

Algoma District School Board Special Education Plan 2025-2026



Confident learners,
caring *citizens*.

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Special Education Plan 2025-2026

The Algoma District School Board proudly educates over 10,000 students across the district. While students' needs are varied and have increased over the past several years, we continue to recognize that the approach to meeting each student's needs must complement and support the vision and goals of the school, the family and the community.

While supporting the inclusion and integration of the exceptional student into the regular classroom is the first choice for many of our families, and always offered by the ADSB, we are able to accommodate families by offering a broad range of special education programs and services to support the unique qualities and diverse needs of individual students.

The 2025-2026 Algoma District School Board Special Education Plan meets the Standards for School Board Plans established under Regulation 306 of the Education Act and establishes programs and services that are consistent with the provincial funding model.

As always, our goal is to provide the programs and services necessary to support our students in becoming ***confident learners and caring citizens!***

Lucia Reece
Director of Education
Algoma District School Board

ADSB Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

Confident learners, caring citizens.



Vision

In partnership with our stakeholders, the Algoma District School Board will create a collaborative learning community where all flourish as confident learners who see themselves as capable, self-directed and open to learning and as caring citizens who value good character and contribute positively to our communities.

Values

We are guided by

- ADSB character traits
- Lifelong learning
- Empathy
- Ethical relationships
- Equity and inclusion
- Accountability

Model for Special Education

The Algoma District School Board is committed to supporting the inclusion and integration of exceptional students in the regular, age-appropriate classroom. This has been, and continues to be, the first option for our students and their families. However, in consideration of the unique qualities and diverse needs of each student, we recognize that some of the families we serve, may prefer, when appropriate, to access a specialized classroom or **specialized** program to enhance the achievement and well-being of their learners. This model of special education program and service delivery provides a seamless approach to serving students with special education needs from entry into Kindergarten through to graduation from the school system.

Our approach to special education is guided by the following principles:

- All students can succeed
- All students have their own unique needs and patterns of learning
- On-going assessment and evaluation are the basis of effective instruction
- Successful instructional practices are founded on evidence-based research, informed by experience
- Programming decisions need to be collaborative and consultative
- A range of programs and services will be available from entry in Kindergarten through graduation
- Inclusion of students into their home school and age-appropriate classroom is the preferred practice
- Fairness is not sameness

The Algoma District School Board Special Education Plan outlines our delivery model for the provision of special education programs and services. This plan complies with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Freedom of Information Act, the Education Act and regulations made under the Act, and other relevant legislation.

Definitions

Exceptional Pupil: The *Education Act* defines an exceptional pupil as “a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program.”

Special Education Program: A Special Education Program for an exceptional pupil is an *educational program that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing special objectives and an outline of educational services that meets the needs of the exceptional pupil.*

Special Education Services: Special Education Services are *facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.*

Consultation Process

The Special Education Department consults with stakeholder groups in different ways throughout the school year. Regular meetings are held with parents, service agencies, parents, pre-school services, and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) to discuss available programs and services.

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The Algoma District School Board SEAC meets on a regular basis to share information and provide input regarding programs and services, initiatives, and ongoing professional development related to special education in the ADSB. Input is regularly provided at these monthly meetings to address issues and concerns related to special education locally and provincially.

Each year, the SEAC of the Algoma District School Board has the opportunity to provide input into the development of the Special Education Plan and reviews finance and budgetary information regarding special education programs and services.

There were no minority/majority reports submitted by the Special Education Advisory Committee for the 2024-2025 school year.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are valued partners in the education of all students. There are many methods available for parents to communicate with ADSB staff about suggestions, information, comments or concerns. These may include:

1. contact with the classroom teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher, Principal, Special Education Department staff, System Administrator for Special Education and/or the Superintendent of Education;
2. contact through community agencies and service providers, including SEAC members;
3. participation in School Councils, the Parent Involvement Committee, and/or other committees (e.g. Well-Being); and
4. case conferences at the school level.

Principals/Vice-Principals

Elementary and Secondary Principals have opportunities to discuss special education programs and services through monthly meetings. Elementary and Secondary Vice-Principals participate in quarterly meetings. Special Education topics and discussions are a regular part of the agenda for these meetings.

Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs)

SERTs provide input to the Special Education Department through on-going contact with Special Education Department staff, as well as regular meetings with SERTs from other schools. The purpose of these meetings is: to discuss operational issues; to solicit input regarding ways to improve/enhance processes and practices; to provide suggestions with respect to special education programs and services; and to participate in ongoing professional development.

Special Education Classroom/Program Teachers

Teachers of specialized classes and **specialized** programs meet periodically to discuss programs and services relevant to the needs of their students and participate in ongoing professional development. These meetings often result in recommendations being put forth to the Special Education Department. Due to ongoing staffing pressures (e.g. occasional teacher availability), meetings of Specialized Program Teachers were limited during the 2024-2025 school year.

Student Achievement Plan

Designated staff from the Special Education Department participate in the on-going review and development of the ADSB Student Achievement Plan to support alignment with special education programs and services.

Budget Consultation Process

Each year, the Algoma District School Board consults with the SEAC on the special education budget. The SEAC reviews this plan, although there is often limited time between the release of funding information from the Ministry of Education to school boards, deadlines for establishment of the board budget, and review by the SEAC.

Funding issues are a topic of conversation at many SEAC meetings and our members are well-informed about the process. The Algoma District School Board currently spends well beyond the funding provided by the **Special Education Fund** to support our core needs. This often requires the use of funds from other envelopes to address the shortfall.

During budget discussions, the components of the Special Education Grant are reviewed.

Beginning in the spring of 2024, the Ministry of Education made changes to the education funding formula. The former Special Education Grant is now known as the *Special Education Fund (SEF)*. The *SEF* is described as “*Incremental funding to support students who need specialized programs, services, and/or equipment*”.

Components of the updated Special Education Fund now include:

- ***SEF-Per Pupil Allocation*** (formerly known as the *Special Education Per-Pupil Amount*)
- ***Differentiated Needs Allocation*** (formerly known as the *Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount*)
- ***Complex Supports Allocation*** (includes amounts formerly known as the *Special Incidence Portion Allocation*, *Education and Community Partnership Program Allocation*, and *Behaviour Expertise Amount Allocation*)
- ***Specialized Equipment Allocation*** (formerly **Special Equipment Amount**)

Roles and Responsibilities in Special Education

(Taken from Appendix A, Standards For School Boards' Special Education Plans)

The Ministry of Education has been redefining roles and responsibilities in elementary and secondary education in legislative and policy framework, funding, school system management and programs and curriculum.

The Ministry of Education Roles and Responsibilities:

- Defines, through the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services, and prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality;
- Ensures that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils;
- Establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model. The model consists of the Foundation Grant, the Special Education Grant, and other special purpose grants;
- Requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education;
- Sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement;
- Requires school boards to maintain special education plans, review them annually, and submit amendments to the ministry;
- Requires school boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs);
- Establishes Special Education Tribunals to hear disputes between parents and school boards regarding the identification and placement of exceptional pupils;
- Establishes a provincial Advisory Council on Special Education to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to special education programs and services;
- Operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools for students who are deaf, blind or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

The Algoma District School Board Roles and Responsibilities:

- Establishes school Board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- Monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- Requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- Provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for the exceptional pupils of the Board;
- Obtains the appropriate funding and reports on the expenditures for special education;

- Develops and maintains a special education plan that is amended from time to time to meet the current needs of the exceptional pupils of the Board;
- Reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education;
- Provides statistical reports to the Ministry as required and as requested;
- Prepares a parent guide to provide parents with information about special education programs, services, and procedures;
- Establishes one or more IPRC meetings to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them;
- Establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee;
- Provides professional development to staff on special education.

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Roles and Responsibilities:

- Makes recommendations to the Board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the Board;
- Participates in the Board's annual review of its special education plan;
- Participates in the Board's annual budget process as it relates to special education;
- Reviews the financial statements of the Board as they relate to special education;
- Provides information to parents, as requested.

The School Principal Roles and Responsibilities:

- Carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, and through Board policies;
- Communicates Ministry of Education and school Board expectations to staff;
- Ensures that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes;
- Communicates Board policies and procedures about special education to staff, students, and parents;
- Ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, through an IPRC meeting, is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and Board policies;
- Consults with parents and with school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional pupils;
- Ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements;
- Ensures that parents are consulted in the development of their child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP;
- Ensures the delivery of the program as set out in the IEP;
- Ensures that appropriate assessments are requested if necessary and that parental consent is obtained;
- Within allotted time frame (30 school days from beginning of the school year).

The Teacher Roles and Responsibilities:

- Carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- Follows Board policies and procedures regarding special education;
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of special education practices;
- Where appropriate, works with special education staff and parents to develop the IEP for an exceptional pupil;
- Provides the program for the exceptional pupil in either the regular class or congregated class setting, as outlined in the IEP;
- Communicates the student's progress with reference to the IEP and provides modifications and/or accommodations as appropriate to the program and as necessary;
- Assists in providing educational assessments for exceptional pupils.

The Parent/Guardian Roles and Responsibilities:

- Becomes familiar with and informed about board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child;
- Participates in IPRC meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities;
- Participates in the development of the IEP;
- Becomes acquainted with the school staff working with the student;
- Supports the student at home;
- Works with the school principal and teachers to solve problems;
- Is responsible for the student's attendance at school.

The Student Roles and Responsibilities:

- Complies with the requirements as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- Complies with Board policies and procedures;
- Participates in IPRC meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and other activities as appropriate to age and circumstances.

Identification of Special Needs

The Algoma District School Board has practices in place as part of a continuous assessment and program planning process that may be initiated as a child prepares to enroll in school, or at any point during a child's school career.

The Algoma District School Board supports the Ministry documents, *"Education for All"*, and *"Learning for All"* which have been written to assist teachers in helping all of Ontario's students learn.

Kindergarten Program– Early Identification

This process begins during the registration process and includes a conversation with parents to learn more about their child, including strengths and interests, any concerns that the parent might have about the child's development, and strategies that the school might use to support a successful transition to the Kindergarten program.

For students already identified with special needs **that are involved with a community partner (e.g. child development centre)** prior to kindergarten registration, a more formal transition process is in place. This process includes an initial "awareness" meeting between the Board and the community partner/agency early in the calendar year, followed by a formal transition meeting with school-based personnel in the spring, and a follow-up meeting after beginning school in the fall. Opportunities are also provided for school personnel to visit the child-care setting during the spring months. Further case conferences may be held throughout the year as needed.

Language screening is included as part of the assessment process for Kindergarten students. Students whose profiles suggest specific learning difficulties are referred to the **In-School Educational Programming Team (ISEPT)**. Parents are consulted whenever a concern requires classroom or home support.

A Process for Accessing Special Education Programs/Services

The following steps may provide a helpful overview of a process of accessing special education programs and services for a student:

1. **Collaboration Among Home & School:** When a concern is brought forward from the school or to the school, special education begins. Sharing information and developing a collaborative plan between home and school is invaluable in supporting and encouraging a student. This may be all that is needed to remediate learning difficulties.
2. **School-based Consultation:** If it appears that further consultation is required, the teacher may suggest that the **In-School Educational Programming Team (ISEPT)** discuss the student's needs to help find school-based strategies and interventions that will support the student's learning.

3. **System-based Consultation:** The school may also contact special education department staff to help with assessing needs, offering suggestions and/or strategies for intervention, discussing further assessment options (either informal or formal), and/or recommending specialized consultation with members of the board team or an outside agency.
4. **Individual Education Plan (IEP):** Depending on the circumstances and the assessment data available, the school principal, in consultation with the special education department, may also recommend that a 'non-exceptional' *Individual Education Plan (IEP)* be put in place for a student. The IEP will outline appropriate programming and services (including accommodations, modifications, and/or alternative programming) that will be provided.
5. **Formal Assessment:** For some students, a formal assessment can help to provide the school with specific information to be used for identification and/or programming. If the student is an appropriate candidate for an assessment to be provided through the school board, the school will follow the ADSB's existing referral process for assessments. In cases where the needs of the student are complex, or in cases where a differentiated diagnosis is required, (e.g. the learning difficulty is accompanied by behavioural, socio-emotional, or mental health concerns) a referral to an external agency for more specialized diagnosis may be the most appropriate pathway. Some families prefer to seek assessments from private practitioners. The school can help provide parents/guardians with information on the assessment referral process.
6. **Report Sharing:** Once an assessment has taken place, a report is written to provide the results of the assessment and the information will be shared with parents/guardians. How the report is shared will depend on whether the assessment was conducted through the school board, or through a private practitioner or external agency.
 - a) **Internal Assessments provided through ADSB:** If the assessment was provided through the school board, the results will be shared with the parent(s)/guardian(s) by the assessor and a Special Education Assignment Teacher (SEAT). Once the results have been shared, parent(s)/guardian(s) will need to give permission for the report to be included in the child's *Ontario Student Record (OSR)* folder, which will enable school staff to use the information in the report to ensure appropriate programming and/or services are in place.
 - b) **External Assessments (e.g. Private Practitioner, External Agency):** If parent(s)/guardian(s) have chosen to have a private assessment conducted outside of the school board, or if an assessment through a community agency was most appropriate for a child, the practitioner or agency that conducted the assessment will share the results with parent(s)/guardian(s) directly. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will need to provide a copy of the report to the school to

enable school staff to use the information in the report for programming and/or identification.

- 7) A) Non-Exceptional / IEP Only:** If results of the assessment indicate that a student requires special education programming and/or services but does not meet the criteria for identification in a specific category or exceptionality, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) may still be recommended in the category of “Non-exceptional” or “IEP only”. If a student already has a Non-Exceptional IEP (see #4) in place, it will be updated with information from the report.

B) IPRC: If the results of the assessment indicate a student profile meets criteria for identification in a specific category of exceptionality (see pg. 7-10) an Identification, Placement, Review Committee (IPRC) meeting will be arranged.

