

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)

Westgate Collegiate and Vocational Institute
Special Needs Classroom

2026 APR 15
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair	Alina Cameron, Vice Chair
Anne Antenucci	Branden Robb (alternate)
Trustee Trudy Tuchenhagen (alternate)	Trustee Leah Vanderwey
Liz Tod	Scott McBean
Tara Ingram	

OTHERS PRESENT:

Trustee Patricia Johansen	Michelle Probizanski
Maggie Fredrickson	Simona Serrao
Ryan McDonell	Westgate Collegiate and Vocational Institute - Special Needs Program Staff

ABSENT WITH REGRET:

Trustee George Saarinen	Michelle Blackburn
Sarah Niles	Wendy Carroll
Miranda Myers	

1. **Call to Order**

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

2. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest**

There were none.

3. **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Liz Tod

Seconded by Trustee Tuchenhagen

“THAT the agenda for the SEAC Meeting, April 15, 2026, be approved.”

CARRIED

4. **Land Acknowledgement**

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

5. **Delegations and Presentations**

5.1 Ryan McDonnell, Principal, and Special Needs Program staff of Westgate Collegiate and Vocational Institute provided a presentation of the special needs program and tour of the special needs classroom.

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 Anne Antenucci

“THAT the minutes of March 26, 2026, SEAC meeting be approved.”

CARRIED

7. Unfinished Business and General Orders

- Suzanne Posthumus, Chair, provided SEAC members with an opportunity to share advocacy updates. SEAC advocacy information for families is available on the Board website.

8. Work Plan

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

9. Correspondence

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

- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Community Town Hall Meeting to Build Support for Bill S-234, April 2, 2026;
- World Autism Day Flag Raising invitation – École Elsie MacGill Public School, April 2, 2026;
- Ontario Early Adversity and Resilience Framework Report – link;
- Beyond the Ban -Empowering Children in The Digital Age, April 20, 2026; and
- April 2026 at Abiinojiishiik amino yawook EarlyON.

All members' questions were addressed.

10. New Business

10.1 Maggie Fredrickson, Principal of Special Education, provided an update highlighting the following:

- Armstrong Public School staff were provided with after-school training on assistive technology, including coaching and classroom modeling;
- training was provided for facilitators and school administrators to support improvements to the Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process;
- new facilitator training for Special Education courses was delivered, with certificates issued upon successful completion; and
- Autism Flag Raising event at École Elsie MacGill Public School was well attended, including participation from three student classrooms and community members.

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All members' questions are addressed.

10.2 Fall 2026 SEAC Guest Speaker: Ideas and Direction:

Members discussed the possibility of inviting a guest speaker as part of a Fall 2026 SEAC event to engage parents and community members and build awareness of special education.

SEAC members were invited to submit feedback, along with suggestions for potential guest speakers and event themes, to Simona Serrao, Executive Secretary.

11. Information/Inquiries & Association Reports

- Anne Antenucci, representative of Autism Ontario, provided an organizational update;
- Alina Cameron, Community Member, provided the Ontario Autism Coalition (OAC) update;
- Liz Tod, representative of Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, provided an association update;
- Tara Ingram, representative of Easter Seals, provided an organizational update; and
- Branden Robb, representative of Anishnawabe Mushkiki, provided an organizational update.

12. SEAC Budget Update

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, confirmed that the SEAC budget status remains the same as previously reported.

13. Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Update – N/A

14. Board Update

Trustee Tuchenhagen, provided the following Board update:

- at the Finance Committee meeting held on Tuesday, April 7, 2026, budget deputations were received from various stakeholders. The presentations and submissions provided valuable input for consideration in the development of the 2026–2027 budget; and
- at the Board Advisory Committee meeting, April 14, 2026, student achievement update was provided, noting overall improvement across grade levels. While progress has been observed in most areas, math achievement remains a focus, with targeted strategies currently underway to support improvement.

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.