



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Time 6:00 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) Welcome New SEAC Members (L. Thompson)
 - (b) Financial Update 2025-26 (R. Wyszynski)
 - (i) Special Education Funding, Grants, Expenditures and Reserves
 - (ii) Input on 2026-27 Budget Process
 - (iii) Finance Committee Meeting Dates
- C - 1 **Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings**
- (a) SEAC Meeting Dates 2026-27* (L. DeJong)
 - (b) SEAC Speaker Event 2026-27 (L. DeJong)
- D - 1 **Consent Agenda** (L. DeJong)
- "That SEAC accept the March 12, 2026 Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein."*
- (a) Approve the Minutes of:
 - (i) SEAC Meeting Minutes dated February 5, 2026*
 - (b) Receive the correspondence from:
 - (i) Durham District School Board dated February 19, 2026*
- E - 1 **New Business**
- (a) Grand Erie's Strategic Plan 2026-30
 - (b) Grand Erie's Special Education Plan – Standard 14* - Equipment (L. Sheppard)
- F - 1 **Information Items**
- (a) Policies out for Comment (K. Jones)
 - (i) [Assessment Evaluation and reporting Policy \(SO-20\)](#)
 - (b) Grand Erie's School Year Calendar 2026-27* (K. Graham)
 - (c) Flex Periods (K. Graham)
 - (d) [Family Math E-Newsletter](#) (L. DeJong)
 - (e) [Family Literacy E-Newsletter](#) (L. DeJong)
 - (f) System Updates (L. Thompson/K. Graham)
 - (g) [Director's Report](#) (L. Thompson)
 - (h) Chair/Vice-Chair Updates (L. DeJong/K. Jones)
- G - 1 **Community Updates**
- (a) Nil
- H - 1 **Future Agenda Items and SEAC Planning Committee**
- (a) Role of the System Staff
 - (b) Student and Family Support Offices
 - (c) ODEN presentation – Specialized Services Transitions Navigator
 - (d) Skill Building and Hub Programs
 - (e) Behaviour Support Plans and Safety Plans

Learn

Lead

Inspire



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Time 6:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room / MS Teams Virtual Meeting

AGENDA

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

J - 1 **Next Meeting**

Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. at the Education Centre Board Room / MS Teams Virtual Meeting

Learn

Lead

Inspire



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 March 12, 2026

Re: SEAC meeting dates for the 2026-27 school year

SEAC meeting dates 2026-27			
Date	Topic	Location	Time
Thursday September 10, 2026	SEAC Meeting - Business	Virtual	4:00 p.m.
Thursday October 8, 2026	SEAC Meeting - Business	Virtual	4:00 p.m.
Thursday November 5, 2026	SEAC Meeting - Business	Virtual	4:00 p.m.
Thursday, November 5, 2026	SEAC Meeting - Learning Night	Virtual	5:30 p.m.
Thursday January 7, 2027	SEAC Meeting - Business	Virtual	4:00 p.m.
Thursday February 4, 2027	SEAC Meeting - Business	Virtual	4:00 p.m.
Thursday February 4, 2027	SEAC Meeting - Speaker Event	Virtual	5:30 p.m.
Thursday April 8, 2027	SEAC Meeting - Business	Virtual	4:00 p.m.
Thursday May 6, 2027	SEAC Meeting - Business	Virtual	4:00 p.m.
Thursday, May 6, 2027	SEAC Meeting - Learning Night	Virtual	5:30 p.m.
Thursday June 3, 2027	SEAC Meeting - Business	Virtual	4:00 p.m.



Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Thursday, February 5, 2026

1:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room/MS Teams

MINUTES

Present: Chair: L. DeJong, Vice Chair: K. Jones, Trustees: E. Thomas, L. Passmore, Local Organizations: L. Campbell, P. Found, C. Gilman, N. Schween, T. West

Administration: Superintendent L. Thompson, Associate Director of Curriculum and Student Achievement L. Munro, Principal Leader J. Senior, Specialized Services Supervisor H. Knill, Recording Secretary: W. Kipp

Absent with Regrets: Executive Assistant, J. Valstar

Absent: Community Representatives: G. Ianniruberto, L. Nydam

Visiting Trustee: Trustee C.A. Sloat

A - 1 **Opening**

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

L. DeJong called the February 5, 2026 meeting to order at 1:05 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: E. Thomas

Seconded by: L. Campbell

THAT the February 5, 2026 agenda be approved.

Carried

B - 1 **Timed Items**

(a) **Early Literacy Supports for Students Update**

Associate Director of Curriculum and Student Achievement L. Munro presented Grand Erie's strategy for supporting students with early literacy.

