

Agenda – SEAC Meeting

November 6, 2024 – 5:30 p.m.

Limestone Education Centre

220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, Ontario

Virtual Link: <https://bit.ly/SEACMTGNov62024>

Public Meeting – 5:30 p.m.

Acknowledgement of Territory: “The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe 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 – October 16, 2024 (Pages 3-8)

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

5.1 SEAC Letter to the Ontario College of Teachers (Pages 9-10)

6. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES UPDATE

6.1 **Intensive Support Teacher and Restructuring Update** – Principal Michael Blackburn, Vice Principal Nicola Dillard, Educational Services Special Education Coordinators: Jessi Lalonde, Melissa West, Matt Aylsworth, Cheryl Snider, and Taggett Bonham-Carter

7. CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

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8. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report – Superintendent Scot Gillam (Pages 11-12)

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

December 11, 2024

11. ADJOURNMENT

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SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

October 16, 2024

Public Meeting

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Members:
T. Lloyd K. McGregor	Present: H. Clark, Autism Ontario E. Clow, Member-at-Large A. Martin, Member-at-Large (Queen's University) H. Simson, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston Z. Rogers, Community Living Kingston J. Barker, Lennox & Addington Resources for Children L. Clouthier, Easter Seals Ontario Regrets: C. Lord, Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario K. Hill, Member-at-Large
Invitees:	Staff:
	Present: S. Gillam, Superintendent, Learning for All C. Snider, Special Education Program Coordinator M. Aylsworth, Special Education Program Coordinator M. West, Special Education Program Coordinator L. Conboy, Mental Health Lead J. Lalonde, Special Education Program Coordinator N. Dillard, Vice-Principal of Educational Services T. Bonham-Carter, Special Education Program Coordinator Regrets: M. Blackburn, Principal of Educational Services W. Fisher, Educational Services and Safe Schools Coordinator
Guests:	Recorder:
M. Smit, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston	J. Senior, Administrative Assistant

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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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Superintendent Scot Gillam welcomed new and returning SEAC Members.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY: Trustee Lloyd that the agenda be approved. Carried.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None at this time.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY: Erin Clow that the September 11, 2024, IEC Minutes be approved. Carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

5.1 MOTION: Trustee Lloyd – That SEAC send a letter to the Ontario College of Teachers, with copies to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Colleges and Universities, requesting an update to the curriculum in Ontario’s Teacher’s Colleges to better meet the diverse needs of students with special education requirements.

MOVED BY: All SEAC Members. Carried.

5.2 New membership – Epilepsy Southeastern Ontario is recommending that Christina Lord, who is the Executive Director in our district, represent Epilepsy Southeastern Ontario on the Limestone District School Board SEAC.

6. EDUCATION SERVICES UPDATE

6.1 Special Education Operational Plan – Monitoring Document – Vice Principal Nicola Dillard delivered a comprehensive presentation on the Special Education Plan- Monitoring Document. The key points of the presentation are summarized as follows:

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SEAC and Educational Services Mission Statement:

Our mission is to support the creation of equitable, supportive and fully inclusive learning spaces where all students can achieve their goals, develop to their full potential, and experience success. Our purpose is to support staff to recognize the unique strengths and needs of every student and to enable the conditions for learning, engagement, belonging and achievement.

The objectives and actions of our monitoring and operational plan are based on the mission and purpose statement we created last year with input from SEAC. This plan is also aligned with our Special Education Plan, which is available on the LDSB website. Our focus is on establishing the necessary conditions in every school to support every student.

To fulfill our mission and purpose, we continue to emphasize four key principles identified during the Special Education Review, incorporating feedback from our students, families, staff, and community partners.

Key Principles:

- Culture Matters
- Supports Matter
- Programming Matters
- People Matter

Capacity building is central to our efforts to enhance the educational experiences of students across Limestone. Over the past few years, we have maintained a consistent focus on core areas while expanding into new areas of learning. This expansion is based on observations and data collected throughout our system, leading to new insights into the conditions that have the greatest impact.

Key Areas of Focus for Capacity Building:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Executive Functions
- Assistive Technology
- Relationship-Based Approaches
- Access and Accessibility
- Modifications/Accommodations
- Neuroaffirming and Inclusive Practices
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

The previous monitoring plan identified goals in four areas and gave a general overview of our progress. While it was clearly linked to our department goals and the Special Education Review, it remained quite separate from the broader LDSB Strategic Plan and goals. There is now an opportunity to achieve greater

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alignment, coherence, and connection with the 'See Yourself In Limestone' initiative, ensuring every school and every student is included.

