

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

September 10, 2025

Public Meeting

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Members:
T. Lloyd K. McGregor,	Present: A. Martin, Member-at-Large (Queen's University) Z. Rogers, Community Living Kingston G. Eaton-Smith, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston E. Clow, Member-at-Large K. Hill, Member-at-Large H. Clark, Autism Ontario L. Clouthier, Easter Seals Ontario Regrets: C. Lord, Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario J. Barker, Lennox & Addington Resources for Children
Invitees:	Staff:
	Present: S. Gillam, Superintendent of Education, Learning for All D. Thompson, Principal of Educational Services 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 J. Lalonde, Special Education Program Coordinator N. Dillard, Vice-Principal of Educational Services T. Bonham-Carter, Special Education Program Coordinator
Recorder:	Guests:
J. Senior, Administrative Assistant	None at this time.

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 of the Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee.

1. WELCOME

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

Chair McGregor read the 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.”

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY: Trustee Tiffany Lloyd 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 Erin Clow that the June 11, 2025, Minutes be approved. Carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None at this time.

6. EDUCATION SERVICES UPDATE

6.1 Presentation: Summer Learning Updates – Principal Deborah Thompson, Vice Principal Nicola Dillard, Mental Health Lead Laura Conboy, And Educational Services and Safe Schools Lead Wendy Fisher shared an in-depth presentation of Summer Learning.

Summer Learning for Students with Special Education Needs – Program Support

- **Literacy Camp Support:** Educational Assistant (EA) support was provided to Camp Read-A-Lot to enable the full participation of students with special education needs in summer literacy programming. Twelve EAs provided support over three weeks at four LDSB sites.
- **Summer School:** A Learning Program Support (LPS) teacher provided ongoing support, guidance and resources throughout summer school. LPS provided support for the full participation of students with special education needs in summer credit courses in July.
- **Sundance Youth Facility:** Educational programming and support were offered to youth in custody in July/August. Students engaged in credit and non-credit courses for four hours per week through a partnership between the St. Lawrence Youth Association and LDSB.

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Summer Learning for Students with Special Education Needs – Transition Support

- **Back to School Transitions:** Over 700 students with special education needs at 45 schools received support from Educational Assistants and Early Childhood Educators before school started. Supports included school visits, team meetings, connections to caring adults, and classroom tours.

Summer Mental Health Supports

- **Adolescent Care Worker (ACW) for Summer School and Read-A-Lot Literacy Program** – An ACW was available to provide support for secondary students attending summer school who were experiencing social, emotional, behavioural or attendance challenges. The ACW also shared content from *Kids Have Stress Too!* To 25 elementary students during the Read-A-Lot Summer Literacy Program.
- **Transition Support** – Attendance Counsellors supported 17 students (10 elementary, 7 secondary) during the last week of August, with 10 referred to community mental health supports.
- **Ongoing Mental Health Support:** Two Social Workers provided ongoing mental health support to students on their existing caseload. Four intermediate students and 16 secondary students received ongoing therapy throughout July and August.
- **Pilot Project with Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC):** Through a time-limited collaboration with KHSC, students were able to benefit from psychiatric assessment, diagnostic clarification, medication recommendations, and in some cases, brief follow-up. Consent was provided by the student/family for information sharing from KHSC with the student's home school.
- ***MH Lit- Mental Health in Action:*** 52 elementary and 37 secondary educators completed the School Mental Health (SMHO) *MH Lit-Mental Health in Action* course.
- **Addressing Anti-Black Racism to Change Pedagogy and Practice:** Seven secondary educators completed Queen's AQ Course – *Addressing Anti-Black Racism to Change Pedagogy and Practice, Part 1*.
- ***By Your Side* Resource Hub:** In Partnership with South East Health Unit and Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board (ALCDSB), Limestone District School Board (LDSB) promoted the SMHO *By Your Side* resource hub with family physicians and health teams across KFL&A. *By Your Side* is a free, online resource hub for caregivers, designed to support mental health learning and well-being for every family.
- **Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP) Collaboration Day:** Approximately 50 Educational Services staff came together for a day of collaboration and learning. The event focused on team connection and multidisciplinary engagement.
- **Upcoming Initiatives:** Includes Applied Suicide Interventions Skills Training (ASIST), Stop Now and Plan (SNAP) in schools training, Student Mental Health and Wellness Symposiums, food insecurity initiatives, and student-led mental health initiatives.

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Summer Professional Learning

- **Behaviour Management Systems Training (BMS):** Fifty-seven EAs were recertified in BMS, while five EAs and two Intensive Support Teachers (ISTs) completed full BMS training. The primary emphasis of BMS is prevention which includes strategies like knowing the student, acting on early warning signs, and the effective use of calming and de-escalation techniques. BMS training also addresses personal safety techniques such as avoidance, releases, and blocks.
- **Intensive Skills Y-Training:** Twenty-six EAs participated in a two-and a half-day training focused on supporting students with complex behavioural and mental health needs. Facilitators taught strategies through instruction, modelling, and role play. Participants were also certified in Behaviour Management Systems training.