For most students, who will continue to receive programming and services in the regular classroom, the IPRC will take place at the school level.

In some cases, if the student demonstrates an appropriate learning profile and the family is interested in considering these options, placement in a specialized program or specialized classroom may be considered. The IPRC may take place at the system level in these circumstances.

Both identification and placement must be reviewed by an IPRC on a regular basis (at least yearly).

- 8) Iterative Programming:** The Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlines the special education programming and services that a student will receive at school. This includes an outline of special education programs and services, specific educational expectations (if applicable), information about methods to review progress, and a transition plan is formally developed, in consultation with you as the parent, for each reporting period or semester (September – January, February - June).

The In-School Educational Programming Team (ISEPT)

The In-School Educational Programming Team assists schools in the early identification of student needs and the early intervention required to address student needs. The ISEPT is an integral part of the early identification and intervention process.

Each elementary school will have a team composed of the Principal, the Special Education Resource Teacher, and two-three other representatives. The presenting teacher will also attend to discuss student needs and previous strategies or interventions that have been implementing in the classroom. Additional personnel from the Special Education Department may be invited as a resource for the school team

Following the meeting, recommendations from the ISEPT will be implemented by the classroom team. It is understood that these recommendations will need to be regularly reviewed and modified as necessary.

Educational and Other Assessments

Classroom Assessment

Classroom teachers are the initial assessors of ALL students - including those with special education needs. The classroom teacher plays a vital role in identifying student needs and providing strategies for effective intervention. By using a wide variety of assessment and evaluation practices, as contained in the *Growing Success* document, classroom teachers are often able to identify student strengths and needs without the need for formal assessment and identification.

Some examples of assessments used by classroom teachers include anecdotal notes, portfolios, journals, work samples, teacher-made tests and use of the Fountas & Pinnell literacy assessment. Classroom assessments generally fall into three categories:

Diagnostic Assessment: This *assessment for learning* occurs before instruction begins so teachers can determine students' readiness to learn and their interests and learning preferences.

Formative Assessment: This *assessment for and as learning* is ongoing during instruction while students gain knowledge and practice skills. Teachers support, model and guide students toward success. Students themselves may take an active role in their learning through self-assessment practices.

Summative Assessment: This *assessment of learning* occurs at or near the end of a period of learning. Student learning is compared to established success criteria, and then communicated to students, parents, teachers and others.

Group Testing

The ADSB has historically administered two group tests to our student population on an annual basis. These include **Insight**, a group-administered cognitive abilities test and **CAT-4**, the **Canadian Achievement Test 4th Edition**. These tests are administered by classroom teachers with the support of the Special Education Resource Teacher. The Special Education Department reviews testing results and then discusses with individual schools any test scores which may indicate the need for a referral for further individual assessment.

Formal Assessments

Formal assessments may only be administered by an appropriate professional. This type of testing is done only with the written consent of the parents or older student. Confidentiality of these tests is maintained according to the wishes of the parents/guardians. Only after the parents/guardian have given written consent is formal testing included in the O.S.R. Third parties do not have access to student records without the consent of the parent/guardian or legal-aged student. These tests are used to determine the presence of a learning difficulty and to highlight focus areas for program accommodations or modifications.

Types of Formal Assessments

Psychological-Educational Assessment

A **Psychological-Educational Assessment** is a standardized individually administered assessment which provides a measure of cognitive ability (IQ), memory, phonemic awareness, academic functioning, as well as a screen for social/emotional and behavioral concerns. Only a psychologist or a psychological associate may make a diagnosis. Generally, at least some of the following instruments may be used:

- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children V
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test III
- Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales
- Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence – 3
- Child Behaviour Rating Scales (Achenbach)
- Adaptive Behaviour Assessment System
- The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers-Harris 2)
- Beck Anxiety Inventory
- Beck Depression Inventory
- Child Depression Inventory (CDI)
- Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children (MASC)
- Conners Rating Scale

In the ADSB, referrals for psychological-educational testing are usually submitted following student participation in the group testing (CAT-4 & Insight) that occurs at the end of grade two. **Note: To ensure the most effective use of resources, the ADSB does not generally "re-assess" students that have already had a formal assessment completed.**

Intake periods for schools to submit referrals usually occur in December and June of each year.

At present, psychological-educational assessments generally take place within one-six months of the intake period during which the referral was approved.

Speech and Language Assessments

For students experiencing difficulties with expressive and/or receptive language, articulation, voice, and/or fluency, a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) may complete assessments as deemed necessary. The SLP will make recommendations and/or additional referrals to help meet the speech and language needs of the student.

Speech Language Pathologists may utilize some of the following types of tests:

- C.E.L.F. 5th Edition – Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals
- C.E.L.F.P. 2nd Edition – Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals Preschool
- P.P.V.T 4th Edition - Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test
- T.A.S.P.—Test of Aided Communication Symbol Performance
- W.A.B.C—Wiig Assessment of Basic Concepts

Students are generally referred for Speech-Language Assessment in the primary division (Grades 1-3). Students are referred for assessment following participation in language development intervention or after consultation with the speech-language pathologist. Assessments are conducted on a “block” schedule throughout the school year. At present, speech-language assessments occur within approximately one-three months following approval of a referral.

Assessment Referrals to Outside Agencies

In cases where the needs of the student are complex, or in cases where a differentiated diagnosis is required, (e.g. the learning difficulty is accompanied by behavioural, socio-emotional, or mental health concerns) a referral to an external agency for more specialized diagnosis may be most appropriate. Throughout the ongoing assessment process, students, classroom teachers, SERTs, board personnel and/or outside agencies work collaboratively to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of instructional strategies.

Communication of Results

Early and ongoing communication with parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding classroom-based assessments helps improve student learning. As classroom teachers identify the strengths and needs of students, this information should be shared with parents through a variety of strategies (e.g. Edsby, phone calls, conferences or meetings).

In the case of a formal assessment conducted by the ADSB, a meeting will be scheduled to communicate the results of the assessment to the parent(s)/guardian(s). Following the sharing of the report, consent must be provided for the assessment to be placed in the student's Ontario Student Record.

External Assessments

When assessments are completed by providers external to the ADSB, it is understood that the external provider conducts the assessment and communicates the results directly to the parent(s)/guardian(s). This process usually occurs outside of the school setting, and school board personnel are not usually involved. If requested, the principal may be able to provide space within the school for external provider to communicate results to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

In cases where the parent(s)/guardian(s) wishes to share an external assessment, a written copy of the assessment report must be provided to the school. Assessment data will be reviewed by the Special Education Department to determine the appropriate course of action. In some cases, it may be necessary to request a copy of the raw data from the outside assessor prior to any action being taken.

Privacy of Information

Any release of assessment results to agencies outside of the Board requires written authorization of the parent(s)/guardian(s) in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)* and the *Education Act*.

Completed assessments and recommendations mentioned above are stored in the Documentation File of the Ontario Student Record in accordance with the *Ontario Student Record Guidelines 2000*.

Testing, Consultation and Travel

Our Special Education staff and the psychology team work together consulting and completing assessments. Approximately 164 formal psychological-educational assessments were completed between July 1, 2024 and June 30th, 2025.

During the school year 2024-2025, the Teachers for Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Low Vision supported students and staff through school visits for equipment repairs and adjustments, program support, student screening reports, and parent and agency contacts.

Presently there are approximately 296 sound field systems and 34 personal FM systems in place for students who are Deaf/Hard of hearing and/or have Central Auditory Processing difficulties. Regular monthly reviews and checks are done to ensure the student needs are being met and to support the classroom teacher.

During the 2025-2026 school year, the ADSB had two Speech and Language Pathologists and 3.5 Communicative Disorders Assistants on staff.

Our SLPs completed 81 assessments, resulting in the identification of 56 Communication – Language Impairment exceptionalities, and 23 of whom received a non-exceptional IEP to ensure programs and services are provided.

In addition, our SLPs completed over 97 ongoing consultations throughout the district. The purpose of the ongoing consultations is to support the achievement and well-being of the student based on his/her individualized profile through collaboration, coaching, capacity building, promotion of effective strategies and facilitation of targeted resources. The Speech-Language Pathologist provides strategies to school staff to support the student's areas of need and assist with appropriate programming.

Our language team also conducted speech and language screens and provided Tier 2 language intervention groups to students:

- 584 language screens completed (K-3)
- 131 students screened and referred to THRIVE for speech services
- 599 students participated in a TIER 2 oral language groups
- 267 oral language groups were conducted
- 2013 discrete sessions
- 4264 discrete sessions per student

Our language team also provided professional development services to Educational Assistants, Early Childhood Educators, and Teachers on topics including:

- Speaking to Inspire: Encouraging Thinking with Declarative Language
- Pathways to Promoting Self-Regulation in Young Students

Special Education Exceptionalities

At present, approximately 30-31% of students (approx. 3250 students) in the Algoma District School Board receive special education programs and services as outlined in an *Individual Education Plan*. The chart below outlines the categories of exceptionality and the specific identifications within each category.

Exceptionality	Definition
Non-Exceptional / Non-Identified / IEP Only	
IEP Only	An IEP may be developed for students who require special education programs and services to address learning needs but do not meet criteria for identification in a specific category or exceptionality. This type of IEP is generally referred to as non-exceptional, non-identified, or IEP only. The IEP will outline accommodations, modifications or alternative programming provided to the student.
Category: Communication	
Learning Disability	One of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that: • affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are at least in the average range; • results in a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support • results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills; • may typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing, memory and attention, processing speed, perceptual-motor processing, visual-spatial processing, executive functions, (e.g., self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making);

	• may be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities; • is not the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction. Board criteria: Assessment by a qualified practitioner that indicates at least average Verbal and/or Non Verbal ability, a reported processing deficit, and a clinically statistically significant discrepancy between average ability and academic achievement.
Autism	A severe learning disorder that is characterized by: a) disturbances in - rate of educational development; - ability to relate to the environment; - mobility; - perception, speech, and language; b) lack of the representational-symbolic behaviour that precedes language. Board Criteria: Diagnosis by a qualified professional (M.D., reg'd. psychologist).
Language Impairment	A learning disorder characterized by impairment in comprehension and/or use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may: a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; b) include one or more of the following: - language delay; - dysfluency; - voice and articulation development which may or may not be organically or functionally based. Board criteria: Assessment by a Speech Language Pathologist indicating a moderate to severe expressive and/or receptive language delay.

Deaf & Hard of Hearing	An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound. Board Criteria: Diagnosis by a qualified professional (audiologist, M.D.), which indicates a sensory neural loss that adversely affects educational performance.
Speech	A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm, and stress. Board criteria: Assessment by a Speech Language Pathologist indicating a severe speech impairment.
Category: Intellectual	
Mild Intellectual Disability	A learning disorder characterized by: a) an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service; b) an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development; c) a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support. Board criteria: This is NOT a diagnosis but is a Ministry of Education identification. Assessment would include a cognitive measure of intelligence that falls at or below the first (1st) percentile with no significant delays in adaptive functioning.
Developmental Disability	A severe learning disorder characterized by: a) an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development; b) an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development; c) a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support. Board criteria: Formal diagnosis by a registered psychologist or M.D. according to the DSM V. Assessment would include a cognitive measure of intelligence that falls at or below the first (1st) percentile as well as significant delays in adaptive functioning.
Giftedness	An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.

	Board criteria: A score at or above the ninety-eighth (98 th) percentile or greater on the WPPSI – III / WISC V as indicated in a psychological assessment.
Category: Behaviour	
Behaviour	A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following: a) an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships; b) excessive fears or anxieties; c) a tendency to compulsive reaction; d) an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof. Board criteria: Behaviour assessment by a qualified professional (M.D., psychologist), including the use of objective measures of behaviour (e.g. multiple scales demonstrating T scores greater than seventy on measures such as aggression, delinquency, hyperactivity, impulsivity, etc.) resulting in a diagnosis of a disorder.
Category: Physical	
Physical	A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or developmental level. Board criteria: Medical diagnosis (M.D.) of a severe physical condition which affects mobility and/or motor skills and which will require special assistance in learning situations at school.
Blind & Low Vision	A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.
Category: Multiple	
Multiple	A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical handicaps, that is of such nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities. Board Criteria: A combination of three or more exceptionalities including severe physical limitations. Refer to other appropriate exceptionalities.

Exceptionality Statistics 2024-2025 (as of May 1st, 2025)

Learning Disability	Autism	Language/ Speech	Deaf & Hard Of Hearing	Mild Intellectual Delay	Developmental Disability	Gifted
823	566	188/1	18	100	45	12
Behaviour	Physical	Blind & Low-Vision	Multiple	Total IPRC	Total IEP Only	Total IEP
561	20	8	19	2361	890	3252

Identification, Placement, Review Committee (IPRC)

An Identification, Placement, Review Committee (IPRC) **determines** whether a student should be identified as exceptional, identifies the areas of the student's exceptionality according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education, determines an appropriate placement for the student; and reviews the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

IPRCs in the ADSB

Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards establish at least one Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). The ADSB utilizes school-level IPRCs to consider regular class placements within the school, and/or system-level IPRCs that consider placements in specialized classrooms or programs.

The parent(s)/guardian(s), as well as a student who is sixteen years of age or older, have the right to attend the IPRC meeting and may request that the IPRC discuss potential programs that would meet the student's needs.

Before considering the option of placing a student in a special education class, the committee must first consider whether placement in a regular class, with appropriate special education programs and services, would meet the student's needs and be consistent with the parent's preferences. Where placement in a special education class is deemed most appropriate, the IPRC must provide written reasons for its decision.

Convening an IPRC Meeting

An IPRC meeting may be convened in one of two ways.

