



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, May 7, 2026

Time 6:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room / MS Teams Virtual Meeting

AGENDA

- A - 1 **Opening** (L. DeJong)
(a) Welcome / Land Acknowledgement Statement
(b) Roll Call
(c) Agenda Additions/Deletions/Approval
- B - 1 **Timed Items**
(a) Behaviour Support Plans and Safety Plans (L. Miedema/J. Senior)
- C - 1 **Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings**
(a) Student and Family Support Offices (K. Graham)
- D - 1 **Consent Agenda** (L. DeJong)
"That SEAC accept the May 7, 2026 Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein."
(a) Approve the Minutes of:
(i) SEAC Meeting Minutes dated April 9, 2026*
(b) Receive the correspondence from:
(i) Kawartha Pine Ridge School Board SEAC dated March 3, 2026*
(ii) Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board SEAC dated April 8, 2026*
(iii) Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board SEAC dated April 13, 2026*
- E - 1 **New Business**
(a) Specialized Services Program Coordinator – Service Provision (L. Sheppard/L. Miedema)
- F - 1 **Information Items**
(a) Policies out for Comment - Nil (K. Jones)
(b) System Updates (L. Thompson/K. Graham)
(c) Chair/Vice-Chair Updates (L. DeJong/K. Jones)
(d) [Director's Report](#)
(e) [Family Math E-Newsletter](#)
(f) [EQAO Math Resources and Sample Questions for Families](#)
(g) [Family Literacy E-Newsletter](#)
- G - 1 **Community Updates**
(a) Nil
- H - 1 **Future Agenda Items and SEAC Planning Committee**
(a) ODEN presentation – Specialized Services Transitions Navigator
(b) Skill Building and Hub Programs
(c) Extensive Needs Program – Contact Brant
(d) Working through transitions for students with community partners
- I - 1 **Adjournment** (L. DeJong)
- J - 1 **Next Meeting**
Thursday, June 4, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. at the Education Centre Board Room / MS Teams Virtual Meeting

Learn

Lead

Inspire



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 9, 2026

1:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room / MS Teams

MINUTES

Present: Chair: L. DeJong Vice Chair: K. Jones Trustees: R. Collver, E. Thomas, Organizations: L. Campbell, T. Morgan, N. Schween Community Representatives: G. Ianniruberto

Administration: Director J. Roberto, Superintendents: K. Graham, L. Thompson, System Leader J. Senior, Specialized Services Supervisor H. Knill, Program Coordinators: L. Miedema, L. Sheppard, Recording Secretary: J. Valstar

Absent with regrets: Trustee T. Sault Organizations: P. Found, T. West

Absent: Community Representatives: L. Nydam Local Organizations: J. Balint

Guests: Trustee C.A. Sloat, Teacher Consultant, Math J. Watkins

A - 1 **Opening**

(a) **Welcome / Land Acknowledgment Statement**

Chair DeJong called the April 9, 2026 meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

(b) **Roll Call/Reminder of Livestream on YouTube/Closed Captioning reminder**

Recording Secretary J. Valstar confirmed roll call.

(c) **Agenda Additions/Deletions/Approval**

Moved by: E. Thomas

Seconded by: L. Campbell

THAT the April 9, 2026 agenda be approved as printed.

Carried

B - 1 **Timed Items**

(a) **Learning Progressions in Math**

Teacher Consultant, Math J. Watkins shared a presentation on Grand Erie's Responsive Instruction in Mathematics.

C - 1 **Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings**

(a) **Strategic Planning Session - Update**

L. DeJong shared an update on Grand Erie's Strategic Planning Session that took place on March 30, 2026.

(b) **SEAC Speaker Event - Update**

Superintendent Thompson shared information about the topic for the SEAC Speaker Event in February 2027. The Learning Disabilities Association of London will present on Executive Functioning. SEAC members were encouraged to send their questions and thoughts to J. Valstar.

(c) **Grand Erie's Draft Special Education Plan 2025-26**

The Specialized Services Management Team gave an overview of updates to Grand Erie's Special Education Plan. SEAC members will receive a copy of the draft Specialized



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 9, 2026

1:00 p.m.

Education Centre Board Room / MS Teams

MINUTES

Education Plan following the meeting. Members were encouraged to review the Plan and provide feedback to J. Valstar by April 23, 2026.

D - 1 **Consent Agenda**

THAT SEAC accept the April 9, 2026 Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein.

Moved by: K. Jones

Seconded by: R. Collver

(a) Approve the Minutes of:

(i) SEAC Minutes dated March 12, 2026

(b) Receive the correspondence from:

(i) Toronto District School Board SEAC dated February 25, 2026

E - 1 **New Business**

(a) **Special Olympics Update**

Superintendent Graham gave an update on the Special Olympics events in Grand Erie.

