



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 17, 2025

Time 6:00 p.m.

Centre for Excellence / MS Teams Virtual Meeting

AGENDA

- A - 1 **Opening** (L. DeJong)
- (a) Welcome / Land Acknowledgement Statement
 - (b) Roll Call
 - (c) Agenda Additions/Deletions/Approval
- B - 1 **Timed Items**
- (a) Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (L. Thompson)
 - (b) Entry to School – Lansdowne Children’s Centre and Grand Erie Specialized Services (L. DeJong/P. Bagchee)
- C - 1 **Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings**
- (a) You Belong Video Series (L. Thompson)
 - Guidance and Support at Grand Erie
 - Experiential Learning at Grand Erie
 - French as a Second Language Opportunities at Grand Erie
- D - 1 **Consent Agenda** (L. DeJong)
- Recommended Motion:**
- “That SEAC accept the April 17, 2025 Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein.”*
- (a) Approve the Minutes of:
 - * (i) SEAC meeting Minutes dated March 6, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
 - * (ii) SEAC meeting Minutes dated March 6, 2025, 7:30 p.m.
 - (b) Receive the correspondence from:
 - * (i) Bluewater District School Board dated February 25, 2025
- E - 1 **New Business**
- * (a) SEAC Meeting Dates 2025-26 (L. DeJong)
 - (b) Special Olympics activities in Grand Erie (J. Senior)
 - (c) Jordan's Principle Funding (L. Thompson)
 - (d) Grand Erie's Special Education Plan 2024-25 – Draft (L. Thompson)
- F - 1 **Information Items**
- * (a) Math Counts Newsletters - (L. DeJong)
 - * (b) Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) Updates
 - (c) System Updates (L. Thompson)
 - (d) Chair / Vice-Chair Updates – (L. DeJong, K. Jones)
 - (i) Accessing Publications on Grand Erie’s website (K. Jones)
- G - 1 **Community Updates**
- (a) NIL
- H - 1 **Future Agenda Items and SEAC Planning Committee**
- (a) A Day in the Life of an Educational Assistant
 - (b) Grand Erie's Long Term Accommodation Plan
 - (c) Review SEAC Term of Reference
 - (d) Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)

Learn

Lead

Inspire



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 17, 2025

Time 6:00 p.m.

Centre for Excellence / MS Teams Virtual Meeting

AGENDA

- (e) Specialized Services Summer Programs 2025
- (f) Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN)

I - 1 **Adjournment** (L. DeJong)

J - 1 **Next Meeting**
Thursday May 15, 2025, Education Centre Norfolk Room / MS Teams Virtual Meeting



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday March 6, 2025

6:00 p.m.

Education Centre Norfolk Room / MS Teams

MINUTES

Present: Chair: L. DeJong, Vice-Chair K. Jones, Trustees: R. Collver, L. Whiton, Community Representatives: B. Bruce, K. Kelly, L. Nydam Organizations: L. Campbell, C. Gilman, S. Jennions, C. Stefanelli

Administration: Director J. Roberto, Superintendent L. Thompson, Principal Leader Specialized Services: J. Senior, Specialized Services Supervisor: P. Bagchee, Program Coordinators: L. Miedema, L. Sheppard, Recording Secretary: J. Valstar

Absent with regrets: Trustee Doyle

Absent: Organizations: P. Found

Guests: Trustee Sloat, Superintendents: R. Vankerrebroeck, R. Wyszynski

A - 1 **Opening**

(a) **Welcome / Land Acknowledgment Statement**

Chair DeJong called the rescheduled meeting from February 6, 2025 to order at 6:04 p.m. and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

(b) **Roll Call/Reminder of Livestream on YouTube/Closed Captioning reminder**

Recording Secretary J. Valstar confirmed roll call. Guests were noted.

(c) **Agenda Additions/Deletions/Approval**

Moved by: Kathy Jones

Seconded by: Christina Gilman

THAT the February 2025 agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

B - 1 **Timed Items**

(a) **Welcome New SEAC Member**

Chair DeJong welcomed Simon Jennions, Community Living Brant, to Grand Erie's SEAC.

(b) **Financial Update 2024-25**

(i) **Special Education funding, grants, expenditures and reserves**

Superintendent Wyszynski provided SEAC members with an update on Special Education funding and spending in Grand Erie.

(ii) **Input on 2024-25 budget process**

Grand Erie's annual budget survey be available on the Grand Erie website soon for community feedback on the budget for the 2025-26 school year. Once it becomes available, J. Valstar will send the link to the survey to SEAC members.



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday March 6, 2025

6:00 p.m.

Education Centre Norfolk Room / MS Teams

MINUTES

(iii) **Finance Committee Meeting Dates**

Finance committee meeting dates are posted on the Grand Erie website. SEAC members were encouraged to observe these meetings for more information on Grand Erie's financial process. J. Valstar will send the link to the meeting packages and livestream links to SEAC members.

C - 1 **Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings**

(a) **You Belong Video Series**

SEAC members viewed the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) at Grand Erie from Grand Erie's You Belong video series. In response to a question from the January 9, 2025 SEAC meeting about how the students are selected to appear in the videos, Superintendent Thompson informed SEAC members that the students in the videos are Grand Erie students who have expressed interest in participating in the making of the videos.

(b) **Review of the SEAC Orientation Handbook**

SEAC members discussed the current handbook and suggested some updates. SEAC members were invited to send any other comments/feedback to J. Valstar.

D - 1 **Consent Agenda**

THAT SEAC accept the March 6, 2025 Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein.

Moved by: L. Whiton

Seconded by: C. Gilman

(a) Approve the minutes of:

(i) SEAC meeting minutes dated January 9, 2025

(b) Receive the correspondence from:

(i) Algoma District School Board SEAC dated January 21, 2025

(ii) Ottawa Catholic District School Board dated January 27, 2025

(iii) Ottawa Catholic District School Board dated January 30 2025

Carried

Vice Chair Jones requested to pull item D-1 (b) (ii). At this request, Superintendent Thompson provided context to the items in the letter from a Grand Erie lens.

E - 1 **New Business**

(a) **2025 - 26 School Year Calendar**

Superintendent Vankerrebroeck shared the 2025-26 school year calendars for elementary and secondary schools in Grand Erie with SEAC members.

(b) **Specialized Services Program Update**

Superintendent Thompson shared the Specialized Services program update. J. Valstar will send the link to Grand Erie's publications to SEAC members.



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday March 6, 2025

6:00 p.m.

Education Centre Norfolk Room / MS Teams

MINUTES

- (c) **Special Education Plan – Standard 11 – Provincial and Demonstration Schools**
SEAC members reviewed Standard 11 from Grand Erie's Special Education Plan and provided feedback to the Specialized Services Management Team. SEAC members were encouraged to email any further feedback to J. Valstar.
- F - 1 **Information Items**
(a) **Policies Out for Comment – Nil**
- (b) **Math Counts Newsletters**
Presented as printed.
- (c) **System Updates – Nil**
- (d) **Chair / Vice-Chair Updates**
Chair DeJong reminded SEAC members that the April 17, 2025 SEAC meeting will take place at the Centre for Excellence at the Teacher Resource Centre. SEAC members were encouraged to attend this meeting in person to see the new space.
- G - 1 **Community Updates - Nil**
- H - 1 **Future Agenda Items and SEAC Committee Planning**
(a) A Day in the Life of an Educational Assistant
(b) Entry to School Process
(c) Grand Erie's Long Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP)
(d) SEAC Meeting Dates 2025-26
(e) Review SEAC Terms of Reference (TOR)
- I - 1 **Next Meeting**
Thursday April 17, 2025 in the Centre for Excellence at the Teacher Resource Centre with a virtual option.
- J - 1 **Adjournment**
Moved by: K. Jones
Seconded by: C. Gilman
THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:32 p.m.
Carried



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday March 6, 2025

7:30 p.m.