1. **Upon receiving a written request from a student's parent(s)/guardian(s), the Principal of the school must refer the student to an IPRC.** This usually occurs when a parent has received professional documentation from an outside professional, which, in discussion with the school, is found to be compatible with the Board guidelines for identification.
- 2) **The Principal may also, on written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s), refer the student to an IPRC.** This usually occurs when staff from the Board's special education department have assessed the student and found that the student's profile meets the Board guidelines for identification.

Prior to the IPRC Meeting

Within 15 days of receiving a written request, or giving written notice as stated above, the Principal must provide a copy of the *ADSB Parent's Guide* to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or student 16 years of age and older, as well as an acknowledgement of the parent's request and a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

At least 10 days in advance of the IPRC meeting date, the Principal of the school will provide to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/ and/or student 16 years of age and older, written notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend the meeting as an important partner in considering their child's identification and placement. This letter will provide notification of the date, time, and place of the meeting, and it will ask the parent to indicate whether they will attend. (Please see pg. 33-34).

The Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher or classroom teacher should review the *ADSB Parent Guide* with the family when an initial IPRC is scheduled.

Prior to the IPRC, background information must be collected. This information is gathered through the collaborative efforts of the Special Education Resource Teacher and the classroom teacher(s) of the student being presented to the IPRC. Information may be collected from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to the OSR, parental/guardian information, assessment information, assessments from external sources (which will be reviewed by appropriate Special Education staff), information from outside agencies (where appropriate), medical information, and/or information from the classroom teacher.

In accordance with Regulation 181/98, any new information received by the Chair of the IPRC, prior to the IPRC, will be shared with the parent(s)/ guardian(s) (or student where appropriate) before the IPRC.

Members of an IPRC

An IPRC is composed of at least three people, one of whom must be a Principal or a Supervisory Officer of the Board. The other members of the committee can be any other staff including other Principals, professional services staff or teachers.

For school-level IPRCs, the Committee will consist of the Principal/Vice-Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher, and one other teacher (which may be the Special Education Assignment Teacher from the Special Education Department). The Principal/Vice-Principal acts as chair of the committee.

If/when IPRCs occur at the system level, the System Administrators and/or Superintendent of Special Education will chair the IPRC. Other committee members generally consist of principals. Home School/Receiving School Principals and Special Education Resource Teachers are also required to attend and may act as Committee members if needed.

Although parents are not, by Ministry regulation, a member of the committee, they are an integral part of the collaborative process.

Others in Attendance

Either the parent or the Principal of the student's school may make a request for the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting. These may include:

- other resource people such as the student's teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher, Board support staff, or the representative of an agency, who may provide further information or clarification;
- a representative of the parent or student 16 years of age or older – that is, a person who may provide support or speak on behalf of the parent or student and;
- an interpreter, if one is required, e.g., sign language, specific language.

The IPRC Meeting

Role of the Chair

The role of the Chair (usually the principal) is to:

- Establish a warm, welcoming environment
- Introduce all participants and establish the purpose of the meeting
- Lead the discussion and encourage input from all participants
- Ensure that all relevant information is shared
- Keep the meeting focused and bring closure to the discussion
- Summarize the decisions, explaining them clearly
- Ensure that the necessary documentation has been completed
- Secure signatures as appropriate

Location: IPRC meetings are typically held at the school attended by the student. System-level IPRCs **may be** held at the Education Centre or another suitable location.

What Takes Place at the IPRC Meeting

The Committee will review all necessary information about the student. They will:

- consider educational assessments;
- consider, subject to the provisions of the Health Care Consent Act, 1996, a health or psychological assessment conducted by a qualified practitioner if they feel that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
- interview the student, with the parent's/guardian's permission, if the child is less than 16 years of age, if they feel it would be useful to do so;
- consider any information that the parent(s)/guardian(s) submits about their child or that the student submits if he or she is 16 years of age or older; and
- consider any information submitted to the Committee that it considers relevant.

The Committee may also discuss any proposal that has been made about a special education program or special education services for the student at the parent's request, or at the request of the student if the student is 16 years of age or older. However, the Committee shall not make any decisions regarding the programs and services.

Parents are encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion. Following the discussion, after all the information has been presented and considered, the Committee will make its decision on Identification and Placement. Following the IPRC meeting, parents will receive a copy of the IPRC Statement of Decision, and a copy will be placed in the student's OSR.

IPRC Statement of Decision

The Statement of Decision for the Algoma District School Board incorporates all of the information required by Regulation 181/98. A specific form has been developed for use at IPRC meetings to ensure that this information is recorded accurately and is easily retrievable for use throughout the school year.

The Committee will consider the assessment information presented to determine:

- if the student meets the criteria for an exceptional student.
- the area of exceptionality that is supported by assessment information as being one of the following: Behaviour, Communication, Intellectual, Physical, or Multiple.
- the appropriate placement as one of the following: Regular Class with (Indirect Support, or Resource Assistance, or Withdrawal Assistance), Special Education Class with Partial Integration, Special Education Class Full Time.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are usually present at the Statement of Decision (unless they have given permission to proceed in their absence), and if they are in agreement with the decision, they are asked to indicate their agreement by signing the Statement of Decision form.

If unable to attend the IPRC, parent permission must be obtained to proceed in their absence or reschedule. If parent(s)/guardian(s) require additional time to consider the IPRC decision, the signing of the form is delayed until the parent(s)/guardian(s) are ready to sign their agreement, or they indicate their plan of action as a result of their disagreement with the decision.

However, if the IPRC is not signed within 31 days of receipt and the process to reconvene or appeal has not been initiated by the parent(s)/guardian(s), the Principal shall notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing the IPRC decision/placement is being implemented.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Right to Reconvene the IPRC

The Algoma District School Board wants to ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have a good understanding of programming directions being considered well before they are made. This open and proactive communication has been helpful in resolving disagreements with the Committee's decision prior to the commencement of the Notice of Appeal process.

In cases where disagreements arise regarding the decision of the IPRC, a variety of options are open to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

If parent(s)/guardian(s) do not agree with either the identification or placement decision made by the IPRC, parent(s)/guardian(s) may: within 15 days of receipt of the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss parent(s)/guardian(s) concerns.

If parent(s)/guardian(s) do not agree with the decision after the second meeting, parent(s)/guardian(s) may file a Notice of Appeal to the Director of Education/Secretary of the Board within 15 days of your receipt of the decision.

Note: If parent(s)/guardian(s) do not consent to the IPRC decision and parent(s)/guardian(s) do not appeal the decision of the Committee, the Board will instruct the Principal to implement the IPRC decision.

Appeal Process

If parent(s)/guardian(s) disagree with the IPRC's identification of the child or with the placement decision of the IPRC, they may, within 30 days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 days of receipt of the decision from the second meeting described above, give written notification of their intention to appeal the decision to:

Lucia Reece
Director of Education/Secretary of the Board
Algoma District School Board
644 Albert Street East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2K7

A notice of appeal shall indicate the decision with which the parent disagrees and a statement that sets out their reasons for disagreeing. The notice of appeal must:

- indicate the decision with which the parent(s)/guardian(s) disagrees as being: the identification as exceptional, or the non-identification, and/or the placement; and
- include a statement that sets out the reasons for disagreement.

The appeal process involves the following steps:

- The Board will establish a Special Education Appeal Board to hear appeals. The appeal board will be composed of three persons (one of whom is to be selected by the parent(s)/guardian(s) who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal).
- The Chair of the appeal board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 days after he or she has been selected (unless parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Board both provide written consent to a later date).
- The appeal board will receive the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview any persons who may be able to contribute information about the matter under appeal.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s), and the child, if he or she is 16 years old or over, are entitled to be present at, and to participate in, all discussions.

The appeal board must make its recommendation within 3 days of the meeting. It may:

- agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented; or
- disagree with the IPRC and make a recommendation to the Board about the student's identification, placement, or both.

The appeal board will report its recommendations in writing, to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) and to the Board, providing the reasons for its recommendations.

Within 30 days of receiving the appeal board's written statement, the Board will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations. (Boards are not required to follow the appeal board's recommendation).

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may accept the decision of the School Board, or may appeal to a Special Education Tribunal.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by writing to the secretary of the Special Education Tribunal. Information about making an application to the Tribunal will be included with the Appeal Board's Decision.

IPRC Review

A student's *Identification* and *Placement* must be reviewed at least once each school year when a student has been identified as an exceptional student through the initial IPRC process. The annual review will take place each school year (following the year in which the initial Identification and Placement took place).

In many cases, Identification and Placement remain the same from year-to-year. If no changes are proposed, the parent/guardian may dispense with the annual review meeting. In keeping with Ministry regulations, the ADSB has included in their *Parent(s)/Guardian(s)' Guide* and in the *Notification of a Proposed IPRC Meeting* form, the right of a parent(s)/guardian(s) to dispense with the annual review meeting. (Page 34)

When parent(s)/guardian(s) do choose to waive the Review meeting, the Identification and Placement recommended by the previous IPRC will remain **unchanged** and the date of the waiver is used to indicate that a review process has occurred, and both the parent and the school agree that the identification and placement should remain the same. The Individual Education Plan will continue to indicate specific programming expectations, goals and transition plans.

A parent(s)/guardian(s) may also make a request for an IPRC Review meeting at any time after a placement has been in effect for three months but a request may not be made more often than once in every three-month period.

Within 15 days of the review notice, the Principal will provide the parent(s)/guardian(s) written notice of approximately when the IPRC review will occur.

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

An **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** is:

- a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student (based on a thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs that affect the student's ability to learn and to demonstrate learning);
- a record of the particular accommodations needed to help the student achieve his or her learning expectations within grade level expectations, given the student's identified learning strengths and needs;
- a working document that identifies learning expectations that are modified from the expectations for the age-appropriate grade level in the particular subject or course;
- a working document that identifies alternative expectations, if required;
- a record of the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purposes of reporting achievement of modified and/or alternative expectations and;
- an accountability tool for the student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and everyone who has responsibilities under the plan for helping the student meet the stated goals and learning expectations as the student progresses through the Ontario curriculum.

In addition, Policy/Program Memorandum No. 156 (PPM 156), *"Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs"* outlines the expectation that a transition plan must be developed for all students who have an IEP.

The purpose of the IEP is to identify clearly for parent(s)/guardian(s), school staff, and the Ministry of Education the reason for accessing special education programs and services.

An IEP must be developed for every student who has been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).

Creating an IEP is a collaborative process that involves the classroom teacher(s) with whom the student interacts, the student where appropriate, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), and where appropriate, other professionals involved with the student, other school personnel/support staff, and staff from community agencies.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) can provide an invaluable perspective on their child's personality, development and learning style and therefore, have a very important role in the IEP development process. ADSB staff are committed to ensuring that parent(s)/guardian(s) are involved early on in the development of the child's IEP and continue to be involved throughout the implementation and review of the IEP. Since the IEP is a flexible, working document, revisions and updates are expected and adjustments as necessary can be made throughout the school year.

The most recent applicable IEP will be stored in the Ontario Student Record (OSR). Each year, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive a copy of the student's IEP and updated copies of all changes made to address the student's strengths and needs.

Transition Planning

Effective transition plans provide continuity of the programs and services in place for any student with special education needs. An effective transition plan that recognizes a student's profile of strengths and needs will help to enhance student achievement and well-being by providing a successful school experience.

Transition requirements are set out in the following policy documents: Policy/Program Memorandum No. 156, *Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs* states that a transition plan must be developed **for all students who have an IEP** while Policy/Program Memorandum No. 140, *Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)*, states that staff must plan for the transition between various activities and settings involving students with autism spectrum disorders.

Transition Planning is an important part of the process of reviewing the IEP during each reporting period. The details of the consultation on the IEP and transition plan must be recorded on the IEP form. Where the parent(s)/guardian(s) are unavailable or not willing to meet with the school, the process is conducted on their behalf and the IEP is forwarded for their approval.

Transitions to School

All service providers meet early in the calendar year to begin transition planning for children with special needs that will be entering kindergarten. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and preschool program providers are consulted, and a plan is developed to support the entry of the child into the school system. Visits are arranged for the parent(s)/guardian(s) at the new school. The Special Education Department works with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to obtain appropriate assessments, which will facilitate knowledge about the child's needs. The spring kindergarten registration process also identifies students who will require special education support. During the 2024-2025 school year, approximately 75 incoming Kindergarten students participated in the formal transition process.

Integrated Transition Planning Process

Integrated transition planning for young people aged 14 and over with a developmental disability is mandated by the province. These students will be transitioning out of children's services and may be seeking further services and supports as they move into adulthood. Parent(s)/guardian(s)/students have the option to participate in this process. Community agencies that support the student are also invited to take part.



ALGOMA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS REGARDING IDENTIFICATION PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) INITIAL MEETING

Date:

Dear:

In accordance with the Provincial legislation governing the identification, placement and review of students in Special Education,

(Student's Name)

will be discussed by the School's Identification Placement and Review Committee on:

(Date and Time)

(School)

Your input at this meeting is welcomed and desirable if we are to best meet this individual's needs. If the time suggested is not suitable, please contact the school to arrange a mutually convenient time. You have the right to have a representative present to support you. First Nation families may wish to invite an education officer from the band to be present at this committee meeting. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

(School telephone number)

Principal

- ☐ Yes, I am able to attend.
- ☐ I am unable to attend. Please proceed with the initial IPRC meeting in my absence.
- ☐ No, I am unable to attend. Please re-schedule the initial IPRC meeting.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)/Adult Student (16+ yrs) Signature: _____

ORIGINAL to Parent/Adult Student (16+ yrs)
COPY to O.S.R. & Special Education System Administrators



ALGOMA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS REGARDING IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) REVIEW MEETING

Dear:

Date:

The IPRC meets each year to review the identification and placement of all exceptional students unless the meeting is formally waived.

A Review meeting for (student) _____ D.O.B.: (Y/M/D) _____
has been scheduled for (date) _____ at the school.

Select ONE (1) of the following options.

