BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

2016-17

Special Education Annual Report

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Introduction

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSB) Special Education Department is committed to every student in our school district. We strive to inspire and support learning by assisting in creating safe, healthy, inclusive and engaging Catholic learning environments. Our mission is to provide opportunities for challenge and choice as we prepare all of our students for success in life. The Annual Report was compiled from information provided by members of the Special Education Services and community partners. It will be reviewed and presented for approval to the BHNCDSB Board of Trustees in June 2017. The Annual Plan will be submitted to the Ministry of Education by July 1, 2017 and posted to the Board website.

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The membership of SEAC for 2016-17 was as follows:

Name	Organization
Bonnie McKinnon	Trustee Representative
Leslie Telfer (Sept to April)	Superintendent of Education
Michelle Shypula (April to June)	Superintendent of Education
Carmen McDermid	Student Achievement Lead - Special Education
Keith Anderson (Jan to June)	Family Counseling Centre of Brant
Catherine Custodio	Haldimand-Norfolk Children's Aid Society
Krista Emmerson	Parents for Children's Mental Health
Jill Esposto	Brant Family and Children's Services
Christine Pearce	Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services
Tracey Taylor	Haldimand- Norfolk REACH
Paul Sanderson	Contact Brant
Heather Shisler	Lansdowne Children's Centre
Lisa Stockmans	Parent Representative (Norfolk)
Teresa Westergaard-Hager	Norfolk Association for Community Living

Throughout this past school year, representatives from various community agencies presented an overview of the mandate of their agencies. This will continue in 2017-18 as new members will have the opportunity to present information on their respective agencies.

The 2016-17 SEAC heard presentations on Assumption College Job Skills students, Developmental Services of Ontario and Passport Information, Tools to Help Students Visualize Math, Renewing the Promise Consultation and Gifted Programming.

The 2016-17 SEAC meeting schedule was as follows:

2016-17 SEAC Meeting Schedule	
September 20, 2016	February 14, 2017
October 25, 2016	March 7, 2017
November 15, 2016	April 11, 2017
December 20, 2016	May 16, 2017
January 24, 2017	June 13, 2017

Programs and Services

System Special Education

System Special Education Resource Teachers (SSERTs) have been assigned to elementary and secondary schools to support and enhance student achievement. Their role is to collaborate with school teams and community agencies, building capacity among teachers, SERTs, Educational Assistants and parents by providing in-services within the schools and in the community (Parents as Partners, Working Together Symposium, Individual Education Plan and the Identification Placement Review Committee process).

The continued focus this year has been to better understand the learner by exploring student profiles, assessment, and evaluation (Hawaii Early Learning Profile, Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) – Grade 2, Woodcock-Johnson Assessments). Key areas for delivery of professional development included; self-regulation, renewed math strategy, and supporting FSL teachers.

The SSERTs assist in the development of student profiles through assessment, observations and program recommendations. The assessment process includes an Ontario Student Record (OSR) search, test administration, dialogue with school team, data collection, consultation with Board Psychologist, preparation and organization of results and recommendations through written report, presentation and sharing of the results with school team and parents. The complete process takes up to 10 hours per assessment. This valuable information could result in the development of an Individual Education Plan and possibly the formal identification of the student (IPRC). The SSERT reviews and supports the school team in preparing IPRC paperwork and packages. This process ensures appropriate identification and placement.

Transitioning is an area of focus for this team. Assistance is provided when planning and implementing entry into school for students with high needs, as well as transitioning into secondary school and beyond. This liaison with community agencies, school teams and parents helps to ensure a seamless transition for students with specific needs.

Through resource creation and information sharing, school teams have been supported in building capacity, maintaining consistency, and facilitating communication with parents. This facilitation contributes to the ongoing building of parental confidence in our Board.

Assessments	Gifted Screens	IPRCs (school or system level)	SEA Support Letters granted	Case Conferences
208	24	361	38	119

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) – A Growth Mindset, Reframing Perceptions

Seven elementary schools received training on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) for those students with a confirmed diagnosis of this disorder. This training took place at the individual schools and was specific to the strengths and needs of the students. Classroom teachers, SERTs, and Principals were invited to attend this training.

The training sessions included:
- An overview of FASD (Etiology)
- Effects that alcohol has on development: learning, behaviour, social development (Profile of the Learner)
- Evidence based strategies for learning and behaviour – what works and doesn't work
- Brainstorming and networking: including current issues, questions, accommodations, strategies, Individual Education Plan (IEP) development, community supports, transitioning tips, etc.