Education Centre Norfolk Room / MS Teams

MINUTES

Present:

Chair: L. DeJong, Vice-Chair K. Jones, Trustees: R. Collver Community Representatives: B. Bruce, K. Kelly. L. Nydam Organizations: L. Campbell, C. Gilman, S. Jennions, C. Stefanelli

Administration:

Director J. Roberto, Superintendent L. Thompson, Principal Leader Specialized Services: J. Senior, Specialized Services Supervisor: P. Bagchee, Program Coordinators: L. Miedema, L. Sheppard, Recording Secretary: J. Valstar

Absent with regrets: Trustee Doyle

Absent: Trustee Whiton, Organizations: P. Found

Guests: Trustee Sloat, Grand Erie Transition Navigator L. Rowe.

A - 1 **Opening**

(a) **Welcome / Land Acknowledgment Statement**

Chair DeJong called the March 6, 2025 meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

(b) **Roll Call/Reminder of Livestream on YouTube/Closed Captioning reminder**

Recording Secretary J. Valstar confirmed roll call. Guests were noted.

(c) **Agenda Additions/Deletions/Approval**

Moved by: K. Jones

Seconded by: R. Collver

THAT the March 2025 agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

B - 1 **Timed Items**

(a) **Specialized Services Transition Navigator**

J. Senior introduced Grand Erie's new Transition Navigator, Lisa Rowe, and described her role to SEAC members.

C - 1 **Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings**

(a) **You Belong Video Series**

SEAC members viewed the Multilingual Language Learner Support at Grand Erie from Grand Erie's You Belong video series.

D - 1 **Consent Agenda** - Nil

E - 1 **New Business** - Nil



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday March 6, 2025

7:30 p.m.

Education Centre Norfolk Room / MS Teams

MINUTES

F - 1 **Information Items**

(a) **Policies Out for Comment**

Vice-Chair Jones encouraged SEAC members to review the following policies that are posted for public feedback and consultation until April 2, 2025.

- (i) Distribution of Materials in Schools (SO-04)
- (ii) Honouring Indigenous Knowledges, Histories and Perspectives (PR-02)

(b) **Math Counts Newsletters**

Presented as printed.

(c) **System Updates**

Superintendent Thompson provided SEAC members with system updates within Grand Erie, including Kickstart to Kindergarten, the Women in Trades Workshop, the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program Focused Apprenticeship Skills Training Pathway (OYAP FAST), Grade 8 to 9 program selection, and the partnership between Grand Erie and the Special Olympics.

(d) **Chair / Vice-Chair Updates** - Nil

G - 1 **Community Updates** - Nil

H - 1 **Future Agenda Items and SEAC Committee Planning**

- (a) A Day in the Life of an Educational Assistant
- (b) Entry to School Process
- (c) Grand Erie's Long Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP)
- (d) SEAC Meeting Dates 2025-26
- (e) Review SEAC Terms of Reference (TOR)

I - 1 **Next Meeting**

Thursday April 17, 2025 in the Centre for Excellence at the Teacher Resource Centre with a virtual option.

J - 1 **Adjournment**

Moved by: C. Gilman
Seconded by: K. Jones
THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:06 p.m.
Carried



Bluewater District School Board

351 1st Avenue North
Chesley ON N0G 1L0
Telephone: 519-363-2014 Fax: 519-370-2909
www.bwdsb.on.ca

February 25, 2025

Minister of Education
438 University Ave, 22nd Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 1N3

sent via email: minister.edu@ontario.ca

Re: Special Education Funding and Educational Assistant Shortage

Dear Minister of Education,

In alignment with a letter sent by Ottawa Catholic District School Board SEAC Chair Traci Clarke, we are writing to express our concerns regarding the challenges faced by special education students in Ontario. Specifically, we are concerned about the funding for special education programs and the shortage of Educational Assistants (EAs).

Funding Challenges:

- **Special Education Grant:** The current funding does not meet the needs of exceptional students, forcing school boards to reallocate resources from other areas.
- **Transportation Funding:** The costs for transporting students with special needs exceed the funding provided, placing additional burdens on school boards and families.

Educational Assistant Shortages:

- **Staffing Gaps:** There is a shortage of qualified EAs, which affects the support provided to students with special needs. This shortage can lead to safety risks and disrupt the learning environment.
- **Student Access:** A lack of appropriate staff can result in students being asked to stay home, which impacts their right to education.

Urgent Need for Action:

We urge the Ministry to increase the special education grant and implement strategies to attract and retain staff in special education.

Possible strategies include:

- **Free Tuition for EA Programs:** Offering free tuition for students in EA programs.
- **Retention Bonuses:** Providing financial incentives for EAs to remain in the sector.
- **Living Wage and Benefits:** Ensuring EAs receive a living wage and benefits.
- **Professional Development:** Investing in ongoing professional development for EAs.
- **Improved Working Conditions:** Addressing workload concerns and providing necessary resources.
- **Stable Employment:** Offering full-time stable positions to retain EAs.

We believe these steps are essential to ensure that all students in Ontario, including those with special needs, have access to equitable and high-quality education.

Sincerely,

Tracy Lynn Schaus-Atkinson
Special Education Advisory Committee Chair
Bluewater District School Board

c. Huron-Bruce Member of Provincial Parliament
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound Member of Provincial Parliament
Ontario Public School Boards' Association
Special Education Advisory Committee Chairs



Grand Erie District School Board

Education Centre: 349 Erie Avenue, Brantford, Ontario N3T 5V3
519-756-6301 | www.granderie.ca | info@granderie.ca

MEMO

To: Grand Erie Special Education Advisory Committee

From: Jennifer Valstar

Date: Thursday April 17, 2025

Re: SEAC meeting dates for the 2025-26 school year

SEAC meeting dates 2025-26		
Date	Location	Time
Thursday September 4, 2025	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.
Thursday October 2, 2025	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.
Thursday November 6, 2025	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.
Thursday December 4, 2025	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.
Thursday January 8, 2026	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.
Thursday February 5, 2026	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.
Thursday March 5, 2026	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.
Thursday April 9, 2026	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.
Thursday May 7, 2026	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.
Thursday June 4, 2026	Education Centre (virtual option available)	6:00 p.m.



PRIMARY FAMILY MATH NEWSLETTER

April 2025

Math Outside Scavenger Hunt:

Create a list of outdoor items. How confident are you that you will find all the items on your list? Why? How does the probability of finding certain items change depending on where we look for them? Did you find all the items on the list? Why or why not?

Source: Zorbits



Game: Are you Psychic?



1. Split a deck of cards among the players.
2. Take turns predicting the next card in the deck and then drawing the card to see if you are correct.
3. You may guess one of the following: the exact card (6 points), number on the card (3 points), suit of the card (2 points), or color of the card (1 point).
4. For example, if a student guesses, "5 of hearts," and the card is the 5 of diamonds, they will earn 3 points for the number and 1 point for the colour for a total of 4 points.
5. After a card is drawn it is left face up for everyone to see.
6. The first student to get 10 points wins.

