



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Agenda

Catholic Education Centre
322 Fairview Drive
Brantford, ON N3T 5M8

Committee of the Whole Tuesday, June 17, 2025 ♦ 7:00 p.m. Boardroom

Trustees:

Carol Luciani (Chair), Dan Dignard (Vice-Chair), Dennis Blake, Bill Chopp, Rick Petrella (on-leave), Mark Watson, Riley O'Brien, Ryan Toft (Student Trustees)

Senior Administration:

Mike McDonald (Director of Education & Secretary), Rajini Nelson (Superintendent of Business & Treasurer), John Della Fortuna, Kevin Greco, Michael Lawlor, Phil Wilson (Superintendents of Education)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Opening Prayer

Almighty God bless us as we gather today for this meeting. Guide our minds and hearts so that we will work for the good of our community and be a help to all people. Teach us to be generous in our outlook, courageous in the face of difficulty, and wise in our decisions. We give you praise and glory, Lord our God, forever and ever. Amen

1.2 Attendance

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

Page 1 - 3

1.4 Declaration of Interest

1.5 Approval of the Committee of the Whole Minutes – May 20, 2025

Pages 4-8

1.6 Business Arising from the Minutes

2. Presentations

3. Delegations

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Unapproved Minutes of the Regional Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting – May 12, 2025

Pages 9-10

4.2 Unapproved Minutes of the Accessibility Committee - May 12, 2025

Pages 11-12

4.3 Unapproved Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting - May 20, 2025

Pages 13-15

4.4 Unapproved Minutes of the Faith Advisory Committee - June 10, 2025

Pages 16-18

4.5 Unapproved Minutes of the Budget Committee - June 11, 2025

Pages 19-21



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5. Committee and Staff Reports

- 5.1** Unapproved minutes and recommendations from the Policy Committee Meeting - June 10, 2025 Pages 22-88
- Workplace Violence Prevention #300.20 (pages 23-32)
 - Workplace Harassment #300.01 (pages 33-45)
 - Duty to Report #300.23 (pages 46-54)
 - Use of Service Animals in School Facilities #200.40 (pages 55-80)
 - Purchasing Cards #700.01 (pages 81-85)
- 5.2** Unapproved minutes and recommendations from the Policy Committee Meeting - June 16, 2025 To Be Distributed
- Board By-Laws
 - Trustee Expenses #100.10
 - Trustee Code of Conduct #100.04
 - Rescinded Policies
 - Access to Legal Counsel #100.09
- 5.3** Special Education Annual Report 2024/2025 Pages 89-141
Presenter: Phil Wilson, Superintendent of Education
- 5.4** Student Achievement Team Annual Report 2024/2025 Pages 142-151
Presenter: Phil Wilson, Superintendent of Education

6. Information and Correspondence

- 6.1** Pastoral Theme
Presenter: Michael Lawlor, Superintendent of Education

7. Trustee Inquiries

8. Business In-Camera

- 207 (2) *Closing of certain committee meetings. A meeting of a committee of a board, including a committee of the whole board, may be closed to the public when the subject-matter under consideration involves:*
- a. *The security of the property of the board;*
 - b. *The disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the board or committee, an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or his or her parent or guardian;*
 - c. *The acquisition or disposal of a school site;*
 - d. *Decisions in respect of negotiation with employees of the board; or*
 - e. *Litigation affecting the board.*

9. Report on the In-Camera Session

10. Future Meetings and Events

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11. Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your gifts to us: for making us, for saving us in Christ, for calling us to be your people. As we come to the end of this meeting, we give you thanks for all the good things you have done in us. We thank you for all who have shared in the work of this Board and ask you to bless us all in your love. We offer this prayer, Father, through Christ our Lord. Amen

12. Adjournment



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Next meeting: Tuesday, Sept 16, 2025, 7:00 p.m. – Boardroom



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

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Committee of the Whole Tuesday, May 20, 2025 ♦ 7:00 pm Boardroom

Trustees:

Carol Luciani (Chair), Dan Dignard (Vice Chair), Dennis Blake, Bill Chopp, Mark Watson, Riley O'Brien (Student Trustee), Ryan Toft (Student Trustee)

Regrets: Rick Petrella (on leave)

Senior Administration:

Mike McDonald (Director of Education & Secretary), Rajini Nelson (Superintendent of Business & Treasurer)
John Della Fortuna, Kevin Greco, Michael Lawlor, Phil Wilson (Superintendents of Education)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Opening Prayer

The meeting was opened with prayer led by Chair Luciani.

1.2 Attendance

Attendance was as noted above.

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the agenda of the May 20, 2025, meeting.

Carried

1.4 Declaration of Interest – Nil

1.5 Approval of Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes – April 15, 2025

Moved by: Bill Chopp

Seconded by: Mark Watson

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the minutes of the April 15, 2025, meeting.

Carried

1.6 Business from the Minutes - Nil

2. Presentations – Nil

3. Delegations - Nil

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Unapproved Minutes from the Regional Catholic Parent Involvement Committee – April 14, 2025

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board receives the unapproved minutes of the Regional Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of April 14, 2025.

Carried



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4.2 Unapproved Minutes from the Special Education Advisory Committee – April 15, 2025

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board receives the unapproved minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of April 15, 2025.

Carried

4.3 Unapproved Minutes from the Accommodations Committee – May 12, 2025

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board receives the unapproved minutes of the Accommodations Committee Meeting of March 18, 2025.

Carried

5. Committee and Staff Reports

5.1 Unapproved Minutes and Recommendations from the Policy Committee Meeting – May 13, 2025

Vice-Chair Dignard presented the unapproved minutes and recommendations from the Policy Committee meeting. Trustee Blake requested that the Home School Policy #200.16 and the Procurement Policy #700.01 be voted on separately.

- THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Home Instruction Policy #200.17 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.
- THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Student Clubs Administrative Procedure #200.44 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.
- THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Opening/ Closing Exercises Administrative Procedure #200.11 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.
- THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Head Lice (Pediculosis) Policy #200.20 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.
- THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Employee Expenses Policy #700.04 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Bill Chopp

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the unapproved minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting of May 13, 2025, to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

Carried



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Home School Policy #200.16

Trustee Blake made the recommendation for the opening sentence to be added back to the policy as it speaks to Catholic Education. Superintendent Della Fortuna confirmed he would reword the sentence and have it added back into the policy.

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Home School Policy #200.16 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried as Amended

Procurement Policy #700.01

Trustee Blake requested a friendly amendment to the policy to have purchases approved by the Director of Education with a cost between \$100,000 and \$200,000, brought to the board periodically as information. Superintendent Nelson confirmed she would bring this back as information.

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Mark Watson

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Procurement Policy #700.01 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried as Amended

5.2 Norfolk County Boundary Review

Director McDonald presented Jack Ammendolia from Watson's and Associates. Mr. Ammendolia discussed the process for the boundary review including the establishing of an Attendance Boundary Review Committee including senior administration, principals, parent representatives and transportation staff. Various committee meetings along with a public consultation meeting were had. Various options were reviewed and considered given the overcrowding at some schools and the available space at others. The recommendation of the ABRC is to proceed with option 1 effective September 2026. The recommendation also approves legacy provisions for students currently in grades 5&6 who will be in grades 7&8 when the changes take effect. A variety of options, transportation times, and geographical areas were discussed including the number of students in each geographical area that would be moving. Mr. Ammendolia confirmed that there was parent representation from all the schools involved along with consultation with transportation staff regarding time spent on the bus. The attendance boundary review committee deliberated about various options ultimately deciding that option 1 was the most effective in balancing enrolment and would cause the least amount of disruption to families. The following was requested to be brought back to the Board meeting for further discussion. The first request was regarding the number of students in area four and how that would change if the boundary was moved from Swimming Pool Road to Hawtrey Rd. The second request was to consider alternatives for students in Area 25. The third request was to have transportation times in areas 4, 6, 7 and 34 provided. The final request was to clarify whether transportation is included for siblings of legacy students who will be in grades 7 & 8 in September 2026.

Moved by: Bill Chopp

Seconded by: Mark Watson

THAT the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approve the amended school attendance boundaries for Norfolk County, as outlined in Figure 2, effective September 2026.

Carried



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Moved by: Bill Chopp

Seconded by: Mark Watson

THAT legacy provisions be implemented to permit currently enrolled Grade 5 and 6 students (2024–25 school year) at affected schools to remain at their existing school through to Grade 8.

Carried

6. Information and Correspondence

6.1 Student Trustee Election

Superintendent Lawlor provided an update on the recent student trustee election. Riley O'Brien from Assumption College and Mulan How from St. John's College were elected by their peers as the 2025-2026 Student Trustees.

6.2 Catholic Education Week Update

Superintendent Lawlor provided a recap on Catholic Education week activities that took place across the system. The Catholic Education Week theme was inspired by the Jubilee year theme, Pilgrims of Hope – proclaimed this year by our late Holy Father Pope Francis. Some of the activities included the Catholic Leadership Symposium and Awards, Flat Luce's Jubilee Journey, Pilgrimage materials provided to schools, the Celebration of the Arts and chalking artwork displays.

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Mark Watson

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board receives the information and correspondence since the last meeting.

Carried

7. Trustee Inquiries - Nil

8. Business In-Camera

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board moves to an In-Camera session.

Carried

9. Report on the In-Camera Session

Moved by: Mark Watson

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the business of the In-Camera session.

Carried

10. Future Meetings and Events

Chair Luciani drew attention to the upcoming meetings and events.

11. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer was led by Chair Luciani.



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12. Adjournment

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board adjourns the May 20, 2025, meeting.

Carried

Next meeting: Tuesday, June 17, 2025 - 7:00 p.m. – Boardroom



REGIONAL CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, May 12th, 2025 – 6:30 pm

Virtual - Microsoft Teams

Members: Michael Lawlor (Superintendent of Education), Humberto Cacilhas (Principal Lead), Carol Luciani (Chair of the Board), Sarah Lebel (Parent Co–Chair), April Taylor (Senior Social Worker), Dianne Wdowczyk (Mental Health Lead), Francesca Pace (Recording Secretary)

Guest: Jesssica Zelem, REACH, Julie Pilon, Woodview

1. Land Acknowledgement

- Humberto Cacilhas provided the land acknowledgement.

2. Opening Prayer

- Superintendent Michael Lawlor led with prayer.

3. Welcome and Opening Comments

- Humberto Cacilhas welcomed all parents and guests.

4. CEW Update

- Superintendent Michael Lawlor gave an update on Catholic Education Week and activities that were going on throughout the week at all elementary and secondary schools.
- He spoke about the Catholic Student Leadership Awards held at Assumption College School, the Celebration of the Arts night held at the Sanderson Center and the 60th Anniversary of Blessed Sacrament School.

5. Introduction

- Humberto Cacilhas introduced Dianne Wdowczyk-Meade, Mental Health Lead for BHNCD SB.

6. Caregiver Child and Youth Mental Health Resources

- Dianne Wdowczyk-Meade spoke about Wayfinder a resource for social emotional learning activities that can be used in the classroom introduced to our Educators.
- Dianne Wdowczyk-Meade spoke about the Ministry Policy Program called Miranda PPM 169. Also, the new parent/caregiver resource, which is a learning Hub called By Your Side, is available through School Mental Health Ontario.



7. Community Mental Health Resources for Children & Youth

- Jessica Zelem from REACH Haldimand/Norfolk spoke about the services offered at REACH for children, youth and their families ages zero to 18.
- Showed PowerPoint with resources and services at REACH.
- Julie Pilon from Woodview (Brant) spoke about Woodview being the lead agency for children and youth mental health.
- PowerPoint showed resources and services offered at Woodview,.

8. Student Achievement

- Chandra Portelli is the Student Achievement Lead at BHNCD SB. She gave an overview of the Student Achievement Plan.

9. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

- Humberto Cacilhas thanked all members and guests for their continued support throughout the year and wished everyone a wonderful summer.
- The group will reconvene in September.
- Meeting ended at 7:50pm



**Accessibility Steering Committee
Monday, May 12, 2025 – 1:00 p.m.
Microsoft Teams Meeting**

- Present:** Rajini Nelson (Chair), Carlee Bond, Rachel Moreau (Zelem), Philip Kuckyt, Rita Raposo, Morlaye Camara, Dave Buist, Deborah King-Bonifacio, Gianni Silvestri, John Nicholson, Katherine Reddicliffe (Recording Secretary),
- Regrets:** Amy Pimentel, April Taylor, Jennifer Charnish-Currie, Mark Watson (Trustee), Carlo Fortino, Linda McFayden, Lou Citino, Mischa Dinsmore, Sandra DeDominicis,

1. Opening Prayer

The meeting was opened with prayer led by Chair Nelson.

2. Introductions

Informal roundtable committee introductions were made.

3. Meeting Minutes / Items Arising from February 25, 2025

Approval of Committee Meeting Minutes – February 25, 2025

Moved by: Morlaye Camara

Seconded by: Deborah King-Bonifacio

THAT the Accessibility Steering Committee approves the minutes of February 25, 2025

4. Additions to Agenda - NIL

Approval of the Agenda – May 12, 2025

Moved by: Phil Kuckyt

Seconded by: David Buist

THAT the Accessibility Steering Committee approves the agenda of May 12, 2025.

5. Committee and Staff Updates

The Accessibility Plan was reviewed at a previous meeting, and no action items were required.

Confirmed all members are included in the Teams channel. All should have access to the files for this committee. Staff to inform if they do not have access to the Team.

The annual meeting schedule is to be reviewed and scheduled for the upcoming year. Typically, three per school year (October, February, May/June). This will be prepared and set up during the summer months.

The next meeting to include the results of the AODA audit. Upon review, items can be distributed for action based on the department responsible.

Clarification required on how employees are trained within the Board on Accessibility. Understanding which department initiates the participation/mandatory training/updates. Details In the future will review the initial new hire onboarding process with the requirements pertaining to Accessibility. Once information is obtained it will be shared with the committee.



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6. Other Business

6.1 Status and Updates on Accessibility Policy

The Accessibility Policy to be resent to all committee members.

Next Meeting: Monday, June 9, 2025 – 1:00 p.m.



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, May 20, 2025 – 1:00pm
Catholic Education Centre and Microsoft Teams**

- Members:** Brandi Bertling (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Dennis Blake (Trustee), Mischa Dinsmore (Lansdowne Children's Centre), Shannon Korber (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Kerri Lomax (Principal, Elementary), Patti Mitchell (Parent, County of Brant), Lauren Moulton (Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services), Jennifer Rudyk (Principal, Elementary), Nil Woodcroft (Haldimand Norfolk REACH)
- Regrets:** Michelle Drake (Crossing All Bridges), Lauren Freeborn (Contact Brant), Simon Jennions (Community Living Brant), Shannon Mason (Principal, Elementary), Marilyn Noi (Autism Ontario), Janelle Sandy (Indigenous Child and Youth Team at Child and Family Services of Grand Erie)
- Resources:** Sandra DeDominicis (Student Achievement Lead, Special Education), Phil Wilson (Superintendent of Education)
- Guests:** Rachel Moreau (Orientation and Mobility Instructor), Maria Petruccelli (System Special Education Consultant), Jennifer Tonnies (System Special Education Consultant), Tracie Witteveen (System Special Education Consultant)
-

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Phil Wilson welcomed the committee.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Superintendent Wilson read the board's land acknowledgement.

3. Opening Prayer

Superintendent Wilson shared an opening prayer.

4. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Lauren Moulton

Seconded by: Nil Woodcroft

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the May 20, 2025, meeting.

Carried

5. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Shannon Korber

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the April 15, 2025, meeting.

Carried

6. Correspondence

An email was received from the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MASCE) asking to obtain targeted feedback from SEAC committees on issues related to special education programs and services at the BHNCD SB.

7. CNIB Deaf-Blind Awareness

June is Deaf-Blind awareness month. Maria Petruccelli and Rachel Moreau discussed the CNIB Deaf-Blind Awareness initiative, which encourages schools to create multi-sensory gardens to promote understanding of Deaf-Blind challenges. Rachel Moreau elaborated on the initiative's growth, detailing presentations by CNIB staff and a Deaf-Blind client, who demonstrated communication methods and engaged students with her personal experiences. The presentations have fostered meaningful interactions and questions from students and staff.

8. Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NCVI)

Maria Petruccelli and Tracie Witteveen discussed Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVC I) training. NCVI equips individuals with the skills needed to recognize, de-escalate, and manage crisis behaviors safely and effectively. This training is provided to Educational Assistants, Special Education Resource Teachers, ABA Leads, and Speech-Language Pathologists, with refresher training every two years.

Recently, the training has expanded to include administrators and all staff members in a verbal de-escalation format. The key changes to NVC I training include: a full-day training model being implemented, physical interventions are now categorized as safety interventions, and related policy forms have been updated accordingly.

9. Lexia and Primary Learning Strategies Class (PLSC)

Jennifer Tonnies gave an update on Lexia and the PLSC Lexia progress. An additional fifty Lexia licenses were acquired to address existing waitlists, bringing the total to 283 active licenses. Professional development sessions have been introduced for Lexia/PowerUp, including training specifically for administrators on Lexia data and reports. Monthly progress emails are being sent, and formal progress reports are scheduled for January, April, and June, highlighting gains by level. The data is used to identify trends, areas for growth, and where additional support is needed. Currently, 14% of users show minimal gains, 53% have progressed one to two levels, 38% have gained three or more levels and met or exceeded targets, and 10% have achieved gains of five or more levels. The PLSC program, which consistently supports Lexia usage, has seen gains ranging from five to eight levels.

10. Community Agency Updates

Shannon Korber

Child and Family Services updated that a summer camp worker has joined the team.

Nil Woodcroft

Haldimand Norfolk Reach will have a new manager as Nil Woodcroft is retiring at the end of

July. Thank you to Sandra DeDominicis for all her work on the transition to school process.

Mischa Dinsmore

Lansdowne updated that there will no longer be a cost to attend their events moving forward, if the family is a Lansdowne client. An upcoming event is the Heroes Walk and Roll.

Jennifer Rudyk and Kerri Lomax

The elementary schools are involved with kindergarten orientations, the track and field meet, and Have a Go.

11. Student Achievement Lead and Superintendent of Education

- The Special Education department has focussed on the organization of resource support, transition visits, and release time for school teams around the transitioning of high needs youth, with a focus is on kindergarten entry, transitions between various grades, transitions between elementary and secondary, and supports beyond the age of 21.
- A First Communion Sacramental Retreat was held at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre on May 7, 2025.
- Members of Special Education attended the OCASE conference learning about blind, low vision programming, innovative ideas around restructuring to support student needs, literacy and numeracy supports, and case law from two lawyers around accommodations and exclusion.
- The Board released the Educational Assistant Preference of Placement Process form and Educational Assistants are submitting their qualifications and preferences for next year to determine staffing for 2025 – 2026 school year.

12. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

Phil Wilson thanked everyone. The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 17, 2025.



**Brant Haldimand Norfolk
Catholic District School Board**

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**Faith Advisory Committee (FAC)
Tuesday, June 10, 2025 ♦ 1:30 p.m.
In person at CEC or Microsoft Teams**

- Present:** Dan Dignard (Vice Chair of the Board), Heather Graham, Tara Williams, Andrew Hall, Michael Lawlor (Superintendent of Education), Keri Calvesbert
- Regrets:** Carol Luciani (Chair of the Board), Fr. Augustine Ogundele, Fr. Rudolph D'Souza, Carlo Fortino, Carole Allen (FACE), Fr. Kevin D'Souza
-

1. Welcome/Introductions

Trustee Dignard welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Opening Prayer

Trustee Dignard opened the meeting in prayer.

3. Approval of the Minutes

The Minutes of the April 17, 2025 meeting were approved.

4. Information and Discussion Items

4.1 New Board Spiritual Theme for 2025-2026 and Faith Day Update

Keri Calvesbert shared the release of the OCSTA 2026 Catholic Education Week theme. To honour and celebrate the ongoing Jubilee Year, the theme is an extension of our Pilgrims of Hope theme, "Catholic Education: Pilgrims of Hope: On the Path to Holiness," rooted in the Scripture, "As God who called you is holy, be holy yourselves." (1 Peter 1:15-16) The theme is supported by 5 sub-themes which will allow us to explore ways to live out the late Pope Francis' call for each of us to be Pilgrims of Hope: Peace be with you, God loves you, Christ saves you, the Holy Spirit lives in you and Together on the journey. BHNCD SB is planning to adopt this theme as the new Board Spiritual Theme for the 2025-2026 school year. Michael Lawlor will present this to the Board at the June meeting for approval. Keri provided updates to planning for Faith Day scheduled for Tuesday, October 7, 2025, the Professional Development Day for all staff. The Pastoral Team is working to plan a day that will be meaningful, educational and impactful. Four parishes across the district including St. Pius X, Brantford, St. Mary's, Brantford, St. Patrick's, Caledonia and St. Mary's, Simcoe along with their parish halls have been booked for the morning. Faith day will begin with Mass at all four parishes (schools and sites have been divided into groups by geography) and a time of fellowship. Staff will travel to their schools/sites for lunch and to participate in the afternoon sessions. Planning for activities, options and timelines for the afternoon are still underway. The Pastoral Team will be meeting in June to finalize plans for the afternoon sessions. Once plans are in place, details will be shared with the Administrator and Management Teams. System memos about Faith Day will be sent out in advance of October 7, 2025.

4.2 Religion and Family Life Curriculum Updates

Keri Calvesbert noted that BHNCD SB is in the process of purchasing the new Family Life Program, "Blessed & Beloved" for Grades 2 and 3. The program is currently being used in Grade 1. Grades 2 and 3 Educators will receive support to implement a soft launch



implementation of the new program in the Fall of 2025. Also, BHNCDSB is in the process of purchasing the new Religious Education Program, "Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ" for Grade 9 with plans to support Educators in the implementation of a soft launch of the program throughout the duration of the 2025-2026 school year.

4.3 Secondary Feedback on Faith Activities

Tara Williams provided an update on behalf of Assumption College School. In addition to all the CEW and ongoing activities (*see list below*), Tara highlighted that 9 of the 11 ACS feeder schools participated in the Grade 8 Faith in Action Days hosted by ACS Chaplaincy and the Social Justice class. The program was well received, and they plan to run this program again next school year. The ACS Chaplaincy 180 Team and Social Justice class were notified that they received the Youth Peace Medal Scholarship award from the YMCA of Brant, Halton, Hamilton for a project called *Confidence Closet: Clothes for a Brighter Future* in partnership with SOAR community services youth/young adult shelter services.

Tara also provided an update on behalf of Holy Trinity Catholic High School. In addition to CEW and ongoing activities (*see list below*), Tara highlighted that the final HT Staff Faith breakfast reached 18 staff members in attendance. This is something to celebrate as the focus on adult faith formation has been fruitful. In addition to celebrating all the positive Faith formation activities at HT, Tara noted that the school is struggling with attendance at Liturgies and Masses and asked committee members for input. Tara has addressed this as a whole community in Parent Memos. This is an issue at all three Secondary schools. Tara suggested this issue might require a larger conversation with Chaplaincy and Secondary Principals. Michael Lawlor will share some possible solutions with Tara in a conversation outside of today's FAC meeting.

Andrew Hall shared on behalf of St. John's College that in late April, Campus Ministry students made a pilgrimage to St. Basil's to view a replica of the Holy Door. During the month of May at SJC, Campus Ministry students visited the elderly at Riverview Terrace. Salt & Light TV filmed the SJC May Crowning Liturgy of the Word, our grandparent breakfast, and interviewed worship band members. The episode for Salt & Light TV will air in the Fall. SJC is holding their Liturgy of the Word on June 11th where they will reflect on how SJC has made connections to the theme of "Pilgrims of Hope."

List of Activities submitted by ACS for Minutes:

During CEW 2025, ACS held a Liturgy and blessing of the new metal Marian artwork housed in the front entry of the school. ACS held their first faith night "Faith Over Fear" an evening that involved music, dance, Scripture, prayer, and faith related activities. Students attended the BHNCDSB Culture of Life conference retreat day "Your Life Matters" and were inspired by guest speakers Brian Amarelo and Jasmine Duckworth. ACS Chaplaincy Leader held a retreat day for Special Education Religion class. The retreat included a visit to the Holy Door at St. Basil Church with prayer and reflection. Students created drawings of their own Holy Door and made connections to their lives. Students participated in community building activities and a hands-on project for local shelters. Students also made sandwiches together at Friendship House with the social justice class. Following morning prayer, Chaplaincy lead a 7-episode video clip series introducing Pope Leo XIV to students. The 180 Team has done a phenomenal amount of work this year leading daily morning school-wide prayers, liturgies, Masses, Grade 9 mini-retreats and Grade 8 Faith in Action programs, visits to the soup kitchen and therapy centre total 18 this year, numerous social justice projects at our monthly meetings, supporting the social justice class through our involvement in Amplify Your Culture and Marketplace for Christmas baskets.



The team has just completed one of the elements of the Confidence Closet running a school-wide shoe drive and are currently running a staff clothing drive. The rest of this initiative will be completed in the Fall.

List of Activities submitted by HT for Minutes:

- Held two Grade 10 NET Retreat Days (well attended)
- Catholic Education Week activities: CSLA Ceremony, CEW Liturgy, Staff Prayer Breakfast, BHNCDSB Culture of Life Retreat Day
- Worked with a Job Skills Coop student throughout the semester doing work in and around the school as well as at the St. Vincent de Paul Pantry
- Finished the 33-day Marian Consecration for Teens on the feast of Our Lady of Fatima
- Chaplaincy created a Chess Team and chaperoned a Chess Tournament at SCS
- Chaplaincy Leader participated in the Diocese of London Pastoral Study Days, CSCO Conference and HDCA Retreat
- Closing School Mass, Athletic Banquet, Special Education Graduation Ceremony, Grad Liturgy and ceremony
- Ongoing Games Club daily at lunches; year-end party to be hosted; Music Ministry practices Thursdays at lunch; and Bible Study Mondays at Lunch

4.4 Elementary Feedback on Faith Activities

Heather Graham reported that Elementary schools focused heavily on our faith during CEW. The Faith and Wellness Pilgrimage with signs provided was well received. Students were led in prayer by teachers as they travelled from one sign to the next. One school participated in a whole-school activity based on a read aloud "God's Dream". Each student listened to the read aloud and created a flower to represent themselves in God's Garden. On the flower each child wrote the God-given gift/talent that they added to the garden. The flowers were displayed all together. Schools held May crowning Masses and recognized school volunteers at their Masses as well. St. Pius X is hosting their closing Mass with Father Rafal this week and noted that Father Rafal should be commended for how well he brings our Catholic faith to our students. He is patient, kind, and teaches students in a way that is meaningful and developmentally appropriate. Fr. Rafal will be missed as he leaves and heads to Poland.

4.5 Diocesan – Deanery Updates

N/A

4.6 F.A.C.E. Updates

N/A

5. Questions/Discussions

N/A

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Trustee Dignard.

Next Meeting: October 14, 2025 1:30 p.m.



Budget Committee
Wednesday, June 11, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.
Boardroom / Microsoft Teams Meeting

Trustees:

Dennis Blake (Chair), Dan Dignard, Carol Luciani, Mark Watson

Senior Administration and Staff Members

Mike McDonald (Director of Education & Secretary), Rajini Nelson (Superintendent of Business & Treasurer)
John Della Fortuna, Kevin Greco, Michael Lawlor, Phil Wilson (Superintendent of Education), Ginny Toth
(Manager of Finance)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Opening Prayer

The meeting was opened with prayer led by Chair Blake.

1.2 Attendance

Attendance was noted as above.

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Mark Watson

THAT the Budget Committee approves the Agenda of June 11, 2025.

Carried

1.4 Declaration of Interest: Nil.

1.5 Approval of the Minutes of July 26, 2024

Moved by: Mark Watson

Seconded by: Carol Luciani

THAT the Budget Committee approves the Minutes of July 26, 2024.

Carried

1.6 Business Arising from the Minutes: Nil

2. Staff Reports & Information Items

2.1 2025-26 Operating Budget Process

Superintendent Nelson opened the meeting by providing insight on the current progress of the 2025-26 budget development. School boards are expected to meet the Ministry's extended deadline of July 31, 2025. Superintendent Nelson commended the efforts of the senior team and staff for their work during this ongoing budget process.



The Grants for Student Needs (GSN) funding by the Ministry was announced later than it had been in previous years. School boards are encouraged to submit on June 30, 2025, as originally noted, but extensions have been granted on a request basis. Following the draft budget presentation to the budget committee the administration is expecting a special board meeting in July for the approval of the overall budget before submission to the Ministry.

Links were provided to share in depth details pertaining to key investments for the 2025-26 school year set out by the Ministry of Education. In addition, a separate link was made available to explore the formulas, calculations and allocations.

Overall, the Core Education funding for the province shows an increase of 3.3% compared to the current year. The primary areas being labour related changes, transportation, internal audit and Education and Community Partnership Program (ECPP).

The core funding and changes for the upcoming year were analyzed. The confirmed Responsive Education Programs (REP) funding available for the Board was presented.

Discussion regarding the REP funding model around salaries in Appendix B was had. It was noted that permanent staff salaries are not generally funded through the REP's. It was also noted that there are no significant changes to the REPs for the 2025-2026 school year.

Historical and preliminary projected enrolment data was exhibited. In summary, the Board's Average Daily Enrolment (ADE) is projected to increase by approximately 147 students.

The Board is currently projecting to have a balanced budget for the 2025-26 school year.

Throughout the remainder of the budget process, the staff will continue to provide further details and any significant changes to the Board.

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Mark Watson

THAT the Budget Committee recommends that the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board receives the 2025-26 Estimates Report for information.

3. Trustee Inquiries: Nil.

4. Business of the In-Camera Session:

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Budget Committee moves to an In-Camera Session.

5. Report on the In-Camera Session:

Moved by: Mark Watson

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Budget Committee approves the business of the In-Camera session.

Carried



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
Catholic District School Board

Minutes

Catholic Education Centre
322 Fairview Drive
Brantford, ON N3T 5M8

6. Future Meetings

Chair Blake noted that the next Budget Committee Meeting will be on Tuesday, July 22, 2025.

7. Adjournment

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Mark Watson

THAT the Budget Committee adjourns the meeting of June 11, 2025.

Carried

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 22, 2025

PENDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FROM THE POLICY COMMITTEE

June 17, 2025

AGENDA ITEM	MOTION
5.1	<p>THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Workplace Violence Prevention policy #300.20 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.</p> <p>THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Workplace Harassment Policy #300.02 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.</p> <p>THAT Committee of the Whole refers the Duty to Report Policy #300.23 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.</p> <p>THAT Committee of the Whole refers the Use of Service Animals in School Facilities Policy #200.40 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.</p> <p>THAT Committee of the Whole refers the Purchasing Cards Policy #700.01 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the unapproved minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting of June 10, 2025, to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the recommendations of the Policy Committee Meeting of June 10, 2025, to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD POLICY COMMITTEE

Prepared by: Kevin Greco, Superintendent of Education

Presented to: Policy Committee

Submitted on: June 10, 2025

Submitted by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

Workplace Violence Prevention #300.20

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (the Board) is committed to fostering a Christ-centered, safe, respectful, and healthy working and learning environment for all staff, students, volunteers, visitors, and community members. This policy is enacted in accordance with the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, and compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1 (OHSA), the Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, and associated regulations.

The Board recognizes that the inherent right of all individuals to be treated with dignity and respect is central to Catholic values and beliefs and supports a safe and nurturing environment for all staff and students. As a Catholic Learning Community, we believe in the prevention of workplace violence and promoting a workplace in which all people including employees, supervisors, and members of the public respect one another and work together to achieve common goals.

The Board has a legal, ethical and moral responsibility to investigate threats and acts of violence against any employee. The purpose of this policy is to define and communicate expectations, roles, and responsibilities in preventing, reporting, and addressing workplace violence within our school board community. This policy applies to all employees, trustees, students, parents/guardians, volunteers, contractors, and members of the public who interact with the Board at Board workplaces, during Board-sponsored activities, and offsite Board business.

DEVELOPMENTS:

This Policy and Administrative Procedure has been updated with definitions from the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)* for: worker, critical Injury and resource person.

The Responsibilities section now includes the duty of trustees to approve and support the implementation of this policy and for the Director of Education and Senior Administration to ensure compliance with the OHSA and the Education Act and that all employees must complete Workplace Violence Prevention Training annually. There is also reference to leveraging support from the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

This Policy and Administrative Procedure now includes the responsibility of each school/site of the Board to develop and implement procedures for summoning immediate assistance when an employee is the victim or witness to a violent incident in the workplace, or when a violent incident in the workplace is likely to occur.