A number of resources and professional websites were provided to the school team to share with those working with the students.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

There are currently 50 Hard of Hearing students and 75 students with Central Auditory Processing / Auditory Processing Disorder (CAP/APD) in the Board.

Services provided this past school year included:

- Providing a hearing awareness workshop for teachers, EAs and SERTs that are involved with Hard of Hearing students
- Hearing awareness presentations in classrooms
- Acquisition of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) and materials to support students who are Hard of Hearing and have CAP difficulties
- Monitoring and troubleshooting such equipment
- Performing regular checks on ear molds, hearing aids and cochlear implants, and FM systems
- Providing in-services for specialized equipment
- Repairing SEA equipment, as required
- Consulting on students' IEPs
- Providing and installing noise reducing strategies for the classroom environment
- Attending case conferences, team meetings, IPRCs, and parent interviews
- Acting as a liaison, support and referral source for families and other agencies
- Interpreting audiological reports
- Providing accommodations/modifications and programming strategies
- Supporting students with pre/post teaching
- Assisting students and families in connecting and networking

2016-17 Hearing Awareness Workshop: Building Capacity with Teachers, Educational Assistants and SERTs

This workshop was designed for teachers, educational assistants, ECEs and SERTs with mainstreamed hard of hearing students. There were 16 participants who experienced the effects of a mild hearing loss while performing a specific academic task common in many classrooms.

The participants read an audiogram and understood the basic implications for language development and its impact on academic and social success. The participants discussed a variety of strategies to address the language and overall communication needs for hard of hearing students. The participants had an opportunity to troubleshoot basic difficulties with hearing aids. They were shown how FM systems and cochlear implants function.

Blind and Partially Sighted

During the 2016-17 school year, individualized orientation and mobility programming was implemented for 24 students in 12 different schools. The primary role of the orientation and mobility educational assistant includes teaching students who are blind or partially sighted the necessary skills to travel safely, efficiently, gracefully and independently, with or without a mobility device, in any environment.

Further involvement of the orientation and mobility educational assistant includes observations, consultation with school staff, and goal setting for Individualized Education Plans. Direct one-on-one orientation and mobility training was also provided for numerous students, educational assistants, early childhood educators and teachers. Additional resources for teachers, support staff, and parents were provided including documents from CNIB, daily physical activity adaptations, individualized orientation and mobility family booklets, and an environmental accessibility checklist. Peer awareness presentations using vision simulators and an introduction to goalball were also delivered in several schools.

The role of the orientation and mobility educational assistant also facilitates collaboration between service providers and schools. As a result, four new referrals to The W. Ross Macdonald School were submitted to complete a functional vision assessment. The objective of the assessment is to build teacher capacity when instructing students who are blind or partially sighted. Furthermore, the orientation and mobility educational assistant is also a member of the Accessibility Committee for the Board. Implemented changes in several schools included marking stairways, creating accessible cafeterias, and addressing potential travel hazards.

Information Technology

Overview of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Support

At the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board, students with special needs are supported with equipment via the SEA process. Recommendations for special equipment are forwarded on behalf of students to the SEA team who then review and process each claim, organize recommended items (including specialized equipment outside of technology) and then arrange for, and/or provide the necessary training.

All items for SEA are ordered through the SEA team who then coordinate with the Information Technology Department to ensure the necessary hardware and software are installed. The SEA team also reviews emerging technologies and their application to special needs students.

The SEA team is conscious of the amount of technology and specialized equipment in the system and is at all times looking to utilize efficiencies in the system, including the recycling of equipment. The SEA team has created and maintains a database of equipment which can be referenced when items for students are needed. This helps in terms of reducing costs and increasing the speed of SEA claim processing. The team has also reached out to our community partners to inform them that surplus SEA equipment exists in our system and they are welcome to view and recommend this unassigned equipment to students under their care in

our system. This has helped both financially and in terms of efficiency due to the fact that equipment does not have to be ordered or purchased for students in need, it need only be transferred.

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board SEA team connects to other boards to discuss efficiencies and new technologies. This is done through the SEA Coordinators Council, a regional body consisting of 17 boards. This group meets twice a year to share best practices and discuss SEA issues in the region. The SEA Coordinators Council also connects regularly online through an eCommunity set up and is managed by our team here at the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board. This group acts as a forum for discussion regarding issues such as intra-board transfer of SEA items, and to share resources and processes.

Training Services

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board SEA team has endeavoured to build capacity among teachers and students in the area of assistive technology. The philosophy that assistive technology is good for all, but essential for some, is vigorously employed here. All students requiring assistive technology are trained alongside their teacher(s) and classmates. This method allows for capacity building in our schools in that a "room full of experts" can help each other to use the technology.

