

**TORONTO CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

Public Session

Agenda

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2009

Dario Imbrogno, Chair
Community Representative

Judith Andrenacci
Community Living Toronto

Don Cameron
Community Representative

John Lentz
Voice for Hearing Impaired

Ashleigh Molloy
Down Syndrome Association

Virginia Pearce
Community Representative

Victoria Scamolla
Association for Bright Children

Marilyn Taylor
Learning Disabilities Association

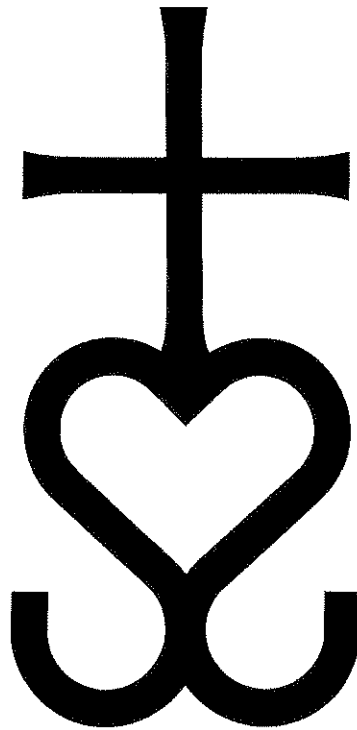
Ara Zoviguian
Autism Society Ontario

Trustee Members

Ann Andrachuk

Paul John Crawford

Vice-Chair, Angela Kennedy



Recording Secretary : Lalita Fernandes 416-222-8282 Extension 2293

In a school community formed by Catholic beliefs and traditions,
our Mission is to educate students to their full potential.

Ann Perron
Interim Director of Education

AGENDA
THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2009

7:00 p.m.

1. **Memorials and Prayer.**
2. **Roll Call and Apologies.**
3. **Approval of the Agenda.**
4. **Declarations of Interest.**
5. **Approval and Signing of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held February 18, 2009. p.1-p.5**
6. **Delegations:**
7. **Presentations:**
 - a) Annette Goodman, Chief Education Officer for the Arrowsmith Program, regarding review of the LD Programs in the TCDSB. **p.6**

8. **Unfinished Business:**

9. **Notices of Matter and Trustee Matters: (for which ninety-six hours notice has been given)**

10. **Communications:**
 - a) From Norm Forma, Associate Supervisor, Ministry Supervision Team (The Board) regarding the SEAC recommendations on the Arrowsmith Program. **p.7-p.8**
 - b) Presentation by Will Young, Manager of Government Relations Arrowsmith Program, to the Board at its meeting held February 25, 2009 regarding support for the SEAC recommendations. **p.9-p.11**

11. **Matters Referred/Deferred to the Committee by the Board and Other Committees.**
 - a) **Recommendations from the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of February 18, 2009. (Referred back to the Committee for further discussion).**
 1. That the Arrowsmith Program be reviewed for its comparative effectiveness, efficiency and equitable access and outcomes in relation to other LD programs delivered in the TCDSB;
 2. That this review commence April 1, 2009 and that a report be available for June 2010 prior to the TCDSB making any decision concerning the Arrowsmith program;
 3. That the TCDSB continue to deliver the Arrowsmith program.
 4. That the TCDSB fully renew its existing contract for the Arrowsmith Program for the 2009-2010 and 2010- 2011 academic years for the current seven sites;
 5. That public consultation will be engaged through out the term of the LD review. The format for such consultation will be defined at a later date and the review will include an analysis for expansion of the existing sites.

6. That SEAC recommend to the Minister of Education to consider the possibility of working with the Arrowsmith Program and use the TCDSB sites as a source of their research.