(b) **Grand Erie's Multi-Year Strategic Plan**

Superintendent Thompson shared Grand Erie's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

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

(a) **SEAC Speaker Event 2026-27 follow up**

SEAC members were encouraged to share ideas for the 2026-27 SEAC Speaker Event and to forward to J. Valstar before the March SEAC meeting.

(b) **Specialized Services Publication**

Superintendent L. Thompson shared the Specialized Services with SEAC members.



Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Thursday, February 5, 2026

1:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room/MS Teams

MINUTES

(c) **SEAC Membership Updates**

S. Jennions, representative of Community Living Brant, has resigned from his position. Replacement representation is being sought from Community Living.

D - 1 **Consent Agenda**

That SEAC Accept the February 5, 2026, Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein.

Moved by: E. Thomas

Seconded by: K. Jones

(a) Approve the Minutes of

- (i) SEAC meeting Minutes dated January 8, 2026

E - 1 **New Business**

(a) **Grand Erie's Attendance Strategy**

Superintendent Thompson shared Grand Erie's Attendance Strategy.

(b) **Proposed SEAC meeting dates for 2026-27**

2026-27 dates were presented, prompting questions regarding a return to evening meetings only. It was explained that the committee is aiming to support the highest possible attendance. SEAC members were encouraged to share their thoughts with J. Valstar. A final schedule of 2026-27 SEAC meeting dates will be shared at the March SEAC meeting.

(c) **Alternate Member from Woodview Recommended to SEAC**

"THAT the appointment of J. McStraviniec, as the alternate representative for Woodview Mental Health & Autism Services, be forwarded to the February 23, 2026 Regular Board meeting for approval."

Moved by: E. Thomas

Seconded by: L. Campbell

Carried

F - 1 **Information Items**

(a) Policies out for Comment

- (i) Acceptable Use of Information Technology (IT-01)
- (ii) Copyright – Fair Dealing Guidelines (SO-24)
- (iii) Exclusion of Students (SO-32)
- (iv) Hiring of Employees (HR-03)
- (v) Privacy and Records Information Management (IT-02)
- (vi) Reporting of Wrongdoing (HR-23)
- (vii) School Food and Beverage (SO-21)
- (viii) Voluntary Indigenous Self-Identification (SO-16)

(b) Family Math E-Newsletter

(c) Family Literacy E-Newsletter

(d) K. Jones did not have any updates to share.



Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Thursday, February 5, 2026

1:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room/MS Teams

MINUTES

G - 1 Community Updates

L. Campbell shared the link from [Contact Brant's webinar](#).

H - 1 Future Agenda Items

- a) Role of the System Staff
- b) Student and Family Support Offices
- c) ODEN presentation- Specialized Services Transitions Navigator
- d) Skill Building and Hub Programs
- e) Behaviour Support Plans and Safety Plans

I - 1 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

J - 1 Next Meeting

Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Education Centre Board Room/MS Teams Virtual Meeting

DRY

February 19, 2026

The Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
Mowat Block, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON

Dear Minister Calandra:

Re: Provincial Proposal to Replace Trustees with Provincially Appointed Supervisors

On behalf of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Durham District School Board, I write to express our profound disappointment and concern regarding the Ontario government's proposal to expand the use of provincially appointed supervisors in place of locally elected trustees in the province's school boards.

The suggestion that trustees could be removed (or their role diminished) undermines local democratic control of education and erodes community confidence. Trustees serve as a non-partisan, direct voice of families and students, particularly those receiving special education supports. In contrast, supervisors appointed by Queen's Park lack accountability to local parents and caregivers. Furthermore, examples from other boards show that important mechanisms for transparency - such as live-streamed SEAC meetings and regular trustee-parent communication - have been curtailed under supervision, challenging families' ability to stay informed and engaged.

We also note that there is no financial savings for the Ministry or school boards by replacing Trustees with Supervisors but, in fact, costs more. The salary for 1 provincially appointed supervisor is approximately \$350,000 per year, whereas the remuneration costs for the 12 Trustees at the DDSB is \$240,000. From our perspective, replacing Trustees with provincially appointed supervisors, who have no connection to the local community and do not understand the unique needs and culture of that community, runs contrary to PPM 170 regarding transparency, collaboration and building trust and does so at a higher cost to school boards and, by extension, Ontario taxpayers.