To ensure understanding, a two-step training process is used. The first step includes all parties (teachers, students, educational assistants and parents) where a general training of software use is provided. Step two in the process involves an individual training session(s) which takes place shortly after the first session. The second session involves reviewing the basics previously taught and then focusing on achieving student learning expectations within the context of the Individual Education Plan.

Special Equipment Amount Claims

There have been 125 SEA claims processed and implemented during the 2016-17 SEA year. Of the 125 claims, 44 of them were equipment based (non-computer) claims. Students who receive this equipment include deaf and hard-of-hearing and students who require specialized equipment (such as standing frames, bikes, chairs, sensory and fine motor items etc.) Eighty-one of the total claims were computer based claims. These claims include students with assistive technology requirements. Students who received assistive technology were trained along with their classmates and teachers. This year 737 students were trained in the use of Text-to-Speech (Kurzweil) software and word prediction (Word Q) software. Additionally, 30 teachers and 11 educational assistants were trained in Kurzweil and Word Q alongside their students. Furthermore, 662 students were trained in Speech-to-Text (TalkTyper and dictation.io software). Additionally, 27 teachers and 11 educational assistants were trained in the speech-to-text software alongside their students. This year, 334 students were trained in a graphic organizer software (Smart Ideas), as well as 13 teachers and six educational assistants.

The table below details the Kurzweil and Word Q3 training completed:

Grade	School	Students Trained	Teachers Trained	EAs Trained
6	St. Gabriel	26	1	0
4	St. Gabriel	24	1	0
6	St. Gabriel	25	1	0
5	St. Gabriel	28	1	0
7	St. Gabriel	25	1	0
5	St. Gabriel	30	1	0
4	St. Mary's, Hagersville	25	1	0
5	St. Mary's, Hagersville	27	1	0
5	Holy Cross	27	1	1
4	Holy Cross	23	1	1
8	Holy Cross	26	1	0
6	Resurrection	22	1	0
4	Resurrection	20	1	0
4	St. Leo	28	1	1
3	St. Leo	20	1	0
5	St. Leo	29	1	1
7	St. Peter	28	1	0
3	St. Peter	19	1	1
4	Our Lady of Providence	20	1	0
5	Our Lady of Providence	30	1	0
4	Sacred Heart, Langton	21	1	0
5	Jean Vanier	25	1	1
4	St. Pius X	23	1	1
5	St. Pius X	31	1	1
5	Christ the King	20	1	1
4	St. Theresa	21	1	1
4	Notre Dame, Caledonia	23	1	0
6	St. Stephen's	23	1	0
4	Sacred Heart, Paris	23	1	1
4	Holy Family	23	1	0
9	St. John's	2	0	0
Totals		737	30	11

Speech to Text (Dragon/TalkTyper, Dictation.io) training completed:

Grade	School	Students Trained	Teachers Trained	EAs Trained
6	St. Gabriel	26	1	0
4	St. Gabriel	24	1	0
6	St. Gabriel	25	1	0
5	St. Gabriel	28	1	0
7	St. Gabriel	25	1	0
5	St. Gabriel	30	1	0
4	St. Mary's, Hagersville	25	1	0
5	St. Mary's, Hagersville	27	1	0
5	Holy Cross	27	1	1
4	Holy Cross	23	1	1
6	Resurrection	22	1	0
4	Resurrection	20	1	0
4	St. Leo	28	1	1
3	St. Leo	20	1	0
5	St. Leo	29	1	1
3	St. Peter	19	1	1
4	Our Lady of Providence	20	1	0
5	Our Lady of Providence	30	1	0
4	Sacred Heart, Langton	21	1	0
5	Jean Vanier	25	1	1
4	St. Pius X	23	1	1
5	St. Pius X	31	1	1
5	Christ the King	20	1	1
4	Notre Dame, Caledonia	23	1	0
6	St. Stephen's	23	1	0
4	Sacred Heart, Paris	23	1	1
4	Holy Family	23	1	0
9	St. John's	2	0	0
Totals		662	27	11

Graphic Organizer (Smart Ideas) training completed:

Grade	School	Students Trained	Teachers Trained	EAs Trained
6	St. Gabriel	26	1	0
4	St. Gabriel	24	1	0
4	St. Mary's, Hagersville	25	1	0
5	St. Mary's, Hagersville	27	1	0

Grade	School	Students Trained	Teachers Trained	EAs Trained
5	Holy Cross	27	1	1
4	Holy Cross	23	1	1
5	St. Leo	29	1	1
5	Our Lady of Providence	30	1	0
4	Sacred Heart, Langton	21	1	0
5	Jean Vanier	25	1	1
4	St. Pius X	23	1	1
5	St. Pius X	31	1	1
6	St. Stephen's	23	1	0
Totals		334	13	6

Applied Behaviour Analysis Program

During the 2016-17 school year, a second full-time equivalent ABA Program Lead was hired with additional funding provided by the Ministry of Education due to changes to the Ontario Autism Program.