12. Reports of Officials and Special and Permanent Committees Requiring Action.

13. Reports of Officials and Special and Permanent Committees for Information:

14. Inquiries and Miscellaneous:

15. Association Reports:

16. Update from Trustees on resolutions recommended to the Board by the Committee:

17. Update of Pending List

DATE REQUESTED	SUBJECT	DUE DATE
June/07	Update on student transition from secondary to post-secondary and how many students were enrolled in special courses.	Deferred until further notice.
Sept/08	Review of Special Education Program and Services.	
Oct/08	Report on Awards to Graduating Grade 8 and Grade 12 Students.	

18. Adjournment.

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
HELD WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2009**

PUBLIC SESSION

PRESENT:

Dario Imbrogno, Chair
Judith Andrenacci
Don Cameron
Ashleigh Molloy
Virginia Pearce
Marilyn Taylor
Ara Zoviguian

Trustee: Ann Andrachuk – by Teleconference
Paul Crawford
Angela Kennedy

Angela Gauthier
Frank Piddisi
Susan Menary
Maria Kokai
Mary Cordeiro
Odilia Pariselli
Lea Cardinalli
Barbara Komorowski
Michael Colella

Apologies were received from John Lentz and Victoria Scamolla who were unable to attend the meeting.

MOVED by Trustee Crawford, that the agenda, as amended, be approved.

CARRIED

MOVED by Marilyn Taylor that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held Wednesday, January 21, 2009 be approved with an amendment to delete the word "Trustee" on page 2, third paragraph.

CARRIED

Clint Harder, representing LD Families.org, addressed the Committee regarding Neuroplasticity Based LD Programming "The Arrowsmith Program".

MOVED by Don Cameron, that the presentation by Clint Harder, representing LD Families.org, regarding Neuroplasticity Based LD Programming "The Arrowsmith Program" be received.

CARRIED

John Del Grande, Trustee Ward 7, addressed the Committee regarding LD Program review and student success.

MOVED by Trustee Crawford that the presentation by John Del Grande, Trustee Ward 7, regarding LD Program review and student success be received.

CARRIED

Annette Goodman, Chief Education Officer for the Arrowsmith Program, made a presentation to the Committee regarding the Program.

MOVED by Don Cameron, that the presentation by Annette Goodman, Chief Education Officer for the Arrowsmith Program, regarding the Program be received.

CARRIED

MOVED by Ashleigh Molloy, that the communication from Christine Thammavongsa, President Association for Bright Children of Ontario, regarding brief summary of the features that are fundamental in programming for gifted students be received.

CARRIED

MOVED by Judith Andrenacci, that the communication from Virginia Pearce regarding Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) be received.

CARRIED

MOVED by Trustee Kennedy, that item 12a) be adopted as follows:

12a) Report regarding Review of LD Programs in the Toronto Catholic District School Board

1. That the Arrowsmith Program be reviewed for its comparative effectiveness, efficiency and equitable access and outcomes in relation to other LD programs delivered in the TCDSB;
2. That this review commence April 1, 2009 and that a report be available for June 2010 prior to the TCDSB making any decision concerning the Arrowsmith program;
3. That the TCDSB continue to deliver the Arrowsmith program.
4. That the TCDSB fully renew its existing contract for the Arrowsmith Program for the 2009-2010 and 2010- 2011 academic years for the current seven sites;

5. That public consultation will be engaged through out the term of the LD review. The format for such consultation will be defined at a later date and the review will include an analysis for expansion of the existing sites.

CARRIED

MOVED by Trustee Andrachuk, arising out of the Report regarding Review of LD Programs in the Toronto Catholic District School Board, that SEAC recommend to the Minister of Education to consider the possibility of working with the Arrowsmith Program and use the TCDSB sites as a source of their research.

CARRIED

MOVED by Marilyn Taylor that the Verbal Update on Awards to Graduating Grade 8 and Grade 12 Students be received.

CARRIED

Arising out of an inquiry from Marilyn Taylor regarding a Survey on Assessment Methods done by the Board, staff were directed to provide the members of SEAC with a copy of the survey.

Staff to arrange for a presentation on the Academy of Reading.

MOVED by Trustee Crawford, that the meeting adjourn.

