

## Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
5:05pm – 5:54pm

### SEAC Members & Quorum Tracking

SEAC Members	October 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2024
<b>Donna Nielsen (Chair)</b> <i>CDSBEO Trustee</i>	Present
<b>Karen McAllister</b> <i>CDSBEO Trustee</i>	Present
<b>Tom Jordan</b> <i>Family and Children's Services of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville</i>	Present
<b>Susie Trotter</b> <i>Child and Youth Mental Health Services, Cornwall Community Hospital</i>	Present
<b>Anna Lafrance</b> <i>Easter Seals</i>	Present
<b>Tracy Mertz</b> <i>Rural FASD Support Network</i>	Present
<b>Marie-Josée Menard</b> <i>The United Counties of SD&amp;G CAS</i>	x
SEAC Member Alternates	
<b>Cathie Knapp-Fisher</b> <i>Family and Children's Services of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville</i>	x
<b>Sue Wilson</b> <i>CDSBEO Trustee, Alternate</i>	Present
<b>Judith Peak</b> <i>Rural FASD Support Network, Alternate</i>	x
Board Resource Staff	
<b>Brent Bovaird</b> <i>Superintendent of School Effectiveness</i>	Present
<b>Angela McNamee</b> <i>Principal of Special Education</i>	Present
<b>Sarah Price</b> <i>Administrative Assistant to Superintendent Bovaird</i>	Present
<b>SEAC Quorum</b>	<b>6/7 – Quorum Achieved</b>

**1. Welcome, Introduction and Roll Call**

**2. Land Acknowledgement and Prayer**

Principal Angie McNamee acknowledged the land and led the group in opening prayer.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Chair Donna Nielsen added the receipt and collaboration of the MACSE Collaboration Form to the agenda under correspondence received.

**Moved by: Tom Jordan**

**Carried**

**4. Receiving of approved minutes from Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, SEAC meeting**

Minutes from the September meeting were electronically approved by committee members on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**5. Empower Reading Presentation – Kerry Kennedy, CDSBEO Special Education Resource Teacher**

The Empower Reading initiative is a literacy intervention program designed to transform struggling readers into capable readers and confident learners. Ms. Kennedy spoke of her experience implementing the program with her group of 6 students; a total of 110 lessons were completed. Students worked on using Empower Reading strategies to support their literacy learning. These strategies included the sounding out strategy, rhyming strategy, peeling off strategy, vowel alert strategy, and spy strategy. Strategies are introduced to students one at a time, building to more complex skills as the program progresses. Through the support of the program and their teacher, students can then learn which strategies work best for them to strengthen their literacy learning. Board data was displayed and showed that through the Empower Reading program, students made a significant increase with their word reading. The pilot program was a huge success for the 2023-2024 school year and we are excited to be entering year two of the pilot program.

**6. Association Updates**

**a. Family and Children’s Services of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville – Tom Jordan**

Mental Health Awareness Week

October 6 to 12, 2024, and information was shared with all FCSSLG employees. The week highlighted the distinction between mental health—our overall well-being—and mental illness, which includes specific diagnoses that impact thinking, mood, or behavior, such as anxiety, depression, and schizophrenia.

The campaign aimed to raise awareness about the challenges people face in seeking support, combat discrimination, and offer support to those affected by mental health issues. Key statistics shared included that 1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness in a given year, and by age 40, half of us will have faced such challenges. Furthermore, wait times for mental health services can be as long as 2.5 years, and the burden of mental illness and substance use in Ontario is 1.5 times greater than that of all cancers combined. Ultimately, everyone is likely to be impacted by mental illness, either personally or through loved ones.

Annual Angel Tree Campaign

started, with Lanark OPP collecting around 600 tags for the initiative, which has been running for over 35 years and benefits from a large network of donors. FCSLLG oversees referrals, tag production, and distribution to staff and workers.

The goal is to ensure that any worker with children or youth on their caseload who needs a gift will have access to one. In addition to the Lanark OPP program, there are many other donors and sponsors contributing, with toys available at every office for families not included in the Angel Tree.

Family Sponsorship is also available, allowing individuals, businesses, and organizations to sponsor families by providing gifts for children, food items or grocery gift cards, and often new household items like bed sheets and kitchen supplies.

#### Dress Purple Day

On October 25<sup>th</sup>, OACAS is wearing purple to remind children, youth, and families that they are not alone, and to highlight the urgent need for improved access to community-based care in Ontario. Many communities lack essential supports and services, leading to long waitlists that hinder timely access to care. In response, OACAS and its partners are urging the Ontario government to strengthen social infrastructure across the province.