Within the 2016-2017 school year, the Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Program Leads carried a combined caseload of 100 students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This included nine students involved in the Connections for Students model. The role of the Lead included classroom observations, consultation with school staff to problem solve and troubleshoot, assist with goal setting for Individual Education Plans, provision of strategies, staff support and feedback for implementation and to act as a liaison between schools and community agencies.

As a member of the transition team for Connections for Students, support was provided to principals, teachers and families during transition to school and following transition from Intensive Behavioural Intervention programs. The ABA Program Lead attended 47 Connections for Students meetings during the 2016-2017 school year.

Professional development provided to staff included a full day training to 32 French as a Second Language teachers including information about ASD, ABA strategies for the classroom, Individualized Education Plan development, structured learning and use of technology in the classrooms. Further training was provided during a half day to school staff related to ASD, behaviour, and transitions. Peer awareness presentations about ASD were given in several students' classrooms.

Membership of the ABA Networking Group for the South West Region was an area of professional development for the role of ABA Program Lead. This group met six times throughout the year to share best practices and collaborate with other ABA Professionals from the region. Committee involvement for the ABA Program Lead included the Local Autism Implementation Committee at Haldimand Norfolk REACH. In March of 2017, one of our ABA Program Leads was trained as a Certified Instructor to provide training to Board staff in the utilization of Nonviolent Crisis Intervention strategies for students demonstrating risk behaviour.

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Gifted Education

Gifted Supplementary Modules

Gifted Supplementary Modules were offered through Special Education Services to provide opportunities and challenges to extend learning and leadership skills of those students identified as Intellectual: Giftedness. The modules were created to enhance classroom curriculum. Students from Grades 4 to 8 were brought together to experience extended learning on a variety of topics. A total of 98 students participated in 2016-2017.

Participation in the modules promoted higher-level critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, leadership and creativity. It was evident that these students enjoyed the many learning opportunities and applied their skills in the modules in an extraordinary way.

Students attended designated modules including:

Grade	Participants	Total Sessions	Supplementary Gifted Modules 2016-17
4	14 students	7	'Young Authors' – The Writing Process
			Academic Challenges, University of Windsor Math Contest
			Leadership and Team Building – Dancing Creek
5	23 students	7	Robotics – Engineering Science Quest workshops, Toyota tour
			'Science Matters'
			Scientist in the Schools/ Solar Ship
			Ontario Science Centre– Body Works
			Academic Challenges, University of Windsor Math Contest
			Brock University - Team Building and Robotics
6	21 students	7	Stratford Festival – 'The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe'
			Drama – Movie Making and Technology
			Science Matters – Circuits
			Ontario Science Centre – NASA Space Simulation
			Academic Challenges, University of Windsor Math Contest
7	22 students	7	Altitude Leadership Program – Leadership (McMaster University)
			University of Waterloo – Engineering Science Quest – Computer Programming
			'Float Your Boat' – Skills Ontario (one team advanced to the Provincials)
			History – The War of 1812 and Movie Maker
8	18 students	7	University of Waterloo – Engineering Science Quest – Computer Programming
			History – The War of 1812
			'Float Your Boat' – Skills Ontario (one team advanced to the Provincials)
			Leadership (New Beginnings) – St. John's College
			Altitude Leadership Program – Leadership (McMaster University)

Speech and Language

The Speech-Language Pathologist Team has provided the following support services to students and staff of the Board during the 2016-17 school year:

- Assessments and consultations for students presenting with a variety of communication challenges including non-verbal students and students with reduced understanding and/or expression of language (i.e., vocabulary, concepts, grammar, social communication, etc.), early literacy, speech sound production difficulties, voice and nasality concerns, and stuttering difficulties
- Individualized home and/or class programming suggestions including direct demonstration
- Initiation of referrals to outside agencies (CCAC, TAC, Audiologist, ENT, Cleft Lip and Palate Team)
- Management of students involved with outside agencies for speech and language services including:
  - Brant and Haldimand-Norfolk Preschool Speech and Language Programs
  - HNHB and SW Community Care Access Centres (CCAC)
  - Technology Access Clinic (TAC)
- Participation in Entry to School Case Conferences for students transitioning into the school board
- Recommendations for Specialized Equipment Amount (SEA), as needed
- Collaboration with Speech-Language Pathologists through involvement with the Association of Chief Speech-Language Pathologists in Ontario School Boards (four meetings)
- Involvement in the Special Needs Strategy, including the Coordinated Service Planning and Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services
- Trained 10 ELKP teachers and four ECEs on Learning Language and Loving It, A Hanen Program, which included:
  - Three full-day and two half-day workshops
  - Five videotaping and reflection sessions with each participant
  - Classroom demonstration and consultation as needed