Source: Zorbits

Math Talk



Here is the forecast for three days in April? What activities would you plan for each day based on the weather?

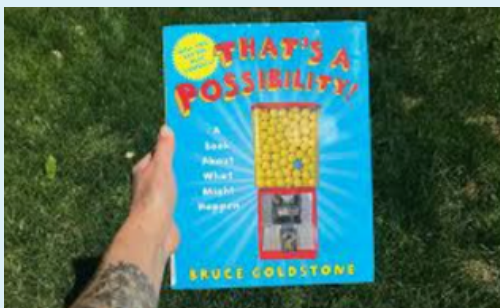
23	24	25
11° 4°	13° 7°	17° 3°

Source: Ontario Curriculum

Problem Solving

Let's do an experiment!

Find a bag and a collection of similar items in different colours (marbles, Lego pieces, Smarties, game pieces). Start with 5. Decide how likely it is to pull that colour out of the bag and then do a trial. How many times did it take you to draw that colour out of the bag? Change the number of items and do it again. What did you notice? What did you wonder? Did you make it more or less likely? How do you know?



Good Read

That's a Possibility! A Book about What Might Happen

by Bruce Goldstone

[Read it here](#)

Good Watch

Probability is the study of chance and the likelihood that an event will happen. Check out the video [here](#) for more information.





FAMILY MATH NEWSLETTER

JUNIOR EDITION

Issue 15: April 2025



Math Riddle

“What is the probability of one in five million?”
“Zero. There is no 1 in 5 000 000. Only a 5 and six zeros”



Game: PIG

PIG is a game for 2 to 6 players. All you need is a pair of dice. The goal of the game is to be the first player to score 100 points. Players take turns with the dice. On your turn, roll the dice and find the sum. You can choose to record your points now or keep rolling, adding onto your previous sum. When you choose to stop, write down your total to “bank” your points.

Now it is the next player’s turn. Continue until one player reaches 100!

BUT, here is the catch! If you roll a 1, you automatically get 0 points for that turn and your turn is over. If you roll two 1s on your turn, you lose all your points, even your “banked” points. What will you do? Will you risk another roll?

Try Multi**PIG**ation! - similar to PIG but players multiply the two die. If the product is even, bank the points. If it is odd, lose the points and your turn.

Watch this video to see it in action!

Pig

Math Talk



What do you notice?

What do you wonder?

What can you tell me about this pattern?

Visual Patterns

Problem Solving: Conducting Experiments

For this activity, if you do not have coloured counters, you can create your own using an old cereal box by cutting out and colouring in 12 circles of the same size, or you could even use Skittles or Smarties.

- Take 12 counters of the colours shown.
- Suppose the counters are in a bag and you take one counter without looking. List all the possible outcomes.
- What is the likelihood/probability of each outcome?
- Which colour is most likely to be taken? Least likely? Will colour will never be taken?
- Predict what will happen if you conduct the experiment 50 times, replacing the counter each time
- Conduct the experiment. Record your results. What do you notice?
- Combine your results with someone else’s at home. What do you notice now?



Outdoor Math: Scavenger Hunt

Earth Day, Everyday! Take some time to get outside, connect with nature, and build environmental awareness.

Create a Scavenger Hunt checklist - a list of items or features for your child to find and observe in nature. Some ideas include: different types of leaves and cones, various flowers and insects, animal tracks or signs (feathers, nests, etc.), rocks, a body of water, pencil rubbings of different types of bark, etc. Before going on the hunt, explain the importance of respecting nature. Remind them to observe rather than disturb living creatures and to avoid picking plants. Head outside, to a park or forest, and begin the hunt. Encourage your child to take their time, look carefully, and be observant. Check off items as they find them. Rather than collecting them, try taking photos of them. After completing the scavenger hunt, talk about what they found, what they noticed, what they wonder, and what they learned. Ask your child what patterns they saw in the things they found? (Consider bringing gloves and a garbage bag along for a mini clean-up with parent supervision)



April is Earth Month

Check out [this link](#) for a Earth Month calendar full of ideas for all grades and ages of activities that families could consider to get involved with Earth Day.



FAMILY MATH NEWSLETTER

INTERMEDIATE EDITION

ISSUE 7: April 2025

Environmental Impact Calculator

Discover the power of math in real-world applications by using our pollution and carbon footprint calculators! Check out these calculators (*click the image*) to make meaningful connections between mathematical concepts and environmental impact.



Footprint Calculator

Our mobile-friendly Footprint Calculator is now available in eight languages at www.footprintcalculator.org

Problem Solving



Throughout 2015-2020, 10 million hectares of trees were removed from forests around the world each year. Only 5 million hectares of trees were planted each year throughout the same period. Write an expression where T = the total hectares covered in trees, n = the number of years since 2020, to model how many hectares of trees there will be in 2025.

([Fact Sheets - Earth Day](#))

Patterns in Nature

Explore and discuss the beautiful patterns found in nature by identifying geometric designs, making predictions and generalizations.

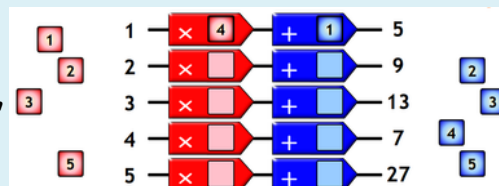


Patterns in Nature

Created by: Suzy Miller, Indigenous Education Teacher Consultant

Purposeful Practice: Brain Box Functions Machine

Try using this interactive functions machine, [Brain Box](#), that can increase in complexity each round.



Math in the Workplace: Environmental Sustainability Consultant

Where's the Math?

Environmental sustainability consultants:

- Take measurements and convert between units
- Work flexibly with various numerical representations (e.g. integers, fractions, decimals, percentages) and relationships (e.g. ratios, unit rates)
- Input collected data into formulas, such as to calculate the 'health' of an ecosystem
- Monitor trends over time
- Communicate findings using graphs and statistical summaries
- Apply mathematical modelling skills to solve complex problems

Students will need to login to myBlueprint to access this information.



What do they do?

"[They] analyze environmental problems and develop solutions, including working to reclaim lands and waters that have been contaminated by pollution. They may also assess the risks that new construction projects pose to the environment and make recommendations to governments and businesses. These recommendations include how to minimize the environmental impact of a project, as well as advice on manufacturing practices, such as advising against the use of chemicals that are known to harm the environment. Some focus on environmental regulations that are designed to protect people's health, while others focus on regulations designed to minimize society's impact on the ecosystem." (Source: [myBlueprint](#))

LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR

February 2025

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) SEAC Circular is published 5 times a year, usually in September, November, February, April, and June.

This circular highlights key topics for your SEAC to consider. Where applicable, action items, questions to ask, and/or recommendations for effective practices will be included under each topic.

Feel free to share any of this information and any attachments with other SEAC members. As always, if you plan to introduce a motion for the consideration of SEAC, it is particularly important that you share all relevant background materials with your fellow SEAC reps.

Topics covered by this SEAC Circular:

1. Ministry of Education Updates:

- Mathematics
- Financial Literacy
- Literacy
- Mental Health

2. PPM 8

3. Transitions

4. Key Takeaways: February 2025 SEAC Circular

List of Supplementary Materials:

1. [2024-25 Math and Literacy Supports Memo](#)
2. [Financial Literacy](#)
3. [Policy and Program Memorandum 8](#)
4. [Right to Read - Year Two Update \(Ontario Human Rights Commission\)](#)
5. [Accessible Transitions for Students with Disabilities K-12](#)
6. [Tiered Approach - LD@School](#)
7. [PAAC Funding Resource Guide](#)

Note: You can access the [SEAC Circular](#), [LDAO SEAC Policies](#), [LDAO Policy Statement on Educational Inclusion](#), and [PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook](#).