OPTION 1: WAIVE the REVIEW MEETING of the IPRC

- ☐ It has been explained to me that there is NO proposed change to the Identification or Placement. I agree that a formal Review Meeting of the IPRC is **not** necessary and I have signed the waiver below.

Regulation 181 Section 21.4(B) states that "where a parent of the pupil gives a written notice to the Principal of the school dispensing with the annual review", an IPRC Review meeting is not required. If you are satisfied with the school's recommendation that the present identification and placement continue and do not feel that a Review meeting is required, please sign below.

I hereby waive this year's Review meeting of the IPRC. (*Parent/Adult Student(16+yrs)*)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

OPTION 2: PROCEED with the REVIEW MEETING of the IPRC

- ☐ I will attend on the scheduled date above and will contact the school to confirm the time. If unable to attend in-person, I will contact the school to discuss other options.

Parent/Adult Student (16+ yrs) Signature: _____
Date: _____

If you have any questions about the Review process of the IPRC do not hesitate to call the school.

Sincerely,

Principal's Signature

ORIGINAL to O.S.R.

COPY to Parent(s)/Adult Student (16+ yrs)/Special education system administrator

Revised 2025 May



Appendix

Individual Education Plan:

Reason for developing the IEP:

Name:

D.O.B.:

Grade:

School:

School Phone:

Principal:

Year:

Reporting Period:

Placement:

Latest IPRC: (dd/mm/year)

Initial IPRC: (dd/mm/year)

Placement Begins: (dd/mm/year)

IEP Completed: (dd/mm/year)

Staff Involved in IEP Development:

Staff Member – Position

Staff Member - Position

Sources consulted:

Assessment Data:

Type	Date	Summary of Results

Areas of Strength	Areas of Need

Subjects, Courses, or Alternative Programs to which this IEP applies:

Subject, Course or Program	ACC	MOD	ALT

Exemptions/Substitutions:

Elementary Program Exemption/Secondary Compulsory Course Substitution Yes No

If yes, please list program(s), course(s), and substitution(s) and provide rationale:

--

Evaluation/Reporting:

Provincial Report Card

Alternative Report Card

Reporting Period One: (dd/mm/year)

Reporting Period Two (dd/mm/year)

Secondary Only: Student is working towards the attainment of a

Ontario Secondary School Diploma

Ontario Secondary School Certificate

Certificate of Accomplishment

Provincial Assessment:

Permitted Accommodations for Provincial Assessment:

--

Exemption: Yes No

Program Supports/Services:

Human Resource Supports: Yes No

<i>Human Resource Support</i>	<i>Date Service Initiated</i>	<i>Frequency/Duration</i>	<i>Location of Service</i>

Specialized Health Services Yes No

--

Individualized Equipment: Yes No

--

Accommodations:

Environmental	Instructional	Assessment

Special Education Program

--

Baseline Level of Achievement: Note: this forms a starting point for development of the IEP and does not change during the course of the school year.

--

Annual Program Goal: A goal statement describes what a student can realistically be expected to accomplish by the end of the school year in a modified subject, course, or program.

--

Reporting Period One:

Learning Expectations/	Teaching Strategies	Assessment Methods

Reporting Period Two:

Learning Expectations	Teaching Strategies	Assessment Methods

Transition Planning

Goal(s):

Action	Person Responsible	Timeline

Integrated Transition Meeting Required: Yes No

Consultation

Date (dd/mm/year)	Activity	Outcome

Parent/Guardian:

I have received a copy of the Individual Education Plan (IEP):	Yes	No
I was consulted in the development of the IEP prior to receiving a copy:	Yes	No
I would like to have further consultation prior to signing the IEP	Yes	No

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

The principal has the legal requirement to implement and monitor the IEP. The IEP has been developed according to Ministry standards. The plan addresses student strengths and needs. The learning expectations will be reviewed and student progress monitored at least once every reporting period.

(Principal Signature)

(Date)

Special Education Placements

The Algoma District School Board is committed to supporting the inclusion and integration of exceptional students in the regular, age-appropriate classroom. This has been, and continues to be, the first option for our students and their families. However, in consideration of the unique qualities and diverse needs of each student, we recognize that some of the families that we serve may prefer, if appropriate, to access a specialized classroom or program to enhance the achievement and well-being of their learners.

Programming for Different Exceptionalities Provided by the Algoma District School Board

a) Programming for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Most students identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder are served in their home schools in age-appropriate classes with accommodations, modifications, or alternative programming provided by the classroom teacher. Additional supports may be provided through school or system-based resources. Placements in specialized programs may also be available depending on the student's social, self-regulation, communication and/or cognitive needs.

b) Programming for Students with Behavioural Needs

Most students identified with behavioural needs are served in their home schools in age-appropriate classes with accommodations, modifications, or alternative programming provided by the classroom teacher. Further supports may be provided through school or system-based resources. Placements in specialized programs may also be available depending on the student's social and self-regulation, needs. For a few students, placement in a specialized treatment program outside the jurisdiction of the Board may be necessary (e.g. *Education & Community Partnership Programs*) subject to the admission procedures of the appropriate agency.

c) Programming for Students with Language Needs

Almost all students identified with speech/language needs are served in their home schools in age-appropriate classes with accommodations, modifications, or alternative programming provided by the classroom teacher. School-based support may also be provided. A Speech Language Pathologist may conduct assessments or consult with school-based staff regarding programming suggestions. The SERT or a Communication Disorders Assistant may provide direct intervention support. Students with speech impairments have their needs met within the regular class with support provided through the recommendations of a Speech Language Pathologist, or through school-based rehabilitative services provided by Thrive Child Development Centre.

d) Programming for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing

All students with hearing loss as their primary need are served in an age appropriate classroom at their home school with accommodations, modifications and/or alternative programming provided by the classroom teacher. Depending on the severity of their needs, some may also receive personalized service from an Itinerant Teacher of the Deaf / Hard of Hearing. A few students also access the services of an American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter. Algoma District School Board uses recommendations from our community partners for the most appropriate personal FM or sound field equipment and classroom environmental acoustic treatments. Consultation services provided by the provincial schools are accessed as needed.

e) Programming for Students with Physical Needs

Students with physical needs are served in an age-appropriate classroom at the home school whenever possible with the addition of appropriate supports and/or specialized equipment based on student needs. Appropriate equipment, consultation through School Health Support Services (Occupational, Physical and/or Speech), and support from Board personnel may also be provided. Where appropriate, necessary medical staff are included to ensure a safe, productive environment. Liaison and interaction with outside agencies occurs regularly. Any accommodations to the physical environment of the school are reviewed to ensure accessibility. Specialized equipment purchases may also be made under the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Claim-Based guidelines.

f) Programming for Students who are Blind/Low Vision

All students with blindness/low vision as their primary need are served in an age-appropriate classroom in their home school with accommodations, modifications, and/or alternative programming provided by the classroom teacher. Some may also receive services from an Itinerant Teacher of the Blind/Low Vision. These services may include instruction in braille or other assistive technology. Any accommodations to the physical environment of the school are reviewed to ensure accessibility. Specialized equipment purchases are made on an as needed basis. In some instances, these purchases are made as set out by the SEA Guidelines. Consultation services provided by the provincial school are accessed as needed.

g) Programming for Students with Multiple Exceptionalities

In most cases, the student is served in an age-appropriate classroom in the home school with accommodations, modifications and/or modified programming provided by the classroom teacher. Where appropriate, the

necessary medical staff is also included to ensure a safe, productive environment. Some families may also choose to access a specialized program/classroom to support the cognitive needs of their learners. Appropriate equipment, consultation through School Health Support Services (Occupational, Physical and/or Speech), and support from Board personnel may also be provided. Where appropriate, necessary medical staff are included to ensure a safe, productive environment. Liaison and interaction with outside agencies occurs regularly. Any accommodations to the physical environment of the school are reviewed to ensure accessibility. Specialized equipment purchases may also be made under the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Claim-Based guidelines.

h) Programming for Students with Intellectual Needs

Many students with intellectual needs are served within the regular class and may have assistance from school and Board level personnel. Curriculum modifications, accommodations and alternative programs may be implemented to assist the student in being successful. Specialized equipment may be provided as recommended by appropriate professionals. Some families may choose to access a specialized program/classroom to support the needs of their learners.

i) Programming for Students that are Gifted

Programming for gifted students is provided within the regular classroom. Differentiated and/or modified learning extensions that focus on student interests, independent projects, creative and high-level thinking, as well as communication skills are provided to meet the student's needs. Acceleration may also be considered depending on a variety of factors. At some schools, ADSB also offers the *Enhanced Learning Program* and *International Baccalaureate Program*, *Advanced Placement* courses, and the "*Reach-Ahead*" program for Grade 8 students interested in taking a Grade 9 credit prior to leaving elementary school.

Types of Placement Options

A range of placement options are available across (and external to) the Algoma District School Board to meet the needs of students in the most appropriate environment. Placement decisions are made by the IPRC, which will determine the placement that best suits the student's needs.

Regular Classroom Placements

- **Indirect Support:** Students with special education needs who are enrolled in a regular class and are receiving direct instruction from a regular classroom teacher to whom the Board provides specialized consultative services.

- **Resource Assistance:** Students with special education needs who are enrolled in a regular class and are receiving direct specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a special education teacher. NOTE: this placement does not imply that the student will receive specialized instruction on a daily basis, but that they will receive specialized instruction on an established schedule.
- **Withdrawal Assistance:** Students with special education needs who are enrolled in a regular class and are receiving instruction outside the regular classroom for part of the school day from a special education teacher. NOTE: this placement does not imply that the student will receive specialized instruction on a daily basis, but that they will receive specialized instruction on an established schedule. Generally, this placement is used for students that receive services from an itinerant teacher (e.g. Itinerant Teacher of the Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing) or participate in a specific program (e.g. Empower).

Special Education Programming in the Regular Classroom: Accommodations, Modifications and/or Alternative Programming

In keeping with the expectations of the Ministry of Education, it is expected practice within the Algoma District School Board to use accommodations, modifications, and or alternative programs for students with special education needs.

- **Accommodations:** The term accommodation refers to the special teaching, assessment, and environmental strategies required to enable a student to learn and demonstrate learning. Accommodations do not alter the provincial curriculum expectations for the grade.
- **Modifications:** Modifications are changes made in the age-appropriate grade level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs. These changes may involve developing expectations and skills required in the curriculum for a different grade level and/or increasing or decreasing the number and/or complexity of the regular grade level expectations.
- **Alternative Programming:** Alternative expectations are developed to help students acquire knowledge and skills that are not represented in the Ontario curriculum. Alternative programming expectations are individualized for the student and generally focus on preparing the student for daily living. Examples of alternative program expectations may include social skills, orientation, or mobility training, and/or self-regulation skills. Alternative programming may be provided in both the elementary and secondary panels.

Note: Alternative courses at the secondary level are usually non-credit courses.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Involvement: The parent(s)/guardian(s) have a key role in the education of the student with special education needs. As such, early and ongoing discussion between school and home will occur to ensure that the most appropriate decisions are being made regarding school placements and programs.

It is the expectation of the Algoma District School Board that parent(s)/guardian(s) are consulted in the development of Individual Education Plans (IEP), and that parent(s)/guardian(s) will assist in the follow through of recommendations and programming strategies.

Involvement of parent(s)/guardian(s) can take an informal and/or a formal approach. Informal communication can occur through regular conversations with school personnel. More formal involvement can occur through team meetings, case conferences, IPRCs and report card interviews.

Specialized Program/Specialized Classroom Placements

Specialized placements are provided based on the need for specialized supports that go beyond the degree of support that can realistically be provided within a regular classroom.

The duration of the special placement will be determined by the success of the programming, the nature of the needs, and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) wishes.

A Special Education Department committee reviews the progress of students in specialized placements on a regular basis and makes recommendations to the IPRC of the continued need for the specialized placement.

- **Withdrawal:** ADSB offers several programs in which students with special education needs continue to be enrolled in an age-appropriate classroom but receive intensive instruction through a withdrawal model for part of the school day from a specialized program teacher. Some programs operate on a “clustered” model (e.g. Integrated Support Program) that includes students transported to the host site from a variety of schools, while other supports are provided to specific schools to support students already enrolled at the school.
- **Special Education Class with Partial Integration (Partial Integration):** Students with special education needs who are enrolled in and attending a self-contained special education classroom with integration into a regular classroom for at least one instructional period daily.
- **Special Education Class Full Time (Fully Self-Contained):** Students with special education needs who are enrolled in and attending a special education class in accordance with Regulation 298, section 31 for the entire school day. Opportunities for integration into age-appropriate classes are arranged.

Specialized Program/Classroom Models in the ADSB

For some students, the programming needs are so extensive that placement in a specialized program or classroom is recommended to provide individual or small group assistance. The ADSB offers a range of specialized program/classroom models as described below.

Integrated Support Program (ISP)

Model: This model operates as a program, not a class. Students that participate in this program are enrolled in the regular, age-appropriate class with accommodations and/or modifications as required.

Students are “withdrawn” from the regular classroom to participate in blocks of specialized programming focused on building self-regulation and social skills as outlined in the *Individual Education Plan*. Skills to support academic achievement (e.g. assistive technology, intervention/remediation) may also be provided depending on individual student needs.

In addition, the ISP room may function as a “resource room” for students to access an alternative space when necessary.

The purpose of the program is for students to develop the knowledge, skills and strategies needed to independently demonstrate the self-regulation, social and/or communication skills necessary to achieve success in the regular classroom without the need for additional supports.

Placement Type: Withdrawal

Cap Size: Up to 8 students are admitted to this program at each site, although additional students may be permitted in special circumstances. Due to similarities in the programming models, students participating in this program generally do not have a Specialized Programming Teacher model available at their home school.

Transportation: Students admitted to this program receive transportation to a school site that hosts the ISP. Vans or cabs are generally used to transport students as regular bus routes are rarely accessible from the student’s home to the program site (Note: in the event of a student participating in a program at their home site, regular transportation routes would be accessed.)