Professional Development

Community of Practice Meetings

The 2016-17 academic school year saw 35 Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) and three Secondary Special Education Department Heads participate in seven face-to-face Community of Practice (COP) meetings to enhance teacher practice and further support student achievement.

COP meetings continued to provide support to SERTs in the areas of: effective Individual Education Plan (IEP) writing and development, the Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC) paperwork and process, effective teaching strategies for students with an intellectual or communication disability, documenting and reporting, etc. Other key topics discussed included: the FSL Vision, Renewed Math Strategy, Four Frames of the Kindergarten program including assessment and appropriate documentation and mental health supports and services. SERTs also received training on different kinds of software including: One-Note, SNIP and PowerSchool.

Self-Regulation was a focused area of learning for Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) throughout the 2016-2017 school year. Following a "Zones of Regulation" conference, the SERTs who attended formed a focus group and prepared a series of six lessons that were presented at the Community of Practice meetings. Information, lessons and materials were shared to assist teachers in helping their students identify the different zones in themselves and others, gain awareness of how others perceive them in the different zones, recognize their personal triggers that lead to the Red or Yellow Zone, and gain insight into the sensory support tools and strategies available to help regulate their zones. In addition, six 'Quick Tips/Strategies' were presented and accompanied with resources that could be taken back to schools and immediately implemented in the classrooms. These 'Tips' included: Breathing techniques, Fidgets, Theraputty, Chew Stixx, Time Trackers and Brain/Body Breaks.

All SERTs participated in a targeted approach for supporting Mathematics learning. Based on school needs and/or teacher learning needs, SERTs chose a math band (K-2 or 3-6 or 7-10) to collaborate with other school and system staff. COP meetings further supported this learning by demonstrating how to differentiate and personalize assessment, instruction and learning. Math resources were purchased by the Special Education Department to enhance hands on learning and to enable students to represent their thinking in a variety of ways.

A number of professional learning opportunities were extended to school SERTs including attending: The Ontario School-Based Mental Health Conference with Ross W. Greene, Ph.D., Kim Barthel, The Working Together Symposium and participating in the on-line Autism courses sponsored by the Geneva Centre.
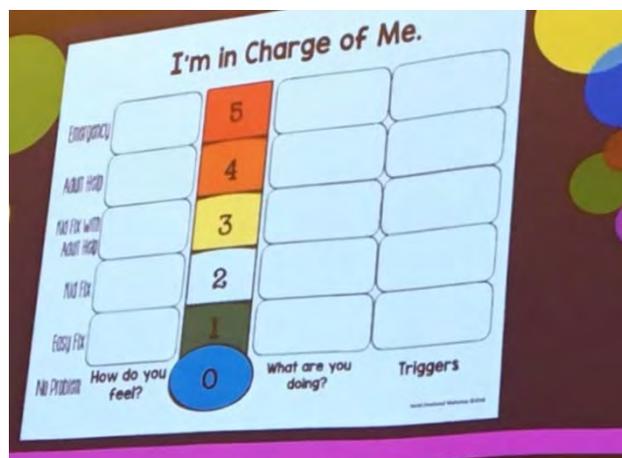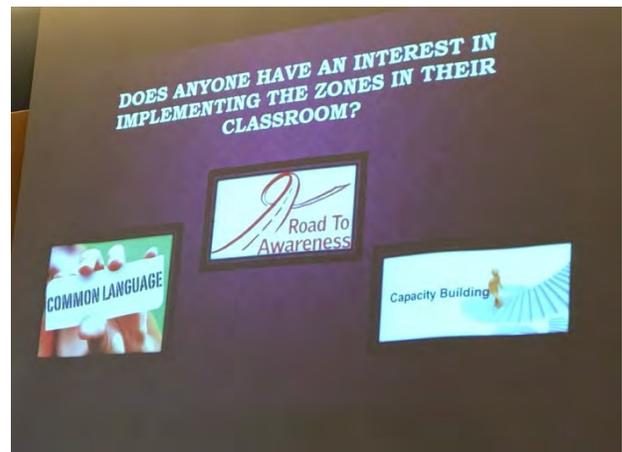
New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)

