WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2026

MINUTES

DRAFT PENDING APPROVAL

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members Present
Tessa Alexander – VOICE for Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing**,** Jolene Bateman – Contact Niagara, Kylee Daley - Niagara Children's Centre, Patty Ferrie – Inclusion West Niagara, Brianne Friewat - Autism Ontario – Niagara Chapter, Tom Janzen – Down Syndrome Niagara, Katie McKay – Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Coalition, Leya Pouloski- NSS-NTEC, Michelle Toy – Pathstone Mental Health, Barb Wilson – Inclusion Action Ontario

Administration/Resource
Simon Hancox - Superintendent of Student Achievement and Well-being, Catherine Hodson- Student Achievement Leader Special Education - Elementary, Matt Ezrin – Student Achievement Leader Special Education - Secondary, Tracey Krysa – Senior Manager Special Education, Shannon Mitchell - Trustee, District School Board of Niagara, Elizabeth Klassen – Trustee, District School Board of Niagara

Regrets
Flavia Orvitz – Autism Ontario
Kelly Pisek – Chief Executive Officer

Recording Secretary
Jennifer McGugan, Safe Schools and Student Well-Being Coordinator

1. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TERRITORY**
   Quorum was established and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. Simon Hancox, Superintendent of Student Achievement and Well-being, opened the meeting with the Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
   Moved by Tom Janzen
   Seconded by Katie McKay

   "***That the Agenda dated October 28, 2026, be approved as presented."***
   CARRIED

3. **WELCOME**
   Simon Hancox welcomed new representative for Contact Niagara, Jolene Bateman.

4. **STUDENT VOICE**
   Matt Ezrin, Student Achievement Leader for Special Education – Secondary, shared a video featuring two students with cerebral palsy and physical disabilities in West Niagara Secondary School's SSTC program, noting that World Cerebral Palsy Day is recognized in October. The video showed how a specialized desk, a slant

board, large-print books, choice boards, talker buttons, and occupational and physical therapy goals have helped both students overcome barriers to participation.

5. **DSBN PRESENTATIONS/UPDATES**
   Simon Hancox highlighted the importance of data-informed decision-making in Special Education and its role in the department's review over the past few years. Paula Condon, Special Education Data Coordinator, and Tracey Krysa, Senior Manager – Special Education, presented the department's work to connect information with practice through timely, consistent, evidence-informed decisions that support more responsive and measurable outcomes.

6. **SEAC COLLABORATION AND FEEDBACK**
   Simon Hancox explained that the Special Education Plan needs to be reorganized to emphasize Ministry standards and better align with reporting mechanisms. He presented the revised table of contents and identified the Special Education Advisory Committee as the first topic for review at a future meeting.

   Simon introduced an activity to gather members' input on the SEAC Handbook. Members worked in pairs to review sections and provide feedback for DSBN to consider as it revises and improves the handbook for SEAC members.

7. **ASSOCIATION INFORMATION**
   Committee members shared information and updates from their respective associations and roles.

8. **TRUSTEE UPDATE**
   Trustee Mitchell shared highlights from the October Board meeting.

9. **CORRESPONDENCE**
   Correspondence was received and discussed from Lakehead District School Board SEAC.

10. **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**
    There were no questions.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**
    The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

    Next Meeting: Wednesday November 25, 2026

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