



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, September 19, 2017 – 10:00 a.m. - Boardroom**

Present: Catherine Custodio, Carmen McDermid, Bonnie McKinnon, Christine Pearce, Michelle Shypula, Teresa Westergaard-Hager,

Regrets: Krista Emmerson, Jill Esposto, Paul Sanderson, Tracey Taylor

1. Opening Prayer

Superintendent Shypula led the group in the opening prayer with a focus on the Board theme; Act Justly, Love Tenderly, WALK HUMBLY with your God. (Micah 6:8)

2. Welcome and Opening Comments

Superintendent Shypula welcomed the group back to another school year and thanked members for all of their work and support to SEAC. Agency members agreed to assist in reaching out to parents to have their voices heard at our committee meetings, specifically for counties not represented on SEAC.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Bonnie McKinnon

Seconded by: Teresa Westergaard-Hager

THAT the SEAC Committee approves the agenda of the September 19, 2017 meeting.

Carried

4. Approval of Minutes – June 13, 2017

Moved by: Catherine Custodio

Seconded by: Bonnie McKinnon

THAT the SEAC Committee approves the minutes of the June 13, 2017 meeting.

Carried

5. Election of Chairperson for 2017-18

Committee agreed upon Superintendent Shypula Chairing the September meeting. No Committee member volunteered to assume the position of Chairperson and Jill Esposto graciously previously advised Superintendent Shypula she would welcome acting as Chair for the 2017-18 School Year. All were in favour for Jill Esposto continuing as Chairperson of the SEAC Committee.

6. Community Agency Updates

Teresa Westergaard-Hager- Supervisor - Community Outreach, Norfolk Association for Community Living

The organization participated in several training opportunities as well as many social events such as, picnics and baseball tournaments, hosted by various agencies in an effort to continue to engage families through the summer months. The agency continues to focus on promoting and supporting the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities throughout the province and Canada. Norfolk Association for Community Living is working towards supporting individual needs rather than running programs and the agency is working with individuals and family members to ensure everyone is on board and dispel any fears that come with change.



Catherine Custodio- Child Welfare Supervisor, Children's Aid Society of Haldimand & Norfolk

The Children's Aid Society of Haldimand and Norfolk held a 5K Walk on Saturday, September 16 to raise awareness in the community and to raise funds to help local children attend camp or recreational activities (*Little Dreams*) and youth attend post-secondary school (*Big Dreams*). They surpassed their goal by raising \$6,529 and Scotiabank generously matched their funds by contributing another \$5,000, which brought the grand total to over \$11,500. The agency, working with a Crown Ward Education Council for the past 9 years, identifies youth at risk and focuses on youth who are not graduating from high school. Funds received by the Ministry are being used towards helping to support these youth by trying to improve the number of students graduating. Catherine shared that a member of their team is from the Hamilton District School Board. This individual recently retired and will be the new facilitator and event planner for their organization. Catherine is open to ideas from the group that will lead to increased graduation rates.

Christine Pearce- Program Manager, Woodview Mental Health & Autism Services

Camp Unity is a specialized summer day camp experience addressing the unique needs of children and youth ages 6 to 18 who have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The camp was very well received this year and Woodview held a Summer Celebration on Tuesday, September 19 at Mohawk Park in Brantford to celebrate the students and their successes. Woodview also provided Summer Programming through Wrap Around for Complex Needs, as well as through the Intensive Child & Family Services Program. There were over 40 children in attendance who they serviced to help meet their goals of emotional regulation, social skills and team building.

The Respite program is now operational from Monday to Thursday in the evening, designated Fridays and Saturdays and on all Professional Activity Days. Members who have knowledge of children age 4 to 18 years in need of this service were encouraged to connect with Contact Brant.

On Thursday September 28 all families connected to Woodview were invited to Brantwood Farms from 5 to 7 p.m. for a family picnic. Collaborating with Six Nations and Brantford zones, Woodview has implemented the SNAP (Stop Now and Plan) model, which runs two programs per week from 4 to 8 p.m. Additionally, they are implementing the Zones of Regulation which is also being used in the Board. Woodview's new initiative is looking at services and offering them where the students are, which is often in schools. This will assist those who may not be able to get to the agency offices for services and yet still be able to offer them counselling etc. They will potentially be looking at three additional areas for counselling and services for families with children ages 0 to 18. Woodview is also looking at a new Early Years initiative where they are collaborating with community centres and hubs in order to provide additional support for parents.

