



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

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
November 4, 2025  
Sugar Maple Room  
12:00 Start Time**

**Present:** V. Simon (Member-at- Large), C. Snider (Algoma Family Services), P. Mick (Member-At-Large), M. Barbeau (Community Living Algoma), M. Tuomi (Autism Ontario), R. Lambert (North Shore Tribal Council – Alternate)

**Trustees:** H. Whitley

**Staff:** B. Vallee (Superintendent), Kristen Viita (System Administrator)

**Regrets:** S. Evans (Trustee), A. Gauthier (Thrive CDC), S. Kitts (North Shore Tribal Council)

**Guests:** A. Naccarato (SEAT), P. Mason (Project SEARCH Teacher)

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

1. **Welcome** – Welcome to all SEAC members.
2. **Round Table** - Introduction of members, staff, and/or guests.
3. **Approval of Agenda and Minutes**
  - Approval of Agenda. Moved by V. Simon. Seconded by M. Barbeau. All in favour.
  - Approval of Minutes (September 9 ,2025). Moved by M. Tuomi. Seconded by H. Whitley. All in favour.
4. **Correspondence:** P. Mick and B. Vallee received an email from a local private practitioner requesting to do a presentation to SEAC regarding concerns about truancy. The issue has been brought forward to senior administration and the board of trustees which is a more appropriate venue as this issue is not directly related to special education programs and services.

## **5. Presentation/Discussion: Update on Project SEARCH (B. Vallee, P. Mason, A Naccarato).**

- B. Vallee, P. Mason and A. Naccarato provided an update regarding the Project SEARCH program. Project SEARCH is a school to work transition program for students with an intellectual or developmental disability.
- B. Vallee provided some background about Project SEARCH. Since beginning at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital in 1996, it has grown into an internationally recognized program with over 700 sites. An overview of the process that ADSB went through to establish a Project SEARCH site locally was also provided.
- The Project SEARCH model is a partnership between a school board (which provides a teacher, delivers a curriculum related to employability-type skills, and provides the student interns); a community rehabilitative services provider (who provides job development services and may also provide a skills trainer), and a host business (which provides an on-site "training room" space, and opportunities for three internships). For Project SEARCH Algoma, the partners are Algoma District School Board (ADSB), Community Living Algoma (CLA), and Sault Area Hospital (SAH).
- Interns are between 18 – 20 years of age, still enrolled in secondary school, have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) with an identified intellectual or developmental disability, demonstrate a requisite level of skills/independence necessary to participate successfully in internships and complete the program, and have agreed that Project SEARCH will be their last year of "school" with the goal of entering the workforce once the program is completed (this is an essential component for outcome tracking)
- The internship program is one school year in duration. Program capacity is 5 – 10 student interns with a variety of intellectual and developmental disabilities. The interns join in host business culture and participate in 3 internships in several departments with continual feedback over the course of the school year. A teacher and skills trainer(s) are on-site to support intern skill and employability development.
- P. Mason discussed what on the ground programming looks like over the course of the year, the work that interns do in the departments, and job development meetings.
- As focus of Project SEARCH is to support interns with intellectual or developmental disabilities in developing the skills and stamina that will help them transition into the world of work Project SEARCH has clear criteria about what constitutes a "successful outcome".
- A successful outcome means that interns can secure competitive employment in an integrated setting, the employment is year-round work (not seasonal/short-term employment) with 16 or more hours each week at a typical/prevaling wage or higher. Interns continue to be monitored by the job development staff to support their entry into the workforce after the internship phase of the program has been completed.

## **6. Member Organization Updates**

### **North Shore Tribal Council (Rachelle Lambert)**

- No updates

### **Thrive (Amanda Gauthier)**

- No updates

## **Community Living Algoma (Margaret Barbeau)**

- Job Path pre-employment training program is underway, training takes approximately 6 weeks with a variety of topics

## **Autism Ontario (Margaret Tuomi)**

- Several different workshops and webinars are beginning in November, will forward links for upcoming sessions, events and webinars to access,
- Discussions around Autism Awareness Month April 2026 are underway
- A Holiday Celebration will be hosted at the Hub on December 5<sup>th</sup>

## **Algoma Family Services (Clint Snider)**

- New Manager of Community Services has been hired
- Community partners have received recognition for Every Breakfast Counts.
- Starting Travel Draw as a fund-raiser
- Director of Services has resigned and is moving to the CEO position at ARCH

## **Member-At-Large (Velma Simon)**

- CICE is preparing for second semester
- Planning for Fall 2026 is underway; already getting applications for CICE program.

## **7. Report from the Board (Trustees)**

- Last Board meeting took place on October 28<sup>th</sup>
- Steelworkers Local 2251 made a large donation to help fund Breakfast programs
- Update on Capital Plan and the work done over the summer at various school sites
- On-going committee and policy review work.

## **8. Report from Administration (K. Viita, K. Lappage)**

- **Provincial CTEP/ECPP Conference.** B. Vallee, K. Viita and K. Lappage all attended the recent Care & Treatment Education Program (CTEP) / Education and Community Partnership Program (ECPP) conference in Waterloo. This provided the opportunity to visit several CTEP/ECPP sites and participate in conversations with staff members about specific programming provided, as well as participating in discussions with the Ministry of Education about “next steps” in regard to changes to CTEP/ECPP.
- **Secondary SERT Session:** Secondary SERTs participated in a learning session on Wednesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. The agenda for our September session included a lengthy discussion around IEP development, including the use of exemptions and substitutions at the secondary level, IPRC structures, and Integrated Transition Meetings. SERTs also participated in a robust discussion about Locally Developed Credit Courses

**9. Next Meeting:** December 9th, 2025.

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

**Meeting adjourned at 1:17 p.m.**