



**ALGOMA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (S.E.A.C.)**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
November 30, 2021
Via MS Teams
12:00 Start Time**

Present: L. Lambert (Algoma Public Health - Infant Child Development Program), S. Kitts (North Shore Tribal Council), P. Mick (Member-At-Large), Amanda Gauthier (Thrive Child Development Centre)

Trustees: S. Evans, R. Reid

Staff: B. Vallee (Superintendent), C. Phillips (Recording Secretary), K. Viita (System Administrator),

Regrets: M. Barbeau (Community Living Algoma)

Guests: Carolyn Nadeau -Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Resource Facilitator
Laura Austin- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Resource Facilitator

Meeting called to order at 12:05 p.m. With the approval of Chair Mick, Superintendent Vallee to facilitate the remainder of the Teams meeting.

1 Round Table - Introduction of members, staff, and guests.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes (October 26, 2021)

- Agenda approval. Moved by. S. Kitts. Seconded by L. Lambert. All in favour.
- Approval of Minutes. Moved by A. Gauthier. Seconded by L. Lambert. All in favour.

3. Correspondence:

Bill 172 FASD Legislation: Letters were received from Trillium Lakelands SEAC, Rainy River SEAC, Avon Maitland SEAC in support of Bill 172 FASD legislation. P. Mick would like to develop a letter of support. B. Vallee will create a draft and bring to the next meeting.

Online Learning Supports: Rainy River DSB SEAC and Waterloo Region DSB SEAC. These letters outlined concerns about the use of UDL and accessibility features for all on-line and e-learning courses. ADSB SEAC has already provided a letter of support on this topic.

Return to Regular Semester System: Halton DSB SEAC wrote to Minister Lecce regarding a shift back to a regular semester system. The Ministry has already made an announcement regarding this topic

4. Presentation

Using Tier One Supports for Students with ASD/Behavioural Needs in the Classroom **(Laura Austin, Carolyn Nadeau, ASD Resource Facilitators)**

L Austin & C Nadeau, ASD Resource Facilitators shared a presentation outlining some of the tier one (classroom-based) supports that are our initial focus when supporting the needs of students with ASD and/or behavioural challenges in the classroom. Tier one supports are considered to be “*Necessary for some, Good for all*”. Information discussed in the presentation included the following:

- ***Visual Considerations:*** Many students with ASD are very successful with visuals as words are transitory while visuals are concrete. Visuals may include objects, pictures, symbols, and/or written words depending on the age and ability of the student. Examples include:
 - Visual schedules
 - “First – Then” Boards used to pair a task with a reinforcement activity
 - Contingency Maps used to identify possible contingencies that provide a student with both positive and negative options to consider
- ***Transitional Considerations:*** Many students with ASD struggle with transitions between tasks, activities, settings, etc. Predictability helps students that may struggle with sudden changes. Classroom strategies to increase predictability include:
 - Signals: Songs and/or phrases used to signal a transition is approaching (e.g. “the cleanup song”)
 - Timers/Countdowns
 - Verbal cues: Words or phrases used to prompt a student that a transition is approaching
- ***Social Skill Considerations:*** Social stories are narrative scripts that use words and pictures to teach the student the expectations and behavior required for specific situations.
- ***Reinforcement considerations:*** Reinforcement is used to support behaviours that are desired for the situation. Considerations that staff make when contemplating reinforcement strategies include:
 - Purposeful planning that includes consideration of the behavior(s) that requires reinforcement, frequency at which the behaviour will be reinforced and determination of the “reinforcer” that will be used.
 - Verbal Praise that is both specific and frequent
 - Token economies/checklists – students are provided with “rules” required to earn tokens towards a larger goal of earning a specific reinforcer.
- ***General considerations*** to think about when using tier one strategies:
 - Supports must be individualized,
 - Supports must be taught to the student
 - Consistency is important (e.g., who, when, how)
 - Communication is necessary to help everyone work as a team to ensure success

Comments/Questions:

- S. Evans and P. Mick both commented that this was a great presentation and it was great to see examples of the strategies/programing used in the classroom to support our special needs learners.
- L. Lambert commented that many of the strategies would also be useful for students with different needs, including those with FASD as per our earlier discussion. L Lambert also asked if ASD Resource Facilitator services are provided via direct supports to schools or through professional development provided to school staff. C. Nadeau and L. Austin responded that both approaches are in place. Direct services are provided to classroom teams in schools (including classroom observations and coaching), as well as professional development opportunities to build the school's capacity to utilize strategies effectively. For example, today's presentation is a condensed version of professional learning that has been provided to our SERT group, and the strategies discussed are foundational strategies that we try to reinforce in our schools when working with our classroom teams.

