

Special Education Advisory Minutes (SEAC)

Thursday, January 23, 2025 | 1:00pm
Zoom Online Meeting & North Bay Board Office

Present:

Tim Graves, Superintendent of Education
Alison Clarke, Principal of Special Education
Kimberly Gignac, Special Ed Coordinator – North Region
Lisa Paradis, Special Ed Coordinator – East & West Regions
Chantal Phillips, Trustee
Louise Sargent, Trustee
Ashley St. Pierre, Board Chair
Tammy Adjouj, Nipissing Down Syndrome Society
Heidi McMillan, Executive Assistant
Laura Hansman, OPVIC

Regrets:

Krista Holmes, Executive Assistant
Leigh Spinney, Community Living Parry Sound
Candy St. Onge, Almaguin Highlands Community Living
Caroline Labrecque, Nipissing First Nation
Carol Couillard, Nipissing Secondary
Chris Guillemette (Vice Chair), Community Living North Bay

Guests:

Gail Degagne, Special Education Math Lead Teacher
Kyla Kadlec, Principal of Alliance
Jeanie Fuscaldo, Trustee

Land Acknowledgement by Kim Gignac

Meeting called to order at 1:00 pm.

Agenda Approval:

Motioned by Tammy Adjouj, seconded by Trustee Sargent. *Carried.*

Approval of the Minutes of the November 21, 2024, meeting:

Motioned by, Laura Hansman seconded by Tammy Adjouj. *Carried.*

Review of the Notes of the December 19, 2024, meeting.

Elections of Chair and Vice-Chair

Election of Chair

7.1 Acknowledgement of voting members and call for nominations

- The committee nomination Chantal Phillips for consideration for position of Chair.
- Chantal Phillips indicated that she would let her name stand.
- No other nominations were made.
- A motion that nominations be closed was made.

7.3 Announcement of Chair

Motion: That Chantal Phillips be acclaimed as the Chair of SEAC for up to a one-year term, effective immediately and ending in December 2025.

7.4 In-coming Chair's Remarks

The Chair assumes the meeting.

- Acclaimed Chair Trustee Chantal Phillips assumed the position of Chair for the duration of the meeting.

8.0 Elections for Vice-Chair

- This item was tabled for the February SEAC meeting as no nominations for the position of Vice-Chair came forward.

9.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

Presentation by Gail Degagne, Special Education Math Lead Teacher

Key Goals:

- Strengthen educator content knowledge, improve educator confidence, develop abilities, advance leadership, increase parent engagement, support professional learning and improve student learning in mathematics through targeted support and intervention

DLRT Direction 2024-2025:

- Focus on small group instruction and individual education plans (IEPs), emphasis on Tier 2 and 3 interventions and resources

Priority Actions:

- Knowing our mathematics learning and ensuring tasks, interventions, and supports are relevant and responsive
- Engage in ongoing learning to strengthen content knowledge of teachers
- Ensuring fidelity of curriculum implementation and use of instructional and assessment practices to enhance student achievement

Math Intervention Plan:

- Transition from Tier 1 to Tier 2 and 3 interventions
- Use of data from math assessments, psycho-educational reports, and IEPs
- Resources: Math Up, Dreambox, Knowledgehook, Mathology, predictable instruction routines, number talks, rethinking fractions, leaps and bounds, Ontario Curriculum

Implementation:

- Daily 20–30-minute sessions for math intervention in small groups
- Focus on grade 3 students struggling with grade-level content
- Use of numeracy diagnostic intervention to identify student needs
- Hybrid model: meetings via Teams and in-person

Feedback and Challenges:

- Positive feedback on specific approaches and resources

- Challenges with consistent group time due to DLRTs being required for other professional activities
- 131 students supported since the program started

Terms of Reference Review (TOR)

- Trustee Phillips expressed a wondering as to why the “Note from the NNDSB Governance Manual” is included in the TOR as it references the Board and this committee and the community members on this committee are not members to the Board.
- SO Graves agreed to strike that paragraph from the TOR and Trustee Sargent was also in favour of having it removed.
- Principal Clarke suggested removing the final paragraph in the section entitled, “Making A Motion.”
- Trustee Phillips thought this section may not be relevant to the committee’s work and agreed it could be removed from the TOR.
- Tammy Adjouj and Trustee Sargent both agreed to remove it.
- Trustee Phillips suggested relocating the highlighted sections to the end of the TOR under a heading called helpful tips.
- Motion: TOR be adopted in the first 3 pages to make up the new TOR and the highlighted sections be relocated to the end of the TOR under a new heading called “Meeting Conduct and Order.”

Motion Moved by Trustee Sargent and seconded by Tammy Adjouj. *Carried.*

School Tour Options/Considerations (forthcoming)

- The central Special Education team is working to determine how best to share what is happening in our Special Education Classrooms in lieu of a spring classroom tour. Updates will be provided by the Principal of Special Education as they are available to this committee.

11. Standing Items

Community Partner Updates

- No updates.

Correspondence received

Letter to the Ministry of Education in Ontario from SEAC Chair of Ottawa Catholic School Board

- Trustee Sargent noted that some of the points in this letter align with the letter our board recently sent to the Ministry. Trustee Sargent proposed we wait until we have figures for our specific board before responding to this letter. It was recommended to hold off responding to this letter from Ottawa Catholic SB to see what kind of response is garnered from the NNDSB board letter that was sent to the Ministry recently. It was suggested to include this letter with the SEAC minutes to the board to allow trustees to see correspondence from other boards.
- SO Graves agrees with Trustee Sargent to attach the letter to the minutes for full board endorsement.
- Trustee Phillips noted that these issues are province-wide and expressed hope that they would be addressed at a provincial level and agreed we follow the suggestion of Trustee Sargent and SO Graves to not respond at this time.

12. Reports

Board Report (oral) – (Board Trustees)

- Trustee Sargent referenced the letter that was sent to the Ministry.

Special Education Report – Alison Clarke

- Principal Clarke noted that she and her central team recently met with the LearnStyle team and engaged in the monthly connect meeting for January. It is noted that 377 total training sessions have occurred this year to date. Students engaged in 30 coaching sessions during the month of December 2024. Cancellation rates are a little higher than last year and are at a 28.6 % cancellation rate, mainly due to poor weather.
- Principal Clarke also detailed that the Special Education Department is preparing for the upcoming PD Day for Educational Assistants on January 31, 2025. The west region EA group will be engaged in learning offered by the EGALE team and mental health PD presented by OSSTF provincial. The east region EA group will be engaged in Emotion Coaching offered by our Mental Health Lead and staff and our north EA group will be receiving Behaviour Management Systems re-certification training offered by our NNDSB Behaviour Team trainers.
- The Special Education Leadership Team continues to work alongside the leads at RISE to complete the final stages of configuration and to plan implementation training sessions with respective staff groups. Invitations for staff training sessions in February will be sent out this week.
- We have onboarded a SLP into a vacant LTO position that continues through to the end of the school year and they recently started. The focus of their work will be supporting the Speech Language Team with the completion of student assessments.

SEAC Chair Report – Trustee Phillips

- Chair Chantal Phillips suggested to add an agenda item for the next meeting to update the NNDSB Parent Guide. Chair Phillips noted that changes she would propose would include rewording some sections to simplify the language and incorporate more graphics rather than relying solely on definitions.

13. New Business

- **Next Meeting: February 20, 2025 at 1 PM**

14. Adjournment Motion.

- Motion to adjourn at 2:20 PM moved by Tammy Adjouj and seconded by Trustee Sargent.
Carried.