

Down Syndrome Association of the Upstate

Board Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2026

Meeting Time: 6:00–7:22 p.m.

Attendance

Elizabeth Duncan, Austin Bryson, Stacey Scott, Gini Nichols, Allison Fleahman, Christian Cisneros, Marianne Schroeder, and Megan Miller

Board Business

The Board reviewed upcoming board recruitment needs. Four board seats are currently open.

Applications will open in July and remain available through the September board meeting. Applicants are expected to be presented for consideration at the October board meeting.

The **June meeting minutes were approved with minor corrections.**

Upcoming Events

The Board reviewed preparations for the **July 18 Waterpark Event** and the **August 22 Night at the Ballpark.**

Approximately **157 people** had RSVP'd for the waterpark event, and approximately **114 people** had registered for Night at the Ballpark as of the meeting date.

The Board discussed event logistics, member engagement, check-in procedures, and volunteer needs.

Finance

The Board reviewed DSAU's financial position as of June 30, 2026.

- Year-to-date income: **\$20,531.04**
- Year-to-date expenses: **\$27,981.45**
- Year-to-date programming expenses: **\$20,685.12**

- June income: **\$5,450.34**
- June expenses: **\$9,236.58**
- June programming expenses: **\$8,732.41**

The Board noted that current-year expenses may exceed current-year income because DSAU's budgeting model uses funds raised in the previous year to support current-year programming.

June income included proceeds from Chrome & Chromosomes and continued Buddy Walk sponsorships and donations.

Summer programming expenses increased substantially, including costs associated with the waterpark event, BOOST assistance, and IEP-related support.

Zeffy has become DSAU's primary platform for donations, event registration, merchandise, and other payments. The organization continues reviewing administrative software costs and opportunities to reduce unnecessary expenses.

The Finance Committee will begin development of the **2027 budget** following the August board meeting. Committee chairs will be asked to present proposed programming, expected costs, and anticipated budget needs.

Volunteer Background Checks

The Board continued development of a formal background-check process for volunteers.

The proposed system would use different levels of screening depending on a volunteer's role and degree of contact with participants. More comprehensive screening would be required for individuals with greater responsibility or ongoing involvement.

Additional options and associated costs will be presented for Board consideration.

Education

The Education Committee reported that four participants had utilized swimming support as of early July.

Upcoming educational and enrichment opportunities include:

- IDEA and back-to-school training.
- Self-defense classes for teens and adults.
- Exploration of a dance collaboration.
- Vocational and life-skills opportunities for adults with disabilities.
- Equine-related activities for individuals with Down syndrome.
- Continued planning for medical, homeschool, transition, and family-education programming.

The committee will continue evaluating opportunities based on accessibility, safety, and benefit to DSAU members.

Community Outreach

The Board discussed expanding relationships with community organizations and improving outreach to Spanish-speaking families.

A Spanish-language interest form has been created, and the website team will explore adding additional Spanish-language information to the DSAU website.

The Board also discussed barriers some families may experience when accessing community services and the importance of strengthening trust and connections throughout the Upstate.

DSAU continues providing grief and bereavement resources to families when needed.

Identifying information regarding individual families has been omitted.

BOOST

A total of **20 BOOST scholarships** had been awarded, totaling approximately **\$9,172.50**.

Awards supported needs including camps, educational resources, technology, and adaptive equipment.

The Board discussed creating a separate camp-funding category in the 2027 budget so that BOOST funds can remain available for a wider range of needs.

The Board **approved transferring \$3,000 from the Education budget to the BOOST budget**.

Marketing & Communications

A new website team has been formed to improve organization, efficiency, and consistency of website updates.

The Board also discussed coordination of social media content and ways board members can help increase engagement with DSAU communications.

Fundraising

Planning for the **2026 Buddy Walk** continues, with sponsorship recruitment and team fundraising identified as major priorities.

The Board also reported that **Chrome & Chromosomes netted approximately \$3,500 after expenses**.

The DSAU golf fundraiser is scheduled for **March 18, 2027**, with sponsorship recruitment and event planning beginning in advance.

County Representative Program

The Board continued planning for a new county representative initiative intended to strengthen DSAU's presence throughout its service area.

The program will focus on identifying local contacts, improving awareness of DSAU resources, and building stronger relationships with families and schools in underserved counties.

The initiative is expected to launch in **January 2027**.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at **7:22 p.m.**