Template for the new Monitoring and Operational Plan:

- Goals from the strategic plan
- Objectives/Goals for our Department
- Specific Strategies/Actions
- Clear timelines, responsibilities, and monitoring

We will maintain our focus on our mission, key principles, and capacity-building areas. We look forward to presenting our first report in December, highlighting the important and impactful work across our District.

6.2 Summer Special Education Supports and Mental Health Funding Report – Mental Health Lead Laura Conboy, and Vice Principal Nicola Dillard provided an overview of the Summer Special Education Supports and Mental Health Funding for students with special educational needs. Here are the key points:

SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS

Literacy Camp Support:

- Educational Assistants (EAs) supported students with special education needs at Camp Read-A-Lot.
- Twelve EAs provided support over three weeks at four LDSB sites.

Summer School:

- A Learning Program Support teacher offered guidance and resources.
- Support was provided for students with special education needs in summer credit courses.

Sundance Youth Facility:

- Educational programming and support were provided to youth in custody.
- Students engaged in credit and non-credit courses through a partnership with the St. Lawrence Youth Association.

TRANSITION SUPPORT

Back to School Transitions:

- EAs and Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) supported over 700 students with special education needs and/or complex mental health concerns.
- Support included school visits, team meetings, connections to caring adults, and classroom tours.

Summer Mental Health Supports:

- Two Attendance Counsellors (ACs), one Student Support Counsellor (SSC), and an Adolescent Care Worker (ACW) provided transitional support to elementary and secondary students.
- Forty-one elementary and nine secondary students received in-person and virtual transitional support. Five students were provided with a school tour and introduced to supportive adults.

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MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

ACW for Summer School and Read-A-Lot:

- An ACW supported secondary students enrolled in summer school who were experiencing social, emotional, behavioral, and attendance issues.
- An ACW also implemented “Kids Have Stress Tool!” sessions for two Grade 1-2 classes during Read-A-Lot Summer Literacy Program.

EA Professional Learning:

- Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) training for 75 casual EAs and 34 Intensive Support Teachers (ISTs). BMS training focuses on prevention through strategies like understanding students, recognizing early warning signs, and using calming and de-escalation techniques. It also covers personal safety methods such as avoidance, releases, and blocks.
- Intensive Skills Y-Training for 38 EAs, focusing on supporting students with complex behavioral and mental health needs. demonstration, and role-playing strategies. Participants also received certification in Behaviour Management Systems training.

Mental Health Counselling:

- Ongoing support from a Social Worker for students on their existing caseload.
- Seventeen students received ongoing therapy throughout July and August.

Out of the City Art Camp:

- Nineteen racialized and newcomer students attended a 5-day art camp led by Zimbabwean Canadian stone sculpting artist Chaka Chikodzi.
- Three secondary students volunteered to work at the camp.

Pilot Project with Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) – Year 2:

- Eighteen students benefited from psychiatric assessments, diagnostic clarification, and medication recommendations through a time-limited collaboration with KHSC.

Mental Health Lit - Mental Health in Action:

- Over 90 educators and 20 administrators completed the School Mental Health Ontario course.

PSSP Professional Learning:

- Approximately 50 mental health support staff participated in a day of collaboration and learning on various mental health and substance use strategies:
 - Mental Health and Substance Use Strategy Highlights
 - Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Protocol
 - Suicide Response Protocol
 - Mental Health and Addiction Nurses
 - Youthab
 - Transgender Health Clinic
 - Maltby Centre – Nexus and One Stop Talk

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These programs aimed to support the educational and mental health needs of students, ensuring a smooth transition back to school and providing ongoing support throughout the summer.

7. PRESENTATION

7.1 Martin Smit, Educational Consultant for Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO)- Martin shared a presentation explaining the services provided by LDAO.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario - Letter from Sadie Augustyn, Chairperson of Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario, nominating Christina Lord, the Executive Director, to represent the organization as a member of the LDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). Provided for information.

9. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

9.1 Autism Ontario Updates- October 2024 – Report from Haley Clark. Provided for information.

9.2 Easter Seals Ontario – Linda Clouthier provided details about an Easter Seals event, Lights On The Lake Event being held on Saturday, November 9, 2024.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report – Superintendent Scot Gillam reviewed the Superintendent's Report that was included in the Agenda Package.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE

November 6, 2024

12. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 pm.

November 6, 2024

Linda Lacroix, Registrar and CEO
Office of the Register
College of Teachers

Dear Linda Lacroix,

The Limestone District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) would like to bring forward several concerns related to the current state of teacher training at Ontario's Teacher Colleges, particularly in the area of Special Education. We also recognize that many of these concerns are consistent across the province.