F - 1 **Information Items**

(a) Policies out for comment

(b) System Updates

(c) Chair / Vice-Chair Updates

(d) Family Math E-Newsletters

(e) EQAO Math Resources and Sample Questions for Families

(f) Family Literacy E-Newsletter

G - 1 **Community Updates**

(a) L. Campbell provided an update to SEAC that Contact Brant has received funding for their Extensive Needs Services.

H - 1 **Future Agenda Items and SEAC Committee Planning**

(a) Role of the System Staff

(b) Student and Family Support Offices

(c) ODEN presentation – Specialized Services Transition Navigator

(d) Skill Building and Hub Programs

(e) Behaviour Support Plans and Safety Plans

(f) Extensive Needs Services from Contact Brant

I - 1 **Next Meeting**

Thursday May 7, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the Education Centre in the Board Room with a virtual option.

J - 1 **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.



1994 Fisher Drive, Peterborough Ontario K9J 6X6

Tel: 1-705-742-9773, 1-877-741-4577

Website: www.kprschools.ca

March 3, 2026

The Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
5th Floor 438 University Avenue,
Toronto, ON. M7A 2A5

Dear Minister Calandra,

On behalf of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPR) I am writing to express concern regarding the impact of Bill 33, Supporting Children and Students Act 2025 and its potential impact on school boards.

We understand that the Minister has indicated that the intent of the legislation is to improve oversight and accountability within Ontario's education system, however, we believe the removal of Trustees undermines the principles of equity, inclusion and local collaboration that are essential in supporting students with special education needs. These principles take on an even greater level of importance for those students with special education needs and where community services such as mental health supports, therapy providers, transportation options and health care partnerships varies widely from region to region.

We are very concerned that Bill 33 allows the Minister to assume supervision of school boards. The bypass of local governance is of greatest concern. In every school board, trustees and SEACs work together to make decisions designed to ensure that the needs of the students and families in our communities that we both serve have the best opportunity to have their needs met in their local communities. We know that for some, access is limited and we work together to minimize that impact. We do this with meaningful and robust discussion with our SEAC members who represent many families and our trustees who represent their communities. It is about meaningful dialogue and community engagement.

As a board that serves a vast area of rural Ontario and three First Nation communities, we know that some of our families rely on our school board as the only source of support services. For other areas of the board our families and children rely on the strong network of local services. The local context for this work is essential for success. We believe that local context must continue to inform decision making.

The Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Education
March 3, 2026
Page 2

We respect the intention to promote consistency and equity across Ontario; however, we believe that the local context must be an important aspect of informed decision making. Like our local board, this province is a combination of rural, urban, large, and small communities, and no two school boards just as no two communities are the same. Decision making is best kept local to best serve the needs of our students.

We respectfully request that the Minister reconsider the removal of locally, democratically elected Trustees. Further we request that the Ministry undertake a large and broad consultation that would include SEACs, educators, stakeholders, and families.

We believe that a system that includes local partnerships, which invests in evidence-based supports, and provides additional and necessary resources would be a path to your intended goals of accountability and greater student success for all.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. We are concerned that the removal of Trustees may have a negative impact on all students for many years to come and we would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the Ministry in the best interest of students.

Sincerely,

Melanie Brynaert

Melaine Brynaert
Chairperson, Special Education Advisory Committee
Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board

- C. Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Hon. Dave Smith, MPP, Peterborough-Kawartha
Todd J. McCarthy, MPP Durham
Hon. David Piccini, MPP Northumberland - Peterborough South
Laurie Scott, MPP Haliburton – Kawartha Lakes – Brock
Tyler Allsopp, Bay of Quinte
Ontario Public School Boards
Chairs of all Ontario Special Advisory Committees
Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)





Huron-Superior Catholic
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

April 8, 2026

The Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
Mowat Block, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON

Dear Minister Calandra:

Re: Provincial Proposal to Replace Trustees with Provincially Appointed Supervisors

On behalf of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Huron Superior Catholic District School Board, I write to express our profound disappointment and concern regarding the Ontario government's proposal to expand the use of provincially appointed supervisors in place of locally elected trustees in the province's school boards.

The suggestion that trustees could be removed (or their role diminished) undermines local democratic control of education and erodes community confidence. Trustees serve as a non-partisan, direct voice of families and students, particularly those receiving special education supports. In contrast, supervisors appointed by Queen's Park lack accountability to local parents and caregivers. Furthermore, examples from other boards show that important mechanisms for transparency – posting our SEAC meeting minutes and regular trustee-parent communication - have mechanisms been curtailed under supervision, challenging families' ability to stay informed and engaged.

We also note that there is no financial savings for the Ministry or school boards by replacing Trustees with Supervisors but, in fact, costs more. The salary for 1 provincially appointed supervisor is approximately \$350,000 per year, whereas the remuneration costs for our 10 Trustees at the HSCDSB is approximately \$140,000. From our perspective, replacing Trustees with provincially appointed supervisors, who have no connection to the local community and do not understand the unique needs and culture of that community, runs contrary to PPM 170 regarding

transparency, collaboration and building trust and does so at a higher cost to school boards and, by extension, Ontario taxpayers.

