



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, May 21, 2019 – 9:30 a.m. – Boardroom**

- Present:** Susan Battin, Jennifer Chapman, Christine Dragojlovich (*Co-Chair*), Lauren Freeborn, Nil Woodcroft
- Resources:** Debbie Fullerton (*Principal and Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing*), Carmen McDermid (*Student Achievement Lead: Special Education*), Patti Mitchell (*Parent, County of Brant*), Michelle Shypula (*Superintendent of Education*)
- Regrets:** Bill Chopp (*Trustee*), Laura Bergeron (*ad hoc*), Jill Esposto, Tracey Taylor, Teresa Westergaard-Hager (*Co-Chair*)
- Guest:** Susan Fitzgerald (System Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT))
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**1. Opening Prayer**

Carmen McDermid led the group in the opening prayer.

**2. Welcome and Opening Comments**

Superintendent Shypula welcomed guests and members and a round of introductions were led for the benefit of all in attendance.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Moved by: Jennifer Chapman

Seconded by: Susan Battin

THAT the SEAC approves the agenda of the May 21, 2019 meeting.

**Carried**

**4. Approval of Minutes – April 16, 2019**

Moved by: Lauren Freeborn

Seconded by: Jennifer Chapman

THAT the SEAC approves the minutes of the April 16, 2019 meeting.

**Carried**

**5. Presentations**

**5.1 New SERT Training**

Susan Fitzgerald, System Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) shared that with the increase of SERTs within the Board, and 16 new SERTs over the past two years, the special education department recognized that formal training would be an asset. As Lead Trainer, Susan developed a Binder that would serve as a resource to capture and reference all information covered during training and workshops. Susan detailed the different sections of the binder as follows;

1. Individual Education Plan (IEP): The process and the development of the plan and the importance of a unique plan for each student.



2. Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC): The details of what is involved in both the initial and review meetings and other pertinent information.
  3. Special Education Amount (SEA): John Silvestri ((Information Technology SERT) and David Szuty (Student Achievement Consultant eLearning K-12)) provide training on referrals.
  4. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): Using information and analysis, Lead Autism Behaviour Analysts in our Board, Crystal Donohue and Laura Klinck provide training on the unique challenges on working with kids with autism.
  5. PowerSchool and PowerSchool Spec Ed: Information system where all data on each individual student is stored and now includes the IEP plans.
  6. Self-Regulation: Itinerant SERT, Nancy Smykaluk shares her knowledge on information and programming for self-regulation and assists with capacity building in schools.
  7. Elementary Transition Classrooms/Secondary Special Programs: Debbie Dignan, Itinerant SERT for transitions classrooms shares information and her knowledge for the Elementary Transition Classrooms (Notre Dame, Brantford and St Joseph's, Simcoe) and Secondary Special Programs.
  8. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement (Fourth Edition) (WJ-IV): Mandatory training before you can administer a test. This test assesses academic achievement.
- Many other training sections in the binder cover areas that assist with writing curriculum and various other forms and training such as CCAT, EQAO and Entry to school case conferences. SERTS completed an Exit Survey upon completion of training, which included suggestions that additional training sessions cover topics such as Mental Health and Lexia Core5. This year, SERTs have received four full day training sessions and two half-day training sessions. Members inquired on the creation of a form that agencies can provide to families providing brief descriptions on special education acronyms and Carmen offered to provide agencies with an information guide.

## **6. Community Agency Updates**

### ***Susan Battin – Senior Therapist and Parent Representative, Lansdowne Children's Centre***

Susan updated on the two information sessions that Lansdowne Children's Centre held for parents with Autism. Fourteen (14) families participated in the day session and twenty-eight (28) families in the evening session and Lansdowne is looking at holding a future date for additional families. Susan updated on the success of Lansdowne Charity Motorcycle ride, with over 247 motorcycles participating and over 400 riders, making this event the largest one to date. The agency is holding their AGM on June 19, 2019 and Susan updated that the summer camps have already begun to fill up.

### ***Lauren Freeborn – Service Planning Coordinator, Contact Brant***

Lauren updated on a recent Passport presentation and on how funds have been affected and causing delays for families. Turnaround time for individuals and families to receive funding reimbursement has increased.



