



**BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
Catholic District School Board**

Minutes

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

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, September 17, 2024 – 1:00pm
Catholic Education Centre and Microsoft Teams**

Members: Brandi Bertling (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Dennis Blake (Trustee), Tara Buchanan (Community Living Brant), Michelle Drake (Crossing All Bridges), Phil Wilson (Superintendent of Education), Nil Woodcroft (Haldimand Norfolk REACH), Lauren Freeborn (Contact Brant), Lauren Moulton (Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services)

Regrets: Laura Bergeron (ad hoc), Mischa Dinsmore (Lansdowne Children's Centre), Kerri Lomax (Principal, Elementary), Patti Mitchell (Parent, County of 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), (Lansdowne Children's Centre), Marilyn Noi (Autism Ontario),

Resources: Sandra DeDominicis (Student Achievement Lead: Special Education)

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Superintendent Wilson welcomed the committee.

2. Opening Prayer

Sandra De Dominicis shared an opening prayer.

3. Land Acknowledgement

Superintendent Wilson read the board's land acknowledgement.

4. Introductions and Welcome

Superintendent Wilson welcomed all committee members and thanked everyone for being a member of the Special Education Advisory Committee for the 2024 – 2025 year.

5. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Lauren Freeborn

Seconded by: Nil Woodcroft

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the September 17, 2024, meeting.

Carried

6. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Lauren Freeborn

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the June 18, 2024, meeting.

Carried

7. Orientation and Election of Chairs

Mischa Dinsmore is the current chair. Trustee Blake asked that the terms of reference of SEAC be included in the October 2024 meeting.

8. Correspondence - Nil

9. Community Agency Updates

Lauren Moulton

Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services has several events taking place this fall including the Fall Fair and Annual General Meeting, safeTALK workshop, and Chalk and Talk. Woodview is also offering Brantford Caregiver Connection, a drop-in program for youth 18 years and younger, experiencing mental health concerns, runs twice a month from September to December. Information on all events will be emailed to the SEAC members.

Tara Buchanan

Community Living Brant is running an Employment Program for ages 18 years and up and provides on the job supports.

The Happy Note project started with the beginning of the school year.

Brandi Bertling

Child and Family Services of Grand Erie has construction underway for a new building in Brantford. There is a request for local artists to do artwork for the building. There are also renovations occurring at the Townsend location. Child and Family Services of Grand Erie is also running a back-to-school drive for student backpacks, lunch bags and school supplies.

Michelle Drake

Crossing All Bridges is holding a Monday night Dance Party from 6-8pm. Children as young as thirteen can attend with a worker.

Nil Woodcroft

Haldimand Norfolk REACH is going through accreditation.

The first fall cohort for the entry to school program for Behavioural and Autism Services has begun. The program will be held in Townsend, Ontario.

Lauren Freeborn

Contact Brant has a new program running in our community through collaboration with Woodview and Willowbridge called Extensive Needs Service (ENS). This program was developed to reduce high-risk behaviours of children and youth to reduce the likelihood of escalation to crisis and family breakdown in children and youth with extensive behavioural, developmental, mental health, social vulnerabilities and medical needs. This interdisciplinary approach plans to address the unmet needs that these children/youth are currently experiencing.

Student Achievement Lead and Superintendent of Education

Student Achievement Leader Sandra DeDominicis and Superintendent Wilson went over 2024-2025 Special Education goals. The Special Education Plan was sent to SEAC members in July 2024 and can also be found on the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSB) website. Two new areas include: 1) focus on the implementation and continued growth of specialized contained class settings that support the unique sensory, communication, social, and academic needs of select pupils through the use of intensive supports. 2) concentrate on the development of self-advocacy and independence skills among students with special needs through an analysis of ongoing goal setting and e-evaluation of student programs and services. Multi-disciplinary approaches and teams will be used to ensure all special needs students become as productive, self-reliant, and independent as possible post-graduation. BHNCDSB wants to ensure all students leave with independence and skills to navigate the world.

The following updates were also provided from the Special Education Department of BHNCDSB:

- Administration Portfolios for Special Education have been determined.
- Occupational Therapy tiered universal supports continue throughout our district.
- Phase 3 of Story Champs has been implemented.

- Empower Reading Program, through SickKids Hospital will be training 13 new Special Education Resource Teacher's (SERTs) September 25-26, 2024.
- BHCNDSB is in the process of a review of modifications in all subject areas. During the 2023 – 2024 school year, audits were completed for students with math modifications and Individual Education Plans (IEPs). BHCNDSB believes in the use of current assessments for these modifications as well as implementing other supports before a modification is implemented.
- Bartimaeus specialists will continue to be used in schools during the 2024 – 2025 school year. There have been many success stories as well as movement of specialists. Three of our highest need schools no longer require the support as the students are now able to work independently.
- Our new Primary Learning Strategies Classroom at Notre Dame, Brantford and Spectrum Abilities Program at Madonna Della Libera are up and running.
- BHCNDSB is training seven new Special Education Resource Teachers.
- Educational Assistants (EAs) were allocated mid-June. BHCNDSB has reevaluated this allocation based on school and student needs. The BHCNDSB model is shared support to create student independence.
- The BHCNDSB Special Education website page is in the process of being updated.
- BHCNDSB Special Education Plan 2024 - 25 and BHCNDSB Special Education Report (2023 - 2024) can be found on the BHCNDSB website.

10. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

Phil Wilson thanked everyone.

The meeting adjourned at 2:24pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 17, 2024.
