

Agenda – SEAC Meeting

September 9, 2026 – 5:30 p.m.

Limestone Education Centre

220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, Ontario

Public Viewing: [Join the Live Event](#)

Public Meeting – 5:30 p.m.

Acknowledgement of Territory: “The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their enduring presence on this land, as well as the presence of Métis, Inuit, and other First Nations from across Turtle Island. We honour their cultures and celebrate their commitment to this land.”

1. WELCOME

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 SEAC Meeting – June 10, 2026 (Pages 3-6)

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

5.1 [Special Education Plan 26-27](#)

6. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES UPDATE

6.1 Accessibility in Limestone Presentation – Educational Services Staff

Limestone District School Board

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[See Yourself in Limestone](#)

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Thames Valley District School Board- Letter to Minister of Education regarding Funding Support for Students Requiring Special Education Programs and Services, dated June 22, 2026. For your information. (Pages 7-8).

7.2 Halton District School Board – Letter to Minister of Education regarding Increased and Sustainable Special Education Funding, dated September 1, 2026. For your information (Pages 9-10).

8. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report – Associate Superintendent Blackburn (Pages 11-12)

9.2 Future agenda items

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

October 14, 2026

11. ADJOURNMENT

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SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 10, 2026

Public Meeting

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Members:
T. Lloyd K. McGregor	Present: A. Martin, Member-at-Large (Queen's University) K. Hill, Member-at-Large E. Clow, Member-at-Large L. Clouthier, Easter Seals Ontario H. Clark, Autism Ontario Regrets: G. Eaton-Smith, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston J. Barker, Lennox & Addington Resources for Children Z. Rogers, Community Living Kingston
Invitees:	Staff:
	Present: S. Gillam, Superintendent of Education W. Fisher, Educational Services and Safe Schools Lead C. Snider, Special Education Program Coordinator M. Aylsworth, Special Education Program Coordinator M. West, Special Education Program Coordinator L. Conboy, Mental Health Lead A. Todd, Vice-Principal of Educational Services J. Lalonde, Special Education Program Coordinator S. Labbett, Special Education Program Coordinator Regrets: D. Thompson, Principal of Educational Services M. Blackburn, Associate Superintendent of Education
Recorder:	Guests:
J. Senior, Administrative Assistant	P. Carson, Financial Services Manager R. Richard, Acting Superintendent of Corporate and Staff Services

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1. WELCOME

Chair McGregor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chair McGregor read the Acknowledgement of Territory:

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2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY: Member-at-Large Erin Clow that the agenda be approved. Carried.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None at this time.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY: Member-at-Large Andrea Martin that the May 27, 2026, Minutes be approved. Carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None at this time.

6. SPECIAL EDUCATION BUDGET PRESENTATION

6.1 Special Education Budget – Financial Services Manager Paula Carson and Acting Superintendent of Corporate and Staff Services Roger Richard provided a detailed presentation on the 2026-2027 Special Education Budget. An electronic copy of the presentation was shared with SEAC members following the meeting at their request.

7. EDUCATION SERVICES UPDATE

7.1 Summer Supports – Special Education and Mental Health – Vice-Principal Alison Todd and Mental Health Lead Laura Conboy provided an update on Ministry funding that will support summer mental health and special education programming. Summer mental health initiatives will include Adolescent Care Worker (ACW) support for students attending summer school, implementation of the *Kids Have Stress Too* program at selected Camp Read-A-Lot sites and continued psychiatric consultation through Kingston Health Sciences Centre. Professional learning opportunities will also support mental health literacy and implementation of the Ministry’s substance use and digital safety modules. The Board will continue to support student engagement initiatives and partnerships related to mental health and experiential learning

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Summer Special Education supports will include Educational Assistant (EA) support for literacy camps, programming support for students with special education needs attending summer school, continued educational programming at Sundance Youth Facility, and transition supports for students entering or returning to school in September. Students who may benefit from transition supports are identified through established transition planning processes, and parents and caregivers may discuss potential support needs with school administration.

7.2 Special Education Update June 17, 2026, Board Meeting – Superintendent Scot Gillam provided an update on the ongoing review of the Elementary special education model. Staff have analyzed information collected through surveys of special education staff, administrators, classroom educators, Educational Assistants (EAs), Early Childhood Educators (ECEs), and Education Services staff, in addition to service delivery and operational data.

Preliminary findings indicated that effective Intensive Support Teachers (ISTs) play a critical role in identifying student needs, developing support plans, and providing responsive supports. Schools with strong IST processes reported more positive experiences with the model, while schools experiencing challenges often identified communication and implementation concerns. Staff noted that the needs-based model has increased access to supports for students without requiring a formal diagnosis or exceptionality.

