



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)

Tuesday, March 21, 2023 – 1:00pm

Microsoft Teams

- Members:** Brandi Bertling (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Dennis Blake (*Trustee*), Mischa Dinsmore (Lansdowne Children's Centre), Michelle Drake (Crossing All Bridges), Christina Ferrell (Woodview Children's Centre), Linda McFayden (Contact Brant), Phil Wilson (*Superintendent of Education*), Nil Woodcroft (Haldimand Norfolk REACH)
- Regrets:** Laura Bergeron (*ad hoc*), Tara Buchanan (Community Living Brant), Lauren Freeborn (Contact Brant), Shannon Korber (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Kerri Lomax (*Principal, Elementary*), Shannon Mason (*Principal Lead: Special Education Staffing*), Marilyn Noi (Autism Ontario), Janelle Sandy (Indigenous Child and Youth Team at Child and Family Services of Grand Erie)
- Resources:** Sandra DeDominicis (*Student Achievement Lead: Special Education*) Patti Mitchell (*Parent, County of Brant*), Debbie Dignan (Elementary Teacher - Itinerant Special Education Resource Teacher)
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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 DeDominicis shared an opening prayer.

4. Introductions and Welcome

Superintendent Wilson welcomed all committee members.

5. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Nil Woodcroft

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

Carried

6. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by: Patti Mitchell

Seconded by: Christina Ferrell

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

Carried

7. Correspondence

A letter was received from the Near North District School Board regarding Special Incidence Portion (SIP) claims. The letter stated that the funds being provided by the government for by these claims is lower than the actual cost of the student, as well as the large amount of time being needed to fill out documentation for SIP claims.

8. Community Agency Updates

Brandi Bertling

Child and Family Services of Grand Erie is struggling to find volunteers for the Volunteer Drive program.

Mischa Dinsmore

A Family Engagement Coordinator, at Lansdowne Children's Centre, is spearheading all parent workshops.

Michelle Drake

At Crossing All Bridges, to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day on March 21, 2023, all staff and families are invited to gather and view the movie, Champions.

Christina Ferrell

At Woodview Children's Centre, a social skills group has just been launched.

Nil Woodcroft

Family Early Intervention Teams at Haldimand Norfolk REACH (HN Reach) met with the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSD) Special Education team on March 2, 2023.

Dennis Blake

On behalf of the BHNCDSD Board of Trustees, Dennis Blake thanked SEAC for the work they are doing.

Linda McFayden

At Contact Brant the services are being very well utilized.

Patti Mitchell

The BHNCDSD Special Olympics registration is at the end of March. The Special Olympics are being hosted at Crossing All Bridges. The Special Olympics is looking for volunteers. Please contact Patti Mitchell if interested in volunteering. On March 30, 2023, from 6 – 8pm, St. John's College is hosting a basketball game against the Brantford firefighters and police.

Updates

8.1 Student Achievement Lead

Lansdowne Children's Centre has provided BHNCDSD with their annual "All About Me" reports for the new 2023-2024 Junior Kindergarten students. Discussions are ongoing with lead therapists to gain more information and insight on each student profile. In total, BHNCDSD will have 14 new students from Haldimand Norfolk Reach and 21 from Lansdowne Children's Centre.

All BHNCDSD, grade 8 Individual Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meetings, took place. These are for students entering one of our secondary special education classes for Job Skills, Community Living or Personal Active Learning (PAL) class. It was very heartwarming and fulfilling to learn of the growth of each of our students.

A new Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) training session was held.

The Special Education team at BHNCDSD is actively involved in attending Kick Start to Kindergarten sessions happening in various schools across the district to represent special education, answer questions, and assist families in transitioning children to Junior Kindergarten.

Over the March Break, Sandra DeDominicis and Debbie Dignan provided a presentation to BHNCDSEB service coordinators focused on Individual Education Plans (IEPs), IPRCs, and Special Education Class placements. The purpose was to provide understanding on how BHNCDSEB initiates these processes, and the intricacies of guiding families through next steps around accessing supports.

March 21, 2023 is recognized as World Down Syndrome Day. BHNCDSEB staff are encouraged to use social media to share, support, and spread awareness.

The three high schools of BHNCDSEB are in the process of planning a prom for secondary special education class students. BHNCDSEB will be collecting donations of suits, dresses, jewelry, shoes etc. to make this a special and accessible event for all students. The event will likely take place at the end of May.

8.2 Superintendent of Education

The final 2022-2023 SEAC meeting, will be held on Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at 12:00pm, at the Catholic Education Centre.

Focus on Youth funding is being used to employ students during the summer months. The three high schools of the BHNCDSEB will recommend students to be part of the program. The Focus on Youth funding will then pay for the student's employment. BHNCDSEB is looking for various ways to get students placed to maximize learning.

8.3 Debbie Dignan – Employability Kits

Funding was provided from the Ministry of Education through an Experiential Learning project to create employability kits for all three high schools. These kits have been introduced in the last two to three months and have allowed the students to learn, practice, and master job specific tasks in preparation for post-secondary pathways of the world of work, independent living, and specialized college programs. Student will learn specific job skills in classroom setting using individualized teaching methods and hands-on materials. Students will generalize the skills learned in the classroom to be skilled and confident employees. BHNCDSEB has received more funding to purchase additional employability kits and are looking at new ideas for new kits.

9. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

Mischa Dinsmore thanked everyone.

The meeting adjourned at 2:13pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at 1:00pm.