



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, February 16, 2021 – 1:00 p.m.  
Teams Meeting**

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

Carmen McDermid led the opening prayer.

**2. Welcome and Opening Comments**

Superintendent Greco welcomed the group.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Moved: Sophie Podfigurna

Seconded: Jennifer Chapman

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the February 16, 2021 meeting.

**Carried**

**4. Approval of the Minutes**

Moved: Sophie Podfigurna

Seconded: Jennifer Chapman

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of January 19, 2021.

**Carried**

**5. Correspondence**

PAAC - Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee

Superintendent Greco has summarized the survey that was sent out to the chairs of the parent groups. We will push this agenda item to the next meeting.

**6. Presentation – Phonological Assessments**

The Speech & Language Services Team completed a grade one, Phonological Awareness Screening Pilot in response to a trend that is seeing an increasing number of student referrals from schools regarding concerns in foundational literacy skills. The goal of the initiative was to provide information to educators and parents about how students are processing, reflecting on, and manipulating sounds which are important foundational skills for literacy instruction. The screening was offered to all grade one students in our board including students enrolled in French Immersion and in virtual school. 572 grade one students participated



in this pilot across the system. Following the screenings, families were provided a report with their child's results including whether the results were 'as expected' or required 'further support' for their grade level. The summary report also recommended activities to support skill development. Teachers were given a class summary of results which included individual student scores along with an overall class performance profile. Teacher resources were provided to assist them with how to incorporate phonological awareness support within their classrooms. Overall results showed that 74% of the students screened needed further support in the area of phonological awareness. The data collected will help to generate a response to assist students in this area. Special Education and Curriculum will be further examining these results and will collaborate to identify the next steps in addressing this student need.

## **7. Community Agency Updates**

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

Consultations are continuing for the potential unification of the agencies. Plans are underway for the Easter Dinner that is a yearly tradition. Stability funds are being looked at for the needs this year. Our services are continuing as much as possible in person.

### **Sophie Podfigurna – Lansdowne**

Thank you for the warm welcome as I temporarily take Mischa's place at the SEAC committee. Lansdowne continues to provide a combination of in person and virtual service, all departments are actively running. Clients whose needs cannot not be met through virtual service are prioritized to receive face to face service at Lansdowne. Staff are primarily working from home and only in centre as needed but our building is open every day.

### **Shannon Mason – Principal Lead**

No report.

### **Bill Chopp – Trustee**

No report.

### **Brook Gardner - Woodview**

No report.

### **Patti Mitchell – Parent, County of Brant**

No report.

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

No report.

### **Nil Woodcroft – Haldimand-Norfolk REACH**

No report.



### **Sarah Robertson – Brant Family & Children’s Services**

Sarah is joining us to replace Jill. She has been at the agency for many years and is now the Director. The agency is working as usual, with some of the tight restrictions easing up. Sarah shared that she looks forward to being a part of the committee.

### **Tara Buchanan – Community Living Brant**

No report.

## **8. Reports**

### **8.1 Superintendent of Education**

**Kevin Greco**

Superintendent Greco shared that he would send out a link to the group to provide feedback on our Budget survey. He asked if anyone from the panel is interested to complete the survey or provide feedback. All our classes are now back to in person learning each day. Our virtual school continues as normal. Our March Break has been postponed by the Minister of Education to the week of April 12, 2021. This may have an impact on our students or staff, everyone has been working hard and following the strict COVID-19 protocols. Stability funding is being looked at by the Board to determine how it will be utilized. Some good news, COVID-19 funding from last spring to assist in the summer school sessions will be available again this year. The summer transition programs will use some of this funding. Our virtual schools (elementary and secondary) numbers are coming down as more families are returning their children to in person learning at our schools. Masking protocols are now mandatory for all students in grades K-12 and screening protocols are enhanced (grades 1-12 are mandated by Province).

### **8.2 Student Achievement Leader: Special Education**

**Carmen McDermid**

On January 27<sup>th</sup>, the Special Education System team hosted another virtual Community of Practice (COP) meeting with all SERTs and Spec. Ed. Department Heads in attendance. Meetings continue to be scheduled to ensure we meet all of the required commitments and deadlines surrounding special education. The focus for this meeting included a variety of topics including: term one reporting, planning for grade 8 to 9 IPRCs, secondary special class IPRC intakes, PowerSchool Special Education, Lexia, SEA and Sonderly training opportunities. All elementary schools (including the virtual school) are in the process of updating Term 2 IEPs for students. This includes: providing parents an opportunity to consult on their child’s IEP, updating any accommodations, specific program pages that have modifications or alternative expectations, and updating the transition plan. Grade 8 to 9 system IPRCs are happening during the weeks of February 8 – 12 and 22 – 26, 2021 for students in our board who are making application to a special class. Parents/guardians, the elementary homeschool principal, SERT and when possible, the classroom teacher virtually attend and participate in these IPRCs. The student’s learning profile, interests and goals are discussed with the appropriate secondary principal/vice-principal, Special Education Department Head, special class teacher and guidance counsellor who will be attached to that student throughout their high school career. Grade 8 to 9 is a huge transition, and it is very important for families to feel connected to the high school and staff who will be supporting their child and these IPRCs are an excellent opportunity for that to happen. Additionally, 96 mainstream grade 8 to 9 IPRCs are scheduled to occur virtually from late-February until mid-March. March Break has been switched until April 12 to 16<sup>th</sup>, which will



**Brant Haldimand Norfolk  
Catholic District School Board**

**Minutes**

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require some switching of dates for the Haldimand Norfolk entry to school case conferences which were scheduled that week.

**9. Closing Remarks/Adjournment**

Superintendent Greco thanked everyone for coming. The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

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**Next meeting:** Tuesday, March 23, 2021, 1:00 p.m. – Microsoft Teams