



**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, September 16, 2025 – 1:00pm  
Catholic Education Centre and Microsoft Teams**

- Members:** Dennis Blake (Trustee), Melanie Caldwell (Contact Brant), Mischa Dinsmore (Lansdowne Children's Centre), Michelle Drake (Crossing All Bridges), Shannon Korber (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Judy McCaffrey (Lansdowne Children's Centre), Lauren Moulton (Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services), Tammy West (Haldimand Norfolk REACH)
- Regrets:** Simon Jennions (Community Living Brant), Patti Mitchell (Parent, County of Brant), Marilyn Noi (Autism Ontario)
- Resources:** Sandra DeDominicis (Vice-Principal of Inclusive and Special Education), Kerri Lomax (Principal, Elementary), Jennifer Rudyk (Principal, Elementary), Phil Wilson (Superintendent of Education)
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**1. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Phil Wilson welcomed the committee, and all members introduced themselves.

**2. Land Acknowledgement**

Superintendent Wilson read the board's land acknowledgement.

**3. Opening Prayer**

Sandra DeDominicis shared an opening prayer.

**4. Approval of Agenda**

Moved by: Mischa Dinsmore

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the September 16, 2025, meeting.

**Carried**

**5. Approval of the Minutes**

Moved by: Lauren Moulton

Seconded by: Mischa Dinsmore

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the June 17, 2025, meeting.

**Carried**

**6. Correspondence – Nil**

## **7. SEAC Elections**

Lauren Moulton has been named the Chair of SEAC and Shannon Korber is the Vice-Chair.

## **8. Community Agency Updates**

### **Shannon Korber**

Child and Family Services reported the opening of a new bed facility in collaboration with SOAR Community Services. They have also been actively working with BHNCDSD throughout the school start-up period to support students and families.

### **Tammy West**

Haldimand-Norfolk REACH reported that access to all programs, including walk-in clinics, has been expanded to support student and family transitions. There has been an increase in the number of families accessing Child and Family Services programs. Challenges remain regarding the cost of before- and after-school programs for children over six years of age. HN REACH has also expanded Autism and Behavioural Services by adding a therapist to provide additional mental health supports.

### **Mischa Dinsmore**

Lansdowne Children's Centre reported that construction of a new building site adjacent to the current location is scheduled for completion in 2027. The annual Heroes Rock and Roll event will take place on October 4, 2025, with participants walking or rolling to raise funds in support of Lansdowne's programs and services.

### **Lauren Moulton**

Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services reported that they will be hosting a Family Fair and Woodview's first-ever community walk. Autism Services are currently offering a variety of group programs, including Pantastic Chefs and Youth Community Connections, to support skill development and engagement.

### **Melanie Caldwell**

Contact Brant reported that the 25th Annual General Meeting will be held on September 23, 2025. Additionally, changes are forthcoming to the Coordinated Services program. The agency is continuing efforts to implement the Extensive Needs program, which currently has a waitlist.

### **Michelle Drake**

Crossing All Bridges reported that they are accepting registrations for students seeking opportunities during Professional Activity (PA) Days and throughout the summer months. Upcoming events include the annual Witch's Night Out, social club activities, and Saturday coffee gatherings.

### **Dennis Blake**

Trustee Blake thanked the committee for being part of SEAC.

### **Kerri Lomax and Jennifer Rudyk**

Principals reported that elementary schools have been focusing on welcoming new learners and supporting student transitions. They have also begun reviewing and updating safety plans and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for the year.

## **9. Student Achievement Lead and Superintendent of Education**

BHNCDSB Special Education Department updated that they:

- Welcomed members back for the new school year and expressed appreciation to principals and vice principals for their support of SEAC.
- Introduced Josie Urquhart as System Special Education Consultant, replacing Jennifer Bergsma who retired in June.
- Specialists and six consultants are actively supporting schools, assessing high-needs students, and adjusting EA allocations as required.
- Transitioned to a new CYW support model with some staff assigned full-time to schools or students; principals responding positively.
- Provided NVCI training to 23 CYWs and SWs.
- Bartimaeus services continue in five schools: ACS, HT, SJC, Holy Cross, and Notre Dame Brant.
- Entry-to-School case conferences are ongoing for complex-needs students.
- Projects underway this year include continued rollout of Story Champs (presentation to SERC in November), full launch of Complex Communicator Guidebooks, a direct support pilot for students with DLD, implementation of Readtopia literacy curriculum for SAP, PAL, and CL, and new achievement test training.
- Empower training begins October 1 for eight new SERTs; not offered at Courtland, Langton, Pope Francis, or Resurrection due to staffing constraints.
- Met with nursing partners to review protocols for nursing supports in schools.
- Held New SERT Training with five new SERTs, attended by Superintendent Wilson.
- Hosted a Mentorship for Mentors session at the CEC with Jim Strachan for staff developing mentorship and leadership skills.
- Planning a Parent Engagement & Community Resource Night in support of Special Education Goal #9 (transitional supports). Agencies participating include SOAR, Special Olympics, Conestoga, Mohawk CICE, Contact Brant, Willowbridge, Brantwood, and Developmental Services Ontario.

## **10. Closing Remarks/Adjournment**

Superintendent Wilson thanked everyone. The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 21, 2025.