Anyone involved as a victim or witness to a violent incident will be assured confidentiality and protection from reprisal when involved in a report or investigation.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers Policy and Administrative Procedure #300.20 Workplace Violence Prevention to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Workplace Violence Prevention

#300.20

Adopted:	June 22, 2010
Last Reviewed/Revised:	<u>May 1, 2025</u>
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Education
Next Scheduled Review:	<u>May 1, 2029</u>

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (the Board) is committed to fostering a Christ-centered, safe, respectful, and healthy working and learning environment for all staff, students, volunteers, visitors, and community members. This policy is enacted in accordance with the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, and compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1 (OHSA), the Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, and associated regulations.

The Board recognizes that the inherent right of all individuals to be treated with dignity and respect is central to Catholic values and beliefs and supports a safe and nurturing environment for all staff and students. As a Catholic Learning Community, we believe in the prevention of workplace violence and promoting a workplace in which all people including employees, supervisors, and members of the public respect one another and work together to achieve common goals.

The Board is committed to protecting employees from workplace violence from all sources. Violent behaviour in the workplace is unacceptable conduct and erodes the mutual trust and confidence that is essential to the well-being of our staff.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

The Board has a legal, ethical and moral responsibility to investigate threats and acts of violence against any employee. The purpose of this policy is to define and communicate expectations, roles, and responsibilities in preventing, reporting, and addressing workplace violence within our school board community. This policy applies to all employees, trustees, students, parents/guardians, volunteers, contractors, and members of the public who interact with the Board at Board workplaces, during Board-sponsored activities, and offsite Board business.

It is Ppolicy of the Board that:

- Every reasonable precaution in the circumstances is taken to protect employees from all sources of workplace violence; this includes protecting employees from the hazard of workplace violence [section 25(2)(h) Occupational Health and Safety ActOHSA].
- ~~There is an administrative procedure that implements this policy, which will outline the responsibilities of all parties and include measures and procedures to protect employees from workplace violence, a means of summoning immediate assistance and a process for employees to report incidents, or raise concerns;~~
- Information and instruction on the contents of this policy and the accompanying administrative procedure are provided to the employee to protect the health and safety of the employee [section 25(2)(a) Occupational Health and Safety ActOHSA];
- Equipment, materials and protective devices provided by the Board are maintained and in good condition [section 25(1)(b) Occupational Health and Safety ActOHSA]
- The Board's responsibilities relating to workplace violence are identified in terms of awareness, prevention and response;
- Assessment(s) reviewing the risks of violence in the workplace are conducted annually on or before November 30, and as often as necessary thereafter in accordance with the provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety ActOHSA to ensure protection of employees from workplace violence;
- Assistance and cooperation are provided to the Joint Health and Safety Committee(JHSC); and
- The person reporting a violent incident or any person who is negatively impacted by a violent act in the workplace is supported and will not be criticized or reprimanded for having made the report.

REFERENCES:

- Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Education Act
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)
- 200.09 Catholic Code of Conduct: Positive Student Behaviour, Progressive Discipline and Safety
- 200.13 Notification of Risk of Injury and Student Safety Plan Policy and Administrative Procedure
- 300.01 Workplace Harassment Policy and Administrative Procedure
- 300.16 Health and Safety Policy and Administrative Procedure
- 300.21 Work Refusal Administrative Procedure
- 400.04 Emergency Response Plan Policy
- 400.06 Security of Schools, Buildings and Grounds Policy
- 400.11 Video Security Surveillance Policy
- 400.15 Protection of Property Policy

FORMS:

- Violent Incident Report – Form 1 (located in the BHNCDSB Online Reporting Tool) N/A.

APPENDICES:

- N/A.

DEFINITIONS:

Bullying: aggressive and typically repeated behaviour (includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written, or other means) where:

- The behaviour is intended to have the effect of or ought to reasonably be known that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of:
 - Causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological or social harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or
 - Creating a negative environment for another individual, and
- The behaviour occurs in the context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race or disability

Complainant: a person who considers that he/she has been subjected to workplace violence related reprisal even though that individual may not lay a formal written complaint. Similarly, a person named as harasser in a complaint will be referred to as the Respondent.

Critical Injury: as defined in the ~~Occupational Health and Safety Act~~ OHSA, means an injury of serious nature that,

- Places life in jeopardy
- Produces unconsciousness
- Results in substantial loss of blood
- Involves the fracture of a leg or arm but not a finger or toe,
- Involves the amputation of a leg, arm, hand or foot but not a finger or toe,
- Consists of burns to a major portion of the body, or
- Causes the loss of sight in an eye.

Domestic Violence: a pattern of coercive behaviour that is used by one person in an intimate relationship to gain power and control over. Domestic violence includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse. Involves a person who has a relationship with a worker – such as a spouse or former spouse, current or former intimate partner or a family member – who may harm, or attempt or threaten to physically harm that worker at work. In these situations, domestic violence is considered workplace violence.

Resource Person: Principals, Managers, Supervisors, Supervisory Officer responsible for Human Resources or the Director of Education.

Sexual Violence: any sexual act, or act targeting a person's sexuality, gender identity, or gender expression, whether the act is physical or psychological in nature; that is committed, threatened, or attempted against a person without the person's consent, and includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, and sexual exploitation.

Workplace: any place where employees perform work or work-related duties or functions. Schools and school-related activities such as extracurricular activities and excursions comprise the workplace, as do the Board office and facilities. In addition, conferences and training sessions fall within the scope of the workplace.

Worker: Any person defined as a worker under the OHSA, including staff, volunteers, and interns

Workplace Violence: as defined in the ~~Occupational Health and Safety Act~~ OHSA, means:

- a) The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
- b) An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; and
- c) A statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

This Administrative Procedure was developed to support and implement Policy 300.20; to clarify roles and responsibilities, and to assist employees and their supervisors in preventing, responding to, reporting and managing workplace violence.

This policy applies to all Board employees, trustees and other users of the Board's facilities, such as members of consultative committees, parents, volunteers, contractors and employees of other organizations not related to the Board, but who work on or are invited onto Board premises. This policy also covers workplace violence by such persons which are proven to have repercussions that adversely affect the Board's learning and working environment.

This policy addresses workplace violence under the ~~Occupational Health and Safety Act~~ OHSA and applies to all employees. The policy addresses workplace violence from all sources which may include: employees, supervisors, trustees, students, parents, suppliers and members of the public.

The rights of students to a respectful working and learning environment, free from violence, are dealt with separately under applicable policies, legislation or regulations including, but not limited to, the Education Act, Ontario Schools Code of Conduct and codes of behaviour.

1.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 Shared Responsibility: Every Person involved with or working for the Board must:

- Treat co-workers, students and the public with respect and dignity;
- Reduce incidents of workplace violence, domestic violence and workplace sexual violence by practicing principles of prevention;
- Understand and comply with the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy, 300.20 and all related procedures; and
- Maintain confidentiality.

1.2 Trustee Responsibilities:

- Approve and support the implementation of this policy.

1.3 Director of Education and Senior Administration Responsibilities:

- Ensure compliance with the OHSA and the Education Act.
- Allocate necessary resources for training and program implementation.

1.31.4 Management Responsibilities:

The Principal/Supervisor will:

- Implement preventative measures and promote safe work environments.
- Ensure an employee works in a manner and with the protective devices, measures and procedures required by OHSA and its regulations [section 27(1)(a) OHSA];
- Ensure an employee uses or wears the equipment, protective devices or clothing that the employer requires to be used or worn [section 27(1)(b) OHSA];
- Identify and manage risks, and develop and implement prevention strategies that eliminate or reduce the risk;
- Create safe work plans;
- Advise an employee of the existence of any actual or potential danger to the health and safety of the employee of which the supervisor is aware [section 27(2)(a) OHSA];
- Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect employees [section 27(2)(c) OHSA];
- Investigate all cases of alleged violence reported by employees in a fair and timely manner; and
- Promote codes of conduct during each school year and provide employees with appropriate training related to the tasks they perform, in order to assist with recognizing the potential for violent acts and understanding how to deal with violent acts in the workplace.
- Conduct workplace violence risk assessments.
- Investigate reported incidents promptly.
- Communicate risks and updates to Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs).

Principals/Supervisors are reminded to inform their staff about:

- Policies and guidelines related to workplace violence and harassment.
- How to access or summon immediate assistance.
- Potential violent situations.
- Individuals with a violent past in circumstances where the employee can be expected to encounter the violent person in the course of his or her work and the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the employee to physical injury.
- Safe work plans.
- Workplace violence and harassment reporting procedures as outlined in the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Administrative Procedure and Workplace Harassment Policy and Procedure.
- Workplace violence and harassment investigation procedures as outlined in the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Administrative Procedure and Workplace Harassment Policy and Procedure.

1.41.5 Employee Responsibilities:

The employee will:

- Work in compliance with the OHSA and its regulations [section 28(1)(a) OHSA];
- Use or wear equipment, protective devices or clothing required by the employer [section 28(1)(b) OHSA];
- Report the absence of, or defect in, any equipment or protective device of which the employee is aware [section 28(1)(c) OHSA];
- Report any contravention of the OHSA or its regulations, or the existence of any hazard the employee knows of, to the employer or Supervisor [section 28(1)(d) OHSA];
- Not engage in any prank, contest, feat of strength, unnecessary running or rough and boisterous conduct [section 28(2)(c) OHSA]. While this type of behaviour may not constitute workplace violence, it must not be allowed. If allowed to continue, this behaviour may escalate into workplace violence; and
- Complete the mandatory Violence and Harassment in the Workplace online training module within one month of date of hire.
- Cooperate with investigations.

Employees must know how to:

- ~~Know how to~~ summon immediate assistance;
- ~~Know how to~~ report incidents of workplace violence to the Board and/or their Supervisor;
- ~~work with the~~ ~~Know that the~~ employer to will investigate and deal with incidents, threats or complaints;
- ~~Know, understand and be able to~~ carry out the measures and procedures that are in place to protect them from workplace violence; and
- ~~Be able to~~ carry out any other procedures that are part of this administrative procedure.

1.6 Joint Health and Safety Committee Responsibilities:

- Review reports of workplace violence.
- Recommend improvements to prevent workplace violence.
- Be consulted in risk assessments and program reviews.

1.51.7 Responsibilities Related to Domestic Violence:

1.5.41.7.1 Employees must be informed that they can report their concerns to the Principal/Supervisor if they fear domestic violence may enter the workplace. If this occurs, the Principals/Supervisors are responsible for creating an individual safety plan for the employee while they are at work. The safety plan should be developed in consultation with the employee.

1.5.21.7.2 An employer can become aware of domestic violence when an incident takes place at work or when concern is raised by an employee, co-worker, or someone else. Other indications could be threatening emails or phone calls at work or unwanted visits to the workplace by the aggressor. An employee must advise their Principal/Supervisor if they have applied for or obtained a restraining order that lists a work location as a protected area or requires a person to remain a certain distance from the employee at all times.

1.5.31.7.3 The Ministry of Labour states that even if the employee does not want any steps taken, the employer may still be required to take some action to protect the employee, depending on the circumstances. Principals and supervisors should work closely with a targeted employee to develop reasonable precautions to address the situation while attempting to respect the employee's privacy and sensitivity of the issue.

2.0 INFORMATION

2.1 Legislative Requirements

- 2.1.1** The OHSA includes workplace violence and workplace sexual violence as a hazard for which employers must develop prevention and response strategies.
- 2.1.2** These procedures support this legislated requirement and the Board's commitment to providing a safe working environment.
- 2.1.3** Under the OHSA, an employer must take every reasonable precaution under the circumstances for the protection of workers, when they are aware, or ought reasonably to be aware, that domestic violence may occur in the workplace and that it would likely expose a worker to physical injury.

2.2 Work Refusal

- 2.2.1** Under the OHSA, an employee can refuse to work if he or she has reason to believe he or she may be endangered by workplace violence [section 43(3)(b.1) OHSA].
- 2.2.2** The Act sets out a specific procedure that must be followed in a work refusal. It is important for all employees, supervisors and Joint Health and Safety Committees representatives to understand and follow this procedure. Teachers, however, cannot refuse work when a pupil's life, health or safety is in imminent jeopardy [section 3(3) of Regulation 857 (Teachers)]. For more information regarding Work Refusal, please refer to the Board's Work Refusal Administrative Procedure 300.21.

2.3 Personal Information Limits

- 2.3.1** The ~~Ontario~~ Occupational Health and Safety Act clarifies that employers and supervisors must provide employees with information, including personal information, related to a risk of workplace

violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour [section 32.0.5(3)]. However, this duty is limited and applies only when the:

- Employee can be expected to encounter the violent person in the course of his or her work; and,
- The risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the employee to physical injury.

2.3.1 Employers and supervisors must not disclose more information than is reasonably necessary for the protection of an employee from physical injury.

3.0 Summoning Immediate Assistance

3.1 Each school/site of the Board must develop and implement procedures for summoning immediate assistance when an employee is the victim or witness of a violent incident in the workplace, or when a violent incident in the workplace is likely to occur.

3.2 Procedures for summoning immediate assistance may vary depending on the circumstances. For example, summoning immediate assistance on a field trip may differ from summoning immediate assistance in a classroom.

3.3 Means of summoning immediate assistance include but are not limited to public address (PA) systems, handheld radios (walkie-talkie), phone/cellphone, panic buttons, code words, yelling for assistance from co-workers, and depending on the severity of the actual, attempted, or threatened workplace violence, it may be necessary to contact police or emergency services.

3.4 All employees who are expected to respond to the need for immediate assistance must be given instruction on their roles and responsibilities when responding to a violent incident.

3.5 The principal/supervisor will ensure that their school/site has sufficient procedures for summoning immediate assistance. If communication devices are used, they must be tested regularly to ensure they are operational and maintained as required.

4.0 Responding to an Act of Violence that Requires Immediate Assistance

4.1 The following immediate action needs to be taken when an Act of Violence occurs that poses an immediate risk of physical injury:

4.1.1 Control workplace access.

4.1.2 In the case of a critical injury, immediately report the incident to the Health and Safety Coordinator, or in their absence, another member of the Human Resources Department in accordance with the Incident/Accident Reporting procedures. The incident scene is to be preserved until an Inspector from the Ministry of Labour has had an opportunity to view it or to instruct you otherwise. A Joint Health and Safety representative may inspect the place where the injury occurred as indicated in the OHSA [section 8(14)].

4.1.3 Call the police when an act **or threat** of violence has occurred or when someone is threatened with violence in the workplace in the workplace presents imminent danger.

4.1.4 All incidents of violence/threat must be reported to the school's Supervisory Officer.

4.1.5 All incidents need to be documented **via the Board's Online Reporting System**.

4.1.6 Consideration must be given as to who needs to be immediately informed (i.e., family members).

4.1.7 A list of potential witnesses needs to be developed.

4.1.8 In consultation with the Supervisory Officer, or with Senior Management, an initial analysis ought to be conducted which will include a plan for the incident investigation.

5.0 Reporting Workplace Violence – Non-Immediate Assistance

5.1 Employees with concerns regarding workplace violence (actual violence, attempted violence, threatened violence) that do not require an immediate response (including concerns about domestic violence that may flow into the workplace) should follow the procedure below:

5.1.1 A person (Complainant) who considers that he/she has been subjected to or witnessed workplace violence, domestic violence, or sexual violence in the workplace, is required and encouraged to report an act of violence and should report the incident **via the Board's Health and Safety Reporting System, and** to their direct Supervisor immediately and seek any medical or emergency attention if required.

5.1.2 Where a person (Complainant) does not feel comfortable in reporting the matter to their direct supervisor, or in the case where the direct supervisor is alleged to have perpetrated the violent act, the Complainant should report the violence to the next higher level of management, who is in position to provide guidance and assistance with the complaint (i.e. Supervisor, Principal, Manager, Superintendent, Director, Ministry of Labour).

5.1.3 The Resource Person **assisting the Complainant** will advise the Complainant of the following:

- 5.1.3.1 The option of requesting the assistance of his/her principal, supervisor, in resolving the complaint. If the principal/supervisor is the person named by the Complainant, the Complainant should request assistance from the next higher level of management.
 - 5.1.3.2 The option of other avenues of recourse such as the right to utilize any applicable provisions of the Collective Agreement, file a complaint with the Ministry of Labour, file a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission, take civil action, or where appropriate, the right to file charges under the Criminal Code.
 - 5.1.3.3 The availability of counseling and other support services provided by the Board;
 - 5.1.3.4 The right to file a formal written complaint under the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy 300.0120 when the alleged perpetrator is an employee of the Board;
 - 5.1.3.5 The right to be represented or assisted by a union representative (as outlined in the applicable Collective Agreement) throughout the process;
 - 5.1.3.6 The right to withdraw from any further action in connection with the complaint, at any stage (even though the Board may need to continue to investigate the complaint).
 - 5.1.4 All incidents or complaints of workplace violence will be kept confidential except to the extent necessary to protect employees, to investigate the complaint, to take corrective action or as otherwise required by law.
- ~~5.2 Under the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy 300.0120, employees are required and encouraged to report an act of violence. Individuals who file a report or participate in an investigation under the Workplace Violence Prevention policy will be protected from reprisal or any negative consequences which may result from acting in accordance with this policy.~~ **stated above**

6.0 Conducting the Investigation

- 6.1 Following a violent event, the investigation process must be implemented immediately. The immediate supervisor (Principal/Supervisor/Superintendent) of the employee will conduct an investigation and may consult the Health & Safety Coordinator;
- 6.2 Where the immediate supervisor is the subject of the complaint, the next level of management will be responsible for conducting the investigation in consultation with the Health & Safety Coordinator;
- ~~6.3 A Ministry of Labour Health & Safety Inspector may, in writing, order an employer to cause an investigation described in clause 32.0.7(1)(a) of the Occupational Health & Safety Act to be conducted, at the expense of the employer, by an impartial person possessing such knowledge, experience or qualifications as are specified by the inspector, and to obtain, at the expense of the employer, a written report by that person from harassment section~~
- 6.4 The investigation must be fair, impartial and timely.
- 6.5 The principal/supervisor in consultation with Senior Management and, if applicable, the Ministry of Labour will determine whether it is reasonable to reassign employees or students (who may be victims of violent behaviour) while the investigation is in progress. Such transfers and reassignments are administrative measures and are not disciplinary in nature. These decisions may be necessary to ensure the safety of the employee in the workplace and also to ensure the integrity of the investigation.
- 6.26.6 Until the investigation is completed, the employee shall remain in a safe place as near as possible to his or her workstation and, if applicable, be available to the Ministry of Labour Inspector for the purposes of the investigation.
- 6.36.7 The Board will provide ~~medical~~medical, and counseling support as deemed necessary in the circumstances, consistent with programs described in collective agreements or by Board policy applicable to non-unionized staff.
- 6.46.8 During the investigation, unionized employees will be advised of their collective agreement rights.
- 6.56.9 It is critical that all relevant information be obtained; this means that a violent incident or unusual and threatening behaviour needs to be investigated with the ~~persons~~people directly involved. This will include the

person who reports the violence or the potentially violent circumstances, those to whom the violent behaviour was directed, other witnesses and the person or persons who are alleged to have engaged in ~~the~~ violent conduct.

6.66.10 The investigation results should be able to determine:

- What happened (series of events)
- What provoked the incident
- If the procedures in place were correctly followed
- If the intervention measures were appropriate
- If the existing safety procedures were adequate
- If the lines of communication were effective~~e~~
- If other preventative measures should be implemented
- If the situation could have been prevented

6.76.11 In conjunction with any discipline that may be imposed, the Board may reassign an employee during or after the Board's investigation, as deemed reasonable under the circumstances.

7.0 Communicating the Results of an Investigation

7.1 The results of the investigation will be communicated to the person who reported the circumstances and to others involved in the investigation that reasonably ought to be informed of the results.

7.2 The results of the investigation and any report created in the course of or for the purpose of the investigation is not considered a report relating to occupational health and safety, for the purposes of subsection 25(2) of the OHSA.

8.0 Training and Education

8.1 All employees must complete Workplace Violence Prevention Training annually.

8.2 New employees must complete training during onboarding. Training includes:

8.2.1 Recognizing warning signs;

8.2.2 Strategies for de-escalation;

8.2.3 Reporting and response protocols;

8.2.4 Legal rights and responsibilities under the OHSA and Education Act.

9.0 Confidentiality and Protection from Reprisal

9.1 Confidentiality of all parties involved in a report or investigation must be maintained, except where disclosure is necessary for investigation or corrective action.

9.2 Retaliation against any individual who reports workplace violence in good faith is strictly prohibited.

11.0 Corrective Actions

11.1 In the case where the perpetrator of a violent incident is a staff member, corrective measures may include:

11.1.1 Verbal/written warnings;

11.1.2 Mandatory training or counseling;

11.1.3 Reassignment or modification of duties;

11.1.4 Disciplinary action up to and including termination;

11.1.5 Reporting to police when applicable.

**REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD POLICY
COMMITTEE**

Prepared by: Kevin Greco, Superintendent of Education
Presented to: Policy Committee
Submitted on: June 10, 2025
Submitted by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

Workplace Harassment #300.01

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (the “Board”) recognizes the inherent right of all individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. As a Catholic Learning Community, the Board believes that all of its employees should work and learn in a respectful, non-threatening environment that is free from harassment in all of its forms and from all sources, including but not limited to employees, supervisors, parents, visitors, members of the public and any other individuals who come into contact with employees of the Board.

The Board has specific duties regarding Workplace Harassment and Workplace Sexual Harassment under the *Ontario Human Rights Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

DEVELOPMENTS:

This Policy and Administrative Procedure has been updated with definitions from the Ontario *Human Rights Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act* for: prohibited grounds, discrimination, and supervisor.

This Policy and Administrative Procedure includes measures for all employees to be educated on harassment in the workplace and the Board’s responsibilities related to harassment, identified in terms of awareness, prevention and response.

Revisions also include a more clearly defined three step procedural response to harassment complaints and more accurately defines the appeal process as a review of the procedural steps of the investigation.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers Policy and Administrative Procedure 300.01 Workplace Harassment to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Workplace Harassment

#300.01

Adopted:	April 23, 2002
Last Reviewed/Revised:	June, 2025
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Business Education
Next Scheduled Review:	November 1, 2029

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (the "Board") recognizes that the inherent right of all individuals to be treated with dignity and respect is central to Catholic values and beliefs and supports a safe and nurturing environment for all staff and students. As a Catholic Learning Community, the Board believes that all of its employees should work and learn in a respectful, non-threatening environment that is free from harassment in all of its forms and from all sources, including but not limited to employees, supervisors, parents, visitors, members of the public and any other individuals who come into contact with employees of the Board.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

The Board has specific duties regarding Workplace Harassment and Workplace Sexual Harassment under the Ontario *Human Rights Code and Occupational Health and Safety Act*. This Policy and Administrative Procedure clarifies roles and responsibilities regarding workplace harassment, to assist employees with their complaint and to provide direction to school administration, managers and supervisors in receiving and responding to a complaint. (moved up from below)

Employees are encouraged to report workplace harassment. The Board will investigate and deal with address all complaints or incidents of workplace harassment in a fair and timely manner. Information about a complaint or incident will not be disclosed except to the extent necessary to protect employees, to investigate the complaint or incident, to take corrective action or as otherwise required by law.

An employee will not be penalized for reporting an incident or participating in a workplace harassment investigation.

~~If an employee needs assistance, he or she may contact the Joint Health and Safety Committee, their union representative (if applicable), or the Human Rights Legal Support Centre.~~

~~In order to protect its employees, the Board will ensure that:~~

- ~~• In consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee, the Board will maintain a Workplace Harassment Administrative Procedure to implement this policy as required under clause 32.0.1(1)(b), of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. In procedure section~~

This Policy and Administrative Procedure includes measures for:

- a working environment that is free from harassment-
- all employees to be educated on harassment in the workplace, to ensure an understanding of the importance of the policy and to be made aware that harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- all those working for the Board, and those using the services of the Board, to be informed that harassment in the workplace or in the provision of services (i.e., educational and other) may be an offence under the law.

- employees to be made aware of the types of behaviour that may be considered harassment.
- the Board's responsibilities relative to harassment, identified in terms of awareness, prevention and response.
- an impartial external investigator to receive and investigate a report of workplace harassment, if the alleged respondent(s) are in a position of authority or perceived authority.

REFERENCES:

- Education Act
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Criminal Code of Canada
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Board Policy 300.12 Volunteers
- Board Policy 300.16 Health and Safety
- Board Policy 300.20 Workplace Violence Prevention

FORMS:

- **Form 1 - Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's Workplace Harassment Complaint Form**

APPENDICES:

- **N/A**

DEFINITIONS:

Complainant: A person who considers that they have been subjected to harassment or harassment related reprisal even though that individual may not lay a formal written complaint.

Disability: A person that has or has had, or is believed to have or have had:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- a mental disorder; or,
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Discrimination: The Ontario Human Rights Code states that "Every person who is an employee has a right to freedom from harassment in the workplace by the employer or agent of the employer or by another employee because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or disability."

Harassment: The *Ontario Human Rights Code* defines Harassment as “engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker, in a workplace, that is known, or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome”. This includes among other things, disparaging comments (i.e., inappropriate gender-related comments), distribution of discriminatory materials, behaviour intended to incite hatred or other verbal or physical conduct of a nature, which is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or where such conduct involves any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination as defined by the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Investigator: An Investigator may include a member of Human Resource Services, a Superintendent of Education, the Superintendent of Business, the Director of Education, or an external investigator.

Prohibited Grounds: Under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (OHRC), prohibited grounds refer to the personal characteristics that are legally protected from discrimination and harassment in areas such as employment, housing, services, and contracts. The prohibited grounds of discrimination are:

1. Age
2. Ancestry
3. Colour
4. Race
5. Citizenship
6. Ethnic origin
7. Place of origin
8. Creed
9. Disability
10. Family Status
11. Marital status
12. Gender identity
13. Gender expression
14. Receipt of Public Assistance
15. Record of offences (in employment - a conviction for an offence under provincial law or a conviction under the *Criminal Code* for which a pardon has been granted and not revoked)
16. Sexual orientation
17. Sex

Reprisal: A reprisal is an action, or threat, that is intended as retaliation for claiming or enforcing a right under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* or the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

Respondent: A person who is alleged to have engaged in workplace harassment as defined in *Definitions* of the *Workplace Harassment Policy*.

Sexual Solicitation or Advances: Section 7(3)(a) of the *Ontario Human Rights Code* sets out a person's right to be free from a sexual solicitation or advance made by a person in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the person where the person making the solicitation or advance knows or ought reasonably to know that it is unwelcome. This provision of the *Ontario Human Rights Code* is violated when the person making the solicitation or advance knows, or should reasonably know, that such behaviour is unwelcome.

Supervisors: The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* defines a supervisor as a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker.

Workplace Harassment: The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* defines workplace harassment as engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace, including virtually

through the use of information and communications technology, that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. The definition of workplace harassment includes workplace sexual harassment.

Behaviours that may be considered workplace harassment include:

- bullying;
- teasing;
- intimidating or offensive jokes or innuendos;
- displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials;
- offensive or intimidating telephone calls, email or text messages.

Workplace harassment is broad enough to include what is often called psychological harassment or personal harassment.

Reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of a worker or the workplace is not workplace harassment.

Workplace Sexual Harassment: The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* defines workplace sexual harassment as:

- Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in the workplace, including virtually through the use of information and communications technology, because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome; or
- Making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

~~**Workplace Harassment:** Any alleged behaviour that appears to meet the definition of harassment, workplace harassment or sexual harassment found in the *Definitions of the Workplace Harassment Policy*.~~

Carol Luciani, Chair of the Board

Date

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

1.0 Purpose:

- 1.1 The Board has a legal, ethical and moral responsibility to investigate allegations of workplace harassment. This policy applies to and addresses workplace harassment from all sources, including but not limited to employees, supervisors, parents, visitors, members of the public and any other individuals who come into contact with employees of the Board during the course of employment.

2.0 Responsibilities:

- 2.1 ~~The School Board Administration of the Board~~ is responsible for:

- discouraging and preventing employment-related harassment and harassment in the provision of services;
- ~~providing awareness of~~ promoting the Board's commitment to providing a harassment-free environment and the existence of the procedures available under the Policy;
- ensuring that an investigation is conducted into incidents and complaints of workplace harassment that is appropriate in the circumstances;
- ensuring that the employee who has allegedly experienced workplace harassment (the "Complainant") and the alleged harasser (the "Respondent"), if he or she is an employee of the Board, are informed in writing of the results of the investigation and of any corrective action that has been taken or that will be taken as a result of the investigation;
- imposing appropriate remedial and preventive measures, which may include discipline up to and including dismissal of an employee(s) when a complaint of harassment is found to have been substantiated;
- providing appropriate procedural assistance and response to a Complainant(s), as well as to Respondent(s);
- formally acknowledging to a person found to have been harassed that harassment has taken place and to provide them with support and assistance as appropriate;
- formally acknowledging to a person who has been named as a harasser if harassment is not found to have taken place;
- regularly reviewing the Workplace Harassment Policy and Administrative Procedure ~~to ensure alignment with the Workplace Harassment Policy;~~
- maintaining confidential records as required;
- providing training and resources for all those working for and providing services to the Board to fulfill their responsibilities under the Workplace Harassment Policy; and
- ~~completing~~ providing any additional training related to harassment in the workplace as required by the Board or through changes in legislation.

2.2 Employees are responsible for:

- promoting a working and learning environment that is free from harassment and assisting anyone who believes they are being or may have been harassed;
- notifying the supervisor or principal if they believe that a colleague or another person employed by the Board has been the victim of harassment; and
- completing the mandatory *Violence and Harassment in the Workplace* online training module within one month of date of hire.

3.0 Workplace Harassment

- 3.1 The Ontario *Human Rights Code* requires that employers have procedures to prevent and respond to allegations of harassment or discrimination. The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* has been amended to include workplace harassment (including sexual harassment) as a hazard for which employers must develop prevention and response strategies. These procedures support the legislated requirements and the Board's commitment to providing a safe working environment.
- 3.2 The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* defines workplace harassment as engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome or workplace sexual harassment. Harassment may also be a form of discrimination if based on one of the Prohibited Grounds as outlined in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

3.3 Types of behaviour which may constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

- jokes causing embarrassment or offence, told or carried out after the person telling the jokes has been advised that they are offensive, or that are by their nature clearly embarrassing or offensive;

- racial epithets; **homophobic, sexist or ethnic slurs**
- mimicking of person's accent or pronunciation of words;
- comments ridiculing individuals because of race-related characteristics or religious dress;
- the display of offensive material and graffiti (including electronic format, fax or voice mail);
- the display of symbols or emblems, including dress, that indicates or incites hatred or notions of supremacy;
- degrading words used to describe a person;
- derogatory remarks directed towards members of a group protected under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*;
- verbal and non-verbal abuse, intimidation or threats.
- **Abuse of authority which undermines performance or threatens career**

3.4 Types of behaviour associated with sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- leering (prolonged and intense staring);
- sexually suggestive or obscene comments or gestures;
- unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, propositions;
- sexual solicitation or advance from a person in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit;
- unwanted gifts;
- unwanted and persistent requests for dates;
- requests for sexual favors;
- unwanted touching;
- verbal abuse or threats of a sexual nature;
- bragging about sexual prowess;
- questions or discussions about sexual activities;
- stalking;
- gender-based remarks about a person's physical appearance or behaviour;
- persistent unwanted contact or attention after the end of a consensual relationship;
- sexual assault;
- any comments, gestures or above-identified behaviour in relation to sexual orientation or gender identity
- reprisal or threat of reprisal for rejection of a sexual solicitation or advance made by a person in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit.

3.5 Other Types of Harassment:

- 3.5.1 **Poisoned Work Environment:** The notion/concept of a poisoned environment is one which is created when a workplace is hostile or unwelcoming because of insulting or degrading comments or offensive actions aimed at an employee or others within the workplace. Negative comments or conduct which humiliates, demeans, **ostracizes** and is devaluing of members of groups targeted by the unwelcome behaviour can be considered to poison a work environment.
- 3.5.2 **Parental and Community Member Harassment:** Harassment may be understood as persistent parental or community criticism of, or interference with, school programs or teacher performance or a course of interaction that is vexatious, unwarranted or unsubstantiated. Parental harassment does not include the normal interaction of parents with school staff regarding their children. A staff member who believes they have been subjected to harassment by a parent **or community member** should follow the procedures for reporting workplace harassment as outlined in this Administrative Procedure.

3.6 ~~What is not Harassment:~~ A reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the workplace is not workplace harassment.

3.7 Harassment or discrimination involving a student of the Board will be addressed under the *Safe Schools Act* and should be reported to the appropriate School or Board Administration.

4.0 Reporting Workplace Harassment

4.1 Any employee of the Board has the right to file a complaint about situations which they believe to be discriminatory or harassing behaviour, whether they are directly involved as the victim of the behaviour or have observed the behaviour exercised against another or others.