This professional development opportunity focused on providing new teachers with in-depth knowledge around the importance of self-regulation and its impact on student learning. The research and work of Leah Kuypers (author of 'Zones of Regulation') and Stuart Shanker (author of 'Calm, Alert and Learning') was shared and discussed. This in-service addressed the need for personalized student instruction in order to allow them to reach their fullest potential. Teacher practice was enhanced through a discussion focusing on:

- class management for any classroom
- calming strategies that can be taught to all students
- environmental factors that affect student learning
- knowing your learner and differentiated instruction
- 'Zones of Regulation'- self-regulation resource and calming bins

French as a Second Language (FSL) Professional Development

Members of the system special education team had the opportunity to further build staff capacity by sharing knowledge and strategies about exceptional learners and their needs with the Board's Elementary FSL teachers. This opportunity began with a discussion around growth mindset and that all students can benefit from the skills involved in learning a second language. Highlights of the day included:

- Supporting students with **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)** and Self-Regulation needs
- Looking at the **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**: Writing expectations, assessing students, looking at differences between accommodations and modifications
- **The Structured Learning Approach**: A strategy that can be used for all students regardless of exceptionality. Participants looked at the visual structure of tasks, work systems, individual schedules, physical structures, and the benefits of this approach
- **Technological support for students with a Learning Disability**: software programs to further support students with a Learning Disability access the Ontario curriculum

Educational Assistants

Elementary and secondary educational assistants had an opportunity to participate in Professional Development days throughout the school year. Topics were chosen based on recommendations to support their own professional development and to provide support with respect to meeting the unique needs of the students with whom they work.Below is a list of the professional learning opportunities that were offered.

Professional Development included:

ABA Strategies/Data Tracking

ABA strategies have proven to be effective for students with autism and also with many other students with exceptionalities. This session will review a variety of strategies, including visual supports, prompting, data collection and tracking. Please come with samples of different visual supports you use with your students to help support them in school. A review of the importance of tracking data and sample data sheets will be explored.

Helping Students with Math: The Importance of Board Games

Playing board games with students teaches them more than just turn taking. Research shows that playing board games can actually help children of any grade level improve math skills. Come and discover how playing math games can develop early number and counting skills; which sets the foundation for learning more advanced math concepts. Participants will learn math skills by playing and making games that can easily be reproduced using house hold items.

Journey into Kindergarten

This interactive workshop will provide participants with the opportunity to closely examine the new Kindergarten program. Through the lens of the four frames of learning, we will focus on how to nurture and support the well-being of our youngest learners in a play-based program.

Trauma Sensitive Classrooms

This workshop will provide an overview of the prevalence of trauma and how trauma impacts the development of the brain and influences our students in the areas of relationship, learning and behaviour. Educators will learn the steps that they can take to create a trauma – sensitive classroom and strategies which will support these students and enhance their learning.

On-line Learning

An opportunity was provided for self-directed, professional learning pertinent to the students being supported. A variety of websites were provided for Educational Assistants to explore to support their learning. Websites include topics about: Anxiety, Trauma, Reactive Rage, Selective Mutism, FASD, sensory-based challenges, Leaky Brakes, understanding behaviours in children & youth with intellectual disabilities, ADHD, OCD, Tics & Tourettes, literacy, math & math games, spelling, visual health, graphic organizers, keyboarding, ASD, phonemic awareness, technology and many other topics.

Tips for Technology

This session will provide the opportunity to learn, refresh and review four of the main programs used by the students with whom we work with. This session will provide instruction on the following programs:

- o Kurzweil (Text to Speech)
- o Word Q (Word Prediction)
- o Smart Ideas (Graphic Organizer)
- o Talk Typer (Speech to Text)

safeTALK

safeTALK is a suicide alertness training program that will help you identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect persons with thoughts of suicide to suicide first aid resources. The goal of the training is to equip you with the talk strategies that will help you have difficult conversations and connect those in need to people that can keep them safe for now. At the end of this session you will receive a certificate of completion.

Nonviolent Crisis Intervention

The Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training program is considered the worldwide standard for crisis prevention and intervention training. The program provides educators with the proactive strategies and skills to safely and effectively respond and handle difficult situations. The core of the program is learning how to provide for the *care, welfare, safety, and security* of all those who are involved in a crisis situation. You will learn a range of preventive strategies, de-escalation skills and communication skills. You will also learn the physical interventions,

including disengagement and holding skills, to be implemented as a last resort, when a person is engaging in risky behaviour.