Future work will focus on strengthening IST practices, enhancing communication regarding the model, expanding Tier 1 supports for classroom staff, and providing targeted professional learning for staff involved in Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

7.3 Special Education Plan Consultation Update – Superintendent Scot Gillam provided an update regarding revisions to the Limestone District School Board Special Education Plan to ensure compliance with Ministry requirements for consultation. A consultation process and feedback form have been added to the Special Education Plan website to allow parents, caregivers, and community members to provide feedback. While school-level concerns are encouraged to be addressed directly with schools, broader feedback may be submitted through the online form. Feedback will be collected and reviewed annually, and the revised Special Education Plan will be submitted to the Ministry by the end of July. The updated plan will be brought forward to SEAC in the fall for review and approval.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Bluewater District School Board – Letter to Minister of Education regarding Funding Support for Students with Special Education and Mental Health Needs, dated June 1, 2026. Provided for information in the Agenda Package.

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9. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

None at this time.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report – Superintendent Scot Gillam provided an overview of the Superintendent's Report, which was included in the Agenda Package.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE

September 9, 2026

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY: Trustee Tiffany Lloyd that the meeting adjourn. Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.

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June 22, 2026

Hon. Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
15th Floor
438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

VIA EMAIL : minister.edu@ontario.ca

Subject: Funding Support for Students Requiring Special Education Programs and Services

Dear Minister Calandra,

On behalf of the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), I am writing to express our concern that provincial special education funding remains inadequate to meet the needs of students requiring special education programs and services.

The draft TVDSB Special Education Budget presented to SEAC on June 15, 2026, indicates that despite significant reductions and cost-saving measures, the special education budget remains more than \$9 million in deficit. SEAC is deeply concerned that the actual unmet needs of students exceed this deficit by a considerable margin. For many years, provincial special education funding has been insufficient to meet the needs of Thames Valley students. As a result, the Board has routinely allocated substantial funding from its general operating budget to address these shortfalls after careful consideration of its obligations to students with special education needs.

School boards have a legal obligation to meet the needs of exceptional pupils under the *Education Act* and related regulations. This obligation is grounded in a needs-based approach, as reflected in sections 170(1)(7) and 8(3) of the *Education Act*, as well as in the definitions of “special education program” and “special education services,” which focus on ensuring that vulnerable students receive the supports they require. Section 8(3) of the *Education Act* requires the Minister to ensure that “all exceptional children...have available to them...appropriate special education program and special education services.”

The Auditor General’s *Performance Audit on Special Education Needs* (May 2026) states that the needs of students with special education needs are not being met: “Special education programs and services did not consistently fulfill the requirements of students with special education needs ... inadequate resourcing ... hindered students’ access to essential supports ... Long wait times delayed professional assessments...and prevented schools from providing students the most suitable services and supports.” (Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, page 5).

At Thames Valley, approximately 15% of students have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that identifies the programs, accommodations, modifications, and services required to support their learning based on ongoing assessment and evaluation. However, the implementation of these supports continues to be constrained by available financial resources. SEAC members regularly hear from parents whose children have identified

needs documented in their IEPs, but who are not consistently receiving all of the supports and services required. According to the Auditor General's Report, teachers do not feel like they have the necessary resources to adequately meet the needs of the students in their classrooms: "87% of teachers in inclusive classrooms reported sometimes, rarely, or never having the necessary resources to implement IEPs effectively." (Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, page 26). This reflects a significant gap between the programs and services currently funded and those necessary for school boards and the Province to fulfill their obligations under the Education Act.

SEAC was encouraged by the Ministry of Education's response to Recommendation 9 of the Auditor General's *Report on Special Education*, which stated:

"The Ministry agrees with this recommendation and recognizes the importance of meeting the needs of all students."

In light of these commitments, SEAC respectfully requests that the Ministry review the special education funding allocation provided to TVDSB for the 2026–2027 school year and seriously consider increasing funding to better reflect students' actual needs. We also strongly encourage the Ministry to reconsider the current funding model to ensure that funding levels are responsive to student needs and that students have timely access to the programs and services necessary for their success.

Thank you for considering the concerns of the Thames Valley District School Board SEAC. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further and respond to any questions you may have. SEAC remains committed to supporting students with special education needs and advocating for an education system that provides equitable access to the programs and services they require.

Sincerely,



Alison Morse

Chair, SEAC
Thames Valley District School Board

Cc: Paul Boniferno, Provincial Board Supervisor
Kevin Auckland, Chief Executive Officer, TVDSB
Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA)
School Board Special Education Advisory Committees (SEAC)

September 1, 2026

Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Education

Subject: Special Education Funding

Minister Calandra,

On June 16th, the Board of Trustees passed the following motion unanimously, during our deliberations on the 2026-2027 school year budget:

Be it resolved that the Chair of the Board write a letter to the Minister of Education to advocate for increased and sustainable funding for special education.

