

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)

Jim McCuaig Education Centre

March 19, 2025
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair
Trustee Trudy Tuchenhausen
Michelle Blackburn
Wendy Carroll
Miranda Myers

Trustee Leah Vanderwey
Trustee Pat Johansen
Scott McBean
Liz Tod
Sarah Niles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Probizanski
Simona Serrao
Angela Lee-Wiwcharyk

Maggie Fredrickson
Sherri-Lynne Pharand

ABSENT WITH REGRET:

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair
Anne Antenucci

Tara Ingram

1. **Call to Order**

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. **Land Acknowledgement**

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair, provided the Land Acknowledgement.

3. **Welcome & Introductions**

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair, welcomed the following guests:

- Angela Lee-Wiwcharyk, Manager of Financial Services

4. **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Liz Tod

Seconded by Scott McBean

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

CARRIED

5. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

6. Presentations

6.1 Budget Presentation

Angela Lee-Wiwcharyk, Manager of Financial Services presented the 2025-2026 special education funding allocation, proposed budget and reviewed the 2025-2026 budget process and guiding principles. All questions were addressed.

7. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Trustee Tuchenhagen

Seconded by Michelle Blackburn

“THAT the minutes of February 19, 2025, SEAC meeting be approved.”

CARRIED

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

9. Correspondence

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair, reviewed the following correspondence sent to all SEAC members:

- March at Abiinojiishik amino yawook EarlyON;
- Link to TB news watch article about Claude E Garton Public School Students signing the anthem at Scotties Tournament of Hearts;
- 3005 Ontario Student Records Procedure;
- EKO spring symposium advance virtual keynote: thinking creatively about addressing online harms for children and youth, March 26, 2025;
- Paper: reframing the most important special education policy in 50 Years – by Douglas Fuchs, PhD1,2, Allison F. Gilmour, PhD1, and Jeanne Wanzek, PhD2;
- Newest version: EarlyON services in Thunder Bay and surrounding region

10. New Business

10.1 Maggie Fredrickson, Principal of Special Education, provided the following special education update:

- Transition support for kindergarten;
- The volume of referrals and the associated waitlist for learning assessments is at an all-time high. Contributing factors include an increase in autism and global developmental delay diagnoses, a shortage of psychological professionals, and ongoing post-COVID system pressures;
- Efforts are underway to obtain accurate projections for special needs class sizes. The Board will continue to provide five special needs classes at elementary schools; and

- Student Support Professionals (SSPs) event will be held at Valhalla Hotel & Conference Centre on May 2nd, 2025, in collaboration with the SSP Union, to recognize their dedication and contributions.

SEAC members collectively recommended approving \$500 of the SEAC budget for the event to cover cost of gift cards for game prizes, and put forward a motion:

Moved by Trustee Vanderwey

Seconded by Sarah Niles

"THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee allocate \$500 from the SEAC budget to support the purchase of prizes for the Professional Development Day for Student Support Professionals on May 2, 2025."

CARRIED

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, reported on the success of this year's job fair.

- 10.2 The SEAC 2025-2026 budget deputation draft letter for the Finance Committee Meeting on April 7, 2025, was circulated as part of the meeting package. Members were requested to submit feedback or input to Simona Serrao, Executive Secretary, Office of Superintendents, by March 28, 2025.

11. Information/Inquiries & Association Report

- Alina Cameron, President – Communications Chair, Ontario Autism Coalition (OAC) provided the OAC update.
- Flag raising for Autism Awareness is to take place Apr 2nd, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at LDSB office.
- Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, proposed changing the June 2025 SEAC meeting date from June 11 to June 12, 2025. There was general agreement on this request.

12. SEAC Budget Update

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, reported the SEAC budget actual as \$ 8,910.

13. Board Update

Trustee Vanderwey presented the following Board update:

- Three Board policies were reviewed and approved; and
- 2025-2026 school year calendar was presented and approved.

14. Adjournment

Moved by Trustee Vanderwey

Seconded by Liz Todd

"THAT we do now adjourn at 7:06 p.m."