

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

October 15, 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 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 G. Eaton-Smith, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston
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 Regrets: T. Bonham-Carter, Special Education Program Coordinator
Recorder:	Guests:
J. Senior, Administrative Assistant	E. Clost-Lambert, Research Analyst L. Gillam, Research Analyst J. Ferguson, Empower and Literacy Lead

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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:

“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.”

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 September 10, 2025, Minutes be approved. Carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None at this time.

6. EDUCATION SERVICES UPDATE

6.1 2026-2029 – Multi Year Accessibility Plan – Superintendent Scot Gillam shared an update on the 2026-2029 Multi Year Accessibility Plan. The following key points were presented:

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2025-2026 Goals)

- Systemic/Physical and Attitudinal: School and playground audits to identify barriers.
- Information and Communication/Tech: Expand captioning options for meetings and produce digital accessibility videos.
- Physical: Track work orders through Facility Services to ensure all orders with an accessibility component are monitored, followed up on, and addressed, as well as working on our own LDSB Accessibility Standards with Facility Services.
- Systemic: Develop K–12 Education Accessibility Standards.
- Attitude: Gather staff and student voices for committee input and consult for the 2026–2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

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Consultation Plan for 2026-2029 Multi Year Accessibility Plan

- Consultation plan shared with Accessibility Committee (Sept 2025).
- Results to be shared in November 2025.
- Incorporate information into the 2026-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and bring to
- Final plan presented to SEAC and Trustees in February 2026.

Maintenance and Facility Upgrades

- Maintenance Work: Painting (including contrast painting), parking lot painting, door access improvements, power door operators/swipe access, fire alarm upgrades (including strobe devices), playground structure improvements, and top-up of Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) in playgrounds.
- Capital Construction – Interiors: Installation and upgrades of elevators, millwork, accessible classroom sinks, and universal washrooms.
- Capital Construction – Exteriors: Upgrades to parking lots (including accessible spaces and signage), improved site access, installation of accessible pathways, and addition of concrete curbs.

6.2 Student Census Update – Research Analysts, Ellyn Clost-Lambert and Laura Gillam, provided an update on the Student Census, including changes since the last meeting and new resources now available for staff, students, and families. The following summarizes the update:

Survey Audience Change

- The census will now be conducted only for students in Grades 4–12 (previously K–12).
- There will be two surveys: one for Grades 4–6 and one for Grades 7–12, completed in schools with educator support.
- The K–3 family survey will not be conducted this time; instead, a family engagement and climate survey will be offered later in the year.

Timeline Adjustment

- The launch of the census survey has been moved to the week of November 24, 2025, to allow more preparation time.

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New Resources

- A Student Census Educator Guide – This digital resource, available on the myLDSB site, provides educators with comprehensive information about the Student Census. It is designed to help educators understand the census, support students in the classroom, and introduce the census to students before they complete it.
- A Student and Family Guide – This is available on the LDSB website, providing details about the survey, its purpose, accessibility considerations, and sample questions.

Accessibility and Support:

- The census includes features to support multilingual learners and students with accessibility needs (e.g., built-in audio, translation options, glossary of terms, flexible completion).
- Support staff and coordinators have been briefed to assist students as needed.
- Students may choose their adult helper for the survey to ensure comfort and confidentiality.

Additional Information:

- All survey questions and rationale are available for preview online.
- A dedicated phone line is available for census support, addressing technology access and other accessibility issues.
- The Grade 4–6 survey reading level has been lowered to Grade 3, and rollover definitions are embedded for key terms.
- Pilot schools are testing accessibility features, and feedback is being incorporated.

6.3 Learning Disabilities Presentation – Special Education Coordinators, Jessi Lalonde and Matt Aylsworth, along with Empower and Literacy Lead, Jo Anne Ferguson, provided an in-depth presentation regarding Learning Disabilities. The presentation covered the Learning Disability (LD) cognitive profile, executive functioning, classroom supports, tiered interventions in LDSB, and advocacy.

Understanding Learning Disabilities

- Learning disabilities were defined and the importance of communication and self-advocacy for students with LD was highlighted.
- Strategies for supporting students, such as using checklists, visuals, and previewing material, were shared.

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Cognitive Profiles and Assessment

- Intelligence and achievement assessments (WISC, Stanford Binet, WJ, KTEA, WIAT) were discussed to identify LD profiles.
- Comparative data on learning profiles and student achievement was presented, emphasizing discrepancies between intelligence and achievement.

Executive Functioning

- The impact of cognitive deficits on executive functions (EFs) was explained, with EFs described as the brain's "conductor."
- Key executive functions were outlined, including working memory, cognitive flexibility, goal-directed persistence, organization, response inhibition, emotional control, planning/prioritizing, time management, task initiation, and metacognition.
- Teacher strategies to support EFs, such as backward design, clear goals, visuals, co-regulation, reducing distractions, chunking lessons, and consistent routines, were provided.

Reading and Writing Models

- The "Active View of Reading" and the "Not-So-Simple View of Writing" were introduced, emphasizing the roles of executive function, working memory, and self-regulation in literacy development.

Classroom Supports and Assistive Technology

- The importance of accessible materials and instructional accommodations (e.g., text-to-speech, audiobooks, digital resources, visuals, flexible response formats) was highlighted.
- It was stressed that accommodations should supplement, not replace, evidence-based reading instruction.

Tiered Interventions

- The multi-tiered system of support was described:
 - **Tier 1:** Universal, high-quality instruction for all students.
 - **Tier 2:** Targeted, supplemental interventions for students needing additional support.
 - **Tier 3:** Intensive, individualized interventions for students with persistent challenges.
- The importance of progress monitoring and data-driven decision-making was emphasized.

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Data and Trends

- Data on LD identifications by year, grade, and gender, as well as co-morbid exceptionalities, was shared.
- Trends in LD identification and the importance of tracking student progress were noted.

Advocacy & Self-Advocacy

- The importance of advocacy for students with LD, including self-advocacy resources and templates, was discussed.
- Students were encouraged to understand their strengths and needs to become effective advocates for themselves.

Key Takeaways

- LD cognitive profiles are unique, with peaks and valleys.
- Staff were encouraged to presume competence in all students.
- Collaboration among staff was identified as essential for effective intervention.
- When students understand their strengths and needs, they are better equipped to advocate for themselves.

A copy of the LD Presentation was requested by SEAC Members to be emailed to them after the meeting, and this was done on October 16, 2025.

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.

9.2 SEAC Approval of the 2025-2026 Special Education Plan – Superintendent Scot Gillam reviewed the 2025-2026 Special Education Plan.

MOTION: Trustee Lloyd moved to accept and approve the 2025-2026 Special Education Plan.

MOVED BY: All SEAC Members. Carried.

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10. NEXT MEETING DATE

November 12, 2025

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

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