First Aid

This session provided basic CPR, First Aid and Defibrillator certification for the work place. This training provided knowledge and confidence to effectively manage an emergency situation.

Inside Out

This session will focus on the connections between thoughts, feelings and actions. Strategies to identify feelings, help students challenge their thoughts and change their behaviours. Make and take items will be made to assist anxious students.

Educational Assistants' Lending Library

The Educational Assistant Resource Library is at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre. New materials are purchased based on requests from Educational Assistants and on needs arising from areas of system focus. At the current time, approximately 400 items are available. Items range from professional reading to children's books, toys and games, to sensory and cause-and-effect materials. During the 2016-17 school year, more than 175 items were borrowed by Educational Assistants and Special Education Resource Teachers.

Special Projects/Events

Working Together Symposium

The Working Together Symposium is a bi-annual event which took place this year on Saturday February 4, 2017 at Assumption College. This event is a one-day symposium that brings together parents, educators and service providers of children, adolescents and adults with special needs. The day is comprised of planned workshops and speakers, presenting on a variety of topics around special needs, developmental and behavioural issues. This year 14 Community agencies supported the symposium, offering 17 workshops, three of which were prepared and presented by teams from BHNCDSB. Attendees were able to choose two of the 17 workshops and also enjoyed two keynote speakers: Dr. Jeff St. Pierre (CPRI, London) and Janet Jacks (CEO Goodness Me).

Learning Upgrade Project 2016-17

Learning Upgrade consists of a series of online courses in Math, Reading, English and Comprehension that feature songs, videos, animations and games to engage today's media-savvy students. These intervention programs can be used as diagnostic and intervention tools for students who are showing early signs of mathematics and literacy challenges.

The Plan

Each elementary school had the opportunity to apply for a maximum of **four** Learning Upgrade licenses for any student in grade 2 and above. Requests for additional licenses was consider. The school team decided, based on their school needs, which students were the best candidates for the program and which Learning Upgrade course best met the student's needs. The school SERT was responsible for implementing the program with their designated students. Each school SERT was expected to have 60 minutes (not consecutive) of their five day schedule dedicated to Learning Upgrade/Learning for All.

Selection Process

- The school team decided which course best met the student's needs and chose **ONE** of the following courses for each of their students:
    - Math Upgrade K – 8 (each grade level is its own course) or
    - Reading Upgrade or
    - English Upgrade 1 – 4 (each grade level is its own course) or
    - Comprehension Upgrade

Delivery Model

- Each student in the program was provided with an individual license purchased by Special Education Services
- Students used the prescribed program (as selected by the school team) a minimum of three times a week for 20 minutes each session per five-day cycle.

- The program was meant to supplement literacy or math instruction. Students were not to be withdrawn from their literacy or math instructional time to work on the program.
- The school SERT delivered the intervention instruction up to a maximum of two students per session

Tracking Student Progress

School SERTs were asked to track student progress through detailed web based assessment reports. It was recommended that reports be monitored consistently and shared with the classroom teacher.

The Data

- Total number of students participating in the program: 113
- 24 Elementary Schools participated
- 5 Elementary Schools chose not to participate.
- Each of the three Elementary transition classes have a teacher whiteboard license with all the courses on their license.
- High Schools have teacher whiteboard licenses with all the courses on their license. St John's has one, Assumption has two, Holy Trinity has one
- 16 student licenses were assigned to students in the PALS and Community Living classes at Assumption.

Grade

Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
24	39	12	17	13	3	5

Gender

Male	Female
81	32

Courses

Students in Language Based Courses		Students in Math Based Courses	
88		25	
Females in Language	Males in Language	Females in Math	Males in Math
24	64	12	13

Reading	Comprehension	English 1	English 2	English 3	Math 1	Math 2	Math 3	Math 4	Math 5
69	2	9	4	4	4	10	6	3	2

High Schools

Learning Upgrade teacher whiteboard licenses were given to Special Education Classroom Teachers. Each of the whiteboard licenses in the high schools were assigned all of the Learning Upgrade courses. Students in the Community Living and PALS classes at Assumption were given their own personal student license. The licenses were used in many different ways. Teachers used them to do demonstrations, whole class lesson, small group lesson and as a center in their learning carousel.