7. Correspondence

On behalf of Jill Esposito, Superintendent Shypula shared that October is National Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month and Tuesday, October 24 is "Dress Purple" day. The agency is looking to collaborate with our Board again this year and to tie in to our Board theme: Act Justly, Love Tenderly, WALK HUMBLY with your God (Micah 6:8). In collaboration, they are developing communication to share with our school administrators including suggested activities for students. This year the School Board and agencies are collaborating to set up VIP POD visits within Brantford and Brant County schools (Holy Cross and Sacred Heart, Paris) to promote the campaign within our schools and communities.



The Ministry distributed a Memorandum to Directors of Education on September 1, 2017 regarding updates and next steps on Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services (IR), a key initiative under Ontario's Special Needs Strategy (SNS). In the memorandum, the Ministry wanted to take the opportunity to *"thank the Steering Committees for their work over the past two years developing integrated rehabilitation service delivery models. Steering committees have identified a number of challenges and have asked for support in the form of provincial direction and policy development. Given the complexity of the transformation to create seamless delivery of Integrated Rehabilitation Services and our commitment to ensure seamless support for families, the ministries will be taking a measured and phased approach to policy development and implementation. The ministries will establish a provincial advisory group that will include clinical experts, sector partners and education stakeholders to provide advice to the ministries on key issues including: the rehabilitation components of **Policy Program Memorandum (PPM) 81: Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings**, implementation of rehabilitation services across education and community-based sectors in a tiered service delivery model, the use of technology for information sharing and reporting, funding and accountability measures. Details about this provincial advisory group will shortly follow and at this time, steering committees should **cease final proposal developments.**"*

8. Reports

8.1 Student Achievement Leader: Special Education

On Friday, September 15, 2017 the Special Education Department hosted their first Professional Development Day for those Educational Assistants (EA) requiring certification in either Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) (25 participants) or First Aid (17 participants). The NVCI certification requirements changed last June to include a more comprehensive 1.5-day training which also includes a focus on autism. Training continues to reinforce that ONLY two out of the 10 units focus on physical intervention while the other eight units focus on communication, verbal intervention, decision making, etc. The goal is to have all EAs receive the new 1.5-day certification by the end of 2018. Feedback to date has been extremely positive. All principals will receive NVCI training on November 3 (full day) and December 15 (afternoon only). There are two new Board NVCI trainers: Crystal Donohue (ABA Lead) and Dianne Wdowczyk-Meade (Mental Health Lead) with the hopes of certifying one additional trainer.

First Aid certification continues to reinforce safety for students and staff. Re-certification occurs every three years as regulated by Red Cross.

The Special Education Services team have identified key areas of focus for the 2017-18 school year including best practices/teaching strategies for students with a learning disability. The department purchased and distributed to each school a new Hawthorne manual titled, 'Learning Disability: Intervention Manual'. Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) received a brief overview of the book and were asked to share this resource with staff. The manual will be shared with Administrators at a Family of Schools Meeting. Future Community of Practice agendas will have an LD, Math and self-regulation focus.

As part of a special project initiative started last year, a number of Snoezelen resources (bubble tubes, nests, sensory kits, etc.) were distributed to 15 more schools (12 elementary and 3 secondary schools). Additional support will be provided to the remaining nine schools before the year-end. Schools were to identify the most appropriate place to create a calm, learning space utilizing these resources. System staff are available to assist schools with choosing the best location, setting up the space and addressing staff in regards to the purpose of these items.



Additionally, based on feedback from school SERTs, other items purchased for schools included: theraputty, breathing balls, fidgets, chew sticks, weighted stuffed animals, rain sticks, timers, beanbag chair, tent and wiggle cushions. All of these items were purchased to support all learners, not just students with special needs.

New SERT Training:

There are 11 new SERTs joining the Special Education Department this year. The department has experienced a significant change in personnel due to retirements, maternity leave, teachers returning to the classroom and as a result additional Ministry funding allocated to staffing school resource teachers. A new SERT mentorship/training program has been established which will provide four full release days for new SERTs where they are partnered up with System SERTs to receive training on key topics such as writing effective IEPs, Woodcock Johnson IV Achievement Testing training, team meetings, review of SERT checklists, preparing high needs packages, appropriate referrals etc.

8.2 Superintendent of Education

Superintendent Shypula introduced the Board Student Achievement Lead, Kerri Chartrand, whom, in her second year in the role, was excited to share with our community agencies updates on our Math and Literacy strategies for the upcoming School Year. Kerri provided an overview of the Differentiated System Support Plan for Student Achievement for 2017-18 (See Appendix A). The plan was created in response to student learning needs using historical data. The plan includes the various support from Superintendents, System Teachers, Math Leads, Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and SERTs.

9. Closing Remarks/ Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.