

QUESTIONS FROM SEAC MEMBERS FOR 10TH JUNE 2020 MEETING

- (1) Given that many Spec Ed students require someone to sit beside them as certain concepts are taught and demonstrated, sometimes even hand-over-hand, how will this be handled if social distancing is required?
- (2) When will IEPs be adjusted to reflect the new realities? How will IEPs be adjusted? In what capacity? What sorts of accommodations can be made for learn at home possibilities? Will teachers receive support in adjusting accommodations for IEPs?
- (3) Given that generalized on-line learning is contraindicated for many students with LD, and no doubt other Spec Ed students, how will academic expectations be adjusted?
- (4) If a high-school course is offered on-line, is there a guarantee that it will also be offered in person so that LD/Spec Ed students are not discriminated against because they can not handle the on-line component?
- (5) How will the school board support closing the gaps for students? What supports for teachers will be put in place to help teachers close the gaps? What is the specific plan to help Spec Ed students, especially in early literacy and numeracy?
- (6) Has anyone been tracking the rates of engagement with the on-line materials so that decisions as to whether to continue this option can be based on actual usage data?
- (7) All younger students (JK, SK, Grade 1) will have a hard time maintaining social distance, not just with their peers but even more so with their teachers, ECEs and EAs. Is it recognized that they and many Spec Ed students will likely be made more anxious and even traumatized by this aspect of the return to school? What is planned in order to mitigate the effects of this? What will the consequences be for a child or staff member who breaks this rule?
- (8) The OCDSB plan for Special Education students includes the offering of the Empower reading program on-line for those students who were already in process when the lockdown began. If this program has indeed been adapted for on-line presentation, can it be made available to any students within the OCDSB who are experiencing reading problems? If not, why not?
- (9) The “after school” plan seems to be relevant only to those with Autism and/or Developmental Disabilities. Is this the case?

- (10) How will Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions be handled on return to school or through distance education, if that is to be continued? Will extra support (e.g., EAs, additional training, etc.) be provided?
- (11) When will there be a Board Plan more specific in place that relates to the needs of LD students? What will that be?
- (12) What will be the priorities of the Learning Support Teachers with respect to return to school?
- (13) Why is the Board going to be issuing report cards to Elementary School students? Based on what? What about students who are assessed based on a modified program or other form of IEP that hasn't necessarily been delivered by parents? Given that the on-line participation by families has been optional, it seems at best unfair and at worst irrelevant to provide any kind of mark or even subjective comments for a child's permanent record. In addition, this adds unnecessarily to a classroom teacher's workload with many of them trying to compare apples and oranges.
- (14) For students placed in the LDSIP program this year, they did not receive the promised full year in the program. How will that discrepancy and time away be accounted for?
- (15) What measures are in place to track the efficacy of the LDSIP program for students? What elements of programming are standardised across all LDSIP classrooms? How is this monitored and tracked? What kind of initiatives/supports/incentives can we offer to teachers teaching the LDSIP program to document and track their program successes?
- (16) Quite a number of schools run informal social groups as a way to support specific identified students, including those with LD. This type of social group (lunch buddies, Lego group, Art group, etc.) has been beneficial to those who have participated. Will this type of group continue and if not, will there be anything to replace the inclusion and skill-building benefits learned in such groups?
- (17) What specific support is being given to our students with Autism and Down Syndrome?
- (18) Please provide a general description of what kind of services are being provided to Special Education children.
- (19) What concerns are we hearing from parents and students and how are we able to address them?

(20) Many teachers are giving bonus work in not only Math, Science, Geog/History, and Literacy as a means to "boost" or "improve" grades, but also in other subjects.

The concern is that the only students who can take advantage of the opportunity to improve their grades are those who are in a situation where they can do the bonus work. In other words, not every student, whether due to socio-economic issues, disability, special education needs, or lack of parental support, has the opportunity to improve their pre-March Break grades.

For the very same reasons that grading assignments for Learn from Home online education was deemed to be inequitable and it was decided that students could not lower their pre-March Break grades by either not working from home or doing "poorly" on assignments; so too is the practice of improving grades by means of bonus projects. Not everyone is able to take advantage of the "opportunity" to improve grades and do bonus work.

How can we ensure that students with Special Education needs aren't denied this opportunity or being left behind?"