

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 24th, 2025, from 5:00pm – 5:41pm

SEAC Members & Quorum Tracking

SEAC Members	September 24 th , 2025
Donna Nielsen (Chair) <i>CDSBEO Trustee</i>	Present
Tracy Mertz (Vice-Chair) <i>Rural FASD Support Network</i>	Present
Karen McAllister <i>CDSBEO Trustee</i>	Present
Tom Jordan <i>Family and Children's Services of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville</i>	Present
Susie Trotter <i>Child and Youth Mental Health Services, Cornwall Community Hospital</i>	Present
Anna Lafrance <i>Easter Seals</i>	Absent without Notification
Nicki Hughes <i>Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario</i>	Present
Amy Malyon <i>Beyond 21 Foundation</i>	Absent with Notification
Kaitlyn Bissonnette <i>CAS SD&G</i>	Absent with Notification
SEAC Member Alternates	
Cathie Knapp-Fisher <i>Family and Children's Services of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville</i>	x
Sue Wilson <i>CDSBEO Trustee, Alternate</i>	x
Angela Carson <i>Beyond 21 Foundation</i>	x
SEAC Quorum	6/9 – Quorum Achieved

1. Welcome, Introductions and Roll Call

2. Land Acknowledgement & Opening Prayer

3. Approval of Agenda

Walk on items added under New Business:

- Member resignation and re-appointment
- Alternate member resignation and re-appointment

- New CDSBEO Director

Walk on items added under Correspondence Received:

- Nomination letter from Career Services, Brockville

Motion

To approve the agenda for our September 24th SEAC meeting with the additional walk on items.

Moved by: Tom Jordan Carried

4. Receiving of approved minutes from Monday, June 2nd, 2025.

The minutes from our June meeting were electronically approved by committee members on June 9th. These minutes are available to the public on the CDSBEO Board website.

5. Best Buddies in Schools – CDSBEO Principals & Team

This thoughtful presentation by the Holy Trinity CSS and St. John CHS teams highlighted the Best Buddies program in CDSBEO schools. Best Buddies plays a vital role in fostering inclusion, friendship, and a true sense of belonging among students of all abilities. Through engaging activities and meaningful peer connections, the program empowers students to build lasting relationships, develop leadership skills, and contribute to an inclusive school environment where everyone belongs.

6. Association Updates

a. Rural FASD Support Network

- Community Engagement Through Events: The Red Shoes Run series—featuring events in Smiths Falls, Johnstown, and Kemptville – successfully raised awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), promoted inclusion, and generated funds to support programming.
 - Program Growth via GROW Grant: The Ontario Trillium Fund's GROW Grant enabled the hiring of our new Youth Mentor with lived FASD experience, who now leads life-skills sessions, mentorship, and accessibility initiatives, while also contributing to sector-wide collaboration.
 - Student Practicum Enhancing Strategic Planning: A Carleton University social work student, is advancing the organization's Logic Model by collecting member feedback to strengthen its use as a tool for advocacy and funding.
 - Advocacy and Policy Influence: Rural FASD will present its Logic Model at the CanFASD National Conference and participate in FASD Awareness Day at Queen's Park, advocating for an amendment to the Education Act and a provincial framework to support neurodiverse individuals in employment and poverty reduction.
- #### **7. Special Education Department Update – Angie McNamee, Principal of Special Education**
- The Summer Transition Program supported over 70 students with diverse learning needs across seven schools, helping them adjust to the school environment and build foundational skills.
 - Special Education staff continue to assist with smooth transitions and IEP preparation.

- To support a tiered approach in early literacy, CDSBEO has acquired a universal reading screening digital platform for reading screening. This is an efficient means to screen students and monitor progress.
- The Empower Reading Program is now being expanded to include all our elementary schools.
- The department is investing in professional development for educators to increase their understanding of various structured literacy interventions.

8. New Business

a. 2025-2026 SEAC Start Time Discussion

Motion

To approve the start time of 4:30pm for the 2025-26 SEAC meetings.

Moved by: Tracy Mertz **Carried**

b. Member Resignation & Reappointment

Motion

To approve Christina Lord's resignation as representative for Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario and accept Nicki Hughes's nomination as new representative for Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario.

Moved by: Tom Jordan **Carried**

c. Alternate Member Resignation & Appointment

Motion

To approve Judith Peak's resignation as alternative representative for Rural FASD Support Network and accept Jayne Stoddart's nomination as new alternative representative for Rural FASD Support Network.

Moved by: Susie Trotter **Carried**

d. CDSBEO Director

We are happy to announce that CDSBEO has a new Director, Shelley Montgomery.

9. Correspondence Received

10. Motion to Excuse Regrets Received

Motion

To approve the below absences as they were notified.

- Amy Malyon, Representative for Beyond 21
- Angela Carson, Alternate Representative for Beyond 21
- Kaitlyn Bissonnette, Representative for CAS SD&G

Moved by: Tom Jordan **Carried**

Motion

To approve the absence of Anna Lafrance, Representative for Easter Seals without notification

Moved by: Susie Trotter

Carried

11. Next SEAC Meeting – Wednesday, October 29th, 2025

12. Closing Prayer

13. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Moved by: Tom Jordan

Carried

Topics for Presentations for 2025-2026 school year:

TOPIC	DATE
Best Buddies in CDSBEO Schools	Wednesday, September 24 th , 2025
Mental Health – Parent Information	Wednesday, October 29 th , 2025
2025-2030 Multi-Year Strategic Plan	Wednesday, November 26 th , 2026 (Double Meeting)
Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario	Wednesday, January 28 th , 2026
ABA Strategies	Wednesday, February 25 th , 2026
Beyond 21	Wednesday, March 25 th , 2026
Support Students who are Blind/Low Vision	Wednesday, April 22 nd , 2026
Reading Intervention	Wednesday, May 27 th , 2026
2025-2026 CDSBEO Special Education Funding Expenditures	June 2026 - TBD