

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)

Jim McCuaig Education Centre
Board Room/Microsoft Teams

2026 MAY 20
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair
Liz Tod
Scott McBean
Trustee Trudy Tuchenhagen

Anne Antenucci
Brandon Robb
Sarah Niles
Trustee Patricia Johansen

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Probizanski
Simona Serrao

Maggie Fredrickson
Megan Semeniuk

ABSENT WITH REGRET:

Suzanne Posthumus, Chair
Tara Ingram
Miranda Myers

Michelle Blackburn
Trustee George Saarinen
Wendy Carroll

1. **Call to Order**

Alina Cameron, Vice 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 Sarah Niles

Seconded by Anne Antenucci

“That the agenda for the SEAC Meeting, May 20, 2026, be approved.”

CARRIED

4. **Land Acknowledgement**

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair, acknowledged the lands and traditional territory.

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5. Delegations and Presentations

5.1 Megan Semeniuk, Mental Health Lead, presented the Mental Health – Annual Report.

All members' questions were addressed.

5.2 There were no delegations.

6. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Trustee Tuchenhagen

Seconded by Anne Antenucci

“That the minutes of April 15, 2026, SEAC meeting be approved.”

CARRIED

7. Unfinished Business and General Orders

• SEAC Fall Event Guest Speaker Update

Maggie Fredrickson, Principal of Special Education, provided an update regarding efforts to secure a potential guest speaker for the proposed Fall SEAC led event. Outreach has been initiated to several organizations. Ruth Mills, Social Worker, Kaleidoscope Mental Health, who recently delivered training to Student Support Professionals (SSPs), has expressed interest in presenting to caregivers and educators as part of this event. She is available to develop a detailed proposal for a potential Fall engagement.

Maggie Fredrickson, Principal of Special Education, will forward the relevant information to Simona Serrao, Executive Secretary, for distribution to SEAC members for review and feedback.

8. Work Plan – N/A

9. Correspondence

Alina Cameron, Vice Chair reviewed the SEAC correspondence that was distributed during the month of May 2026, as follows:

- Moose Hide Campaign - Walk to End Violence event – May 14, 2026;
- Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board - SEAC Letter to Ministry in Support of Trustees;
- Invitation – American Sign Language (ASL) Student Performance by Claude E. Garton Public School Sign Club – May 5, 2026;
- May 2026 at Abiinojiishik amino yawook EarlyON;
- Ontario Autism Coalition (OAC) Special Education Survey Report (2024-2025);
- Correspondence from Waterloo Region District School Board; and
- Auditor General of Ontario - Special Education Report, May 12, 2026.

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10. New Business

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

- several students are benefiting from the *Bright Beginnings Program*, which has proven to be an effective support for transitioning into school;
- the *Auditor General's Report* will be reviewed collaboratively by Special Education staff. The report will inform planning for professional development for the upcoming school year; and
- the final session of the Special Education after-school facilitator training was completed. The session was well attended, provided valuable learning opportunities, and participant feedback has been collected.

All members' questions were addressed.

10.2 2025-2026 SEAC Leadership Scholarships & Awards

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, presented the recipients of the 2025–2026 SEAC Leadership Scholarships and Awards. Detailed write-ups of the student recipients are included in the meeting package.

10.3 New Classrooms

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, provided an update on the development of new classroom programs. The revised funding model allows for increased flexibility in program design and the opportunity to collaborate with community treatment partners.

Two new *Bridges* classrooms are in the early planning stages at McKellar Park Central Public School, serving students in Grades 2 to 5 and Grades 6 to 8. These programs will support students' mental health, well-being, and transition needs. Social workers will work collaboratively with students and families as part of the program. A longer-term placement model is being considered to support improved student outcomes.

In addition, a new special education classroom is being explored at Sherbrooke Public School, with a potential start in the Fall, pending final planning.

Members were invited to provide feedback for the new special education classrooms to Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, and Maggie Fredrickson, Principal of Special Education, by email.

All members' questions were addressed.

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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; and
- Scott McBean, representative of Children’s Centre Thunder Bay, put forth the suggestion of Lakehead District School Board, SEAC, submitting a letter to the Minister of Education, consistent with correspondence from other SEACs across Ontario, outlining concerns regarding the impact of Bill 33 and Bill 101 on special education programs and services. Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, offered to prepare a draft letter for SEAC’s review and feedback, incorporating current issues affecting special education.

Scott McBean brought forward the following motion:

“That the Lakehead District School Board, Special Education Advisory Committee, write a letter to express concern regarding the impact of Bill 33 and Bill 101 on Special Education Programs and Services.”

Moved by Scott McBean

Seconded by Sarah Niles

CARRIED

12. SEAC Budget Update

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education, provided the budget update.

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

14. Equity & Inclusive Education Advisory Committee Update – N/A

15. Board Update

Trustee Tuchenhagen, provided the following Board update:

- the resignation of Board Chair, Trustee Vanderwey;
- the election of Trustee Oikonen as the new Board Chair; and
- the Board has until August 3, 2026, to appoint a new trustee.

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.