

SEAC Meeting Notes

October 22, 2025

Via Zoom and North Bay Board Room

Present:

Tim Graves, Superintendent of Education
Alison Clarke, Principal of Special Education
Stephanie Norrie, Executive Assistant
Lisa Paradis, Spec Ed Coordinator – East & West Regions
Candy St. Onge, Chair, Almaguin Highlands Community Living
Louise Sargent, Trustee
Kimberly Gignac, Special Education Coordinator – North Region

Guests

Christopher Walkling, K-12 Student Achievement and Well-Being Principal

Regrets:

Tammy Adjoudj, Nipissing Down Syndrome Society
Leigh Armstrong, Vice-Chair, Community Living Parry Sound
Chris Guillemette, Community Living North Bay
Laura Hansman, Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)
Caroline Labreque, Nipissing First Nation
Ashley St. Pierre, Trustee

Land Acknowledgement presented by Kim Gignac

Called to Order at 1:02 pm

Agenda Approval

Deferred as quorum was not attained. Notes to be taken. Agenda consensus was acquired.

Approval of the Minutes of the September 24, 2025, meeting. Deferred.

Discussion; Trustee Sargent's last name was misspelled incorrectly once in the September minutes. She would like to clarify that she does not wish to officially have her name listed as a future Chair. Trustee Sargent chaired the September meeting in the absence of an officially elected Chair. As the September minutes have not yet been approved, a formal motion to make these changes was not necessary.

Business Arising from the Minutes

SEAC Engagement Survey

- Principal Clarke was tasked to create an engagement survey to gain feedback on how to increase SEAC committee engagement.
- Four responses were obtained; In summary, Wednesday afternoon was the most preferred time and date.

Approval of the 2025/26 SEAC Meeting Dates

- Principal Clarke shared that Wednesday was the most agreed upon date, and that next month we can approve the dates for the 25/26 year.
- Trustee Sargent would like to ensure that there was discussion surrounding the December and June meetings (noting the third week may be busy with Christmas and the last weeks of school).

Standing Items

Community Partner updates

- Chair St Onge shared that the new transition program is up and running, PATH turned out to be excellent over the summer. Six participants learned job skills and resume writing, visited the fire hall where home safety was reviewed, and there were plenty of social interactions. Tamara is the new transition worker, and they have many new things planned for the future.
- Next month is very busy with 48 respite applications to be reviewed in 30 days.

Correspondence received

- No correspondence received to review.

Partnership Protocol Discussion

- SO Graves gave a brief overview of the previous month's discussion and shared that this discussion has also taken place within the Executive Council. Both discussions are ongoing, and feedback continues to be collected.
- Principal Clarke and Lana St. Louis have dedicated time and held meetings to consider ways to improve the protocol based on what their shared daily work experience has been and where the current process can be improved.
- Chair St. Onge asked if outside providers will still be considered. SO Graves explained that the protocol needs to strike the correct balance between meeting the needs of students within the board and being able to manage and oversee the For-Profit/external agencies in schools effectively.
- Lisa Paradis noted that private assessment reports can have limited value to the school board without full collaboration.

Reports

Board Report - Trustee Sargent

- The governance committee is in the process of reviewing the manual; everything is to be in place by the spring.

- November is the organizational meeting wherein voting for positions will take place. Committee membership confirmation will follow.
- Trustee Sargent thanks Candy and Leigh for taking on the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair.

Special Education Report- Alison Clarke

- Principal Clarke reported that school teams were required to send home IEPs to parents/guardians within the first 30 days of the school year. This fall was the first time that newly drafted IEPs were created using the RISE Student Profile system. The central team, from the beginning week of the 2025/26 school year, offered and provided individualized support to school teams to help ensure that they were able to navigate challenges they encountered.
- Most school teams were able to independently or mostly independently use the software to create and sign off on IEPs. Many users reached out for varying levels of support to which individualized responses were given. Notably, Lisa Paradis and Kim Gignac, alongside the IT department, were recognized for their work in providing support, as implementing the new software system has come with a learning curve. School teams will now be or soon to be engaging in Identification Placement and Review Committee Meetings (IPRCs) wherein they will use RISE to facilitate the IPRC meeting processes.
- This year's progress reporting for alternative special education programming will be completed using RISE. This will be new learning for most educators within the special education classrooms as well as for educators who are delivering alternative programs for students in mainstream classrooms.
- The central Special Education Behaviour Support Team facilitated Behaviour Management Systems Training (BMS) for newly onboarded Educational Assistants and other employee groups that expressed an interest in receiving the BMS training. The training session occurred at Almaguin Highlands Secondary School on October 20. Approximately 40 employees participated.

SEAC Chair Report

- Chair St. Onge did not have anything to report as it was her first meeting as Chair.

New Business

Student Achievement Plan Update by Principal Chris Walking

- See the attached document for an overview of the presentation that Principal Walking delivered.
- Trustee Sargent asked how the bus driver shortage has affected the data. Principal Walking shared that this is an issue that disproportionately affects northern students but that the data, as a whole, does not uniquely identify the reason for the absences, so it is difficult to isolate and extract that answer from the data.

Student Representation on SEAC (Discussion)

- An overview of the benefits of a student Senate representative was given as the direct result of a request made by another principal to see if this was a welcome addition to SEAC. The logistics of the student participants were noted as requiring further clarification. More information can be shared at the next meeting if the committee would like to continue to look into this.
- SO Graves shared that upon review, the regulation may not allow a student to be an official member but acknowledged that student voice in education is an important consideration.
- Chair St. Onge noted that there may be an opportunity to share the Special Education side of things and include student representation.
- Trustee Sargent noted cautions, highlighting attendance. If SEAC was seeking more student voice, perhaps the student trustees would be a better fit in attending as guests.
- SO Graves commented that if there was student representation at SEAC, it may be beneficial to have a student representative who has accessed special education services. Students who have accessed special education resources may be able to share valuable feedback with SEAC.
- Graves noted that regardless of the origin of the student voice, the SEAC committee can always invite students to participate.

Next meeting: November 26, 2025

Adjournment at 2:06