



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, April 19th, 2022 – 1pm
Teams Meeting

Members: Kevin Greco (*Superintendent of Education*), Bill Chopp (*Trustee*), Laura Bergeron (*ad hoc*), Tara Buchanan, Lauren Freeborn, Annemarie Krauss, Christina Ferrell, Nil Woodcroft, Shannon Korber, Brandi Bertling, Kim Fraser, Marissa Lechowicz

Regrets: Bill Chopp, Laura Bergeron, Lauren Freeborn, Kim Fraser

Resources: Carmen McDermid (*Student Achievement Lead: Special Education*), Shannon Mason (*Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing*), Kerri Lomax (*VP, Secondary*), Patti Mitchell (*Parent, County of Brant*)

1. Land Acknowledgement

Superintendent Greco led with a land acknowledgement.

2. Opening Prayer

Carmen McDermid shared an opening prayer.

3. Approval of Agenda

Approved: Patti Mitchell

Seconded: Tara Buchanan

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the April 19, 2022, meeting.

4. Approval of the Minutes

Approved: Tara Buchanan

Seconded: Nil Woodcroft

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the March 22, 2022, meeting.

5. Correspondence

No new correspondences to share.

6. Presentation

6.1 Post-Secondary Pathways

Debbie Dignan – Itinerant Special Education Resource Teacher, shared a presentation on Post-Secondary Pathways for Students with Intellectual Disabilities. The presentation offered information for parents and students regarding the different resources available such as supported employment, community integration through co-operative education, and more.

7. Considerations for Student Summer Break

The Board will continue summer programming as offered in previous years. There is an after-school skills development program for students with autism and similar needs and funds to assist the transitions program. The transitions program supports students who encounter challenges with learning and/or socializing and assists them in getting a head start before the school year begins.

Last year the Board was successful in completing over 40 assessments during the summer. Hopeful this will be continue this summer.

Summer Secondary credits and Focus on Youth programs will continue, as well as Ready Set Go and Camp Blast that are ongoing. Communities are used to these and expect these programs. Programs are communicated out through Principals.

8. Community Agency Updates

Annmarie Krauss – Lansdowne

Undergoing some changes with our servers. There is now a referral hub on our website for intake services and this can connect you to a service coordinator. New Autism entry to school program, which families need to be invited to attend. Summer camps will be up and running this year and are currently in the planning stage. Hiring summer staff to assist with respite services and at home/in community care.

Christina Ferrell – Woodview

Mental Health week is coming up on May 2nd-6th. Woodview is gearing up for the week with a lot of activities going on within the community.

Kerri Lomax – VP, Secondary

Based on the Experiential Learning Proposals that were discussed at a previous meeting, St. Johns College and Assumption College will be offering modified First Aid training in May to 27 students. The training will take place at SJC. Holy Trinity will be offering a Babysitting Course which includes 10 hours of instruction and provide 17 students the opportunity to create their own “babysitting kit”. Both programs will award a certificate, which will be great for students to add to their resumes. There are two Grade 8 to 9 programs that will be running the week before school in August. The Ready Set Go program will be offered to students based on needs. The Here We Go program is being offered as an extension and will benefit Grade 8’s to walk the halls and find courses with their timetable before day one of Grade 9.

Nil Woodcroft – Haldimand-Norfolk Reach

Currently busy with the Transition to School program. There has been a significant increase in children being supported through this program. The Autism Unit has started the Entry to School program in Simcoe at the EarlyON Site. Participation in Kick Start to Kindergarten sessions held at the Board schools sparking a lot of positive feedback, as well as feedback to host these sessions earlier to help with offering recommendations and other resources to parents/families.

Shannon Korber – Child and Family Services of Grand Erie

The Brant Family and Children’s Services and The Children’s Aid Society of Haldimand-Norfolk have officially amalgamated as of April 1st. The new name of the amalgamated agencies is Child and Family Services of Grand Erie.

Shannon Mason – Principal Lead

Transition programs are coming up so staff are busy with preparations.

Patti Mitchell – Parent, County of Brant

No new formal correspondences.

Tara Buchanan – Community Living Brant

The Employment program continues to be busy. Currently experiencing staffing shortages within Community Living but working through them. Offering a family group and sibling network that are open to anyone who is seeking support. Belonging Brant is hosting Jane’s Walks, which are 1 hour citizen-led walks that everyone is welcome to attend. May 10th-12th is the Asset Based Community Development Symposium, look for information regarding this on our Facebook page where you will find registration information.

9. Reports

9.1 Superintendent of Education

Superintendent Greco shared an update on virtual schools. Virtual schools will still exist in September and at this time the enrollment rates are very low.

Currently the Board is looking at how our support staff are allocated to see if there are any ways to improved service delivery. The Board is reviewing re-engagement strategies to address attendance concerns, which may lead to having a Social Worker focus on attendance improvement and re-engagement programs. The number of Violent Threat Risk Assessments have increased during the pandemic as well as the need for more Social Workers support in elementary schools.

Superintendent Greco shared that summer transition supports would also be continuing this summer to help support students and prepare them for next school year. This will include providing assessments for students to identify learning gaps.

9.2 Student Achievement Lead

The Student Achievement Lead thanked community partners for creating the 'All About Me' pages for the Entry to School case conferences for students entering kindergarten in September 2022. School teams benefit greatly from receiving this information about students' profiles and in helping to plan for their transition into school.

The After School Skills Development Program or 'Camp Connect' will again be offered to specific students this summer in all three counties. These camps target the improvement of functional independence, social-communication skills, self-regulation, life planning and classroom success for students with autism. Staff will receive additional training to further enhance their own skills in how best to support individual student goals in a camp environment. The camps offered last summer received very positive feedback from families and requests to have them continue in the future.

10. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

No further remarks. Meeting adjourned at 2:45pm.

Next meeting date, time, location: May 17th, 2022 – 1pm, Microsoft Teams