



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

**MINUTES OF MEETING
May 5, 2026
Sugar Maple Room
12:00 Start Time**

- Present:** P. Mick (Member-At-Large), M. Barbeau (Community Living Algoma), M. Tuomi (Autism Ontario), Sara Burns (Thrive CDC), V. Simon (Member-at- Large), R. Lambert (North Shore Tribal Council - Alternate), C. Snider (Algoma Family Services)
- Trustees:** S Myers (Alternate)
- Staff:** B. Vallee (Superintendent), Kristen Viita (System Administrator), K. Lappage (System Administrator)
- Regrets:** H. Whitley (Trustee), S. Evans (Trustee), S. Kitts (North Shore Tribal Council), A. Gauthier (Thrive)
- Guests:** None

Meeting called to order at 12:01 p.m. 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 Velma Simon. Seconded by Clint Snider. All in favour.
 - Approval of Minutes (April 7, 2026). Moved by Margaret Tuomi . Seconded by Velma Simon. All in favour.
- 4. Correspondence:** *Hastings & Prince Edward County DSB SEAC re: Trustees*
Huron-Superior Catholic DSB SEAC re: Trustees
- 5. Presentation/Discussion:** *Draft ADSB Special Education Plan (B. Vallee)*
 - Proposed content changes to the Special Education Plan were reviewed and discussed at our April SEAC meeting. There has not been any additional feedback provided via email since the meeting.

- B. Vallee reviewed additional changes made to the plan, including updated “numbers” that are included in the plan. We historically use May 1st as our “count date” to update these numbers to ensure consistency from year-to-year. This included testing and screening totals for psychological-educational and language assessments, updates in the categories and exceptionalities as well as JK transitions, EA allotment and staffing. B. Vallee also reviewed changes to the ADSB Parent Guide that are provided in yellow.
- Open forum for discussion and feedback occurred following the review of updates and changes.

6. Member Organization Updates

North Shore Tribal Council (R. Lambert)

- Batchewana First Nation has started a Ready for Kindergarten program with approximately 15 participants.

Thrive (S. Burns)

- Finalizing transition to school (Entry to School) program - high demand for spots
- April 30th is the cut-off date for preschool speech and language program. Following April 30th, Thrive is informing parents that children must wait to receive school board programming and services once they begin school as there is not sufficient time for an SLP to pick them up on a caseload prior to the beginning of the school year.
- Drop-in sessions (by appointment) are being provided for speech support.
- Joint information sessions for parents/guardians with access OAP. Twice weekly during the month of May. Different topics are addressed at each session.

Community Living Algoma (M. Barbeau)

- Together We Are Better Contest winners have been announced.
- Along with ADSB and SAH staff, CLA staff participated in Project SEARCH skills assessment with ADSB and SAH. Currently four interns for next year.
- Integrated Transition Meetings are scheduled through April/May
- Summer Employment Program has begun for students and job coaches on sixteen-week contracts. Additional students/job coaches begin in July for eight-week contracts. The program will support 41 students with 18 employers
- Community involvement event taking place at Moose Lodge
- May is Community Living Awareness Month

Algoma Family Services (C. Snider)

- No report this month.

Autism Ontario (M. Tuomi)

- In February, Autism Ontario provided input to the Minister of Education via a report.
- Autism Ontario School Resource Collection provides tools and guidance for parents. Resources will continue to be released over the summer months, including multiple language translations to support families.

Member-At-Large (Velma Simon)

- Preparing for Graduation in June and intake for the fall semester.
- Able to transfer credits from CICE at times to other programs, which is consistently increasing yearly
- College upgrading can be done with support of CICE program
- Similar struggles with budget as many other organizations are seeing in the province
- Focus is getting into secondary schools to ensure awareness of the CICE program
- Focus on helping students ensure that they have necessary skills (e.g. use of appropriate software programs, self-advocacy)

Member-At-Large (P. Mick)

- No report this month.

7. Report from the Board (Trustees)

- Three Rivers School (Blind River) tour for trustees is taking place in in late May. Opening Sept 2026 – many students wanted to graduate from current school.
- Announcement made on Friday that Thessalon will be getting a new elementary school. Current school is over 100 years old and there was an issue with a significant roof leak in the annex building that required moving kindergarten classes and daycare.
- Nurturing Algoma Presentation by Dr. Jennifer Loo. 25% of children ages 0-6 present at-risk in at least one area. Discussions about contributing factors (e.g. 44% of children are born into a home where an individual has a mental health concern). Data tallies with special education data (e.g. 32% of students in our schools identified with a special education need
Plant Youth program. Planet Youth is a global data-driven initiative based on Icelandic model regarding prevention of youth substance use. Looking towards a roll-out of the model in communities in our district
- Policy approval for School Council and Parent Involvement Committee policies.

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

- **Professional Development Day:** Professional Development Day took place on April 17th. Staff members participated in a school-based session on Artificial Intelligence. Individual sessions took place for specific groups include a session for teachers of Grades 4-8 on teaching vocabulary and word meanings, a session on strengthening Oral Language and Dialogue for French as a Second Language (FSL) teachers, a session for K-2 French Immersion teachers on use of the early reading screening platform, and a session for Anishinaabemowin teachers. Kindergarten teachers participated in a half-day session focused on the new Kindergarten Curriculum document, including a focus on oral language development led by our speech-language pathologist, teaching the self-regulation and well-being strand, and ensuring a smooth start through the Transitions program. School staff also participated in school improvement work during the afternoon.
- **RISE Software Training:** All of our SERTs have received training in the RISE platform and are beginning “test-driving” various components of the platform in preparation for implementation in the fall of 2026. K. Lappage also participated in the spring User

Group session conducted by Learnstyle. These sessions bring together all boards using the platform for discussion around updates, issues, and problem-solving.

- **SERT Session:** Virtual SERT meeting took place on the afternoon of Friday, May 1st to cover some operational pieces as we continue towards the end of the school year. Topics of discussion include IPRC Review Meeting processes, next steps in RISE implementation, Transitions (Entry to School, Elementary to Secondary), Secondary Program and Classroom options, processes for transfer of specialized equipment, summer learning/transitions, and completion of formal assessment packages, including a discussion of appropriate candidates for internal assessment vs external referrals.
- **Sonderly Regional Training:** Eight board staff, including two of our SEATs and six SERTs were selected to participate in a full-day virtual workshop presented by Sonderly, which is the professional learning arm of the Geneva Centre for Autism. Sonderly provides a range of online course options in which our staff have participated over the years. The breakdown for the April 30th session include *Supporting Communication in Autistic Students*, *Promoting Independence*, *Understanding and Responding to Complex Behaviour Through a Compassionate Functional Lens*, and *Putting it All Together*.

9. **Next Meeting:** June 2nd, 2026

10. **Motion to adjourn:** Moved by Margaret Tuomi. Seconded by Susan Myers. All in favour.

Meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.