Human Resource Supports: A Specialized Program Teacher and two educational assistants are allocated to the ISP.

Admission Criteria: Students admitted to the ISP will have a formal identification of Behaviour or Autism Spectrum Disorder. Referral to the program is made by the home school and reviewed by a Special Education Department committee to determine suitability for the program. Final determination of the placement is made through the IPRC.

De-mission Criteria: The purpose of the program is for students to develop the knowledge, skills and strategies needed to independently demonstrate the self-regulation, social and/or communication skills necessary to achieve success in the regular classroom without the need for additional supports. Support levels are gradually faded as the student progresses within the program. Students return to their home school upon demission with appropriate transition activities to promote the student's success in their return to the home school.

Program Locations: Ben R. McMullin (Junior/Intermediate)
Isabel Fletcher Public School (Primary/Junior)
Pinewood Public School (Primary/Junior)

SPECIALIZED PROGRAMMING TEACHER(S)

Model: This model operates as a program, not a class. Students that receive support through the *Specialized Programming Teacher* model are enrolled in the regular, age-appropriate class with accommodations and/or modifications as required.

A specific caseload of students are “withdrawn” from the regular classroom to participate in blocks of specialized programming with the *Specialized Programming Teacher*. Specialized programming support will often focus on building self-regulation and/ social skills (outlined in an *Individual Education Plan*) or providing additional support for modified academics in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Some students may require supports in both areas. Skills to support academic achievement (e.g. assistive technology, intervention/remediation) may also be provided depending on individual student needs and caseload.

The *Specialized Programming Teacher* model is offered at specific schools to support the needs of students within their home school setting. Specific programming support is tailored to the needs of the caseload at the individual site.

Placement Type: Withdrawal

Cap Size: The caseload of the *Specialized Programming Teacher* is determined through consultation with the principal, school and system team and may vary depending on the intensity and frequency of support provided.

Transportation: As Specialized Programming Teachers are assigned to support the needs of students within specific schools, students receiving this type of programming access regular transportation options based on existing eligibility requirements.

Human Resource Supports: A Specialized Program Teacher is assigned to schools implementing this model; educational assistants are allocated to the school based on existing processes.

Admission Criteria: The *Specialized Programming Teacher* model is designed to ensure a higher level of support is available to students in the home school setting by provided an additional resource teacher to augment the role of the SERT. Students accessing this resource model will primarily include students with behavioural needs that require alternative programming for self-regulation and/or social skills development. In some schools, students with mild intellectual disabilities that require modified academic programming may also access support from the SPT instead of the SERT. Specific students to be supported by the SPT are determined by the principal in consultation with the school and system team.

De-mission Criteria: Specific students to be supported by the SPT are determined by the principal in consultation with the school and system team. When students no longer require the support of the SPT, this will be discussed with the student's guardian.

Program Model	Blind River Public School
Locations:	Central Avenue Public School
	Kiwedin/Northern Heights Public School
	East View Public School
	H.M. Robbins Public School
	White Pines Intermediate
	Superior Heights Intermediate
	Korah Intermediate

Practical Learning Classroom (PLC)

Model: This model operates as a self-contained classroom. The Practical Learning Classroom focuses on Alternative programming rather than Ontario Curriculum expectations.

The model is primarily focused on alternative programming in areas such as self-care, independent living skills, social skills, self-regulation, and/or communication skills. Students also receive academic instruction focused on functional academic areas (e.g. e.g. safety signs and symbols; using money at a store).

Students may also be integrated with their same age peers in program areas such as phys.ed, or the arts, and participate fully in school-wide events and activities.

Students participating in this program often continue into a non-credit, life-skills focused program in secondary school. Prior to admission, parent(s)/guardian(s) must be informed that, as the program focuses on alternative programming, students enrolled in the PLC

will likely continue to further life skills (e.g. non-credit) programming at the secondary level.

Placement: Fully Self-Contained, Partial Integration

Enrollment: Up to 10 Students

Transportation: Students admitted to this program receive transportation to the school site that hosts the PLC. Vans or cabs are generally used to transport students as regular bus routes are not usually accessible from the student's home to the site.

Human Resource Supports: A Specialized Classroom Teacher and two educational assistants are allocated to the program.

Admission Criteria: Students demonstrate evidence of a developmental or intellectual disability supported by a formal identification (e.g. generally an identification of Developmental Disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder). Referral to the program is made by the student's home school. All referrals are reviewed by a Special Education Department committee to determine suitability for the program. Final determination of a student placement is made by a system-level IPRC.

Demission Criteria: Should students choose to leave the placement, they would return to their home school upon demission from the program. It is understood, however, that most students accessing this program remain in this placement and enter a non-credit life skills-focused program in secondary school.

Program Locations: Anna McCrea Public School (Junior/Intermediate)

Structured Learning Classroom (SLC)

Model: This model operates as a self-contained classroom. The *Structured Learning Classroom (SLC)* focuses on developing communication, self-regulation, and social skills, along with instruction in functional academics (literacy and numeracy) for students with high needs that are placed in this type of classroom.

All students placed in the SLC have a formal identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder with significant self-regulation, social skills and communication needs.

The Structured Learning Classroom focuses on Alternative programming rather than Ontario Curriculum expectations.

Placement: Fully Self-Contained, Partial Integration

Enrollment: Up to 6 students

Transportation: Students enrolled in the SLC receive transportation to a school site hosting an SLC program. Students are usually assigned to a program as close to home as possible with consideration for the age grouping of students within the class.

Human Resource Supports: A specialized classroom teacher and two educational assistants are allocated to each SLC.

Admission Criteria: Students admitted to the SLC have a formal identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder with significant self-regulation, social skills and communication needs. Referral to the program is made by the student's home school. All referrals are reviewed by a Special Education Department committee to determine suitability for the program. Students are placed in the program by an ADSB system-level IPRC.

Demission Criteria: Students leave the program when they demonstrate sufficient progress in developing the communication, self-regulation, and social skills needed to achieve success in a regular classroom or within a specialized classroom/program with a different focus. Students would return to their home school upon demission from the program unless another specialized placement is considered.

Program Locations:

- Greenwood Public School (Primary/Junior)
- Boreal FI Public School (Junior/Intermediate)
- Parkland Public School (Primary/Junior)
- River View Public School (Junior/Intermediate)
- FH Clergue FI Public School (Junior/Intermediate)

Developmental Education Classroom

Model: This model operates as a self-contained classroom. The *Developmental Education Classroom (DEC)* focuses on supporting the development of communication, social, self-help and self-regulation skills along with instruction in functional academics (literacy and numeracy).

Students in this program work towards alternative program expectations, including functional literacy and numeracy, rather than the Ontario Curriculum expectations.

Students may be integrated into the regular age-appropriate classroom for a variety of learning opportunities.

Cap Size: Up to 10 students (may be fewer depending on specific exceptionalities)

Human Resource Support: Specialized Classroom Teacher and two educational assistants are assigned to support the DEC.

Admission Criteria: Students admitted to the DEC will have an identification of a Developmental Disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder. All referrals are reviewed by a

Special Education Department committee to determine suitability for the program. Students are placed in the program by an ADSB system-level IPRC.

Program Locations: Blind River Public School (Primary/Junior)
Central Avenue Public School (Primary/Junior)
Elliot Lake Intermediate (Intermediate)

Developing Alternative Realistic Expectations (DARE)

White Pines C&VS

The *DARE* program is a non-credit Grade 9 & 10 program designed for students that have a mild cognitive delay. Students enrolled in this program may be identified with a variety of exceptionalities including MID, ASD with mild cognitive delay, and/or a Developmental Disability with appropriate adaptive functioning. This is a transitional program that provides students with a functional academic program, while also developing hands-on, everyday life skills that will be needed for future work readiness.

Note: students entering this program require the adaptive functioning skills needed to independently follow the regular routines of a secondary school (e.g. independent lunch hour, class transitions, bus transportation).

Field School Programs

Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre, Station Mall, White Pines

The *Field School* program is a non-credit workplace program designed to help students reach a readiness level for employment, community placement, or further education (through programs such as the *Community Integration through Cooperative Education Program* at Sault College). Students are assigned to one of the three Field School sites and rotate through various job placements, while also working on functional academics, social skills and life skills within a classroom setting. Beginning in Grade 11, this program is only available to students that have demonstrated the requisite level of independence to function effectively in a work environment. Note: Students participating in the White Pines Field school participate in co-op type programs throughout the community.

Community Education Program

Superior Heights C&VS

The *Community Education Program* provides focused instruction in functional academics (literacy and numeracy) along with alternative programming focused on developing self-care, social, self-regulation, and communication skills. Students participate fully in all school-wide events and activities. Regular outings and excursions within the community are an important aspect of the program.

Students At Risk Today (START) Program

Korah, Superior Heights, White Pines

This credit-earning program supports students with various needs and may provide a re-engagement opportunity for students who have not met with success in mainstream programming. Students in *START* may have mental health challenges, behaviour concerns, attendance needs or substance abuse issues. *START* focuses on social skills needed for students to be successful in the mainstream classes, in a work placement, and in the community. Class sizes are smaller, with increased adult support, to enable students to work to their full potential. In the *START* program, students have individualized timetables, and have access to counselling and other services.

Learning for Emotional & Academic Development (LEAD)

Central Algoma Secondary School, Elliot Lake Secondary School, W. C. Eaket Secondary School, Michipicoten High School

These classes are designed to meet the special education needs of smaller communities. Any number of different exceptionalities may be included in these classes. Although the profile of each class is specific to the individual school, the focus is on individualized instruction with as much integration into regular classroom programs as appropriate. Students follow an individualized academic program with a strong focus on social and life skills. Students are accepted into the program based on prioritized and identified needs of the school(s). These classes are school specific and students are prioritized by need.

Education and Community Partnership Programs

For a few students with complex needs, government-approved *Education and Community Partnership Programs* (formerly known as Care, Treatment, Custody and/or Corrections) programs are established to focus primarily on therapeutic or other needs. The Algoma District School Board provides academic programming (including teaching staff) to support the agencies operating these programs. In some cases, space within a school is also provided to allow students access to programs. Placement within any of these programs involves an admission procedure that is usually controlled by the agency running the program. For programs focused on re-engagement, admission is determined by the Board in consultation with the appropriate agency. The Algoma District School Board works in partnership with the following agencies/programs:

- Algoma Family Services (2 Primary/Junior Classes at Parkland Public School)
- Algoma Family Services (Algoma Education Connection – Kina Awiiya)
- Counselling Centre of East Algoma (Elliot Lake Secondary School)
- Thessalon First Nation (Central Algoma Secondary School)
- Indian Friendship Centre (White Pines C & V.S. – Mino Mikaaning)
- Algoma Family Services (Non-Residential Attendance Centre)
- Custody (Donald Doucet Youth Centre)

Provincial and Demonstration Schools in Ontario

The Ministry of Education operates Provincial Schools and Provincial Demonstration Schools in the province of Ontario. They exist to:

- provide education for students who are deaf or blind, or who have severe learning disabilities;
- provide an alternative education option;
- serve as regional resource centres for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;
- provide pre-school home visiting services for students who are deaf or deaf-blind;
- develop and provide learning materials and media for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;
- provide school board teachers with resource services; and,
- play a valuable role in teacher training throughout the province.

Provincial Schools

The Ministry of Education operates several Provincial Schools, which exist to serve the needs of the blind, the deaf, and the deaf-blind.

a) Provincial Schools for the Blind

W. Ross Macdonald School: School for the Blind and Deaf-Blind. W. Ross Macdonald School is located in Brantford and provides education for students who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. The school provides:

- a provincial resource centre for the visually impaired and deaf-blind;
- support to local school Boards through consultation, assessment and the provision of special learning materials, such as Braille materials, audio-tapes, electronic books and large-print textbooks; as well as,
- professional services and guidance to ministries of education on an inter-provincial, co-operative basis.

Programs are tailored to the needs of the individual student and:

- are designed to help these students learn to live independently in a non-sheltered environment;
- are delivered by specially trained teachers;
- follow the Ontario curriculum developed for all students in the province;
- offer a full range of courses at the secondary level;
- offer courses in special subject areas such as music, broad-based technology, family studies, physical education, and mobility training;
- are individualized, to offer a comprehensive “life skills” program;
- provide home visiting for parents and families of pre-school deaf-blind children to assist in preparing these children for future education.

b) Provincial Schools for the Deaf

The following Provincial Schools offer services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students:

- **Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf** in Belleville (serving eastern Ontario).
- **Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf** in Milton (serving central and northern Ontario).
- **Robarts School for the Deaf in London** (serving western Ontario).
- **Centre Jules-Léger in Ottawa** (serving francophone students and families throughout Ontario).

The Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296 determines admittance to a Provincial School.

These schools provide elementary and secondary school programs for students who are deaf from pre-school level to high school graduation. The curriculum follows the Ontario curriculum and parallels courses and programs provided in school boards. Each student has his or her special needs met as set out in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Schools for the Deaf:

- provide rich and supportive bilingual/bicultural educational environments which facilitate students' language acquisition, learning, and social development through American Sign Language (ASL) and English;
- operate primarily as day schools; and,
- provide residential facilities five days per week for those students who do not live within reasonable commuting distance from the school.,

Each school has a Resource Services Department, which provides:

- consultation and educational advice to parent(s)/guardian(s) of children who are deaf and hard-of-hearing and school Board personnel;
- information brochures;
- a wide variety of workshops for parent(s)/guardian(s), school Boards, and other agencies; and,
- an extensive home-visiting program delivered to parent(s)/guardian(s) of pre-school children who are deaf and hard-of-hearing by teachers trained in pre-school and deaf education.

Demonstration Schools

Each Provincial Demonstration School has an enrolment of forty students. The language of instruction at the Trillium, Amethyst, and Sagonaska schools is English; at Centre Jules-Léger, instruction is in French.

