

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

May 8, 2023

Leadership Report

Learning Transformation and Equity - Special Education and Inclusion

Louise Sirisko, Associate Director, Instructional Innovation and Equitable Outcomes

Nandy Palmer, System Superintendent of Special Education and Inclusion

Incorporating Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction through Assistive Technology Digital Tools

The Assistive Technology Team is offering hands-on professional learning sessions throughout the Spring to support Curriculum Leaders/Assistant Curriculum Leaders (CLs/ACLs) of Special Education, along with secondary teachers and support staff with implementing accommodations in inclusive classrooms that incorporate Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction. Three different tools will be covered in the sessions:

- 1) OrbitNote in the Secondary Classroom: Interacting with Accessible & Actionable PDF Documents;
- 2) Mindomo in the Secondary Classroom: Using Digital Graphic Organizers; and
- 3) WeVideo Online Video Editor in the Secondary Classroom.

Professional Learning Sessions for Educators of Intensive Support Programs

In April, Special Education and Inclusion staff presented additional sessions for teachers and support staff on supporting students in Intensive Support Programs - ISPs (e.g., ASD, DD ISP, MID, Gifted etc.). These additional sessions provided an opportunity for educators and support staff to learn and explore inclusionary practices specific to the exceptionality in an ISP setting. Participants deepened their understanding of the intersection of anti-ableism, anti-oppression and anti-racism and discussed ways in which students can effectively be integrated.

TDSB Ukrainian Welcome Fair

Special Education and Inclusion joined the TDSB Ukrainian Welcome Fair on Saturday, April 15, 2023 at Western Technical Commercial School as part of the carousel of services and supports for families. Information on Special Education and Inclusion programs, services and supports were shared. Over 300 participants attended the fair.

Parent Engagement Session #3 Reminder

Special Education and Inclusion will be offering a third parent/guardian/caregiver session on Tuesday, May 30th and Wednesday, May 31st at 7:00 p.m. This session will focus on summer



transitions and will include ideas to engage students during the summer months such as home activities, library resources and information on how to use Read & Write Gold at home. Information on community agencies will also be shared. There will be an opportunity for parents/guardians/caregivers to ask questions about these processes. The sessions will be facilitated by Special Education and Inclusion staff.

Multi-Year Strategic Plan CAC Consultations

As TDSB approaches the end of its current strategic plan, we are launching the Multi-year Strategic Plan Renewal. The strategic plan is the long-term vision for the TDSB, establishing clear priorities that will guide Trustees and system and school leaders over the next four years. The goal is to develop a four-year roadmap, driven by student-centered needs and goals that are equity-informed and evidence-based.

Members of the TDSB community will have opportunities to engage and reflect on the existing strategic plan and identify their priorities to create a more focused strategy. The most important contributor to the strategic planning process is the voice of the TDSB school community.

Throughout the next few months, we will be asking students, parents/guardians/caregivers, staff, community members and Community Advisory Committees to reflect on the current strategic priorities and goals and contribute to renewing the MYSP.

All members of the TDSB school community are invited to Have Your Say! We encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities listed on the [MYSP Renewal webpage](#) to contribute to the conversation.

Special Education Plan 2023-2024

The TDSB SEAC Subcommittee submitted their recommendations to staff for amendments to the current Special Education Plan. Staff thanks the subcommittee for their work. Recommendations from the committee as well as recommendations from families, community partners and school and department staff were taken under advisement and amendments made accordingly in order to ensure alignment with ministry standards and to create a more comprehensible and accessible document. The next step will be for SEAC to approve the amendments to the plan, after which the plan will go to the Board of Trustees for approval so it can be submitted to the ministry.

Special Education and Inclusion Annual Report

The 2022-2023 Annual Report was shared with the Program and School Services Committee (PSSC) on April 12, 2023 for receipt and was presented to the Board for approval on April 27, 2023.

In an effort to create coherence and alignment of special education and inclusion practices, programs and structures across the TDSB to foster more inclusive environments for students with special education needs, the Special Education and Inclusion Department has been focusing on the following areas:



- Challenging and Dismantling Oppressive Structures;
- Capacity Building;
- Changing Mindsets; and
- Communication and Engagement.