CARRIED

SECRETARY

CHAIR

MOVED by Judith Andrenacci, that the meeting adjourn.

CARRIED

SECRETARY

CHAIR



TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

DELEGATION REGISTRATION FORM

Delegations are allowed to speak in accordance with policy T.14, Delegations. Be advised of the limitations in the policy. The total number of delegations is normally ten (10) at a Standing Committee.

Delegations registered before 11:00 a.m. on the Friday before the Standing Committee may be considered to speak for up to 5 minutes. Late registration must be received by 11:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting. It will be added as an addendum to the agenda. A late delegation will only be allowed to present if fewer than 10 delegations are to be heard or if the Committee Chair grants an extension. Inquiries should be directed to the Recording Secretary, Tel: (416) 222-4282 ext. 2293; Fax: (416) 229-3333

For Board Use Only

Delegation Number:

Public Session
 Private Session
 Five (5) Minutes
 Three (3) Minutes

Name: Annette Goodman, Chief Education Officer, Arrowsmith Program

Date of Presentation: March 24 2009 SEAC

Topic or Issue Review of LD Programs in the TCDSB

Your Point of View: (e.g. for or against the topic or issue; presenting a program, service, or product etc.) Speaking to SEAC Feb. 19th, 2009 recommendations regarding Arrowsmith Program, and Arrowsmith's delegation to Feb. 25th Ministry Supervision Team (The Board) Meeting.

Check One Box

I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf.

I am an official representative of the Catholic School Advisory Committee.
School _____ Position _____

I am an official representative of student government.
School _____ Position _____

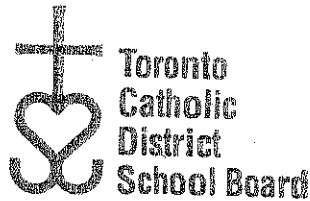
I am here as a spokesperson for another group or organization.
Name of group Arrowsmith Program Inc.

The Board does not wish to prevent the expression of honest opinion, but requires that negative, critical or derogatory comments about identifiable persons be made in Private Session.

Check One Box

I do not intend to use the name/title/position of a person in a negative, critical or derogatory manner.
(Public Session)

I do intend to use the name/title/position of a person in a negative, critical or derogatory manner.
(Private Session)



March 13, 2009

Mr. Dario Imbrogno
Chair – TCDSB SEAC
1 Easthampton Drive
Etobicoke, Ontario
M9P 3P4

Dear Dario Imbrogno:

As you are aware, the SEAC recommendations regarding the Arrowsmith Program were before the Supervision Team on February 25th 2009. The report was presented by the Vice-Chair of the Committee. When advised that the Supervision Team had a number of questions regarding the recommendations, the Vice-Chair requested that the report be deferred so that the full committee could have the opportunity to discuss the issues. We had intended to focus on the following topics:

Nature of the Program

- Does SEAC view the Arrowsmith Program as a medical or educational intervention?
- What consideration was given to the varying views in the educational research community on the nature of the Arrowsmith Program?
- What role should the nature of the program play in determining whether local school boards should offer it?

Program Placement

- For what portion or type of LD students does SEAC consider Arrowsmith the most appropriate placement?
- What criteria should be used in determining the type of program placement – self contained, resource withdrawal, HSC, or Arrowsmith- for students with learning disabilities?
- How should the placement decision be made?
- How should priorities for admission be determined for the limited number of spaces available?

- What alternate placements/intervention did the SEAC Committee explore for students served by the Arrowsmith Program?

Program Review

- What is the rationale for SEAC's recommendation to continue intake during the program review?
- What role did the TCDSB research indicating other placements to be as effective or more effective than Arrowsmith on improvements in processing/phonological and literacy measures play in this recommendation?

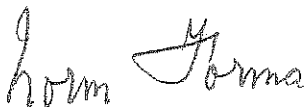
Budget Priority

- What priority would SEAC assign to the purchase of licences for the Arrowsmith program in the 2009-2010 special education budget requests?