4.2 Employees can report incidents or complaints of workplace harassment **and/or discrimination** verbally or in writing.

4.3 When submitting a written complaint, the Complainant ~~may~~ **should** provide the details of their complaint in writing or by completing the *Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's Workplace Harassment Complaint Form* (Form 1). **Employees can provide additional documentation with the form.**

4.4 If submitting a written complaint outside of the prescribed form, employees will include the following:

- Name of the Complainant(s) and contact information;
- Name of the Respondent(s), position and contact information (if known);
- Names of the witness(es) (if any) or other person(s) with relevant information to provide about the incident (if any) and contact information (if known);
- Details of what happened including date(s), frequency and location(s) of the alleged incident(s);
- Any supporting documents the Complainant(s) may have in their possession that are relevant to the complaint; and
- A list of any documents a witness, another person or the Respondent(s) may have in their possession that are relevant to the complaint.

4.5 Completed forms/ written complaints and any supporting documentation should be forwarded in confidence to the Manager of Human Resource **Services** at hrmanager@bhncdsb.ca

4.6 When reporting verbally, the reporting contact, along with the Complainant, will record the necessary information.

5.0 Employee **Complainant** Responsibilities: Bringing Forward a Complaint

5.1 Step 1: Informal Resolution

- i. A Complainant is encouraged to bring the matter to the attention of the Respondent by making direct and clear objection to the **respondent(s)** indicating that the comment or conduct is not acceptable. This may resolve the issue.
- ii. It is important that the Complainant document (note the details of) any communication they have with the Respondent (i.e., what was said, date, time, place, witnesses, etc.).
- iii. Where such an approach is attempted and does not produce a satisfactory result or where the Complainant does not feel able to bring the matter directly to the attention of the Respondent, the Complainant should report the harassment to their direct supervisor.
- iv. **The supervisor will support the complainant and assist in determining the best way to resolve the issue.**
- v. In the case where the Respondent is the Complainant's direct supervisor, the Complainant should report the harassment to the next level of management, **Human Resources Services** or another Board employee who is in a position to provide guidance and assistance with the complaint. This may include another Supervisor, Principal, Manager, Superintendent or Director of Education. **This person will assist in determining the best way to support the complainant and assist them in resolving the issue.**

5.2 Supervisor Responsibilities: Responding to a Complaint

- 5.2.1 Where an allegation of harassment **and/or discrimination** is brought forward by an employee, the Supervisor ~~or Board~~ receiving the receiving the complaint will advise the Complainant of the following:

- the availability of counseling and other support services provided by the Board, such as the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EAP);
- the right to withdraw from any further action in connection with the complaint at any stage. The Complainant should be advised that the Board has a legal obligation to investigate allegations of harassment and may continue to investigate the complaint even if they choose to withdraw from any further action;
- there may be times when the Board is legally required or determines it is necessary to conduct an investigation even if someone does not want to file a formal complaint. In that case, it would be considered an employer-initiated complaint.
- all incidents or complaints of workplace harassment, including identifying information about any individuals involved, shall be kept confidential by all parties involved in an investigation, except to the extent where it is necessary to reveal details in order to protect employees, to investigate the complaint, to take corrective action or otherwise as required by law.
- to follow the same procedures if they have been the subject of any act of reprisal for bringing an instance of discriminatory or harassing conduct to the attention of the Board through these procedures or otherwise.

5.2.2 The Supervisor will consult with Human Resource Services and discuss options for resolution with the Complainant:

- Step 2: The Principal/Supervisor (or next higher level of management if the Principal/Supervisor is the Respondent), will assist in resolving the complaint informally. This may include meeting with all parties to discuss the matter, exploring the notion of conflict resolution, mediation or any other options to affect a satisfactory solution. Human Resource Services will assist the supervisor in this process.
- Step 3: Submit a formal written complaint under Policy 300.01. If the Complainant chooses to ~~lay~~ file a formal written complaint, the Complainant should be advised that their complaint will be forwarded to the Manager of Human Resources to initiate the formal investigation process. The supervisor will advise the Complainant that the Respondent is entitled to receive the written complaint submitted information regarding the allegations made against them so that they can respond appropriately.

5.2.3 A complaint should be brought to the attention of the Board within six (6) months of the occurrence of the events which gave rise to the complaint. However, where a reasonable circumstance exists for failing to bring the complaint within six (6) months and the delay would not result in any prejudice to the Respondent, a complaint may be accepted beyond the six (6) month limit.

6.0 Step 2: Informal Resolution: Supervisor Facilitated

6.1 Failing resolution at step one the Principal/Supervisor (or next higher level of management if the Principal/Supervisor is the Respondent), will assist in resolving the complaint informally.

6.2 The Principal/Supervisor will:

- Consult with Human Resources Services where assistance is required.
- Meet with the Complainant to gather information and clarify the details of the complaint.
- Meet with the Respondent(s)
- Meet with any identified witnesses to corroborate information.
- Inquire in any other ways to gather relevant and necessary information.
- Collaborate with the Complainant on how they would like to proceed to remedy the situation (informal discussion with the Complainant and Respondent (i.e., mediation, conflict resolution, education).

6.3 All parties will be advised that they may be accompanied by a union representative (if applicable). The union representative will be advised that their participation in the investigation is to support the employee through the process.

- 6.4 All parties involved will be advised that confidentiality and professionalism must be maintained by all parties throughout and following the investigation process. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in disciplinary action.
- 6.5 Comprehensive and confidential notes will be kept by the supervisor/principal.
- 6.6 The principal/supervisor will prepare a written summary for all parties that may include recommendations to restore and maintain the professional relationship.

7.0 Step 3: Formal Complaint

- 7.1 The complaint may proceed to Step 3 in the following circumstances:
- In lieu of Step 1 or Step 2, if it is determined by Human Resource Services that the most appropriate avenue, given the circumstances surrounding the complaint, is to proceed to Step 3 (e.g., if the source of the complaint is the Complainant's Supervisor);
 - If Step 1 and/or Step 2 does not resolve the complaint;
 - In the case of Sexual Harassment.
 - In lieu of Step 1 and/or 2, at the option of the Complainant
- 7.2 Where the Complainant wishes to bring forward a formal written complaint, they may do so by providing the details of their complaint in writing or by completing the *Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's Workplace Harassment Complaint Form* (Form 1).
- 7.3 Once completed, the complaint, completed form and any supporting documentation should be forwarded in confidence to the Supervisor and the Manager of Human Resource Services at hrmanager@bhncdsb.ca.
- 7.4 Where other board personnel receive the complaint they will inform the Manager of Human Resource Services of the formal written complaint. This should be done within 24 hours of receiving the complaint.
- 7.5 The Manager of Human Resource Services will assign the investigation to the appropriate Board personnel who will conduct an impartial investigation into the complaint. Investigations may be conducted by a member of Human Resource Services, a Superintendent of Education, the Superintendent of Business, the Director of Education or an external investigator, dependent upon the position of the Complainant or Respondent and at the discretion of the Manager of Human Resource Services.
- 7.6 While the investigation is on-going, the Complainant, the Respondent, and any witnesses will be instructed not to discuss the complaint, incident(s) or the investigation with other employees or witnesses unless necessary to obtain advice about their rights.
- 7.7 The investigator may identify in-term measures to be implemented throughout the investigation for the safety and wellbeing of the parties involved.
- 7.8 The assigned Investigator will meet with the Complainant and Respondent individually and will outline the formal complaint process as outlined in the following stages.
- 7.9 The Board recognizes that anonymous complaints are difficult to investigate while still providing procedural fairness. Available options may be limited.

8.0 Formal Complaint Investigation Procedure

8.1 Stage 1: Documentation and Notification Process

- 8.1.1 The Investigator will advise the Complainant of their right to take other avenues of recourse such as:
- utilizing any applicable provisions of the Collective Agreement;
 - filing a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission;
 - filing a complaint with the Ministry of Labour;
 - resolving the issue through federation/union mechanism if both Complainant and Respondent are members of the same bargaining unit;
 - taking civil action;
 - reporting the incident to the police and taking action under the *Criminal Code*.

- 8.1.2 The Investigator will advise the Complainant that the Respondent is entitled to receive information regarding the allegations made against them so that they can respond accordingly.
- 8.1.3 Both parties will be advised that even if the matter is resolved to the satisfaction of the Complainant, the Board is obliged under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code* to continue the inquiry into the complaint and to take whatever remedial action is appropriate.

8.2 Stage 2: Investigation

- 8.2.1 The assigned Investigator will collect evidence by meeting with the Complainant and Respondent (separately), interview witnesses and otherwise investigate all aspects of the matter that are relevant in determining whether or not the allegations of harassment are substantiated.
- 8.2.2 All individuals who are interviewed will be advised that they may be accompanied by a union representative (if applicable). The union representative will be advised that their participation in the investigation is to support the employee through the process.
- 8.2.3 All parties involved in the investigation including the Complainant, Respondent and any witnesses will be advised that confidentiality must be maintained by all parties throughout and following the investigation process.
- 8.2.4 Comprehensive, confidential notes will be kept by the Investigator.

8.3 Stage 3: Report and Conclusion

- 8.3.1 At the conclusion of the investigation, the Investigator will prepare a summary of the investigation findings.
- 8.3.2 Both the Complainant and the Respondent will be informed in writing whether the allegations of harassment are substantiated or unsubstantiated.
- 8.3.3 The Investigator will recommend appropriate remedial action which should be taken in the circumstances. It should be noted that remedial action may be recommended regardless if the allegations of harassment are substantiated or unsubstantiated.
- 8.3.4 Such remedial action may include, but not be limited to:
 - counseling;
 - education or training related to harassment;
 - formal written apology;
 - change of work assignment of the Complainant and/or Respondent;
 - disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- 8.3.5 The Investigator will advise the appropriate Supervisor of the investigation findings in writing, and recommend any disciplinary and/or remedial action to be taken. The Supervisor, in consultation with a member of Senior Administration is responsible for determining the level of disciplinary action and/or remedial action to be taken, based on the investigative findings.

8.4 Stage 4: ~~Appeal~~ **Review of the Decision**

- ~~8.4.1~~ **8.4.1** The Complainant and/or Respondent may ~~appeal~~ **request a review of the decision** ~~investigation process~~ to the Director of Education within 10 days of the receipt of the investigation findings. The Director will conduct a review of the ~~investigative findings and determine~~ **investigation to determine** whether:
 - ~~i. the investigators failed to comply with these procedures;~~
 - ~~ii. new relevant evidence becomes known after the final decision~~ **and before the expiry of the ten working days.**
- ~~8.4.18~~ **8.4.2** ~~This process does not include a review of the final decision regarding a claim that the conclusions drawn by the investigator(s) were incorrect.~~
- ~~8.4.28~~ **8.4.3** Based on the appeal review, the Director may recommend an additional investigation be conducted either by another Investigator employed by the Board or by an external investigator.

8.5 Retention of Records

- 8.5.1 Records of the investigation will include:
- a. a copy of the complaint or details about the incident;
 - b. a record of the investigation including notes;
 - c. a copy of witness statements, if taken;
 - d. a copy of the investigation report;
 - e. a summary of the results of the investigation that was provided to the Complainant and to the Respondent, if an employee of the Board;
 - f. a record of any corrective action taken to address the complaint or incident of workplace harassment;
 - g. a copy of any appeal related records;
 - h. a copy of any corrective action taken to address the complaint or incident of workplace harassment.
- 8.6 All documentation collected during the formal process must be kept confidential and maintained in a filing system in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. All written documents must be kept in a sealed envelope and stored in the office of the Manager of Human Resources.
- 8.7 The results of an investigation, and any report created in the course of, or for the purposes of the investigation, are not a report respecting occupational health and safety for the purposes of subsection 25(2) in the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and therefore are not required to be shared with the Joint Health and Safety Committee.
- 8.8 For the purposes of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, records must be kept for at least one year from the conclusion of the investigation.

9.0 Reprisal

- 9.1 The Ontario *Human Rights Code* (Section 8) and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (Section 50), require that employers protect employees from reprisal or threats of reprisal. A reprisal is an action, or threat, that is intended as retaliation for claiming or enforcing a right under the *Code*.
- 9.2 Employees who file a complaint under the Workplace Harassment policy or who are involved in an investigation related to Workplace Harassment will be protected against reprisal and retaliation.
- 9.3 Under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, reprisal against an individual will be treated as harassment when such actions occur, for;
- a) having invoked the Policy (whether on behalf of oneself or another individual);
 - b) having participated or cooperated in an inquiry or investigation process under the Policy; or
 - c) having associated with a person who has invoked the Policy or participated in these Administrative Procedures.
- 9.4 In the event that an employee is shown to have not acted in good faith and has initiated a complaint under the Workplace Harassment policy in a frivolous or malicious manner, the Board may take formal disciplinary action against the Complainant. Such discipline is not considered reprisal or a breach of this policy. Documentation regarding the disciplinary action will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

10.0 Consequences of Engaging in Harassment

10.1 Under Statute

- 10.1.1 Persons who engage in harassment prohibited by the Ontario *Human Rights Code* are liable under the *Code* for damages payable to the Complainant. In addition, a person who violates the *Code* or who obstructs a Human Rights investigation may also be liable to prosecution under the *Code* and, on conviction, subject to a monetary fine as determined by the Ontario Human Rights Commission.
- 10.1.2 Persons who engage in workplace harassment prohibited by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* are liable for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- 10.1.3 Persons who have knowledge of, or who acquiesce in harassment may be found in violation of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, or the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, as having indirectly engaged in prohibited activity and are subject to the same consequences as those who directly engage in discrimination or harassment.

10.2 At Common Law

- 10.2.1 Persons who engage in harassment or discrimination, directly or indirectly, may be sued.

10.3 In Employment

- 10.3.1 Employees who engage, directly or indirectly, in discrimination or harassment may be disciplined up to and including dismissal.

11.0 Confidentiality

- 11.1 The Board understands that it is difficult to come forward with a complaint of harassment and recognizes a Complainant's interest in keeping the matter confidential.
- 11.2 To protect the interests of the Complainant, the Respondent and any others who may report incidents of harassment, confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation process to the extent practicable and appropriate under the circumstances.

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD POLICY COMMITTEE

Prepared by: Kevin Greco, Superintendent of Education

Presented to: Policy Committee

Submitted on: June 10, 2025

Submitted by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

Duty to Report #300.23

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board ("the Board") is committed to fostering safe and inclusive school communities that promote and support student well-being and achievement. The Board believes all staff have an obligation to contribute to building a culture of care and are equipped to respond to safety risks, including their duty to report any child in need of protection to the local Child and Family Services (CFS).

The duty to report a child in need of protection to the local Child and Family Services applies to all employees, volunteers, and parents/guardians of the Board. All employees, volunteers, and parents/guardians of the Board are directed to follow the *Joint Child Protection Protocol* at the link in the References section.

Child and Family Services help to protect infants, children and youth who are experiencing abuse or are at risk of experiencing abuse, physically, sexually, emotionally or through neglect or abandonment. Section 125(1) of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* (CYFSA) provides direction for reporting a child in need of protection to Child and Family Services. This includes a child that is or may be suffering from abuse or neglect by a caregiver, or by a person having charge of the child. Every person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is "in need of protection" shall immediately report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to Child and Family Services. The Ontario Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum No. 9 *Duty to report children in need of protection* further emphasizes this duty, requiring all school staff to be aware of their responsibilities under the CYFSA and ensuring that school board policies conform to the Act's provisions.

DEVELOPMENTS:

This is a NEW Board Policy and Administrative Procedure. It clearly articulates that all staff play an important role in safeguarding the physical and mental health and well-being of children and youth by recognizing, preventing, and responding to children who may be in need of protection. This Policy and Administrative procedure point the reader to detailed staff responsibilities, legal requirements, procedures, child protection protocols, referrals and investigations that are outlined in the Board's *Joint Child Protection Protocol*.

Section 125(1) of the Act confirms that if a person, including a person who performs professional or official duties with respect to children and youth, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be in need of protection, the person shall immediately report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to Child and Family Services. This includes a child that is or may be suffering from all

types of abuse, emotional harm, exploitation, and/or neglect by a caregiver, or by a person having charge of the child. Therefore, teachers, principals, and other professionals in the course of performing their professional duties must report this information without delay to Child and Family Services.

To comply with Erin's Law (Child, Sexual Abuse Prevention and Reporting) this Policy and Administrative Procedure also states that the Board will ensure that important information regarding child sexual abuse prevention and reporting, counselling and resources are available for students, staff, parents and that the Board will ensure that students are annually learning about topics of child sexual abuse prevention and reporting.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers Policy and Administrative Procedure #300.23 Duty to Report to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Duty to Report

#300.23

Adopted:	March 2025
Last Reviewed/Revised:	NEW
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Education
Next Scheduled Review:	2029

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (“the Board”) is committed to fostering safe and inclusive school communities that promote and support student well-being and achievement. The Board believes all staff have an obligation to contribute to building a culture of care and are equipped to respond to safety risks, including their duty to report any child in need of protection to the local Child and Family Services.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

The duty to report a child in need of protection to the local Child and Family Services (CFS) applies to all employees, volunteers, and parents/guardians of the Board. All employees, volunteers, and parents/guardians of the Board are directed to follow the *Joint Child Protection Protocol* at the link in the References section.

Child and Family Services help to protect infants, children and youth who are experiencing abuse or are at risk of experiencing abuse, physically, sexually, emotionally or through neglect or abandonment. Section 125(1) of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* (CYFSA) provides direction for reporting a child in need of protection to Child and Family Services. This includes a child that is or may be suffering from abuse or neglect by a caregiver, or by a person having charge of the child. Every person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is "in need of protection" shall immediately report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to Child and Family Services. The Ontario Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum No. 9 *Duty to report children in need of protection* further emphasizes this duty, requiring all school staff to be aware of their responsibilities under the CYFSA and ensuring that school board policies conform to the Act's provisions.

REFERENCES:

- Child, Youth and Family Services Act (2017) (amended, 2021)
- Policy/Program Memorandum 9, Duty to report children in need of protection
- Erin's Law (Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and Reporting), 2024, S.O. 2024, c. 33 - Bill 123 - An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to child sexual abuse prevention and reporting
- Joint Child Protection Protocol
- BHNCDSB Policy 200.23 Equity and Inclusive Education
- BHNCDSB Policy 200.07 Voluntary Indigenous Self-Identification
- BHNCDSB Policy 200.51 Anti-Human Trafficking
- BHNCDSB Police School Board Protocol

FORMS:

- Report of Reasonably Suspected Child Protection Concern Form – Form 1
- Child and Family Services School Visits Log – Form 2

APPENDICES:

- N/A

DEFINITIONS:

Child and Family Services (CFS): also known as Children's Aid Societies, or Child Welfare Agencies, are government or non-profit organizations that focus on the well-being of children and families, particularly those facing difficult situations, by providing services like child protection, family support, and placement options.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

1.0 Responsibilities

- 1.1 All staff play an important role in safeguarding the physical and mental health and well-being of children and youth by recognizing, preventing, and responding to children who may be in need of protection.
- 1.2 Detailed staff responsibilities, legal requirements, procedures, child protection protocols, referrals and investigations are outlined in the Board's *Joint Child Protection Protocol*.

2.0 Requirements

- 2.1 Section 125(1) of the Act confirms that if a person, including a person who performs professional or official duties with respect to children and youth, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be in need of protection, the person shall immediately report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to Child and Family Services. This includes a child that is or may be suffering from all types of abuse, emotional harm, exploitation, and/or neglect by a caregiver, or by a person having charge of the child. Therefore, teachers, principals, and other professionals in the course of performing their professional duties must report this information without delay to Child and Family Services.
- 2.2 Upon making a report to the Child and Family Services, the principal and/or school personnel shall record the information including the name of the intake worker and the date and time of the report in the *Report of Reasonably Suspected Child Protection Concern Form (Form 2)*.

3.0 Record of Visits

- 3.1 In cases where the Child and Family Services worker must visit the school as part of an investigation, the principal will make the student and the person who made the report available for an interview in a discrete location.
- 3.2 Upon arrival at school, the investigating CFS Worker shall produce proper identification and complete the *Child and Family Services School Visits Log (Form 1)*.

4.0 Human Trafficking

- 4.1 All school board staff, volunteers and families work together to safeguard the physical and mental health and well-being of children and youth by recognizing, preventing, and responding to human trafficking in culturally sensitive ways.
- 4.2 Staff will identify the warning signs of human trafficking and safely connect those who have been, or are at risk of being trafficked, to the appropriate responsive school and community programs and services. The Board's Anti-Human Sex Trafficking Policy 200.51 guides the ongoing response to students who may be at risk of trafficking.

5.0 Indigenous Peoples

- 5.1 The duty to report extends to all students. However, as members of distinct, self-determining Nations, Indigenous Peoples have the right to be consulted in determining best approaches to the care and response in duty to report scenarios and incidents of human trafficking. The Board recognizes the importance of consultation and outreach with Indigenous rightsholders, in the work to prevent and respond to human trafficking in Indigenous communities.

6.0 Confidentiality

- 6.1 Board staff will respect confidentiality, privacy, and related requirements when they respond to students who are at risk. The Board acknowledges the limits of confidentiality under the law, in particular section 125(1) of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act that requires all adults to immediately report to the local Child and Family Services any reasonable grounds to suspect that a child below the age of 16 is in need of protection, including incidents of human trafficking.

7.0 Ongoing Reporting

- 7.1 Subsection 125(2) of the act states that the duty to report is an ongoing obligation. If a person has made a report about a child to Child and Family Services and has additional reasonable grounds to suspect that the child is or may be in need of protection, that person must make a further report to Child and Family Services.

8.0 Older Children

- 8.1 Subsection 125(4) of the act clarifies that, if the child is 16 or 17 years old, there is no duty to make a report, but there are circumstances where a person may make a report concerning older children as described in paragraphs 1 to 11 of subsection 125(1).

9.0 Consequences of Failure to Report

- 9.1 Subsection 125(5) of the act makes it an offence where a person performing professional or official duties with respect to children fails to report a child who they suspect is or may be in need of protection. Subsection 125(6) expressly identifies teachers, designated early childhood educators, and school principals as such persons. If such professionals obtain information, in the course of performing their professional or official duties, that leads them to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, they must report this suspicion. If they do not report the suspicion, they are liable, upon conviction of the offence, to a fine of up to \$5000.

10.0 Protection for Persons Making Reports

- 10.1 The Board supports subsection 125(10) of the Child and Family Services Act which confirms that no action for making a report will be instituted against a person who acts in accordance with the duty to report in section 125, unless the person acts maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the suspicion.

11.0 Erin's Law (Child, Sexual Abuse Prevention and Reporting)

- 11.1 The Board will ensure that information regarding child sexual abuse prevention and reporting, and available counselling and resources for children who are sexually abused, is made available to all students, staff, parents and guardians of students in its schools.
- 11.2 The Board will ensure that students in its schools are engaged annually, in a developmentally appropriate manner, regarding the topics of child sexual abuse prevention and reporting, including age-appropriate techniques to recognize child sexual abuse and telling a trusted adult.

RECORD OF CHILD WELFARE AGENCY SCHOOL VISITS

[illegible]

PRINCIPAL TO RETAIN THIS RECORD
IN THE CHILD WELFARE AGENCY LOG BOOK FILE
IN A SECURE LOCATION

Retention: E+1 (E = case resolved)

Child Protection Protocol - February 2025

Child and Family Services of Grand Erie, Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic DSB, Grand Erie DSB

REPORT OF REASONABLY SUSPECTED CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN FORM

To be used in preparation of making a report to child welfare.

Not all information is required but can be useful.

Child and Family Services of Grand Erie 519-753-8681

Ogawadeni:deo 519-445-1864

Student's Last Name	First Name	Gender	Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"><div><input type="radio"/> Female</div><div><input type="radio"/> Male</div><div><input type="radio"/> Trans/Non-binary</div></div>	<input type="text"/>

Date of Report	Time of Report	Grade / Class	Teacher
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

School	School Address	School Telephone
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Home Address (Street No. / Apt)	City	Postal Code	Home Telephone
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Religion or Culture (if known):	Languages Spoken at Home:
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Indigenous identity (if known):

Is the student Indigenous? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

If yes, indicate: ☐ Status ☐ Non-Status ☐ Inuit ☐ Metis

If known, indicate the student's First Nation or other membership/affiliation:

Medical Concerns or Relevant Special Needs

Siblings

Last Name	First Name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Mother / Guardian Last Name	First Name	Business No.	Home or Cell No.
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Father / Guardian Last Name	First Name	Business No.	Home or Cell No.
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Keep your consultation to the minimum.
This report form and any other written records may be subpoenaed in subsequent legal proceedings.

- What the child said and to whom
- The alleged offender (s) and relationship to the child
- When and where the incident occurred
- Names of any other children who might be involved
- Brief description of easily visible marks or injuries or evidence of neglect

Details of Reasonably Suspected Abuse / Neglect (use an additional form if further space is required)

Person Making the Report :

Last Name

First Name

Position

--	--

Name of Child Welfare Agency

Name of the Person to Whom the Information was Reported

Investigation outcome:

Investigation Undertaken? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ UNKNOWN

Follow up received? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ UNKNOWN

If yes, note date of follow up
in this format DDMMYYYY:

Status of file

Principal / Supervisor
or Designate Signature

Print Name

Retention: E+1 (E = case resolved)

Principal to retain this record in Child Welfare Agency Log Book file in a secure location.

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD POLICY COMMITTEE

Prepared by: Phil Wilson, Superintendent of Education
Presented to: Policy Committee
Submitted on: June 10, 2025
Submitted by: Michael McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

Service Animal In School Facilities #200.40 Public Session

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (the "Board") recognizes the dignity, worth, and inclusive potential of every student as grounded in Catholic values and supported by human rights legislation. Service Dogs may serve as an accommodation to support students with disability-related needs, enabling access to the Ontario curriculum and full participation in school life.

The Service Animals in School Facilities Policy (#200.40) was last reviewed in 2011. Since then, legal and practical understanding of service animals in educational settings has evolved, particularly with the introduction of Policy/Program Memorandum No. 163 and growing awareness around the use of Service Dogs to support students with disabilities including Autism, PTSD, and mobility challenges.

DEVELOPMENTS:

The revised policy reflects a comprehensive update to align with current legal frameworks including the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and PPM 163. Major revisions include:

- Terminology Alignment: The policy has moved away from the term 'Certified Service Dog' and now uses the term 'Service Dog' throughout, aligning with the definitions outlined in the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).
- Expanded Scope and Responsibilities: Responsibilities of principals, parents/guardians, students, and Board personnel are explicitly outlined to ensure consistency and accountability in decision-making.
- Procedural Enhancements:
 - Introduction of case conference protocols, training requirements for staff and handlers, and templates for communication with school and transportation communities.
- Exclusion criteria that consider health, safety, and competing rights (e.g., allergies, phobias).
- A detailed process for admitting a Service Dog, including documentation, transition planning, and communication strategies.
- Staff Training Requirements: A significant enhancement in the revised policy is the requirement that all Educational Assistants (EAs), classroom teachers, Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs), and principals who may be involved with a student supported by a service dog shall receive training on the role, function, and integration of service dogs within the school environment. This training is essential to ensure a safe, consistent, and inclusive educational experience for the student.
- Furthermore, the policy now mandates that a minimum of three Educational Assistants shall be trained and certified as service dog handlers. This ensures uninterrupted support for the student in the event of staff absences or leaves. In schools with fewer than three Educational Assistants, all EAs should be trained, ensuring continuity of care and equitable access to accommodations.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers the Service Animals in School Facilities Policy #200.40 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Service Animals in School Facilities

#200.40

Adopted:	June 7, 2011
Last Reviewed/Revised:	June 10, 2025
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Education
Next Scheduled Review:	2029

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board believes that all persons are created in God's image and possesses inherent worth and dignity. ~~Every individual has an inherent and immeasurable worth and dignity. Each human life is considered sacred.~~ We are committed to fostering a safe, caring, inclusive, and accepting Catholic ~~providing students with full access to schools in a safe, caring, accepting, and healthy~~ learning environment that enables each student to reach ~~his or her~~ their fullest potential. The use of a Certified Service Dog ~~may be an appropriate accommodation is an intervention strategy that is recognized as an aid~~ to support students with ~~special~~ disability-related needs.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

~~It is the policy of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board that a student with a disability shall be accommodated in such a way as to enable success while preserving and enhancing the student's personal dignity, self respect and self worth. These accommodations may include use of a Certified Service Dog.~~

~~This policy applies to all students in board-operated schools who may require the support of a Service Dog as an accommodation for a disability, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act, and other applicable legislation.~~

REFERENCES:

- Education Act
- Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (2005)
- Human Rights Code (Ontario)
- Blind Person's Rights Act
- PPM 163: School Board Policies on Service Animals
- Special Education in Ontario Schools: Kindergarten to Grade 12: ~~A Policy and Resource Guide 2017 (2017)~~
- ~~Individual Education Plan: A Resource Guide 2004~~
- Multi-Year Integrated Accessibility Plan ~~2018-2023 Policy 200.32~~
- ~~Related Board Policies and Procedures (e.g., Transportation, Field Trips, Admission of Students)~~
- ~~Integrated Accessibility Standards — Customer Service Administrative Procedure 200.34~~
- ~~Admission of Students Policy and Administrative Procedure 200.14~~
- Educational Field Trip and Excursions Policy and Administrative Procedure 500.01

- ~~• Nutrition — Creating a Healthy Environment Policy and Administrative Procedure 200.01~~
- ~~• Transportation of Students Policy and Administrative Procedure 400.19~~
- ~~• Volunteers Policy and Administrative Procedure 300.12~~

DEFINITIONS:

Service Dog: A dog trained to assist a person with a disability with daily living tasks and/or accessing the curriculum. Training must be from a school accredited by the International Guide Dog Federation or Assistance Dogs International.

Handler: The individual with the disability (typically the student) who manages the Service Dog.

Support Person: A trained adult who may be required to assist in handling the dog if the student is unable.

Competing Rights: Situations where the rights of one individual (e.g., use of a Service Dog) may affect the rights of others (e.g., severe allergies).

Adult Student: A student who is 18 years or older, or 16 or 17 years of age who has removed themselves from the care and control of their parent/guardian.

Certified Service Dogs¹: This refers to three recognized categories of trained dogs used to accommodate the special needs of some students. These include:

- a) **Guide Dogs:** for persons who are visually impaired (blind/low vision)
- b) **Hearing Dogs:** for persons who are hearing impaired (deaf/hard of hearing)
- c) **Service Dogs:** for persons with disabilities (students using wheelchairs, students with Autism, students with Multiple Sclerosis, seizure disorder or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD))

A Certified Service Dog is a working dog and does not interact with employees or other students. The dog will generally have a black leather Special Skills Dog (SSD) harness and leash and saddlebag/or vest.

Handler: The dog handler for the purpose of the Board's policy, regulation and administrative procedure is the student with the disability-related needs for whom the Certified Service Dog is performing services and who is managing and responsible for the Certified Service Dog's performance of those services. It is the expectation of the Board that students utilizing a Certified Service Dog will be the dog's Handler.

¹ For the purposes of the Board's policy and administrative procedure, includes service dogs whose training schools are members and accredited with either the International Guide Dog Federation or Assistance Dogs International and who are handled by a student with a disability who receives the dog's services to assist with daily living activities and/or access to the Ontario curriculum

¹ For the purposes of the Board's policy and administrative procedure, a Service Dog refers to a dog trained by an organization accredited by the International Guide Dog Federation or Assistance Dogs International, used to support a student with a disability in performing daily living tasks and/or in accessing the Ontario curriculum. Where the student cannot independently manage the dog, a trained adult may assist as a support person.

