



**BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK  
Catholic District School Board**

**Minutes**

Catholic Education Centre  
322 Fairview Drive  
Brantford, ON N3R 2X6

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**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, May 16, 2023 – 1:00pm**

**Catholic Education Centre or Microsoft Teams**

- Members:** Dennis Blake (Trustee), Mischa Dinsmore (Lansdowne Children’s Centre), Christina Ferrell (Woodview Children’s Centre), Marilyn Noi (Autism Ontario), Phil Wilson (Superintendent of Education), Nil Woodcroft (Haldimand Norfolk REACH)
- Regrets:** Laura Bergeron (ad hoc), Brandi Bertling (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Tara Buchanan (Community Living Brant), Michelle Drake (Crossing All Bridges), Linda McFayden (Contact Brant), Janelle Sandy (Indigenous Child and Youth Team at Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Shannon Korber (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie)
- Resources:** Sandra DeDominicis (Student Achievement Lead: Special Education), Kerri Lomax (Principal, Elementary), Shannon Mason (Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing), Patti Mitchell (Parent, County of Brant)
- Guests:** Stephanie Bergman (Speech and Language Pathologist), Meagan Courneyea (Speech and Language Pathologist), Mary Hanhan (Speech and Language Pathologist), Susan Lentz (Lansdowne Children’s Centre), Glenn Thistle (System Special Education Resource Teacher)
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**1. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Mischa Dinsmore welcomed the committee.

**2. Land Acknowledgement**

Superintendent Wilson read the board’s land acknowledgement.

**3. Opening Prayer**

Sandra De Dominicis shared an opening prayer.

**4. Introductions and Welcome**

Superintendent Wilson welcomed all committee members.

**5. Approval of Agenda**

Moved by: Christina Farrell

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the May 16, 2023, meeting.

**Carried**

**6. Approval of the Minutes**

Moved by: Christina Farrell

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the April 18, 2023, meeting.

**Carried**

**7. Correspondence - Nil**

## **8. Community Agency Updates**

### **Christina Ferrell**

Woodview Children's Centre will be holding a drop-in program at Harmony Square on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons over the summer months.

Workshops will be available to all families in the community through Woodview Children's Centre. A calendar of events is being developed.

### **Mischa Dinsmore**

Lansdowne Charity Motorcycle ride is taking place on July 8, 2023. Lansdowne Children's Centre will be raffling off a Harley Davidson motorcycle. The tickets are \$25 each. The motorcycle tours the city to encourage the purchase of tickets, as well to educate on the services Lansdowne Children's Centre provides.

### **Nil Woodcroft**

The Early Identification Child development team of Haldimand Norfolk REACH recently met, and are following up, to review the Kick Start to Kindergarten events that were held. The overall feedback was positive, and now discussions are taking place, given the limited capacity of screeners, on how to do things differently in order to expand these events to more schools.

HN REACH is planning a summer school program, facilitated in Delhi at St. Frances Cabrini School and in Dunnville at Mapleview School.

Additionally, HN REACH is working on a school readiness program for students entering JK and SK.

HN REACH continues to be busy with the transition to school planning with caregivers and there has been an increase in late referrals this year for the All About Me program.

## **Updates**

### **8.1 Student Achievement Lead**

The focus of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSD) has been centered around student support visit meetings that were held with Superintendent Wilson, Special Education Resource Teachers and Principals to discuss Educational Assistant support. Approximately 250-300 students need support. This data will be used to support staffing for the next school year.

BHNCDSD held a virtual Community of Practice meeting to discuss the Empowered Reading Program implemented through Sick Kids Hospital.

An open house was held at Notre Dame School, Brantford, for the transition class, to welcome students, meet the staff and have a tour of the school.

Have a Go, an adapted track and field event for the Special Education students, will be held in Burford on June 6, 2023, with a rain date of June 7, 2023. Members of SEAC are welcome to come out and support the event.

## **8.2 Superintendent of Education**

BHNCDSB has been working through the budget process for Special Education, aligning with our needs and priorities.

A plan is currently being devised for the Empower Reading program to maximize the number of students who can participate. Eight schools will receive Empower Reading support for the 2023-24 school year.

Bartimaeus has been providing support for a few of our students and BHNCDSB has received positive feedback. Next steps are being devised for the next school year, prioritizing who would benefit from this type of support.

Books titled, Can't Read, Can't Write, Here's My Book, by Michael Jacques, books were given to Superintendent Wilson from principal, Sue Defreyne. The author, Michael Jacques is a young adult with Autism and an intellectual disability. It was written using an Ipad's speech to text function and talks about the importance of belonging and inclusion.

The Special Education year end summary will be due to the Ministry at the end of June. BHNCDSB is looking at who we have served, and the plan is being redeveloped the plan for next year.

## **8.3 SLP Pilot Program Update**

Three Speech Language Pathologist's (SLPs) for BHNCDSB, Stephanie Bergman, Meagan Courneyea, and Mary Hanhan provided a presentation discussing the pilot project Story Champs, language curriculum for kindergartens. It is an evidence-based program and has been used in schools and settings proven to make positive gains. The program is multi-tiered and multi-sensory (touch sight gestures, learning) and provides support to the whole class. The program can also be used in smaller groups, for students at risk, giving them a language boost.

Listening and de-coding are needed in order to have reading comprehension. This isn't possible without oral language skills; it is the foundation of the child's success.

This program supports literacy development, supports students with language delays. Allows SLPs to work side along educators to develop skills in classroom and better prepare students for literacy development. The goal is by the end of the 12 weeks that the at-risk students are at the same level as the other students. The first 6 weeks focus on parts of the story and how it is organized, the next 6 weeks are lessons, complexity, and language structure. The goal is by the end of the 12 weeks, that the at-risk students are at the same level as the other students.

The goal is to build capacity in our educators. Looking at student and educator impact with two focus groups,

## **8.4 Supplementary Gifted Module Overview**

Presentation from Glenn Thistle, System Special Education Resource Teacher, for Supplementary Gifted Modules, showing visits to Lynwood, Circle Square Ranch, Shaw Festival and the Toyota Plant, as well as the modules held at SMCLC.

## **9. Closing Remarks/Adjournment**

Mischa Dinsmore thanked everyone.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 20, 2023.

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