Transitioning into School (Kindergarten)

We recognize how critical the transition into Kindergarten is for many of our young students who have specific needs. The partnership between parents and agencies can assist with getting to 'know our learners' and further promote a seamless transition. This process was enhanced by the following initiatives:

Entry into School Meetings with Community Agencies

'Entry into School' meetings were held at Haldimand Norfolk REACH (six students presented) and Lansdowne Children's Centre (LCC – ten students presented and eight additional students were flagged due to some concerns) in February 2017. With parental consent, the agencies provided valuable information regarding new kindergarten students entering our system with whom they have concerns. The resource teachers provided student background, strengths and needs, agency involvement (i.e., speech, occupational therapy, physiotherapy), diagnosis (if applicable), and a report summary of helpful information and contacts. The Student Achievement Lead for Special Education and System Special Education Resource Teachers attended and dialogued about each student to gain a better understanding of their profile and to do some initial transition planning.

'Parents as Partners' – Community Connections

The Parents as Partners workshops are designed to support families with the transition into the Early Learning Kindergarten Program. The symposium included both Haldimand-Norfolk REACH and Lansdowne Children's Centre families. The workshop topics included: Preparing for Kindergarten, Communicating for Success, How Kindergarten Programs Support Students with Special Needs, the Parent Role in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), and the Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC) process. Thirty families registered and participated in the day. System Special Education Resource Teacher representatives and Student Achievement Leader attended each workshop to support the presenters (as informal and formal support), enhance parent confidence and build new partnerships as we prepare for a seamless transition for new kindergarten students into school.

Parent Resources

In an effort to build capacity and develop parental trust, a Case Conference Guide for Parents was created and mailed to families prior to the System Level Case Conference. The guide outlined what to expect when preparing for a case conference, tips for parents as their child transitions into school, roles and responsibilities, community contacts and ways to further promote speech-language and fine motor skills.

In addition to the parent guide, an 'All About Me' booklet was distributed to the parents at the case conference which included personal information (i.e. names of people in their family, pets), likes, dislikes, method of communication, etc. Parents were asked to fill out this booklet and return it to the classroom teacher in September as part of the transition process.

System Level 'Entry into School' Case Conferences - The Multidisciplinary Team

Case Conferences were attended by parents, Student Achievement Leader, members of the System Special Education Team, home school team, agencies and daycare providers. At this time, the student was introduced and information was gathered. It was also an opportunity for parents to share information and to meet with the school team. This year we hosted system-level case conferences in Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk areas.

Visits – 'Getting to Know You'

Daycare and classroom visits were arranged as needed by the school team and system staff (with parental consent).

Supporting our Faith Journey

Supplementary Retreats

As part of the 'Supporting our Faith Journey' program created by the Special Education Department, three retreats were offered at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre. The retreats were geared toward students with an intellectual disability, students with autism (who could make transitions easily), and/or students who could benefit from a simplified supplementary 'hands on' program. The children spent an exciting and engaging day participating in a variety of faith-centered activities. This day was designed to help exceptional students increase their understanding as they prepared to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion, or Confirmation.

Each retreat provided the opportunity for the students to:

- read and discuss the Scripture Reading related specifically to the sacrament
- learn about the sequence of events when receiving the sacrament
- tour the church and highlight key symbols in the church
- rehearse the steps involved in receiving the sacrament using visual representation and assistance from the priest
- highlight specific vocabulary relevant to the sacrament through vocabulary BINGO, concentration, fishing for important vocabulary, etc.
- engage in a modified 'hands on' learning opportunity, incorporating drama (making and using character puppets) to help students gain a better understanding of the sacrament
- use technology (iPad) to engage in religious games and puzzles to reinforce comprehension
- take home a variety of 'hands on' activities, including a parent guide with instructions to further promote practice and repetition

The retreats were well received and enjoyed by all. The students gained a better understanding of the sacrament, increased their confidence to receive the sacrament, and experienced the opportunity to make new friends. The students were eager to share the day's events and activities with both their peers and their families.

Elementary and Secondary 'Have a Go'

'Have a Go' is a modified track and field meet for students with a physical, intellectual or communication disability. This event has been held annually for the past nine years. The Secondary Have a Go was held on Friday, May 24, 2017 at Assumption College School and was led by the Secondary Special Education Department and the St. John's College Leadership class. This year saw 52 students participate in a variety of modified track and field events. The Elementary Have a Go was held on Wednesday, June 7, 2017, also at Assumption College School. There were over 92 students who attended, which included participants and a buddy of their choice. The main goal of both the Elementary and Secondary Have a Go was to provide an opportunity for students to actively participate, socialize with peers and build friendships with students from other schools.

Elementary 'Have a Go'

Secondary 'Have a Go'

Rick Petrella, Chair of the Board
Chris N. Roehrig, Director of Education & Secretary
Prepared by Michelle Shypula, Superintendent of Education