



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

**MINUTES OF MEETING
January 21, 2025
Sugar Maple Room/Teams
12:00 Start Time**

Present: M. Tuomi, (Autism Ontario), M. Barbeau (Community Living Algoma), Amanda Gauthier (Thrive CDC), Clinton Snider (Algoma Family Services), P. Mick (Member-At-Large), Velma Simon (Member-at- Large)

Trustees: H. Whitley, S. Evans

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

Regrets: S. Kitts (North Shore Tribal Council)

Guests: Jan Marelli, Secondary System Administrator

Meeting called to order. With the approval of Chair Mick, Superintendent Vallee to facilitate the remainder of the hybrid meeting.

1. Welcome

2. Round Table - Introduction of members, staff, and/or guests.

3. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- Approval of Agenda. Moved by M. Barbeau. Seconded by M. Tuoumi. All in favour.
- Approval of Minutes (December 10, 2024). Moved by. C. Snider. Seconded by M. Barbeau. All in favour.

4. Correspondence: Letter re: Special Education Funding & Staffing Shortages

- Letter from Ottawa Catholic DSB SEAC regarding issues related to special education funding, particularly staffing shortages regarding educational assistants. They have requested that other SEAC chairs “co-sign” their letter. SEAC members agree; P. Mick will indicate willingness to be added to the letter.
- **Draft Letter supporting Limestone DSB SEAC letter to OCT Registrar re: Special Education Training in Teacher Preparation Programs.**

SEAC members approved the draft letter, which will be sent by our SEAC in support of the original letter from Limestone DSB SEAC.

5. Presentation: ***Pathways for Students*** (Jan Marelli, Secondary System Administrator)

- As the option selection process is underway for secondary schools, J. Marelli shared information regarding current options available for students, with a particular focus on Locally Developed Compulsory Courses. The presentation provided information about:
 - Graduation requirements, which have changed for students currently enrolled in Gr. 9 as well as those that will be entering Gr.9 next year. The mix of compulsory credits and optional credits has shifted compared to the requirements for students currently in grade ten or above.
 - Types of Courses available. In grade nine, courses are available at the De-streamed, Open, or Locally Developed level. In grade ten, courses are offered at the Academic, Applied, Open, or Locally Developed level. In grade eleven and twelve, courses are offered at Academic, Applied, Open and Workplace levels.
 - Locally Developed Compulsory Courses are generally accessed by students who have been receiving significantly modified programming in Grade 8 and/or are several grade levels behind in developing literacy and numeracy skills, even with accommodations in place.
 - Locally developed courses provide a measure of flexibility and support for students to meet the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.
 - These courses are not intended to “replace” Applied courses, so with the move to de-streaming in grade nine, boards are required to track and submit enrollment numbers for locally developed courses to ensure that this does not happen.
 - Students entering high school and currently enrolled in grade nine are also required to attempt the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) at least one prior to enrollment in the literacy course.
 - Information booklet is available on the board website and copies have been provided for SEAC members.

6. Member Organization Updates

Community Living Algoma (M. Barbeau)

- *Together We're Better* contest is underway. This is open to all school boards to participate.
- Information/postings for the *Summer Employment Program* have been released. Students with an intellectual or developmental disability are eligible to apply to the program. Applications are also available for students without a disability that are interested in employment as Job Coaches or Coordinators. The application deadline is February 28, 2025. Information is available via the CLA website at <https://communitylivingalgoma.bamboohr.com/careers>

Autism Ontario (M. Tuomi)

- Monthly SEAC Lunch Chat took place on January 15, 2025 to share events and activities being planned.
- [Celebrate the Spectrum](#) link contains information including *Fly a Flag*, *Get Involved*, *Events*, and the *School Giving Challenge*. Flags, bracelets, window decals, etc. can be purchased at cost. Every year, Autism Ontario gets requests from schools, organizations, businesses and more, requesting presentations, speakers or resources to help

them celebrate, so this year a *Participant Request Form* has been introduced on the website. Note: Requests must be submitted prior to February 1, 2025, for consideration.

Algoma Family Services (Clint Snider)

- Various in-house training programs taking place (e.g. ASIST, CPI).
- New groups are beginning (e.g. *Parenting a Second Time Around* supporting grandparents who are raising their grandchildren).

