



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

**MINUTES OF MEETING
June 18, 2024
DT Walkom/Teams
12:00 Start Time**

Present: P. Mick (Member-At-Large), M. Tuomi, (Autism Ontario), M. Barbeau (Community Living Algoma), Clinton Snider (Algoma Family Services) A. Gauthier (Thrive Child Development Centre)

Trustees: H. Whitley (Trustee), S. Evans (trustee)

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

Regrets: Velma Simon (Member-at- Large) S. Kitts (North Shore Tribal Council),

Guests: None

Meeting called to order following our reflection. 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 C. Snider. Seconded by M. Barbeau. All in favour.
- Approval of Minutes (May 28, 2024). Moved by C. Snider. Seconded by P. Mick. All in favour.

4. Correspondence:

- **PAAC on SEAC:** Letter focused on 'best practices' for SEACs. A stated 'best practice' is to hold meetings after 6:00 at night to encourage parent involvement. Members discussed the impact this might have. The consensus at present is to leave meetings at the current time as attendance tends to be very good among our members.

- **Waterloo Region DSB re: Recruitment and Retention of Educational Assistants:** This letter supports the Dufferin-Peel CDSB letter of February 21, 2024 regarding recruitment and retention of Educational Assistants.
- **Waterloo Region DSB: Vacancies on MACSE:** The letter addresses the WRDSB SEAC concerns about multiple and on-going vacancies on the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) with additional terms set to end soon. WRDSB SEAC is concerned that these vacancies may be limiting the work of MACSE. S. Evans clarified that you have to be appointed to MACSE and the process is not clear.

5. Member Organization Updates

Community Living Algoma (M. Barbeau)

- Summer employment program is up and running
- Events planned for 70th anniversary to involve the community. A BBQ is planned for August.

Thrive (Amanda Gauthier)

- Excited to have funding and able to secure summer students who will be supporting children at summer camps.

Algoma Family Services (Clint Snider)

- Pride parade that was held early June was a success.
- July and August summer camps will be offered for children who would struggle at regular camps, giving the opportunity to take part.
- Working and focusing on next year hoping to offer groups focused on anxiety and mental health.

M. Tuomi (Autism Ontario)

- Today is Autistic Pride Day
- Parent groups continue to run this month.
- National Indigenous Peoples Day - Woodland Arts
- Building Brighter Futures Fund (BBFF) ** We will accept applications for this year's Building Brighter Futures Fund in July 2024. ** BBFF provides financial assistance directly to autistic adults in Ontario through a reimbursement of funds spent to access greater participation in their local communities. Program fees for recreation or skill development, respite, professional supports, tuition, or other creative solutions connected to building life plans for autistic adults will be considered for reimbursement. <https://www.autismontario.com/BBFF>
- Journey to Adulthood - An Overview: This session is an introduction / overview of key topics in the transition from youth to adulthood. It will provide caregivers with a broad overview of adult services, funding, and supports along with key dates to apply for adult services. Date: June 12, 2024, Time: 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM Register: <https://www.autismontario.com/civicrm/event/info?id=9820>

P. Mick (Member- At-Large)

- Nothing to report this month.

6. Report from the Board (Trustees)

- Final Board Meeting of the school year took place on June 11th
- International Trips – students and staff attended the meeting to share some of their experiences on trips to France, Vietnam/Cambodia/Thailand, and Spain.
- Presentation by our student trustees of their work over the past year. Always exciting to see the leadership development that takes place with our student trustees over the course of the school year. We also had the opportunity to welcome our incoming student trustees.
- Policy review and approval of the updated Code of Conduct
- Budget was approved at the Board Meeting
- Special Education Plan was approved.
- Trustees will be participating in OPSBA general meeting and other events over the coming weeks. Elaine Johnstone, vice-chair of the ADSB, has been nominated as chair of the provincial Indigenous Trustees Council.
- Graduations take place the next 2 weeks – our trustees will be attending many ceremonies.

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

- **SERT Professional Learning:** We hosted a busy day of in-person professional learning for our SERTs on Friday, May 31st. The morning session began with *Meaningful Mathematics Intervention* which was a continuation of the learning that has taken place over our past few meetings. We also provided a session called “*Moving Beyond the Transition Meeting*” which offered an opportunity for SERTs to develop transition plans for some of their incoming students that was facilitated by our presenters. During the afternoon, SERTs rotated through a series of breakout sessions on the following topics: School-Based Transition Planning offered by the Principal/SERT from Ben R. McMullin outlining their processes and practices for transition planning, an overview of the “flow of the school year” regarding SERT long-range planning conducted by our Special Education Leads, and a session on accessing supports in the community led by our Early Years/Child Development Facilitator.
- **Shelley Moore Session 5 (May 30th):** Unfortunately, due to low numbers in attendance at the final session scheduled for May 30th, the session was cancelled. We were probably a bit too quick to cancel however, as we found out afterwards that one of our site did have seven people in the room using the big screen. Fortunately, however, Shelley has offered to send along a recorded presentation on this topic so that it can be distributed.
- **June 10th Professional Development Day:** A variety of activities took place during the June 10th PD Day. Although the day is set aside for the purposes of assessment and reporting for elementary teachers, and secondary teachers participated in a variety of school improvement and year-end planning activities, the special education department was actively involved in providing learning/training for educational assistants and elementary principals. Educational Assistants participated in a series of five workshops focused on a variety of special education topics that included *Language Development*, *Executive Function*, *Understanding IEPs*, *Transition Plans*, and *Building Empathy*.

Understanding of Autism. Elementary Principals completed Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) training.

- **Special Education Plan:** The Special Education Plan was accepted by the Trustees at the June 11th Board Meeting. This will be posted to the board website during the first week of July, after which we will submit the official checklist document to the Ministry.
- **Update re: SEA Funding:** One of the pieces that “slipped through” the initial funding announcements a bit (probably because the acronym has been kept the same), but the Special Equipment Amount is now the Specialized Equipment Allocation. Some substantial changes have been made to the way SEA funding is provided. M Barbeau asked what happens to equipment when students graduate? B. Vallee responded that any equipment that is serviceable is stored and our partners will usually check on equipment in storage prior to recommending new equipment. This happens frequently with younger students who “grow out of” equipment that is still in good condition.

8. Next Meeting: September 17, 2024

10. Motion to adjourn: Moved by M. Tuomi. Seconded by H. Whitley.

Meeting adjourned at 12:45