While the current teacher education curriculum typically includes courses on pedagogy, curriculum development, assessment and evaluation, classroom management, and educational psychology, there is a noticeable underemphasis on the importance of special education training. Moreover, there is a clear lack of consistency across Ontario's Teacher Colleges in delivering this essential learning.

Our concerns are rooted in several key areas. First, there is a lack of standardized and comprehensive special education training in initial teacher education programs. Despite the diversity of learners in Ontario classrooms, teachers are not receiving consistent preparation in this vital area. Furthermore, Ontario's classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse, both culturally and in terms of student learning needs, and teachers must be adequately prepared to address this wide range of abilities. Unfortunately, data from the LDSB student census indicates that students with special education needs continue to face significant academic and social challenges, often due to teachers' limited knowledge and training in this area. Compounding this issue, the limited number of Professional Activity (PA) Days available for ongoing professional development restricts the opportunities for teachers to focus on special education once they are in the field.

Addressing these concerns is essential. Research consistently shows that teachers who receive formal special education training are more effective in supporting students with disabilities, leading to better outcomes for these students. Additionally, such training equips teachers to implement Individual Education Plans (IEPs) more effectively and differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of all students. Teachers with comprehensive special education training are also more likely to foster inclusive, supportive learning environments that benefit not only students with special education needs but all students in the classroom.

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Robin Hutcheon, Chair | Krishna Burra, Director of Education and Secretary | Craig Young, Treasurer

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The LDSB SEAC strongly encourages the Ontario College of Teachers, in consultation with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Education, to ensure that special education training becomes a core component of all teacher preparation programs in Ontario. We believe this programming should be responsive to the evolving needs of Ontario students, with regular review and oversight by special education experts, both at the Teacher College level and within schools themselves. By doing so, we can help ensure that all new teachers enter the profession equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to support students with special education needs from their very first day in the classroom.

Sincerely,

Trustee Karen McGregor,
Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee

cc: Jill Dunlop, Minister of Education
Nolan Quinn, Minister of Colleges and Universities

Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

11/06/2024

A. Ministry Updates:

Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)

The Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) provides advice to the Minister of Education about:

- The development and delivery of programs and services for students with special education needs.
- Identifying and providing early intervention programs.

MASCE also:

- Responds to proposals or positions from the Ministry of Education or other ministries.
- Identifies concerns with how special education programs and services are delivered and provides information, advice and recommendations for the ministry to consider.
- Submits an annual report that includes a summary of the year's activities.
- Meets up to three times a year, typically in February, June and October, for a maximum of four and a half days per year.
- Establishes subcommittees as needed to explore specific issues and bring recommendations to the council meetings.

The Leadership Team at Education Services provides regular updates to MASCE on topics such as *Current and Emerging Issues Affecting Students with Special Education Needs, Successful Practices for Supporting Students with Special Education Needs, Challenges and Possible Solutions, and Possible Solutions and Future Directions*. Information has been shared with the Ministry for the next MASCE meeting happening later in November.

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Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week – November 17-23, 2024

Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week is taking place on November 17–23, 2024, this year. This week provides an opportunity for school and school boards to promote initiatives and priorities specific to local school communities. Throughout the week, Limestone District School Board (LDSB) students, school staff, and parent/caregivers will be encouraged to learn more about bullying, including cyberbullying, and their effects on student learning and well-being. Resources will be shared with the LDSB community shortly through Associate Superintendent Patty Gollogly.

B. Educational Services Updates:

Professional Development Opportunities

Student Support Teachers (SSTs), Intensive Support Teachers (ISTs) and Learning Program Support (LPS) teachers will all be meeting during the month of November. Agenda topics and learning will be shared at the December 11, 2024, SEAC Meeting.

Intensive Skills Y Training and Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) Training

Intensive Y-training and BMS training took place in October for all new permanent Education Assistants (EAs) and several new casual hires. As a reminder, Intensive Skills Y Training focuses on supporting students with complex behavioural and mental health needs through demonstration and role-playing strategies. BMS training focuses on prevention through strategies like understanding students, recognizing early warning signs, and using calming and de-escalation techniques. It also covers personal safety methods such as avoidance, releases, and blocks.

Traumatic Event Systems (TES) Training

On October 15 and 16, 2024, LDSB staff and community agency partners took part in a 2-day TES training with renowned Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) founder, Kevin Cameron. The TES model is a responsive methodology that addresses the systemic aftermath of a traumatic event on individuals and communities.

Prepared by: Scot Gillam, Superintendent of Education, Learning for All

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