You can access Ministry funding (B & SB) memos by date at: [Ministry Funding](#).

1. Ministry Priorities for 2024-2025

a. Math

As part of the 2024-25 Math and Literacy Supports, the Ministry of Education is meeting with each school board across the province to review student performance on EQAO math scores. Students who are not meeting to standard often include those with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), both with and without a formal diagnosis. Math is a critical skill for student success across the province as it supports problem-solving, logical reasoning, and critical thinking, which are essential for academic achievement, career opportunities, and everyday life.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC representatives can inquire about how school boards are supporting student achievement in mathematics.
- Ask if evidence-based strategies are being used to assess and enhance student growth in math learning.
- Inquire about the availability and focus of professional learning opportunities for educators to strengthen their ability to teach math effectively, particularly for students with IEPs.

b. Financial Literacy

In the 2025–2026 school year, students must complete a mandatory course on Financial Literacy to graduate from high school. Students need to achieve a score of 70% to meet the minimum standard. If they do not meet this benchmark, they will be required to retake this test.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC members may inquire about the types of support that will be provided for identified students to help them achieve this benchmark.

c. Literacy

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's (OHRC's) Two-Year Anniversary Update of the Right to Read report indicates that boards across the province have made some progress in the directives given but limited progress in key areas. Gains have been made in curriculum, professional development, and universal screening. However, there has been little to no progress in teacher education, additional qualifications courses, accommodations, and professional assessments. The OHRC report recommends equitable access to interventions, ensuring that every school has Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions available for students in each grade

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC members could inquire about the availability of Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions in schools across their board. This was a recommendation in the Right to Read Year Two report.
- Suggest tracking progress on implementing the Right to Read recommendations and sharing updates with SEAC.
- Recommend that boards develop, implement, and monitor plans to ensure equitable access to professional assessments and interventions for all students with LDs.
- Encourage boards to advocate for systemic change by sending a letter to the Ministry of Education requesting dedicated funding and resources for enhanced training in evidence-based literacy instruction for new teachers and additional qualifications courses.

d. Mental Health

The mental health of students, particularly those with disabilities, significantly impacts their ability to learn and succeed. Improving student mental health support can lead to enhanced academic performance, better social-emotional skills, and a positive school climate, benefitting all students and particularly those who may struggle with additional challenges. Students who feel like they matter and belong in a school environment, particularly students who with LDs develop resiliency. Resiliency is a key component to academic success.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC representatives may want to ask how funding for mental health resources is being allocated to support students with LDs specifically.
- Inquire about the availability of mental health professionals, such as child and youth workers, counselors, and psychologists, in schools and how their services are being tailored to support students with LDs.
- Recommend regular evaluations of mental health programs to ensure they effectively address the needs of students with LDs and other exceptionalities.
- Suggest providing professional development for educators on recognizing and supporting student mental health challenges.
- School Boards have a Mental Health lead at each school who is responsible for sharing information to parents to guide and support their students with positive mental health. Ask how these materials are being shared with parents in your Board.

2. PPM 8

The year two update from the OHRC report recommends revising PPM 8 to align with the DSM-5, incorporating current research on reading and spelling. The update should also include a comprehensive review of interventions implemented and an evaluation of the progress achieved. Additionally, the report highlights that current assessment practices often lack a full battery of cognitive tests, which are crucial for identifying and addressing the specific needs of students.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- Inquire whether school boards are advocating for updates to PPM 8 to reflect evidence-based practices and DSM-5 guidelines.
- Recommend that SEAC monitor and provide feedback on the implementation and effectiveness of interventions for students with reading and spelling challenges.
- Suggest that boards document and share outcomes from interventions to build a repository of effective practices.

3. Transitions

Audits of student Individual Education Plans (IEPs) continue to highlight that transition planning is an area requiring improvement, particularly for students with disabilities moving from K-12 to postsecondary. Poor coordination between secondary schools and postsecondary institutions remains a significant barrier.

One of the recommendations for our students with LDs includes providing assistive technology training for both staff and students, as well as improving access to instructional materials and adaptive technology before learning begins. The report also suggests creating a learning skills course tailored to address students' executive functioning needs. Developing resiliency in students was emphasized as a key area for boards to address through professional learning opportunities. Transition support should encompass both large transitions, such as moving from secondary to postsecondary education, and smaller transitions, such as changes between grade levels or classrooms.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC representatives may inquire about how boards ensure that IEPs are dynamic tools to support effective student growth.
- What strategies are in place to ensure timely access to instructional materials and adaptive technology before learning begins for students with LDs?

- Ask how school boards are ensuring effective transition planning for students with LDs, especially in coordination with postsecondary institutions.
- Suggest professional development opportunities for educators to support students in fostering belonging, mattering, and resiliency and managing transitions effectively.

4. Key Takeaways: February 2025 SEAC Circular

1. **Ministry of Education Priorities:** Boards are focusing on improving math, financial literacy, literacy, and mental health outcomes for students. SEAC representatives are encouraged to explore how these priorities are being addressed and advocate for evidence-based practices and equitable access to resources.
2. **Transitions:** Transition planning for students with disabilities continues to be an area of improvement. Recommendations include providing assistive technology training, improving access to instructional materials, and fostering resiliency through professional learning.
3. **Individual Education Plans (IEPs):** SEAC members should inquire about how IEPs are being utilized as dynamic tools to support effective student growth, particularly during transitions.
4. **PPM 8 Updates:** The Ontario Human Rights Commission recommends revising PPM 8 to reflect DSM-5 guidelines and current research on reading and spelling, with a focus on improving interventions and cognitive assessments.
5. **Right to Read Implementation:** Boards need to enhance access to Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions and develop, implement, and monitor plans for equitable assessments and interventions for all students with LDs.
6. **Mental Health Support:** The mental health of students with disabilities remains a critical focus area. Boards should ensure appropriate funding, professional mental health staff availability, and educator training to support students effectively.
7. **SEAC Action:** SEAC representatives play a vital role in advocating for inclusive practices, raising critical questions, and ensuring that board policies align with provincial priorities and student needs.

LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR

April 2025

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) SEAC Circular is published 5 times a year, usually in September, November, February, April, and June.

This circular highlights key topics for your SEAC to consider. Where applicable, action items, questions to ask, and/or recommendations for effective practices will be included under each topic.

Feel free to share any of this information and any attachments with other SEAC members. As always, if you plan to introduce a motion for the consideration of SEAC, it is particularly important that you share all relevant background materials with your fellow SEAC reps.

Topics covered by this SEAC Circular:

1. Ministry of Education Updates:

- Special Education Budgets 2025-2026
- Special Education Plan

2. Mental Health and Learning Disabilities

- Additional resource: [Myths and Facts](#)
- Additional resource: [School Mental Health Ontario - Resources for Parents](#)

3. Key Takeaways: April 2025 SEAC Circular

List of Supplementary Materials:

1. [Technical Guides for School Boards - Budget Structure](#)
2. [PAAC on SEAC Resource Guide for Budgets 2024](#)
3. [The Right to Read - Year Two](#)
4. [Accessible Transitions for Students with Disabilities \(K-12\)](#)
5. [Development of Proposed K-12 Standards - Final Recommendations](#)

Note: You can access the [SEAC Circular](#), [LDAO SEAC Policies](#), [LDAO Policy Statement on Educational Inclusion](#), and [PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook](#).

