

Down Syndrome Association of the Upstate

Board Meeting Minutes

August 10, 2026

Meeting Time: 6:00–7:44 p.m.

Board Business

The Board reviewed DSAU's mission and discussed continued recruitment for open board positions. Additional outreach will be made to therapy centers, early intervention professionals, volunteers, and other community contacts.

The **July meeting minutes were approved.**

Upcoming Events

The Board reviewed preparations for several upcoming DSAU-wide events, including:

- **Night at the Ballpark — August 22**
- **Disability Expo — August 23**
- A sensory-friendly Halloween event at The Children's Museum of the Upstate in October

Volunteer coverage, registration, informational materials, and event logistics were discussed.

Finance

The Board reviewed DSAU's financial position through July 31, 2026.

- Year-to-date income: **\$25,202.44**
- July income: **\$4,671.40**
- Year-to-date expenses: **\$29,929.71**
- July expenses: **\$1,948.26**
- Year-to-date programming expenses: **\$22,516.76**
- July programming expenses: **\$1,691.60**
- Current spending allocation: approximately **75% programming / 25% administrative**

July reflected positive monthly net activity, while year-to-date expenses continue to exceed current-year income as anticipated under DSAU's practice of using previously raised funds to support current-year programming.

Buddy Walk sponsorships and donations continue to generate significant fundraising revenue.

Volunteer Background Checks

The Board reviewed a proposed tiered background-check system based on volunteer responsibilities and level of participant contact.

The proposed structure includes:

- Limited screening requirements for occasional volunteers working under direct supervision.
- Additional screening for ongoing volunteers and social-group leadership.
- More comprehensive screening for roles involving direct participant access or greater organizational responsibility.

Background checks would generally be renewed every two years.

The Board also discussed establishing a designated volunteer-management role and using a third-party screening provider so DSAU would not directly maintain sensitive background-check information.

The Board **approved Sterling Volunteers as the organization's background-check provider**, with all eight members present voting in favor.

Associated costs will be included within the appropriate administrative budget category.

Individual background-check details and internal personnel assignments have been omitted from the public minutes.

Education

The Education Committee reviewed several current and upcoming programs, including:

- Self-defense programming.
- Continued swim-lesson support, with earlier promotion planned for 2027.
- Equine activities through Eden Farms.
- Spectrum Stargazers.
- A BRIDGED back-to-school workshop.
- Continued IEP advocacy and education.

The Board discussed emphasizing positive, proactive, age-appropriate IEP planning and increasing family education about the role and scope of advocacy support.

Community Outreach

Community outreach efforts continue through partnerships with local organizations and professionals.

The Board also discussed maintaining outreach to new families and families experiencing hospitalization or other significant needs.

Identifying information regarding individual families has been omitted.

BOOST

No major changes were reported.

Approximately **\$9,172.50** had been awarded through BOOST as of the end of July.

Marketing & Communications

The Board reviewed ongoing website updates and coordination of Facebook and other communications.

Efforts continue to improve scheduling, consistency, and organization of DSAU's public communications.

Fundraising

Planning continues for the **2026 Buddy Walk**, with sponsorship recruitment remaining a major priority.

The Board also reviewed continued planning for the **2027 golf tournament**.

County Representative Program

The Board continued identifying potential contacts for the developing county representative initiative.

The program remains focused on expanding DSAU's reach and strengthening connections throughout the organization's service area.

New Family Baby Shower

The Board discussed creating a new welcome event for recently joined DSAU families with children approximately age two and younger.

A baby shower-style event is tentatively planned for **September 19, 2026**.

2027 Budget Planning

The Board began a broader discussion of priorities for the **2027 budget**.

Preliminary areas under consideration include:

- Maintaining fundraising support.
- Creating separate education budget categories for swimming and arts programming.
- Increasing Teacher Appreciation funding and selected educational programs.
- Reviewing Community Outreach and Family Care allocations.
- Restructuring BOOST to better distinguish camp assistance from other educational, medical, adaptive, and technology needs.
- Maintaining designated support for swim lessons, IEP assistance, and other education initiatives.
- Moving toward approximately quarterly organization-wide social events.
- Continuing annual events such as the Waterpark Event, Night at the Ballpark, Christmas Party, and World Down Syndrome Day.
- Exploring an additional winter family event.
- Increasing opportunities for both Mom's Night Out and Dad's Night Out.

Committee chairs will be asked to provide updated funding needs and priorities as the 2027 budget is developed.

Additional Business

The Board discussed potential birthday yard-sign partnerships as another way to recognize DSAU members.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made.

The meeting adjourned at **7:44 p.m.**