Service Animals in School Facilities

#200.40

Adopted:	June 7, 2011
Last Reviewed/Revised:	
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Education
Next Scheduled Review:	

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board believes that all persons are created in God's image and possesses inherent worth and dignity. ~~Every individual has an inherent and immeasurable worth and dignity. Each human life is considered sacred.~~ We are committed to fostering a safe, caring, inclusive, and accepting Catholic ~~providing students with full access to schools in a safe, caring, accepting, and healthy~~ learning environment that enables each student to reach ~~his or her~~ their fullest potential. The use of a ~~Certified~~ Service Dog ~~may be an appropriate accommodation is an intervention strategy that is recognized as an aid to support students with special disability-related needs.~~

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

~~It is the policy of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board that a student with a disability shall be accommodated in such a way as to enable success while preserving and enhancing the student's personal dignity, self-respect and self-worth. These accommodations may include use of a Certified Service Dog.~~

~~This policy applies to all students in board-operated schools who may require the support of a Service Dog as an accommodation for a disability, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act, and other applicable legislation.~~

REFERENCES:

- Education Act
- Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (2005)
- Human Rights Code (Ontario)
- Blind Person's Rights Act
- PPM 163: School Board Policies on Service Animals
- Special Education in Ontario Schools: Kindergarten to Grade 12: ~~A Policy and Resource Guide 2017 (2017)~~
- ~~Individual Education Plan: A Resource Guide 2004~~
- Multi-Year Integrated Accessibility Plan ~~2018-2023 Policy 200.32~~
- Related Board Policies and Procedures (e.g., Transportation, Field Trips, Admission of Students)
- ~~Integrated Accessibility Standards — Customer Service Administrative Procedure 200.34~~
- ~~Admission of Students Policy and Administrative Procedure 200.14~~
- ~~Educational Field Trip and Excursions Policy and Administrative Procedure 500.01~~
- ~~Nutrition — Creating a Healthy Environment Policy and Administrative Procedure 200.01~~
- ~~Transportation of Students Policy and Administrative Procedure 400.19~~
- Volunteers Policy and Administrative Procedure 300.12

APPENDICES:

- Appendix A – Information for Parents/Guardians Requesting a ~~Certified~~ Service Dog in the School
- Appendix B – Request for ~~Certified~~ Service Dog Involvement with a Student
- Appendix C – Administrative Checklist for Implementation of a ~~Certified~~ Service Dog in a School Environment
- Appendix D – Management Plan for the Care of the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog
- Appendix E – Sample Letter to School Community
- Appendix F – Sample Letter to the Families of Children in the Class(es)
- Appendix G – Sample Letter to those Sharing Transportation

DEFINITIONS:

Service Dog: A dog trained to assist a person with a disability with daily living tasks and/or accessing the curriculum. Training must be from a school accredited by the International Guide Dog Federation or Assistance Dogs International.

Handler: The individual with the disability (typically the student) who manages the Service Dog.

Support Person: A trained adult who may be required to assist in handling the dog if the student is unable.

Competing Rights: Situations where the rights of one individual (e.g., use of a Service Dog) may affect the rights of others (e.g., severe allergies).

Adult Student: A student who is 18 years or older, or 16 or 17 years of age who has removed themselves from the care and control of their parent/guardian.

Certified Service Dogs¹: This refers to three recognized categories of trained dogs used to accommodate the special needs of some students. These include:

d) **Guide Dogs:** for persons who are visually impaired (blind/low vision)

e) **Hearing Dogs:** for persons who are hearing impaired (deaf/hard of hearing)

f) **Service Dogs:** for persons with disabilities (students using wheelchairs, students with Autism, students with Multiple Sclerosis, seizure disorder or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD))

~~A Certified Service Dog is a working dog and does not interact with employees or other students. The dog will generally have a black leather Special Skills Dog (SSD) harness and leash and saddlebag/or vest.~~

Handler: The dog handler for the purpose of the Board's policy, regulation and administrative procedure is the student with the disability-related needs for whom the Certified Service Dog is performing services and who is managing and responsible for the Certified Service Dog's performance of those services. It is the expectation of the Board that students utilizing a Certified Service Dog will be the dog's Handler.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

Purpose

To provide direction for school administrators in supporting the admission and integration of a Service Dog in schools as a disability-related accommodation.¹

~~The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board believes that as a Catholic learning community, we need to provide safe, nurturing and inclusive environments for learning, working and growing. The purpose of the Administrative Procedure is to provide direction to school administrators regarding the accommodation process for students desiring to use their Certified Service Dogs while attending school.¹~~

Responsibilities

Superintendent of Education: ~~The Superintendent of Education will Oversees~~ implemention the policy and administrative procedure board wide.

Principal/Vice-Principal and/or Designate: ~~Coordinates request and integration process. Principals are to ensure that the procedures are followed and appropriate forms are completed and on file and that all staff, students and others are properly~~

¹ ~~For the purposes of the Board's policy and administrative procedure, includes service dogs whose training schools are members and accredited with either the International Guide Dog Federation or Assistance Dogs International and who are handled by a student with a disability who receives the dog's services to assist with daily living activities and/or access to the Ontario curriculum~~

¹ For the purposes of the Board's policy and administrative procedure, a Service Dog refers to a dog trained by an organization accredited by the International Guide Dog Federation or Assistance Dogs International, used to support a student with a disability in performing daily living tasks and/or in accessing the Ontario curriculum. Where the student cannot independently manage the dog, a trained adult may assist as a support person

~~trained on how to interact with the student who is accompanied by the Certified Service Dog.~~

School Staff: ~~School staff will implement the Service Animals in School Facilities administrative procedure in their schools. Support inclusive practices and implement procedures.~~

Parents/Guardians: ~~Parents/Guardians will follow the Service Animals in School Facilities administrative procedure. Submit required documentation, comply with policy and support dog care.~~

Student: ~~Students will follow the Service Animals in School Facilities administrative procedure. Participate in the care and management of the Service Dog as appropriate.~~

Information

The Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) provide the legal foundation for students with disabilities to receive appropriate accommodations, which may include the use of a service animal. While school buildings are not considered public spaces under the Education Act, the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board recognizes that service animals may be a necessary accommodation to support a student's access to the Ontario curriculum and participation in school activities. In accordance with Policy/Program Memorandum No. 163 (2019), the Board will consider requests for service animals on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the duty to

accommodate to the point of undue hardship.

A service animal is one that is individually trained to perform tasks that support a student's disability-related needs. The student (or their parent/guardian) may be asked to provide documentation confirming the animal's training and how it assists with the student's functional needs at school. While emotional support animals and therapy animals are not recognized as service animals under current Ontario law, the Board may consider such requests where there is clear evidence of a demonstrated disability-related need and when no other accommodation is appropriate.

Parents/guardians considering a service animal for their child are encouraged to meet with the school principal, the Student Achievement Leader of Special Education, and the Superintendent of Special Education to explore options and review the required process before making any formal commitments.

~~The Human Rights Code, the Blind Persons' Rights Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2001) provide authority for Certified Service Dogs to accompany their handlers in all public places and spaces accessible to third parties. **School buildings are NOT public spaces pursuant to the Education Act.** Nevertheless Certified Service Dogs can be recognized as an accommodation strategy² that aids the Handler (student with special needs) to access the Ontario Curriculum or perform daily living activities. Certified Service Dogs and their Handlers receive specialized training to work together and consequently they are trained to present minimal risk and impact on other people and their environment. As a result, access by the Certified Service Dog to the school attended by the Handler may be facilitated pursuant to this procedure.~~

~~The access of Certified Service Dogs, for the benefit of a student, will be considered by the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board in accordance with the duty to accommodate the disability-related needs of that student to the point of undue hardship in accordance with the Human Rights Code. When a Certified Service Dog is being considered by a family as an accommodation for their child, the parent/guardian may wish to consider meeting with the school principal, Student Achievement Lead: Special Education and the Superintendent of Education, Special Education prior to making a commitment to receive a dog.~~

~~**Companion Dogs and Service Animals**, for the purpose of the Board's policy, regulation and administrative procedure, include animals that provide comfort and friendship to students who may have emotional, self-esteem or social problems. However, their assistance is generally not required to enable a student to access the Ontario curriculum. While these~~

~~¹ If an individual with a Certified Service Dog wishes to visit a school, he/she must provide ample notice of this visit so the principal can ensure the Certified Service Dog's presence will cause no undue hardship to others. Visitors on board property who require the use of a Certified Service Dog must ensure the dog wears the distinctive harness/saddlebag or vest. The Certified Service Dog must also be on a leash at all times and accompanied by the handler. For further information, please refer to the Board's customer service policy and procedure pursuant to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2001).~~

~~² Accommodations refer to special teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment required to enable a student to learn and demonstrate learning (Special~~

~~Education in Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12: A Policy and Resource Guide, 2017 p.G1)~~
~~animals may have training, the student they serve may not be the Handler and the student and the animal do not have the same training that a Certified Service Dog and its handler receive.~~
~~As a result, requests for the use of Companion Dogs and Service Animals will only be considered as a last resort to accommodate the student's demonstrated disability related needs.~~

~~Therapy Dogs do not provide services to students while they are attending school.~~

~~Training and Registration~~

~~Procedure~~

Both the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog and the Handler must receive training to ensure that the dog provides the Handler with accommodation services in an appropriate manner irrespective of the environment.

~~A Certified Service Dog and the dog's Handler must be trained and the dog must be registered certified by an accredited provider. in Canada. Training schools for Certified Service Dogs in Ontario must be members and accredited.. by either:~~

- ~~a) The International Guide Dog Federation, whose purpose is to serve the visually impaired and blind people from around the world by training and providing Guide Dogs or;~~
- ~~b) Assistance Dogs International Inc. which is a coalition of not-for-profit organizations that train and place Assistance Dogs.~~

~~Certified~~ Service Dogs ~~are may be~~ given to students with disabilities including: Physical, Blind or Low Vision, Deaf/Hearing Impaired, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder or a seizure disorder.

~~Initiating Admittance and Integration of a Certified Service Dog~~

~~Initiating the Process~~

- ~~Parents/guardians submit a formal written request to the school outlining the purpose and benefits of having a Service Dog attend the school with their child, including details how the Service Dog will accommodate the student's demonstrated disability related needs.~~
- ~~A case conference is convened to review documentation, including:~~
 - ~~Letter from a regulated health professional recommending the Service Dog.~~
 - ~~Proof of training and certification from an accredited provider.~~
 - ~~Annual proof of up-to-date vaccinations, municipal license, and insurance.~~
- ~~The admittance of a Service Dog in school is determined on a case-by-case basis through a thorough consultation process. When a parent requests the use of a dog, the principal must first confirm it is a Service Dog and consult with the Superintendent of Education: Special Education. Decisions consider the specific needs of the student and, when necessary, balance the rights and needs of all individuals involved.~~
- ~~As part of the approval process, the principal will hold a school conference and council meeting. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are expected to attend and contribute to support a safe, smooth transition.~~

Considerations

- The school team will assess:
 - Student needs and IEP recommendations.
 - Staff and student allergies, phobias, and cultural concerns.
 - Emergency protocols and signage.
 - Transportation requirements.
- Exclusion of a Service Dog
 - Once the use of a Service Dog in a school has been approved, exclusion of the animal from the school or specific areas within the school may only occur under the following circumstances:
 - **Health or Safety Risks:**

The presence of the Service Dog poses a demonstrable risk to the health, safety, or physical or mental well-being of students or staff. This includes situations such as medically documented severe allergies or psychological harm.
 - **Statutory Requirements:**

Exclusion is required by applicable legislation. Examples include:

 - *Health Protection and Promotion Act* and *Food Safety and Quality Act*, which prohibit service animals from areas where food is prepared, processed, or handled (e.g., school kitchens or culinary classrooms). However, Service Dogs are permitted in areas where food is served or sold (e.g., cafeterias or lunchrooms).
 - **Prohibited Breeds:**

The Service Dog belongs to a breed prohibited by law, such as those restricted under the *Dog Owners' Liability Act* (e.g., pit bull terriers).
 - **Material Change in Circumstances:**

There has been a significant change in the circumstances that led to the original approval of the Service Dog (e.g., changes in the student's needs, dog behavior, or school environment).
 - **Legal Obligations:**

Exclusion is otherwise required by applicable federal, provincial, or municipal law.
 - **Duty to Consider Alternatives:**

Before a decision to exclude is made, reasonable efforts must be undertaken to explore alternative arrangements or accommodations that would allow continued access for the Service Dog without compromising health, safety, or legal obligations.
 - **Continuous Progress Monitoring and Support Review**

Data-informed assessment by the school team indicating that the Service Dog is not contributing meaningfully to the student's support goals or academic and/or social-emotional outcomes. Ongoing tracking of effectiveness using measurable indicators (e.g., behavior logs, attendance data, engagement rubrics) must inform this evaluation. Where consistent data collection is lacking or not implemented by

staff, this absence of evidence may hinder the ability to justify the continued presence of the Service Dog and should prompt a review of the support plan.

-
- **Service Dogs for Students Who Are Not the Handler:**
 - When a student cannot independently handle a service dog, the dog is not considered a Service Dog under this procedure. However, the student may still benefit from having the dog as an accommodation. In such cases, a trained adult must supervise and handle the dog. Each request will be assessed individually under the Human Rights Code, considering:
 - The student's disability-related needs;
 - How the service dog supports those needs;
 - Availability of alternative accommodations;
 - Impact on the classroom and school environment.

Communication

- **Inform:**
 - School community (Appendix E).
 - Class-specific families (Appendix F).
 - Transportation families (Appendix G).
 - Post signs on each entry door of the school advising visitors of the presence of a working Service Dog.

Staff Training

- All Educational Assistants (EAs), classroom teachers, Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs), and principals who may be involved with a student supported by a service dog shall receive training on the role, function, and integration of service dogs within the school environment. This training is essential to ensure a safe, consistent, and inclusive educational experience for the student.

Furthermore, a minimum of three Educational Assistants shall be trained and certified as service dog handlers. Assigning multiple trained handlers is required to ensure uninterrupted support for the student, particularly in the event of staff absences or leaves. Schools should prioritize building a team of trained staff to guarantee that the student has consistent access to their service dog and the support they require throughout the school day. Schools that are allocation less than three Educational Assistants should have all Educational Assistants trained.

Ongoing Review

- Annual update of documentation is required (e.g., IEP, vaccinations, certifications, insurance)
- Principal to notify Superintendent when a Service Dog is introduced or withdrawn.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

The Parent/Guardian shall:

- Submit a formal written request to the school outlining the purpose and benefits of having a Service Dog attend the school with their child, including details how the Service Dog will accommodate the student's demonstrated disability related needs.
- Pay for any financial implications regarding the use and care of the Service Dog, which may include additional training from time to time for the Service Dog and the Handler.

- Submit and annually update the school with documentation confirming current vaccinations, a valid municipal Service Dog license, and verification of the dog's good health.
- Ensure the Service Dog's personal care and physical needs are met, including a daily bio-break routine as required.
- Provide proof of general liability insurance coverage in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 to cover any injuries or damages that may arise from the Service Dog accompanying the Handler at school.
- May wish to obtain insurance coverage in the unfortunate event that the dog is stolen or injured through no fault of the board.
- Ensure full compliance with the BHNCDSD Service Animals in Schools policy.

Service Dog Handler Responsibilities

The Service Dog handler shall:

- Maintain the service dog's calm and controlled behaviour, ensuring it remains focused on the handler (e.g., no aggression, excessive barking or whining, jumping on or sniffing others, or begging for food).
- Ensure the service dog remains quietly at rest (e.g., lying under a table or beside the handler) without unnecessary movement when not actively working.
- Ensure the service dog responds promptly and consistently to the handler's commands, cues, or directions.
- Ensure the service dog behaves appropriately in the presence of other dogs or animals.

Principal/Vice-Principal/Designate Responsibilities

The principal, vice-principal, or designate shall:

- Confirm that the dog is a Service Dog and that its use by the student handler aligns with the recommendations and needs identified through the IPRC and/or IEP process. If the dog is not certified or the student is not the handler, and alternative accommodations are determined to meet the student's demonstrated disability-related needs, the Superintendent shall provide written rationale for the decision.
- Consult with the appropriate Superintendent before arranging a meeting regarding the use of a Service Dog.
- Inquire about any significant allergies or anxieties related to the Service Dog and consider appropriate accommodations to address competing rights.
- Organize a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s)/adult student, classroom teacher(s), Superintendent of Special Education, a representative from the Service Dog Training Provider, the student (as appropriate), and other relevant staff or resource personnel to develop a comprehensive plan addressing:
 - The role and function of the Service Dog;
 - Training provided to the student handler;
 - Care and physical needs of the Service Dog, including:
 - Designated relief area on school property;

- Procedures for waste removal and disposal;
 - Accessible waste disposal container for the handler;
 - Seasonal and weather-related considerations;
 - Classroom arrangements, including seating;
 - Any required changes to routines, procedures, or programming;
 - Pre-entry visits for the Service Dog to acclimate to the school;
 - Transition planning for the student and dog;
 - Schedule for introducing the dog to the school community;
 - Training plan for school staff (e.g., principal, teachers, EAs);
 - Behavioural expectations and conduct guidelines regarding the dog for students, staff, and visitors;
 - Communication and enforcement strategies for these rules.
- Notify all school staff and the school council of the Service Dog's presence.
 - Collaborate with the appropriate Superintendent and the Student Achievement Lead: Special Education to address any concerns related to the dog's presence.
 - Coordinate demonstrations or educational sessions by the Service Dog provider for students, staff, and/or the school community, as needed.
 - If applicable:
 - Inform Brant Haldimand Norfolk Student Transportation Services about any transportation requirements.
 - Post signage at all school entry points informing visitors of the presence of a working Service Dog.
 - Update emergency protocols (e.g., notify the Fire Department about the Service Dog).
 - Inform the school's Superintendent when the Service Dog begins attending the school and if/when the dog is no longer present.
 - Communicate with stakeholders, letters will be distributed as follows to inform:
 - The school community of the arrival of the Service Dog, its purpose and rules regarding conduct around the Service Dog (Appendix E).
 - The families of the students in any of the classes where the Service Dog will be present to elicit information concerning allergies or anxiety from student's families (Appendix F).
 - The families of any students who will be sharing transportation where the Service Dog will be present, where applicable (Appendix G).
 - All information regarding the Service Dog will be retained in the student's OSR.

~~The parent(s)/guardian(s) must initiate the process by providing a letter to the school requesting permission to have a Certified Service Dog assist their child in school.~~

~~The entry of the Certified Service Dog is decided after extensive consultation and is not automatically approved. Decisions regarding the admittance and integration of Certified Service Dogs into the school environment for the benefit of a student are made on a case-by-case basis.~~

~~When parent(s)/guardian(s) request that their child use a dog in school, it must be determined if the request is for a Certified Service Dog and the principal must review the request with the~~

Superintendent of Education: Special Education. All circumstances of a particular case, including the individual needs of the student being assisted by the dog and the needs of other students will be considered. Where necessary in the decision-making process, rights and needs of one person may need to be balanced against the rights and needs of another.

As part of the approval process, the principal will schedule a school conference meeting and a school council meeting. The parent(s)/guardian(s) are expected to attend and provide input to ensure a safe and smooth transition for all.

When the use of a Certified Service Dog in school has been approved, the animal may be excluded from access to the school or part of the school when:

- There is risk to the health of students/staff or the physical or mental well-being of students as a result of the presence of the Certified Service Dog;
- Exclusion is required by another statute. Examples include the Health and Protection and Promotion Act and Food Safety and Quality Act. The former Act prohibits service animals in places where food is prepared, processed or handled (e.g. kitchen of school cafeteria or culinary arts classroom) although Certified Service Dogs are permitted where food is served and sold (e.g. school cafeteria or lunchroom);
- The Certified Service Dog is a breed that is not prohibited by law. An example would be the Ontario Dog Owner's Liability Act, which places restrictions on pit bull terriers;
- There has been a material change in the circumstances that led to the original approval of the use of the Certified Service Dog in the school;
- Law otherwise requires exclusion; and
- Consideration should be given to options available prior to exclusion of the Certified Service Dog.

Certified Service Dogs for Students Who are not the Handler

When the student is not able to "handle" the dog, the dog will not be considered a Certified Service Dog for the purposes of this procedure but the student may still receive a benefit from utilizing a service dog as an accommodation. Where the student is not the handler, an adult must be trained and must provide supervision and handling of the service dog. As a result, requests to permit the service dog to attend and be integrated into the school environment will be considered individually in accordance with the duty to accommodate to the point of undue hardship pursuant to the Human Rights Code. Factors to be considered include but are not limited to:

- The student's demonstrated disability related needs;
- The accommodation(s) that may be provided by the service dog to meet the student's disability related needs;
- Alternative accommodations available that meet the student's demonstrated disability related needs; and
- The impact on the classroom and school.

Procedures

1.0 Parent/Guardian

The parent/guardian shall:

- 1.1 Provide a letter to the school requesting permission for a Certified Service Dog to the school and outlining the purpose and benefits of having a Certified Service Dog attend the school with their child, including details of the way the Certified Service Dog will accommodate the student's demonstrated disability related to needs, for

~~example providing guidance in hallways;~~

- ~~1.2 Provide a letter from a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, a member of the College of Psychologists or nurse qualified in a discipline relevant to the person's disability confirming the recognized disability and related special needs, including a recommendation for the use of a Certified Service Dog;~~
- ~~1.3 Provide a Certificate of Training for the Certified Service Dog and the Handler from the accredited National Service Dog Training Centre or from another certified training centre;~~
- ~~1.4 Pay for any financial implications regarding the use and care of the Certified Service Dog, which may include additional training from time to time for the Certified Service Dog and the Handler;~~
- ~~1.5 Provide and annually update the school with proof of up-to-date vaccinations, a municipal Certified Service Dog license and confirmation that the Certified Service Dog is in good health;~~
- ~~1.6 Arrange for the personal care and physical needs of the Certified Service Dog including once a day bio-break procedure as necessary;~~
- ~~1.7 Provide proof of a general liability insurance coverage in the amount of \$2 000 000.00 in the event of injury and/or damages resulting from the dog attending school with the Handler; and~~
- ~~1.8 The owner of the Certified Service Dog may also consider insurance coverage in the unfortunate situation if the dog were to be stolen or injured at no fault of the board.~~

2.0 Certified Service Dog Handler

~~The certified service dog handler shall:~~

- ~~2.0 Ensure quiet, steady behaviour from the Certified Service Dog while maintaining focus on the Handler (e.g. no aggression, inappropriate barking/crying, jumping on or sniffing of strangers, begging for human food);~~
- ~~2.1 Ensure that when the Handler is at rest, the Certified Service Dog lay quietly under a table or beside the Handler without getting up or moving around excessively;~~
- ~~2.2 Ensure that the Certified Service Dog responds quickly and readily to the Handler's commands, cues and/or directions; and~~
- ~~2.3 Ensure that the Certified Service Dog demonstrates appropriate behaviour around other dogs and animals.~~

3.0 Principal/Vice-Principal/Designate

~~The principal/vice-principal/designate shall:~~

- ~~3.1 Ensure that the dog is a Certified Service Dog and use by the student who is the Handler is consistent with the needs or recommendations of the IPRC and/or IEP process. If the dog is not a Certified Service Dog or the student is not the Handler and the decision is made that alternative accommodations to meet the student's demonstrated disability related needs are available, the Superintendent will~~

~~identify in writing the rationale for the decision.~~

~~3.2 Consult with the appropriate Superintendent prior to setting a meeting to discuss the use of a Certified Service Dog.~~

~~3.3 Inquire regarding any potential severe allergies and/or anxieties with respect to the Certified Service Dog and consider possible accommodation plans to meet competing rights.~~

~~3.4 Arrange a meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)/adult student, classroom teacher(s), Superintendent of Special Education, a representative of the Certified Service Dog Training Provider, the student, as appropriate, and other~~

~~staff/resource person deemed necessary to discuss and develop a plan to determine:~~

- ~~• The purpose and function of the Certified Service Dog;~~
- ~~• Training provided for the Handler (student) of the Certified Service Dog;~~
- ~~• Personal care and physical needs of the Certified Service Dog such as:~~
- ~~• The safest and most environmentally sound place for the Certified Service Dog to relieve itself;~~
- ~~• Removal and disposal of animal waste;~~
- ~~• Provision of a suitable container for waste that the Handler can access;~~
- ~~• Considerations for seasonal changes and inclement weather.~~
- ~~• Classroom considerations such as seating arrangements;~~
- ~~• Any necessary changes in routines, procedures and/or program;~~
- ~~• Arrangements for the Certified Service Dog to visit the school without students present in order to familiarize it with the school site;~~
- ~~• A transition plan for the Certified Service Dog and the student;~~
- ~~• A timetable for the introduction of the Certified Service Dog to the school and class;~~
- ~~• A timetable for the training of the student's school team (i.e. principal, teacher(s), educational assistant(s) etc.);~~
- ~~• Rules of conduct around the Certified Service Dog for students, staff and the public; and~~
- ~~• Methods for disseminating and regulating such rules.~~

~~3.5 Inform all staff and the school council regarding the presence of a Certified Service Dog;~~

~~3.6 Liaise with the appropriate Superintendent, Student Achievement Lead: Special Education to resolve any specific concerns or issues raised regarding the presence of a Certified Service Dog;~~

~~3.7 Arrange for demonstrations by the Certified Service Dog provider for the student body, staff, and/or the community as deemed necessary to provide education and awareness of the Certified Service Dog in the school;~~

~~3.8 If applicable, ensure that the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Student Transportation Services is contacted regarding any transportation requirements; Revise emergency procedures as required to include the Certified Service Dog (e.g. notification to the Fire Department regarding the existence of the Certified Service Dog);~~

~~3.9 Post signs on each entry door of the school advising visitors of the presence of a working Certified Service Dog; and~~

~~3.10 Inform the school's Superintendent that a Certified Service Dog is in place at the school and when/if the Certified Service Dog is no longer going to be at the school.~~

4.0 Communication

~~Letters will be distributed as follows to~~
~~inform:~~

- 4.0 ~~The school community of the arrival of the Certified Service Dog, its purpose and rules regarding conduct around the Certified Service Dog (Appendix E);~~
- 4.1 ~~The families of the students in any of the classes where the Certified Service Dog will be present to elicit information concerning allergies or anxiety from student's families (Appendix F);~~
- 4.2 ~~The families of any students who will be sharing transportation where the Certified Service Dog will be present, where applicable (Appendix G); and~~
- 4.3 ~~All information regarding the Certified Service Dog will be retained in the student's OSR.~~

Information for Parents/Guardians Requesting a Certified Service Dog in the School

1. The success of the implementation of a service dog into a school setting depends on clear communication, a well-informed school community and careful planning. The information you provide will assist the principal to make the best possible decisions for your child and other students, as well as for the staff, volunteers and visitors in the school. The information will be filed in your child's Student Record (OSR).
2. The use of a service dog is considered to be an accommodation to help your child learn and to develop the necessary skills to achieve success at school. The use of a companion dog is generally not considered to be an accommodation under the Ontario Curriculum. If your child already has an Individual Education Plan, it will be reviewed at a case conference or one will be developed in consultation with you. The principal will invite you, your child's teacher(s), a representative from ~~an accredited provider of Service Animals, the assistance dog training school, the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) in the school, Special Education Consultant and the Student Achievement Leader of Special Education Coordinator and a member of Student Support Services team~~ to the case conference to discuss your child's needs, the accommodations that are already in place for your child as well as the additional assistance provided by the dog.
3. The information you provide will help the principal to implement your request. It is important that you provide the information that addresses the safety of the students and staff. For example, the principal needs to know that the dog has no history of nipping, biting or growling at children or adults nor exhibits aggressive protective behaviours.
4. Provide proof of general liability insurance coverage in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 in the event of injury and/or damages resulting when the dog is attending with the student handler at school.
 - a. Service dogs are generally very expensive. We also recommend confirmation that the owner has coverage in the unfortunate situation if the dog were to be stolen or injured at no fault of the Board.
5. It is important that you reinforce information about the standards in place through the accredited assistance dog school that address the safety of the students and staff.
6. The principal will investigate if any student or member of staff has severe medical or psychological reactions to dogs that may impact the involvement of the service dog at school.
7. The well-being of the dog is very important. Its care, handling and training needs will be addressed

and your input as a trained handler is valuable. The principal also needs to know what other resources are available to facilitate the transition to school and the implementation of the plan. Strategies for becoming familiar with the building and school grounds, introduction to assemblies/concerts, recess and informing the staff about interacting with the dog will need to be included in the planning.

8. The principal, with your assistance, will develop a communication plan to inform students, staff and community members as appropriate.
9. A school assembly presented by ~~an accredited provider of Service Animals a designate of service or guide dog school is required~~ **recommended** to ensure practical understanding of an assistance dog in the school community. Important information shared in this way facilitates understanding and acceptance of new practices at the school. You will be asked to participate in the information session/assembly.
10. After all the discussion is in place, the goal will be to implement the plan as soon as possible. Your responsibilities include:
 - a. Transporting or walking the dog to and from school or facilitating the use of bus transportation,
 - b. Providing the required equipment and dog care items
 - c. Working cooperatively with the school staff to make this accommodation a success,
 - d. assisting the principal to communicate relevant information to the school community,
 - e. providing the principal with required documentation in a timely fashion, and
 - f. Informing the principal of all relevant information that may affect the students and staff.
11. Once the necessary information has been discussed, the principal will consult with the Superintendent of Education and **the Student Achievement Leader of Special Education** Lead prior to the admittance and the implementation of the service or guide dog into the school.



Request for ~~Certified~~ Service Dog Involvement with a Student

School:	
Name of Student:	D.O.B.
Address:	
Name(s) of parent(s)/guardian(s):	
Telephone(s) Home:	Cell

- a) Type of Service Dog: _____
- b) The service dog will provide the following assistance with: _____

- c) Name and contact information of the accredited service dog school that provided the dog, training and will provide follow up support for the school community? _____

I/we understand that it is our responsibility to:

- Provide the principal required documentation regarding training, certification, registration, municipal licensing, vaccinations and health of the dog in a timely fashion;
- Provide required documentation and information regarding disability related needs and accommodations to be provided by the dog in a timely fashion;
- Facilitate transportation of the dog to and from the school;
- Provide general liability insurance coverage in the event of injury and/or damages resulting from use of the dog in school;
- Assume financial responsibility of the dog's training, veterinary care, city/county license and all other related costs;
- Work cooperatively with the school staff and provide and communicate information relevant to the school and school community;
- Provide the required equipment and dog care items;
- Attend to the daily care needs of the dog; and
- Work cooperatively with the school staff to make this accommodation a success.

I/we give permission for this information to be shared with the school community.

Signature of student (if over 18) or parent(s)/guardian(s)	Date
--	------

Signature of student (if over 18) or parent(s)/guardian(s)	Date
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Checklist for Implementation of a Certified Service Dog into a School	Date of Completion and Notes
Advise parent/guardian/adult student (18 years and older) making the request that the Board has a procedure to follow before a decision is made.	
Provide parent(s)/guardian(s)/adult student with the form Request for a Certified Service Dog Involvement with a Student and Information for Parents/Guardians Requesting a Service Dog in the School.	
Inform Superintendent Responsible for Special Education and Student Achievement Lead of Special Education Lead as well as the Superintendent responsible for the school request.	
<p>Ensure that the parent/guardian/adult student submits copies of the following documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A professional diagnosis of a disability which can be accommodated through the use of a service dog • A current letter from a regulated health professional recommending the Service Dog a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons or the College of Psychologists and confirming the diagnosis and recommended accommodations to be facilitated by the service dog support • Copy of certificate or letter from accredited training program for dog's and handler's training • Copy of current, official vaccinations certificate for the dog and letter of good health • Proof the dog is registered in Canada through an accredited dog training school • Proof of municipal dog license • Liability Insurance 	
<p>Inquiries made regarding any potential severe allergies, anxieties with respect to dogs and possible accommodation plans to meet competing rights of students in the school.</p> <p>AND on busses (considering students from other schools) regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allergies • Phobia of Dogs • Cultural sensitivities and other issues • Plan for required accommodations 	

<p>Convene a case conference with the following in attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/Guardians and/or student over the age of 18 • Classroom teacher(s), if available 	
<p>The case conference discusses and develops a plan for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose and function of the Certified Service Dog • Training provided for the Handler (student) and the Certified Service Dog • Personal Care and physical needs of the Certified Service Dog • Classroom considerations such as seating arrangements • Any necessary changes in routine and procedures and program changes • A transition plan for both the Certified Service Dog and the student • A timetable for introduction of the Certified Service Dog to the school and class(es) • A timetable for training of the student's school team • Rules of conduct around the Certified Service Dog for students, staff • Arrange a time for the Certified Service Dog to visit the school without students present in order to familiarize it with the school site 	
Review the request with respect to its consistency with the IEP and/or recommendations from the IPRC.	
Inform school staff that a request has been made and receive their input.	
Inform appropriate bus contact that a request has been made and receive input. If transportation is being used through the consortium and the transportation is shared with another Board(s) then those Boards must be contacted so that they can also complete their assessments and communicate with school community members.	
Inform School Council and community at a School Council meeting and receive their input.	
Contact the Fire Marshall and with assistance, create a plan for fire and emergency exit. Plan must be included with school fire plan.	
Meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s)/adult student, to inform them of the information, you have received and if the service dog is approved,	
develop the implementation plan, including fire and emergency exit plans and Management Plan for the Care of the Dog.	
Advise the Superintendent and the Student Achievement Leader of Special Education Lead of your actions.	

IEP should be updated as needed along with any behaviour plans.	
Develop a communication strategy to inform students, staff, community and relevant employee representatives. Include information in registration packages.	
Post signs on the entrance doors and at any other appropriate places to advise visitors of the dog's presence.	
Monitor and review the implementation on a regular basis. Including updated medical information for the service dog and records of re-training and updating.	
File relevant documentation and correspondence in the documentation file of student's OSR.	
Update plan and documentation yearly as required (IEP, certification, vaccinations, Fire and Emergency plan, good health records, etc.)	
Inform the Superintendent that a Certified Dog is in place at the school and when/if the <u>Certified</u> Dog is no longer going to be at the school.	