Furthermore, setting up Parent/Student Support Offices, to be staffed by current Board staff, while a great point of contact for parent/students to obtain information regarding Board process or policies, is not a replacement for the advocacy a Trustee does on behalf of students and parents. As employees of the Board, staff is accountable to the Board itself; in contrast, Trustees are accountable to their constituents. Parents and students, especially those who require special education accommodations, will lose an important avenue to hold teachers, schools and the Board accountable for ensuring that students are receiving those accommodations appropriately.

In the DDSB, SEAC members, including trustees and representatives from eight different associations (along with our *At Large* members), work collaboratively to advise the Board on special education programs, services, and parent



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support. This local advocacy is vital to ensuring students with exceptional needs receive tailored supports that enable their success.

We are concerned that removing elected trustees will disconnect families from decision-making processes and weaken the advocacy structures that help protect the rights of students with special education needs. We urge the Ministry to preserve local governance and strengthen, not weaken, the voices of parents and caregivers in shaping education policies that affect their children.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eva Kyriakides".

Eva Kyriakides

Chair, SEAC

Durham District School Board

cc: Chairs of Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees
Chandra Pasma, Shadow Minister of Education (CPasma-QP@ndp.on.ca)
John Fraser, Education Critic (jfraser.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org)

Standard 14

Equipment

The purpose of the standard is to inform the ministry, board staff members and other professionals, and parents/caregivers about the provision of individualized equipment for students with special needs.

Procedures for determining individualized equipment purchases for students to use at school comply with those outlined in the Ministry of Education document Special Education Funding Directives – Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA). Our goal is to provide a fair, transparent and tailored allocation system that supports students, while bolstering the educator’s capacity to include all students in classroom programming.

Budget Allocation

For the 2024-25 school year, the Ministry of Education has changed the funding model so that boards are allocated a budget amount based on a student enrolment formula. Any single items costing over \$5 000 are submitted to the Ministry for reimbursement. SEA Directives are published online and can be found at this link:

With the support of Specialized Services staff, educators prepare a Special Equipment Amount (SEA) file for individual students requiring specialized equipment. This equipment is to provide students with accommodations that are directly required and essential for one or more of the following:

- attending school,
- accessing the Ontario curriculum,
- supporting or augmenting a board determined alternative program and/or course,
- supporting transitions

The Ministry requires school boards to retain SEA records for the current school year and the previous 3 school years. Information from approved SEA files is reported to the Ministry of Education Area office each year.

As per Ministry of Education SEA directives, Grand Erie is expected to make cost effective choices about acquiring appropriate equipment and will ensure that students (where appropriate), teachers and board staff who work with the student have received training in order to make the best use of the equipment. Grand Erie responsibilities include ensuring that:

- Equipment is functioning properly, and that the equipment is meeting students’ needs.
- Equipment is replaced as required when students outgrow equipment or when equipment wears out through use.
- Upgrades and refurbishment are considered as an option before replacement.

- Equipment is reused by/transferred to other students when no longer required by the student for whom it was purchased.
- Efforts are made to share equipment among several students when appropriate and possible:

Portability of SEA Equipment When a student for whom SEA equipment was purchased moves to a new school board in Ontario, the equipment must move with the student, unless in the opinion of the new school board it is not practical to do so. The receiving board will make a formal request to the sending board for the transfer of equipment and is responsible for the shipping and handling costs associated with moving the equipment. Equipment does not transfer to private schools or post-secondary institutions, employment settings, or home- schooling or out of province/country moves.

Determination of Need

Determination of need is completed in conjunction with the school team and a relevant, qualified professional (for individual equipment). Outside agencies may assist with identifying equipment required by a student but may only be allocated if sufficient training and monitoring is available. Students must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) to qualify for assistive technology and/or equipment through SEA funding. Where appropriate, trials are conducted utilizing existing board technology to see whether the laptop or iPad is the most appropriate and timely accommodation to support the need. Where two or more students qualify for the same equipment, equipment may be shared.

Supporting Documentation	
Equipment	Technology <i>Technology request packages are prepared by the school educator team and are shared with the SEA Approval Committee for review of dedicated technology.</i>
A letter of support from a relevant professional indicating that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The equipment is essential and necessary for the student to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attend school ○ Access the Ontario curriculum 	A data story provides a holistic picture of the daily lived experience of a student at school. Essential statements from a qualified professional for technology requests are not mandatory, and when included serve as a piece of the student's data story. A data story may include a combination of;