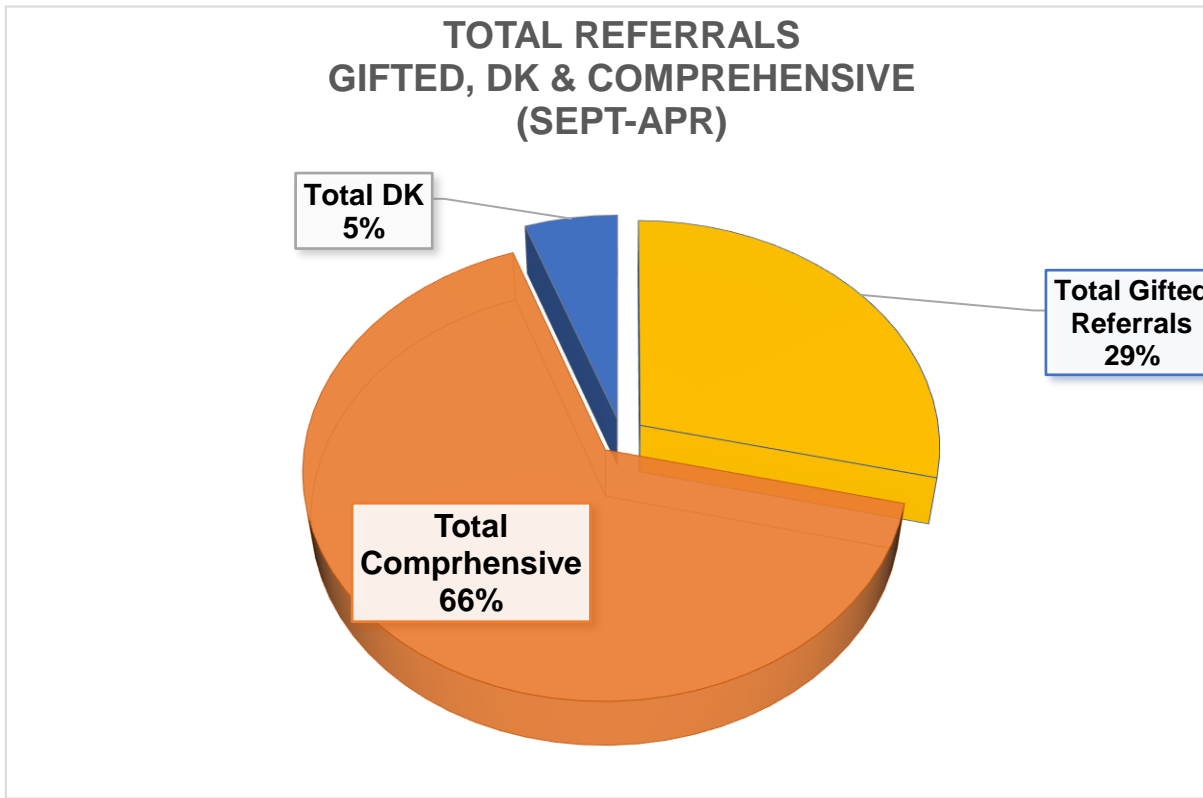
These focus areas are interconnected and reflect the need for shared responsibility and shared accountability in serving students with special education needs, and indeed all students.

Restructuring of Special Education and Inclusion Learning Center (LC) Coordinators and Learning Network (LN) Consultants

Coordinator and Consultants will be restructured within the Special Education and Inclusion Department. The TDSB is divided into 4 Learning Centres. Each Learning Centre includes 6 Learning Networks. Currently, there are 8 Coordinators and 40 Consultants. We will be restructuring to have 12 Coordinators (3 assigned per Learning Centre) and 24 Consultants (1 per Learning Network). Increasing the number of Coordinators in each Learning Centre will allow for coherence and alignment of special education legislated practices and processes such as IPRCs and IEPs. This model will lead to improved flow of information from school staff to superintendents, and will allow for shared responsibility and shared accountability for improved outcomes for students with special education needs. The restructuring will result in savings that will be analyzed through the budget development process as being revenue neutral to the department or contribute to deficit reduction and come for approval to the Board of Trustees.