Pediatric Care Initiative

- **Joint Project with Kingston Community Health Centres:** Funded by the Sisters of Providence Grant, this initiative aims to align school and medical support plans for students and families in two pilot schools (KSS & LCVI).
- **Services Provided:** Access to primary care, coordination of services through KCHC, social prescribing, wrap-around supports, and case conferences to support both school and medical plans of care.

6.2 IEP Rollout Update – Special Education Coordinator Jessi Lalonde delivered a comprehensive presentation explaining the new process using Aspen as the platform for managing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for Special Education.

Purpose and Vision

- Aspen is introduced as a unified platform for managing student information, especially IEPs for Special Education. The platform aims to streamline updates, protect student data, and link IEPs directly to staff assignments, making navigation familiar for school staff.

Key Benefits

- **One Platform:** All student data in one place.
- **Familiar Navigation:** Easy for staff already using Aspen for other tasks.
- **Linked to Staff Assignments:** Reduces manual access management.
- **Learner Profile:** Enhanced student profiles support IEP development.
- **Future Possibilities:** Plans to include safety/medical plans and document school-based interventions.

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Implementation Timeline

- **Fall 2024:** IT collaboration to tailor Aspen for LDSB needs; training materials prepared; focus group input.
- **January 2025:** System-wide messaging; collaboration with IT for data transfer.
- **February 2025:** Training for educators and administrators; migration of IEP data; teachers begin using Aspen for IEPs.
- **Spring 2025:** Continued training; archived IEPs moved; cross-checking data for September readiness.

Transition Details

- Sections like clinical assessments, educational assessments, strengths/needs, accommodations, SEA equipment, and transition plans have already been copied over to Aspen.
- Teachers are encouraged to ensure entries align with Ministry Guidelines and LDSB Best Practices.

IEP Sections and Instructions

- The IEP includes: Student Profile, Assessments, Courses/Accommodations, Provincial Assessments, Transition, Human Resources, IEP Team, Consultation, and Response.
- Detailed, easy-to-follow instructions and videos are available for each section, including best practices and previews of printed IEPs.

Symbols and Supports

- Symbols throughout the instructions indicate time-saving tips, Ministry guidelines, best practices, and roles such as Student Support Teacher (SST) and LPS.

Assessment and Editing

- Assessment data and strengths/needs are auto copied from learner profiles but can be edited by unlocking the section.
- Drop-down menus reflect LDSB-approved assessments; teachers can add/edit as needed.

Personalization

- Teachers can personalize strengths and needs for each student, using both suggested lists and custom entries.

Teacher To-Do List (September 2025)

- Add current assessment data.
- Ensure assessments relate to modified/alternative goals.
- Update strengths and needs.

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Support and Resources

- Trained staff (administrators, SSTs, ISTs, Special Education Coordinators) are available for support.
- Technical questions can be submitted via Heat tickets to the Aspen ITS team.
- A user-friendly checklist is provided for updating IEPs for Term 1.

Referral Process

- Decisions to refer students for Special Education are collaborative, based on classroom interventions and data.
- Guiding questions and criteria are provided for when to refer or not refer a student.

Tiers of Support

- **Tier 1:** Universal instruction and supports for all students.
- **Tier 2:** Targeted supplemental interventions for some students.
- **Tier 3:** Intensive interventions for a few students.
- Data and progress monitoring inform movement between tiers.

Ongoing System Support

- Coordinators and educators receive ongoing training and support.
- IT collaboration continues to ensure smooth implementation and dashboard development for data visibility.

6.3 SEAC Topic Selection for the 2025-2026 School Year – Superintendent Scot Gillam began the discussion on topic selection for the 2025-2026 SEAC Meeting schedule. The following topics were proposed or confirmed for presentation and discussion:

Planned Presentations

- Operational Monitoring Plan – Scheduled three times throughout the year.
- Budget Presentation – Tentatively planned for May or June, depending on government timelines.
- Special Education Structure Update – Focused on changes at the elementary level, with potential expansion to secondary.
- Mental Health Strategy – To be presented at a future date.

Suggested Topics from SEAC Members

- Pediatric Care Initiative – Interest in learning more about its rollout and impact.
- Student-Led Mental Health Initiatives – Exploring how funding supports student-driven efforts.
- Elementary to Secondary Transition Supports – Understanding the supports available to students during this transition.

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- Attendance and Engagement – Addressing attendance challenges and supporting students who struggle to attend school.
- Food Insecurity – Consideration of its relevance to SEAC discussions, especially in partnership contexts.

Members were encouraged to continue suggesting topics throughout the year. The committee expressed openness to evolving priorities and being responsive to emerging needs.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

8. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

None at this time.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

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

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

October 15, 2025

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 pm.

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See Yourself in Limestone