



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, September 20, 2016 – 10:00 a.m.
Boardroom**

- Present:** Jill Esposto (Chair), Catherine Custodio, Carmen McDermid, Bonnie McKinnon, Paul Sanderson, Leslie Telfer, Teresa Westergaard-Hager
- Regrets:** Krista Emmerson, Christine Pearce, Heather Shisler, Lisa Stockmans, Tracey Taylor
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1. Opening Prayer

Carmen McDermid led the group in the opening prayer.

2. Welcome and Opening Comments

Jill Esposto, SEAC Chair, welcomed the group and led a round of introductions for the benefit of Lindsay Blasdell, Temporary Secretary to the Superintendent of Education, who was in attendance.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Bonnie McKinnon

Seconded by: Catherine Custodio

THAT the SEAC Committee approves the agenda of the September 20, 2016 meeting.

Carried

4. Approval of Minutes – June 28, 2016

Moved by: Paul Sanderson

Seconded by: Catherine Custodio

THAT the SEAC Committee approves the minutes of the meeting of June 28, 2016, as amended.

Carried

5. Election of Chairperson for 2016-17

No Committee member volunteered to assume the position of Chairperson for the current school year.

Jill Esposto was asked to stand as Chairperson for another year and she accepted the position.

All were in favour for Jill Esposto continuing on as Chairperson of the SEAC Committee.

6. Community Agency Updates

Teresa Westergaard-Hager – Community Outreach, Norfolk Association for Community Living

The organization currently supports the efforts of two co-op students who are employed at the local farmers' market providing them with the opportunity to gain valuable money skills. Another co-op student is currently employed at a catering service. More part time employment opportunities for adults is hoped to be attained at the Norfolk County Fair this fall. The organization continues to provide support to a total of 150 individuals in the areas of independent living, employment and recreational services. Most employment that is offered is seasonal in nature. The transition period is currently underway for the purpose of phasing out their profit share program. A referral for development services (DSO) begins with the assessment of the individual's needs in comparison to anyone else in the community, and the resources that are required to fill those needs. Those in most need are the organization's highest priority.



Catherine Custodio – Children’s Aid Society of Haldimand and Norfolk

The new data system (CIPIN) goes live December 12, 2016. This system will allow access for all agencies to all individuals’ files. The training commences this week and sessions will rotate throughout the entire agency over the next several weeks.

Paul Sanderson – Contact Brant

Further to Teresa’s update, Paul added that an assessment of a child should be arranged when the child has been deemed very low functioning. Once the child has been assessed, a letter from the school should be attained in order to allow for eligibility to services that would benefit the child. He advised of the issues that have presented themselves in regards to the ROKS referrals, there is a gap in getting families to follow through and sign off. Leslie Telfer explained that supports can be put into place for the benefit of the child in need; recommendations can be made with financial commitments for families; and, in the end, the family has the right to decline such support returning that child to school. Unfortunately the schools do not have the supports the child requires in a regular school and there is no referral for residential care.

Jill Esposito – Brant Family and Children’s Services (FACS)

Jill announced the upcoming theme day ‘GO Purple’ scheduled for October 19, 2016. The day is to bring awareness around Child Abuse Prevention and the role everyone plays in keeping children safe. Jill generously provided the Committee members with a variety of supplies (i.e., purple ribbon, purple pens, posters, etc.) to participate in the upcoming day. Leslie Telfer confirmed that BHNCDSB Senior Administration agreed to support ‘GO Purple’ Day on October 19th as the message ties into the Board’s spiritual theme, *Love Tenderly*.

7. Reports

7.1 Student Achievement Leader: Special Education

Planning is in the works for the upcoming November PA day for Educational Assistants. They will have a portion of the day dedicated to Math instruction and Math literacy. The Special Education Department has purchased resources such as Mathematical games and manipulatives for each school to further support professional learning in the area of Mathematics. Educational Assistants will learn by participating in playing Math games to foster a deeper understanding of the importance of listening and observing how students learn. This will help to support one of the Renewed Math Strategy~Learning for All strategies which focuses on personalizing and providing precise learning for all students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Some Educational Assistants will participate in becoming re-certified in First Aid and Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training.

Carmen shared a new resource book called, ‘The ADHD Book of Lists’ by Sandra F. Rief, MA. There are specific chapters within the book that outline academic difficulties matched with specific strategies specifically in the area of Mathematics and executive functioning. The book provides a variety of practical approaches to concerns related to issues in the overall learning for students with ADHD. The book also offer tips for parents/families caring for children with ADHD.

The Board has a current posting out for a Speech-Language Pathologist to cover a maternity leave.



7.2 Superintendent of Education

Superintendent Telfer informed the Committee of the current version of the Special Education Plan, referring to the work the Board is doing. She reviewed the fundamental principles and shared belief of BHNCD SB. She explained that teachers are the primary person responsible for the student's learning. There has been an increase complement of Educational Assistants across the system. Jobs to be posted address the needs that have been acknowledged. She advised that the current school year has proven to be the smoothest start-up from the Special Education's perspective. There continues to be an effort to examine the needs of those children diagnosed with autism. Funding has been made available for the hiring of a person for a 2-year position. The position has yet to be posted as staff is currently determining what is required and the specialization that is necessary to perform the duties in this new role. Superintendent Telfer was happy to announce that the Board continues to have access to IBI supports for the time being.

8. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.