



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, September 21, 2021 – 1pm
Teams Meeting**

- Members:** Kevin Greco (*Superintendent of Education*), Bill Chopp (*Trustee*), Laura Bergeron (*ad hoc*), Tara Buchanan, Jennifer Chapman, Lauren Freeborn, Annmarie Krauss, Christina Ferrell, Nil Woodcroft, Sarah Robertson, Marissa Lechowicz
- Regrets:** Patti Mitchell
- Resources:** Carmen McDermid (*Student Achievement Lead: Special Education*), Shannon Mason (*Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing*), Patti Mitchell (*Parent, County of Brant*)
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Land Acknowledgement

Land acknowledgement led by Lauren Freeborn.

1. Opening Prayer

Carmen McDermid shared an opening prayer.

2. Welcome and Opening Comments

Superintendent Greco welcomed the committee to a new school year and new members. Thanked Lauren and Jennifer for being co-chairs of the committee for this meeting. Looking forward to a new year and the return of extracurricular activities.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved: Jennifer Chapman

Seconded: Annmarie Krauss

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the September 21, 2021, meeting.

Carried

4. Approval of the Minutes

Moved: Annmarie Krauss

Seconded: Sarah Robertson

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of June 15, 2021.

Carried

5. Correspondence

No new correspondence.

6. Community Agency Updates

Annmarie Krauss – Lansdowne

Staff are back working within the centre and therapists are back in the schools. Children are more frequently being seen in the centre, and also proceeding with in-home visits.

Bill Chopp – Trustee

No update. Thanked Lauren for being the chair for the previous year and looking forward to Kevin and Carmen's leadership this year.



Christina Ferrell – Woodview

Woodview had a busy summer running camps. Programs are full service and within homes. Drop-in programs ran at Harmony Square Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 5pm-7pm and Saturday 1pm-3pm for youth ages 12-18 years old.

Jennifer Chapman – Haldimand-Norfolk Children’s Aid Society

An amalgamation with Brant FACS is underway to share services, more information to follow. Summer was busy as full in-home services continued. Shannon Korber (Society Education Liaison, shared with Brant) has returned in her role focusing on children in care and liaising with boards. Preparations are underway for the annual youth Thanksgiving dinner which will be done this year with gift baskets being delivered to doorsteps.

Sarah Robertson – Brant Family and Children’s Services

Brant FACS is currently operating as usual and formalizing policies to have staff attend schools. Events are planned for Sept 30th (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation) such as education activities, a walk, and facilitating a screening of Blood Memory for residential schools. Brant FACS Indigenous staff will spend the day away from work to honour this day. The remainder of staff will participate in learning and discussion groups throughout the day.

Tara Buchanan – Community Living Brant

CL Brant continues to operate similar to last year and staff are now back in the office and providing in-person supports. The Employment Support Program is sailing with the labour shortage in Ontario. This program is designed for people aged 16 and over and welcomes any person with any disability.

Lauren Freeborn – Contact Brant

Contact Brant is currently in the process of developing the Urgent Response Service (URS) program for children with Autism. URS is a time limited, rapid service response to a specific need to prevent further escalation of risk of harm to self, others, or property. The child must be registered with the Ontario Autism Program already in order to access the URS program. This is not a crisis support. If school staff would like to complete a referral, it would be ideal if they could call with the parent. If that’s not possible, the parent(s) would need to be aware of the referral. The program is time limited (12 weeks) and hope to have it up and running in January/February of 2022.

Nil Woodcroft – Haldimand-Norfolk REACH

HN REACH continues to provide services through home visits, phone and virtual supports, as well as in person at REACH work sites. Currently operating at 75% capacity within most REACH sites. The Infant and Child Development Service is busy assisting with transitions to school. Currently encountering challenges with medically fragile participants not being able to attend school due to nursing staff shortage. With the Developmental Unit, some individuals waiting for Special Services at Home funding who have been removed from the waiting list.

7. BHNCD SB SEAC Guide

Superintendent Greco reviewed the parameters of the SEAC guide. Members agreed to continue with Thursday meetings at 1-3/pm using Microsoft Teams.

8. Reports

8.1 Superintendent of Education

Superintendent Greco shared the Special Education Annual Plan 2020-21 and extended thanks to all those who helped put the plan into action. Shannon Mason returns as our principal representative this year. Virtual school enrollment has significantly decreased from last year highlighting the



benefits of in-person learning.

Welcomed Marissa Lechowicz, Executive Assistant to Superintendent Greco, to the committee.

Immunization Disclosure Policy: Reach out to Marissa if there are contacts who may have been missed and she will forward them information. BHNCDNB has a protocol in place for all staff and regular/frequent staff who enter our facilities to attest to our vaccination policy and rapid antigen testing. A board-approved community partner list continues to be updated for those who have disclosed their immunization protocol to us. Principals confirm vaccination status and screening measures with other volunteers who enter our schools.

Extra support was provided through the Summer Transition Support Program for those who were struggling with mental health on the caseloads of our CYW's. Phone calls, online meetings, and porch visits were some examples of the supports used over the summer. Program was very successful and supported students/families in beginning the school year.

Special Education Department also hosted many programs. We are very pleased with how well transition went for students and their families. Hosted Summer Transition Programs and Camp Connect through our After School Skills Development Program.

9.2 Student Achievement Lead: Special Education

The Summer Transition Support Program was again hosted in every elementary and secondary school during the final few weeks of the summer. The program offered students with complex special education needs and/or mental health needs an opportunity to receive individualized and precise transition support prior to the start of the new school year.

Carmen shared a presentation on the After Schools Skills Development Program (ASSDP), Camp Connect for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The BHNCDNB designed a unique in-person summer 'camp' experience for students with significant needs, limited independent skills and who required significant adult support. Students from 14 different schools participated in Camp Connect along with BHN staff and guest presenters from the community. Camp Connect targeted the improvement of functional independence, social-communication skills, self-regulation, and life planning. Camps were organized in all three counties for up to five students per camp. Feedback from parents was overwhelming positive about the experience their child had while attending the camp.

Four new SERTs were provided with a one-day, in-person workshop to help prepare them for their new role. Further training days are scheduled throughout the year based around critical special education expectations/timeframes/deadlines.

9. Call for Nominations – SEAC Chair and Vice Chair

Superintendent Greco thanked Lauren and Jennifer for chairing the meetings this past year. Members were asked to send nominations for the 2021-22 school year by Tuesday, September 28th to Marissa, and the survey will go out by the 30th. If there are no nominations received, we will be asked for volunteers directly, however both Lauren and Jennifer have agreed to continue if there are no nominations. A reminder that board members are not able to nominate.

10. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

Lauren called for any additional comments. No comments. The meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.