Current Provincial funding, specifically for Special Education, does not fully cover the cost of providing the necessary programs and services required by students with special education needs. This has been a significant issue for school boards throughout Ontario for several years, resulting in larger class sizes, fewer educational assistants and other specialized staffing positions, along with a reduced number of self-contained classes for students who struggle in a traditional classroom setting.

Here in Halton, the Centre for Diverse Learners (CDL) voted against the 2026-2027 Special Education Plan at their June Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meeting. In their Minority Report, they cited that, "Our decision is based on concerns regarding the cumulative impact of increased class sizes, reductions in specialized staffing, and decreased access to professional supports for students with special education needs." The report outlines "reductions in special education teaching positions, educational assistants, psychoeducational consultants, speech and language consultants, social workers, child and youth care practitioners, structured reading supports, and assistive technology supports" as concerning.

The 2026 Independent Ontario Auditor General's Performance Audit of Special Education Needs found that "existing resources are often insufficient to ensure consistent implementation of accommodations and programming". This is consistent with the concerns expressed by the CDL. For declining enrolment boards this is especially concerning because most special education funding is based on overall enrolment while the number of students with special education needs continues to increase disproportionately.

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Phone: 905-335-3663 | 1-877-618-3456 Fax: 905-335-9802

www.hdsb.ca

In their Minority Report, the CDL recommends that the HDSB, “formally advocate to the Ministry of Education for increased and sustainable special education funding that reflects the complexity and growth of student needs,” and added that their “decision to oppose the proposed plan should not be interpreted as criticism of Board staff or the Special Education Department.

Like many school boards across Ontario, the HDSB spends significantly more on Special Education than we receive from the province. HDSB Trustees would also like to echo the sentiments expressed earlier this year by the Limestone and Thames Valley school boards, and **request that additional funding be made available to school boards to ensure our students with special education needs are able to access the intensive supports they need in order to reach their potential.**

We recommend implementing a provincial working group composed of representatives from school boards across the province who have special education expertise, and members of agencies that support students with special education needs, alongside Ministry representatives tasked with developing a more realistic funding model that will meet the current system’s needs.

Sincerely,

Amy Collard
Chair, Halton District School Board
Trustee, Burlington Ward 5

CC:
MPPs
Ontario Public School Boards' Association Member Boards

Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

09/09/2026

A. Ministry Updates:

Summer Mental Health and Special Education Funding:

The Ministry of Education provided Ontario school boards with Responsive Education Program (REP) funding for the 2025-2026 school year to support continuity/transitional support for students. This funding must be utilized between July – October with reporting back to the Ministry in November.

Some examples of how LDSB funding was used include mental health and special education transitional support, summer camp enhanced supports, psychiatry pathway/referrals and social worker continuity of care. Educational Services will provide a fulsome presentation on this funding and initiatives at the November SEAC meeting.

B. Educational Services Updates:

Professional Learning:

Planning for system professional learning has begun, with meetings scheduled for Student Success Teachers (SST), Intensive Support Teachers (IST), Learning Program Support Teachers (LPS), and School to Community Services Teachers (SCS) in September and October. Key areas for professional learning will be determined through a review of system needs, feedback from LDSB staff, and alignment with the Educational Services Operational Plan.

Technology Summit:

On August 19, 2026, over 100 educators attended the Summer Institute: Technology Summit at Bayridge SS. The Summit focused on technology platforms and applications to support student learning and success. Educational Services facilitated two sessions focused on Microsoft Accessibility tools and Inclusion by Design using Microsoft Copilot.

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Educational Assistant (EA) Allocation Audit:

In collaboration with the East Region Internal Audit Team, an Educational Assistant Allocation engagement and report was completed focused on our EA allocation process. Data was collected through document review, staff interviews and data analysis over a two-month period at the end of the 25-26 school year. The report will be presented to the LDSB Audit Committee in September and shared with SEAC at our October meeting. The second part of the audit, focused on Educational Assistant roles within Limestone, will be facilitated during the 2026-2027 school year.

Mental Health Action Plan 2026-2027:

In collaboration with the LDSB Mental Health Leadership Committee and under the leadership of Laura Conboy (Mental Health Lead), the 2026-27 Mental Health Action Plan has been drafted, posted to the LDSB website, and shared with the Ministry of Education. The yearly plan articulates specific areas of focus and action to support the multi-year Mental Health, Substance Use and Addictions strategy.

Prepared by: Michael Blackburn, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Program Services- Special Education and Mental Health, ITS and Continuing Education

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