



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, October 20, 2020 – 1:30 p.m.  
Teams Meeting**

- Members:** Kevin Greco (*Superintendent of Education*), Bill Chopp (*Trustee*), Laura Bergeron (*ad hoc*), Tara Buchanan, Jennifer Chapman, Mischa Dinsmore, Jill Esposito, Brook Gardner, Terri-Lynn Zakrzewski
- Regrets:** Lauren Freeborn, Patti-Mitchell (*Parent, County of Brant*), Teresa Westergaard-Hager, Nil Woodcroft
- Resources:** Shannon Mason (*Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing*), Carmen McDermid (*Student Achievement Lead: Special Education*)
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**1. Opening Prayer**

Carmen McDermid led the opening prayer.

**2. Welcome and Opening Comments**

Superintendent Greco welcomed the group and asked if anyone had any new business.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Moved: Tara Buchanan

Seconded: Jill Esposito

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the October 20, 2020 meeting.

**Carried**

**4. Approval of the Minutes**

Moved: Brook Gardner

Seconded: Bill Chopp

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of September 29, 2020.

**Carried**

**5. Correspondence**

No correspondence to share.

**6. Community Agency Updates**

**Jennifer Chapman - Child Welfare Supervision, The Children's Aid Society of Haldimand-Norfolk**

No report.



**Jill Esposto - Director of Services, Brant Family & Children's Services**

It is child abuse prevention month. Purple masks promoting the month were distributed to schools. Foster parent recognition looks differently this year, families will be recognized with gift cards. Most staff are now working at the office at least part of the time.

**Mischa Dinsmore - Lansdowne**

There is currently limited in-person service being provided. We are prioritizing those most at need for in person assessments and all others are completed over the telephone or virtually over zoom.

**Tara Buchanan – Community Living Brant**

Community Living is celebrating National Disability Employment month. We are supporting this by wearing royal blue or purple. Penman's Dam in Paris is being lit up blue to honour this. The event is called Light it Up.

**Shannon Mason – Principal Lead**

No report.

**Bill Chopp – Trustee**

Trustee Chopp asked how virtual learning is going for IEP students. Superintendent Greco says we have taken a two tiered approach to it. Students with significant needs have continued in their classroom in their homeschool with the supports in place. Some students are virtual and receiving assistance to be successful. Each plan is individualized to each family. All virtual students are still connected to their homeschool through their SERT. The homeschool is writing the IEP since they know the child and family best. The learning plans are then shared with the virtual school teacher. Carmen McDermid shared that the virtual IEP's are sent to families who must sign them and return to her. Some students have found virtual school more challenging than others. The teachers are accommodating the students as needed. Progress reports are the next challenge, and we are currently working on this.

**Brook Gardner - Woodview**

Woodview has had a staggered approach for client needs. We never completely stopped services but went from mostly virtual to now offering in person service. We have made space in the building to allow for physical distancing for those who need to come in person. Many staff are working from home to allow for more space in the buildings. There has been a high number of children needing face to face service. Co-vid protocols are in place to help keep everyone safe. We will share the Clinics flyer.

**7. Reports**

**7.1 Selection of Chair**

**Kevin Greco**

Laura Freeborn and Jennifer Chapman have agreed to Co-Chair our SEAC committee this year. Superintendent Greco thanked them for stepping up and helping out.



**7.2 Superintendent of Education**

**Kevin Greco**

Superintendent Greco reported that we are mandated by the Ministry to limit the number of people/visitors coming into our buildings. We are only allowing people to enter who are school staff or for those who have to enter to meet an essential need for a student. This must be arranged in advance. Anything that can be done virtually is encouraged. Agencies needing access to the school need to reach out to the Principal to plan the visit. Everyone entering a Board building must sign in, leave contact tracing information, wear PPE and sign out upon leaving and follow all Board Protocols.

Our Board has added Educational Assistants, Special Education Resource Teachers, Social Workers and Child and Youth Workers. We were able to add these extra staff to assist our students. The new staff are engaging in training. Many of our staff are training in Self-Regulation. Several models are being used in our schools. We are trying to consolidate these and how self-regulation fits into our philosophy of education.

**7.3 Student Achievement Leader: Special Education**

**Carmen McDermid**

Over the years, Speech & Language Services have continued to evolve within our board. In trying to respond to student needs, many schools seek support from the Special Education Team, specifically our Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LPs), to support early literacy intervention. As a result, the Speech & Language Services team are going to be completing Phonological Awareness Screens for Grade One students across the system. This screening will take approximately 15 minutes and will be completed within the classroom (in most cases). Building early literacy skills is an important part of a student's education. A critical component of literacy is Phonological Awareness which is an understanding that spoken language is made up of words and that each word consists of syllables and individual sounds. Results will help inform the teacher of a student's Phonological Awareness abilities and the level of support needed. The S-LP will also be available for general classroom consultation.

**8. Closing Remarks/Adjournment**

Superintendent Greco thanked everyone for coming and asked everyone to reach out if they have any suggestions regarding meeting times. The meeting adjourned at 1:51 p.m.

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**Next meeting:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020, 1:00 p.m. – Microsoft Teams