Application for admission to a provincial Demonstration School is made on behalf of students by the school board, with parent(s)/guardian(s) consent. The Provincial

Committee on Learning Disabilities (PCLD) determines whether a student is eligible for admission. Although the primary responsibility to provide appropriate educational programs for students with learning disabilities remains with school boards, the Ministry recognizes that some students require a residential school setting for a period of time.

The Demonstration Schools were established to:

- provide special residential education programs for students
- enhance the development of each student's academic and social skills; and,
- develop the abilities of the students enrolled to a level that will enable them to return to programs operated by a local school Board within two years.

An in-service teacher education program is provided at each Demonstration School. This program is designed to share methodologies and materials with teachers of Ontario school boards. Information about the programs offered should be obtained from the schools themselves.

ADSB and Provincial & Demonstration Schools

During the 2024-2025 school year, the Algoma District School Board had no students attending provincial schools.

When attending these schools, students are transported to the nearest airport. They are accompanied by a guide at the airport and transported to the provincial schools each Monday. They return home every Friday. ADSB students generally attend Trillium (Demonstration) or E.C. Drury (School for the Deaf) as these sites serve students from central and northern Ontario school boards, although exceptions do occur based on various circumstances.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of students wishing to attend schools for the blind or deaf make direct application to these schools. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with severe learning disabilities make application to the Special Education System Administrators who will give them guidelines and information about the requirements for acceptance. Usually, however, it is the System Administrators for Special Education who, having seen concerns about the ability of a student with severe learning disability to function adequately in a regular school setting, may suggest the option of attending a Demonstration School to parent(s)/guardian(s). Once the parent(s)/guardian(s) are in agreement the System Administrators for Special Education will facilitate the process, which includes interviews of the student by the provincial school committee and the submission of appropriate documentation.

Health Support Services

School Boards and school staff work collaboratively with agencies of other ministries to provide health support services to students with special education needs.

Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 81, “Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings” (1984), outlines the responsibilities for ensuring that students with special education needs receive the health support services they require so that they are able to benefit from an educational program. The following list specifies the division of services among ministries, as stated in PPM No. 81.

Ministry of Education (school boards):

- administering oral medication
- physical assistance (lifting, positioning, feeding, toileting)
- physio/occupational therapy (general maintenance exercises)
- speech and language services (Language disorders are the responsibility of school boards. Articulation/speech sound production problems, fluency disorders, and non-speech communication are shared responsibilities with the Ministry of Health).

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care:

- injection of medication
- catheterization (sterile)
- manual expression of bladder/stoma
- postural drainage/suctioning
- tube feeding
- physio/occupational therapy (intensive clinical treatment)

Health Support Services are delivered by qualified practitioners from various support agencies who provide services within the school when medical documentation indicates that these procedures must be done during the school day.

Schools may complete referral forms provided by these agencies and then the individual agencies work with the families to determine appropriate care. School boards do not determine the criteria for this service. Services discontinue if M.D. documentation declares them unnecessary or the school support agency discharges according to their criteria.

Services such as Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech/Language Services are considered school-based rehabilitative services. These services are provided by Thrive Child Development Centre and are controlled directly by the delivery agency. Agencies determine the criteria and level of services. This service model reflects the fact that the Algoma District School Board does not employ Occupational Therapists or Physical Therapists. There have been no appeals on these service issues.

NOTE: PPM 81 is currently under review by the Ministry of Education. Services are subject to change upon release of the updated document.

Specialized Health Supports Provided in Schools

Specialized Health Support Service	Agency or position of person who performs the service	Eligibility criteria for students to receive the service	Position of person who determines eligibility to receive the service and the level of support	Criteria for determining when the service is no longer required
Nursing	Algoma Public Health, (APH) Home & Community Care Support Services	Injection of medications	Agency	M.D.'s certification
Occupational Therapy	THRIVE	Application by parents	Agency	Agency
Physiotherapy	THRIVE	Application by parents	Agency	Agency
Nutrition	APH	Yearly programs for all students planned by A.P.H.	Agency	Agency
Speech & Language Therapy	THRIVE – Speech ADSB - Language	Appropriate screening & assessment	THRIVE – speech ADSB- Language	Assessment (usually SLP)
Administration of prescribed meds.	ADSB Staff	M.D. in alignment w/Bd. Policy	M.D. in alignment w/Bd. Policy	M.D. documentation on Bd. Form
Catheterization	Clean – ADSB (E.A) Sterile - Home & Community Care Support Services	M.D. documentation	M.D.	M.D.
Suctioning	Shallow- ADSB (E.A) Deep – Home & Community Care Support Services	M.D. documentation	M.D.	M.D.
Lifting and Positioning	ADSB	Physiotherapist documentation and Bd staff	Physiotherapist and Bd. Staff	Physiotherapist And Bd staff
Assistance with mobility	Teachers, E.A.s With training by appropriate Agency, CNIB	Documentation by appropriate Professionals and review by Bd. Staff	Special Ed. Department	Documentation to support school related needs
Feeding	Teachers, EAs	Prof. Assessment	Special Ed. Department	
Toileting	E.A.s	M.D. documentation	Special Ed. Department	M.D. documentation

Specialized Equipment

The Algoma District School Board allocates funding for the purchase of specialized equipment required to be successful in the learning environment. The Ministry of Education provides **Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) (formerly Special Equipment Amount)** funding to school boards to assist with the costs of equipment essential to support students with special education needs, where the need for specific equipment is recommended by a qualified professional.

ADSB follows the updated SEA funding guidelines to support the purchase of specialized equipment for students.

Formula Component: All boards receive a base amount of \$200,000 as well as a per pupil amount of \$51.10. (e.g. average daily enrollment multiplied by the per-pupil amount). These funds can be used for any equipment type, whether technology related or not, training, maintenance, and/or repairs related to that equipment for students with special education needs. Any unspent funds become part of the Special Education Fund deferred revenue envelope and can be used for SEA purchases and/or to provide any special education programs and services in future years.

Claims-Based Component: Boards can apply for funding for the purchase of any single item (for any equipment type whether technology related or not) costing \$5,000 or over before taxes for an individual student with special education needs. The only exception is fixed and/or hard-wired equipment which remain ineligible (fixed/capital expenditures).

Use in a School Setting

It is important to remember that equipment purchases are made to address individual student needs as they apply to the school setting.

Equipment purchased to assist students is to remain at school, including all holidays and summer breaks. Exceptions may be made because of participation in a board-provided summer program, with the permission of the school principal.

It is expected that equipment will be replaced or upgraded as needed to accommodate changes in students' needs or due to changing technology. The expected number of years of use for different types of equipment varies depending on the technology.

Eligibility for Obtaining Specialized Equipment

Documentation required:

- an assessment from a qualified professional including a diagnosis and the needs that the equipment is meant to address;

- a recommendation indicating the types of equipment the student requires to address these needs;
- an indication that the equipment is needed to access curriculum.

Also required are:

- a current copy of the student's IEP that provides evidence of the use of the equipment in the student's program;

Considerations for Purchase

The Special Education System Administrator will review all documentation provided by the professional, and determine if the equipment is appropriate to the age of the child, the school board standards, and the academic needs.

The following must be considered prior to the purchase of the equipment:

- Will the recommended equipment provide the student with the accommodations necessary to access learning opportunities and the learning environment in a more equitable fashion?
- Can the student operate the equipment requested?
- What type of support is required to allow the student to use the equipment?
- How does the technology (hardware and software) currently available in the school NOT meet the student's needs?
- Has the request been recommended by an appropriately qualified professional?
- Where possible, a Canadian supplier is preferred, and equipment must be CSA approved. Recommendations for specific equipment must be outlined and included in the request for purchase.
- Upon review of the request, additional documentation or recommendations for alternative equipment may be made.
- All decisions related to the purchase of specific computer software/hardware are the exclusive jurisdiction of the Algoma District School Board.

Portability or Transfer of Equipment

Equipment purchased through SEA funding is considered portable, therefore, it should be transferred when the student changes schools or moves to a different school board within Ontario. The student's sending board will not be reimbursed by the Ministry. The receiving board will be responsible for any shipping or handling costs associated with the timely and effective transfer of equipment.

Transportation

The Special Education Department and Algoma & Huron-Superior Transportation Services (AHSTS) work together to provide transportation for students with special education needs. Two large providers and several small bus companies, which service more distant, smaller areas of this large board, currently provide school bus services. Depending on availability, a range of services may be provided to students with special education needs, and wherever possible, students with special education needs use regular transportation resources.

Guidelines for Transportation

- a. The Special Education Department in consultation with the school Principal and Algoma & Huron-Superior Transportation Services (AHSTS) will determine if a student with special education needs requires special transportation that is not the regular bussing provided by the Board.
- b. A transportation request form, completed by the school and parent(s)/guardian(s) each school year, will be required to access specialized transportation.
- c. The safety of a student with special education needs will be a factor when considering alternative transportation arrangements.
- d. Students with special medical conditions that are debilitating and of a long-term nature and that are documented by a physician may be provided with transportation.
- e. Students enrolled in a Special Education Classroom or a **Specialized Program that is unavailable** at the student's home school are provided with transportation within reasonable geographical limits.
- f. When no such specific education program is involved, parents are responsible for providing transportation for students with special education needs attending a school that is outside of their school area.
- g. One school week is required to implement transportation arrangements.
- h. Students attending Provincial and Demonstration Schools are provided with transportation via air and ground providers, arranged through the Ministry of Education.

Drivers employed by the transportation carriers must have a "B" license and a criminal background check is done before the license can be obtained. Taxi drivers must have a clean driving record and be approved by the local police commission. Drivers are trained in the use of both hydraulic lifts and "tie-down" procedures to secure wheelchairs. Drivers also receive training to serve students with specialized transportation needs and regular first-aid training for emergency medical response through the transportation carrier. Other types of specific training, including training specific to the student they serve, may be provided as needed and upon request.

All carriers cooperate with our schools to develop specific procedures and protocols for the drivers of particular special needs students. Emergency communications, epi-pen use, restraint systems, special pick-up and drop-off arrangements, etc. are addressed for individual students.

Accessibility

The Board's multi-year plan, for improving accessibility to schools and programs for special needs students is coordinated with our annual buildings and grounds, and school renewal planning. Accessibility needs are incorporated into renovation planning whenever possible to improve effective use of limited resources.

Addressing accessibility needs in single school communities is a priority in planning since alternatives are not available for students, as they sometimes are in multi-school communities. The needs for specific students, in specific schools, are determined annually and addressed during the summer months to provide accessibility for the new school year. The Special Education Department works with principals and Plant Department personnel to coordinate and meet needs.

The Education Centre of the Algoma District School Board is wheelchair accessible through the ground floor entrance and the elevator.

To ensure that available funds from school operations grants are directed to greatest needs, the Board, each year, reviews the student needs when planning for the coming school year. Each year, in the spring, the Special Education Department contacts the Plant Department to inform them about schools that are receiving students with access needs.

If specific school buildings can be reasonably and appropriately renovated to install ramps and/or to re-model washroom areas, and the rest of the school is accessible and safe to wheelchairs, then this work is undertaken during the summer months. If re-modeling is not feasible at the closest school to the student, then the student is transported to another school, which is physically accessible in that same community, or in the closest neighbouring community, that can accommodate these needs.

Information regarding the ADSB's Accessibility Plan is available at www.adsb.on.ca.

Accessibility Committee

The ADSB Accessibility Committee was formally constituted in January 2003 and currently consists of the following members:

Brent Vallee - Superintendent of Special Education
Joe Santa Maria - Executive Superintendent of Business & Operations
Krista Lappage – System Administrator of Special Education
Alicia Mannarino- Human Resources Officer
Chris Alfano – Health & Safety Officer
Trevor Brown – Assistant Supervisor of Capital Planning
Ian Gauld – Eastern Area Coordinator
Sarah Anich-Mansfield – Learning Disabilities Resource Facilitator
Alicia Chapman – Teacher of the Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing
Lisa Henderson – Community Member (CEO of Thrive CDC)

Coordination of Services

Coordinated Response Table (CRT)

When a school team requires additional consultation or coaching to help guide their work in supporting a student's achievement and well-being, the school reaches out to the appropriate board team or department for support.

If/when the needs are complex and may require support from across multiple central office teams, the principal (or superintendent) may submit a referral to the Coordinated Response Table. The "leads" that meet at this table identify and deploy appropriate staff from their respective teams (if not already involved) to support the request from the school team, ensuring a multidisciplinary approach.

The CRT also ensures that there is coordination amongst central office staff responding to support the school team by ensuring that the lead from each board team is aware of the work that other team members have done, or may be doing, to support the school. These coordinated services remain in place for as long as necessary.

Throughout the process, school staff continue to work closely with families, recognizing that a strong partnership is essential for the student's success.

Protocol for Agreements with External Providers

The ADSB has established a protocol for agreements with external providers to provide a framework for implementing agreements with external providers who wish to provide mental health, physical health or social services including assessment, counselling, therapy and/or treatment, in Algoma District School Board schools. This protocol may be viewed at [Protocol for Agreements with External Providers](#).

Early Transitions

For students entering Kindergarten that have been identified with special needs prior to registration, a formal transition process is in place. This process includes an initial “awareness” meeting among the Board and the community partner/agency that is currently providing services to the student, followed by a formal transition meeting with school-based personnel in the spring, and a follow-up meeting after beginning school in the fall. Opportunities are also provided for school personnel to visit the childcare setting during the spring months. Further case conferences may be held throughout the year as needed.

During the 2024-2025 school year, approximately 75 incoming Junior Kindergarten students took place in the formal Transitions process.