Supporting Documentation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support or augment an alternative program or course ○ Support transitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quote from suppliers for the essential equipment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student voice • academic evidence (student work) • classroom data (observations and conversations) • classroom assessments (ELAT, Heggerty, Bridge the Gap) • professional assessment recommendations (Speech-Language assessment, Psycho-Ed assessment, OT assessment, etc.) • achievement report cards • open answer questions on the SEA Request Form are intended to share educator considerations for the next instructional move <p>A technology request considers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How the student performing ○ What may be impeding on their ability to thrive ○ What pedagogical and/or instructional strategies/moves are needed
<p>A signed copy of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) identifying equipment in the learning and assessment accommodations and learning expectations, and transition plan to provide evidence of intended use.</p>	<p>A signed copy of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) identifying equipment in the learning and assessment accommodations, learning expectations, and transition plan to support evidence of intended use.</p>

Equipment purchased with SEA funding should be considered as a set of physical assets, which boards have a responsibility to protect, maintain, and manage as a public resource. Grand Erie has developed and follows internal operating policies and procedures regarding the purchase, repair, use and disposal of equipment purchased with SEA funding.



2026-27 School Year Elementary Calendar

Brant | Brantford | Haldimand | Norfolk

	1st Week					2nd Week					3rd Week					4th Week					5th Week					
	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	
September 2026		1	2	3	4	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30			
		B	P	P	B	H	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2			
October 2026				1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	29	30	
				3	4	5	P	1	2	3	H	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	
November 2026	2	3	4	5	6	9	10	11	12	13	16	17	18	19	20	23	24	25	26	27	30					
	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	P	2	3	4	5	1	2					
December 2026		1	2	3	4	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30	31		
		3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	B	B	B	H	H	B	B	B	B		
January 2027					1	4	5	6	7	8	11	12	13	14	15	18	19	20	21	22	25	26	27	28	29	
					H	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	P	1	2	3	4	5	
February 2027	1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	15	16	17	18	19	22	23	24	25	26						
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	H	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4						
March 2027	1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	15	16	17	18	19	22	23	24	25	26	29	30	31			
	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	B	B	B	B	B	5	1	2	3	H	H	4	5			
April 2027				1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	29	30	
				1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	
May 2027	3	4	5	6	7	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	20	21	24	25	26	27	28	31					
	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	H	3	4	5	1	2					
June 2027		1	2	3	4	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30			
		O	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	P	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	P		

B Board Designated Holiday **P** Professional Activity Day **H** School Holiday **O** Ontario Day (School Day)

The first day of school for all students will be **Tuesday, September 8, 2026.**

September 2, 2026: Literacy and Mathematics/Health and Safety Protocols
September 3, 2026: Literacy and Mathematics/Student Well-Being, School Safety and Violence Protection
October 6, 2026: Curriculum and Assessment/Student Well-Being, School Safety and Violence Prevention

November 20, 2026: Curriculum and Assessment
January 22, 2027: Curriculum and Assessment
June 11, 2027: Curriculum and Assessment
June 30, 2027: Student Achievement Reflection and Planning



2026-27 School Year Secondary Calendar

Brant | Brantford | Haldimand | Norfolk

	1st Week					2nd Week					3rd Week					4th Week					5th Week					
	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	
September 2026		1	2	3	4	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30			
		B	P	P	B	H																				
October 2026				1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	29	30	
							P				H															
November 2026	2	3	4	5	6	9	10	11	12	13	16	17	18	19	20	23	24	25	26	27	30					
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December 2026		1	2	3	4	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30	31		
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January 2027					1	4	5	6	7	8	11	12	13	14	15	18	19	20	21	22	25	26	27	28	29	
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February 2027	1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	15	16	17	18	19	22	23	24	25	26						
	E	E	E	P	P						H															
March 2027	1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	15	16	17	18	19	22	23	24	25	26	29	30	31			
											B	B	B	B	B				H		H					
April 2027				1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	29	30	
May 2027		3	4	5	6	7	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	20	21	24	25	26	27	28	31				
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June 2027		1	2	3	4	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30			
		O																E	E	E	E	E	P			

B Board Designated Holiday
 P Professional Activity Day
 H School Holiday
 O Ontario Day (School Day)
 E Scheduled Examination Day

The first day of school for all students will be **Tuesday, September 8, 2026.**

September 2, 2026: Literacy and Mathematics/Health and Safety Protocols

September 3, 2026: Literacy and Mathematics/Student Well-Being, School Safety and Violence Protection

October 6, 2026: Literacy and Mathematics/Student Well-Being, School Safety and Violence Prevention

November 20, 2026: Curriculum and Assessment/School Improvement Planning

February 4, 2027: Curriculum and Assessment

February 5, 2027: School Improvement Planning/Division and Department Planning

June 30, 2027: Student Achievement Reflection and Planning