



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

MINUTES OF MEETING
May 10, 2022
Via MS Teams
12:00 Start Time

Present: S. Kitts (North Shore Tribal Council), A. Gauthier (Thrive Child Development Centre) P. Mick (Member-At-Large), Margaret Barbeau (Community Living Algoma)

Trustees: R. Reid, S. Myers (alternate)

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

Regrets: S Evans (Trustee)

Meeting called to order at 12:00 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 (November 30, 2021)

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

3. Correspondence:

Correspondence: Letter from Upper Grand District School Board- PPM 81

- The letter addresses potential consolidation of speech and language services for students outlined in the updated draft of PPM 81. The UGDSB SEAC supports this but believes that funding for the delivery of speech-language pathology services to school-age children would need to be consolidated under the direction of the Ministry of Education to promote more equitable and inclusive services with great access for all children with diverse needs.

Correspondence: Letter from Superior-Greenstone District School Board- Virtual meetings

- The letter seeks consideration for Regulation 632/20 (regarding Electronic meetings) becoming permanent. This would allow Boards to continue to allow all meetings to occur virtually and to eliminate the requirement for the Director of Education/designate and the Chair to be physically present in the same room for all meetings, regardless of distance, weather, or health.

Correspondence: Letter from York Catholic District School Board- SIP Claims

- The letter supports Durham DSB's Special Education Advisory Committee letter regarding Special Incident Portion Claim Funding. We have also written a letter of support on this topic.

Correspondence: Letter from Waterloo Region District School Board- Suspension/Expulsion Data Tracking

Waterloo Region District School Board plans to write a letter to the Minister of Education requesting that the Suspension/Expulsion data tracking be amended to include data regarding students with exceptionalities that have been suspended or expelled; and that this include data on different types of exceptionalities and the number of students with exceptionalities that have been suspended or expelled. R. Reid commented that this would be extremely labour-intensive to do manually, so there would need to be funding to ensure that the data software was able to capture this information. B Vallee concurred, as we would definitely require the Ministry's tracking tool to be able to link to our student information system to make this effective.

4. Presentation: Draft of the 2022-23 ADSB Special Education Plan/Parent's Guide

- B. Vallee shared updated "numbers" for the draft *Special Education Plan*, including the overall number of IEPs across the board, specific information around each category of exceptionality (e.g. percentage of students with IEPs identified within that category), mental health services data, language supports and services, Kindergarten transition numbers, and staffing information.
- SEAC members will be provided with the most recent draft of the special education plan that has been updated to include this information.
- Funding and budget information for the *Special Education Plan* will be reviewed at our June meeting. We will invite Superintendent Santa Maria to join us for this.
- S. Meyers asked if the increase in IEPs might be relative to our overall increase in enrollment? B. Vallee commented that the number of students with an IEP in ADSB has historically been 23%-25% of our student population and the current numbers do fall within the upper limits of that range (e.g. now closer to 25%). We also know that, historically, we tend to have a much higher percentage of students identified by IPRC as opposed to students that are IEP only than is the case across the province.
- S. Kitts asked if some of these numbers decline because of students graduating? B. Vallee responded that yes, for the *Special Education Plan* we use a May 1st count date to ensure that we use comparable data from year to year. We also do a an Oct. 31st "count" to examine our fall numbers from year-to-year as we know that the numbers in several categories decline in September as students have graduated but then increase again over the course of the school year as assessments and IPRCs are conducted.
- SEAC wondered if we are seeing an increase due to COVID-19? B Vallee responded that our IEP numbers would not be directly affected by COVID-19 as there are specific criteria to receive special education programs and services, particularly for Identification within a category. However, we know that overall achievement levels of students have been impacted, with a number of students not yet achievement at pre-pandemic expectations.

5. Member Organization Updates

S. Kitts (North Shore Tribal Council)

- Busy testing students who will be either entering Grade 9 or university/ college next year.
- Planning the graduation parade for all graduating students in Senior Kindergarten, Gr. 8, and Gr. 12. The parade started 2 years ago when the pandemic began. There has been such positive feedback on the process, it will run again this year.

A Gauthier (Thrive)

- Thrive continues to grow – adding new individuals and new positions.
- The new location on Queen Street is filling up quickly!
- Excited that L. Lambert is interested in Thrive's Alternate member and will complete and submit the application form.
- The *Entry to School* program has now begun. This is part of the updated *Ontario Autism Program*.
- Thrive is also in the process of hiring summer students who act as a mentor/coach to allow clients to attend regular summer camp programming.

M. Barbeau (Community Living Algoma)

- Community Living Awareness Month. The lights at the Water Tower will be blue and green (Community Living colours) between May 2-7, 2022.
- Annual general meeting scheduled to take place in June
- Sergio Iacoe (Manager of Inclusion) is working with the education program team to engage with schools.

P. Mick (Member- At-Large)

- Nothing to report

6. Report from the Board (Trustees)

- We just finished a 'gap' in our Board meeting schedule, so there has only been one Board meeting since SEAC last met.
- Election is approaching in the fall. Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA) is launching a campaign (*I ❤️ Public Education*) to raise awareness of education issues.
- Trustees participated in a review of our Human Trafficking Protocols as all Boards have been in the process of developing these resources.
- Policy Review continues at each meeting.
- Our next Board meeting is scheduled for May 17th, 2022

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

- **Kindergarten Transitions:** K Viita has been very busy with our spring round of transition meetings for students that are entering school in the fall of 2022. We have had about 65 students participating in the Transitions process this year to date.
- **Welcome to Kindergarten:** Our *Welcome to Kindergarten* programs are going to back in place this spring after being modified due to pandemic issues over the past few years.

- ***SERT Professional Development:*** Our Secondary SERTs have been working with Darryl Fillmore, Mental Health Lead, on the SERT's role in supporting positive mental health practices in our schools, as well as processes for directing students to appropriate supports as necessary. Elementary SERT sessions have been focused on supporting the transition of EQAO Primary and Junior assessments towards an online format as well as some work on some of the tweaks and changes that we are implementing regarding our IPRC process.
- ***Principal/Vice-Principal Professional Development:*** An after-school session took place this month to support Principals and Vice- Principals with navigating the Individual Education Plan (IEP) engine, as well as some background information regarding the expectations for IEP content and development.

8. Next meeting: June 7, 2022

Our next meeting is scheduled for June 7, 2022. We will extend an invitation to Superintendent Santa Maria to provide an update on Special Education Funding and Budget for next year.

9. Motion to adjourn: Moved by. R. Reid. Seconded by A. Gauthier

Meeting adjourned at 1:15p.m.