



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

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
May 28, 2024  
DT Walkom/Teams  
12:00 Start Time**

**Present:** P. Mick (Member-At-Large), M. Tuomi, (Autism Ontario), S. Iacoe (Community Living Algoma - Alternate), Rachelle Lambert (North Shore Tribal Council - Alternate) Velma Simon (Member-at-Large), Clinton Snider (Algoma Family Services)

**Trustees:** H. Whitley (Trustee)

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

**Regrets:** A. Gauthier (Thrive Child Development Centre), S. Evans (Trustee)

**Guests:** Joe Santa Maria- Associate Director

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 guests.

**3. Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

- Approval of Agenda. Moved by C. Snider. Seconded by M. Tuomi. All in favour.
- Approval of Minutes (April 23, 2024). Moved by M. Tuomi. Seconded by C. Snider. All in favour.

**4. Correspondence:**

- **DDSB Durham District re:** Transportation accessibility
- **RRDSB Rainy River District School Board re:** supporting students with special education needs, including staffing, funding and transportation.

**5. Presentation/Discussion: *Update on Special Education Budget (associate Director Joe Santa Maria)***

- J. Santa Maria provided an overview of the ADSB budget which will be approved in June with specific reference to the special education budget.
- Changes have been made to provincial funding formulae e.g. Special Education Grant has changed to Special Education Fund. These changes are outlined in the draft Special Education Plan. Detailed information is provided on the Ministry website.
- Special Education funding is projected to be similar in terms of the total funding amount with a slight increase in overall dollars. However, while dollars have risen, increases have not kept pace with inflation.
- Transportation funding continues to be an ongoing issue. Our board is spending a lot of time on this as the Northern Ontario context is significantly different than southern Ontario and we do not feel that the funding supports our student's needs. This is projected to be worse in upcoming years. For special education, transportation costs can be significant as we transport students to different sites for specialized programs and services. This can be very expensive and our partners continue to have difficulty finding drivers, etc to sustain services.
- Partnership Funds continue to be provided to support high need areas. Some examples of these include the subsidy for Special Education Additional Qualifications, summer learning, summer mental health supports and other key areas.
- Ongoing challenges with staffing, particularly with educational assistants. This is a problem provincially as well.

**Presentation/Discussion: *Review of the Draft Special Education Plan 2024 (B. Vallee)***

- Components of the Special Education Plan are mandated by provincial legislation. We are required to provide a "checklist" to the Ministry each year that outlines changes to the document and provides a link to the document.
- SEAC members were provided with an overview of all suggested changes and adjustments to the Special Education Plan.
- Some of the information (e.g. numerical data) is updated yearly to reflect current totals. Examples of these areas include testing numbers, transition meetings, IPRC and IEP-only statistics, and other quantitative data.
- Other updates to the plan are made based on content. This includes new program descriptions, updated program locations, job descriptions within the special education department, special projects, and so on.
- There are also changes made to increase clarity (e.g. phrasing) of the language.
- Following discussion at the meeting, SEAC members may provide input or feedback electronically until June 7<sup>th</sup>.
- The Special Education Plan will be submitted to the Board of Trustees at the June Board meeting (June 11<sup>th</sup>).

## 6. Member Organization Updates

### R. Lambert (North Shore Tribal Council)

- Batchewana is looking at running school readiness programming during the summer.
- Violent Threat Risk Assessment training occurring today with additional training scheduled for June.

### V. Simon (Member-at-Large),

- Busy with transitions into the program and transitions for students who are finishing their programs and seeking employment.
- Seems to be an increase in the number of summer job opportunities available.
- Graduation is scheduled for June 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Program Advisory Committee Meeting takes place on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

### C. Snider Algoma Family Services (AFS)

- Over 400 visits to the Wellness Hub have taken place. The hub provides full kitchen and laundry facilities to help develop independent living skills. Plan on putting a café in to help provide more work experiences.
- Other programs (e.g. ECPP) are working on transitions for students that are leaving the program and referrals for new entry.

### M. Tuomi (Autism Ontario)

- The *One-to-One Summer Support Worker Reimbursement Fund* is available to Ontario families of children or youth with ASD who retain the services of a one-to-one worker to accompany their child to a camp or program or out on community outings. [One-to-One Summer Support Worker Reimbursement Fund](#). Maximum reimbursements of \$600, per child or youth, (up to 18th birthday) will be made to subsidize services between July and August. A minimum of 500 children from across Ontario are expected to receive reimbursement. Reimbursement will be provided based on a random selection made from all eligible applicants who apply.
- During our May 2024 Team Meetings, we shared a list of resources with links on one of the slides. A PDF of the slides is attached with embedded links. I've also compiled a list of resources and updates that may be of interest. It includes information from Autism Ontario, the Government of Ontario, the Ministry of Education, MACSE and more. You can access the list through the link in the title above, or through the attached word document. [Special Education Resources](#)

### P. Mick (Member- At-Large)

- Nothing to report this month.

### S. Iacoe (Community Living Algoma).

- Continuing work on the Summer Employment Program. Students will be working at various business in the community. Job coaches, including post-secondary

and late secondary school students are hired by CLA to support these students in their employment placements. Looking to extend the program into more sites in the district.

- August BBQ planned.

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

- Information Night on Skilled Trades is taking place this Friday at Superior Heights
- Trustees will be hosting the Board Retirement Dinner for all employee groups on Monday, June 3rd at Grand Gardens.
- Graduations for grade eight and grade twelve students are quickly approaching.

#### 8. Report from Administration (B. Vallee & K. Viita)

- **Transitions Update:** Very busy with transition meetings over the past few weeks as our spring phase of meetings began May 13<sup>th</sup> and continues through the end of the month. Approximately 78 students are participating in the transition process. Our special assignment teachers/leads, and members of our multi-disciplinary team help to facilitate these meetings in our schools.
- **SERT Professional Learning:** We hosted a busy day of in-person professional learning for our SERTs on Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. The morning session began with more *Meaningful Mathematics Intervention*. We also had a focused discussion on the *Empower Reading* program as part of the tiered approach to addressing the needs of all student and updates on a variety of items such as indirect service consultation, social skills/self-regulation groups, IPRC Reviews, assessment referrals and an overview of the EQAO Assistive Technology reference. SERTs also had the opportunity to work through case studies focused on developing a transition plan based on a student profile. During the afternoon, SERTs rotated through a series of breakout sessions on the following topics: *Literacy Intervention; Executive Functioning, and Transitions*. Next full-day session for our SERTs will take place on Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, which will be our final whole group session of the school year.
- **Shelley Moore Session 4 (April 24<sup>th</sup>):** The focus of session four was *All Students Have a Meaningful Purpose*". The session looked at the connection between place and purpose, and how we can use place as starting point to meaningful planning for individuals within an inclusive community. Our final session entitled "*All Students are Planned For*" takes place on Thursday, May 30<sup>th</sup>.
- **Project SEARCH:** Our skills assessment day took place at the beginning of May. It looks like we will have 5-6 new interns entering the program for the 2024-2025 school year. Graduation for this year's cohort is scheduled for Monday, June 17<sup>th</sup>.
- **EQAO:** EQAO assessments are underway. Grade Six students will complete the Junior assessment towards the end of May, with Grade Three students completing the primary assessment in early June. Grade Nine assessment for mathematics will take place in mid- to late June as well.

9. **Next Meeting:** June 18, 2024

10. **Motion to adjourn:** Moved by V. Simon. Seconded by M. Tuomi.

**Meeting adjourned at 1:37**