

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Jim McCuaig Education Centre

FEB 19, 2025
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair
Trustee Trudy Tuchenhagen
Michelle Blackburn
Wendy Carroll
Miranda Myers

Trustee Leah Vanderwey
Trustee Pat Johansen
Scott McBean
Sarah Niles
Anne Antenucci

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Probizanski
Simona Serrao

Maggie Fredrickson
Kali Bernst

ABSENT WITH REGRET:

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair
Tara Ingram

Liz Tod

1. **Call to Order**

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

2. **Land Acknowledgement**

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, provided the Land Acknowledgement.

3. **Welcome & Introductions**

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, welcomed the following guests:

- Kali Bernst, Principal of Indigenous Education and Program

4. **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Trustee Vanderwey

Seconded by Anne Antenucci

"THAT the agenda of February 19, 2025, SEAC meeting be approved."

5. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

6. Presentations

- 6.1 Acadience Assessment Tool was presented by Kali. Bernst, Principal of Indigenous Education and Program. All questions were addressed.
- 6.2 3005 Ontario Student Record Policy in draft was presented by Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education for review and feedback. Scott McBean requested the procedure for this policy. Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education agreed to share the procedure by email in advance of the next meeting.

7. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Sarah Niles

Seconded by Trustee Tuchenhausen

“THAT the minutes of January 15, 2025, SEAC meeting be approved.”

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

- 8.1 Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, provided an update to the group that the flag raising for Autism Awareness will be conducted at all Lakehead Public Schools. A small celebration will be planned at the Board office with the SEAC Chair and Vice Chair on April 2, 2025.
- 8.2 Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, read out the thank you note from Hammarskjold High School: Special Needs Program for the funds allocated by SEAC to them. Information was also provided in the note on how the funds will be the utilized.
- 8.3 SEAC 2024-2025 (Updated) Work Plan incorporated the changes discussed at the January 15, 2025, SEAC meeting. The updated copy of the workplan was shared as part of the meeting package.

9. Correspondence

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, reviewed the following correspondence sent to all SEAC members:

- 9.1 LDSB SEAC Advocacy Draft Letter to the Ministry of Education
Re: Increase funding for the Right to Read program for February 2025;
- 9.2 LDSB SEAC Advocacy Letter to the Ministry of Education Re: Urgent Appeal for Improved Funding and Support for Students with Special Education Needs, NW-ON, May 28, 2024;
- 9.3 Letter in draft from SEAC Chair Ottawa Catholic School Board Re: Inadequate Special Education Funding & Educational Assistant Shortage, January 2025;
- 9.4 Letter from LDSB Board of Trustees Re: Follow-Up – Ongoing Concerns Regarding Student Transportation Funding, December 18, 2024;
- 9.5 Ministry of Education Pre-budget consultation link for Special Education;
- 9.6 Kindergarten registration information (flow chart);
- 9.7 Durham District School Board SEAC Advocacy Letter to Ontario College of Teachers;

- 9.8 Ontario Autism Coalition (OAC) Special Education Report (2023-2024 School Year);
- 9.9 Algoma District School Board SEAC Letter of Support, January 21, 2025;
- 9.10 Policy Input Memo re: Lakehead District School Board - Due Date for Input - March 29, 2025;
- 9.11 Website link for PCS Vinyl Playground Sign - Purchased and donated to Algonquin Avenue Public School; and
- 9.12 2025 OPSBA Awards – Call for Nominations

10. New Business

- 10.1 Maggie Fredrickson, Special Education Principal, provided the following special education update:
- Claude E Garton Students of sign language club signed anthem at Scotties tournament of hearts. Approximately 60 students have signed up and are part of the sign language club that was started.
 - Special education facilitators were brought together for a focus group to understand the IEP process, as well as the communication style and information provided to parents. Final documents on process are still in progress and will be ready soon to share with schools. The IEP and IPRC Process was reviewed by this focus group as well.
 - Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education informed the group of the varying results of the Empower class at Secondary level. Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, proposed to move the funds for Empower to Sr. Elementary grades
 - Michelle Probizanski reported unfilled SSP vacancies for LTOs. LDSB is actively seeking SSPs. Robust marketing is in progress to recruit and fill these vacancies. A job fair is being conducted on February 17th, 2025, 2pm at Da Vinci.
 - All schools will be sent information to participate in “Red Shirt Day of Action for Accessibility and Inclusion: Wednesday, May 28, 2025.

11. Information/Inquiries & Association Report

- Anne Antenucci was appreciative of the North Stars game for sensory free hockey on January 22nd, 2025.

12. SEAC Budget Update

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, reported the SEAC budget actual as \$ 7, 104

13. Board Update

Trustee Tuchenhagen presented the following Board update:

- January 27th, 2025, was family literacy day in schools and Trustees were invited to the schools to read.
- Trustees were invited to Public Education Symposium, January 24th & 25th, 2025, to learn more about their role as a Trustee. This event was attended by few of the Trustees and was found worthwhile.

- The 25-year appreciation Tea took place at the Board office, and over 70 employees received recognition for their years of service.
- School year calendar 2025-2026 was presented, as well as the list of policies that will be reviewed in the future.

14. Adjournment

Moved by Miranda Myers

Seconded by Anne Antenucci

“THAT we do now adjourn at 7:15 p.m.”