



Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes - December 10, 2025

A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was held virtually on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance:

Trustees: Samantha Estoesta, Joe Meissner

Association Members: Jennifer Checkley (Easter Seals), Jane Martin (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy), Shannon Taylor (Epilepsy South Central Ontario), Roberta Thompson (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society)

Non-Association Members: Carmen Sutherland (Waterloo Region Family Network)

Board Staff in Attendance: Jodi Albrecht (Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being), Jennifer Crawford (Administrative Assistant), Stephen McCrae (System Administrator)

Guest: Ben Balfour (Overlap Associates)

Regrets: Lilly Adam (YMCA of Three Rivers), Lisa Bonnell (Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children), Michelle Hughes (FASD/ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise), Christine MacDonald (Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County), Ami McIntosh (Autism Ontario), Jeff Senior (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society), Esther Wainaina (Human Rights Officer - Lead Accessibility Plan), Kathy Waybrant (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy), Lisa Weiler Haskins (VP Educational Assistants Association)

Call to Order

Shanon Taylor called the meeting to order at 7p.m.

Welcome & Territorial Acknowledgement - Jodi Albrecht

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Roberta Thompson, seconded by Carmen Sutherland:
That the agenda of the December 10, 2025 meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, be approved.

- Carried -

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Roberta Thompson, seconded by Carmen Sutherland:
That the minutes of the November 12, 2025 meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, be approved.

- Carried -

Business Arising from the Minutes

- Follow up: When minutes are approved by SEAC we can at that point share them with others

WRDSB Special Education & Student Well-Being Report - Jodi Albrecht

- Information
 - System Updates
 - [EQAO Results have been released](#)
 - Pleased with the results and growth obtained
 - Future winter SEAC presentations on
 - Literacy in secondary;
 - Literacy for complex communicators;
 - Transitions for students in ACE classes;
 - Neuroaffirming PD
- Discussion
 - WRDSB Strategic Plan Focus Group Presentation, Ben Balfour (Overlap Associates - Manager, Strategy and Transformation)
 - [The Strategic Plan](#), located on the WRDSB website
 - Comprised of: [Strategic Directions](#) and the [Learner Profile](#)
 - Feedback:
 - **Strategic Directions**

- Removing barriers for all students
- Having a plain language version of the plan available to assist parents to understand its context
- Strengthening the relationship between teacher, student and home through the use of this document
- Showcase how these things are coming together
- **Learner Profile**
 - How are we adapting to meet the environment?
 - How are we tracking and recording outcomes?
 - The profile needs to exhibit diversity and inclusion for all students
 - How are we adapting so it is appropriate in different situations?
 - Possibly creating a customized or adapted learner profile
 - Should the Learner Profile be a stand alone document?
 - Posting the Strategic Plan in classrooms for staff and student reflection

Chair Report for discussion/feedback - Roberta Thompson

- [Letter of Support from the Simcoe County DSB](#)
 - Update: Bill 33 has passed
 - Minister of Education has no plans to make any announcements before Christmas

Trustee Report - Sam Estoesta and Joe Meissner

- December Trustees Report
 - The WRDSB has passed a balanced budget for this school year
 - The Education Act outlines we need to balance the budget within 3 years
 - Last year we passed a balanced budget with a small surplus
 - We can now access a portion of our reserve funds over the next few years and we voted to allocate some funds as follows: Continue

literacy and numeracy supports; Additional classroom support by hiring of Educational Assistants, Behaviour Analysts and other support staff; Technology and infrastructure updates as our IT systems are aging; and The Attendance Support Program to help with staff attendance

- Received an update on the Structured Literacy Multi-Year Plan. We are a couple of years into this plan, showing higher confidence rates, moving to higher tiers within the plan, and expanding out the profiles for the work we are doing in regards to Special Education, MLL
- The update on the Math Achievement Action Plan is also showing higher confidence rates amongst students.
- Looking for further input on the Strategic Plan
 - Survey open until Dec 12, 2026
 - Focus groups continuing
 - Held the first of 3 public engagement sessions
- EQAO results are on the WRDSB website
 - Very happy with the results
 - Grades 3, 6, 9 performed above our 2023-24 results
 - Maintained for grade 6 math and grade 10 students writing for the first time

Round Table Association Reports

- Jennifer Checkley, Easter Seals Ontario
 - Secured additional funding and have resumed approving equipment requests in the order they were received
 - [Summer camp registration](#) opening Jan 21, 2026
 - Changes this year to number of days offered
- Ami McIntosh, Autism Ontario
 - [Autism Ontario December Updates](#)
- Carmen Sutherland, Waterloo Region Family Network
 - [School Navigation Workshop Series: Transitions Workshop](#)

- Jan 15, 2026, 6:30-8pm, 500 Hallmark Dr. Waterloo
- WRFN Focus Group for Parents and Caregivers
 - Dec 11, 2025: For your awareness, this session is currently full
- WRFN Annual Appeal is running until Wednesday Dec 31, 2025. Goal is to raise \$50,000.00 so we can continue to offer Family Resource Coach support free of charge to families
- Jane Martin, Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy
 - 50/50 Draw available on our [website](#)
- Roberta Thompson, Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society
 - Book recommendation: Light Up the Learning Brain, by Jessica Sinarski
 - Planning for [World Down Syndrome Day](#)
 - Had our Holiday Party which was a lot of fun

Adjournment

Moved by Carmen Sutherland, seconded by Jennifer Checkley:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

- Carried -

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.