

**SEAC meeting**  
Wednesday, November 26, 2025  
**Via Zoom and North Bay Boardroom**

**Present:**

Tim Graves, Superintendent of Education  
Alison Clarke, Principal of Special Education  
Stephanie Norrie, Executive Assistant  
Chair Candy St. Onge, Almaguin Highlands Community Living  
Vice-Chair Leigh Armstrong, Community Living Parry Sound  
Louise Sargent, Trustee  
Lisa Paradis, Special Education Coordinator – East & West Regions  
Kimberly Gignac, Special Education Coordinator – North Region  
Chris Guillemette, Community Living North Bay  
Tammy Adjoudj, Nipissing Down Syndrome Society

**Guests**

Seija Van Haesendonck, Superintendent of Business

**Regrets:**

Caroline Labreque, Nipissing First Nation  
Laura Hansman, Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)

**Land Acknowledgement** presented by Lisa Paradis

**Called to Order** at 1:06 pm

**Agenda Approval**

Motioned by Trustee Sargent, seconded by Leigh Armstrong. *Carried.*

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

Motioned by Chris Guillemette, seconded by Leigh Armstrong. *Carried.*

**Approval of the Notes of the October 22, 2025, meeting.**

A consensus was reached to accept the notes as they were presented.

**Business Arising from the Minutes**

Approval of the 2025/26 SEAC Meeting Dates with amended dates in December and June.

Motioned by Leigh Armstrong, seconded by Chris Guillemette. *Carried*

Changes to the proposed dates include:

- December's meeting will take place on December 10, 2025
- June's meeting will take place on June 10, 2026.

## **Standing Items**

### **Community Partner Updates**

There were no updates from Almaguin Highlands Community Living, Community Living North Bay or Community Living Parry Sound at this time, mainly due to the high number of respite applications that are currently under review. Community Living representatives all shared that the number of respite applicants has been increasing yearly, but funding has remained the same, resulting in a lesser amount of funding to share amongst the families applying.

Chris Guillemette shared that starting in January, she will have the student nutrition program added to her portfolio.

### **Correspondence Received**

There was no correspondence received to review.

## **Reports**

### **Board Report**

Trustee Sargent shared that the organizational board meeting was held November 18<sup>th</sup> and there is a new Board Chair, Jay Aspin, and a new Vice Chair, Bill Steer.

Committee membership will be confirmed in December and hopefully there will be an additional trustee attending SEAC.

The trustees continue to navigate the binding directives and are diligently working through them.

### **Special Education Report**

Principal Clarke noted that on November 6, 2025, members of the central Special Education team joined a professional learning session working group on the topic of dysregulated students at Almaguin Highlands Secondary School. The session included special education central team members as well as school-based administrators from all three board regions. This group was invited and brought together in collaboration with the central Safe Schools team. The NNDSB Lead Psychologist was able to provide foundational information and contribute to a common understanding related to the profiles of students with the diagnoses of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder (DMDD) and Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD). This working group is expected to continue and allow administrator participants to develop their knowledge and understanding of how to support these students and lead their respective school teams in

understanding these student profiles in order to respond and interact according to what they need.

Principal Clarke reported that on November 19 and 20, 2025, the special education coordinators attended the RISE User Group Fall Conference wherein they engaged in collaborative learning sessions on the RISE student profile platform. This annual conference facilitates Ontario school boards coming together to discuss RISE software implementation and refinement and allows teams to network, learn and elicit feedback related to function and workflows. Principal Clarke noted that this conference is important as we engage in software refinement and look for new ways to implement the software to use it to its fullest capabilities. As well, LearnStyle's User Group Fall Conference provides SEAIT software learning sessions. NNDSB uses SEAIT software to inventory and process claims for student high needs equipment (such as standers and walkers) and technology (such as laptops and iPads). The coordinator team's learning and contributions are very helpful as we work to support and collaborate with NNDSB school teams, NNDSB IT Department and central program teams in using RISE.

Principal Clarke noted that some of the special education central teams are currently short-staffed. Both our psychology team and our behaviour team have vacant positions that are currently posted as temporary. Principal Clarke is working with the Human Resources Department to fill vacant temporary positions and recognizes that it's difficult to recruit and retain qualified employees within these specialized positions.

Principal Clarke is also currently working to post for a "Transition Navigator Coordinator Position," which is a position that was offered during the 2024/25 school year, as well, and is made available through Ministry funding to support student transitions, including transitions from elementary to secondary schools. Principal Clarke is hopeful of finding a successful candidate to fulfill this role and work with members of our central special education team as well as school teams to provide more personalized and precise transition programming, planning and supports for students with individual education plans.

Lastly, the central special education team has recently received communication from the Ministry regarding Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding applications, which are due to the Ministry on or before January 31, 2026. The central team is working to prepare the list of students that meet the Ministry's criteria for submission. This work requires us to ensure that these students are captured within Power School appropriately with special education programs noted. Ministry data collected, at this time, is based on October 31 ONSIS submissions. SIP funding is critical for special education funding for students with complex needs.

## **SEAC Chair Report**

Chair St. Onge thanked everyone for making the time to join and looks forward to seeing additional members in the future.

## **New Business**

### **Budget Presentation by Seija VanHaesendonck, Superintendent of Business**

Please see the attached document to review the presentation that SBO Van Haesendonck delivered.

#### **Discussion:**

SO Graves asked what the ideal timeline would be for SEAC to complete budget recommendations. SBO Van Haesendonck suggested the end of April would provide an appropriate amount of time for review.

SO Graves suggested that it may be prudent to begin budget discussions at the January meeting to develop timely recommendations.

Trustee Sargent noted that if discussions start in January, it is easier to navigate challenges in meeting quorum before April.

Chris Guillemette asked if there was the possibility of discussions beginning in December.

SO Graves suggested presenting last year's recommendations in December and then seeing what develops or changes from there.

### **Additional Comments**

SO Graves wanted to acknowledge the work of Principal Alison Clarke, Kim Gignac and Lisa Paradis within the Special Education department. The high workload that the team carries is significant, challenging at times, while also meaningful and very appreciated.

Next meeting: December 10, 2025.

### **Motion to adjourn at 1:54 pm**

Motioned by Chris Guillemette, seconded by Leigh Armstrong. *Carried.*