You can access Ministry funding (B & SB) memos by date at: [Ministry Funding](#).

1. Ministry of Education Updates

a) Special Education Budgets

Background and Context

SEAC plays a critical role in advising school boards on the development and allocation of special education funding. As part of this responsibility, SEAC members participate in budget planning and review to ensure that resources are directed toward supporting students with exceptionalities.

School boards will soon receive their 2025–2026 budget allocations, allowing them to plan accordingly. Under [Regulation 464/97](#), school boards must provide SEAC with the opportunity to:

- “participate in board’s annual budget process under section 231 of the Act, as that process relates to Special Education” (Section 12 (2))” and
- “review financial statements of the board, prepared under section 252 of the Act, as those statements relate to Special Education.” (Section 12 (3))”

Ontario school boards are actively moving through their budget processes in preparation for the 2025–2026 school year. While they await their **Core Education Funding** allocations—typically announced in the spring—they continue planning based on projected needs. Given demographic shifts, including an aging population and evolving immigration trends, school boards may need to assess how these factors influence enrollment and funding needs.

With the new government now in place following the recent election, funding announcements are expected to resume in the near future. Boards will adjust their budgets accordingly once the allocations are received.

Implications for Students with Special Education Needs

Budget decisions directly impact the availability and quality of special education services. A delay and/or decrease in funding allocations could:

- Affect the ability of boards to plan, hire, and retain specialized staff, including educational assistants (EAs), special education teachers, and resource staff.
- Delay decisions on Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention supports, which are critical for students with learning disabilities who require direct, specific instruction and/or intensive support.

- Influence the continuity of special education programs, as boards may face financial constraints that impact services.
- Result in potential shifts in staffing allocations, leading to uncertainty for families and students who rely on consistent support structures.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC members should monitor any changes to special education programs and advocate for a full continuum of supports to ensure that students with disabilities continue to receive appropriate services. If programs are being modified or removed, SEAC reps should inquire about:
 - What alternative supports are being put in place to address the needs previously met by the program.
 - How Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports are being provided to ensure students receive timely and effective interventions.
 - How staff, including specialized educators and support personnel, are being allocated to support significant changes and transitions in service delivery.
- SEAC should advocate for maintaining and enhancing special education staffing, including specialized educators, educational assistants (EAs), and support staff, to meet student needs effectively. Given anticipated funding constraints, SEAC should inquire whether staffing levels will be impacted and what steps are being taken to ensure continuity of support.
- SEAC members should be familiar with key findings from the Ontario Human Rights Commission's (OHRC) *Right to Read - Year Two Update*. While progress has been made in areas like curriculum revision and early screening, there are significant ongoing challenges, particularly in:
 - **Access to interventions:** Despite improvements, not all students have access to Tier 2 and Tier 3 evidence-based interventions. SEAC should inquire about how boards are ensuring equitable access to interventions across schools.
 - **Accommodations:** Many students are still relying on accommodations (e.g., assistive technology) rather than receiving early interventions. SEAC should ask whether schools are balancing accommodations with direct instruction in foundational literacy skills.
 - **Professional assessments:** Long wait times for assessments continue to be a barrier. SEAC should advocate for transparent criteria for prioritizing assessments and for timely intervention supports while students wait.

- **Teacher preparedness:** Many educators lack the necessary training to implement accommodations effectively. SEAC should ask how the board is supporting teachers with job-embedded professional learning to ensure they can implement structured literacy approaches.

b) Special Education Plans

Background and Context

Each Ontario school board is required to develop and maintain a Special Education Plan, outlining how special education programs and services will be delivered to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities. The Ministry of Education mandates an annual review of these plans to ensure they align with current policies, funding structures, and best practices.

SEAC plays a critical role in this process by advising, reviewing, and advocating to ensure that plans reflect the diverse needs of students receiving special education services. SEAC members should work to identify gaps, promote best practices, and advocate for resources that enhance student support.

SEAC's role includes:

- **Advising school boards** on the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services. This includes making recommendations to improve the services offered.
- **Participating in the annual review** to ensure that the plan is updated and aligned with student needs.
- **Advocating for transparency and accountability** in how special education services are provided. Advocacy is essential for students and families, and SEAC members play a vital role in ensuring their voices are heard, represented, and considered in decision-making.

Implications for Students with Special Education Needs

A comprehensive and well-developed Special Education Plan ensures that students with disabilities receive:

- **Timely and appropriate interventions** that address their unique learning needs.
- **Access to a full continuum of supports**, including classroom accommodations, interventions, specialized programs, and assistive technology.

- **Consistent staffing and resources**, ensuring students receive support from trained professionals such as educational assistants (EAs), special education teachers, speech-language pathologists, and mental health professionals.
- **Structured transition planning**, whether between grades, schools, or into post-secondary education, ensuring that students move through the system with the necessary support.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations

- Are Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention supports clearly outlined in the plan to ensure that students receive targeted and intensive support as needed?
- How is parent and student feedback incorporated into the development and revision of the plan?
- What data and outcome measures are being used to evaluate the effectiveness of special education programs?
- Are staffing levels and resources sufficient to implement the plan effectively, particularly given potential funding constraints?

2. Mental Health:

Background and Context

School boards receive dedicated funding to support student mental health, enabling the implementation of the School Mental Health Initiative. This initiative includes:

- Professional resources and practical tools for educators.
- Ongoing professional learning to ensure staff can effectively support students.
- Collaboration with community partners to enhance mental health services.
- Additional funding to address emerging local concerns, such as cannabis use and body image issues.

Mental health support is critical for students with learning disabilities. Research indicates that over half of students with learning disabilities experience anxiety and depression. Without proper mental health interventions, these challenges can negatively impact academic performance, social development, and overall well-being.

SEAC members play a vital role in advocating for equitable and proactive mental health supports. Promoting positive mental health within schools helps to reduce stigma, foster

inclusivity, and support student achievement.

Implications for Students with Special Needs

Students with exceptionalities, particularly those with learning disabilities, ADHD, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and other neurodiverse conditions, often face higher rates of mental health challenges. Without timely and accessible mental health support, these students may struggle with:

- **Increased Anxiety & Depression:** Many students with special education needs experience heightened academic stress, social anxiety, and low self-esteem.
- **Emotional Dysregulation:** Difficulty managing emotions can lead to behavioral challenges, school avoidance, or disengagement from learning.
- **Impact on Learning:** Mental health concerns can hinder focus, executive functioning, and motivation, making it harder to access and benefit from special education supports.
- **Barriers to Accessing Services:** Many families experience long wait times for mental health assessments and interventions, delaying critical support.
- **Intersection with Bullying & Stigma:** Students with exceptionalities are at higher risk of social exclusion, bullying, and feelings of isolation, which further impact their well-being.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- How is the school board ensuring that mental health supports reach students with exceptionalities, particularly those with learning disabilities?
- What steps are being taken to ensure that school-based mental health initiatives are accessible, culturally responsive, and tailored to students with diverse needs?
- How is student and family feedback being incorporated into mental health program improvements?
- What data is being used to track the effectiveness of mental health supports for students with special education needs?
- What additional training is being provided to special education staff, including Educational Assistants (EAs) and Special Education Teachers, on mental health literacy and trauma-informed practices?