Management Plan for the Care of the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____

Student Number: _____ School Year: _____

Name of Dog: _____

School: _____

Note: Where possible and feasible, these responsibilities should be handled by the student in the same manner as at home.

Dietary Needs: _____

Water Needs: (e.g. provision of water bowl, procedures for use, cleaning, etc.)

Bladder/Bowel Needs of Dog (e.g. frequency, location, disposal, etc.)

Other considerations:

1. Hot weather: _____

2. Winter weather: _____

3. Additional considerations: _____

Signature Student: _____ Date: _____

Signature Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature Principal: _____ Date: _____

[School Letterhead]

[Insert Date]

Re: Service Animals in School Facilities

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that there will be a ~~Certified~~ Service Dog in our school assisting one of our students.

This ~~Certified~~ Service Dog is a highly trained ~~Certified~~ Service Dog for our student and is able to assist in many of the routine activities, which may pose some challenges for this student. This child's right to have a ~~Certified~~ Service Dog is protected under Human Rights legislation.

There will be an information session at the school to integrate the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog into our daily routines and all our students will be instructed as to the proper procedure regarding the Certified Service Dog. They will be informed that the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog is a working ~~Certified~~ Service Dog and not a pet while at school.

We anticipate the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog being a benefit to the student's learning and we look forward to this new addition to our school community.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Sincerely,

Full Name

Title

c: Name – Title, Location (if applicable) *(names are listed alphabetically by last name)*
Superintendent of Education: Family of Schools, Special Education
OSR

Attachment or Enclosure (if applicable)
XX:xx (AUTHOR INITIALS:your initials)

[School Letterhead]

[Insert Date]

Re: Service Animals in School Facilities

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that there will be a ~~Certified~~ Service Dog in our school assisting one of our students and this student and the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog will be a part of your child's class.

This ~~Certified~~ Service Dog is a highly trained ~~Certified~~ Service Dog for our student and is able to assist in many of the routine activities, which may pose some challenges for this student. This child's right to have a ~~Certified~~ Service Dog is protected under Human Rights legislation.

There will be an information session at the school to integrate the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog into our daily routines and all our students will be instructed as to the proper procedure regarding the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog. They will be informed that the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog is a working ~~Certified~~ Service Dog and not a pet while at school.

If you have any specific concerns regarding the presence of the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog in your child's class, please contact me at the school.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Sincerely,

Full Name
Title

c: Name – Title, Location (if applicable) (*names are listed alphabetically by last name*)
Superintendent of Education: Family of Schools, Special Education
Classroom Teacher (s)
OSR

Attachment or Enclosure (if applicable)
XX:xx (AUTHOR INITIALS:your initials)

[School Letterhead]

[Insert Date]

Re: Service Animals in School Facilities

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that there will be a ~~Certified~~ Service Dog in our school assisting one of our students and this student and the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog will be a part of your child's transportation.

This ~~Certified~~ Service Dog is a highly trained ~~Certified~~ Service Dog for our student and is able to assist in many of the routine activities, which may pose some challenges for this student. This child's right to have a ~~Certified~~ Service Dog is protected under Human Rights legislation.

There will be an information session at the school to integrate the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog into our daily routines and all our students will be instructed as to the proper procedure regarding the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog. They will be informed that the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog is a ~~working~~ Certified Service Dog and not a pet while at school.

If you have any specific concerns regarding the presence of the ~~Certified~~ Service Dog on your child's mode of transportation, please contact me at the school.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Sincerely,

Full Name
Title

c: Name – Title, Location (if applicable) *(names are listed alphabetically by last name)*
Superintendent of Education: Family of Schools, Special Education
Classroom Teacher (s)
OSR
Transportation

Attachment or Enclosure (if applicable)
XX:xx (AUTHOR INITIALS:your initials)

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD POLICY COMMITTEE

Prepared by: Rajini Nelson, Superintendent of Business & Treasurer
Presented to: Policy Committee
Submitted on: June 10, 2025
Submitted by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

Purchasing Cards - #700.07

Public Session

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (the “Board”) remains committed to maintaining a high standard of stewardship and accountability in all aspects of decision-making and operational practice.

The primary objective of the P-Card program is to enable staff members to purchase low-dollar goods and services in an efficient, timely, and cost-effective manner. The program reduces administrative burdens associated with traditional procurement processes by allowing eligible employees to make necessary purchases directly.

The purpose of this Policy and Administrative Procedure outlines the expectations pertaining to the use of P-Cards and includes information on the acceptable use and limitations of Board P-Cards.

DEVELOPMENTS:

In its continued efforts to **strengthen accountability** and ensure that the P-Card system is used properly, the Board has conducted a review of the existing P-Card policy. As a result of this review, the following additional measures are included:

- **Monthly Spending Reviews:** A formal requirement has been established for a monthly review of all P-Card transactions.
- **Compliance Monitoring:** These monthly reviews are intended to verify compliance with the P-Card policy, identify any irregularities, and ensure that all purchases are properly documented and authorized.
- **Strengthened Controls:** Monthly spending reports to be submitted to the Superintendent of the Business to enhance internal controls.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers the Purchasing Cards Policy #700.07 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Purchasing Cards

#700.07

Adopted:	June 26, 2007
Last Reviewed/Revised:	February 27, 2024
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Business Services & Treasurer
Next Scheduled Review:	2027-2028

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (the "Board") is committed to a high level of stewardship and accountability with respect to all decisions and practices. The Board recognizes the need for staff to purchase certain low dollar goods and services in an efficient and timely manner.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

A Purchasing Card (or "P-Card") is intended to facilitate the purchase and payment of a large volume of low value purchases. To minimize risk and financial expense to the Board, P-Cards will only be issued to authorized individuals who have a legitimate business reason for having a P-card and who need to use the P-Card on a regular basis in carrying out their assigned duties.

The purpose of this Policy and Administrative Procedure outlines the expectations pertaining to the use of P-Cards and includes information on the acceptable use and limitations of Board P-Cards.

REFERENCES:

- [Broader Public Sector Accountability Act](#)
- [Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive and Implementation Guidebook](#)
- [Broader Public Sector Perquisites Directive](#)
- [Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive](#)
- [GOV 100.10.P - Trustee Expenses](#)
- [FIN 700.01.P - Procurement](#)
- [FIN 700.04.P - Employee Expenses](#)
- Purchasing Card Handbook (staff only)

FORMS:

- N/A

DEFINITIONS:

Budget Holder: a person who is accountable for the spending decisions in their area of responsibility.

Cardholder: authorized Board staff who hold a Board-issued P-Card in their name.

Merchant Category Classification (MCC): classification of business by the type of goods or services provided. Classification can be assigned or blocked to restrict P-Card usage. They also are used for reporting purposes.

Monthly Spend Limit: the maximum dollar threshold, including taxes, allowed on a P-Card for a one-month statement period.

Purchasing Card (P-Card): a commercial card that allows organizations to purchase goods and services in lieu of a traditional purchasing process and up to specified amounts for approved business purposes.

Purchasing Card Administrator: administers the P-Card program (system administration, card management, process and procedure development, education, user support, compliance review, reporting, etc.). Typically, the P-Card Administrator is the Manager of Procurement and Risk Management Services (or delegate).

Transaction Limit: A maximum per transaction dollar limitation placed on each card charge.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

Any new P-Cards issued to staff must have the approval of their Principal/Manager or Superintendent, as well as final approval from the Superintendent of Business & Treasurer before the card is ordered. Any changes to P-Card limits must also receive formal approval from the Manager of Procurement and Risk Management Services.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Cardholder

- i) Review, agree and sign a Purchase Card Agreement outlining cardholder responsibilities.
- ii) Ensure each purchase remains within the individual's transaction limit and monthly credit limit.
- iii) Ensure compliance to Board policies and procedures.
- iv) Verify accuracy of monthly statements and take appropriate, immediate action to correct any errors.
- v) Retain original transaction receipts for reconciliation and audit purposes (photocopies not acceptable).
- vi) Reconcile the monthly statement using the prescribed transaction log, obtain approval from applicable supervisor and submit to Financial Services within ten business days of receipt of the statement.
- vii) Immediate notification to the P-Card Administrator in the event of a lost or stolen card.
- viii) Notify supervisor and P-Card Administrator of any changes in circumstance (name, address, role, department, etc.).
- ix) Ensure sufficient budget is available to support the purchases on the P-Card.

Cardholder's Supervisor

- i) Ensure each Cardholder has read and understood their responsibilities as outlined in this Policy and Administrative Procedure and Purchasing Card Handbook regarding the use of the P-Card.
- ii) Review and approve (where applicable) the monthly statement and transaction log within the timelines established by Financial Services.
- iii) Ensure the Cardholder is compliant with policies and procedures in the use of the P-Card.

P-Card Administrator

- i) Under the authority of the Superintendent of Business & Treasurer, issue, cancel or revoke the P-Card in accordance with policies and procedures.
- ii) Provide Cardholder(s) with training and support in the appropriate use of the P-Card.
- iii) Authorize changes to Cardholder information, card limits and MCC codes.
- iv) Maintain list of P-cards issued **and monitor the usage of P-Cards.**
- v) **Conduct a regular review, audit, and verify compliance with the policy.**
- vi) **Provide a report** to the Superintendent of Business & Treasurer on usage of all P-Cards **monthly highlighting details such as the maximum amounts used, irregular transactions, activities on cancelled P-Cards and or any compliance oversight.**

USE AND RESTRICTIONS

The P-Card is intended to facilitate the purchase and payment of low value goods and services required for Board business. It is the expectation that eligible and authorized staff will use a Board issued P-Card, as opposed to a personal credit card. The use of a personal credit card may result in a denial or delay in reimbursement.

Each P-Card is established with an individual transaction limit and a monthly credit limit, which can be found on the P-Card agreement.

P-Cards **may not** be used to:

- i) Bypass an existing Board contract, policy, or procedure.
- ii) Purchase furniture, equipment (including any technology items), software or other tangible capital asset unless prior approval from Procurement Services has been obtained.
- iii) Transact any personal expenses; such use may be deemed fraudulent and could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- iv) Purchase gift cards unless prior approval from Procurement and/or Financial Services has been obtained.
- v) Split purchases into multiple transactions to circumvent approved Cardholder limits.
- vi) Obtain cash advances.
- vii) Honoraria (payments of fees for services performed by individuals not employed by the Board).
- viii) Payments to other schools or other Board departments.
- ix) Alcohol.
- x) Employee gifts (e.g., flowers for assistant's day, retirement gifts, etc.).
- xi) Gift for trustees, government employees or other Broader Public Sector organizations.

Certain types of merchants, including (but not necessarily limited to) liquor stores and cannabis outlets have been blocked on Board issued P-Cards. Attempts to purchase items from these vendors will be declined when the P-Card is presented at these restricted vendors. This blocking is applied on a vendor-by-vendor basis based on the assigned MCC. As a result, some otherwise legitimate purchases from blocked vendors will not be able to be made by using the P-Card.

Board P-Cards must not be tied to a "PayPal" or like payment service account. If no other payment option exists, contact Procurement and Risk Management Services.

Exceptions are subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Business & Treasurer.

Circumstances not specifically noted in this Policy and Administrative Procedure must be brought to the attention of the P-Card Administrator for review and recommendation of the most cost effective and compliant method for the purchase of the material or service in question.

ISSUANCE OF P-CARDS

In general, P-Cards are issued to individuals where there is an ongoing and/or frequent need to purchase goods and services that fall under their responsibilities and/or brings efficiency to the procurement process. The following roles are eligible to use a P-Card:

Role	Maximum Credit Limit
Director and Superintendents	\$5,000
Manager of Procurement and Risk Management Manager of Information Technology Manager of Facility Services	\$5,000
Executive Assistants	\$3,000
Manager of Financial Services Manager of Human Resource Services Manager of Communication Services	\$3,000
Facility Services Supervisors and Coordinators	\$3,000
Student Achievement Leads – Curriculum and Special Education	\$3,000

Any changes to the above chart are subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Business & Treasurer.

Purchasing cards are issued to individuals upon full approval of a P-card application. Any new P-Cards issued to staff must have the approval of their Principal/Manager or Superintendent, as well as final approval from the Superintendent of Business & Treasurer before the card is ordered.

CHANGES AND CANCELATION

Any changes to P-Card limits and/or MCC permissions must also receive formal approval from the Manager of Procurement and Risk Management Services.

Cards will be cancelled in the following circumstances:

- i) Upon termination of employment with the Board.
- ii) When specifically requested to do so by the supervisor.
- iii) When a change in job responsibility dictates that a card is no longer required.
- iv) When repeated misuse has occurred and at the discretion of the Superintendent of Business & Treasurer.



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

Catholic Education Centre
322 Fairview Drive
Brantford, ON N3T 5M8

Policy Committee Meeting Tuesday June 10, 2025 ♦ 3:30 p.m. Boardroom

Trustees:

Dan Dignard (Chair), Dennis Blake, Carol Luciani, Mark Watson, Bill Chopp

Regrets: Rick Petrella (on leave),

Senior Administration:

Mike McDonald (Director of Education & Secretary), Rajini Nelson (Superintendent of Business & Treasurer), John Della Fortuna, Kevin Greco, Michael Lawlor, Phil Wilson (Superintendents of Education)

Regrets: (Superintendent of Education)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Opening Prayer

The meeting was opened with prayer led by Chair Dignard.

1.2 Attendance

Attendance was noted as above.

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Policy Committee of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the agenda of the June 10, 2025, meeting.

Carried

1.4 Approval of Minutes from the Policy Committee Meeting – May 13, 2025

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Policy Committee of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the minutes of the May 13, 2025, meeting.

Carried

2. Committee and Staff Reports

2.1 Workplace Violence Prevention #300.20

Superintendent Greco presented the workplace violence prevention policy. Updates include definitions from the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) for: worker, critical Injury and resource person. The Responsibilities section now includes the duty of trustees to approve and support the implementation of this policy and for the Director of Education and Senior Administration to ensure compliance with the OHSA and the Education Act and that all employees must complete Workplace Violence Prevention Training annually. Discussion regarding the correlation between the Workplace Harassment and Workplace Violence Prevention policies was had along with the Trustee Code of Conduct that Trustees fall under and the committee members on the joint health and safety committee.



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

Catholic Education Centre
322 Fairview Drive
Brantford, ON N3T 5M8

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded: Carol Luciani

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers the Workplace Violence Prevention policy #300.20 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried

2.2 Workplace Harassment #300.02

Superintendent Greco presented the Workplace Harassment Policy. Updates include definitions from the Ontario *Human Rights Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act* for: prohibited grounds, discrimination, and supervisor. Measures for all employees to be educated on harassment in the workplace and the Board's responsibilities related to harassment, identified in terms of awareness, prevention and response were updated, as well as a more clearly defined three step procedural response to harassment complaints and more accurately defines the appeal process as a review of the procedural steps of the investigation. Discussion regarding next steps in terms of follow-up was had including up to and including termination.

Moved by: Bill Chopp

Seconded: Mark Watson

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers the Workplace Harassment Policy #300.02 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried

2.3 Duty to Report #300.23

Superintendent Greco presented the Duty to Report policy. This is a new Board Policy and Administrative Procedure. It articulates that all staff play an important role in safeguarding the physical and mental health and well-being of children and youth by recognizing, preventing, and responding to children who may be in need of protection. This Policy and Administrative procedure point to detailed staff responsibilities, legal requirements, procedures, child protection protocols, referrals and investigations that are outlined in the Board's *Joint Child Protection Protocol*. To comply with Erin's Law (Child, Sexual Abuse Prevention and Reporting) this Policy and Administrative Procedure also states that the Board will ensure that important information regarding child sexual abuse prevention and reporting, counselling and resources are available for students, staff, parents and that the Board will ensure that students are annually learning about topics of child sexual abuse prevention and reporting. Discussion regarding the forms that accompany the policy, and procedure was had along with record keeping.

Moved by: Mark Watson

Seconded by: Carol Luciani

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers the Duty to Report policy #300.23 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

Catholic Education Centre
322 Fairview Drive
Brantford, ON N3T 5M8

2.4 Use of Service Animals in School Facilities #200.40

Superintendent Wilson presented the Use of Service Animals in School Facilities policy. This policy was last reviewed in 2011. The revised policy reflects a comprehensive update to align with current legal frameworks including the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and PPM 163. Some of the updates include three Educational Assistants trained and certified as dog handlers, tracking the effectiveness of the service dog, exclusion criteria that consider health, safety, and competing rights (e.g., allergies, phobias), a detailed process for admitting a Service Dog, including documentation, transition planning, and communication strategies and the introduction of case conference protocols, training requirements for staff and handlers, and templates for communication with school and transportation communities. Discussion regarding the name and scope of the policy including the addition of other service animals was discussed. If there are requests for additional animals, the policy will be brought to the board for further discussion. Discussion regarding allergies and phobias of dogs was discussed. The next steps for communicating with the community, transportation, and staff was had regarding the addition of a service dog in the school.

Moved by: Mark Watson

Seconded by: Carol Luciani

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers the Use of Service Animals in School Facilities to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried

2.5 Purchasing Cards #700.01

Superintendent Nelson presented the Purchasing Cards policy. In its continued efforts to strengthen accountability and ensure that the P-Card system is used properly, the Board has conducted a review of the existing P-Card policy. As a result of this review, the following additional measures are included: monthly spending reviews, compliance monitoring, and strengthened controls. Discussion regarding the timeliness of the reports was had along with the roles and responsibilities listed.

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Policy Committee recommends that the Committee of the Whole refers the Purchasing Cards policy #700.01 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried

3.0 Adjournment

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Policy Committee of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board adjourns the June 10, 2025 Policy committee meeting.

Carried.

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Prepared by: Phil Wilson, Superintendent of Education
Presented to: Committee of the Whole
Submitted on: June 17, 2025
Submitted by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

SPECIAL EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

Public Session

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In alignment with the Ministry of Education's direction, school boards must prepare, approve, and submit a Bi-Annual Report outlining the special education programs and services provided by the Board and its schools. This report has been compiled using information contributed by members of the Special Education Services Team.

DEVELOPMENTS:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's Special Education Department is dedicated to supporting the diverse needs of all learners in our community. Grounded in our Catholic faith, we are committed to helping every student achieve their full academic, social, and spiritual potential. We work in partnership with schools to foster inclusive, safe, and welcoming environments where all students are empowered to thrive. Our mission is to respond to each student's unique strengths and challenges, close learning gaps, and create pathways to success for every learner.

The report underscores the broad array of supports and initiatives that enhance learners' access to the curriculum and promote their active engagement in both academic and personal development. In 2024-2025, the Special Education team initiated intentional, system-wide changes to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

By moving away from deficit-based approaches and embedding equity-driven research into professional learning, the board began a strategic journey toward dismantling ableist practices and reimagining what student success can look like.

Through targeted intervention models, a strong emphasis on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and differentiated instruction, and the establishment of clear accountability measures for IEP development and modifications, BHNCDSB reduced unnecessary identifications and improved student access to grade-level curriculum.

The board also prioritized the use of structured, evidence-based programs such as *Lexia* and *Empower*, ensuring consistency, fidelity, and measurable impact across schools through robust data monitoring. Additionally, intentional shifts in SEA training, consultant support structures, and classroom teacher engagement with assistive technology fostered more inclusive and responsive learning environments for all students.

This report outlines key special education initiatives and projects, along with the strategic implementation of professional learning and training designed to ensure staff are well-prepared to deliver effective, individualized programming for all students. Guided by the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and rooted in our Catholic faith, we are committed to walking with our students and fostering inclusive, barrier-free learning environments that promote improved student achievement and well-being.

This report showcases the outstanding vision, dedication, and collaboration of the entire BHNCDSB special education team—including our Educational Assistants, Special Education Resource Teachers, Special Education Consultants, and Special Education Specialists. This work has been guided and energized by the leadership of Sandra DeDominicis, our Student Achievement Leader for Special Education. Her clear and purposeful vision for student programming, combined with her exemplary leadership, has empowered staff to support every student in achieving their full potential. The positive outcomes of this collective effort are clearly reflected in the data presented within this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Special Education Annual Report 2024-25 report to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

Special Education Annual Report 2024-2025



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INTRODUCTION

Special Education

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSB) is dedicated to meeting the diverse needs of all students and ensuring that each learner achieves their academic, social, emotional, and spiritual potential. We strive to create safe, inclusive, and faith-filled learning environments where every student can thrive. Our Special Education programs and services are guided by the principles of equity and inclusion, and are designed to build upon each student's strengths and address their individual needs. The delivery of specialized supports is led by classroom teachers and enhanced through interdisciplinary collaboration at the school and system levels. Partnerships with parents/guardians are foundational to our approach; they are considered full partners in their child's educational journey. In alignment with our Catholic mission and the Board's spiritual theme, *Pilgrims of Hope*, we work closely with families, community agencies, Ministries, and local resources to enrich the educational experience of all students.

Through this collective effort, we aim to close achievement gaps, foster a sense of belonging, and cultivate learning environments where all students are valued and supported. The *Pilgrims of Hope* theme calls us to walk alongside students with special education needs, ensuring that they are embraced with dignity and love. Our goal is to equip every learner to become an independent, faith-filled, and positive contributor to society. The BHNCDSB's Special Education Services team, supported by faith-based learning, works collaboratively with families and partners to fulfill our shared vision of "*Excellence in Learning ~ Living in Christ.*"

The Annual Report was compiled from information provided by members of the Special Education Services Team. It will be reviewed and presented for approval to the BHNCDSB Board of Trustees on June 17, 2025. The Annual Plan will be submitted to the Ministry of Education by July 31, 2025, and posted to the Board website.

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The membership of SEAC for 2024-25 was as follows:

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Dennis Blake	Trustee Representative
Philip Wilson	Superintendent of Education
Sandra De Dominicis	Student Achievement Lead – Special Education
Debbie Cotter	Resource to the SEAC, Executive Assistant to Philip Wilson
Mischa Dinsmore (Chair)	Lansdowne Children Centre
Lauren Moulton (Vice-Chair)	Woodview Mental Health & Autism Services
Shannon Mason	Principal, Sacred Heart Langton & Special Education Staffing
Kerri Lomax	Principal, St. Michael's Dunnville & Special Education Staffing
Jennifer Rudyk	Principal, St. Bernard of Clairvaux & Special Education Staffing
Simon Jennions	Community Living Brant
Michelle Drake	Crossing All Bridges
Marilyn Noi	Autism Ontario
Lauren Freeborn	Contact Brant
Patti Mitchell	Community Resource and Parent, County of Brant
Nil Woodcroft	Haldimand-Norfolk REACH

Shannon Korber	Child & Family Services of Grand Erie
Brandi Bertling	Child & Family Services of Grand Erie
Janelle Sandy	Indigenous Child & Youth Team at Child & Family Services of Grand Erie

Throughout this past school year, representatives from various community agencies presented an overview of the mandate of their agencies. This will continue in 2025-26 as new members will have the opportunity to present information from their respective agencies.

The 2024-25 SEAC heard presentations on the following:

Orientation and Mobility

Orientation and Mobility Instructor, Rachel Moreau, presented details on how CNIB Deafblind Services has been actively engaging with schools through insightful presentations that shed light on the career path of a Deafblind intervenor and the lived experiences of individuals with deafblindness. These sessions have provided students and educators with a deeper understanding of communication techniques, accessibility, and the essential role of intervenors in bridging gaps for those with combined vision and hearing loss. Schools are also improving their gardens to create inclusive, sensory-friendly spaces for learning and engagement, supporting Deafblind Awareness Month in June.

Complex Communicator Guidebook

Speech-Language Pathologist, Mary Hanhan, presented a new resource titled the *Complex Communicator Guidebook*. This tool was developed by the Speech & Language team to support educators working with students who have complex communication needs. It includes practical tools, evidence-based strategies and accessible handouts designed to build capacity across school teams. The presentation highlighted key sections and shared how the guidebook aligns with the broader goals of inclusive communication and student-centered support. Additionally, the accompanying visual supports that were created to accompany the guidebook were available to explore. These included nutrition break placemats and theme boards, among many other accessible tools. These visuals were designed to help bring the strategies in the guidebook to life and support implementation across school environments.

Lexia

System Special Education Consultant, Jennifer Tonnies explained updates to the Lexia license complement and progress monitoring model, as well as professional development opportunities. An increase of 50 licenses brought the total District complement to 300 licenses, which has eliminated waitlists for students. Through ongoing partnership with Greenfield Learning, professional development sessions were offered to Special Education Resource Teachers and Administrators to strengthen use of the program and leverage data. Continued data tracking and usage analysis ensured accountability among Special Education Resource Teachers so that the program was implemented as intended for maximum gains in literacy skills. As of April 2025, the following data was shared: 53% of students gained 1 - 2 levels in skills, 38% of students gained 3 or more levels in skills, with 10% of those students gaining 5 or more levels in skills. It was noted that 3 - 4 levels equates to a grade's worth of reading skills. The Primary Learning Strategies Class (PLSC) was highlighted for their engagement and dedication to Lexia, demonstrated by gains of 4 - 8 levels per student.

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training

System Special Education Consultants, Tracie Witteveen and Maria Petrucci provided updates about the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training program (3rd Edition) and its continued implementation focusing on equipping staff with effective strategies to recognize, de-escalate, and manage crisis behaviours safely. The training continues to be delivered to Educational Assistants, SERTs, ABA Leads, and Speech Language Pathologists and has been extended to administrators based on requests. Changes to the training model, shifting from a blended learning model to a full-day, in-person classroom format were shared. Presenters noted changes to key policy documents and forms to reflect the language and safety interventions used in NVCI, and shared the new ‘Debrief Meeting Minutes Template’ as a tool to guide post-incident discussions and planning. The presenters also emphasized the board’s dedication to continuous professional learning by providing ‘Verbal Intervention’ training to all staff during the September PA Day.

Empower

Student Achievement Leader for Special Education, Sandra De Dominicis, reminded members that Empower™ Reading is an intensive reading program that was developed by researchers at the Hospital for Sick Children and took over 30 years to develop. Empower™ Reading provides struggling readers with the skills necessary to become successful readers by teaching them various word identification skills and decoding strategies. Empower™ Reading is a 110-lesson program, that is delivered in 45- to 60-minute blocks, four to five times per week. Year 1 data from 13 schools and 81 students was shared to show gains made over the course of the first instructional year. 10 metrics were measured at 3 checkpoints in the learning process (prior, mid-way, and post completion) and includes measures from the Empower Reading Program as well as selective standardized achievement subtests from the Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement. There is evidence of growth and a steady incline in scores on all measures during all checkpoints. The gains were continuous regardless of identification or cognitive ability.

EQAO & OISE for #DataInAction Symposium

The Superintendent of Special Education and the Student Achievement Leader for Special Education shared that they were invited to present at this year’s #DataInAction Symposium. Their presentation highlighted the board’s intentional, system-wide approach to improving reading achievement for students identified with learning disabilities.

Rooted in equity-driven research and a commitment to dismantling ableist practices, the board shifted beyond traditional deficit-based models of special education. Through the implementation of structured literacy interventions, targeted professional learning, and redesigned support structures, BHNCDSB fostered more inclusive learning environments and improved student access to grade-level curriculum.

The session showcased practical strategies and measurable outcomes, including significant gains in EQAO Grade 6 reading scores. This evidence demonstrates how thoughtfully designed and scalable interventions can meaningfully impact student success and promote equity for all learners.

The 2024-25 meeting schedule was as follows:

2024-25 SEAC Meeting Schedules	
Tues., September 17, 2024	Tues., February 18, 2025
Tues., October 15, 2024	Tues., March 18, 2025
Tues., November 19, 2024	Tues., April 15, 2025

Tues., December 17, 2024	Tues., May 20, 2025
Tues., January 21, 2025	Tues., June 17, 2025

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

System Special Education

System Special Education Consultants are assigned to elementary and secondary schools to support staff and enhance student achievement and wellbeing. Their role is to collaborate with school teams and community agencies, and to build capacity among teachers, SERTs, Educational Assistants and parents by providing in-services within schools and in the community. In addition, System Special Education Consultants ensure that Ministry of Education mandates and protocols are followed by providing training and producing resources to support staff in meeting Ministry standards. Through resource creation and information sharing, System Special Education Consultants build capacity, maintain consistency, and enhance communication with parents.

An area of focus for System Special Education Consultants is to collaborate with school SERTs to better understand learners by exploring student profiles, assessment data and evaluation. They assist in the development of student profiles through assessment (Hawaii Early Learning Profile, Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement (WJ), and Battelle Early Academic Survey (BEAS)), observations and program recommendations. System Special Education Consultants dialogue with school teams to determine appropriate next steps and potential interventions. This valuable information could result in the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and possibly the formal identification of a student through the IPRC process. The System Special Education Consultant supports the school team in preparing IPRC paperwork in order to ensure appropriate identification and placement of the student.

System Special Education Consultants are responsible for training students and teachers in the use of computer equipment assigned through the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) process. Following their Phase 1 (pre-recorded) training, every student who receives a laptop computer works with their school's respective consultant for one or more individual sessions to learn and practise their skills in using the assigned equipment. Following the student training session, the consultant connects with the student's teacher to ensure they are informed about the use of assistive technology, and to provide individual training based on the teacher's needs. Please refer to the *Information Technology: Training Model* section of this report, for more information.

Academic Assessments

System Special Education Consultants use two different assessment tools to examine a student's academic performance. The Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement (WJ) is used with the majority of students in elementary and secondary grades. It is a standardized test which explores achievement and provides scores in Broad Reading, Broad Mathematics, Broad Written Language, and Phoneme-Grapheme Knowledge. A breakdown of each broad area is as follows:

Broad Reading	Broad Mathematics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter-Word Identification Sentence Reading Fluency Passage Comprehension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculation Math Facts Fluency Applied Problems
Broad Written Language	Phoneme-Grapheme Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spelling Sentence Writing Fluency Writing Samples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word Attack Spelling of Sounds

With our early struggling learners, specifically those in grades one and two, we use the Battelle Early Academic Survey (BEAS). With its comprehensive breakdown in the areas of *Phonological Awareness* and *Phonics and Word Recognition*, the BEAS provides valuable information about where gaps exist, enabling classroom teachers and school SERTs to tailor programming to address the specific areas of need. This skill analysis blends very well with primary teachers' use of the Heggerty *Phonemic Awareness* program and SERTs' use of the *Bridge the Gap Phonemic Awareness Intervention Lessons*, to help identify areas of need and work toward closing gaps in students' learning. The BEAS provides scores in overall Literacy and Mathematics, with breakdowns as follows:

Literacy	Mathematics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print Concepts Phonological Awareness (6 subtests) Phonics and Word Recognition (7 subtests) Listening Comprehension Fluency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers, Counting, and Sets Geometry Measurement and Data Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Cognitive Assessments

System Special Education Consultants are responsible for determining the eligibility of a student to receive a cognitive assessment with contracted psychologists through a committee process. The cognitive assessment referral process involves consultation with school staff, and the review of documents in the Ontario Student Record (OSR) including Provincial Report Cards, EQAO results, WJ or BEAS assessment results, CogAT scores and outside agency reports.

Transitions

The System team places great importance on successful student transitions. Assistance is provided when planning and implementing entry into school for students with high needs, as well as transitioning into special class placements, secondary school and post-secondary opportunities. This liaison with community agencies, school teams and parents/guardians helps to ensure student needs are met by creating supported and informed transitions.

The following chart illustrates some of the processes that System Special Education Consultants have supported during the 2024-2025 school year:

Cognitive Referrals Submitted	IPRCs (school or system level)	Case Conferences	Achievement Tests Completed (WJ and BEAS)
59	301	254	43

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

There are currently 32 Hard of Hearing students in the Board.

Services provided during the 2024-2025 school year included:

- Acquisition of Specialized Equipment Amount (SEA) and materials to support students who are Hard of Hearing and have CAP difficulties.
- Monitoring and troubleshooting such equipment.
- Providing in-services for specialized equipment.
- Repairing SEA equipment, as required.
- Consulting on students' IEPs.

- Providing and installing noise reducing strategies for the classroom environment.
- Attending team meetings.
- Acting as a liaison, support and referral source for families and other agencies.
- Providing accommodations/modifications and programming strategies.

Information Technology

Overview of Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA)

The Ministry of Education provides Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) funding to school boards each year. This funding is used to assist school boards with the cost of equipment essential to support students with special education needs. The equipment is to provide students with accommodations that are directly required and essential for the student to be able to attend school or to access the Ontario Curriculum. There are two components to the SEA funding model:

The Formula-Based Component

The formula-based fund is allocated for the purchase of computer and all technology-related equipment, non-computer-based equipment for items under \$5000, training, maintenance and repair of equipment. Each school district receives an allocated amount each SEA year (May 1st to April 30). The allocation amount is calculated based on a formula which includes a base amount, plus a per pupil amount that comes from the Board's average daily enrolment (ADE).

