



**BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
Catholic District School Board**

Minutes

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

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, November 15th, 2022 – 1pm
Catholic Education Centre, 322 Fairview Dr, Brantford**

- Members:** Brandi Bertling, Bill Chopp (*Trustee*), Mischa Dinsmore, Christina Ferrell, Kim Fraser, Lauren Freeborn, Shannon Korber, Phil Wilson (*Superintendent of Education*), Nil Woodcroft
- Regrets:** Laura Bergeron (ad hoc), Tara Buchanan, Michelle Drake, Kim Fraser, Shannon Mason, Patti Mitchell, Marilyn Noi
- Resources:** Crystal Austin (*Applied Behavior Analysis Lead*), Sandra DeDominicis (*Student Achievement Lead: Special Education*), Laura Klinck (*Applied Behaviour Analysis Lead*), Kerri Lomax (*Principal, Elementary*), Shannon Mason (*Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing*), Patti Mitchell (*Parent, County of Brant*)
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1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mischa Dinsmore welcomed the committee.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Superintendent Wilson led with a land acknowledgement.

3. Opening Prayer

Sandra De Dominicis shared an opening prayer.

4. Introductions

The committee provided brief introductions for new and existing members and introduced themselves and the organization they belong to.

5. Approval of Agenda – November 15, 2022

Moved by: Christina Ferrell

Seconded by: Lauren Freeborn

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the November 15, 2022, meeting.

Carried

6. Approval of the Minutes – October 18, 2022

Moved by: Lauren Freeborn

Seconded by: Shannon Korber

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the October 18, 2022, meeting.

Carried

7. Correspondence

An email was received from Child and Family Services of Grand Erie asking for any donations in the form

Next meeting, Tuesday, January 23, 2023, 1pm-3pm, Location TBD.

of unwrapped toys, basic needs items, gift cards or financial donations.

8. Community Agency Updates

Christina Ferrell - Woodview

Woodview has many families coming through for services. The mental health needs are high. They are getting ready for Christmas and preparing for their *Dashing Through the Halls* program.

Shannon Korber - Child and Family Services of Grand Erie (CFSGE)

They are very busy focusing on Christmas activities. There is a flyer with the *Season of Sharing*. They are putting on Christmas dinner for youth involved with them. There is a constant need, and the role has not stopped. Unfortunately, many children are being placed outside of their current area as there is a lack of placements for them. They are finding the school board process' are not quick and they need more of Shannon Korber's role, so the children can be placed quicker. School is of the utmost importance to the children.

Kerri Lomax – Principal BHNCDSD

Schools are busy, and the time is going quickly. Progress reports went home on November 4, 2022, and there were parent teacher interviews last Thursday and Friday. It is very different now that families are now back in the schools. Families appreciated coming back into the school and back into the classroom. There are many activities planned for Christmas and several EA changes. The goal is trying to keep people in our "bank" for supply teachers.

Mischa Dinsmore – Lansdowne Children's Centre

Lansdowne is hoping to do an in-person Christmas party for families and clients.

Nil Woodcroft – Haldimand Norfolk Reach

The fall is a very busy time with the annual continuous quality improvement process. Individual unit reports are completed, and a survey is sent out which contains important information used for planning. There are clinic dates which are free to families enrolled in the Autism Program with both walk in and booked appointments available. A behaviour therapist and family service coordinator are also available every Thursday.

Lauren Freeborn – Contact Brant

No update.

Brandi Bertling – Child and Family Services of Grand Erie (CFSGE)

Very busy providing extra supports to families and youth. The *Season of Sharing* program flyer has been sent and both gift and monetary donations are being accepted. There is a shortage of both resource housing and volunteer drivers. There need is high in Brant Haldimand Norfolk, and they are struggling to keep driver positions filled. If you know anyone semi-retired, please reach out to them to help.

9. Updates

9.1 Student Achievement Lead

- 1) Oct 19 – presented an overview of Special Education to new teachers, IEP, exceptionality profiles, resources

- 2) As a department they offered voluntary PD on *Bridge the Gap* and recently started a voluntary PowerSchool PD for SERTs as how data is communicated from the board to ministry
- 3) Finalizing transportation database trying to make it more comprehensive; almost ready
- 4) Lexia licenses still available and if students are not using then they are being reallocated
- 5) Analyzing the effectiveness of EA devices and next step
- 6) Did attend SERC with 4 system SERTs and met with people across the province and discussed issues across the province. It is comforting and encouraging although we are a small board and small department, that we are on par and somewhat ahead. It was discovered that other boards are seeing similar behaviours as well.
- 7) Starting to make decisions about Sonderly autism training
- 8) Virginia Rutledge has been providing assistance around CCAT and sip claims; the class caps are super helpful
- 9) Reach meetings occurring with Nil and Karen re. entry to school case conferences
- 10) We ran first successful EA PD day and non-violent crisis training was the priority then first aid, emotion coaching and virtual workshops around self-regulation

9.2 Applied Behavior Analysis Leads

After School Skill Development Program (ASSDP) presentation was given. ASSDP is a ministry mandated program supporting students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the areas of social skills, communication, functional skills, and regulation.

Camp Connect was run in July and August of 2022. It was a camp-style experience for select students designed to promote the development of social skills. Each camp ran for 2 weeks, Monday through Thursday mornings in our schools located in Cayuga, Brantford, and Delhi.

Each camp was designed to support between four and six students, with a staffing ratio that varied, based on the support required in each specific group. There was amazing support from SERTS, teachers and EA's.

The skills targeted include taking turns, indicating "your turn" to a peer, suggesting an activity to a peer, asking a friend for an item, and responding appropriately to winning or losing. These skills were taught through activities such as yoga and fitness, board games, pottery making, gardening, crafts, people games, food activities, music and dance and outdoor exploration. The strategies included explicit teaching, modelling, visual cues, choice, verbal cues, and positive reinforcement.

The feedback from the camp was very positive. Most students learned something new and would like to come back. Staff really enjoyed the camp. The constructive feedback for the 2022-2023 planning is that more students are involved and for a longer time.

9.3 Superintendent of Education

Special Education is changing both due to funding and the shortage of professional staff. There is a rise in complex behaviours. We continue to reset every so often and problem solve within our schools and Special Education teams to meet the needs of our schools. It is challenging but worthwhile work.

We are working through SIP claims and have 3-5 students that could allow us to have a successful application. Each grant could be \$28,000. These are due mid-December.

TPA with ministry-funds for tier three intervention program for reading: Empower Reading. We will have 13 trained Empowered teachers in our schools to focus on decoding and spelling for grades two to five students. This is for children who are low to high average ability but cannot decode. It is for students that are two grade levels below their reading level. It is a game changing reading intervention that is significant and life lasting.

Sick Kids Hospital is the research hub, and their staff train our staff. It operates during school hours and is for children who are getting some Special Education support for at least one period per day. No testing needs to be completed on the student but work with the Sick Kids' team is completed to ensure they meet the profile. The plan is to start around January with training, concluding mid-late September and hope to have the program up and running in October. After mentors are trained, we have trainers for years.

CCAT testing has been done previously with Grade twos. Some boards have moved this to Grade three or four. We have looked at past practices and most boards are doing this test in Grade four or seven. This test is used to identify gifted students. Superintendent Wilson has asked for feedback from administrators on this testing.

We have a Special Education AQ and have 63 applicants. We will be selecting applicants to take courses based on the need of the BHNCDSD.

10. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

Mischa discussed the possibility of having the next meeting at an alternate location, but to also book the CEC and have the option of hybrid.

Meeting adjourned at 2:15pm.