



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, October 8, 2019 – 9:30 a.m. – Boardroom**

- Present:** Susan Battin, Jill Esposto, Lauren Freeborn, Nil Woodcroft
- Resources:** Carmen McDermid (*Student Achievement Lead: Special Education*), Michelle Shypula (*Superintendent of Education*)
- Regrets:** Bill Chopp (*Trustee*), Laura Bergeron (*ad hoc*), Jennifer Chapman, Christine Dragojlovich, Shannon Mason (*Principal and Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing*), Patti Mitchell (*Parent, County of Brant*), Tracey Taylor, Teresa Westergaard-Hager
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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

Acting Chair, Jill Esposto, amended the Agenda to include **Membership and Meeting Times** as Item 6.

Moved by: Susan Battin

Seconded by: Nil Woodcroft

THAT the SEAC approves the agenda of the October 8, 2019 meeting, as amended.

Carried

4. Approval of Minutes – June 18, 2019

Moved by: Nil Woodcroft

Seconded by: Susan Battin

THAT the SEAC approves the minutes of the June 18, 2019 meeting.

Carried

5. Approval of Minutes – September 17, 2019

Moved by: Susan Battin

Seconded by: Nil Woodcroft

THAT the SEAC approves the minutes of the September 17, 2019 meeting.

Carried

6. Membership and Meeting

The committee agreed that a survey would be sent out to group members to review future meeting dates:

- Second Tuesdays of the month from 1:30 to 3:30 pm or 3:30 to 5:30 pm
- Third Wednesdays of the month from 1:30 to 3:30 pm, 3:30 to 5:30 pm or 6:00 to 8:00 pm



- Option for suggested dates that will best suit individual schedules

The committee agreed that the survey results would be reviewed at the November SEAC meeting and would commence in January 2020. The secretary to the Superintendent of Education would complete and send out the survey to group members. Additionally, the secretary will coordinate a SEAC membership invitation letter to select agencies to recruit for the committee.

7. Election of Chairperson 2019-20

The election of chairperson for the 2019-20 school year was deferred to November to include more committee representation in the election.

8. Correspondence

8.1 Letter from the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board SEAC

Superintendent Shypula provided an overview of the Letter that the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board SEAC created addressed to Honorable Lisa M. Thompson – Minister of Education (see Appendix A). The letter was in support of the concerns expressed in a letter by the Durham Catholic District School Board on Wednesday, March 6, 2019 and the Ministry's lack of clarity around the process of students returning to our school systems and presenting difficulties to our Special Education Services Departments. The letter also addressed unclear direction on both support and funding to Boards. The letters were sent out to all Chairs of Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees in May 2019.

8.2 Letter from Peel District School Board

Superintendent Shypula updated on the letter received from Peel District School Board on May 10, 2019 and addressed to The Honourable Lisa Thompson, Minister of Education. The letter expressed the concerns on the negative impacts in changes to funding for the Special Incidence Portion (SIP) and a request to review and change their decisions (see Appendix B).

8.3 Letters from Greater Essex County District School Board

Superintendent Shypula updated on the letters received from Greater Essex County District School Board, both dated July 5, 2019 and addressed to the Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister of Education. The first letter (see Appendix C) was written by their SEAC in support of Bill 64, **Noah and Gregory's Law**, *Transition to Adult Developmental Services and Supports* that they feel will improve transitions to adult services. The second letter (see Appendix D) addresses the concerns of the changes to the provincial funding model for class size averages and the impact of these changes on students.

9. Community Agency Updates

Nil Woodcroft – Manager of Early Childhood Intervention, Haldimand-Norfolk REACH

Nil updated that HN Reach had just completed their third accreditation with the Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA). The accreditation was a three-year process where the CCA reviewed the agencies' policies, standards and practices and that the overall experience was positive by meeting with staff, participants and Board members. HN Reach is currently awaiting results. Nil updated on autism services for families and how certain services are being extended to June 2020. HN Reach are working with families in the application process to assist in the selection of services for the child(ren). A list of services is posted on their website at: <http://www.hnreach.on.ca/>. Nil updated on infant and child



development services and that EarlyON Child and Family Centres continue to offer a variety of programs at various sites such as Dunnville, Caledonia and Simcoe. A list of these sites and programs offered are also available on their website.