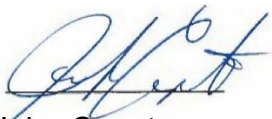
Furthermore, setting up Parent/Student Support Offices, to be staffed by current Board staff, while a great point of contact for parent/students to obtain information regarding Board process or policies, is not a replacement for the advocacy a Trustee does on behalf of students and parents. As employees of the Board, staff is accountable to the Board itself; in contrast, Trustees are accountable to their constituents. Parents and students, especially those who require special education accommodations, will lose an important avenue to hold teachers, schools and the Board accountable for ensuring that students are receiving those accommodations appropriately.

In the HSCDSB, SEAC members, including trustees and representatives from eight different associations (along with our SEAC Members At Large), work collaboratively to advise the Board on special education programs, services, and parent support. This local advocacy is vital to ensuring students with exceptional needs receive tailored supports that enable their success.

We are concerned that removing elected trustees will disconnect families from decision-making processes and weaken the advocacy structures that help protect the rights of students with special education needs. We urge the Ministry to preserve local governance and strengthen, not weaken, the voices of parents and caregivers in shaping education policies that affect their children.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John Caputo
Chair, SEAC
Huron Superior Catholic District School Board

cc: Chairs of Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees
Chandra Pasma, Shadow Minister of Education (CPasma-QP@ndp.on.ca)
John Fraser, Education Critic (jfraser.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org)

April 13, 2026

Ashley Card
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board (HPEDSB)
156 Ann Street, Belleville, ON K8N 3L3

The Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
Mowat Block, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 0B8

Dear Minister Calandra:

Re: Provincial Proposal to Replace Trustees with Provincially Appointed Supervisors

On behalf of the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board (HPEDSB) Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), I am writing to advise that our committee has reviewed correspondence issued by the Durham District School Board (February 19, 2026) and Durham Catholic District School Board (March 4, 2026), regarding the provincial proposal to replace trustees, with provincially-appointed supervisors. We share their profound disappointment and concern that such a move would undermine the local democratic control of education and diminish the voices of our most vulnerable students.

In HPEDSB, our mission is to educate and empower students with skills for success. We believe that every student can benefit from and contribute to the school community. Achieving this mission requires a governance structure that is deeply rooted in the local community, one that understands the unique needs and culture of the families we serve. The vital role of local trustees in Special Education serves as a direct, non-partisan voice for families and students, particularly those requiring special education supports.

At HPEDSB, we recognize that while instructional strategies are "good for all," they are "necessary for some". Trustees ensure that these necessary supports remain a priority by holding the Board accountable - unlike appointed supervisors who are accountable to Queen's Park, trustees are directly accountable to their constituents. This accountability is essential for parents of students with special education needs who rely on trustees to ensure the Board appropriately delivers required accommodations.

Our SEAC works collaboratively to advise the Board on special education programs and services. The removal of elected trustees disrupts this local advocacy structure, which is vital to ensuring students receive tailored supports enabling their success.

As noted by our colleagues at DDSB, replacing multiple trustees with a single supervisor often results in higher costs to the taxpayer. In our view, redirecting funds from local governance to provincially appointed salaries provides no benefit to the students in our classrooms.

The HPEDSB 2025–2030 Strategic Plan prioritizes Promoting Citizenship, Well-being, and Safe Environments. We believe that transparency and collaboration are the cornerstones of building trust within our community. We are concerned that under provincial supervision, critical transparency mechanisms such as regular trustee-parent communication, could be curtailed, as seen in other boards.

While the Ministry proposes Parent/Student Support Offices staffed by Board employees, these are not a replacement for trustee advocacy. Board staff are accountable to the Board itself, they cannot provide the same independent representation for families navigating complex special education processes.

Our committee believes that students should be educated in the most enabling, least restrictive setting that meets their needs. For this to be effective, education policies must be shaped by those who are directly impacted by them. We urge the Ministry to uphold the principles of PPM 170 by strengthening, not weakening, the voices of local parents and caregivers. Local advocacy is not a barrier to student achievement, it is a prerequisite for it. Removing trustees would silence the only direct, elected voice that families currently have in public education. Changes to democratic governance should never occur without the informed consent and input of communities most affected.

Thank you for your consideration of this vital matter.

Sincerely,



Ashley Card, Chair
Special Education Advisory Committee

c.c. Chairs of Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees
Chandra Pasma, Shadow Minister of Education (cpasma-qp@ndp.on.ca)
John Fraser, Education Critic (jfraser.mpp-co@liberal.ola.org)
Katherine MacIver, Director of Education, Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board