The Claims-Based Component

The SEA Claims-Based fund is allocated for the purchase of any single item equipment (technology-related and non-computer-based equipment) \$5000 and over.

Process for Submitting a SEA Claim

There are five different processes for submitting a SEA claim:

- Submitting a claim with a formal assessment
- Submitting a claim without a formal assessment
- Submitting a claim for a student with fine motor issues
- Submitting a shared claim
- Submitting a trial claim

Recommendations for special equipment are forwarded by the school and reviewed by the team. Claims must meet Ministry guidelines and requirements.

Purchasing SEA Equipment

The Board is committed to ensuring the efficient and responsible use of SEA funds. All equipment purchases made through SEA are guided by principles of cost-effectiveness, with selections based on the most economical options that meet student needs.

SEA fund allocation is carried out in an equitable and timely manner to support student learning. When procuring equipment, the Board considers several key factors, including quality, cost, durability, longevity, and compatibility with existing infrastructure.

Additionally, the SEA team is authorized to repurpose equipment within the system to maximize resource utilization and support broader student access.

SEA Repairs and Replacements

The Board is responsible for ensuring that all SEA-funded equipment is maintained in proper working condition and continues to meet the individual needs of students. In alignment with Ministry of Education SEA

Directives, school boards are expected to pursue financial efficiencies in the procurement and management of SEA equipment.

To comply with these requirements, the Board prioritizes equipment upgrades and refurbishment as the first course of action before considering the purchase of new devices.

Repairs

Non-Tech/Physical Equipment - Non-tech equipment repairs are completed by “Motion” after a quote has been obtained and the repair has been approved.

Hearing Equipment – School and system level staff attempt to problem solve the issue. If the issue remains unresolved, the equipment is sent back to the vendor for repair or replacement.

Tech Equipment - The SEA team collaborates closely with the Information Technology (IT) department to ensure that efficient and effective processes are in place for the maintenance and repair of SEA-funded technology equipment. To support this effort, the Board has designated a dedicated computer technician responsible for managing all SEA-related equipment work orders.

Replacements

SEA equipment will be replaced or upgraded **only** for the following reasons:

- The student’s needs have changed, and the equipment no longer meets their needs
- the student outgrows the equipment
- The equipment wears out through use
- The equipment is broken and is unrepairable
- The equipment is no longer functioning in a way that meets the student’s needs
- The equipment is too old and can no longer be serviced or supported

Taking SEA Equipment Home

In accordance with Ministry of Education SEA Directives, all equipment purchased through the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claims process remains the property of the school board. This equipment is provided to support students for whom it is deemed essential for learning. As such, SEA-funded equipment must remain at the school and be accessible to the student throughout the instructional day.

The school principal is responsible for authorizing any use of SEA equipment outside of school premises. It is also the principal’s duty to ensure that the equipment is returned in good working condition.

Permission to take SEA equipment home may be granted by the principal under the following circumstances:

- To complete unfinished schoolwork, assignments, or projects at home
- For participation in home instruction programs
- For use during summer school sessions

The Reclamation of SEA Equipment

SEA equipment can be reclaimed if:

- The student outgrows the equipment
- The student is not using the equipment
- The student no longer needs the equipment
- The parents/guardian(s) no longer want their child to have the equipment

SEA Transfers

When a student transfers to another school within the district or to a publicly funded school board elsewhere in Ontario, any equipment purchased through the SEA program must accompany the student. The receiving board retains the right to decline the transfer of the equipment.

Decisions regarding the transfer of SEA equipment are made with careful consideration of the student's best interests, the compatibility of the equipment with the receiving board's infrastructure, and the practicality and efficiency of the transfer process.

The SEA Coordinator is responsible for overseeing all equipment transfers. The receiving board is required to formally request the equipment and is responsible for covering all associated shipping costs. Transfers are expected to be completed within six weeks of the initial request.

In the 2024-25 SEA year, 61 students with SEA equipment transferred into our board and 47 transferred out.

SEA Equipment Management and Disposal

Maintenance and Management

Equipment purchased through SEA funding constitutes a set of physical assets that school boards are obligated to protect, maintain, and manage as valuable public resources.

To ensure the safety and functionality of this equipment, annual inspections are conducted on all electric and hydraulic non-tech devices. These inspections are carried out in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (O.H.S.A.), R.R.O., Regulation 851, Section 51. Following the review of inspection reports, any required repairs or maintenance are promptly arranged and completed to uphold safety standards and operational integrity.

Disposal and Reassignment of SEA Equipment

SEA-funded equipment that has reached the end of its useful life or is no longer safe for use must be disposed of in a responsible and environmentally sustainable manner.

- **Reassignment of Unused Equipment:** Any SEA equipment that is no longer in active use is placed in Board storage and reassigned to other students as needed, until it is deemed obsolete or reaches the end of its service life.
- **Technology Equipment Disposal:** Unusable technology equipment is collected by a Board-approved recycling provider. All computer equipment is recycled in accordance with environmentally responsible practices. Prior to collection, hard drives and any labels containing student information are securely removed.
- **Non-Technology Equipment:** Certain non-technology items are retained for spare parts. Equipment composed of recyclable materials is sent for recycling, while non-recyclable items are disposed of safely and in an environmentally conscious manner.
- **Donations of Surplus Equipment:** Non-technology equipment that has remained in storage for over five years without being reassigned may be donated to charitable organizations that support individuals and communities in need. For example, a truckload of surplus SEA equipment was donated in the fall to *For the Needy Not the Greedy*, a non-profit organization based in the Niagara region that provides assistive medical devices to individuals and organizations unable to afford them.

Collaboration and Partnerships

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's SEA team actively collaborates with other school boards through the SEA Coordinators Council—a regional consortium comprising 17 boards—fostering shared learning and consistent practices across the region.

In addition, the Board works closely with community partners, such as Lansdowne Children's Centre, to ensure their involvement in the SEA process is aligned with the Board's procedures and supports a coordinated approach to student support.

SEA Computer Equipment Training Model

Students who receive SEA-funded computer equipment are provided with targeted training on software identified as essential to their learning needs. The training model has been designed to meet the specific needs of the student and support their effective use of assistive technology. The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board employs an internal training model, with all instruction delivered by Board personnel.

There are three types of training:

1. Students who receive SEA computer equipment through a new SEA claim submission
2. Students who transfer into our board with SEA computer equipment
3. Boardmaker training

Students may receive training in one or more of the following programs, based on their individual learning profiles:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Edge
- Windows 10 text suggestions
- Microsoft Word text predictions
- Smart Ideas
- Boardmaker

System Special Education Consultants are responsible for delivering training at their assigned schools.

Boardmaker training is conducted in collaboration with the student's Educational Assistant and is facilitated by the IT Special Education Consultant.

To ensure comprehensive support for both students and educators, the training model consists of three phases:

- Student Session 1 – Introductory Training
- Student Session 2 – Individualized One-to-One Training
- Classroom Teacher Support Session

The first session introduces students to their equipment and foundational software tools. This is followed by a personalized one-to-one session tailored to the student's specific learning needs. Based on the student's progress, the trainer may recommend additional sessions for further support. Upon completion of the student training, a support session is provided to the classroom teacher to ensure effective integration of the technology into daily instruction.

Students who receive SEA computer equipment receive training on software that has been identified as essential to their learning. The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School board implements an "in-house" training model where training is completed internally. Students may receive training in any or all of the following programs: Microsoft Word, Microsoft Edge, Windows 10 text suggestions, Microsoft Word text predictions, Smart Ideas and Boardmaker. System Special Education Consultants are responsible for providing training at the schools they are assigned to. All Boardmaker training is completed with the student's Educational Assistant and provided by the IT Special Education Consultant.

To facilitate understanding and to ensure that support is provided to all those involved in the learning process, training is comprised of three phases: two student sessions and one classroom teacher support session. The first student session is an initial/introduction phase, followed by a one-to-one training session. The trainer will

decide if the student requires subsequent training sessions for additional support. Once the student training is complete, the trainer will provide a support session to the classroom teacher.

Phase One: Asynchronous Introductory Training

The initial phase of training is delivered asynchronously through the Computer Training course on Brightspace. All students requiring training are enrolled in the course and granted access to the relevant modules. Each module includes a lesson, a skill demonstration, and a corresponding hands-on activity. Students are expected to complete all modules independently prior to the scheduled second phase of training.

To accommodate diverse learning needs, the course offers two distinct training pathways:

Path 1: Provides a highly scaffolded, slower-paced learning experience with extensive modeling and support.

Path 2: Offers a more independent learning experience with broader exposure to accessibility tools and less scaffolding.

The primary objective of this introductory phase is to familiarize students with their SEA-funded equipment and to provide foundational training on the basic functions and operations of their device.

In addition to supporting initial training, the Computer Training course serves as an ongoing resource. Students may revisit the modules at any time to reinforce their skills and enhance their proficiency with the equipment and associated software.

Phase Two: Individualized One-to-One Training

The second phase consists of individualized, synchronous one-to-one training, typically delivered approximately one week after the completion of the initial training modules. This session is tailored to address the specific academic needs of the student, as outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). It begins with a brief review of the foundational skills introduced during the initial phase, followed by a customized lesson that integrates essential assistive technology tools. These tools are selected to support the student in meeting their learning goals within the context of their IEP.

Additional one-to-one training sessions are scheduled on an as-needed basis to ensure continued support and skill development.

Phase Three: Classroom Teacher Support

The third phase involves a dedicated support session for the classroom teacher. The objective is to equip teachers with the necessary skills to effectively support students in using their assistive technology. The content of this session is tailored to the specific needs of the teacher and may include:

- Converting documents to accessible formats using Microsoft Word or the Microsoft Edge browser.
- Accessing educational resources via AERO.
- Sharing documents through Brightspace or OneDrive.

Ongoing Support and Resources

To promote the successful implementation of assistive technology, several support mechanisms have been established. These include:

- A comprehensive computer training course is available to both staff and students.
- “How-to” booklets that provide step-by-step guidance for using assistive tools.
- A follow-up email from the instructor to the classroom teacher and the school’s Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), containing all relevant resources to support students using SEA equipment.

Additionally, Community of Practice meetings are held to enhance SERTs’ understanding of accessibility tools and software used by students with SEA equipment.

This training model was designed to deliver effective, student-centered instruction while building capacity among staff and students across the district. It ensures the sustainable and successful use of assistive technology. The model has proven to be both pedagogically sound and cost-effective, offering a highly efficient and impactful approach to training.

Special Equipment Amount Claims for 2024-25

During the 2024–2025 school year, a total of 273 SEA claims were processed and implemented. Of these, 76 were equipment-based (non-technological) claims, which included items such as sensory equipment, hearing support devices, vision support tools, personal care equipment, and physical assistance equipment. The remaining 197 claims were for computer-based equipment, supporting students who require assistive technology to meet their learning needs.

Training Services

All students who receive SEA-funded computer equipment are provided with comprehensive training on both the hardware and software components of their devices. A range of software applications and assistive tools are utilized to address the diverse learning needs of students and to ensure effective use of the technology.

Application	Software Application Tool
Word processing	Microsoft Word
Meetings and video conferencing	Microsoft Teams
Learning management system	Desire2Learn Brightspace
File storage	Microsoft OneDrive
Text-to-speech	Microsoft Word, Microsoft Edge
Text-to-speech on the Web	Microsoft Edge
Speech-to-text	Microsoft Word, Window's Dictation tool
Word prediction	Window's 10 Text suggestions
Concept mapping/graphic organizer	SMART Ideas 5
Visual symbols and schedules	Boardmaker 7
Converting documents to an accessible format	OCR scanning on photocopier, opening the PDF in Word, opening PDF in the Edge browser, OCR tool in Adobe Pro
Reading and writing on a PDF file	Microsoft Word, Microsoft Edge, Adobe Reader, Adobe Pro
Vision supports	Microsoft Word, Zoom-Text, Immersive Reader (in Edge and Word)

This year, 165 students and two Educational Assistants received training on a variety of software application tools. A total of 113 educator support sessions were conducted. During these sessions, educators were provided with resource materials via email to assist them in supporting students with their equipment. In some cases, additional in-person follow-up sessions were arranged to offer further guidance.

SEA Training completed in 2024-25:

School	Students	Educational Assistants	Educators
Blessed Sacrament	8	0	7
Christ the King	5	0	3
Holy Cross	4	0	2
Holy Family	1	0	1
Madonna Della Libera	8	0	3
Notre Dame Brantford	6	0	3
Notre Dame Caledonia	4	0	3
Our Lady of Fatima	1	0	1
Our Lady of Providence	5	0	3
Resurrection	0	0	0
Sacred Heart Langton	1	0	2
Sacred Heart Paris	15	0	8
St. Basil	4	2	3
St. Bernard of Clairvaux	2	0	2
St. Cecilia's	1	0	0
St. Frances Cabrini	7	0	5
St. Gabriel	8	0	4
St. Joseph's	22	0	6
St. Leo	5	0	3
St. Mary's Hagersville	4	0	3
St. Michael's Dunnville	4	0	4
St. Michael's Walsh	3	0	4
St. Patrick Brantford	4	0	2
St. Patrick's Caledonia	9	0	5
St. Peter	1	0	1
St. Pius X	7	0	4

St. Stephen's	1	0	1
St. Theresa	2	0	2
Assumption College School	4	0	0
Holy Trinity Catholic High School	8	0	0
St. John's College	11	0	28
TOTAL	165	2	113

Professional Development and Staff Training

Through our Community of Practice meetings, Professional Development in SEA and technology training was provided to Special Education Resource Teachers on the following topics:

- Soundfield systems – what models we have, how they operate and how to troubleshoot.
- The plan for the new special education laptops for schools.
- Edwin – the board approved literacy resource. Built in accessibility tools that support inclusion and universal design for learning (UDL).
- E.A. Chromebooks – process of acquiring, transferring and returning.
- Boardmaker and TD snap – practical applications.
- SEA on the IEP – process for cleaning up school data.
- Review equipment transfer process.
- Use of Board recommended assistive technology tools for EQAO.

Applied Behaviour Analysis

During the 2024-25 school year, there were four full-time Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Program Leads providing support to principals, teachers, support staff and families for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other special education needs.

The ABA Program Leads shifted towards a tiered model of support to improve the effectiveness and quality of ABA service across the Board (the number of students that received Tier 1 supports may not be reflected in the total caseload number, as consent is not required).

ABA Tiered Model of Support



Within the 2024-25 school year, the ABA Program Leads carried a combined caseload of 240 students with ASD, as well as 59 non-identified students.

The ABA team collaborated with school and system staff on a variety of topics including:

- Behaviour reduction
- Self-regulation
- Student Safety Plans
- Individual Education Plans
- Essential Information Highlights forms
- Communication
- Social interaction
- Functional skills
- Strategies to promote independence and participation in school activities
- Structured learning systems
- Data collection systems
- Organizational skills
- Creation and use of visual supports
- Transition planning and supports
- Ontario Autism Program (OAP) Services
- Specialized classes

In addition, the ABA team collaborated with community providers and families involved in the OAP programs and services:

- Entry-to-School Program

- Connections for Students Program
- Urgent Response Services
- Extensive Needs Services
- Core Clinical Services
- Family Foundational Services
- Determination of Needs meetings

ABA Program Leads provided a variety of other services. Some of which include:

- Observation and analysis of collected data (i.e. Frequency) to inform individualized recommendations
- Staff training and support in the use of ABA-based strategies
- Classroom peer awareness presentations
- Building staff capacity with Boardmaker Online
- Collaboration with school staff and community partners (i.e. Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Services, Behaviour and Mental Health Services, Service Coordination)
- Development and planning for implementation of the Spectrum Abilities Program and Primary Learning Strategies Classroom
- Co-ordinating Sonderly training for all staff

Blind and Low Vision

During the 2024-25 school year, individualized orientation and mobility programming was implemented for 35 students in 17 different schools. The primary role of the Orientation and Mobility Instructor includes teaching students who are blind or partially sighted the necessary skills to travel safely, efficiently, gracefully, and independently, with or without the use of a mobility device, in any environment. To achieve this goal, instruction is provided in the following areas:

- Concept development
- Motor development
- Sensory development
- Visual skills
- Social skills
- Techniques of orientation and mobility
- Use of devices

Further involvement of the orientation and mobility instructor during the 2024-25 school year includes:

- Observations, consultation with school staff, and goal setting for Individualized Education Plans
- Direct one-on-one orientation and mobility training to students, educational assistants, early childhood educators, teachers, and administrators
- Classroom peer awareness presentations
- Collaboration with school mental health professionals (Social Workers, Child Youth Workers)
- Providing additional resources for teachers, support staff, and parents including documents from CNIB, daily physical activity adaptations, individualized orientation and mobility family booklets, and an environmental accessibility checklist
- Collaboration with school administrators and the Facilities Department to identify and remove barriers in schools. Implement physical changes in schools, such as marking stairs and addressing potential travel hazards, guided by the principles of universal accessible design
- Liaison between school and community agencies such as Vision Loss Rehabilitation Ontario (VLRO)
- Supporting students transitioning into kindergarten and high school (attending System IPRC meetings and providing transition visits to students)
- Presentations introducing students to the sport of “Goalball”

The role of the orientation and mobility instructor also facilitates collaboration between service providers and schools. As a result, seven new referrals to the W. Ross Macdonald School were submitted to complete a functional vision assessment. The objective of the assessment is to build teacher capacity when instructing students who are blind or partially sighted.

This year CNIB's Deafblind Community Services delivered presentations in 10 schools for Deafblind Awareness Month in June. The presentations offered a fresh look into the challenges and strengths of individuals with deafblindness. Through real-life stories and discussions, students and educators gained insight into how they navigate the world with adaptive technologies. A key focus was the vital role of deafblind intervenors, who provide tailored support and bridge communication gaps. The initiative sparked meaningful conversations and inspired schools to continue to create sensory gardens, promoting inclusivity and deeper awareness.



Elementary and Secondary Special Education Programs

System Special Education Consultants support students, staff, and families in elementary and secondary special education programs, aligning with the values and goals in the 2023-2027 BHNCD SB Strategic Plan, and focusing on student belonging, teaching & learning, and wellness. Students come to our special education programs with diverse strengths, needs, and learning styles. The System Special Education Consultants assist school staff in the development and implementation of individualized programs to ensure that all students reach their full potential and acquire the skills and knowledge needed for their secondary and post-secondary pathways.



Elementary Transition Classes

Spectrum Abilities Program Overview

The Spectrum Abilities Program (SAP) is a specialized classroom that supports six students from across the Board in grades three to five who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. This structured environment includes:

- Visual supports
- Integration opportunities
- Differentiated instruction
- Structured learning routines
- Proactive behaviour supports
- Cross-curricular opportunities to support generalization
- Data collection
- Access to technology
- Multisensory learning
- Independent work systems
- Authentic opportunities for interactions
- Alternative & augmentative communication supports

SAP classroom supports included:

- Special Education Teacher - 1
- Educational Assistants – 4

SAP School Board level consultative supports included:

- ABA Program Lead – 2
- Speech-Language Pathologist – 1
- System Special Education Consultant – 1

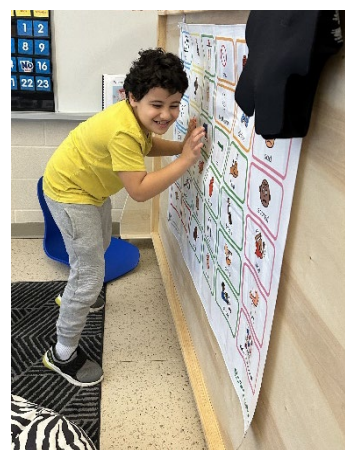
This multi-disciplinary team met regularly to collaborate on best practice and support communication between home and school.

This program is located at Madonna Della Libera School in Brantford. It is designed to provide a highly individualized and supportive learning environment.

Each student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that is created to build upon their unique strengths and is tailored to address their specific needs.

Alternate Programming Focus Areas:

- Communication Skills
- Social Skills Development
- Functional Literacy and Numeracy
- Personal Life Skills
- Self-Regulation
- Gross and Fine Motor Skills



To better understand students' learning profiles, staff were trained in the administration and use of the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skill (ABLLS) assessment. Once the students' individual strengths and needs were determined, the resource guided the development of targeted educational programs across a variety of domains.

To further support programming, job-embedded professional development was provided by the S-LP over the span of 12 weeks, using Story Champs as a foundational resource. With the regular support model, additional opportunities were created to further facilitate learning and programming within the classroom. The Teacher and S-LP were able to use this foundational knowledge to extend the programming to meet students' needs in the domains of language development, self-regulation and social skills.



To support sensory regulation, SAP has access to a dedicated sensory room adjacent to the classroom. This space features a variety of equipment that promotes proactive regulation as well as a calming space to regulate students.



To ensure an inclusive education experience for all students, the class participated in enriching community-based opportunities, including field trips to Spectrum Gymnastics and participation in the “Have A Go” track and field event, organized by the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSB).

Primary Learning Strategies Class

During the 2024-25 school year, the Primary Learning Strategies Class (PLSC) supported 5 students in grades one through three. Students in this class benefited from the daily support of a teacher, educational assistants, and a behavioural specialist (Bartimaeus), as well as ongoing involvement with a Child Youth Worker (CYW) and consultation from two Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Program Leads and a System Special Education Consultant. Throughout the year, the PLSC team worked hard to provide an educational setting prioritizing self-regulation skills, independent skill-building, and academic success. Strategies and supports the team has implemented include (1) environmental modifications (e.g., alternative work and calming spaces, highly structured and organized classroom set up, specialized seating options), (2) class-wide strategies (e.g., visual supports, availability of fidget items and noise-cancelling headphones, a high degree of consistency and predictability in both expectations and interactions), and (3) individualized strategies (e.g., reinforcement systems, coping strategies, social narratives, visual cues on a student’s desk, integration into grade-level classrooms). Students have responded well to the approaches listed above and have demonstrated growth in a variety of areas. Every learner has progressed in different ways, such as demonstrating more tolerance to environmental stressors, or transitioning away from preferred activities with increasing independence. As a group, students have become more confident with advocating for their own needs, they are increasingly able to express their emotions safely and are active participants in their own academic learning.

Secondary Special Education Classes

Special education classes exist at each of our secondary schools. Many of these learners have complex needs and are identified through the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) in one or more of the following categories: Intellectual, Physical, and Communication: Autism. To meet their educational needs, students access alternative courses, or a combination of alternative programming and modified expectations from the Ontario Curriculum. Some students earn credits toward the Ontario Secondary School Certificate or the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.



The following chart summarizes the total enrolment in each of the secondary special education programs for the 2024-2025 school year.

	St. John's College	Holy Trinity	Assumption College
Personal Active Learning (PAL)	7	5	8
Community Living	10	9	10
Job Skills	28	15	35

Alternative Courses (non-credit) are offered in all our special education programs. The *Secondary K Course Alternative Frameworks* continue to be used by our special class teachers to ensure that learning is meaningful, developmentally appropriate, and prepares students for their post-secondary pathways. Each course framework consists of pedagogical ideas, student learning competencies, assessment checklists, and supplementary resources.

Members of the System Special Education team build capacity by offering professional development and training to Special Education Classroom Teachers, Educational Assistants, Elective Teachers, and Special Education Department Heads. During the 2024-2025 school year, support was offered on the following topics: alternative and modified curriculum, IEP writing, navigating PowerSchool SpecEd software, assessment tools, preparing for Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meetings, and evaluating learning expectations for report writing on the Alternative Report Card or Provincial Report Card. Secondary special class staff participated in a full-day workshop examining and implementing the Complex Communicator Guidebook which was developed by BHNCD SB Speech-Language Pathologists. Staff learned about modes of communication and how student communication can be expanded using many different methods. A collaborative approach was used to develop student “communication portraits” to better understand each student’s unique communication profile.

Secondary special education programs provide students with the opportunity to learn and practice essential employability and life skills. This year, students participated in a number of community and in-school work experiences. Some community work experiences included Canadian Tire, Sobeys, FreshCo, Farm Boy, daycare centres, pet stores, bakeries, restaurants, garden stores and elementary schools. In-school experiences included practice with employability kits, working in the school cafeteria, preparing and serving the Breakfast Program, and assisting custodial staff. Skills learned from these experiences are essential for success in many post-secondary pathways (e.g., employment, continuing education, and for independent/assisted living).

Through Job Links, students were able to participate in certification programs to develop skills including food handler and first aid.



During the 2024-2025 school year, emphasis was placed on helping families make informed decisions about secondary special education programs and transitions to post-secondary opportunities by:

- Meeting with families and arranging in-person tours
- Providing informational documents to help families differentiate between the special education programs offered (PAL, Community Living, and Job Skills), and their graduation outcomes
- Hosting an information night for families of grade 8 students considering the Job Skills program, to highlight key aspects of the program, including options for non-credit and credit bearing courses, preparation for entering the world of work (e.g., resume writing, interview skills) and opportunities for work experience
- Connecting families with community agencies to support the transition to various post-secondary pathways

Speech and Language

Speech & Language Services has provided a variety of supports to students and staff throughout the 2024–2025 school year. Aligned with this year’s Speech-Language & Audiology Canada (SAC) theme, *“S-LPs and Audiologists: Doing More Than You Think,”* the Speech-Language Pathology (S-LP) team advanced inclusive practices and strengthened communication supports across the district.

Recognizing that communication is foundational to learning, relationships, and inclusion, the S-LP team worked collaboratively to ensure all students, particularly those with communication challenges, had access to timely, effective, and appropriate support.

Advancing a Tiered Model of Support

The S-LP team deepened its implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), reviewing and refining service pathways to enhance access at the universal (Tier 1) and targeted (Tier 2) levels. Emphasis was placed on early, classroom-embedded interventions to reduce reliance on intensive Tier 3 supports. A restructured referral process for language concerns encouraged educators and SERTs to trial classroom strategies before proceeding to formal assessments.

A new class-based consent model was also introduced into secondary special education programs, allowing educators to access general strategies, visual supports, and programming tools for all learners. This model was established to increase access of services at the Tier 1 level.

Expansion to Kindergarten Year 1

Following a shift in Preschool Speech and Language (PSL) services, Board S-LPs assumed responsibility for Kindergarten Year 1 students. In collaboration with Lansdowne Children's Centre, the team supported transitions from PSL to school-based services, reviewed reports, consulted with educators, and implemented classroom strategies. This ensured continuity of care from the outset of their educational journey.

Supporting Inclusive Education and Building Capacity

Two Board-wide professional development days were led by the S-LP team, focusing on supporting complex communicators and building capacity in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). In collaboration with the Technology Access Clinic (TAC), elementary Educational Assistants engaged in a full day of AAC training on January 20, 2025. At the secondary level, targeted sessions were provided on January 30, 2025, by the Board S-LPs and other members of the Special Education Team to Department Heads, Personal Active Learning (PAL) and Community Living teachers, and EAs, using the *Simple View of Complex Communication* framework.



Communicated
WHAT DOES COMMUNICATION MEAN TO YOU?
200 responses



Story Champs Support in Kindergarten

The team continued their implementation of job-embedded professional development using the *Story Champs*® narrative language program in 17 classrooms. Educators and S-LPs collaborated on:

- **Screening & Assessment:** Training in administration and interpretation of oral language and early literacy screeners
- **Instructional Cycles:**
 - Cycle 1: Story grammar elements
 - Cycle 2: Complex sentence structures
- **Gradual Release Model:** Transition from S-LP-led instruction to educator-led implementation
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Multi-sensory strategies supported a wide range of learner needs
- **Multi-Tiered Support Model:**
 - **Tier 1:** Whole-class narrative-based lessons
 - **Tier 2:** Targeted interventions for students identified as at risk for oral language delays
 - **Tier 3:** Individual/Small Group Instruction for students who received support in the 2023-2024 school year and still identified at-risk post-intervention

Complex Communicator Guidebook

To support students with complex communication needs, the S-LP team developed the *Complex Communicator Guidebook*, a comprehensive resource containing evidence-based strategies, partner communication tools, and visual supports. This new resource was aimed at building educator capacity and fostering inclusive communication practices across the district. This initiative reflects the team's commitment to honouring student dignity and supporting diverse modes of expression.

Designed for teachers, EAs, SERTs, and administrators, the guidebook promotes inclusive communication and supports the development of individualized communication portraits.

To complement the guidebook, additional Tier 1 visual supports were developed to promote inclusive communication environments. These included:

- Communication boards and books
- Routine visuals and adapted prayers
- Nutrition break placemats
- Theme boards and school location labels
- Sensory room choice visuals

A curated collection of visuals was compiled into a sample resource book and was provided to all schools. This resource offered a wide range of adaptable visuals for schools to select from and modify based on individual student needs. Transition Planning Funds were allocated to produce and equitably distribute these materials across all elementary schools, ensuring that educators had access to consistent tools to plan and collaborate effectively for students with complex communication needs.



Speech Support Initiatives

To address increased demand for speech assessments, the Board partnered with HearSay Speech and Hearing Centre to complete assessments for referral to Lansdowne Children's Centre's School-Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS).

Additionally, SBRS piloted a new service delivery model offering in-centre therapy to kindergarten students on school waitlists. These small group sessions, led by Communication Disorders Assistants under S-LP supervision, addressed gaps created by shifts in preschool speech therapy provision.

Team Expansion

The team welcomed a fourth S-LP in Spring 2025, enhancing the team's capacity to balance caseloads and provide more responsive and collaborative supports.

Students Supported

The following student-directed services were provided this school year:

- Comprehensive assessments (i.e., full language evaluation) were conducted for 8 students, with follow-up consultation services provided.

- Targeted assessments (i.e., supporting one area of communication such as speech sound production, voice, fluency, narrative language) were conducted for 191 students.
- Consultation services were offered to 167 students with *complex communication needs*, including non/minimally speaking students. This involved individualized support, implementation of communication systems, and collaboration with educators and other professionals.
- Consultation services were provided to 34 students with reduced understanding and/or expression of language, early literacy difficulties, and/or speech challenges. This included educating the school team on the students' communication profile, developing home and school programming, IEP development (e.g., goals and accommodations), and collaboration with all team members.
- Targeted intervention (i.e., through narrative language pilot program, *Story Champs*®) was provided for 56 students who were identified by their classroom educators as at-risk of developing oral language difficulties.
- Transitioned service for 124 students from preschool to school board Speech & Language Services
- Collaborated with schools, families and/or community partners to support the transition for 50 students with complex communication needs entering the school system.
- Referred 126 students to School Based Rehabilitation Services for speech support and 19 students to the Technology Access Clinic for augmentative and alternative communication support.

Professional Development and Innovation

Ongoing professional development continued to inform and elevate the team's practice. Key learning opportunities included:

- SAC School Services Symposium 2025: Attended a variety of learning sessions related to communication, language and literacy practices in school settings
- ReadTopia: Engaged in learning about supporting literacy for students with complex needs
- Coaching to Inclusion Conference: Participated in learning related to inclusive practices

These initiatives will further enhance the team's tiered service approach and support inclusive communication and literacy practices across schools.

Ongoing collaboration was also fostered with diverse S-LPs across Ontario, facilitated by active involvement in the Association of Chief Speech-Language, as well as the S-LPs for Complex Communication Needs/Augmentative and Alternative Communication (CCN/AAC) in Ontario School Boards. Speech & Language Services were also invited to share about the board-wide *Story Champs*® project within the school board as well as multiple other school boards in the province.

Recognition: Champions of Inclusion

The S-LP team was honoured with the 2025 Champions of Inclusion Award at this year's *Coaching for Inclusion* conference. This recognition celebrates the team's outstanding contributions to advancing inclusive communication practices across the district. Guided by the belief that every student, regardless of communication ability, deserves to be heard, supported, and included, the team continues to partner with families, educators, and community agencies to remove barriers and build pathways to participation.




Gifted Education

Gifted Programming should promote the following skills: higher-level critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, communication, leadership, and creativity. During the 2024-25 academic year, Gifted Supplementary Modules were offered in terms 1 and 2 through Special Education Services to provide enrichment opportunities and challenges to extend learning and leadership skills to students identified in the area of Intellectual: Giftedness. Students from grades 4 to 8 were brought together in person to experience extended learning on a variety of topics. Twenty-six students participated in the 2024-2025 Supplementary Gifted Modules. There were 14 schools represented across the board. The students were divided into two groups, grades 4-6 and grades 7-8.