These are issues that we expect would have arisen as the Board considered and debated the recommendations of the SEAC Committee regarding Arrowsmith's request to renew program funding. As the Board is currently under supervision that mechanism is not available. Therefore, it would be appreciated if SEAC could address these issues during its next meeting and the presentation of its recommendations to the Supervision Team

We appreciate the work that your committee does on behalf of all students with special needs in the TCDSB.

Sincerely,



Norm Forma
Associate Supervisor

ARROWSMITH PROGRAM

Delegation to February 25th Meeting
TCDSB Ministry Supervision Team (The Board)

Good evening members of the Ministry Supervision Team and Board Trustees. My name is Will Young and I am the Manager of Government Relations for the Arrowsmith Program

I would like to start by thanking the Trustees, and all of the Board staff involved in the delivery of the Arrowsmith Program, for your on-going commitment in offering the Arrowsmith Program for the past 12 years

Arrowsmith also appreciates the support for the continued delivery of the Arrowsmith Program shown by Board staff in their recent report

And we also thank the members of SEAC for their recommendations related to the delivery of our program.

Arrowsmith's comments on the SEAC Recommendations listed in the Agenda are as follows:

With respect to Recommendations 1 & 2 we would comment that:

1. Arrowsmith has over 30 years of success in achieving transformative changes in cognitive capacity.
2. Research has already been done on the Arrowsmith Program by a highly respected researcher.
3. Research confirms that the Arrowsmith Program increases the cognitive capacity and that this increased cognitive capacity results in improved academic performance.
4. One of these studies has demonstrated the significant reduction in resource support required by students post completion of the Arrowsmith Program
5. Although our position is that research has already validated the effectiveness of our program,

Arrowsmith acknowledges that decisions related to the expenditure of public funds should be based on demonstrated performance

6. If it is decided that additional research is to be carried out on the Arrowsmith Program any such comparative study must be based on a comparison of equivalent student groups, and it must utilize appropriate measures of program outcomes.

ARROWSMITH PROGRAM

Delegation to February 25th Meeting

TCDSB Ministry Supervision Team (The Board)

7. As the Trustee's and Board staff are aware Arrowsmith is a 3 to 4 year Program. We would suggest that a comparative research study undertaken in 14 months is limited in terms of assessing program outcomes.
8. Ideally - a comprehensive comparative analysis of the Arrowsmith Program would include a longitudinal study of the gains achieved upon completion of the 3 to 4 year program

If SEAC Recommendations 3 & 4 are adopted the Arrowsmith Program will be delivered for an additional 2 years in all 7 of the existing sites

1. Based on discussions at the February 18th SEAC meeting our understanding of SEAC's intention is that the full enrollment of 70 students will be maintained for the entire 2 year renewal period.
2. As approximately 20 students graduate each year maintaining full enrollment will require the admission of new students in each year of the renewal period.

SEAC Recommendation Number 5 provides for Public consultation during the review process

1. Arrowsmith regards public consultation as a critical component in maintaining the transparency of the review process.
2. We suggest that target dates should be set for the Public Consultation meetings at the outset of the process

With respect to SEAC's Recommendation Number 6 Arrowsmith would welcome a review of our program by the Ministry of Education.

1. At the request of Ministry staff, a detailed overview of the Arrowsmith Program was submitted to the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch in December 2008
2. To date we have had no meetings with Ministry of Education staff.
3. However we understand that the Arrowsmith documentation is being reviewed by the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch.

SUMMARY

- Arrowsmith supports the SEAC recommendations, however we feel that there is sufficient research demonstrating the positive outcomes achieved by the Arrowsmith Program cognitive exercises.
- If the recommendations are adopted we look forward to an on-going dialogue with Board staff, members of SEAC, and the Board, related to the implementation of the recommendations.
- Thank you for your consideration of Arrowsmith Program's comments.
- I would be pleased to answer questions.