Susan Battin – Senior Therapist, Lansdowne Children’s Centre

Susan updated that Lansdowne Children’s Centre will be starting their accreditation process in November with the CCA. Lansdowne’s Heroes Walk & Roll event held on Saturday, September 14, 2019 was a great success and will become an annual event. The agency is starting to meet to start planning for Christmas party events and have an upcoming motorcycle ride event. Speech and language services are starting to meet with teachers in the Board. Lansdowne provision of occupational and physiotherapy services are offered in Dunnville, Simcoe and Caledonia and looking to expand services in to EarlyON sites within HN Reach. Due to recent changes in legislation, Susan updated on changes within autism services and that costs will be associated with services in the future.

Lauren Freeborn – Service Planning Coordinator, Contact Brant

Lauren updated on changes within the Ontario Autism Program (OAP) and what options are available to families. There is a current waitlist and families who require assistance with applications and services available to them, can contact Lansdowne for individual appointments.

Jill Esposto - Director of Services, Brant Family & Children Services

Jill updated on ongoing changes that have taken place with staffing since July 2019 at Brant Family and Children Services. The Board of Directors resigned in July and the Ministry removed Andrew Koster as Executive Director. This amid funding challenges which continue under the Ministry preview. The Ministry appointed Bernadette Gallagher is Acting ED and she also carries out the duties of the Board. She will be overseeing the work at Brant FACS over the next year and is responsible to recruit a new Board who can then hire a permanent Executive Director. The funding challenges are complex and were impacted by the multiple factors including the onboarding of the new CPIN system, authorization of workers, high rates of Targeted subsidy and funding challenges related to the Transitional Funding formula applied by the Ministry when Ogwadeni:Deo took over the child welfare mandate for Six Nations families and children. The agency is participating in helping to inform broader changes for the sector alongside the Ministry as they explore ways modernize child welfare. They are looking at adoption services as well as broader issues impacting the whole field of Child Welfare in Ontario. Brant and Brantford continue to have high rates of opioid use and death as well as high rates of poverty which impact child welfare service as well.

10. Reports

10.1 Student Achievement Leader: Special Education

Carmen updated on the Board Wide System Faith Day that was held on Friday, September 13, 2019 and how the focus was on the Board new spiritual theme, *Encounter – Hearts on Fire (Luke 24:32)*. Staffs had an opportunity to pray and reflect together in teams. Carmen provided staffing updates on the special education department and how all system positions are currently filled within the Board. On Thursday, September 12, 2019, a Community of Practice (COP) meeting was held where speakers, Linda McFadden and Monica Scott Brant and Haldimand Norfolk, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) Coordinators updated Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) on their roles and responsibilities. Carmen updated that there will



be an upcoming COP meeting on October 30 where staff will receive a presentation on school-based rehabilitation services from Jennifer Huxley, Service Manager with Lansdowne Children's Centre. Participants will receive information on school-based rehabilitation services. Participants will also receive information on Coordinated Service Planning from Maxine Lean and Lauren Freeborn from Contact Brant. On Thursday, September 26 and Friday, September 27, SERTs were divided into two groups with support from the system special education team to assist with the writing of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) in being able to write measurable goals and expectations. Carmen updated that during the summer months the Board worked with Nelson to complete 43 cognitive assessments and a lot of positive feedback was received from parents about this opportunity.

Carmen updated on discussions had with the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) for Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVC) training and shared how CPI felt that staff were well trained and the option of online training could be explored following the extensive enhanced, face-to-face training.

Carmen shared that she will be requesting members feedback and their input in specific areas of the special education plan, that is enclosed in their binders.

10.2 Superintendent of Education

Superintendent Shypula updated on the Educational Assistants: Leveraging Digital Implementation. The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School will be launching its Educational Assistants: Leveraging Digital Plan in October 2019. Following intentional planning with various stakeholders, including educational assistants, principals, student achievement, special education, principal and superintendent representation and in collaboration with IBM, five schools across the district will begin this pilot project. The five schools are:

- Notre Dame (Brantford)
- Resurrection
- St. Peter
- Jean Vanier
- Christ the King

The focus of this project will be for educational assistants to use digital to assist classroom and special education teachers in capturing and sharing the student's academic, motor and social development as it relates to the expectations in the student's Individual Educational Plan. In consultation, the various stakeholders were instrumental in establishing clear and concise success criteria for the pilot, identifying base-line data, monitoring strategies, and in developing purposeful and engaging professional learning to build educational assistants, classroom and special education teachers' capacity.

11. Closing Remarks/ Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 am and Superintendent Shypula thanked members for their contributions to the meeting.