

SEAC meeting

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Via Teams and North Bay Boardroom

Present:

Jay MacJanet, Director

Tim Graves, Executive Superintendent

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

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- left at 2:00 pm

Caroline Labreque, Nipissing First Nation- arrived at 1:56 pm

Guests

Carine Corbeil, NNDSB Special Education Math Lead Teacher

Kim Pauli, Assistant Superintendent

Kim Jenkins, Special Education Coordinator (Temporary)

Kyla Kadlec, Principal Alliance Public School

Regrets:

Laura Hansman, Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)

Land Acknowledgement presented by Tim Graves

Called to Order at 1:03 pm

SO Graves shared reasoning for the cancellation of the December SEAC meeting and introduced new member, Director MacJanet, to the committee. This was followed by members' self-introductions.

Agenda Approval

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

Approval of the Minutes of the November 26, 2025, meeting.

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

NEW BUSINESS

Math Interventions and Programming Supports Presentation by Math Lead Teacher, Carine Corbeil

Please see the attached document to review the presentation that Carine Corbeil delivered.

- Chris Guillemette asked what the collaboration is with parents in terms of communication, expectations of parent support.
- Carine Corbeil shared that some schools send out letters to communicate with parents on this topic.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Motion to approve the SEAC Annual Agenda for the 2025-2026 School Year as revised.

Motioned by Chris Guillemette, seconded by Tammy Adjoudj. *Carried*

Changes to the proposed the SEAC Annual Agenda for the 2025-2026 School Year include:

- Candy suggested that it would make sense to move EQAO into February now that results are available.
 - The March SEAC meeting will be the alternate date if Principal Walkling is not available for the February SEAC meeting.
- Principal Clarke noted that the budget presentation reflects an evolving process and may need to remain flexible on the schedule.
- Principal Clarke asked if there are topics not currently on the annual agenda that the committee would like to learn more about.
 - None at this time.

Budget Recommendations for 2026-2027 School Year- SO Graves

SO Graves started the discussion off by recognizing that the 2025 budget recommendations are built on value statements. SO Graves noted that to date SEAC budget recommendations have not typically included specific dollar amounts attached to the value statements.

- Recommendation 1- *The SEAC for the NNDSB supports maintaining to the best of our ability, staff and resource support aligned with the tiered model of support currently in place across all regions of the Board.*
 - Chair St. Onge suggested adding a specific number of accommodation spaces within specialized classrooms.
 - Tammy Adjoudj noted that the committee may want to consider if there are enough staff system-wide and reflect that in budget recommendations.

Action Item: SO Graves asked if it would be helpful to bring data forward for the committee's consideration when reviewing the budget recommendations (including but not limited to the number of classroom spaces in each region, and the number of students being considered for future classroom spaces, their exceptionality). This was encouraged by the committee.

- Recommendation 4 – *The SEAC for the NNDsb supports the best possible allocation of central staff to support early and timely intervention, testing, professional assessments and specialized services (speech and language, hearing, sight, behaviour, Applied Behaviour Analysis) with equitable access across the regions.*
 - Tammy Adjoudj said that often students lack a timely or fulsome diagnoses and as such the support they need may be overlooked.
 - Chris Guillemette asked Tammy if she felt that access was not equitable. Tammy clarified that there are more needs than services and in an ideal world students would not continually see extended wait times to access available supports.
- Recommendation 5 - *The SEAC for the NNDsb supports maintaining staffing levels for Education Assistants, through retention and recruitment strategies, across the Board to enable equitable and inclusionary practices.*
 - Tammy Adjoudj asked if the language throughout the recommendations could be altered to reflect stronger language and phrasing, specifically noting that the existing phrase “maintaining to the best of our ability” may need revision.
 - Tammy also shared her support of viewing available data to support the budget recommendations.
- Recommendation 6 - *The SEAC for the NNDsb supports the continued use of the model of Flexible Education Assistants in all regions to best reflect the changing and evolving needs of students.*
 - Principal Clarke explained the difference between Flex and School-based Educational Assistants (EAs).
 - Flex EA- these positions are assigned centrally and do move school locations for the purpose of meeting urgent student needs.
 - School-based EA- these positions are permanently assigned to a school and typically remain at the assigned school in support of students.
 - Principal Clarke also shared that if/when students move, during a school year, then Flex EAs can be considered for redeployment as needed.
- Recommendation 8 - *The SEAC for the NNDsb supports the acquisition of additional resources for secondary student programming in recognition of student learning losses and learning gaps related to the COVID19 pandemic.*
 - Chair St. Onge identified that the language surrounding Covid learning gaps could be updated to underscore current challenges such as bus cancellation days and online learning.
 - Vice-Chair Leigh Armstrong agreed but noted that new learning cannot take place during transportation cancellation days.

