



**BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
Catholic District School Board**

Minutes

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

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 21, 2023 – 1pm
Microsoft Teams**

- Members:** Dennis Blake (*Trustee*), Mischa Dinsmore, Shannon Korber, Kerri Lomax (*Principal, Elementary*), Shannon Mason (*Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing*), Linda McFayden, Patti Mitchell (*Parent, County of Brant*), Marilyn Noi, Phil Wilson (*Superintendent of Education*), Nil Woodcroft
- Regrets:** Brandi Bertling, Laura Bergeron (ad hoc), Tara Buchanan, Michelle Drake, Christina Ferrell, Kim Fraser
- Resources:** Sandra DeDominicis (*Student Achievement Lead: Special Education*), Adrian Brouwer (Educational Assistant), Kelby Porteous (Educational Assistant)
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1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mischa Dinsmore welcomed the committee.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Superintendent Wilson read the Board's land acknowledgement.

3. Opening Prayer

Sandra De Dominicis shared an opening prayer.

4. Introductions

The committee provided brief introductions for new and existing members of their roles and responsibilities.

5. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Nil Woodcroft

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the February 21, 2023, meeting.

Carried

6. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by: Linda McFayden

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the January 17, 2023, meeting.

Carried

7. Correspondence – Nil

8. Community Agency Updates

Mischa Dinsmore – Lansdowne Children Centre

On Saturday, March 11, 2023, an information fair will be held for information on Summer Camp programs. Families can speak to camp coordinators to plan the best placement for their child. Mischa discussed Smart Start Hubs, a tiered approach for families to connect with developmental services in Brantford.

Shannon Korber – Child and Family Services of Grand Erie

Child and Family Services of Grand Erie will be bringing youth to an event at Mohawk College called “Discovery Justice at Mohawk”, to tour the campus and get minds focused on post-secondary education. Child and Family Services of Grand Erie is in the process of Strategic Planning with an outside agency. There are wait lists for mental health services as the needs are not decreasing.

Linda McFayden – Contact Brant

Contact Brant continues to be busy with referrals as well as the Urgent Response System.

Keri Lomax and Shannon Mason – Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board

Eights schools are participating in the Kickstart to Kindergarten program which will allow parents/guardians time with various outside agencies. There is a focus on having parents register now for the 2023-2024 school year.

Patti Mitchell – Parent (County of Brant)

The Special Olympics program at St. John’s College continues to grow, and volunteers are needed.

9. Updates

9.1 Student Achievement Lead

- The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSB) has updated the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training for all Special Education Resource Teachers and specialists from our team.
- The Bartimaeus behaviour supports are up and running at Sacred Heart in Langton and the staff have reported great success so far with the supportive adults and are collaborating well as a team.
- Speech Language Pathologist, Mary Hanhan, has begun working for BHNCDSB and has been assigned to several Brant and Brant County schools. The focus is on oral language development.

- A Conference of Parties meeting was held to review Identification, Placement and Review Committee meetings, special class updates, entry to school processes, Nelson process, report cards and Special Equipment requirements.
- BHCNDSB has forwarded two applications to our Amethyst Demonstration School for consideration next year.
- On February 1, 2023, BHCNDSB held a very successful Educational Assistant Professional Development Day where the morning was spent creating structured learning tasks for our self-contained classes, touring self-contained classrooms, and visiting Open Doors, an adult day program in Simcoe, Ontario, for adults with developmental disabilities. The afternoon was spent creating motivational book stacks in a therapeutic art session as well as a wellness presentation from Leslie Gordon Christie.
- Our specialized transportation database appears to be ready to be trialed.
- On February 17, 2023, a Special Education Retreat was held to collaborate as a team and discuss challenges, but more importantly envision potential change for the future to create a department that can be even more responsive to student needs and keep up with the ever-growing demand for existing infrastructure. All specialist's attended which meant that every voice was accounted for.

9.2 Superintendent of Education

- The Math Additional Qualification course will begin on March 2, 2023 and will focus on special education. Fifteen teachers are participating.
- The Empower reading rollout is scheduled for March 9, 2023, with ten schools interested. Administrators will be introduced to this rollout on March 23, 2023.

BHCNDSB is looking into the use of Key Math as a diagnostic assessment tool. Key Math will allow for a clear picture as to what level children are at.

9.3 Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Program

Sandra DeDominicis introduced a Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board student who has thrived through the PAL program. His Educational Assistants explained communication has been a key factor in improving his learning and behaviour. He uses an iPad to communicate and enjoys socializing with other students. He is learning skills such as laundry, reading with friends, participating in an exercise program, and mobility has no longer been an issue. He participates in activities such as biking to a local grocery store, using a list, identifying items, and then paying for his groceries. He is then involved in making his food. The PAL program has been a great success for this student and has had a positive impact on his life.

10. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

Mischa Disnmore thanked everyone.

The meeting adjourned at 2:34pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 21, 2023, at 1pm.