3. Transitions:

Background and Context

Transition planning is essential for students with learning disabilities and other exceptionalities. Transitions occur at multiple levels, from daily micro-transitions (e.g., moving between subjects and classrooms) to major educational shifts, such as: grade 8 to high school; high school to post-secondary education, employment, or apprenticeship programs.

A well-structured transition plan ensures that students move smoothly between educational environments, reducing anxiety and disruption. However, poorly planned transitions can create significant barriers to success.

Students with learning disabilities often experience heightened stress during transitions, making emotional support, self-advocacy skills, and tailored accommodations essential. SEAC members play a crucial role in advocating for individualized transition plans to support students with exceptionalities effectively.

The Ministry of Education has provided funding to support transition planning, and LDAO strongly advocates for the continuation and expansion of these resources.

Implications for Students with Special Needs

Transitions can have a profound impact on students with exceptionalities, particularly those who require structured routines, predictable environments, and specialized supports. Without proper transition planning, students may experience:

- **Disrupted Learning & Regression:** Sudden changes in environment, expectations, or support systems can lead to learning setbacks, especially for students who thrive on structure and consistency.
- **Increased Anxiety & Stress:** Uncertainty around new settings, peers, and expectations can trigger heightened anxiety, reluctance to engage, or school avoidance.
- **Lack of Appropriate Accommodations:** Transitioning without continuity in Individual Education Plans (IEPs), assistive technology, or support staff can jeopardize academic progress.
- **Social and Emotional Challenges:** Changes in social environments may cause feelings of isolation, particularly if students struggle with communication or self-advocacy.



- **Parental Involvement Gaps:** Families play a critical role in transitions, yet they are often left out of decision-making processes. Ensuring parental engagement leads to stronger, more effective transition plans.
- **Need for Educator Training:** Educators and support staff require ongoing professional development to ensure they can effectively support students through transitions.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- How is Ministry funding being used to support transition planning, and what measurable impact has it had at the student level?
- What plans are in place to strengthen transition work for the next school year?
- How is the effectiveness of transition planning being monitored, and what metrics are used to assess success?
- How are families involved in the transition process, and what steps are taken to ensure their concerns and insights are considered?
- What professional development opportunities are provided to educators and support staff to ensure they are well-equipped to implement effective transition plans?

4. Key Takeaways: April 2025 SEAC Circular

- **Advocacy for Special Education Funding:** SEAC members play a vital role in ensuring that special education funding is used effectively. They should actively participate in budget discussions and advocate for a full continuum of supports to meet the diverse needs of students with exceptionalities.
- **Staffing & Specialized Support:** Maintaining and enhancing staffing levels for special education teachers, educational assistants (EAs), and support personnel is essential. SEAC members should inquire about staffing allocations and advocate for continuity in specialized support services.
- **Special Education Plans & Policy Oversight:** SEAC members should participate in the annual review of their board's Special Education Plan, ensuring that it aligns with evidence-based practices, student needs, and equity-focused approaches.
- **Mental Health & Well-being:** Positive mental health is essential for student success. SEAC should advocate for:
 - Increased access to mental health supports tailored to students with learning disabilities and other exceptionalities.
 - Professional learning opportunities for educators on mental health literacy and trauma-informed teaching.
 - Data-informed evaluations of the impact of mental health initiatives at the school board level.
- **Effective Transition Planning:** Students with learning disabilities require structured, well-supported transitions at all levels (e.g., grade-to-grade, high school to post-secondary/work). SEAC should:
 - Ensure individualized transition plans are in place for students with exceptionalities.
 - Advocate for early planning, educator training, and parental involvement in the transition process.
 - Monitor how school boards evaluate and improve transition supports to reduce anxiety and ensure continuity of services.

A Note to SEAC Representatives

LDAO SEAC Representatives are encouraged to share this resource with other SEAC members in their school board. By spreading awareness and building collective understanding, we can strengthen advocacy efforts and improve outcomes for students with learning disabilities across Ontario.

About the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO)

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) has been a trusted voice for over 60 years, supporting individuals with learning disabilities and ADHD—as well as their families, educators, and communities. We provide expertly curated resources, advocate for systemic change, and promote equity in education and beyond.

Our signature initiatives—LD@school, TA@l'école, LD@home, and LD@work—reflect our commitment to supporting individuals across the lifespan, from early learning through to adulthood and employment.

Learn more at www.LDAO.ca

OPEN LETTER TO SEACs ACROSS ONTARIO

From the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO)

March 2025

Dear SEAC Members,

As the 2025–2026 budget season progresses, the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) extends our sincere thanks for your ongoing commitment to students with exceptionalities. Your work ensures that the voices and needs of students with learning disabilities (LDs), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and related exceptionalities are central to local decision-making across Ontario.

We recognize that boards are working through complex planning processes. As special education models continue to evolve, what remains clear: the specific needs of students with LDs and ADHD have not changed. These students continue to require timely, structured, and individualized supports—delivered through a full continuum of services, including Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, access to trained professionals, and accommodations that are matched to cognitive and learning profiles.

SEAC's Legislated Role: Supporting Student-Centered Planning

Under Regulation 464/97, SEACs are formally mandated to advise on both special education budgeting and planning. The decisions you help shape this spring will directly influence staffing, service delivery, and access to interventions in the year ahead.

To ensure meaningful progress for students with learning disabilities (LDs) and ADHD, we encourage SEAC members to bring forward student-centered and solution-focused questions, such as:

- **Tiered Supports:** How are Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions being sustained, staffed, and resourced across the board? What systems are in place to ensure timely access to direct, explicit instruction and individualized supports?
- **Continuum of Placements:** What options remain available for students who may require alternative or specialized settings? How are placement decisions being made to ensure alignment with individual learning needs and equitable access to appropriate supports?

- **Transition Planning:** What structured processes are in place to support students with LDs and ADHD as they move between schools, programs, or instructional models? Are individualized transition plans embedded in IEPs and supported by dedicated personnel?
- **Educator Capacity:** What professional learning is being prioritized to build educator capacity in structured literacy, direct and explicit instruction, differentiated instruction, universal design for learning, strategies to support executive functioning, and other evidence-based interventions?
- **Equity of Access:** How are disparities in access to specialized supports across different program pathways and school contexts being addressed? What steps are being taken to ensure students with LDs and ADHD receive consistent, individualized supports regardless of their placement?

As always, your work at the SEAC table ensures that policy and funding decisions reflect real student needs and drive equitable outcomes across the system.

Building on Momentum: From Early Screening to Sustained Support

We are encouraged by the introduction of early diagnostic assessment and intervention strategies across Ontario, including the Ministry's investments in universal screening and evidence-based reading instruction. These are promising steps forward and align with the recommendations of the [Right to Read](#) inquiry report and its [Year Two Update](#).

To maximize the impact of these early efforts, boards must also plan for sustained, individualized support across the entire student journey. This includes not only Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, but also structured transition planning as students move between programs and schools. The [Kindergarten to Grade 12 \(K-12\) Education Standards Development Committee](#) has emphasized the importance of embedding structured, individualized transition planning into IEPs to ensure continuity of supports as students move between schools and programs. The report also calls for dedicated Transition Facilitators to help families and students navigate these changes. Without well-resourced, accountable, and student-informed transition processes, there is a risk of widening learning gaps and disrupting progress for students with LDs and ADHD.

As SEAC members, your role in ensuring that Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions are protected—and expanded where needed—is critical to achieving true equity for students with exceptionalities.

A Shared Commitment to Collaborative Advocacy

At LDAO, we see SEACs as essential partners in this work. We are here to support you—whether through policy insights, curated resources, or thought partnership around motions, planning, and provincial trends.

