



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, June 4, 2026

Time 1:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room / 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) Alternative Education in Grand Erie (R. Vankerrebroeck)
 - (b) Financial Literacy Graduation Requirement (K. Graham)
 - (c) 2026-27 Special Education Programs in Grand Erie (L. Thompson / J. Senior)
- C - 1 **Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings**
- (a) Grand Erie's Special Education Plan 2025-26 (L. Thompson)
Recommended Motion:
"That the 2025-26 Special Education Plan, for submission to the Ministry of Education and uploading to the Board's website, be forwarded to the June 22, 2026 Regular Board Meeting for approval."
 - (b) SEAC Striders Team Update
- D - 1 **Consent Agenda** (L. DeJong)
- "That SEAC accept the June 4, 2026 Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein."*
- (a) Approve the Minutes of:
 - (i) SEAC Meeting Minutes dated May 7, 2026*
 - (b) Receive the correspondence from:
 - (i) Upper Grand District School Board's SEAC dated May 13, 2026*
 - (ii) Bluewater District School Board SEAC dated June 1, 2026*
- E - 1 **New Business**
- (a) National AccessAbility Week* (J. Senior)
 - (b) Alternate SEAC Member for the Lansdowne Children's Centre Representative
"That the appointment of Paige Collings as alternate to Tiffany Morgan, Representative for Lansdowne Children's Centre, to the Special Education Advisory Committee for the remainder of the Term 2022-2026 be forwarded to the June 22, 2026 Regular Board Meeting for approval."
- F - 1 **Information Items**
- (a) Policies out for Comment - Nil (K. Jones)
 - (b) [System Updates/Report of the CEO](#) (formerly called Director's Report) (Thompson/K. Graham)
 - (c) Chair/Vice-Chair Updates (L. DeJong/K. Jones)
 - (d) [EQAO Math Resources and Sample Questions for Families](#)
 - (e) [Family Math E-Newsletter](#)
 - (f) [Family Literacy E-Newsletter](#)
- G - 1 **Community Updates**
- (a) Heroes Walk and Roll Fundraising Event* (A. Gladman/L. Henrikson)

Learn

Lead

Inspire



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, June 4, 2026

Time 1:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room / MS Teams Virtual Meeting

AGENDA

- H - 1 **Future Agenda Items and SEAC Planning Committee**
- (a) ODEN Presentation – Specialized Services Transitions Navigator
 - (b) Extensive Needs Program – Contact Brant
 - (c) Working through transitions for students with community partners (school entry, grade to grade, elementary to secondary, secondary to post-secondary)
 - (d) Terms of Reference
- I - 1 **Adjournment** (L. DeJong)
- J - 1 **Next Meeting**
Thursday, September 10, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. MS Teams Virtual Meeting

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Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Thursday, May 7, 2026

6:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room/MS Teams

MINUTES

Present: Chair: L. DeJong, Vice Chair: K. Jones, Trustees: E. Thomas, T. Sault, Community Representatives: L. Nydam Local Organizations: L. Campbell, C. Gilman, T. Morgan

Administration: Director of Education, Secretary to the Board, CEO Dr. J. Roberto Superintendents: L. Thompson, K. Graham, System Leader J. Senior, Specialized Services Supervisor H. Knill, Program Coordinators: L. Sheppard, L. Miedema, Recording Secretary: W. Kipp

Absent with Regrets: P. Found, Gabe Ianniruberto, T. West

Absent: N. Schween

Visiting Trustee: C.A. Sloat

A - 1 **Opening**

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

L. DeJong called May 7, 2026, meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

(b) **Roll Call**

Recording Secretary W. Kipp confirmed roll call.

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

Moved by: K. Jones

Seconded by: T. Sault

THAT the May 7, 2026, agenda be approved as printed.

Carried

B - 1 **Timed Items**

(a) Behaviour Support Plans and Safety Plans information was shared by L. Miedema and L. Sheppard.

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

(a) Student and Family Support Office update was shared by Superintendent K. Graham.