IPRC Data - April 2023

April IPRCs	
Learning Centre 1	229
Learning Centre 2	214
Learning Centre 3	99
Learning Centre 4	363
IPRCs Completed	905
IPRC Cumulative since August 2022	
IPRC Cumulative since August 2022	2431



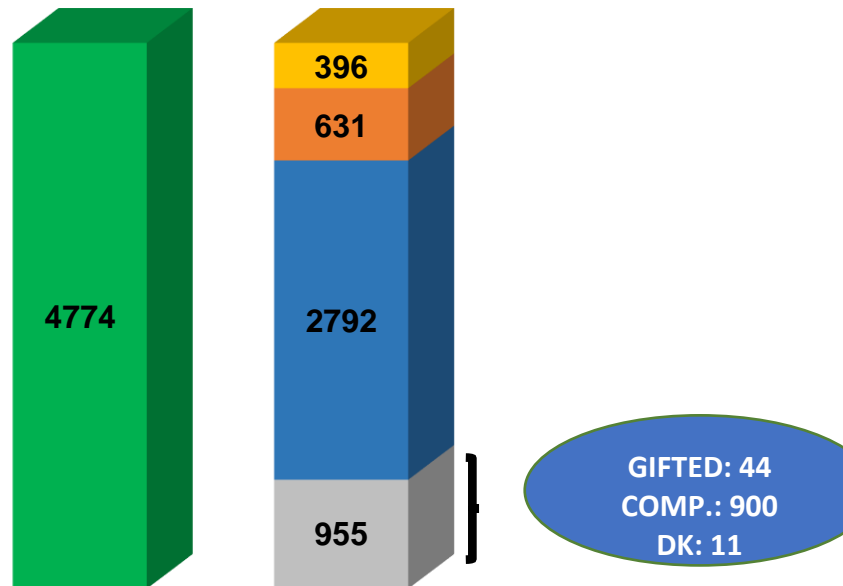
Since September 2022, the total number of referrals is **4774** (*DK-262; Gifted-1370; Comprehensive-3142*)

- Gifted and DK referrals begin in late October, November, continued to present are quite low at this time.



PSYCHOLOGICAL REFERRALS-BREAKDOWN SEPT.-FEB.

■ Total Referrals ■ Waiting ■ Completed ■ In Progress ■ Removed



For Comprehensive/DK Assessments: October 2022 had 737 Waitlist; November 2022 has 727; December it was 824; January it was 900, February it is 924, March it is 944, April 911. There has been a decrease from last month by **3.5% comprehensive/DK**.

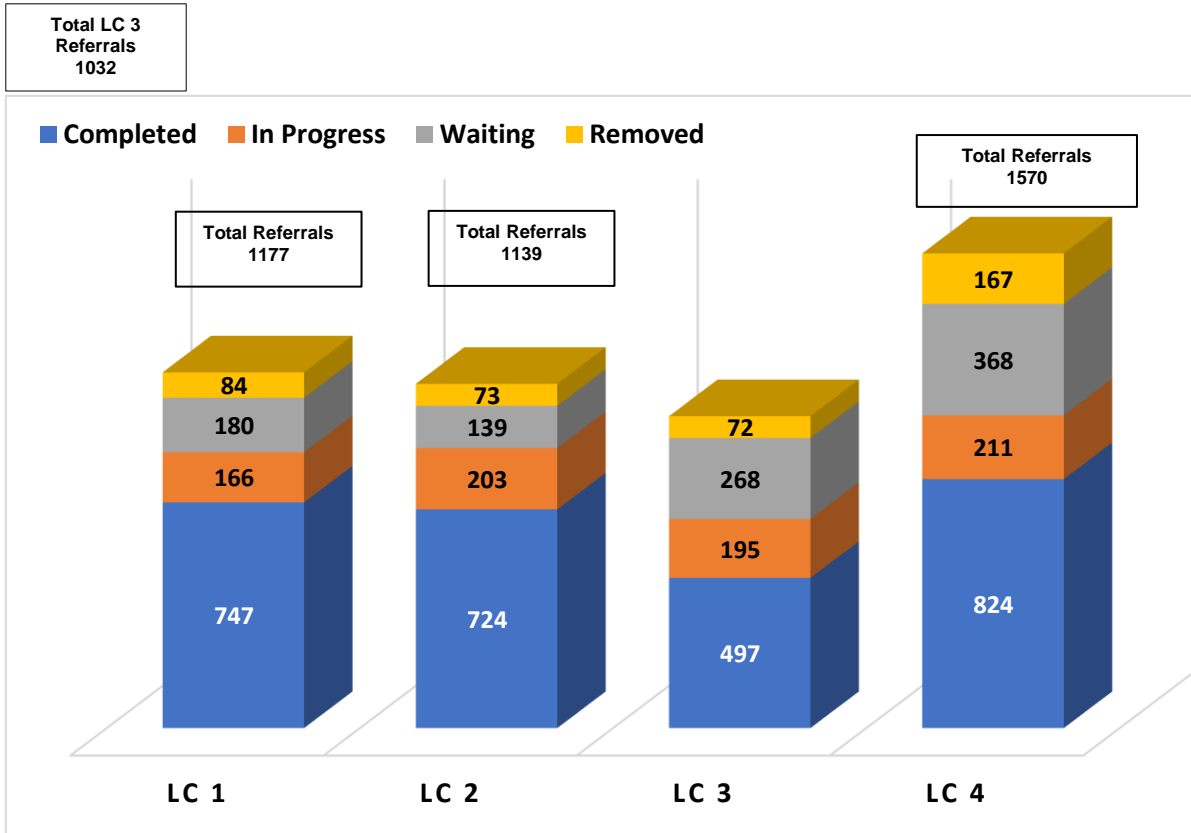
The Comprehensive assessments are continuing, and staff began January 2023 strong with a 5.9% reduction in the comprehensive waitlist from December 2022 and between January and March, there has been a slight increase in the comprehensive/DK assessments by 3% although the overall waitlist is down by 12% (Gifted have been almost completed). The rest of the year will continue with comprehensive.

