



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, November 16, 2021 – 1pm
Teams Meeting**

Members: Kevin Greco (*Superintendent of Education*), Bill Chopp (*Trustee*), Laura Bergeron (*ad hoc*), Tara Buchanan, Jennifer Chapman, Lauren Freeborn, Lynda Field-Newhouse, Christina Ferrell, Nil Woodcroft, Marissa Lechowicz

Regrets: Annmarie Krauss, Sarah Robertson

Resources: Carmen McDermid (*Student Achievement Lead: Special Education*), Shannon Mason (*Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing*), Patti Mitchell (*Parent, County of Brant*)

1. Land Acknowledgement

Lauren Freeborn led with a land acknowledgement.

2. Opening Prayer

Carmen McDermid shared an opening prayer.

3. Welcome and Opening Comments

Superintendent Greco welcomed the committee.

4. Approval of Agenda – November 16, 2021

Moved: Tara Buchanan

Seconded: Bill Chopp

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the November 16, 2021, meeting.

Carried

5. Approval of the Minutes – October 19, 2021

Moved: Tara Buchanan

Seconded: Christina Ferrell

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the October 19, 2021 meeting.

Carried

6. Correspondence

No new correspondence to share.

7. Presentation

Alison Hilborn – Urgent Response Service

The Urgent Response Service (URS) provides a time limited service/intervention to children registered in the Ontario Autism Program. The URS is accessed through self-referral, from a clinician, a care coordinator, or other relevant professionals for children who have high risk factors. The presentation will be sent to Marissa to be shared with all SEAC members.

8. Community Agency Updates

Christina Ferrell – Woodview

Woodview continues to support clients in person and virtually, if needed. There is an increase in clients needing our services. In January 2021 Woodview in Brantford opened up Autism services. There are currently openings for services.

Jennifer Chapman – Haldimand-Norfolk Children's Aid Society

The amalgamation planning continues as well as full in-person services. Currently recruiting an Executive Director. Preparing for a holiday dinner for youth who live on independence.

Nil Woodcraft – Haldimand-Norfolk REACH

Haldimand-Norfolk REACH has moved into Step 3B – all employees have returned to regular schedules in REACH sites. Services continue to be offered in-person, by phone or virtual supports.

Lynda Field-Woodhouse – Lansdowne

Lansdowne just wrapped up the smile cookie campaign and hero's walk and roll event. The agency continues to expand and increase core services in Haldimand-Norfolk areas including Dunnville, Caledonia, and Norfolk.

Patti Mitchell – Parent, County of Brant

Special Olympics planning has started and plans to conduct virtual competitions for events such as running, and swimming have been discussed. Volunteers have been difficult to find. Hopeful there will be an in-person meet for Worlds 2023.

The Ontario Disability Support Program youth pilot project group has been successful. The program has assisted youth to acquire employment using supports such as resume development, preparing for interviews, and employment expectations.

Formally thanked St. John's College for their sports being inclusive.

Tara Buchanan – Community Living Brant

A pilot program is set to start next year with Grand Erie for employment supports. Community Living is partnering with other organizations to start a new youth committee for marginalized youth. Meetings have started to brainstorm ideas of how to get youth engaged. The committee will allow youth to decide what needs are required within their community. For now, the committee is being called a Youth Hub, but the youth will be creating their own name and designing a logo.

Shannon Mason – Principal Lead, Special Education Staffing

Currently busy interviewing a lot of Casual Educational Assistants.

Lauren Freeborn – Contact Brant

Contact Brant is currently in the process of developing the Urgent Response Service (URS) program for children with Autism. URS is a time limited, rapid service response to a specific need to prevent further escalation of risk of harm to self, others, or property. The child must be registered with the OAP program already to access the URS program. This is not a crisis support. If school staff would like to complete a referral, it would be ideal if they could call with the parent. If that's not possible, the parent(s) would need to be aware of the referral. The program is time limited (12 weeks), and we are hopeful that it will be up and running in Spring of 2022.

Contact Brant is currently offering virtual or in person appointments, depending on the client's preference. All in person appointments will follow the necessary Covid protocols to ensure the safety of both our clients and staff.

9. Feedback for the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education

Superintendent Greco shared an update regarding the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education

feedback. Marissa will send all SEAC members a feedback template to be returned by December 7th. Responses will be collated and discussed at the December 14th meeting.

10. Reports

10.1 Superintendent of Education

Superintendent Greco shared the Board has been working hard to supply our students with assistive technology. The Workforce Demographic Survey has now closed, and the Board is looking forward to reviewing the results to ensure our workplace is inclusive. The Board is now working on the Student Demographic Survey to launch in the Fall of 2022 with messaging, communication, and education about this initiative in the upcoming months. The Board will also bring the survey to SEAC for review and feedback.

10.2 Student Achievement Leader: Special Education

The Special Education Department is pleased to have Nelson psychometrists and psychologists back working within our schools to cognitively assess students. Testing, report shares and IPRCs (if appropriate) continue to be a priority in further identifying student needs. The Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) will be administered to every grade three student in the district over the next few weeks. The results of this test, in conjunction with daily schoolwork and classroom observation, help educators to further identify a student's strengths and needs. In addition, the test results help the Special Education Department to establish initial screenings for students who may have academic needs or strengths which may require specific follow up. An update regarding the November 12th Professional Development Day provided for Educational Assistants was shared with the committee through a mini-PowerPoint presentation.

11. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

No further remarks. Superintendent Greco and Lauren thanked the committee. Meeting adjourned at 2:26pm.

Next meeting date, time, location: December 14th, 2021 – 1pm, Microsoft Teams