D - 1 **Consent Agenda**

That SEAC Accept the May 7, 2026, Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein.

Moved by: K. Jones

Seconded by: E. Thomas

(a) Approve the Minutes of

(i) SEAC meeting Minutes dated April 9, 2026

(b) Correspondence shared from:

(i) Kawartha Pine Ridge School Board SEAC dated March 3, 2026*



Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Thursday, May 7, 2026

6:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room/MS Teams

MINUTES

- (ii) Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board SEAC dated April 8, 2026*
- (iii) Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board SEAC dated April 13, 2026*

E - 1 **New Business**

- (a) Specialized Services Program Coordinator – Service Provisions information regarding roles was shared by L. Sheppard and L. Miedema.

F - 1 **Information Items**

- (a) Policies out for Comment - Nil
- (b) System Updates were shared by Superintendent L. Thompson and Superintendent K. Graham.
- (c) Chair L. DeJong did not have updates at this time and Vice-Chair K. Jones shared information regarding training put on by the Alzheimer Society regarding dementia.
- (d) Director's Report
- (e) Family Math E-Newsletter
- (f) EQAO Math Resources and Sample Questions for Families
- (g) Family Literacy E-Newsletter

G - 1 **Community Updates**

Nil

H - 1 **Future Agenda Items**

- (a) ODEN presentation – Specialized Services Transitions Navigator
- (b) Skill Building and Hub Programs
- (c) Extensive Needs Program – Contact Brant
- (d) Working through transitions for students with community partners

I - 1 **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

J - 1 **Next Meeting**

Thursday, June 4, 2026, at 1:00 p.m., Education Centre Board Room/MS Teams Virtual Meeting

May 13, 2026

Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
5th Floor 438 University Ave
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

VIA EMAIL: minister.edu@ontario.ca

Subject: Funding Support for Students with Special Education and Mental Health Needs

Dear Minister Calandra,

The Upper Grand District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is writing to formally express our full support for the funding priorities recently outlined by our colleagues at the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB). We recognize that the challenges highlighted by SCDSB are not isolated and are further emphasized in the recent Auditor General report on special education in Ontario. They represent a systemic need for a more responsive and modernized special education funding model in Ontario.

In particular, the UGDSB SEAC wishes to emphasize the following:

- **The 2025 AODA Mandate:** With the 2025 deadline for the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* rapidly approaching, our schools require urgent, dedicated capital investment. Physical accessibility (elevators, washroom modifications, and sensory spaces) is a human right, and boards will face significant challenges to meet these legal obligations within current facilities' budgets.
- **Inter-Ministerial "Wrap-Around" Support:** We strongly echo the call for increased funding for community partners (such as those funded by the Ministry of Health and MCCSS). In particular, our Care and Treatment Education Partners Dufferin Child and Family Services, Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington and Wyndham House.
- require stable and adequate funding to remain viable and cost-effective. When community mental health and therapeutic agencies are underfunded, the burden shifts to the school system. For students to succeed, the "bridge" between healthcare and education must be financially reinforced.
- **Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Sustainability:** While recent updates are noted, the funding must keep pace with the increasing complexity of student needs post-pandemic. High-quality, specialized staffing is the backbone of special education, and the funding must reflect the true cost of hiring and retaining these experts.

The UGDSB SEAC remains committed to ensuring that every student, regardless of their needs, has the resources required to flourish. We urge the Ministry to consider these shared priorities as you develop future funding formulas.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss how these regional pressures affect the students of Upper Grand and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



[Laurie Whyte \(May 14, 2026 10:15:44 EDT\)](#)

Laurie Whyte
Chairperson, SEAC



Andrea Wyshniowsky
Vice-chairperson, SEAC

cc: Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Hon. Mike Schreiner, MPP, Guelph
Hon. Joseph Racinsky, MPP, Wellington-Halton Hills
Hon. Sylvia Jones, MPP, Dufferin-Caledon
Hon. Matthew Rae, MPP for Perth-Wellington
Ontario Public School Boards' Association
School Board chairs
Chairs of Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees
Board of Trustees, UGDSB
Peter Sovran, Director of Education and CEO, UGDSB
Brent McDonald, Associate Director and Chief Operating Officer, UGDSB



