 2023;
- 12b) Mental Health and Well-Being Annual Report 2021-2022;
- 13a) Consideration of Motion from Richelle de Belchior, Community Representative regarding Details of Professional Development Workshops;

Inquiries from Trustee Rizzo regarding:

- 18a) Strategies to Retain Full-time Psychologists;
- 18b) Removing Staff from Multiple Exceptionalities/Developmentally Delayed (MEDD) classes to provide for Classroom Support to a Child with Two Percent (2%) Vision;

18c) Before and After School Programs for Special Needs Students;

Inquiries from Geoffrey Feldman regarding:

18d) How the TCDSB deals with Students with Low and Blind Vision;

18e) Measuring Inclusive Education;

Inquiries from Richelle de Belchior regarding:

18f) Skills and requirements for an Early Childhood Educator;

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18n) The plans in place by the TCDSB to measure children in Junior kindergarten and Senior kindergarten's social and learning behavior as they progress to Grade One; and

- 18o) How much funding is being used to prepare the teachers in Grade One with kids coming in from Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten who only experienced the COVID pandemic.

20. Adjournment

MOVED by Geoffrey Feldman, seconded by Tyler Munro, that the meeting be adjourned.

On the Vote being taken, the Motion was declared

CARRIED

SECRETARY

CHAIR