Mental Health Supports

In Ontario, increasing mental health support for children and youth has been recognized by educational leaders as a key challenge that must be addressed. ADSB has a mental health team, which is supported by a mental health lead, mental health workers, mental health and addiction nurses (LHIN), school & attendance counselors, senior administration, school administrators, special education staff, and staff from various community partners. During the 2024-2025 school year, the ADSB Mental Health Team provided information regarding the Mental Health supports and strategies to Trustees, SEAC, Senior Administration, community partners and schools within ADSB. Protocols are currently in place with community partners such as Algoma Family Services and Sault Area Hospitals to assist students with transitions to, from, and through care.

As of May 1st, 2025, the ADSB Mental Health Lead has led 91 formal transition meetings, participated in 161 Mental Health Consultations, with 107 follow-ups, participated in 0 Expulsion process, 3 return from suspensions, as well as facilitating 2 traumatic events responses. Mental Health Workers, Mental Health and Addiction Nurses, and School & Attendance Counsellors also service students and maintain an active caseload. As of May 1st, 2025, the number of individual students maintained on caseloads was 1993 with those receiving sessions at 1756.

Special Education Staff

The Algoma District School Board utilizes teachers, professionals and paraprofessionals to support the delivery of programs and services to students with special education needs. Staff members are deployed within schools as well as on a system-wide basis. It should be noted that system-wide Special Education Staff positions listed are subject to the funding and budgetary process each year.

School-Based Special Education Staff

Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs):

The Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) provides school-based resource support for the planning, development, and implementation of special education programs and services within the school.

While the role of the SERT is quite complex, SERTs support special education programs and services by providing direct instruction to students, supporting the development of *Individual Education Plans* (IEPs) and the implementation of accommodations, modifications, and alternative programming, conducting assessments and preparing referrals, and fulfilling various accountability requirements (e.g. meetings, case conferences, agency contacts).

Specialized Programming Teachers (SPTs)

The *Specialized Programming Teacher* model is offered at specific schools to support the needs of students within their home school setting. Specific programming support is tailored to the needs of the caseload at the individual site.

A specific caseload of students are “withdrawn” from the regular classroom to participate in blocks of specialized programming with the *Specialized Programming Teacher*.

Specialized programming support will often focus on building self-regulation and/ social skills (outlined in an *Individual Education Plan*) or providing additional support for modified academics in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Some students may require supports in both areas. Skills to support academic achievement (e.g. assistive technology, intervention/remediation) may also be provided depending on individual student needs and caseload.

Teacher of the Blind/Low-Vision

An Itinerant Teacher of the Blind/Low-Vision provides direct services to students who meet the requirements to receive the services of a teacher of the blind. The amount of intervention is dependent on the students’ vision and learning needs. At the system-level,

a Specialist Teacher of the Blind/Low Vision may provide regular and/or ongoing school-based in-service to assist school teams in meeting the needs of students, acting as a system-wide contact for any Blind/Low-Vision needs, and supporting Special Equipment Allocation (SEA) claims for students.

Teacher of the Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing

Teachers of the Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing provide direct services to students who meet the profile for the services of a teacher of the deaf. Some of these students also receive the support of an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter to assist in meeting their program needs. At a system-level, a designated Teacher of the Deaf/Hard-of Hearing provides program and language support for deaf students, as well as overseeing implementation of special auditory equipment to supplement student's personal hearing aids/cochlear implants and acting as a system-wide contact for Deaf/Hard of Hearing needs.

Educational Assistants

Each year, as part of the Educational Assistant Allocation process, all schools complete and submit an Allocation Request form. This form provides an overview of needs within the school that may require support from an Educational Assistant.

Special Note: No specific identification or diagnosis generates the allocation of EA support. EA support is allocated based on demonstrated intellectual, adaptive functioning, physical/medical or safety considerations that have a significant impact within the school setting.

It is expected that a student's identified areas of need within these areas will be used to establish alternative programming goals for the IEP, with the goal of supporting the student in developing increased independence within each area. For many students, it is expected that the need for EA support will decrease as the student progresses in meeting their goals.

A system-level committee reviews the needs of each school and makes a recommendation regarding the number of EAs that may be required at each site, subject to approval of the Superintendent. These allocation numbers continue to be reviewed throughout the school year.

Once the numerical allocation for each school has been determined, EAs are assigned to schools as per the process specified in their collective bargaining agreement. Following the assignment of a complement of EAs to a school site, individual schedules and assignments are determined by the school principal. Changes to EA schedules and/or assignments may be made at any time as determined by the principal.

During the 2024-25 school year, the ADSB employed approximately 235 Educational Assistants to help meet the needs of the approximately 3252 exceptional students.

System-Based Special Education Staff

Special Education Assignment Teacher (SEAT)

The Special Education Assignment Teacher (SEAT) supports schools in planning, developing, implementing and monitoring special education programs and services in addition to facilitating the school's access to system-wide supports and services.

This may include collaborating with SERTs, Specialized Program or Classroom Teachers, Vice-Principals or Principals to support them in conducting special education processes (e.g. IPRC and IEP development), as well as supporting SERTs, classroom teachers, and other staff through mentoring, demonstration, and the provision of professional learning opportunities.

Individual SEATs also have a specific portfolio of responsibilities related to various elements of special education programming and services (e.g. Formal Assessment).

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Resource Facilitators

The ASD Resource Facilitators support the achievement and well-being of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder by providing consultation, coaching, and/or capacity building support to promote the implementation of effective practices, strategies, and resources appropriate to a school setting. This may include facilitating learning opportunities, including presentations, for students, caregivers, educators and/or other professionals to extend their awareness and understanding of ASD and enhance their ability to develop and implement appropriate strategies. The ASD Resource Facilitators also provide a liaison to third-party service providers to determine how these providers can utilize designated spaces within the school to provide ABA services, or to support students' transitions into classrooms.

Behaviour Analyst:

PPM 140 established the expectation that special education programs for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder make use of the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), when appropriate.

The Behaviour Analyst provides the expertise to conduct both informal and formal assessments (e.g. ABLLS) and support school staff in developing and implementing programming that utilizes ABA principles in a manner appropriate to an educational setting. Support may include working collaboratively to build the capacity of school staff to conduct or interpret assessments, develop, implement, and monitor IEPs and Student Support Plans, and to implement high-yield strategies and resources that will enhance student success.

Currently, the Behaviour Analyst also provides a liaison to third-party service providers (e.g. OAP providers) to determine how these providers can utilize designated spaces within the school to provide interventions, or to support students' transitions into the classroom.

Behaviour Coach

The Behaviour Coach provides embedded coaching for school staff regarding the use of appropriate strategies, interventions, and resources for students with behaviour needs related to Autism Spectrum Disorder or other exceptionalities. This may include working collaboratively to help school staff conduct or interpret assessments, support the development, implementation, and monitoring of IEPs and Student Support Plans that incorporate the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), and to implement high-yield strategies and resources that will enhance student success.

The Behaviour Coach also collaborates with board staff and other stakeholders as part of our processes to support the effective transition of students with high needs.

Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)

The Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) provides assessment and consultation services to address the language and communication needs of the school-aged population of the ADSB. The SLP will administer various assessment instruments and observe students to evaluate student needs and suggest appropriate programming. In addition, the SLP may also provide recommendations for strategies that school teams can implement with students, including appropriate communication supports. Due to caseload, the SLP only provides direct service to students in exceptional circumstances. As part of the special education team, the Speech-Language Pathologist also collaborates with Board staff and community stakeholders on a regular basis.

Communication Disorders Assistant (CDA)

Under the direction of a Speech-Language Pathologist, Communication Disorders Assistants conduct much of their work in schools conducting or implementing screening tools, and working with oral language or phonological awareness development groups focused on using and understanding oral language (e.g. vocabulary development, semantics (meaning of words), syntax (sentence structure), morphology (grammar), story re-tell, story grammar elements, following directions, and/or "Wh"- questions. CDAs rotate amongst schools to provide blocks of intervention to students.

CDAs work collaboratively as part of the multi-disciplinary team to support board staff and other stakeholders in addressing the language needs of students.

Learning Disabilities Resource Facilitator

The Learning Disabilities Resource Facilitator supports the achievement and well-being of students with learning disabilities by facilitating learning opportunities for students, caregivers, and Board staff to extend awareness and understanding of the strategies and

resources necessary to enhance achievement and well-being and promote the development of self-advocacy skills. The LD Resource Facilitator provides consultation, coaching, and/or capacity building support to promote the implementation of effective practices, strategies, and resources, conducts presentations and other learning opportunities for students, parents, and service providers on issues related to learning disabilities and collaborates with other staff to support the transition of students.

Early Years/Child Development Resource Facilitator:

The Early Years/Child Development Resource Facilitator supports the achievement and well-being of students by facilitating learning opportunities for students, caregivers and Board staff to extend awareness and understanding of the strategies and recourse necessary to support the needs of early years or primary students with developmental, communicative, and/or physical challenges. The Resource Facilitator provides consultation, coaching, and/or capacity building support to promote the implementation of effective practices, strategies, and resources, conducts presentations and other learning opportunities for students, parents, and service providers on issues related to learning disabilities and collaborates with other staff to support the transition of students.

Mental Health, Counselling and Attendance Team

Mental Health Lead (MHL):

The MHL provides expertise to support staff understanding of mental health and addictions issues, develop protocols related to mental health/addictions, and facilitates the implementation of the Board-wide Mental Health & Addictions Strategy.

The MHL works with school and system leaders in the ADSB and district to further develop, implement, and communicate a comprehensive Board Mental Health & Addictions strategy that promotes positive child and youth mental health.

This may include working with Board personnel and community partners to enhance an integrated system of pathways to care, and to facilitate access to resources for students and their families as part of the Algoma Model. In the case of students that have received tier three support services through community providers (e.g. Sault Area Hospitals) the MHL acts as a liaison to facilitate the process to helping the student transition back to school. At the system level, the means that the MHL conducts district needs assessment and resource mapping to identify specific service delivery gaps in the area of mental health and addictions for students.

The MHL also assists schools in the selection and implementation of mental health promotion and prevention programming strategies, as well as serving as a liaison for provincial mental health initiatives. This involves a process of collaborate and plan with other mental health leaders across the province to share learning and to provide input to the development and implementation of provincial resources.

The Mental Health Lead also provides assistance and clinical supervision to support the

work of the Mental Health Workers and the School & Attendance Counsellors.

Mental Health Worker

Mental Health Workers provide direct mental health support services and/or other mental health supports to secondary school students on issues impacting their achievement and well-being, including but not limited to crisis intervention, anger management, problem-solving; grief & loss; social skills, interpersonal relationships, bullying and harassment, stress management.

This may include connecting with families to engage caregivers as part of the planning and intervention process as appropriate; facilitating access to mental health supports and services for students requiring Tier Three supports through initial referrals and follow-ups to community mental health and social services providers; and coordinating school supports with community-based services for students and families by facilitating the ADSB transitions process available for students moving to/through/from care.

Mental Health Workers also help to provide ‘evidence-based’ strategies for educators/school administrators to support mental health promotion and prevention in ways that align with school-based IEPs, support plans, and/or health treatment plans and deliver professional learning opportunities to support the mental health needs of students.

School & Attendance Counsellors

School & Attendance Counsellors provide tier one and tier two supports to students. Support may include a brief services model of individual and/or group counselling that utilizes a social-emotional problem-solving model. Support is provided to address issues impacting upon students’ well-being and achievement. Such issues may include anger management, grief & loss, social skills development, interpersonal relationships, bullying and harassment, stress management and/or crisis intervention. School and Attendance Counsellors also take on a lead role in supporting students as part of the ADSB Response to Traumatic Events Team.

In the case of students that may require “tier three” support of a more intensive nature, School & Attendance Counsellors help facilitate the referral of students and families to community agencies (e.g. AFS, Sault Area Hospitals) that have the required infrastructure to provide such supports.

School & Attendance Counsellors also provide attendance support services as part of the process of enforcing Education Act legislation and regulations associated with compulsory school attendance.

Special Education Department Staff 2024-2025

Superintendent of Special Education – Brent Vallee

System Administrator Special Education– Kristen Viita

System Administrator of Special Education – Krista Lappage

- Confidential Secretary to the Superintendent – Charlene Phillips (945-7297)
- Special Education Department Clerk – Colleen D’Orazio (a.m.) (945-7272)

Testing Services (Contracted)

- Psychologist – Dr. Bruce Linder (consultation)
- Psychological Associate – Penny Poisson-Lawrence
- Psychological Associate – Dona Menard-Calder
- Psychometrist – Enrico Schiruu

Special Education Assignment Teachers

- Caroline Beemer
- Colleen Esposti
- Amanda Naccarato

Itinerant Teachers (w/System-Wide Responsibilities)

- Teacher of the Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing: Lindsay Bisailon

Multi-Disciplinary Team

- Speech Language Pathologist: Sara Amato
- Speech Language Pathologist: Lianne Vezeau
- Communication Disorders Assistant: Mikaela Caputo
- Communication Disorders Assistant: Jenna Carlucci
- Communication Disorders Assistant: Jessica Nicholson
- ASD Resource Facilitator: Laura Austin
- ASD Resource Facilitator: Carolyn Nadeau
- Behaviour Analyst: Chris Bartko (on leave)
- Behaviour Coach : Debbie Iozzo
- LD Resource Facilitator: Sarah Anich-Mansfield
- Early Years/Child Development Resource Facilitator: Lori Lambert

SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF

2024-2025 Elementary Panel

Special Education Staff	FTEs	Staff Qualifications
1. Teachers of exceptional students		
1.1 Teachers for resource-withdrawal programs SERTs (Special Education Resource Teachers)	29.3	Special Ed. Pt. 1 minimum
1.2 Teachers for self-contained classes LEAD classes, special education classes	26.68	Sp.Ed.Pt. 1
2. Other special education teachers		
2.1 Itinerant teachers	3.70	Teacher of the Deaf Special Education .Pt.1
	1.5	Teacher of the Blind Specialist, Special Education Pt. 1
2.2 Special education system administrators	1.4	Specialist Sp. Ed.
2.4 Special Education Assignment Teachers	2.0	JK – 8 support
3. Educational assistants in Sp.Ed.		
3.1 Educational assistants	197	C.Y.W. , D.S.W. S.S.W
4. Other professional resource staff		
4.1 Psychologists		Reg'd. Psychologist, Psych.Assoc.
4.2 Speech-language pathologists	1.8	Reg'd. Sp. Lang. Path. (M.Sc.,M.A. Comm. Disorders)
4.3 ABA Support Staff	4.0	
4.4 Occupational therapists	0	
4.5 Physiotherapists	0	
4.6 Social workers	10	B.A.,B.S.W.plus related social qual
5. Paraprofessional resource staff		
5.1 Orientation and mobility personnel	0	Contractual as needed
5.2 Oral interpreters	0	
5.3 sign interpreters	1.0	B.A. plus A.S.L.
5.4 transcribers	0	
5.5 Interveners	0	
5.6 Auditory-verbal therapists	0	

2024-2025 Secondary Panel

Special Education Staff	FTEs	Staff Qualifications
1. Teachers of exceptional students		
1.1 Teachers for resource-withdrawal programs	12.5	Special Ed. Pt. 1 minimum
1.2 Teachers for self-contained classes	13.67	Sp.Ed.Pt. 1
2. Other special education teachers		
2.1 Itinerant teacher	0.0	Teacher of the Deaf
2.2 Teacher diagnosticians		
2.3 Special education system administrators	.60	Specialist Sp. Ed.
2.5 Special Education Assignment Teacher	1.0	7-12 Support
3. Educational assistants in Sp.Ed.		
3.1 Educational assistants	36	C.Y.W. , D.S.W.
4. Other professional resource staff		
4.1 Psychologists	0	Reg'd. Psychologist - consultation
4.2 Psychometrists	0	M.A.
4.3 Psychiatrists	0	
4.4 Speech-language pathologists	0.2	Sp. Lang. Path.
4.5 Audiologists	0	
4.6 Occupational therapists	0	
4.7 Physiotherapists	0	
4.8 Social workers	10	B.A.,B.S.W.plus related social qual
5. Paraprofessional resource staff		
5.1 Orientation and mobility personnel	0	Contracted as needed
5.2 Oral interpreters	0	
5.3 sign interpreters	2	
5.4 transcribers	0	
5.5 Interveners	0	
5.6 Auditory-verbal therapists	0	

Staff Professional Development

The overall goal of the staff professional development plan is to ensure the continuous growth and development of the professional practice(s) of staff involved in the delivery of special education programs and services.

The System Administrator and Superintendent of Special Education attend all SEAC meetings and present monthly professional development reports. In addition, members of SEAC share opportunities for professional development provided by their agencies with staff, and present their concerns regarding the learning needs of the system. Staff speak at community meetings and also attend local community workshops.

Special Education staff visit schools on a regular basis, consult with SERTs and provide input on required areas for professional development to the Superintendent for Special Education. As a result, training sessions are developed to instruct specific staff on areas which are required to deliver programs and services to special needs students. Experienced teachers and board professionals run workshops and on-line professional development for other board staff.

When specialized training outside the expertise of Board personnel is required, arrangements are made with other agencies to provide and share costs associated with the workshops.

Specific Professional Development

A range of specific professional development opportunities is provided each year for regular class teachers, special education teachers, professionals, support staff, administrators and parents. It is the intent of the Special Education Department to establish priorities for in-service every year. Professional learning opportunities provided during the 2024-2025 school year included the following:

Behaviour Management Systems (BMS)	Initial Certification Refresher Training	Focus on preventative measures and safety when dealing with aggressive behaviours	EAs, ECEs, Specialized Program/Classroom Teachers completed BMS training in 2024-2025
Autism Training	New Staff	Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder and Strategies for working with students.	On-boarding of new staff
Special Education Resource Teacher Sessions	Special Education Resource Teachers	Topics include: SERT scheduling, Accommodations, Modifications, Alternative Programming, Thinking in Tiers, Assessment & Evaluation, Language Development, Literacy & Numeracy Intervention Executive Functioning, Assistive Technology IPRC & IEP Processes	Monthly
ASD Certificate Training (Sonderly)	Teachers, NTIP Teachers, Educational Assistants, Early Childhood Educators	Core Teaching Strategies for Autistic Students Supporting Play-Based Learning for Kids with ASD ABA for Educators Part One Functional Behaviour Assessment ADHD in the Classroom RBT 40-Hour Training Course	Annual

Special Projects

Behaviour Management Systems/Autism Awareness Training

Behaviour Management Systems is an Ontario-based program developed by educators for educators to safely and effectively manage student behaviours in a way that is safe for both students and staff member(s).

The philosophy behind Behaviour Management Systems complements ADSB's *Guidelines for Working with High Needs Students* as both strongly support the importance of knowing the child, understanding the function and possible “triggers” of a behaviour, and emphasize the use of calming and de-escalation techniques.

Autism Awareness Supplement

In addition to providing BMS re-certification, ADSB certified trainers provide an Autism Awareness Supplement that has been developed to augment the regular BMS training.

Empower Reading

The Empower website <http://www.sickkids.ca/empower> describes Empower as a series of remedial reading programs designed to address the core learning problems of children who struggle with reading. Various program offerings offer remediation in decoding and

word reading, spelling, vocabulary development and text comprehension. Empower Reading provides a comprehensive approach to teaching children with various levels of reading disabilities the skills needed to decode words, analyze text, and successfully learn to read and gain knowledge from written materials. The ADSB currently offers the Gr. 2-5 Spelling and Decoding program at participating elementary school sites, as well as the Gr. 6-8 Spelling and Decoding program at participating Intermediate school sites.

During the 2024-2025 school year, the ADSB continued to expand implementation of the Empower Reading program. Empower Reading Gr. 2-5 Decoding and Spelling is now offered on-site in 25 ADSB elementary schools while the Gr. 6-8 Decoding and Spelling program is offered in all 5 of our Intermediate School sites. Three full-time and one half-time itinerant Empower Teachers also provide the Gr. 2-5 and/or Gr. 6-8 Decoding & Spelling program to elementary and intermediate sites across the board.

Empower is currently being implemented by SERTs in the schools offering the program. This involves a commitment to a) participate in all Empower training sessions; b) implement the Empower program with a selected group of 6-8 students; and c) participate in any feedback, data collection, etc. that was needed.

Project SEARCH

Algoma District School Board launched a Project SEARCH program in Sault Ste. Marie beginning in the fall of 2023. Project SEARCH started at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in 1996. There are now more than 650 Project SEARCH sites worldwide including six in Canada.

Project SEARCH is an internationally successful transition-to-work model for young people with developmental or intellectual disabilities. During their final year of secondary school, students are fully immersed with a leading community organization, known as a "host business". The students prepare for employment with job skills training through a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on career training which is completed through an unpaid internship. This is a program that promotes workplace diversity and

Project SEARCH started in Ontario in 2019 and is recognized as best practice for business and public sector partnership. It has media and government attention. ADSB became involved with Project SEARCH as part of a Ministry of Education Pilot project.

Robots for Autism

In partnership with Robokind, ADSB is implementing the use of the *Robots for Autism* Program. Described as a multidisciplinary developmental behaviour approach, the program helps to develop socio-emotional learning skills in students with autism. ADSB currently has two robots – Milo and Veda – helping to supporting learning in several of our Structured Learning Classroom and Practical Learning Classrooms.

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Algoma District School Board holds monthly meetings during the school year. Usually, meetings take place on the last Tuesday of the month from September through March, and the first Tuesday of the month from April through June. Meetings usually occur at noon in the Sugar Maple room of the Education Centre. SEAC information and meeting dates are published on the ADSB web site: www.adsb.on.ca

SEAC meetings enable each member association to provide input on the particular needs of the association they represent, to bring valuable information from association members, to work collaboratively with the Board to ensure that the needs of all exceptional students are met, and to advise the Board about Special Education programs and services. SEAC meetings also provide the opportunity for Special Education personnel to keep SEAC members up to date on Board initiatives, activities, and programs and services for students with special education needs.

The chair of the SEAC reports all correspondence to the membership. Often, letters of concern are received from other school boards to provide information or request the support of the Algoma SEAC. The Algoma SEAC will also write letters promoting special education to the Ministry of Education.

The System Administrator and Superintendent of Special Education, and two trustees attend all meetings and are thus able to respond directly to concerns from members about pending legislation, new programs, budget questions, etc. SEAC may make recommendations to the Board on a variety of Special Education topics, and participates in the annual review of the Special Education Plan, and in the review of the annual budget and finances for Special Education.

Meetings of the SEAC are open to the public. The contact numbers for SEAC members are noted on the Board's website.

Guidelines for Selecting Members

SEAC members are appointed by the Algoma District School Board.

They serve for the same term as the Board of Trustees. A new SEAC is formed every four years following the election of the trustees.

SEAC members must be qualified to vote for Trustees of the board and must be resident in its jurisdiction.

SEAC members consist of representatives from local associations that operate locally within the area of jurisdiction of the Board, as nominated by the local association and appointed by the Board. It is also possible for organizations to nominate one alternative for each representative. The Board also has the option to appoint a member-at-large to represent the interests of the community.

One SEAC member (and an alternate) is also appointed to represent the interests of First Nations pupils. This member is nominated by the North Shore Tribal Council and appointed by the Board. The qualifications outlined above are not required of this member.

Selection Process

Nomination letters from local associations are sent to the Superintendent of Special Education. Recommendations for appointment are made to the Board for approval at a board meeting.

SEAC members serve the same term as trustees. Local associations may apply at the beginning of the SEAC term (e.g. municipal election) to nominate a member of the Algoma District School Board SEAC. (The current term for SEAC began in December 2022 and runs through November 2026).

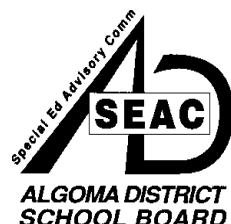
If a member is unable to fulfill their term in office, the association may nominate an alternate to fill the position and will notify the Board in writing of their intent to nominate the alternate.

The alternate's name may then be recommended to the Board of Trustees for approval. Should the association be unable to find a suitable replacement, the association would notify the Board of their intent to withdraw from the SEAC.

Roles and Responsibilities of SEAC

In keeping with legislation set out in Regulation 464/97, 11, 12(1), (2) of the *Education Act*, the roles and responsibilities of the SEAC include:

1. To further the interests and well-being of groups of exceptional children or adults;
2. To provide important advice on special education;
3. May make recommendations to the district school board or school authority respecting matters affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board;
4. To be provided with the opportunity to participate in the annual review of the board's Special Education Plan; and
5. To participate in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education.



**ALGOMA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
2022-2026**

Name	Organization/Interest	Work Phone
MICK, Pat *CHAIR*	Member-At-Large	(705) 779-2403 patriciamick41@gmail.com
SNIDER, Clint	Algoma Family Services	705-945-5050 ext 2032 csnider@algomafamilyservices.org
TUOMI, Margaret	Autism Ontario	(705) 542 1794 mrstuomi@gmail.com
KALLONEN, Kate	Autism Ontario (Alternate)	(705) 2531157 katekallonen@outlook.com
BARBEAU, Margaret	Community Living Algoma	(705) 253-1700 mbarbeau4@icloud.com
IACOE, Sergio	Community Living Algoma (Alternate)	(705) 253-1700 ext 3005 Sergio.lacoe@cla-algoma.org
GAUTHIER, Amanda	THRIVE Child Development Centre	(705) 759-1131 ext 229 agauthier@kidsthive.ca
BURNS, Sarah	Thrive Child Development Centre (Alternate)	(705) 759-1131 ext 290 sburns@kidsthive.ca
SIMON, Velma	Member-At-Large	(705) 989-6662 velma.simon@saultcollege.ca
KITTS, Sherri	North Shore Tribal Council	(705) 946-3933 ext 217 skitts@gardenriver.ca
LAMBERT, Rachelle	North Shore Tribal Council (Alternate)	rlambert@batchewana.ca
EVANS, Sheryl	Trustee – ADSB	(705) 943-9072 evanss@trustee.adsb.ca
WHITLEY, Heather	Trustee- ADSB	(705) 206-4175 whitleyh@trustee.adsb.ca
MYERS, SUSAN	Trustee- ADSB (Alternate)	(705) 256 - 6128 myerss@trustee.adsb.ca
ADMINISTRATION (Resource to SEAC)		
VALLEE, Brent	Superintendent of Education – ADSB	705-945-7297
VIITA, Kristen	System Administrator – ADSB	705-945-7111 ext 10258
LAPPAGE, Krista	System Administrator – ADSB	705-945-7111 ext 10255
PHILLIPS, Charlene	Recording Secretary - ADSB	705-945-7297

Updated May 1, 2025

Addressing A Concern

The following provides a step-by-step list of personnel to whom concerns regarding special education programs and/or services (e.g. IPRC, programming, progress) should be addressed:

- a) Classroom teacher
- b) Special Education Resource Teacher
- c) Principal or Vice-Principal
- d) Special Education Assignment Teacher
- e) System Administrator for Special Education
- f) Superintendent of Special Education
- g) Director of Education
- h) Board of Trustees/Chair of the Board
- i) Ministry of Education

Additional Information:

- **Website – www.adsb.on.ca**
Additional information related to special education programs and services is available on the Algoma District School Board's website. Please follow the Special Education tab for information specifically related to special education.
- Dial toll free to the Sault Ste. Marie Education Centre at **1-888- 393-3639** or dial direct at **705-945-7111**.
- **Kristen Viita**, System Administrator for Special Education - 705-945-7111 ext. 10258
- **Krista Lappage**, System Administrator for Special Education – 705-945-7111 ext 10255
- **Brent Vallee**, Superintendent of Special Education
Algoma District School Board
644 Albert Street East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2K7
Phone: 705-945-7297