Bluewater District School Board

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Chesley ON N0G 1L0
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www.bwdsb.on.ca

June 1, 2026

The Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
5th Floor 438 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

VIA EMAIL: minister.edu@ontario.ca

Subject: Funding Support for Students with Special Education and Mental Health Needs

Dear Minister Calandra:

On behalf of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of Bluewater District School Board (BWDSB), I am writing in support of the Simcoe County District School Board SEAC's letter of January 14, 2026, regarding special education and mental health funding priorities. We share the concerns of other boards related to the persistence of an inadequate special education funding model at a time when the complexity of student needs and demand for corresponding services continue to grow.

BWDSB has been navigating recent staffing reductions in special education services stemming from broader and significant fiscal pressures across our system, including funding constraints, cost increases, and the obligation to maintain a balanced budget under provincial legislation. Unfortunately, surplus that was used in previous years to support our special education budget is no longer available, further exacerbating the issue.

With this in mind, we are highlighting the following priority areas that we urge your ministry to consider:

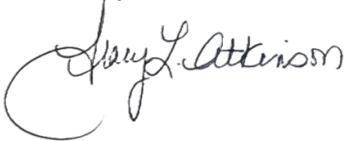
- **Special education funding:** We appreciate the recent Special Incidence Portion funding updates by your ministry. However, overall special education funding still falls below what is required to address the rising costs associated with recruiting and retaining support staff, including educational assistants, whose expertise is critical to supporting the growing needs of our most vulnerable students. It has also become increasingly difficult to meet these students' complex needs when expenses are exceeding funding, thus causing multi-million-dollar deficits within the special education envelope.
- **Community mental health supports:** While our board invests heavily in a robust and responsive system-wide mental health team to provide tiered student support across 42 schools, these services alone cannot replace the clinical interventions that are essential through our community partners and agencies. Adequate funding from the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for wrap-around community services ensures that students can access much-needed mental health supports beyond the limitations of what our schools can deliver. In BWDSB, we rely on the work and expertise of our invaluable partners in children's mental health, such as Keystone Child, Youth & Family Services. It is important to note that our board spans a vast and unique geography, where easy access to services is crucial for families. This is especially pronounced when considering the many crisis and tragedy responses that our board has had to manage recently.

- **Alignment with accessibility legal requirements:** As the 2025 deadline approaches for the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, it is imperative that capital investments are dedicated to ensuring physical accessibility needs are met in our schools, such as elevators, ramps, washroom enhancements, and the retrofitting or addition of other spaces. Current budget allocations pose significant challenges in meeting these vital obligations.

One of this year's identified priorities of the BWDSB SEAC is focused on making sure that the voices of our students and parents/guardians are captured in our work and advocacy efforts. We respectfully ask that the ministry consider the above areas of shared concern with the families we represent, and work collaboratively with us and other boards on effective solutions moving forward.

Thank you for your continued commitment to supporting our students with special education needs. We appreciate your attention to this critically important and timely matter.

Sincerely,



Tracy Lynn Atkinson
Chair, SEAC

cc: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Paul Vickers, MPP, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound
The Honourable Lisa Thompson, MPP, Huron-Bruce
Ontario Public School Boards' Association
Ontario School Board Chairs
Chairs of Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees
Board of Trustees, BWDSB
AJ Keene, BWDSB Chief Executive Officer

/jp

AccessAbility Week Monday

Announcement:

This week is **National AccessAbility** Week!

In Canada, we celebrate National AccessAbility Week every year starting on the last Sunday in May. The week raises awareness about accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities in Canadian communities and workplaces. Together, let's celebrate diversity, raise awareness and work towards a future where everyone can thrive. We can amplify the voices of individuals with disabilities and build a more accessible and equitable world.



