

PAAC on SEAC

Annual Report 2016-17

The **Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees** (PAAC on SEAC) was established in 1983 and is the only group in Ontario that brings together provincial parent associations to communicate and co-operate on issues pertaining to SEACs. PAAC, and its member organizations, encourage valuable partnerships among trustees, educators, voluntary associations and parents. PAAC on SEAC members have been working closely to improve SEAC effectiveness and communication, and to assist Ontario's students with special education needs through our shared advocacy.

Highlights of 2016-17

PAAC on SEAC Resources

In 2015 PAAC on SEAC was awarded a grant of \$17,500, by the Ministry of Education, Parent Engagement Office, to develop SEAC training resources. The roll out of the new resources occurred in fall 2016 and the videos and updated handbook was well received by SEAC members across the province. The three new video training modules, and updated Handbooks, are available on the [PAAC on SEAC website](#) and You Tube Channel.

PAAC on SEAC also posted the [Annual Calendar](#) for SEAC members to help SEACs with their annual planning process, and a Funding Resource Guide for SEAC Members on the website.

A Funding Guide was created to assist SEACs in understanding and advocating within their boards about special education funding. The guide can also be found on our website.

Meetings with Ministry of Education

PAAC on SEAC members also met four times this year with Paul Grogan, Education Officer, SEPPB, who is the liaison for PAAC on SEAC at the Ministry. At the meetings that Paul attended he provided updates on the meetings of the [Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education](#) as well as the [Special Education Updates](#) from the Ministry.

In addition, PAAC on SEAC members were asked to participate in the Ministry consultations on:

- Draft Provincial Framework for Alternative Programs, K to Grade 12
- Proposed definitions for the exceptionalities of:
 - Behaviour
 - Intellectual, including:
 - Giftedness
 - Mild Intellectual Disability
 - Developmental Disability

- Proposed Scope of the Education Accessibility Standard.

At these consultations members identified the need for the Ministry to take a Human Rights perspective and address the “duty to accommodate” individuals with disabilities under the Ontario Human Rights Code. Members also identified the importance of holding meaningful consultations and members had some reservations regarding the Ministries consultation process with PAAC as a stakeholder. The current practice of how the Ministry of Education hosts its consultations with our group, and others does not allow adequate time to bring information back to our individual organizations and thus provide the ministry with a fulsome response to their consultation subjects. PAACs concerns regarding the consultation process were also brought to the Minister’s Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) via community collaboration forms.

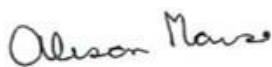
PAAC on SEAC Monthly Meetings

Other topics discussed at the regular meetings include:

- **Accessibility:**
 - David Lepofsky, Chair of the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\) Alliance](#), shared the AODA Alliance discussion paper on the proposal for an Education Accessibility Standard and asked for feedback from PAAC on SEAC members.
 - Subsequently, the Ontario Human Rights Commission requested feedback from PAAC on SEAC members regarding the review of the OHRC Guidelines on Accessible Education (2004). This document pre-dates the development of the OHRC “Policy on Disabilities and Duty to Accommodate” (2008) and related discussion of the impact of ableism on services and supports for individuals with disabilities, and the Supreme Court of Canada decision in the case of Jeffrey Moore in 2012.
- **Special Education Plans:**
 - PAAC on SEAC continues to hear concerns about how SEAC is not being adequately involved in the development of the annual Special Education Plan. The discussion raised questions about who the target audience is for the Special Education Plan (Ministry, parents, general public) and how to make the information easy to read and understand by parents.
- **Special Education Funding:**
 - PAAC on SEAC heard from SEACs that are concerned about the negative impact of the new special education funding model on some school boards. A number of school board SEACs have written to the Minister of Education to raise these concerns.
 - Members of PAAC on SEAC agreed there is a need for continuous evaluation of the special education funding model to meet student needs across the province.

- PAAC recommends ongoing education and information sharing opportunities for SEACs to ensure members are properly informed regarding Special Education funding.
- **Special Needs Strategy:**
 - Members shared regular updates on the progress of the provincial Special Needs Strategy, including:
 - Announced implementation of the plans for the improvements to coordination of services for children with multiple and/or complex needs. Many communities have started hiring system service coordinators.
 - Release of the *Program Guidelines for the Integration of the Delivery of Rehabilitation Services*, including the occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech-language pathology services.
 - Release of the *Guidelines for the Submission of Final Proposals for the Delivery of Integrated Rehabilitation Services*

This report provides a few of the highlights of the activities of PAAC on SEAC in the past year. For more information about PAAC on SEAC please check the website or contact the Co-Chairs at info@paac-seac.ca. A list of PAAC on SEAC members is shown on the following page and new members are welcomed.



Alison Morse

Past Chair



Katie Muirhead

Chair