***Jennifer Chapman – Child Welfare Supervisor, Haldimand-Norfolk Children’s Aid Society***

Jennifer updated on the Child and Youth Day that Haldimand-Norfolk Children’s Aid Society held on May 14, 2019, where the agency recognizes all children and youth in their care. The agency will be holding their AGM on Thursday, June 20, 2019 and they will honour students who have graduated high school and post-secondary education.

***Christine Dragojlovich – Clinical Manager, Woodview Mental Health & Autism Services***

Christine updated on the success of Mental Health Week and on the kickoff event at Freedom House with the presentation of the 2019 STRIVE awards. Christine updated on the Counseling Clinics and Youth Drop In that Woodview has to offer. Woodview offers walk-in counselling services for children and youth between the ages of 7 to 18 at Brantford Pediatrics, 379 St. Paul Avenue every Wednesday from 9 am to 2 pm (See Appendix A). The agency offers a walk-in counselling service for children and youth between ages of 7 to 18 and their families located at Charing Cross Medical in Brantford. As of Tuesday, June 4, 2019, these services will be available every Tuesday from 10 am to 6 pm (See Appendix B). Christine shared that Woodview Youth Centre in Harmony Square will offer as of May 31, 2019, free counselling services for youth between ages 12 to 18 every Friday from 11 am to 3 pm (See Appendix C).

**7. Reports**

**7.1 Student Achievement Leader: Special Education**

Carmen provided updates on the Entry to School Case Conferences that have been ongoing since April and that they are offering an additional date on May 16 for any families that are new to the Board. Principals have been very diligent in notifying the Special Education Team on any new families registering for Junior Kindergarten that require a school case conference.

Carmen shared that the Secondary Tri-High Games (formerly called Have a Go) is on Thursday, May 23, 2019 at Assumption College School. All three high schools will have athletes representing their schools. On Wednesday June 5, 2019, the elementary Have A Go will take place at the Burford Arena Baseball Diamond from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm.

Carmen updated that Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) testing is now taking place within the Board for all students in grades three and six. Elementary testing occurs from May 21 – June 3. Secondary Grade Nine EQAO Math occurs from June 4 – 17.

Carmen spoke about the OCASE Conference that was attended by a few of the System SERTs and herself on Friday, May 17, 2019. Director Claudine Munroe, Special Education / Success for All Branch was one of the guest speakers at the conference. She shared a very general overview of the 2019-20 special education grants, Priorities and Partnerships Fund and supports for Mental Health and Autism. Three lawyers lead a portion of the day dedicated to a case study analysis. Additionally, there was a legal panel discussing challenging topics being experienced by school boards. This panel along with school Board representatives led the discussion and shared important legal information. Keeping accurate and objective documentation was outlined as one of the most critical takeaways.



## **7.2 Superintendent of Education**

Superintendent Shypula updated that May is the Ontario Autism Consultation Month. This is the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services response to the serious concerns generated across the province as a result of its less than satisfactory reception to the #ClearTheWaitlist plan for the Ontario Autism Program. The government's plan for consultation consists of an online survey, tele-town hall meetings and a minister selected advisory committee.

While this plan is not an immediate resolution to families, service providers or educators, it does offer everyone a chance to have their voices heard. We encourage our SEAC members to do their best in expressing their concerns regarding recent changes to the Ontario Autism Program in whatever format is most suitable for them.

### **What Happens after the Consultations?**

The new advisory panel will review the information gathered through the consultations and will provide advice on developing a new needs assessment process and approach to supporting children and youth with complex needs. The outcomes of the consultations, along with further enhancements to the Ontario Autism Program, are expected to be announced at the end of July 2019 on the Ministry website. Up to this date, the Board remains unclear as to the exact number of students who may be returning to classrooms in September 2019. We continue to be in frequent communication with our Children Treatment Centres to monitor the situation and determine potential student support in the fall.

### **Link to the Survey:**

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/specialneeds/autism/consultations.aspx>

Superintendent Shypula updated on the 2-day Traumatic Event System training that all of the Board administrators received on May 14 and 15, 2019 with Kevin Cameron. Kevin Cameron is the Executive Director of the North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response. The training teaches proven methodologies for dealing with the impact of trauma on individuals in schools, workplaces and communities.

## **8. Closing Remarks/ Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 am and Superintendent Shypula thanked members for their contributions to the meeting.