

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)**

Jim McCuaig Education Centre  
Board Room/Microsoft Teams

2026 MAR 26  
6:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair  
Sarah Niles  
Wendy Carroll (virtual)  
Michelle Blackburn  
Miranda Myers (virtual)

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair  
Trustee Leah Vanderwey  
Trustee Trudy Tuchenhagen (alternate)  
Scott McBean (virtual)

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Trustee Patricia Johansen (virtual)  
Maggie Fredrickson  
Angela Lee-Wiwcharyk

Michelle Probizanski  
Simona Serrao

**ABSENT WITH REGRET:**

Trustee George Saarinen  
Anne Antenucci

Liz Tod  
Tara Ingram

1. **Call to Order**

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest**

There were none.

3. **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Trustee Vanderwey

Seconded by Trustee Tuchenhagen

*“THAT the agenda for the SEAC Meeting, March 26, 2026, be approved.”*

**CARRIED**

4. **Land Acknowledgement**

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, acknowledged the lands and traditional territory.

5. **Delegations and Presentations**

5.1 Angela Lee-Wiwcharyk, Manager of Financial Services, presented the special education funding allocation, proposed budget, and reviewed the budget process and guiding principles for the 2026-2027 school year.

All members' questions were addressed.

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5.2 There were no delegations

6. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Alina Cameron

Seconded by Michelle Blackburn

*“THAT the minutes of January 21, 2026, SEAC meeting be approved.”*

CARRIED

7. Unfinished Business and General Orders

7.1 Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, presented the SEAC brochure. It is interactive with hyperlinks to other relevant resources for special education.

Members were given an opportunity to review the brochure and provide feedback. Feedback and changes discussed will be incorporated in the final version. Any additional feedback can be sent to Simona Serrao, Executive Secretary.

The SEAC brochure, once finalized, will be posted on the Lakehead District School Board (LDSB) website, SEAC webpage as a resource.

8. Work Plan

The 2025-2026 SEAC work plan was deferred to the next meeting.

9. Correspondence

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair reviewed the SEAC correspondence that was distributed during the month of February and March 2026, as follows:

- February 2026 at Abiinojiishiik amino yawook EarlyON;
- Lakehead District School Board administrative policies under review, with input due March 29, 2026:
  - Fundraising in Schools;
  - Territorial Students Program – Transportation & Services; and
  - Fees for Learning Materials and Activities;
- Lakehead District School Board governance policies under review, with input due March 29, 2026:
  - 5010 Special Education Policy & Procedures;
  - 7030 Human rights and Workplace Harassment;
- Empowered Kids Ontario (EKO) scholarship information;
- FASD Support Group Information;
- Durham District School Board SEAC – Letter of Support for School Board Trustees;
- March 2026 at Abiinojiishiik amino yawook EarlyON; and
- Autism Ontario Invite – Join Celebrate the Spectrum April 1-30, 2026.

All members' questions were addressed.

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10. New Business

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

- **Welcome to Kindergarten Event:** Lakehead Public Schools hosted a Welcome to Kindergarten event at École Elsie MacGill Public School, which was well attended. SEAC participated with an information table staffed by the Chair and Vice Chair. A strong focus was placed on supporting the transition to school for students with identified needs;
- **Special Education Professional Development (PD):** A recent after-school special education PD session was well attended and considered a success. The session was well received, with positive feedback from administrators;
- **Upcoming Administrator IPRC PD:** PD session for administrators is scheduled, focusing on effective IPRC practices. Topics will include legal requirements, family engagement, and best practices, with a mock IPRC session included to support learning;
- **Special Education Facilitator PD:** Special Education Facilitators will receive PD aligned with the administrator training outlined above;
- **World Autism Awareness Day:** Many LPS schools are recognizing World Autism Awareness Day by raising the flag. SEAC members, trustees, and senior administration, have been invited to attend the flag-raising ceremony at École Elsie MacGill Public School on April 2, 2026;
- **Assistive Technology Training:** Budget has been allocated for assistive technology training to support teachers in understanding the features and functions of available technologies. A follow-up session with the same group is anticipated in late May 2026 to review student learning needs and next steps;
- **Student Support Professionals (SSPs) PD:** Ruth Mills facilitated PD sessions for SSPs, focusing on supporting youth with complex needs as they navigate school and social environments. Sessions were held for both elementary and secondary SSPs, emphasizing understanding diversity within complex needs;
- **Student Support Professional (SSP) Allocation Committee:** A new SSP allocation committee will be implemented for the coming year. This change provides an opportunity for administrators and central staff to collaboratively participate in decision-making related to budgeting, resource allocation, and effective use of available funds; and
- **Student Activities:** Highlights were shared regarding activities and opportunities supporting students with special needs across the system.

All members' questions are addressed.

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- 10.2 Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, provided the following Special Education Programs update:

Changes are being considered for the Day Treatment Program in partnership with Children's Centre Thunder Bay to better support students with complex special education needs. Options to improve and streamline are currently under discussion. Plans are not yet finalized. Preliminary ideas have been discussed, and a more detailed update will be brought forward to SEAC once decisions are further developed.

- 10.3 Maggie Fredrickson, Principal of Special Education, provided an overview of Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments and shared summary of results for Grades 3 and 6.

- 10.4 Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, informed the committee of the letter received from the Finance Committee inviting SEAC to submit a written deputation regarding the 2026–2027 budget. The committee discussed content to include in the written submission.

Committee members were asked to share any additional feedback or suggestions for inclusion, to Simona Serrao, by the morning of March 27, 2026.

- 10.5 Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, reminded the committee of the invitation for SEAC to be represented at the Equity and Inclusive Education Advisory Committee and encouraged members to consider the opportunity.

Members interested in serving as the SEAC representative are asked to notify Simona Serrao, Executive Secretary.

11. Information/Inquiries & Association Reports

- Alina Cameron, Community Member, shared the 2025-2026 OAC survey results data and OAC update.

12. SEAC Budget Update

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, provided an update on the status of the SEAC budget.

13. Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Update

Suzanne Posthumus provided the following update from the recent PIC meeting:

- presentation on the Indigenous Education Framework and its support for LPS students;
- budget presentation highlighting provincial funding pressures and planned investments;
- update on LPS Foundation activities, including an upcoming trivia night and volunteer involvement;
- discussion on cyber awareness;

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- partnership update with Sister Margaret Smith;
- planning underway for a daycare at École Gron Morgan Public School; and
- update shared on international students within the Board.

14. Board Update

Trustee Vanderwey provided the following Board update from the recent Board meeting, Tuesday, March 24, 2026:

- shortage of bus drivers for school transportation was reported; and
- a motion was passed to have the same number of elected trustees for the upcoming election of trustees.

15. Adjournment

Moved by Sarah Niles

Seconded by Trustee Tuchenhagen

*“THAT we do now adjourn at 7:53 p.m.”*