



**BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
Catholic District School Board**

Minutes

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

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, May 20, 2025 – 1:00pm
Catholic Education Centre and Microsoft Teams**

- Members:** Brandi Bertling (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Dennis Blake (Trustee), Mischa Dinsmore (Lansdowne Children's Centre), Shannon Korber (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Kerri Lomax (Principal, Elementary), Patti Mitchell (Parent, County of Brant), Lauren Moulton (Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services), Jennifer Rudyk (Principal, Elementary), Nil Woodcroft (Haldimand Norfolk REACH)
- Regrets:** Michelle Drake (Crossing All Bridges), Lauren Freeborn (Contact Brant), Simon Jennions (Community Living Brant), Shannon Mason (Principal, Elementary), Marilyn Noi (Autism Ontario), Janelle Sandy (Indigenous Child and Youth Team at Child and Family Services of Grand Erie)
- Resources:** Sandra DeDominicis (Student Achievement Lead, Special Education), Phil Wilson (Superintendent of Education)
- Guests:** Rachel Moreau (Orientation and Mobility Instructor), Maria Petruccelli (System Special Education Consultant), Jennifer Tonnies (System Special Education Consultant), Tracie Witteveen (System Special Education Consultant)
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1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Phil Wilson welcomed the committee.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Superintendent Wilson read the board's land acknowledgement.

3. Opening Prayer

Superintendent Wilson shared an opening prayer.

4. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Lauren Moulton

Seconded by: Nil Woodcroft

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the May 20, 2025, meeting.

Carried

5. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Shannon Korber

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the April 15, 2025, meeting.

Carried

6. Correspondence

An email was received from the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MASCE) asking to obtain targeted feedback from SEAC committees on issues related to special education programs and services at the BHNCD SB.

7. CNIB Deaf-Blind Awareness

June is Deaf-Blind awareness month. Maria Petruccelli and Rachel Moreau discussed the CNIB Deaf-Blind Awareness initiative, which encourages schools to create multi-sensory gardens to promote understanding of Deaf-Blind challenges. Rachel Moreau elaborated on the initiative's growth, detailing presentations by CNIB staff and a Deaf-Blind client, who demonstrated communication methods and engaged students with her personal experiences. The presentations have fostered meaningful interactions and questions from students and staff.

8. Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NCVI)

Maria Petruccelli and Tracie Witteveen discussed Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVC I) training. NCVI equips individuals with the skills needed to recognize, de-escalate, and manage crisis behaviors safely and effectively. This training is provided to Educational Assistants, Special Education Resource Teachers, ABA Leads, and Speech-Language Pathologists, with refresher training every two years.

Recently, the training has expanded to include administrators and all staff members in a verbal de-escalation format. The key changes to NVC I training include: a full-day training model being implemented, physical interventions are now categorized as safety interventions, and related policy forms have been updated accordingly.

9. Lexia and Primary Learning Strategies Class (PLSC)

Jennifer Tonnies gave an update on Lexia and the PLSC Lexia progress. An additional fifty Lexia licenses were acquired to address existing waitlists, bringing the total to 283 active licenses. Professional development sessions have been introduced for Lexia/PowerUp, including training specifically for administrators on Lexia data and reports. Monthly progress emails are being sent, and formal progress reports are scheduled for January, April, and June, highlighting gains by level. The data is used to identify trends, areas for growth, and where additional support is needed. Currently, 14% of users show minimal gains, 53% have progressed one to two levels, 38% have gained three or more levels and met or exceeded targets, and 10% have achieved gains of five or more levels. The PLSC program, which consistently supports Lexia usage, has seen gains ranging from five to eight levels.

10. Community Agency Updates

Shannon Korber

Child and Family Services updated that a summer camp worker has joined the team.

Nil Woodcroft

Haldimand Norfolk Reach will have a new manager as Nil Woodcroft is retiring at the end of

July. Thank you to Sandra DeDominicis for all her work on the transition to school process.

Mischa Dinsmore

Lansdowne updated that there will no longer be a cost to attend their events moving forward, if the family is a Lansdowne client. An upcoming event is the Heroes Walk and Roll.

Jennifer Rudyk and Kerri Lomax

The elementary schools are involved with kindergarten orientations, the track and field meet, and Have a Go.

11. Student Achievement Lead and Superintendent of Education

- The Special Education department has focussed on the organization of resource support, transition visits, and release time for school teams around the transitioning of high needs youth, with a focus is on kindergarten entry, transitions between various grades, transitions between elementary and secondary, and supports beyond the age of 21.
- A First Communion Sacramental Retreat was held at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre on May 7, 2025.
- Members of Special Education attended the OCASE conference learning about blind, low vision programming, innovative ideas around restructuring to support student needs, literacy and numeracy supports, and case law from two lawyers around accommodations and exclusion.
- The Board released the Educational Assistant Preference of Placement Process form and Educational Assistants are submitting their qualifications and preferences for next year to determine staffing for 2025 – 2026 school year.

12. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

Phil Wilson thanked everyone. The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 17, 2025.