

Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting (SEAC) Hybrid Model – Wednesday, April 22, 2026

ATTENDANCE

Chairperson:	Donna Nielsen, CDSBEO Trustee
Trustee(s):	Karen McAllister, Trustee Representative Sue Wilson, Trustee, Alternate
Members Present:	Tracy Mertz (Vice-Chair), Rural FASD Brandy Sheahan, Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario Nicki Hughes, Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario, Alternate Amy Malyon, Beyond 21 Ryan Billing, Career Services of Brockville, Alternate Kaitlyn Bissonnette, CAS SD&G Susie Trotter, Child & Youth Mental Health Services, Cornwall Community Hospital
Members Absent:	Tom Jordan, Family and Children's Services of LLG Carrie Onstein, Career Services of Brockville Jayne Stoddart, Rural FASD, Alternate Cathie Knapp-Fisher, Family and Children's Services of LLG, Alternate Angela Carson, Beyond 21, Alternate
Board Administration:	Brent Bovaird, Superintendent of School Effectiveness Angela McNamee, Principal of Special Education Sarah Price, Administrative Assistant to Superintendent Bovaird

1. Welcome, Introductions and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm.

2. Land Acknowledgement, Opening Prayer & MYSP Connection

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion

To approve the agenda for our April 22nd meeting as presented.

Moved by: Susie Trotter

Carried

4. Receiving of approved minutes from Wednesday, March 25th, 2026.

The minutes from our March 25th meeting were electronically approved by committee members on March 30th. These minutes are available to the public on the CDSBEO Board website.

5. Supporting Students who are Blind/Low Vision – Tara Hickman, CDSBEO Hearing and Vision Resource Teacher

SEAC received a presentation on services for students who are blind or have low vision, outlining eligibility criteria, assessment practices, and the multi-tiered model of support. The presentation described the role of the Blind/Low Vision Specialist Teacher, including collaboration with school teams, assistive technology, accommodations, and instruction aligned with the Expanded Core Curriculum. Emphasis was placed on removing barriers to learning, promoting independence, and ensuring equitable access to curriculum and assessment. The presentation highlighted how these supports contribute to student achievement, well-being, and inclusion.

6. Association Updates

Rural FASD Support Network

- The Smiths Falls Office location will close effective April 30, 2026
- Mental Health First Aid courses will continue to be delivered
- Planning for the 2026 FASD Awareness continues. Our first event will be May 26 at Lower Reach Park in Smiths Falls that includes activities and a 1km run and the second will be on August 16 at Riverside Park in Kemptville that includes activities and a triathlon. Both events are to spread FASD awareness among the youth, families and community members participating.
- Monthly caregiver meetings will continue at a new location (ConnectWell: 88 Cornelia St., West, Unit A4 in Smiths Falls) on the third Saturday of each month.

7. Special Education Department Update – Angie McNamee, Principal of Special Education
Digital Special Education Platform – CLEVR:

CDSBEO is moving forward with implementing the CLEVR digital Special Education platform to streamline documentation, align with Aspen, and improve efficiency for teachers and Special Education Resource Teachers.

Educational Assistant Handbook:

A new Educational Assistant Handbook has been developed to provide consistent guidance and clarity of roles, with dedicated time scheduled for EAs to review it during the April 24 PA Day.

Catholic Education Week Activities and Events

Transition Fairs:

During Catholic Education Week, CDSBEO will host two Regional Transition Fairs in Kemptville and Cornwall, in collaboration with our co-terminus board, to support students with multiple exceptionalities and their families transitioning to adult life.

Mental Health Week Initiatives:

Schools received Mental Health resource packages to support Mental Health Week activities,

and the Mental Health Team will offer virtual parent sessions focused on evidence-based strategies for student well-being.

Mini Course Program:

Selected intermediate students will participate in a week-long Mini Course Program at the University of Ottawa or Carleton University to explore post-secondary pathways and support secondary school transitions.

8. New Business

a. June Meeting Date

Motion

To approve the recommendation that we send a survey to members to determine a June meeting date.

Moved by: Amy Malyon

Carried

b. Special Education Annual Report

Review of updates made to sections 9, 11 and 12 of the 2025-2026 Special Education Annual Report

9. Correspondence Received

- a. Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB – Letter to Minister regarding Bill 33

10. Motion to Excuse Regrets Received

Absent with notification

- Carrie Onstein, representative for Career Services
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Absent without notification

- Tom Jordan, representative for Family and Children’s Services of Lanark, Leeds & Grenville

Motion

To approve the absence(s) as notified.

Moved by: Karen McAllister

Carried

11. Next SEAC Meeting – Wednesday, May 27, 2026, at 4:30pm

12. Closing Prayer

13. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

That the meeting be adjourned at 5:40pm.

Moved by: Tracy Mertz

Carried

Topics for Presentations 2025-2026

- Wednesday, September 24th, 2025: Best Buddies in CDSBEO Schools

- Wednesday, October 29th, 2025: Mental Health – Parent Information
- Wednesday, November 26th, 2025: 2025-2030 Multi-Year Strategic Plan
- Wednesday, November 26th, 2025: Calm, Connected & Compassionate: The Impact of Board Wide BMS Training
- Wednesday, January 28th, 2026: Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario
- Wednesday, February 25th, 2026: CDSBEO EQAO Results through a Special Education Lens
- Wednesday, March 25th, 2026: Beyond 21
- Wednesday, April 22nd, 2026: Supporting Students who are Blind/Low Vision
- Wednesday, May 27th, 2026: 2025-2026 CDSBEO Special Education Funding Expenditures
- June, date TBD: Reading Intervention