- SO Graves noted that there is not a specific policy that disallows new learning. However, he suggests that there is potential to identify strategies that we can employ and then make suitable budget recommendations to support the strategies.
- SO Pauli commented that when Principal Walkling returns, he may be able to share current suggestions for continued learning on snow days and share details included in inclement weather best practices.

- Chris Guillemette suggested an overall language review to the budget recommendations, such as using words like “prioritizing or strengthening” vs “maintaining and ensuring to the best of our ability.”
- Principal Clarke asked if the committee would like to be presented with some wording options to review at the next meeting.
- Discussions will continue next month.
- SO Graves said that the final SEAC budget recommendations for 2026 should be finalized at May’s meeting.

STANDING ITEMS

Community Partner Updates

Almaguin Highlands Community Living- Chair St. Onge shared that a key staff member has recently left the organization and the job posting to fill that role is currently live. Chair St. Onge looks forward to introducing the new employee to Central Special Education staff.

Community Living North Bay- Chris Guillemette highlighted that the Special Olympics fundraising at Tim Hortons starts Jan 30 in support of this year’s athletes.

Community Living Parry Sound- no update.

Nipissing Down Syndrome Society- Tammy Adjoudj pointed out that World Down Syndrome Day is March 21, 2026.

Correspondence Received

There was no correspondence received to review.

REPORTS

Director’s Remarks

Director MacJanet offered his appreciation to committee members for receiving him as a new member of SEAC. He shared his background connection of working with Family and Children’s Services for seven years, noting a soft spot for marginalized children and those with special

needs. Director MacJanet has recognized the moral compass is pointed in the right direction amongst the staff at NNDSB.

Director MacJanet appreciated the Math presentation given by Carine Corbeil, emphasizing that the NNDSB will now be led by data and evidence, and he aims to achieve ongoing improvements.

Recently, while at a Land of Lakes school visit, he attended a music showcase as well as visited the special education classrooms and was impressed by the capabilities of staff.

Director MacJanet noted that he would appreciate receiving a literacy presentation and the committee advised that this could be added to SEAC's Annual Agenda. He also acknowledged Chris Guillemette's question about parent involvement, recognizing that parent and community partner involvement is key in supporting students.

Director MacJanet closed out his remarks by reiterating his vision of improving the Board as a whole and the connection to providing support to students to bolster their ongoing success.

Special Education Report

Principal Clarke reported that the central Special Education Team met with the LearnStyle Team and engaged in a monthly connect meeting for January. LearnStyle is NNDSB's partner in assistive technology coaching sessions for students receiving technology support through the Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) funding.

- This year and to date, 209 total training sessions have occurred. Students engaged in 43 coaching sessions during the month of December 2025.
- Cancellation rates are lower than they were compared to last year.
- This year's cancellations (62 cancelled sessions, at a cancellation rate of 22.9%) have been mostly due to student illness.
- LearnStyle is also interested in receiving DLRT feedback on the effectiveness of their service and its impact on students. The NNDSB team will be collaborating with the LearnStyle team to develop survey questions to gather information from school DLRTs.

The central Special Education Department is preparing for the upcoming professional activity day on Friday, January 30th. The department is responsible for planning and delivering professional learning to the educational assistants (EAs).

- The west region EAs will be engaged in a presentation entitled, "Demystifying Oppositional Behaviour" facilitated by the NNDSB Lead Psychologist as well as "Universal Design for Learning Communication Strategies" by the NNDSB Speech Language Pathologist Team.
- The east region EA group will be engaged in "Strategies to Support Students with Blind Low Vision and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Needs" as well as "Best Practices to Support Inclusion" offered by the specialist teachers.

- The north region EA group will be receiving Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) recertification training, which they receive annually.

This year, the Special Education Department was able to support increased BMS trainer certifications. Trainer training occurs in various locations within Ontario and allows those with qualifications to train others in Behaviour Management Systems. Two additional members of the central behaviour team were trained this year. As a result, there are now seven trained members within NNDSB. For many years, NNDSB had three BMS trainers.

The “Transition Navigator Coordinator Position” has been filled and the individual hired for this position began work on January 19, 2026. This individual will be supporting student transitions, focusing on transitions from elementary to secondary schools by working with school-based educator teams and parents/guardians. The mandate of the position is to provide more personalized and precise transition programming, planning and supports for students.

The central special education team recently received submitted NNDSB’s Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding applications. The applications are due to the Ministry on or before January 31, 2026.

In February, members of the central Behaviour Team will be facilitating a learning session with the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) educators to present on the foundations of behaviour management plans.

In March, a virtual system special education meeting is scheduled wherein important learning and information will be shared with school resource teachers and administrators.

SEAC Chair Report

Chair St. Onge welcomed Director MacJanet to the committee and thanked everyone for joining, recognizing the important work that the SEAC committee does.

Next meeting: February 25, 2026

Motion to adjourn at 2:17 pm

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