To support your ongoing advocacy, we've included:

- Our two most recent **LDAO SEAC Circulars** (February and April 2025), which highlight provincial priorities such as the Right to Read implementation, mental health supports, special education planning, and structured transition processes.
- A link to our new video resource: **SEAC Motions: A Guide for Effective Systemic Advocacy**. This short on-demand webcast was developed quickly in response to requests from SEAC representatives. It offers practical guidance on how SEAC motions can influence policy, programming, and funding—along with tips for clarity, collaboration, and effective follow-up. Attached, you'll also find the full transcript of the webcast for your reference or to share with your SEAC colleagues.
- LDAO's **Policy Statement on Educational Inclusion for Students with Learning Disabilities**, which affirms the right of students with LDs to access a continuum of placement options based on their individual needs. This includes alternative settings and individualized supports, where appropriate, to ensure equitable access to learning.

Thank you again for your service, leadership, and dedication to student success. We are proud to support your role in shaping inclusive, accessible, and responsive education systems across Ontario.

In partnership,



Dr. Steven Reid

President and CEO

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO)

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Hello and welcome to today's webcast on SEAC motions. I'm Dr. Steven Reid, President and CEO of the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario. Before I introduce our co-facilitator, I want to take a moment to thank all our LDAO representatives for their dedication and service. Your work is essential in ensuring that students with learning disabilities and co-occurring conditions like ADHD receive the support they need to succeed. This webcast reflects our role as a provincial organization, equipping our chapters with the knowledge and skills to strengthen their local advocacy, enhance their impact, and ensure our collective voice is heard at the SEAC table. I'm joined by a longtime leader in the field of special education advocacy, someone who has been a strong voice for students and families, Lynn Ziraldo. Lynn, thank you for being here today and thank you for your longtime service as a SEAC representative. Such important work.

Thanks, Steven. I'm really looking forward to this discussion because SEAC plays such a crucial role in ensuring students with exceptionalities receive the supports they need. One of the key ways SEAC members can drive change is by making motions that bring important issues to the attention of trustees and board administration.

That's right. SEAC members are not just advisers; they are systemic advocates. They ensure that special education funding policies and programs truly reflect the needs of students. At LDAO, we know how critical our SEAC representatives are in making sure that students with learning disabilities are properly supported across Ontario. But our roles aren't about being adversarial. Effective advocacy is about building relationships, fostering collaboration, and creating a shared understanding of key issues by working together with trustees, school boards, and families. SEAC members help shape meaningful, student-centered policies that lead to real change. And that's why this webcast is so important. We're going to walk through the importance of motions, the principles behind them, and how SEAC members can effectively make changes, make motions, and follow up on them to ensure they lead to action.

Before we dive into the process of making motions, let's take a step back and talk about why SEAC's role is so vital. SEAC have a legislated mandate to advise school boards on special education programs and services, and there are two key areas where SEAC plays a major role: special education budgets and special education plans.

Exactly. SEAC members help ensure that budget decisions prioritize the needs of students with disabilities. School boards are currently preparing their budgets, which they do every year, and under regulation 46/497, SEAC must be given the opportunity to participate in this process. SEAC should be asking questions about how funding is being allocated for special education.

Beyond budgets, SEAC plays a key role in shaping each board's special education plan. The plans outline how supports will be delivered, how interventions will be provided, and how students with disabilities will receive the help they need to succeed. SEAC members must ensure these plans reflect the best available evidence and the realities that students and families face. And one of the best ways to influence these discussions is through motions. SEAC motions help bring key issues to the Board of Trustees, ensuring that they are aware of concerns and recommendations from the special education community.

Now that we've talked about SEAC's role in influencing special education policies and

budgets, let's take a closer look at why motions are such a powerful tool. Motions enable SEAC members to create meaningful change by ensuring decisions are structured, transparent, and actionable. They provide a formal process that allows members to raise concerns, propose solutions, and make recommendations that support, influence, and hold school boards accountable in developing policies and programs that meet the needs of students with exceptionalities. Exactly. Even when a motion is introduced, it goes through a clear process of discussion, potential revisions, and voting. This structured approach ensures that key issues aren't just raised in conversation but are formally considered and documented. And that's why it's important because motions help track progress. When SEAC passes a motion, it's not just a suggestion. It becomes part of the official record, making it easier to follow up and hold the board accountable for its decisions.

And beyond accountability, motions also influence real action. When SEAC presents motions to the Board of Trustees, they help shape future decisions, program development, and special education plans. Right. An important reminder: every school board operates slightly differently. Some school boards may have specific rules for how SEAC motions are presented and reviewed. That's why it's essential for SEAC members to familiarize themselves with their board's procedures to ensure their motions are effective. Absolutely. Motions are one of the most powerful tools for advocacy. They ensure that the voices of students, families, and advocates are heard and that real systemic change is possible. More than that, motions help ensure that change doesn't just stay an idea. They drive action, keep important conversations going, and strengthen relationships between SEAC trustees and board administration. By making well-crafted motions, SEAC members can foster collaboration and accountability, ensuring ongoing progress for students with exceptionalities.

Now that we understand why motions matter, let's talk about the core principles that make motions effective. A motion isn't just about bringing up a concern; it's about making real change happen. That's why motions need to be clear, purposeful, and actionable.

That's right, Steven. One of the most important principles of a motion is clarity and precision. A motion should clearly state the issue, the action being requested, and who is responsible for carrying it out. If a motion is vague or too broad, it becomes difficult to track the progress or ensure accountability. It's just as important as relevance and purpose. Every motion should be aligned with the mandate and focused on improving special education programs, policies, and services. A motion that doesn't align with key priorities is unlikely to gain traction. The stronger the connection to student needs and system-wide impact, the more likely it is to drive meaningful change. And that ties into another key principle: accountability and follow-through. When SEAC passes a motion, it should include a plan for tracking progress and getting updates. If we don't follow up, we risk motions being acknowledged but not acted upon.

Exactly. Another principle is the democratic process. Every member should have a chance to discuss, debate, and vote on motions. This ensures that different perspectives are heard and that motions reflect the priorities of the entire community, not just one or two members. And let's not forget transparency. Every motion that passes becomes part of the public record, which

is crucial for building trust and ensuring accountability. Having a clear record helps future SEAC members and school board leaders see what's been recommended and what action has taken place. Another principle is feasibility and impact. Motions should be realistic and achievable. If a motion proposes something that isn't within the board's authority or is too broad, it's less likely to lead to real change. SEAC members should always think strategically: what is the most effective way to influence policy, funding, or the special education plan? And finally, motions should be rooted in equity and representation. SEAC exists to advocate for students with exceptionalities, so motions should reflect the real needs of families and educators, whether it's about funding, resources, training, or policy improvements. Motions should always keep students at the center. That's why understanding these principles is so important. When SEAC members craft motions with these in mind, they don't just raise concerns; they drive meaningful change for students with special education needs. Absolutely. Motions are one of the most powerful tools that SEAC members have. By making them clear, strategic, and action-oriented, we can ensure they lead to real improvements in special education programs and services.

So, how to make a motion? Now that we've established why SEAC is so important, as well as the principles of motion, let's go through the process of making a motion. A motion follows a clear structure and ensures that SEAC recommendations are followed and formally considered by trustees. Before we get into the step-by-step process, it's important to highlight some of the effective practices for making a motion. SEAC members who approach motions strategically by being prepared, clear, and action-oriented are more likely to see their motions gain support and lead to real change.