District Updates

- GIFTED 2024-25

Composition of the Program



Participation from Brant	Participation from Haldimand	Participation from Norfolk
8 Schools 69%	2 Schools 12%	4 Schools 19%
Grade 4s: 2	Grade 4s: 1	Grade 4s: 0
Grade 5s: 6	Grade 5s: 0	Grade 5s: 3
Grade 6s: 4	Grade 6s: 1	Grade 6s: 0
Grade 7s: 4	Grade 7s: 0	Grade 7s: 0
Grade 8s: 2	Grade 8s: 1	Grade 8s: 2

Supplementary Gifted Dates 2024-2025 TERM 1

Grade 4 – 6 Modules		Location of Module	
Stratford Film Festival: Wendy and Peter Pan	Wednesday, October 23, 2024	9:00 am to 5:00 pm	Drop off and pick up at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre Avon Theatre, Stratford*
Junk Drawer Races: Cardboard Car Race, Paper Glider	Friday, November 1, Tuesday, November 5 and Thursday, November 21, 2024	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre (SMCLC)*
Film Camp in a Box (virtual home school)	Tuesday, November 19, 2024 (virtual pre-meeting) 9:30 am	9:30 am Virtual	Virtual – from home school
The Museum Kitchener	Tuesday, November 12, 2024	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre* Kitchener by bus
Film Camp in a Box	Tuesday, December 3, 2024	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
The Museum	Tuesday, January 14, 2025	9:00 am to 12:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
Scientists in School	Tuesday, January 14, 2025	1:00 pm to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
* All drop offs and pick-ups will be at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre, 455 Colborne Street East, Brantford, Ontario *			
Grade 7-8 Modules		Location of Module	
Stratford Film Festival: Wendy and Peter Pan	Wednesday, October 23, 2024	9:00 am to 5:00 pm	Drop off and pick up at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre Avon Theatre, Stratford*
Junk Drawer Races: Hydraulic Cranes	Friday, November 1, Tuesday, November 19, and Friday, November 29, 2024	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
Film Camp in a Box (Virtual from SMCLC)	Tuesday, November 19, 2024 (virtual pre-meeting) 9:30 am	9:30 am Virtual	Virtual – from SMCLC
The Museum Kitchener	Tuesday, November 12, 2024	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre* Kitchener by bus
Film Camp in a Box	Tuesday, December 3, 2024	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
The Museum	Tuesday, January 14, 2025	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
Scientists in School	Tuesday, January 14, 2025	1:00 pm to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
* All drop offs and pick-ups will be at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre, 455 Colborne Street East, Brantford, Ontario *			

Supplementary Gifted Dates 2024-2025 TERM 2

Grade 4-6 Modules		Location of Module	
STEM (St. Leo's School) Grades 4-5	Friday, February 21, 2025	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	**Drop off and pick up at St. Leo's School, 233 Memorial Dr., Brantford
Film Camp in a Box (virtual home school)	(virtual pre-meeting) at home school	March 4 – 9:15 am – 9:30 am home school	Virtual – from home school
Film Camp in a Box	Thursday, March 20, 2025	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
The Museum Kitchener	Wednesday, April 2, 2025	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre* Kitchener by bus
The Warplane Museum	Tuesday, May 20, 2025, Warplane Museum	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
* All drop offs and pick-ups will be at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre, 455 Colborne Street East, Brantford, Ontario, except below. *			
** Drop off for STEM days is St. Leo's School, 233 Memorial Dr., Brantford**			

Grade 7-8 Modules		Location of Module	
STEM (St. Leo's School) Grades 6-8	Wednesday, February 26, 2025	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	**Drop off and pick up at St. Leo's School, 233 Memorial Dr., Brantford
Film Camp in a Box (Virtual from SMCLC)	(virtual pre-meeting) at home school	March 4 – 9:15 am – 9:30 am home school	Virtual – from home school
Film Camp in a Box	Thursday, March 20, 2025	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
The Museum Kitchener	Wednesday, April 2, 2025	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre* Kitchener by bus
The Warplane Museum	Tuesday, May 20, 2025, Warplane Museum	9:00 am to 3:00 pm	St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre*
* All drop offs and pick-ups will be at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre, 455 Colborne Street East, Brantford, Ontario, except below. *			
** Drop off for STEM days is St. Leo's School, 233 Memorial Dr., Brantford**			

Gifted Programming Report: 2024–2025 Academic Year

Gifted programming is designed to foster the development of higher-level critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, communication, leadership, and creativity. During the 2024–2025 academic year, Special Education Services offered Gifted Supplementary Modules in Terms 1 and 2 to provide enrichment opportunities for students identified with Intellectual: Giftedness.

These modules brought together 26 students from Grades 4 to 8, representing 14 schools across the board. The majority of sessions were attended by the full group, with the exception of two STEM-focused days, which were divided into Grades 4–6 and Grades 7–8 to better tailor the learning experience.

Program Overview

A total of 15 modules were delivered throughout the year, with 14 attended by the full group. Highlights of the program included:

- Stratford Festival Experience**

The year began with a group excursion to the Stratford Festival. Students participated in a workshop with professional actors and attended a performance of *Wendy and Peter Pan*.

- **Junk Drawer Races – Skills Ontario**

Over two full days, students engaged in hands-on engineering challenges. Grades 4–5 designed and built **Cardboard Car Racers**, while Grades 6–8 constructed **Hydraulic Cranes**.

- **Film Camp in a Box**

In December and March, students collaborated on short films using Claymation and silent film techniques. These sessions covered storytelling, scriptwriting, pitching, camera work, editing, and industry insights.

- **The Museum, Kitchener**

In November, students visited The Museum, explored the Maker Space, and designed **Bottle Rocket Launchers**. In January, The Museum team and Scientists in School facilitated a follow-up session at SMCLC, featuring science and coding activities.

- **BHNCDSB STEM Team Day**

Both groups spent a day designing and building **cars and drones**, applying engineering and design thinking skills. Students needed to follow a schematic drawing and solve problems along the way.

- **Final Module – Warplane Heritage Museum**

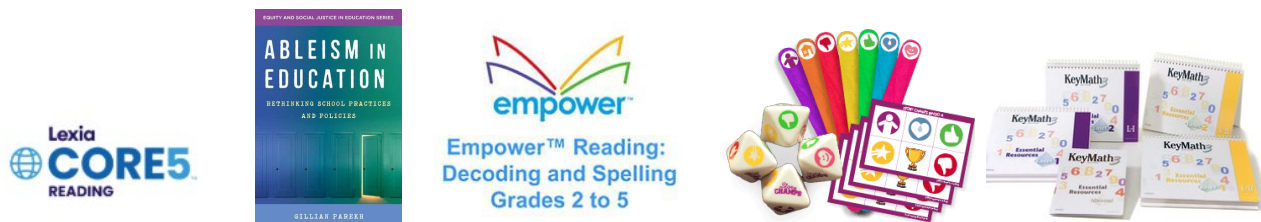
The culminating experience took place at the Warplane Heritage Museum in Mount Hope. Students worked in collaborative teams to build and test **flight-worthy drones** and participated in a guided tour and discussion about aviation history.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Community of Practice Meetings

The 2024-2025 academic school year offered Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) and Secondary Special Education Department Heads professional development through five virtual and three in-person Community of Practice (CoP) meetings to enhance teacher practice and further support student achievement.



The meetings provided professional development and support to SERTs in key areas such as:

- Role of the SERT – duties, responsibilities, Tier 3 support, and accountability.
- PowerSchool and PowerSchool SpecEd – updates, curriculum changes, OnSIS reporting, review of Ministry and Board standards, accessing current and new documents in PowerSchool SpecEd.
- Individual Education Plan (IEP) – development, writing, reporting, and Jordan’s Principle component.
- Transition Plans – internal IEP audit, key findings, updates, and next steps.
- Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC) – process and required paperwork; 8 to 9 transitions, mainstream vs. special class considerations.
- Supporting Grade 8 to 9 Transitions – best practices and supports.
- Transition Navigator Resources – entry to school, within school, elementary to secondary, and post secondary resources, supports, release time, services, and summer visits.
- Secondary Special Education Programs and placement options.
- EDWIN – professional development on resources and supports.
- EQAO – accommodations, exemptions and the IEP.
- EQAO and OISE Research – best practices, impactful changes, and data-driven results.
- Lexia – program structure, best practices and leveraging data reports for intervention in Core5 Reading and PowerUp Literacy through interactive sessions facilitated by Greenfield Learning.
- Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Services – shared relevant/new information regarding the Ontario Autism Program (OAP) and Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA), ABA model of delivery (supports and services), Entry to School Program, Student Safety Plans and Data Collection methods, escalation plans, and Sonderly.
- Special Equipment Amount (SEA) – updates, student training process, SEA on the IEP.
- Speech and Language Services – continued implementation of Story Champs, referrals, complex communicators, Board services, TAC, building language supports, TD Snap, Boardmaker, Complex Communicator Guidebook, and Champions of Inclusion award.
- Speech Screens – HearSay process, supports, and services.
- Considerations for external, third party supports – protocols and expectations.
- Special Olympics Ontario Summer Games – presentation and volunteer opportunities.
- Curriculum modifications and IEPs – specifically for language and mathematics.
- Key Math – training, administration, IEPs, progress monitoring, guidelines, and best practices.
- Orientation and Mobility – updates, O&M instructor role and referral process, deafblind community services.

- Gifted Program –information and updates about virtual gifted modules, as well as gifted screening.
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services – soundfield system repairs and troubleshooting guide.
- Secondary Special Programs – process, programs, student candidate criteria, classroom tours and program inquiries.
- Have A Go – consent process, eligibility, and event details.
- Sacramental Retreats – providing resources, activities, and opportunities for fellowship to students preparing for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist, or Confirmation.
- Student Support and Mental Health Services – whole school approach, Student Support Plan, Wayfinder, and School Mental Health Ontario.
- Medical Care Plans, Plans of Care and Essential Highlight Forms.
- Entry to School Case Conferences – school vs. system-level, process, protocol, reminders, and purpose.
- Community partner updates (Lansdowne and School Based Rehabilitation Services – OT and PT).
- Ontario Student Record documentation.
- Case Conferences – process, documentation, responsibilities, and minute taking.
- Modified Days – memorandum, process, and considerations.
- French Exemptions – policy and forms for initial requests and renewals for 2024-2025 school year.
- Nelson Psychological Assessment Reports – acquiring assessments, report shares and next steps.
- Kneer Psychological Assessment Team – considerations for cognitive testing, responsibilities, referral, process, report shares, next steps.
- Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement – administration tips and reminders, strengths/needs/strategies resources.
- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) – grade 4 exemption considerations, training, administration.
- School Based Rehabilitation Services – referral process for occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and speech-language services.
- Amethyst Demonstration School – programs, facility, process, and eligibility.
- Lansdowne Children’s Centre Occupational Therapy Support Model and processes.
- Academic Planner updates.
- NVCI – training for all SERTs, and Safe Schools Incident Reporting.
- Principal/Vice-Principal Special Education Channel and access to resources.
- Empower Reading Program from Sick Kids – training, information, criteria, updates, success stories, assessment tracking, consents.
- Specialized Transportation Database –updates and training from Transportation Services.
- Spectrum Abilities Program – criteria, eligibility, goals, updates, and programming.
- Learning Strategies Class – criteria, eligibility, and goals, updates, and programming.
- Programming for Complex Behaviours – resource and guidebook.
- EA Allocation Process – process, meetings, student support rubrics, and criteria for advocacy.
- SERT Allocation Process.

District priorities were shared with SERTs and included:

- **Board Spiritual Theme – Pilgrims of Hope** – supporting the faith formation of students and staff by emphasizing that transformation through service is a call to put our faith into action. We are called to be part of the solution by inviting us to understand ourselves as a people on a journey – not standing still, not looking only inward, but moving forward together in faith, with hope guiding our steps.
- **Ableism Research Continued** – Guide our work through critical reflections on Special Education Systems, understanding disability, enabling vs. disabling systems, streaming, implications of special

education programming and modifications from an early age, ableism, flaws in assessment tools and practices, and the disproportionality of marginalized groups.

- **Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) – The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)** was administered to all participating Grade 4 students this year. The CogAT is a group-administered assessment designed to measure students' reasoning and problem-solving abilities across three key areas: Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal domains. It is not a test of what students have learned in school (academic achievement), but rather how they think and process information—skills that are critical for learning new material.
 - **Verbal Battery** assesses reasoning with words and language, including vocabulary, verbal analogies, and sentence completion.
 - **Quantitative Battery** focuses on numerical reasoning, such as understanding number relationships, patterns, and problem-solving using numbers.
 - **Nonverbal Battery** evaluates spatial and figural reasoning using shapes and patterns, making it less dependent on language and helpful for identifying strengths in students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

The Grade 4 CogAT is used to help identify gifted students, to inform instructional planning, and to better understand each child's learning profile. The results can highlight strengths and areas for growth that may not be evident through traditional academic assessments. This year, all Grade 4 teachers were trained on how to administer the CogAT in October 2024 which involved 802 junior students.

- **The Empower Reading: Decoding and Spelling Program** continued to be implemented for all schools but 2, by 24 instructors during the 2024-2025 school year. This Tier 3 program is designed to address the academic challenges faced by children who have or are at risk of having a reading disability. It is a multi-component intervention program designed by SickKids that teaches struggling readers effective strategies for decoding, spelling words, and understanding text, equipping them to build confidence in their reading skills, expand their levels of independence, and empower them to become active readers.
- **Lexia:** Built on the science of reading, Lexia® Core5® Reading is a research-proven program that accelerates the development of literacy skills for students of all abilities, helping them make the critical shift from learning to read to reading to learn. 300 licenses are monitored across the district for students in grades 2 to 5 (Lexia Core5) and grades 6 to 8 (Lexia PowerUp) with demonstrated needs in the area of reading to ensure they are meeting usage targets daily and acquiring growth through the implementation of supplemental lessons and interventions.
- **Partnership with Bartimaeus Incorporated:** Partnering with outside behaviour specialists has enabled us to support students in reaching their full potential by addressing dysregulation and complex behaviours that interfere with learning and achievement. These behaviour specialists have supported school teams in situations that require interventions with students experiencing moderate to extreme behavioural, emotional, psychological and developmental challenges both in the school and in the community. With their support, we have been able to continue to create and maintain safe and positive school environments.
- **Story Champs:** *Story Champs*® is an evidence-based program that uses a systematic and explicit approach to promote the development of oral language skills, such as vocabulary, sentence structure and oral narratives. Strong oral language skills are an essential component to later reading and writing success. Story Champs is currently in Year 2 of a 3-Year phase roll out across the district. For a total of

twelve weeks, Board Speech-Language Pathologists work alongside Kindergarten educators through a gradual release model (i.e., I Do – We Do – You Do) to provide whole classroom support as well as targeted small group intervention to target oral language through storytelling.

- **KeyMath-3:** KeyMath-3 is a diagnostic assessment tool that assesses a full spectrum of essential math concepts and skills, including a comprehensive math instruction and intervention program for students in grade 3 to 12. KeyMath-3 resources have been provided to every school in our board and Special Education Resource Teachers have received formal training on how to administer the assessment, interpret results, plan and deliver intervention lessons to fill in gaps and monitor progress. Students eligible to receive this diagnostic assessment must have significant difficulty acquiring age-appropriate numeracy skills, despite receiving differentiated instruction and universal design for learning in the classroom as well as tiered supports. The KeyMath-3 assessment has also been administered to determine the appropriateness and precision of the modified programming for students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and to adjust the expectations on the IEP as required.
- **Math Modification Process:** In response to last year's IEP audit, the Superintendent of Special Education and Student Achievement Leader for Special Education continue to oversee all requests to place students on a modified math program (below grade level) via an Individualized Education Plan by analyzing:
 - tier 1 to 3 supports in the classroom
 - use of UDL and DI strategies
 - the accommodations in place
 - progress monitoring
 - ongoing assessments and data
 - whether all required steps have been taken
 - required formal assessments to be completed to pinpoint acceptable areas to modify
 - evidence of documented conversations with parents informing them of the implications of being on a modified math program
 - the length of time that a student has attempted grade-level modifications

It should be noted that although the district grew in enrollment by 10%, modified math IEPs dropped from 319 in 2024-2025 to 247 in 2024-2025.

- **Below-Grade Level Modification Process for all Subjects:** In response to last year's IEP audit, the Superintendent of Special Education and Student Achievement Leader for Special Education continue to oversee all requests to place students on a modified program (below grade level) via an Individualized Education Plan by reviewing the supports, data, and information outlined above in order to minimize the potential impact of strictly professional judgement.
- **Self-Contained Classes: Primary Learning Strategies Class:** The Primary Learning Strategies Class opened to support students with an identification of Behaviour by allowing them to participate in a one-to-two-year program focused on developing skills in self-regulation, social skills, communication skills, independence skills, and academic skills. After year one, six students were enrolled in the program. Two students will transition back to their homeschool where the students will be able to apply and generalize their new learning (in the areas of coping, stress management, resiliency, self-advocacy, independence, executive functioning, and self-regulation) to their usual mainstream classroom environment. After year 1, three students will remain in the program with two new students joining the program.
- **Self-Contained Classes: Spectrum Abilities Program:** The Junior Spectrum Abilities Class began this year to support students with an identification of Communication: Autism by allowing them to learn in a highly specialized learning environment. These students had an opportunity to develop their academic skills, social skills, communication skills, self-regulation skills, independence skills, and other

goals outlined in their Individual Education Plan through explicit instruction around emotion and behaviour regulation and a modified learning environment routed in ABA principles. The classroom is designed to provide a higher level of structured monitoring, individual attention, and planning around their particular learning style and modifications to the environment including specialized resources and supports. After year one, five students will remain in the program for the 2025 -2026 school year.

New SERT Training Program

This professional development opportunity focuses on providing new Special Education Resource Teachers with in-depth training and knowledge around the role and responsibilities of a school-level Special Education Resource Teacher. Professional development was provided to seven SERTs who were new to the role in the 2024-2025 school year. Training included five full-day in-person sessions, one of which included training in the administration of the Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement, and another in the administration, scoring and intervention for the KeyMath-3 assessment/intervention tool. Teacher practice was enhanced through formal training, opportunities for small-group activities and discussions, and 1:1 mentorship that focused on writing an Individual Education Plan. The following topics were covered through in-person discussion and training, and/or were addressed through resources, guidelines and materials that were included in a SERT reference binder:

- Individual Education Plan and Transition Plan development process.
- IPRC process (Initial and Review; system and school level).
- Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claims.
- Developing SERT and EA schedules.
- PowerSchool and PowerSchool SpecEd.
- Structured Learning.
- Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement training.
- KeyMath-3 training
- Scoring the “Writing Samples” subtest of the WJ-IV Tests of Achievement.
- HELP (Hawaii Early Learning Profile) alternative curriculum and assessment tool.
- Updating student information forms (Safety/Seizure/Medical Plans, Essential Highlights forms).
- Locating resources in the SERT channel in Teams.
- Best practices for the Ontario Student Record (OSR).
- Updating assessment data on IEPs.
- Accurate recording of student data in the Ontario Student Information System.
- Safety Plans.



Professional Development for Lead and Consultants

This year, our Student Achievement Leader for Special Education along with all System Special Education Consultants participated in three impactful professional learning conferences: *Coaching to Inclusion* (London), *OCASE* (Mississauga), and *SERCC* (London). Each experience strengthened their capacity to lead inclusive, equitable, and supportive learning environments.

A powerful and emotional thread ran through both *Coaching to Inclusion* and *SERCC*, centered on the story of Joe Lambert. His firsthand account of institutionalized schooling for individuals with disabilities illuminated the lasting harm of exclusion and segregation. His message served as a compelling call to action - reminding educators to center dignity, compassion, and belonging in all aspects of our work.

Coaching to Inclusion also emphasized peer-mediated supports as a foundation for inclusive school communities. Presentations highlighted the importance of intentional peer interactions, structured support systems, and student empowerment. Programs like *School on Track* reinforced the critical role of relationships in fostering student success and well-being.

At the *OCASE* conference, staff gained legal and structural insights into special education leadership. Sessions led by legal counsel offered practical guidance on the IPRC process and the Duty to Accommodate. Additional presentations explored systemic change, inclusive policy development, and brain-based approaches to supporting students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, including Denise Kollee's *Think Brain, Not Behavior*.

The *SERCC* conference focused on neurodiversity, empowerment, and inclusive programming. Dr. Adam Davies' keynote challenged deficit-based models and promoted strength-based approaches. Sessions explored effective assessment and programming for students with intellectual disabilities and emphasized building transferable life skills in secondary classrooms. These insights align with the Safe and Supportive Schools framework, promoting autonomy and well-being for complex learners.

Collectively, these professional learning experiences have deepened our ability to lead with empathy, apply inclusive frameworks, and support school teams in creating environments where all learners can thrive. The knowledge gained continues to inform our practices and reinforce our commitment to equity and inclusion across the system.

Educational Assistants' Professional Development

Based on the direction provided by the Ministry of Education and on the needs across the system, some newly designed sessions were created to further support the work of Educational Assistants. Additionally, Educational Assistants also participated in board-wide professional development day training which focused on the following key topics.

Curriculum - September 13, 2024

Educational Assistants had an opportunity to plan and prepare for the students they support by engaging in some of the following tasks:

- developing activities to accompany any established alternative programming goals
- developing any social stories to accommodate skills that are posing early challenges such as: sharing, transitions, washroom routines, etc.
- creating tracking/data collection documentation
- creating agreed upon communication tools to travel between home and school.
- making a list of resources/EA lending library materials/PPE that may be required moving forward
- creating calming/sensory spaces/work task areas within the classroom environment
- creating an “Essential Highlight” form based on what they know about their learner
- updating and revising any “Occasional EA Support Plans” for causal educational assistants
- preparing materials using Boardmaker or work task resources (e.g., Task Galore) for structured learning tasks, visual supports, and other hands-on activities
- preparing materials for the students they serve in the building as required or as assigned by the classroom teacher

System Faith Day - October 8, 2024

This site-based day provided an opportunity for staff to come together and launch the Board’s Spiritual Theme for the 2024–2025 school year: *“Catholic Education: Pilgrims of Hope.”* The day began with all staff gathering as a community of faith, followed by encouraging words on the “Year of Prayer” by Dr. Josephine Lombardi. Her address emphasized the theme of hope and explored how the Lord’s Prayer can serve as a guide for living. The day also included moments for personal reflection and faith-based activities, thoughtfully led by school administrators.

NVCI; Health & Safety; Various Topics - November 15, 2024

Select Educational Assistants participated in a full day of Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training, led by certified staff. The NVCI program (3rd Edition) is recognized globally as the standard for crisis prevention and intervention. It equips educators with proactive strategies and practical skills to safely and effectively manage challenging situations. At the heart of the program is the commitment to ensuring the care, welfare, safety, and security of everyone involved in a crisis.

Participants learned preventive strategies, de-escalation techniques, and effective communication skills. They also received instruction on physical interventions—such as disengagement and holding techniques—which are to be used only as a last resort when an individual poses a safety risk. The training was delivered by four members of the Special Education Team. This year, the training model transitioned from a blended half-day format to a full-day, in-person classroom model. In alignment with this shift, relevant policies and forms were updated to reflect current language and safety practices. A new document was also introduced to help school teams record discussions and outline next steps following the use of safety interventions.

Remaining Educational Assistants participated in professional development around mandatory “Slip, Trip, and Fall Training” as dictated by the Occupational Health and Safety Act. This was followed by “Verbal Intervention Training” provided by the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI). This training provided employees with the skills to

identify, respond to, and verbally de-escalate challenging behaviour in a safe, hands-off manner. In addition, each Educational Assistant was required to join one of the professional learning sessions below:

IEPs 101 – Educational Assistants had a chance to explore the Individual Education Plan (IEP) as it relates to their role. They then investigated relevant sections of the IEP and discussed how to interpret and integrate them into their work with students.

SMoRRRES: Getting “Some More” Out of Communication Partners

Participants learned effective communication partner strategies to support students who use Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) systems.

Supporting All Learners: Exceptionalities, Student Profiles, and Inclusive Strategies

This presentation focused on understanding and supporting students with diverse exceptionalities.

Participants explored a variety of student profiles to better understand the range of learning needs present in today's classrooms. Practical strategies and tools to foster an inclusive, equitable learning environment where every student has the opportunity to succeed were offered. Other key topics included how to support:

- Accommodations
- Differentiated Instruction
- Universal Design for Learning

Tips for Using a Chromebook and Boardmaker

In this session, participants learned some tips, tricks, and features that would help them use their Chromebook more effectively and efficiently. Additionally, they reviewed Boardmaker basics and learned how to save and print activities from their Chromebook.

Understanding Cortical Vision Impairment

Participants engaged in a presentation on CVI, where they explored its impact on daily life and learning. Conditions such as traumatic brain injury, stroke, congenital infections, and neurological disorders can lead to CVI. EAs heard from experts about innovative strategies and discovered how we can empower individuals affected by this condition.

Elopement: Why do they Wander? Why do they Run? How do I Stop Them?

Participants had an opportunity to expand their knowledge around students who elope. They learned how to identify and use appropriate proactive strategies and function-based interventions to support the safety of all students.

Building Language Together - January 20, 2025

All BHNCDSE elementary educational assistants participated in a full day of in-person professional learning at the Marriott TownePlace Suites in Brantford, focused on advancing Special Education goals. The training aimed to enhance instructional practices in oral language, while fostering collaboration with community partners. With a growing number of students identified as complex communicators, the session emphasized practical strategies to support nonverbal and minimally verbal students through visual supports and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems. Katie Angle, a Speech-Language Pathologist from Hamilton Health Sciences' Technology Access Clinic, led participants through an engaging session focused on key strategies for supporting communication. Topics included building communication and interaction skills, using visuals to structure routines and support language development, and effectively implementing Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). The session aimed to promote equity, empower students, and strengthen collaboration among staff, families, and community agencies.

Complex Communicator Guidebook - January 30, 2025

Secondary Educational Assistants, PAL core teachers, Community Living core teachers, and Special Education Department Heads participated in a professional development session hosted by the Special Education department at each of their respective school locations. The focus of the session was on supporting students with complex communication needs through the use of the newly developed Complex Communicator Guidebook. Facilitated collaboratively by the school's Speech Language Pathologist and System Special Education Consultant, the session provided educators and support staff with tools, strategies, and capacity-building opportunities to better support students who express themselves through a range of communication methods. Staff explored Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) practices and neurodiversity-affirming approaches, with an emphasis on fostering inclusive classrooms where all student voices are valued. The session also introduced a new communication support model, which empowers educators to collaborate directly with Speech Language Pathologists. Department Heads were present to ensure consistent implementation of the guidebook's strategies across their schools.

Mental Health & Well-Being Day - April 11, 2025

On Friday, April 11, 2025, the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board held a system-wide Mental Health & Well-Being Professional Development Day, aligned with its commitment to fostering mentally healthy and inclusive learning environments. The day began with a keynote presentation by *Dr. Kristen McLeod* on Trauma-Informed Schools, providing staff with strategies to support students impacted by trauma. Educators and school-based staff then engaged in reflective activities using the *Mentally Healthy Classrooms Reflection Resource* and the *Leading Mentally Healthy Schools Audit Resource*, which informed both school-level Student Achievement Plans and the Board's 2025-26 Mental Health Action Plan.

In the afternoon, the focus shifted to staff wellness. Sessions included an exploration of self-regulation, an overview of wellness resources provided by the Board's *Wellness and Abilities Department*, and participation in self-care activities designed to promote well-being and community among staff. The day concluded with a dedicated time block encouraging staff to take actionable steps to prioritize their own mental health. The PD Day supported the Board's ongoing efforts to build trauma-informed, mentally healthy classrooms while promoting staff resilience and well-being.

NVCI Training & Resource Development - June 6, 2025

On June 6, 2025, the Special Education Department organized Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training for selected permanent and casual Educational Assistants (EAs). EAs who were not required to update their training, remained in their home schools to support staff and students by assisting with report card attachments, updating data and support plans, preparing transition materials, and developing visual supports and structured learning resources.

Nonviolent Crisis Intervention

The Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training program (3rd Edition) is considered the worldwide standard for crisis prevention and intervention training. The program provides educators with the proactive strategies and skills to safely and effectively respond and handle difficult situations. The core of the program is learning how to provide for the *care, welfare, safety, and security* of all those who are involved in a crisis situation. Preventive strategies, de-escalation skills and communication skills are taught along with learning the physical interventions, including disengagement, and holding skills, to be implemented as a last resort, when a person is engaging in unsafe behaviour. The training is provided by 4 trainers within the Special Education Team. This year, the training model has shifted from a Blended half-day model to a full day, in person Classroom Training Model. Relevant policies and forms have been updated to include language and safety interventions, and a new document has been created to record school team discussions and next steps following use of safety

interventions. Our board took a significant step forward by delivering Verbal Intervention Training to staff across all the schools in our board, reinforcing our commitment to safe and supportive learning environments.

Educational Assistants' Lending Library

The Educational Assistants' Lending Library provides the opportunity for Educational Assistants (EAs) to borrow materials which may not be available at their school. There are currently more than 400 items available, with items ranging from professional reading to children's books, toys and games, to sensory and cause-and-effect materials. New resources are purchased based on needs arising from areas of system focus, and on suggestions from EAs. 2024-2025 was our first full year using Insignia, a digital library catalogue. This new system enabled users to view and request items online and allowed for tracking of items which are out on loan.

SPECIAL PROJECTS/EVENTS

Inclusionary Practices

Transition to School

Transition into School (Kindergarten)

We recognize how critical the transition into kindergarten is for many of our young students who have specific needs. The partnership between parents and agencies can assist with getting to 'know our learners' and further promote a seamless transition. This process was enhanced by the following initiatives:

Information Sharing by Community Agencies for Entry into School

'Entry into School' meetings were held with Haldimand Norfolk REACH personnel beginning in February 2025, where students with various needs were presented. The Student Achievement Lead for Special Education and a System Special Education Consultant attended and dialogued about each student to gain a better understanding of their profiles and to initiate transition planning. Lansdowne Children's Centre, Brantford, presented students with various needs through written communication and phone conversations with System Special Education Consultants. With parental consent, both agencies provided valuable information regarding incoming Year One and Two Kindergarten students currently receiving agency support. The agency resource consultants provided student background, strengths and needs, agency involvement (i.e., speech, occupational therapy, physiotherapy), any diagnoses (if applicable), and a report containing a summary of helpful information and agency contacts.

Parent Resources

To build capacity and develop parental trust, a 'Special Education Brochure for Parents' was created and mailed to families prior to the system - level case conference. The brochure outlined what to expect when preparing for a case conference and provided a link to our 'Ready to Learn Catholic Elementary School Guide for Parents' which shares valuable information about the kindergarten program and helpful tips on transitioning to school, roles and responsibilities, community contacts and ways to further promote speech-language and fine motor skills prior to school entry.

In addition to the kindergarten guide, an 'All About Me' booklet was also mailed to parents prior to the case conference. This booklet gives parents the opportunity to share personal information (e.g., names of people in their family, pets), likes, dislikes, preferred method of communication, etc. Parents were asked to fill out this booklet and return it to the classroom teacher at the end of June as part of the transition process.

System Level 'Entry into School' Case Conferences – The Multi-Disciplinary Team

Case Conferences, held in April, May and June of 2025, were attended by parents, Student Achievement Leader: Special Education, members of the System Special Education Team, home school team, agencies and daycare providers. At this meeting, the student was introduced, and information was gathered and shared with the school. It was also an opportunity for parents to share information and to meet with the school team. This year we hosted all of the system level case conferences virtually. There were 30 meetings held for the Brant, Haldimand, and Norfolk schools.

Supporting Our Faith Journey

Supplementary Activities/ Resources

Special Education Services remain committed to nurturing the faith journey of all students. Our retreats are tailored to meet the unique learning needs of our exceptional learners.

The retreats are designed to provide differentiated instruction that enriches the understanding of the sacraments. Through accommodations and guided mentorship, we empower students to actively engage in their faith, fostering a connection with Christ.

The retreats offered an array of hands-on activities, games, songs, prayers, storytelling, baking, and opportunities for fellowship. These experiences allowed students to immerse themselves in the rituals of the sacraments through meaningful engagement, visual aids, and direct instruction. Although communication and self-regulation have long been priorities, this year's approach was marked by increased intentionality. A calming area was introduced to support self-regulation, and activities were designed with multiple entry points to ensure accessibility for all learners. Stories and learning experiences were carefully paced to sustain engagement. Aided communication was embedded throughout, including the consistent use of low-level core boards, to honour and amplify every student's voice. These supports ensured that all participants were recognized, respected, and meaningfully included, helping to cultivate and deepen their faith experience.

This intentional and responsive planning was made possible through a retreat survey distributed to all schools. The survey gathered information on student attendance and specific needs, which directly informed the design of the retreat experiences, ensuring they were tailored, inclusive, and meaningful for all participants.

This year four students attended the Reconciliation retreat and six students attended First Communion retreat.

We extended the learning environment beyond the classroom with a visit to St. Mary's Catholic Church, conducted by a member of the church community, thereby bridging connections with our valued community helpers.