Activity Suggestion:

We invite schools to take part in **Art for Access**, a creative and inclusive activity that celebrates belonging and accessibility. Students can express what inclusion means to them through posters, textured and 3D artwork, or a shared “Everyone Belongs Here” mural, using colours and materials in ways that feel right for them. These works can be proudly displayed around the school to highlight student voice, strengths, and the many ways we all learn and belong.

Additional Resources:



Flag



K-8 Video



9-12 Video

AccessAbility Week

Tuesday

Announcement:

Tomorrow is Red Shirt Day®. Wear red and help celebrate inclusion and belonging in our school! Have you ever noticed that a ramp at a building entrance isn't just used by someone in a wheelchair? It's used by parents with strollers, students with injuries, people making deliveries, and really anyone who finds it helpful. That's the idea of Universal Design: creating spaces that work for everyone from the start.

At our school, we use this same thinking in our classrooms. Just like architects design buildings to be accessible to all, our teachers design learning so every learner can access, engage, and succeed.

Activity Suggestion:

Today we invite classrooms to explore accessibility and universal design in a hands-on way. Students can design a universally accessible playground or choose a space in our school and think about how it could be made more accessible for everyone. Consider how small changes can make a big difference for different users. Let's work together to create spaces where everyone belongs! [Accessible Playgrounds Ontario](#)



Katie Novak, EdD

Additional Resources:



[The Education Table Podcast - Novak Education](#)

[We're Back! Five Moore Minutes Season 5!](#)

[Free UDL Resources: Tools for Implementing Universal Design for Learning](#)



EASTER SEALS

Red Shirt Day[®]

#RedShirtDay #RedForAccessibility

AccessAbility Week Wednesday

Announcement:

Today is Red Shirt Day[®]. We wear red and share what we pledge to do in the year ahead to enhance accessibility and inclusion in your school and classroom community.



Activity Suggestion:

Visit [Easter Seals Canada](#) for additional Red Shirt Day activities for your classroom.

Additional Resources:

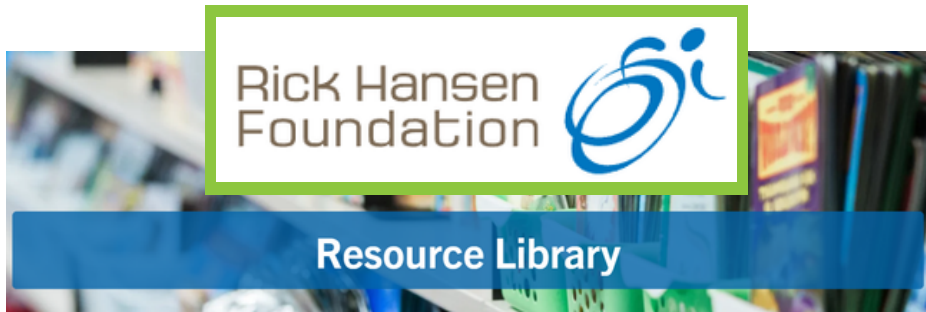
[Red Shirt Day Posters and Motivational Quotes](#)

[Recommended Books for Children and Adults](#)

[#REIMAGINEEMPLOYABILITY](#)



AccessAbility Week Thursday

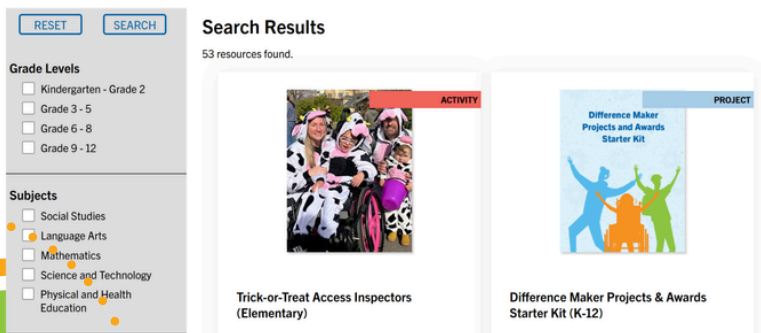


Announcement:

Today, we're reminded that small moments, like sharing and talking about stories, can help create a more inclusive school. By reading books that feature different abilities, learning styles, and friendships, and by talking about characters' strengths and the support they receive, we build understanding and empathy. These small conversations help us learn how to better support one another and make our school a place where everyone belongs.