So first, you need to craft the motion prior to the meeting whenever possible. Taking time to draft your motion in advance allows you to refine the wording, anticipate potential concerns, and ensure that it is both clear and actionable. Sharing motions with SEAC members beforehand can also help strengthen the language and build early support. Second, use clear and specific language. A well-crafted motion should be concise, action-oriented, and leave no room for ambiguity. Avoid vague terms like "improve" or "review" without specifically specifying what outcome is expected. For example, instead of saying "SEAC recommends more training for teachers," which is very broad, a stronger motion would say "SEAC recommends that all special education teachers receive structured literacy training by September 2026".

And thirdly, address potential objections before the motion is presented. Think about possible concerns or counterarguments and be prepared to adjust wording to gain consensus. If there's opposition, consider proposing a friendly amendment to clarify the intent or address reasonable concerns without weakening the motion's impact. And finally, seek assistance if needed. If you're unsure about how to word a motion properly, consult with the chairperson or an experienced SEAC member. Reviewing past successful motions can also provide helpful templates. By following these effective practices, SEAC members can ensure their motions are clear, actionable, and more likely to gain support. Now, let's go through the step-by-step process of making a motion.

Now that we've discussed the importance of SEAC motions and effective practices for

making them, let's walk through a real-world example of how a SEAC motion is introduced, debated, amended if needed, and voted on. In this scenario, Lynn will act as the chair of SEAC, and I will be representing LDAO as the SEAC member bringing forward a motion. I'll be playing the role of other SEAC representatives at the meeting and will identify myself as I do. We'll follow the proper procedure. Let's get started. Yes, that will give you a real sense of what to expect in a SEAC meeting and how to participate effectively in the process. Let's go. I, SEAC member one, would like to move the motion: "Be it resolved that SEAC recommends to the Board of Trustees that Tier Three intervention supports be expanded for students with learning disabilities." Is there a seconder for this motion? I, SEAC member two, second the motion. And we're just going to step out of character just for a moment, just for a little sidebar. At this stage, SEAC members can express their support for or concerns about the motion and may also provide advice. Members may also propose an amendment, and if the original mover accepts the amendment, it is considered a friendly amendment and the motion is revised before discussion continues. If the mover does not accept it, the amendment can still be introduced separately as a formal amendment requiring its own mover and seconder before debate and voting. Once the final wording is settled on, the motion is read again before moving to a vote. And so that's the end of our sidebar. I have a list of speakers. SEAC member three, please go ahead. I, SEAC member three, support this motion because many students with learning disabilities require targeted, intensive support to succeed academically. Expanding Tier Three interventions will ensure that students receive evidence-based instruction tailored to their specific needs. Thank you. SEAC member four, do you have a comment? Yes, I, SEAC member four, speak against the motion in its current form because it does not specify how these additional supports will be implemented. For example, will this require hiring more specialists or are we reallocating existing resources? That's a great point. Member one, would you be open to an amendment? Yes, I, SEAC member one, would like to propose a friendly amendment to clarify that these expanded Tier Three interventions will be supported through additional specialized support and professional development for existing educators. Is this amendment agreeable to the seconder? Yes, I, SEAC member two, agree with the amendment. Before we hear the motion again, I would just like to know if there's any further discussion. Seeing none, let's hear the revised motion. As the secretary, I'll read the revised motion: "Be it resolved that SEAC recommends to the Board of Trustees that Tier Three intervention supports be expanded for students with learning disabilities, with a focus on increasing specialized staff and professional development for educators". Again, I will ask if there's any further discussion on the motion as read. Seeing none, I will now call for a vote. All those in favor, please raise your hands. All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

Awesome. Thank you for that, Lynn. And we'll just move out of character and into tracking SEAC motions. Once a motion is passed, SEAC needs to follow up. Too often, motions are made and then forgotten. Effective members make sure their motions are tracked. Exactly. SEAC members should request updates on motions in the "Business Arising" section of the agenda and ask trustees or board staff to provide written responses. An action chart attached to

each agenda can also help keep track of motions, responses, and the next steps. And most importantly, SEAC members should keep advocating. If a motion doesn't move forward, find out why and keep pushing for change.

We hope that this webcast has given you the tools and confidence to make motions effectively at SEAC meetings. Thank you for joining us. Remember, communication is the key. It's not what we say, it's how we say it. Your systemic advocacy makes a difference, and we look forward to seeing the impact you have for students with disabilities across Ontario. SEAC members play a vital role in shaping the future of special education. Every motion you make, every conversation you start, and every connection you build contributes to meaningful change. Keep advocating. Keep pushing forward, and together we can create a more inclusive and equitable education system for all students. On behalf of LDAO and the communities we serve, thank you for your dedication, your advocacy, and your commitment to supporting students with learning disabilities and co-occurring conditions like ADHD. When we work together, we strengthen our impact, and your work matters. Together, we're making a difference. Thank you.

Final slide is displayed. The presenters do not speak to this slide. The following information is shown:

The logo of the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) appears at the top of the slide, with the slogan: "The right to learn, the power to achieve"

What We Do: Develop accessible, evidence-based resources for educators, families, and individuals; Deliver signature initiatives: LD@school, TA@l'école, LD@home, and LD@work; Advocate for equitable access to assessment, accommodations, and inclusive policies; Support a network of local LDA chapters across Ontario; Partner on systemic change in education, employment, and public policy

Key Priorities: Reducing stigma; Advancing accessibility; Building inclusive learning and working environments; Empowering individuals and families through knowledge and support.

POLICY STATEMENT ON EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

The following policy statement of the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC) was adopted by the Board of Directors of the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO), as recommended by the LDAO Legislation and Policy Committee, on November 17, 2008.

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC) Policy Statement on Educational Inclusion for Students with Learning Disabilities (presented to the LDAC Executive Committee in February 2005, the LDAC Board of Directors in June 2005 and ratified on November 26, 2005).

STATEMENT

The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC) does not support full educational inclusion or any policies that mandate the same placement, instruction, or treatment of all students with learning disabilities or the idea that all students with learning disabilities must be served only in regular education classrooms at the exclusion of all other special education placement options. LDAC believes that full inclusion, when defined this way, violates the rights of parents and students with disabilities guaranteed by the *Charter of Rights and Freedom* and *Human Rights Codes* which guarantee education equality and freedom from discrimination and rejects the arbitrary placement of all students in any one setting.

LDAC supports the availability of a continuum of education services as prescribed in an individual educational plan for each student with learning disabilities to ensure success and must be flexible enough to meet the changing needs of students with learning disabilities by:

- 1) Providing a range of options and services and diverse learning environments (placements) to meet the specific needs of each student;
- 2) Providing the most enabling environment for that student that will effectively meet the student's best interests socially, emotionally, behaviourally, physically and educationally; and,
- 3) Focus on what is in the best interest of the student and, in that context, consider all the needs of the student as expressed by the student and his/her parents and that of their consulting professionals.

RATIONALE

Because each student with learning disabilities has unique needs, an individualized education plan and placement must be tailored on individual strengths and needs. For one student, the plan may be provided in the regular classroom yet for another student, the regular classroom may be an inappropriate placement and may need alternative

instructional environments, teaching strategies, and/or materials that cannot or will not be provided within the context of the regular classroom environment. The severity and nature of the individual needs should determine the alternative teaching strategies, accommodations, resources, supports and placement required.

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO)

www.LDAO.ca