Member-at-Large (Velma Simon)

- No deadline for application to the CICE program; however, there is now a cap (10 students) on the number of students registered in the program so spots are filling up.

Thrive CDC (Amanda Gauthier)

- Nothing to report

Member-At-Large (Pat Mick)

- Nothing to report

7. Report from the Board (Trustees)

- At the January 11th Board Meeting, the following areas were discussed:
 - Director's Annual Report released
 - School Year Calendar consultation is available for parents and other stakeholders. [School Year Calendar Consultation](#)
 - Kindergarten registration has begun.
 - Multi-Year Accessibility Plan document (previously reviewed by SEAC) provided to Trustees
 - Policy approvals
 - Committee Assignments for upcoming school year (SEAC is a four-year term)
 - Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA) Public Education Symposium upcoming – many trustees attend this symposium.
- Trustees also participated in a training session on Governance during the month of January.

8. Report from Administration (B. Vallee, K. Viita, K Lappage)

- **Kindergarten Registration Begins.** Now that we have arrived in 2025, Kindergarten registration has begun for students born in 2021, as well as those born in 2020 that may not have attended school yet. Very helpful to have families register as early as possible as this helps with preliminary planning for the 2025-2026 school year. This is particularly true for students that may be part of our formal Kindergarten Transitions process for students with special education needs.
- **Kindergarten Transitions Process:** With Kindergarten registration underway, the Kindergarten Transitions process has begun. The first phase of meetings includes approximately 45 students. We usually end up with approximately 65-75 students participating in the formal process as we move through the year.
- **SERT Professional Learning:** Our Elementary SERT session for the month of January took place on Friday, January 17th. Our SERTs participated in a full day of Acadience

training. Acadience is the universal screener that is being implemented across the ADSB for all K-2 students.

- **Professional Development Day (January 31st):** We are in the process of planning for the January 31st Professional Development Day. Elementary Teachers have the day set aside for the purposes of assessment and reporting, while secondary teachers will be participating in professional learning and semester turn-around activities. The special education department will be focused on professional learning for educational assistants for this PD Day. Reminder to all that agendas for upcoming PD Days are posted on the ADSB website two weeks in advance of the date. [Professional Development](#)
- **OCASE Virtual Symposium (Jan 17th):** B Vallee attended the virtual January workshop for OCASE. OCASE is the Ontario Council for Administrators of Special Education, which is a sub-division of the Council for Exceptional Children. This workshop was focused on use of Artificial Intelligence apps to support learning of students with special education needs.
- **EQAO Mathematics Assessment (Grade 9) Window Opens:** The window to conduct EQAO testing for Grade 9 mathematics will be open from Wednesday, January 8th through until Thursday, January 30th. This is for students currently enrolled in the Grade 9 math course. Grade 9 testing occurs each semester.
- **SIP Modernization:** The Ministry continues to look at review and “modernization” of Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding. SEAC members will recall that this was previously a claims-based process that was extremely onerous, requiring significant amounts of staff time at both the school and system level to complete claims. While the review is underway, the province is using a formula-based model. The province is also collecting data on the number of students that would be considered eligible for SIP funding; Boards were asked to submit a list of students meeting criteria during the June “count” and the October “count”.
- **SEA/SIP Review:** As part of the process of updating SEA (*Special Equipment Allocation*, formerly *Special Equipment Amount* / SIP (*Special Incidence Portion*) processes, every board in the province will be participating in a review over a four-year cycle that begin in the 2023-2024 school year. ADSB is one of the boards participating in the review process this year. We anticipate that this will take place in the spring months. Isabel Fletcher and Ben R. McMullin are the two schools that have been randomly chosen for the review process.
- **Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Workshops:** This year, the ADSB PIC is sponsoring a series of monthly parent workshops on a variety of topics. These include workshops focused on Secondary Course Selection (January 27th), importance of School Attendance (February 24th), Numeracy/Mathematics (March 31st), Positive Mental Health & Resiliency (April 28th) and Special Education (Programs, Services) on May 26th. Each session will take place virtually from 6:30-7:30. Link to register is available through the ADSB website [PIC January Workshop](#).

9. **Next Meeting:** February 11, 2025

10. **Motion to adjourn:** Moved by C. Snider. Seconded by M. Tuomi

Meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.