Elementary 'Have a Go'

'Have a Go' is a modified track and field event for students with physical, intellectual or communication disabilities. The focus of this event is on participation, interaction, and friendship.

'Have a Go' Philosophy

Rooted in the spirit of equality and team unity, *"Have A Go"* is a celebration of inclusive participation and personal growth through physical activity. This initiative is designed to create a welcoming environment where every individual is encouraged to engage, explore, and excel—regardless of ability.

'Have A Go' promotes:

- Inclusive physical activity that welcomes and supports all participants.
- Physical fitness and the pursuit of personal athletic achievement.
- The formation of new friendships through shared experiences.
- A culture of participation, dedication, effort, and team spirit.
- The development of self-confidence, a positive self-image, and a strong sense of personal worth.

Through this initiative, we aim to inspire joy, resilience, and connection—empowering every participant to truly "have a go" and discover their potential.

The Athletes

This event is designed for students in Grades 4 to 8 who have an intellectual disability, a physical disability, or who are on the autism spectrum. Each school is invited to nominate a team, selected in collaboration between the school principal and the Special Education Resource Teacher.



To foster inclusion and support, each participating athlete may be accompanied by a peer buddy from their school. These buddies play an important role in encouraging and assisting athletes throughout the event, helping to ensure a positive and engaging experience for all participants.

The Events

Athletes participate in 12 adapted track and field events. The events are adapted from the regular track and field Board meet. A rest station was also included where freebies and water were provided.

2025 'Have a Go'

The Elementary *Have a Go* event took place on Wednesday, June 4, 2025, at the Burford Arena, bringing together students from across the district in a celebration of inclusion, athleticism, and school spirit. A total of 23 schools participated, with 81 athletes in attendance, each accompanied by a peer buddy of their choice.

The day began with a formal procession of athletes onto the field, followed by an inspiring opening ceremony that included the singing and signing of the national anthem, a prayer, a land acknowledgement, and a group warm-up activity.

Throughout the day, athletes rotated through 12 engaging and inclusive activity stations, each designed to promote physical fitness, personal achievement, and enjoyment. Participants were recognized for their efforts with ribbons awarded at each station, and each athlete received a commemorative medal in celebration of their accomplishments.

To mark the occasion, every athlete was presented with a special event T-shirt, worn proudly throughout the day as a symbol of their participation and success.

Secondary Tri-High Games



Secondary students in the Personal Active Learning (PAL), Community Living, and Job Skills programs at St. John's College, Holy Trinity Catholic High School, and Assumption College School came together for a fun-filled day of team sporting events and friendship! The Leadership and Fitness/Recreation students and teachers at St. John's College did an amazing job with creating the activities and hosting the 2025 Tri-High Games event. There were eight different events; and while the teams created a sense of fun competition, high-fives and cheering could be seen and heard by all!

Transition Navigator Project

With funding from the Ministry of Education, the Special Education Department has developed and implemented a series of strategic initiatives designed to support and enhance transitions for students with special education needs and/or disabilities. These transition supports encompass the full educational journey—from entry into school, progression between elementary and secondary education, to pathways beyond secondary school into post-secondary education, the workforce, and community life.

We are pleased to highlight the following initiatives developed to facilitate successful transitions for students with special education needs and/or disabilities:

Transition: Entry to School

- **Complex Communicator Guidebook:**

Developed by our team of Speech-Language Pathologists, this resource is designed to foster inclusive learning environments for students who use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). In addition to the guidebook, pre-made communication theme boards and visual supports have been created. For the 2025–2026 school year, approximately 197 students have been identified as AAC users, each of whom will receive a Complex Communicator Guidebook. The goal is for this guidebook

to accompany each student throughout their educational journey, supporting ongoing learning, planning, and programming.

- **Kindergarten Planning Sessions:**

Kindergarten educators (teachers and Early Childhood Educators) have been offered up to three full days of planning time to prepare for incoming students with high needs. These sessions include access to the Complex Communicator Guidebook, enabling early dialogue about student profiles and the development of visual supports and structured learning tasks. This proactive planning approach is intended to facilitate a smoother and more successful transition into kindergarten.

- **Social Stories:**

Custom “Welcome to School” and “Moving to a New Grade” social stories have been developed to help students prepare for school transitions and feel confident and supported throughout the process.

Transition: Elementary to Secondary

- **Secondary Program Visits:**

All Grade 8 students entering self-contained secondary programs (PAL, Community Living, Job Skills) were provided multiple opportunities to visit their future classrooms. These visits allowed students to become familiar with the new environment, meet staff, interact with peers, and participate in classroom activities. Transition support was coordinated with elementary staff to facilitate up to five visits for PAL students, three visits for Community Living students, and one visit for Job Skills students.

- **Teacher Collaboration:**

Secondary PAL teachers were invited to visit the elementary schools of their incoming students. These visits enabled teachers to collaborate with current educators and observe existing supports, resources, and programming in place for each student.

- **Customized Social Stories:**

School-specific social stories were created to help students better understand and anticipate their transition to secondary school, promoting a sense of familiarity and reducing anxiety.

Transition: Post-Secondary Education, Employment, and Community Integration

- **Community Partnership:**

A partnership with Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre (CAB) has been established to support graduating students transitioning to community-based day programs. For the 2025–2026 year, three students (one from St. John’s College and two from Holy Trinity) will participate in CAB’s summer camp and year-long day program.

- **Online Resources for Families:**

Comprehensive information and resources will be made available on the BHNCDSB website to assist families of children and youth with special needs and/or disabilities in navigating key transition points.

- **Transition Information Fair:**

An Information Fair will be held to support families in planning for life after secondary school. This event will showcase post-secondary education opportunities, employment programs, and community services. Families and students will have the opportunity to engage with local service providers and agencies essential to successful lifelong transitions. Participating organizations will include:

- Developmental Services Ontario (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services)
- Community Living Brant
- Contact Brant
- Willowbridge Community Services
- Crossing All Bridges
- Special Olympics
- Brantwood Community Services
- Conestoga College (Community Integration through Co-operative Education)
- Mohawk College (Community Integration through Co-operative Education)

EQAO and OISE Presenters

The Superintendent of Special Education and Student Achievement Leader for Special Education were invited to present at this year's #DataInAction Symposium to highlight how the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board implemented intentional, system-wide changes to improve reading achievement among students identified with learning disabilities. Grounded in equity-driven research and a commitment to dismantling ableist practices, the board moved beyond a deficit-based approach to special education. Through the use of structured literacy interventions, targeted professional learning, and redesigned support structures, the board created more inclusive learning environments and enhanced access to grade-level curriculum. The session highlighted practical strategies and measurable outcomes—including significant gains in EQAO Grade 6 reading scores—that demonstrate how thoughtful, scalable interventions can drive success for all learners.

Interventions

LEXIA

Lexia Core5® Reading and *PowerUp® Literacy* are personalized web-based reading curriculums for students from Kindergarten through Grade 12. Students learn, practice, and consolidate fundamental literacy skills by interacting with the online, adaptive program, receiving teacher-led Lexia Lessons, and by completing independent, paper-based activities using Lexia Skill Builders. Student data is captured through reports that assist teachers in making informed instructional decisions to help students achieve grade-level benchmarks.

Lexia Core5 is intended to be used by students from kindergarten to Grade 5. The online activities support and build on the classroom curriculum while developing reading skills in phonological awareness, phonics, structural analysis, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Online activities should be used for a daily maximum of 20 to 25 minutes.

Lexia PowerUp is intended to be used by students in Grade 6 and higher. The online activities support and build on the classroom curriculum, developing literacy skills in word study, grammar, and comprehension. Online activities should be used for a daily maximum of 30 minutes.

The system special education team recognizes the need for an intensive literacy intervention program that addresses learning difficulties associated with reading and decoding text.

Criteria

Criteria, developed by the Student Achievement Lead for Special Education and the System Special Education Consultants, were used to determine which students would be assigned a Lexia license:

Students in grades 2-6, with demonstrated needs in the area of reading, and who met at least one of the following additional criteria:

- identified with a Learning Disability or Mild Intellectual Disability.
- on a non-identified IEP to address reading needs.
- not identified (no IEP), but with demonstrated needs in the area of reading.

Due to the intensive supports already being provided, students involved with Empower were not considered. Students in grades 7 and 8 were considered on a case-by-case basis.

School teams were asked to consider a student's attendance record in their selection process. A student is required to work on Lexia approximately 20-25 minutes every day to fully benefit from all that the program has to offer - regular attendance is fundamental for this to happen.

Selection Process - 2024-2025

Step 1

Elementary school SERTs reviewed their current Lexia roster and additional candidates with their school team to determine which students would be considered for a license. Factors considered included student attendance and motivation, usage history and progress, student needs and other interventions, which program is most appropriate (Core5 or PowerUp), SERT and classroom schedules, and total number of licenses being requested (ensuring there is protected time to support students accessing the program and to deliver Lexia intervention lessons as required).

Step 2

Elementary school SERTs shared student profiles with their System Special Education Consultant to confirm that a student met criteria and was a suitable candidate. Elementary student profiles included a current diagnostic reading assessment, intervention history, report card grades and comments, and Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement assessment (if applicable).

Step 3

Available Lexia licenses were assigned by the Lexia District Administrator. SERTs were informed of the student candidates who were added to the Lexia license waitlist.

Step 4

All students were required to complete the auto-placement activity at the beginning of the school year. Monthly progress monitoring of student minutes and levels occurred. At the end of the year, **all** licenses will be reviewed, and students with consistent usage and gains of at least 3 levels will be considered for an additional year on the program if the school team wishes.

As of April 27, 2025:

- 282 elementary students and one secondary special class student were accessing a Lexia license
- 28 elementary schools and 1 secondary school had students on Lexia
- Student gains were on track to meet the goal of at least 3 levels of progress:
 - 38% of students had achieved gains of 3+ levels
 - 48% of students had achieved 1-2 levels with a target of 3 levels by June 2025
 - 14% of students were still in their starting level

Tracking Student Progress

Elementary school SERTs and the Lexia District Administrator monitored student progress throughout the time students worked on Lexia. Student progress was measured by analyzing the data provided in Lexia reports, specifically looking at the number of Lexia levels completed, as well as the overall usage minutes and units completed during a school year. A student must demonstrate proficiency in each unit in order to progress to the next unit or skill. When an error is made, the program provides scaffolded support and instruction on that specific skill. Students who demonstrate mastery progress through units move onto more advanced skills and continue in this way until a Lexia Level is completed. A Lexia Level takes approximately 4-6 weeks to successfully complete. A guide was developed to assist school teams in identifying trends, areas for growth and

successes based on Lexia reports and student usage data. The Superintendent of Special Education also monitored the use of this Tier 2 reading intervention alongside school administrators and school SERTs.

Student Success Stories

The Primary Learning Strategies Class experienced tremendous growth through consistent use of Lexia Core5. With support from staff, students gained up to 8 levels, representing up to 2 years of skill development. This growth is associated with improved diagnostic scores, increased confidence and class participation, and greater classroom success and interest in reading.



EMPOWER

The **Empower™ Reading and Decoding Program** is an intensive, research-based literacy intervention designed to help struggling readers in elementary and secondary school improve their decoding and reading comprehension skills. Developed by the Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) in Toronto, Empower uses explicit, systematic instruction to teach students flexible decoding strategies, including phonological awareness, phonics, and morphology. The program emphasizes mastery through repetition, guided practice, and scaffolded support, helping students build confidence and independence as readers. It is typically delivered in small groups by trained educators and has demonstrated strong outcomes in helping close the reading achievement gap for students with reading difficulties, including those with learning disabilities.

Criteria

Students eligible to receive instruction in this program must:

- Be in grades 2 to 5.
- Be having significant difficulty acquiring age-appropriate reading skills, particularly decoding, word identification, and spelling skills but have solid comprehension skills.
- Be developing in all ways except decoding, word identification, and spelling.
- Speak in English as a first language *OR* are English Language Learners.
- Have low average to above average cognitive ability.
- Have a 'learning disability' profile but do not have to have a medical diagnosis of dyslexia or a formal identification of a learning disability in reading.
- Attend school on a regular basis.
- Not have significant behavioural issues and safety concerns.

Impact

This year, 24 SERTs in all schools except Our Lady of Fatima and Blessed Sacrament were involved in delivering this Tier 3 intervention to a total of 165 students across the district.

Tracking Student Progress

The following assessments were measured pre-Empower, mid-Empower and post-Empower to all participating students in order to measure growth and monitor progress throughout the learning cycle.

- Woodcock-Johnson IV raw scores for the Broad Reading subtests
- Woodcock-Johnson IV raw scores for the Phoneme/Grapheme Knowledge subtests
- Empower Screening Data for:
 - Sound Symbol Test (Letter Sound Identification Task and Sound Combinations Task)
 - Keyword Test
 - Test of Transfer
 - Challenge Word Test

KEYMATH-3

KeyMath-3 is a diagnostic assessment tool that assesses a full spectrum of essential math concepts and skills, including a comprehensive math instruction and intervention program for students in grade 3 to 12. Prior to the administration of *KeyMath-3*, tiered approaches in numeracy must have been trialed with students.

Eligibility

Students eligible to receive this diagnostic assessment must:

- Be in grades 3 to 12 (grade 2 is acceptable in unique circumstances)
- Have significant difficulty acquiring age-appropriate numeracy skills
- Be receiving differentiated instruction in the classroom
- Be receiving universal design for learning in the classroom
- Have been exposed to ongoing, high-impact instructional practices through the classroom teacher including:
 - Learning goals, success criteria and descriptive feedback
 - Direct instruction
 - Problem-solving tasks and experiences
 - Teaching and problem solving
 - Tools and representations
 - Math conversations
 - Small group instruction
 - Deliberate practice
 - Flexible groupings
- Receive increased progress monitoring that demonstrates limited ongoing progress despite Tier 1 and 2 supports
- Be receiving increased intensity of dedicated instruction
- Be accessing more intensive mathematics instruction and supports as needed through the SAT Team and/or School-Based SERT
- Be supported through evidenced-based resources such as Math Up, Eyes on Math, Leaps and Bounds, Knowledgehook, Number Talks, Number Sense Routines etc.

Who is eligible for a Key Math Assessment?

Pathway 1:

Where a classroom teacher can demonstrate significant use of systematic and explicit instructional strategies as noted above through ongoing and intense support, and the student continues to demonstrate significant difficulties in math, Key Math - 3 can be used prior to an achievement test to determine areas of needs and/or deficit. Intervention lessons are to be implemented immediately to fill learning gaps in order to attempt to have the student resume grade level instruction and avoid further testing or the development of a non-identified IEP. Ongoing progress monitoring will dictate whether individualized supports are working. Progress monitoring that demonstrates little to no progress over time indicates that further formal assessments may be warranted (e.g., Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement to measure Broad Mathematics).

Pathway 2:

As part of the modified mathematics IEP audit, some students may require additional testing in Key Math to determine the appropriateness and precision of the modified programming and to adjust the IEP as required. Future decisions around modifications will include future Key Math assessments (administered by trained Special Education Resource Teachers).

Intervention Program

Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) develop an instructional plan based on the comprehensive score report that is generated, using the essential resources provided. Lessons are linked to the KM-3 assessment results and are delivered to students on a Teacher Easel Display with engaging graphics. Lessons can be delivered by the SERT, teacher and/or educational assistant and can be delivered individually or in a small group. Students are engaged in Guided Practice activities, bridging the gap between instruction and student practice. Independent Practice opportunities are provided to students to reinforce and extend their learning. Assessment of learning and progress monitoring includes various assessments which are found in each math concept cluster. After a period of intervention and after lessons have been delivered, an alternate form of the diagnostic assessment is administered to pinpoint skill development and areas that may still require intervention.

CONTINUITY OF SUPPORT FOR SUMMER LEARNING AND TRANSITION

The following supports will be offered again throughout July and August 2025 to support students with special needs and/or mental health needs.

Professional Learning, Training, and Capacity Building

- Training from the LDAO
- Training for Autism through 'Sonderly' for select staff
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training for select staff which may include administrators, educational assistants, or Child and Youth Workers
- Summer NTIP session for new educators (TBD)

Closing Gaps and Mitigating Learning Loss

- Review of assessment results for program planning and transition.
- Scheduled daycare or preschool visits for incoming Kindergarten students with complex needs.

- Collaborate with school teams to help identify students who would benefit from attending Camp Blast (a virtual, faith-based literacy program for students in grades 1 & 2).
- Bartimaeus supports for select students throughout the summer months to support behaviour challenges (TBD).

Summer Transition Support Programs

Identification and Transition Planning

Identify students with complex special education needs and mental health or engagement concerns at each school. Design and implement individualized, targeted transition sessions to support these students as they move into new learning environments.

Development of Visual and Digital Resources

Create visuals, videos, and other resources (e.g., social stories) for both classroom and individual use. These tools will assist students, families, and staff in understanding expectations related to the new learning environment, classroom routines, instructional modifications, and physical classroom layout.

Staff Training and Capacity Building

ABA Leads and other specialists will provide professional learning for staff focused on effective transition strategies, social skill development, facilitating transitions from home to school and within new environments, fostering safety, and promoting self-regulation.

Summer Programming Opportunities

Provide summer camp opportunities for select secondary students to experience the programming and supports offered through *Crossing All Bridges*.

Resource Distribution

Distribute the *Complex Communicator Guidebook* and accompanying resources to all classrooms supporting complex communicators to promote consistent communication strategies.

Collaborative Planning Time

Provide dedicated planning time for SERTs, ECEs, and classroom teachers working with incoming students with complex needs, to ensure thoughtful preparation and alignment of supports.

Continuity of Support Services

Engage Bartimaeus services to provide individualized support to select students during the summer months. These services will help sustain progress, maintain established routines, and preserve relationships to ease the transition back to school.

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Prepared by: Phil Wilson, Superintendent of Education
Presented to: Committee of the Whole
Submitted on: June 17, 2025
Submitted by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

Public Session

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board is dedicated to fostering achievement and success for every learner, guided by its *Multi-Year Strategic Plan* and rooted in Catholic values. We believe each student is a unique, capable individual called to reach their God-given potential.

The Student Achievement Team, aligned with Ministry of Education priorities, focuses on building literacy and numeracy skills from Kindergarten to Grade 12. This work is informed by an understanding of the diverse strengths, needs, and identities of our students.

Achievement is advanced through a collaborative, research-based approach that includes tiered interventions, differentiated instruction, and evidence-driven assessment. The team partners with schools, system leaders, and educators to set high expectations, close achievement gaps, and ensure equitable outcomes.

Recognizing that student voice, well-being, and engagement are vital to success, the Board supports staff through continuous capacity building and targeted professional learning. The goal is to create inclusive, culturally responsive, and faith-filled learning environments where all students can thrive academically, socially, and spiritually.

DEVELOPMENTS:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board continues to advance a comprehensive and collaborative approach to improving student achievement, aligned with the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan and grounded in our Catholic faith.

In 2024-2025, significant efforts focused on literacy and numeracy development, early intervention, and building educator capacity across all grade levels:

- **Early Reading Screener:**

In response to Ministry directives, the Early Reading Screener was implemented for Year 2 Kindergarten to Grade 2 students. In 2024-2025:

- Over 2,500 students were screened.
- 240 staff members were trained in the effective use of the screener.
- Screening data informed small-group interventions and targeted teacher coaching to close early literacy gaps.

- **Math Achievement Action Plan:**

Year 2 of a 3-year plan focused on supporting priority schools through:

- Direct intervention work with students.
- Coaching and professional learning for educators.
- Targeted leadership support for principals.

- **EQAO Readiness:**

- Professional learning sessions were offered to teachers to prepare for EQAO assessments.
- Additional preparation materials and administration support were provided to ensure effective implementation.

- **Board Student Achievement Plan:**

A new public-facing Board Student Achievement Plan was launched in April 2025:

- It identifies three priority areas and eleven indicators.
- The plan measures the Board's progress against provincial expectations.
- Action items are posted on the Board website for transparency and accountability.

Looking ahead to 2025-2026, the Board is enhancing its Student Achievement structure:

- New Elementary Literacy and Numeracy Consultants.
- New Secondary de-streamed math consultants.
- Focused support for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT).
- Principal leadership development through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
- Implementation of the new Kindergarten Curriculum.

This work has been shaped and propelled by the leadership of Chandra Portelli, our Student Achievement Leader for Student Achievement. Her strategic and purposeful vision for student programming, coupled with her exemplary leadership, has equipped and inspired staff to help every student realize their full potential. These collective efforts reflect the vision, dedication, and collaboration of our entire BHNCDSB team—educators, administrators, and system leaders— working together to support student achievement and well-being.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Student Achievement Annual Report 2024-25 report to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

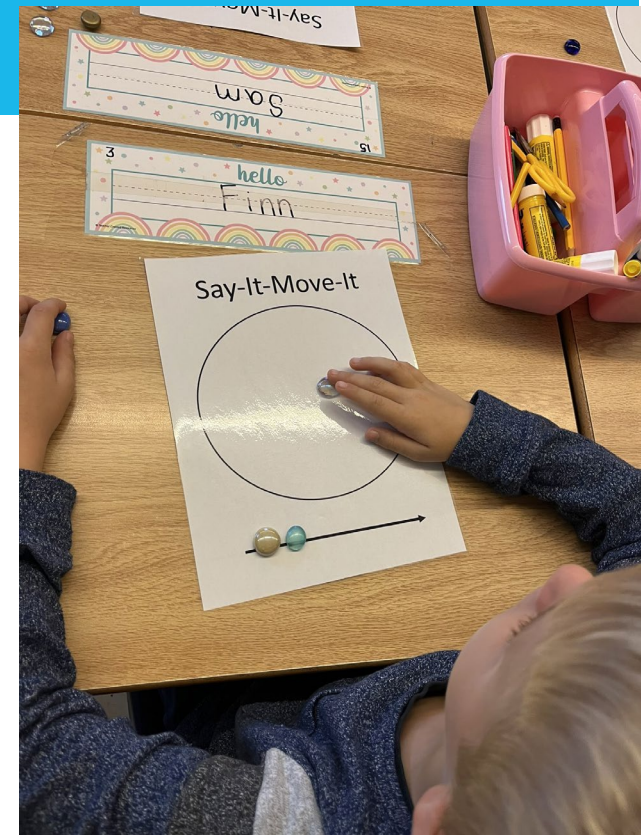
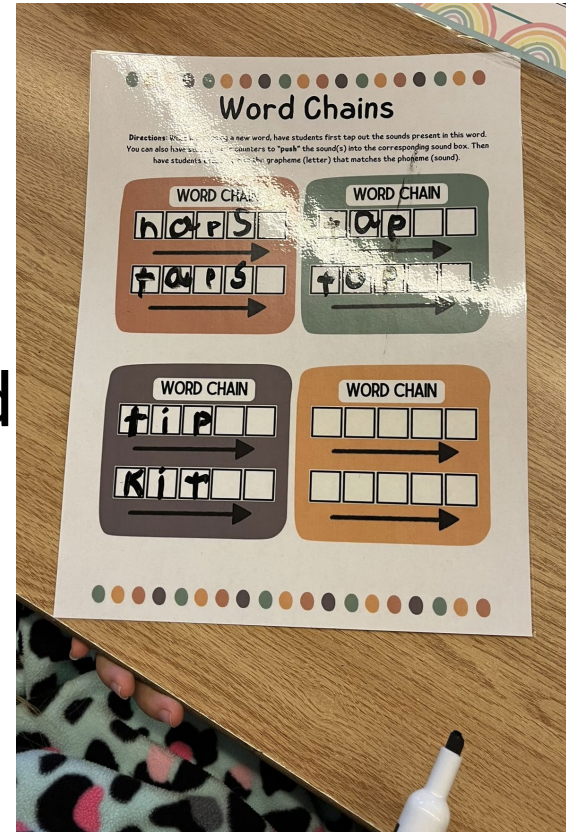


Student Achievement Update

2024-2025

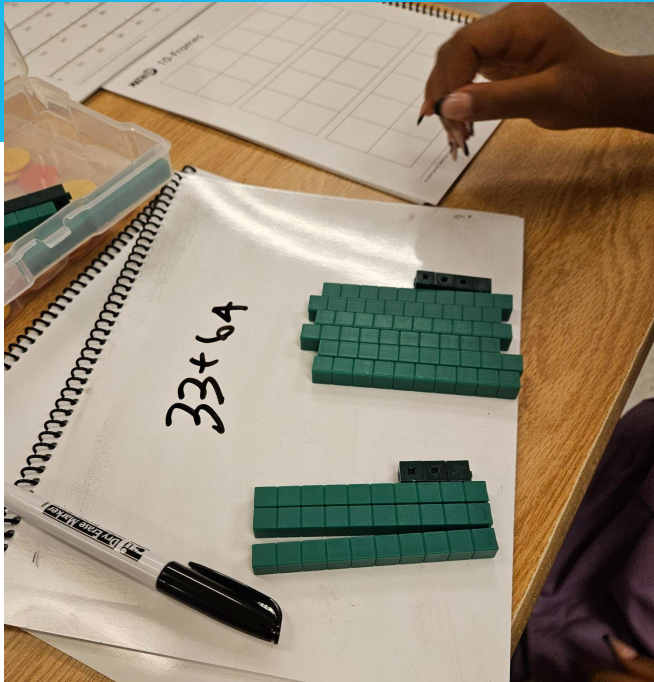
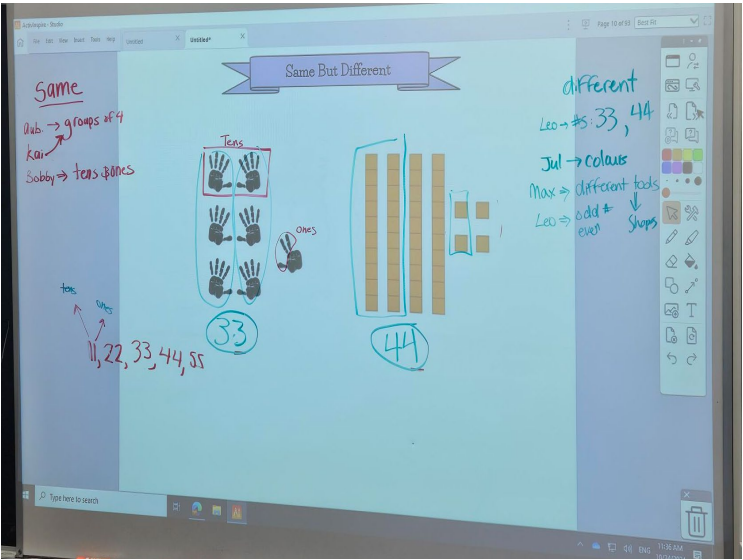
Early Reading Screener

- Required beginning September 2024
- Year 2 Kindergarten – Grade 2
- Reported on January Report Card
- 2500 students screened
- 240 staff trained
- Small-group interventions, teacher coaching



Math Achievement Action Plan

- Year 2 of 3
- Facilitator support in priority schools
- Intervention work with students
- Coaching support for educators
- Principal support



High Impact Instructional Practices		
	Tools and Visual Representations	Math Conversations
What is it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of manipulatives, images, and diagrams help make abstract concepts more concrete and deepen understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussions about mathematical concepts that help build skills to communicate their thinking, justify reasoning, clarify understanding, and learn from different perspectives
Why Use It?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tools and Visual representations make math more accessible, increase engagement, support comprehension and provide a way to think during problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Math conversations encourage active engagement, support a collaborative learning community, help to build confidence in mathematics and enhance critical thinking skills
What Might it Look Like in Practice?	<p>Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Represent student strategies during a Number Routine (e.g. drawing a number line) to notice and name strategies used• Co-create anchor charts, visual aids and word walls• Leverage digital manipulatives to illustrate concepts <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Select from a variety of concrete or digital manipulatives to solve problems• Reference anchor charts, visual aids and word walls• Use whiteboards or VNPS to record group thinking	<p>Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Select Number Talks and routines during which they will intentionally use the Math Talk Moves• Anticipate student responses prior to facilitating a number routine to connect and respond to student thinking• Ask "keep thinking questions" to support productive struggle <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share what they "Notice and Wonder" during "Slow Reveal Graphs"• Share their warrant to defend their claim during a "Which One Doesn't Belong" debate in Math• Listen to, comment about and build on the contributions of their peers during a Number Routine
Checklist for TEACHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Select tasks that encourage students to use Visual Representations<input type="checkbox"/> Introduce and consistently use helpful Tools and Visual Representations<input type="checkbox"/> Allocate substantial time for students to develop comfort with Tools and Visual Representations<input type="checkbox"/> Make connections between various representations<input type="checkbox"/> Include Visual Representations in assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Select purposeful and engaging tasks or routines that allow students to have rich conversations<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitator of learning rather than an instructor (e.g. ask questions rather than provide answers)<input type="checkbox"/> Build a culture of positive math mindset where mistakes are accepted (e.g. take risks, be brave, try something new)<input type="checkbox"/> Model and use math talk moves<input type="checkbox"/> Anchor conversations through the use of visual representations
Checklist for STUDENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Describe and justify their thinking with Visual Representations<input type="checkbox"/> Use multiple forms of representations: concrete, representational, abstract<input type="checkbox"/> Engage in real-world situations or a task requiring the use of Visual Representations<input type="checkbox"/> Self-select tools, strategies and Visual Representations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> On-task-talk and noise<input type="checkbox"/> Pause to think before responding<input type="checkbox"/> Engage in partner, small group or whole class conversations<input type="checkbox"/> Listen to the thinking of others and ask clarifying questions<input type="checkbox"/> Attempt new or unfamiliar strategies shared by others



- Professional Learning for teachers
- Preparation materials
- Administration support



Grade 6 Spatial Sense: Geometry and Spatial Reasoning



E1.1 create lists of the geometric properties of various types of quadrilaterals, including the properties of the diagonals, rotational symmetry, and line symmetry

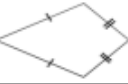
Type of Question: Application

Which quadrilateral has rotational symmetry of order 2?

- A
- B
- C
- D

Distractor Misconception

A A kite has 2 sets of equal side lengths, 2 diagonals, BUT **rotational symmetry of order 1**



B A square has 2 diagonals and **rotational symmetry of order 4**



C A dart has: 2 sets of equal side lengths and **rotational symmetry of order 1**



	No Response	A	B	C	D
Below Level 1	2	28	26	19	25
Level 1	0	28	27	23	22
Level 2	0	33	29	14	23
Level 3	0	28	23	8	40
Level 4	0	16	11	5	68

Only 68% of students achieving a Level 4 on the assessment selected the correct response. This is quite low compared to other released questions.

When an incorrect response is chosen, **Distractors A and B** are

selected with a similar frequency. **Distractor C** (dart) is chosen the least frequently and may be attributed to a lack in familiarity with a "dart".

Vocabulary: kite, square, dart, rectangle, quadrilateral, rotational symmetry, order of rotational symmetry

Printable/shareables:

[Question With Answers](#) | [Eliminating Distractors](#) | [Questions Without Answers](#)

Tools & Visual Representations:



Trace the shape and rotate the copy around the original, using a dot to keep track of the rotation

Frayer model ([link to editable version](#))

DEFINITION	CHARACTERISTICS
How many times a shape can be turned and fit onto its own outline as it makes one complete rotation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rotation is around the CENTRE of the shape Rotational symmetry means a shape can fit into itself in less than a full turn order value is 3 (other ROT have rotational symmetries)
Order of Rotational Symmetry	
The order of rotational symmetry for a parallelogram is 2	

Board Student Achievement Plan

- Public report and action items posted to Board Website on April 2
- 3 priority areas, 11 indicators
- Measures our progress against the province

for all

PURPOSE:

Levelling up achievement outcomes and experiences for every student.

For each priority and indicator, school boards will use board-level data on their student populations to further refine actions.



PRIORITY:
Achievement of
Learning
Outcomes in Core
Academic Skills



PRIORITY:
Preparation of
Students for
Future Success



PRIORITY:
Student
Engagement &
Well-being



Portrait work with
Shayde Sandy

Other Student Achievement Areas



Looking Ahead to 2025-2026

- New Student Achievement structure
 - Elementary Literacy and Numeracy Consultants
 - Secondary de-streamed math consultants
 - Focused support for OSSLT
 - Principal leadership for Student Achievement (PLCs)
- New Kindergarten Curriculum



for all



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
Catholic District School Board

Thank You



2024-25

Trustee Meetings and Events

Date		Time	Meeting/Event
June 18, 2025		7:00 pm	Committee of the Whole
June 25, 2025		7:00 pm	Board Meeting
June 27, 2025		4:45 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Assumption College Graduation Holy Trinity Graduation St. John's College Graduation

Meetings scheduled at the Call of the Committee Chair: Accommodations Committee, Audit Committee, Budget Committee, Faith Advisory Committee, Policy Committee