#### Foster Family Appreciation Week

Foster Family Appreciation Week will be held from October 21-25, 2024, coinciding with the "2024 Raising the Bar" virtual conference hosted by the Foster Parents Society of Ontario (FPSO) from October 18-26. The conference aims to foster community and discuss relevant topics in fostering, with a discount code available for registrants. For questions, contact Elaine Pratt or Jennifer Warren. Additionally, OACAS will host a webinar on "Multi-Agency Breach Management" on October 30, 2024. The Ontario government is investing in over 100 organizations to provide safe, supervised activities for children and youth through inclusive sports and recreation programs, benefiting more than 13,000 young people in over 80 communities.

#### FCSLLG Strategic Renewal

We are in the process of renewing, updating and improving our Strategic Plan. This process will involve extensive input collection from staff, the communities we serve and our youth/families.

### **b. Children's Youth Mental Health Services for Cornwall Community Hospital – *Susie Trotter***

The Solution Focused Therapy (SFT) initiative involves collaboration with various community partners, including the Ontario Health Team and several mental health organizations. In March 2024, SFT training was provided to clinicians and community partners. The therapy consists of 4 to 6 sessions, aiming to reduce waitlists and enable quicker client access. SFT is an evidence-based approach that emphasizes clients' strengths, fostering hope regarding their challenges. After completing SFT, clients can transition to other services or receive "tune-up" sessions as needed.

**c. Rural FASD Support Network – Tracy Mertz**

Rural FASD is actively engaging with the community, recently addressing Quinte area caregivers about supporting those with neurodivergent children and the importance of community connections.

Information was also presented on our upcoming Mental Health First Aid training scheduled for November 14, with virtual spots still available.

Jessica Danielle from Wellington Kids shared insights on the significance of early interventions for speech and community challenges, which resonated with the caregivers.

In November, Staff Sergeant Kerly Tawdrous from the OPP will discuss community safety and protecting children at a meeting on November 16, accessible both in-person and via their YouTube channel.

Shannon Butt, an individual living with FASD, has launched a six-week program called Anchors for youth. If you or someone in your community suspects a youth could have this diagnosis of FASD please reach out so that we can assist in supporting this individual and their caregivers.

**7. Special Education Department Update – Angie McNamee, Principal of Special Education**

- The Individual Education Plans for all elementary and secondary students were sent home to families on or before October 16<sup>th</sup>.
- School Special Education Resource Teachers and Consultants are working together to complete the October 31<sup>st</sup> Special Education OnSIS submission to the Ministry of Education.
- CDSBEO is updating its Behavior Management System (BMS) training facilitation plan. Recently, BMS trainers conducted in-person training for all Principals and Vice-Principals. On the October 25<sup>th</sup> Professional Development Day, Education Workers had the chance to earn their BMS practitioner certification through the online Vector platform. The physical component of the training will take place in the coming months, with trainers visiting schools to facilitate the sessions.
- The Curriculum and Special Education departments are collaborating to address the Ontario Human Rights Commission's recent recommendations. We will adopt an inter-departmental approach to eliminate barriers and ensure all CDSBEO students have access to foundational reading interventions. Updates on this important initiative will be shared with the SEAC committee.

**8. New Business**

**a. Vice-Chair Nomination**

Motion

To accept Tracy Mertz's nomination as vice-chair of SEAC for the remainder of the term ending on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

**Moved by: Karen McAllister** *Carried*

**b. Member Nomination: Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario**

Motion

To accept Christina Lord's nomination as a local association member and Nicki Hughes' nomination as alternate representing Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario

**Moved by: Tom Jordan** *Carried*

**9. Correspondence Received**

**a. MACSE Collaboration Template**

Review and collaboration of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) form.

**10. Motion to Excuse Regrets Received**

Marie-Josée Menard, Representative of the United Counties of SD&G CAS. Motion to approve the absence as it was received without notification.

**Moved by: Tom Jordan** *Carried*

**11. Next SEAC Meeting – Wednesday, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024 which is our double meeting beginning at 5:00pm**

The presentation for this meeting will be "Inspiring Behaviour Change: Making a Difference Each Day".

**12. Closing Prayer**

**13. Motion to Adjourn Meeting**

**Moved by: Tracy Mertz** *Carried*

**Topics for Presentations for 2024-2025 school year:**

TOPIC	DATE
Reading Intervention & Supporting Student Gains	Wednesday, August 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2024
2025-2030 Multi-Year Strategic Plan Timeline	Wednesday, September 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2024
Empower Reading	Wednesday, October 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2024
Inspiring Behaviour Change: Making a Difference Each Day	Wednesday, November 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2024
Supporting Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing	Wednesday, January 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2025
Mental Health and Supports	Wednesday, February 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2025
Making Math Count	Wednesday, March 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2025
LD at School with Martin Smit	Wednesday, April 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2025
2024-2025 CDSBEO Special Education Funding Expenditures	Wednesday, May 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2025
Final Annual Report Review	Monday, June 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2025