5. Member Organization Updates

P. Mick (Member at large)

- Nothing to report.

L. Lambert (APH Infant Child Development Program)

- At APH, the focus is very much on COVID-19
- As assessment focus period has just concluded
- Starting the transition process for our students who will be entering into school next year. Information has been provided to K. Viita.

S. Kitts (North Shore Tribal Council)

- Back in the office this week as a period of working from home has just ended.
- Garden River FN currently has a high number of COVID-19 cases
- Currently hiring 4 ASW workers to cover maternity leaves and some staffing changes.
- Excited that Garden River's land-based learning program currently has 14 students attending regularly.

A Gauthier (Thrive)

- Thrive has officially moved into the second location on Queen Street
- We continue to see students, virtually is the first option when possible.
- A Christmas drive-through event was originally planned, however due to the local COVID-19 situation APH recommended it be cancelled.
- Some staff movement has occurred and new positions have opened.

6. Report from the Board (Trustees)

- An extensive presentation at our last meeting about plans for a Trades centre to be developed at White Pines. Learning in the trades has been a big focus for our Board for several years.
- Excited to announce a partnership with the Mike Holmes group as part of this work.
- The Committee of the Whole Meeting included policy review – an updated draft of our opening exercises policy was discussed.
- Updated information regarding COVID-19 impacts on schools has also been discussed.

7. Report from Administration (B. Vallee & K. Viita)

- **Update on COVID-19 Cases/Responses in Schools:** Due to the high rate of COVID-19 cases in the Algoma District, particularly in the SSM area, new guidelines to limit the spread and curb the surge of cases have been released. Some of these restrictions include the suspension of extra-curricular activities in which students cannot be masked or maintain 2m of distancing for a period of 28 calendar breaks. We have had outbreaks (defined as 2+ cases in a setting where there is a high possibility of an epidemiological link between the cases) in several schools. B. Vallee outlined the process that is in place within the ADSB to communicate information when we have cases that impact on schools as we work with APH to distribute information as quickly and effectively as possible.
- **Transitions:** Fall meetings have concluded. We are preparing for the 2022 process to begin in January.
- **CAT4/Insight Assessments:** This year, we conducted testing with both grade 3 and grade 4 students between October 18th-29th. We expect to have results of the assessment in the new year.
- **Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) Trainer Re-Certification:** Our BMS Trainers participated in a re-certification session (this is an annual requirement) on November 17th.
- **Formal Assessments:** Assessments for referrals received in June 2021 have been completed. We will be opening up our next intake period for referral submissions during the month of December.
- **SERT Professional Development (New SERT PD):** We were pleased to be able to conduct a full day of professional development (in addition to our ongoing SERT sessions) for our new SERTs. The morning focused on use of the *Read & Write* platform, with the afternoon session focused on our Language Intervention processes, including a focus on establishing oral language intervention groups.
- **Ongoing SERT PD:** The PD focus of our last SERT session was on the use of *Tier One Intervention Strategies for students with ASD/Behaviour Needs* – an expanded version of the presentation that SEAC received today.
- **Professional Development Session for GRWC Jordan's Principle Initiative Team:** On November 16th, we provided a professional development session for the Garden River Wellness Centre's Jordan's Principle Initiative Team. The first part of the session, presented by B. Vallee, focused on *Developing and Implementing Spec Ed Programs & Services in ADSB*. This provided an overview of the programs and services that we offer, with a particular focus on classroom-based programs and services and IEP development. The second part of the session focused on *Executive Functioning*, presented by Sarah Anich-Mansfield, LD Resource Facilitator. These sessions were similar to those provided to ADSB staff on the September 24th PD Day.

8. **Next meeting: No December meeting. Our next SEAC meeting is scheduled to be January 18, 2022**

9. **Motion to adjourn:** Moved by. R. Reid. Seconded by S. Kitts.

Meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.