



GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at the Administration Building, 451 Park Street West, Windsor, ON.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Kim McKinley, Trustee

Tim McCarty, Autism Ontario

Chelsea Lackovic, Windsor Council of Home and School Association

Erin Plumb, Learning Disabilities Association Windsor-Essex County

Cheryl Lovell, Trustee

Amanda Denhartogh, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise

BOARD PERSONNEL IN ATTENDANCE

Chris Mills, Superintendent of Schools/Special Education Programs and Services

Vicki Houston, Director of Education

Laura Bates, Supervising Principal of Special Education

Marc Crundwell, Supervisor of Psychological and Speech Language Services

Sarah Solly, Special Assignment Teacher STEPS Co-operative Ed & Experiential Learning

Jodi Burgon, OPC Elementary

Theresa Williams, OPC Secondary

REGRETS

Joanna Conrad, Windsor-Essex Down Syndrome Association

Mandy Hayes, Community Living Association

RECORDER

Melissa Beaton

1. Call to Order

Chairperson McKinley called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm.

2. Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands and Water

Chairperson McKinley read the approved GECD SB Land Acknowledgement.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: C. Lackovic

Seconded by: C. Lovell

That SEAC approved the Agenda for May 13, 2026.

The motion was carried.

4. Declaration of conflict of interest

None

5. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: T. McCarthy

Seconded by: C. Lovell

That SEAC approved the Minutes of April 8, 2026.

The motion was carried.

6. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

There was no new business as a result of the minutes.

7. New Business

M. Vukov advised that she will be stepping down from the SEAC Committee effective immediately. C. Mills shared her email of best wishes as we move forward.

8. Special Education Presentation

- Breaking Barriers Grant – Experiential Learning

C. Mills welcomed and introduced S. Solly to the committee.

This presentation outlined a collaborative initiative aimed at improving transition outcomes for students with developmental disabilities. It highlighted existing barriers, including limited access to meaningful workplace experiences, job skills training, and independent travel skills, which can impact students' readiness for employment and adult independence. The initiative aligns with Ministry priorities by strengthening transition planning through experiential learning, community partnerships, and inclusive employment pathways.

Through partnerships with Community Living (Career Compass) and Transit Windsor, the program provides pre-employment training, workplace readiness support, and hands-on transit training to build independence and confidence. A system-level approach was described, connecting classroom learning to co-op placements and future employment opportunities, with a focus on developing sustainable employer relationships and improving alignment between school and adult services.

Initial results indicate strong progress, including transit training for 76 STEPS students and expanded access to pre-employment programming. The presentation emphasized the need for continued support to sustain and scale the initiative, noting that while early outcomes are promising, long-term investment is required to fully establish inclusive employment pathways and ensure successful transitions for students.

9. Special Education Updates

- Professional Development Updates

L. Bates highlighted a range of professional development opportunities focused on supporting inclusive education practices. Sessions included subject-specific learning for LST, GLS, MAPS, ESL, and STEPS programs, with a strong emphasis on the use of artificial intelligence in the inclusive classroom. These sessions provided a hands-on strategy for differentiating instruction, supporting diverse learning needs, and enhancing student independence, including preparation for post-secondary transitions. The PA Day also included sessions on adapted physical education and creative programming such as the Incubator Art Lab, supporting a broad range of student needs and learning styles.

Additional professional learning opportunities were offered for specialized groups, including Support Worker for Deaf/Hard of Hearing staff and Early Childhood Educators, with participation across multiple sessions.

A full-day session on adapted literacy was also delivered, in collaboration with John McGivney School Authority. This training aimed to strengthen educator capacity in

supporting students with complex learning needs through practical application, collaborative planning, and alignment with classroom instruction and IEP goals.

- Special Education Plan Review – L. Bates
 - Standard 4 – Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies
 - Standard 5 – The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee
 - Standard 7 – Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings
 - Standard 9 – Special Education Placements Provided by the Board

Feedback/revisions were collected to apply to the 2026-2027 plan.

- Special Education events/dates
 - Speech and Hearing Month
 - Education Week – May 4, 2026
 - National AccessAbility Week – May 31 to June 6, 2026
 - Miracle League Days – May 19, 25 and 26, 2026 & June 2, 3 and 11, 2026 at Libro Centre Amherstburg

10. Items for Future Agendas

No items.

11. Association Reports

- A. Denhartogh, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise – FASD Peer Support Group meeting is being held on May 20, 2026, with a focus on planning for FASD Awareness Day planning session.
- E. Plumb, Learning Disabilities Association Windsor-Essex County – Summer Programs include Summer Recreation Camp from July 6, 2026, to August 14, 2026, for 6-12 years old and Barton Reading and Spelling. The 7th Annual Parent LDA Conference is May 20, 2026, from 6:30pm to 8pm, this is a free virtual event and open to all. 2nd Annual Ladies Golf Tournament being held September 18th at Oxley Beach Golf Course. There are learning courses for educators, families and professionals available at Ld@Learning. Annual Educators Institute is August 18 & 19; 2026 this is 2 half-day sessions for educators. The Roy Cooper Scholarship deadline is June 26, 2026, for student with LD pursuing post-secondary in engineering and physical sciences, visit <https://www.ldawe.ca/> for information. June 3, 2026, we are having a pasta fundraiser at Giovanni Caboto Club.
- T. McCarty, Autism Ontario – The One-to-One Summer Support Worker Reimbursement Fund is available to Ontario families of autistic children or youth who retain the services of a one-to-one worker to accompany their child to a camp, program or out on community outings. Maximum reimbursements of \$600, per child or youth (up to 18th birthday) will be made to subsidize services between July and August. A minimum of 500 children from across Ontario are expected to receive reimbursement. Reimbursement will be provided based on a random selection made from all eligible applicants who apply.

12. Distribution

- Waterloo Region District School Board – Provincial Proposal to Replace Trustees with Provincially Appointed Supervisors
- Waterloo Region District School Board – Support for Funding Priorities for Students with Special Education and Mental Health Needs

- Waterloo Region District School Board – Letter to Minister Calandra
- Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board – Provincial Proposal to Replace Trustees with Provincially Appointed Supervisors

13. Adjournment

Chairperson McKinley adjourned the meeting at 1:57 pm.



NEXT MEETING, June 10, 2026

Board Meeting Minutes available on [GECDSB website](#).

Vicki Houston, Director of Education

Chris Mills, Administrative Liaison

Kim McKinley, SEAC Chairperson

[Ministry SEAC website](#)