Activity Suggestion and Resources:

Schools are invited to take part in an **Inclusive Read-Alouds & Book Talks** activity that builds empathy and belonging through shared stories. By reading books that feature different abilities, neurodiversity, and inclusive friendships, as well as discussing characters' strengths, challenges, and supports, students engage in meaningful conversations that promote understanding. Schools are encouraged to use the [Rick Hansen Foundation Resource Library](#) and [Red Shirt Day Library](#) resources to support this work and take small, intentional steps toward creating more inclusive learning environments.



"Our best work is still to come."
- Rick Hansen

AccessAbilityWeek

Friday

Announcement:

Today, we're reminded that creating an inclusive school starts with small, intentional actions. By learning and practicing varying ability etiquette—like using respectful language, offering help thoughtfully, and valuing different abilities—we help create a school environment where everyone feels seen, supported, and included. Together, even small steps can make a big difference in making our school a place where everyone belongs.

Activity Suggestion:

During Accessibility Week, schools are invited to host a Technology Try-It Day to explore simple digital tools that support learning in different ways. Students can try features such as read-aloud or text-to-speech, closed captions, visual timers, and speech-to-text, seeing how these tools can help with focus, understanding, and sharing ideas. These are tools for everyone, as all learners benefit from having choices in how they learn.



Additional Resources:



Increase Access with Assistive Technology.

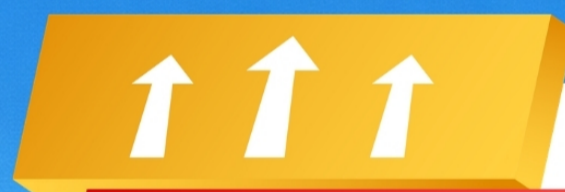
Alternative Education Resources Ontario - AERO

Access Communication

DRESS UP. TEAM UP. SHOW UP.

Lansdowne
HEROES
WALK AND ROLL

SEPT-26, 2006 BRANT PARK, BRANTFORD



LEVEL UP

Lansdowne
Children's Centre



HEROESWALKANDROLL.COM



Dear Friends

We are excited to invite you to be part of something truly special - **Heroes Walk & Roll for Lansdowne Kids**, taking place on **September 26, 2026**.

Heroes Walk and Roll is a super-celebratory fundraising event where families, children, youth, and teams come together to champion support of Lansdowne Children's Centre programs and services. There are many ways to get involved.

Join the fun!

- Sign up to Walk or Roll with your friends and family
- Build a team for the corporate challenge
- Make a difference as an Event Sponsor or Community Partner

Every day, Lansdowne Children's Centre helps children and youth overcome challenges, build confidence, and reach their full potential. Serving more than **6,500 children and youth** across our region each year, chances are you know a Lansdowne kid - a child, friend, neighbour, family member, or colleague who has benefited from our services.

By participating, sponsoring, or forming a fundraising team, you will help ensure local children and families continue to receive the specialized support they need to thrive.

To register a team, purchase tickets, or learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please visit:

<https://www.lansdownecentre.ca/heroeswalkandroll>

About Lansdowne Children's Centre for Child Development

Lansdowne Children's Centre provides specialized assessment, therapy, and support services to infants, children, and youth with physical, developmental, and communication needs throughout Brantford, the Counties of Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk, Six Nations of the Grand River, and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Working alongside families, caregivers, and community partners, Lansdowne helps children reach their optimal potential and achieve meaningful milestones.

We hope you will join us on September 26 as we celebrate the incredible children and families we serve while helping build a stronger, more inclusive community for all.

Thank you for your consideration and support. We look forward to seeing you at Heroes Walk & Roll for Lansdowne Kids.

Sincerely,

Ashlyn Gladman

Development Officer

Lansdowne Children's Centre

agladman@lansdownecc.com