- As the DK and Gifted get completed, this waitlist for comprehensive will decrease throughout the school year.

This chart indicates the breakdown of the **4774** psychological referrals (*Gifted, Comprehensive & DK*) received since September 2022 to April 2023.

- End of April 2023, **911** Comprehensive & DK Assessments are on the waitlist (**900 and 11 are Comprehensive & DK Assessments respectively**)
- **2792** Referrals (*Comprehensive/DK & Gifted*) have been completed since September 2022.
- **631** Referrals (*Comprehensive, DK & Gifted*) are in progress

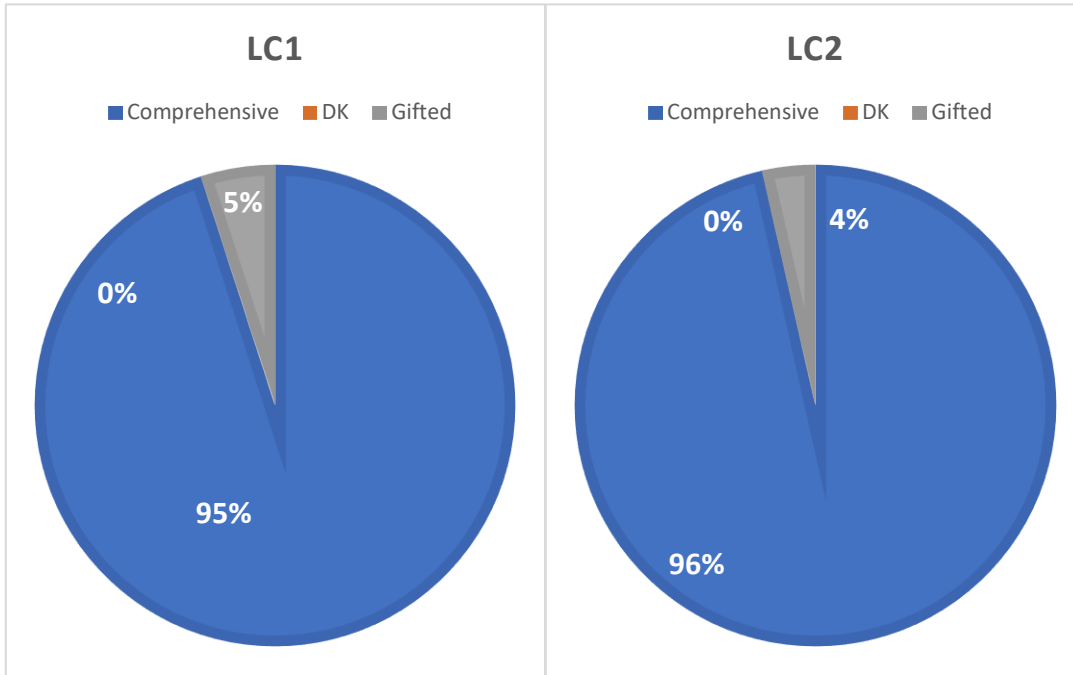
- **396 have been removed for some these following reasons:**
 1. *The parent/guardian has not consented to the assessment*
 2. *The student has left the board*
 3. *The student moved out of the city/region/providence/country*
 4. *Other supports were provided that supported the initial needs which initiated the assessment (trauma therapy; outside private psycho-educational assessment by parent/guardian; supports/differential strategies provided to the educators in the classroom that have positive outcomes etc.)*

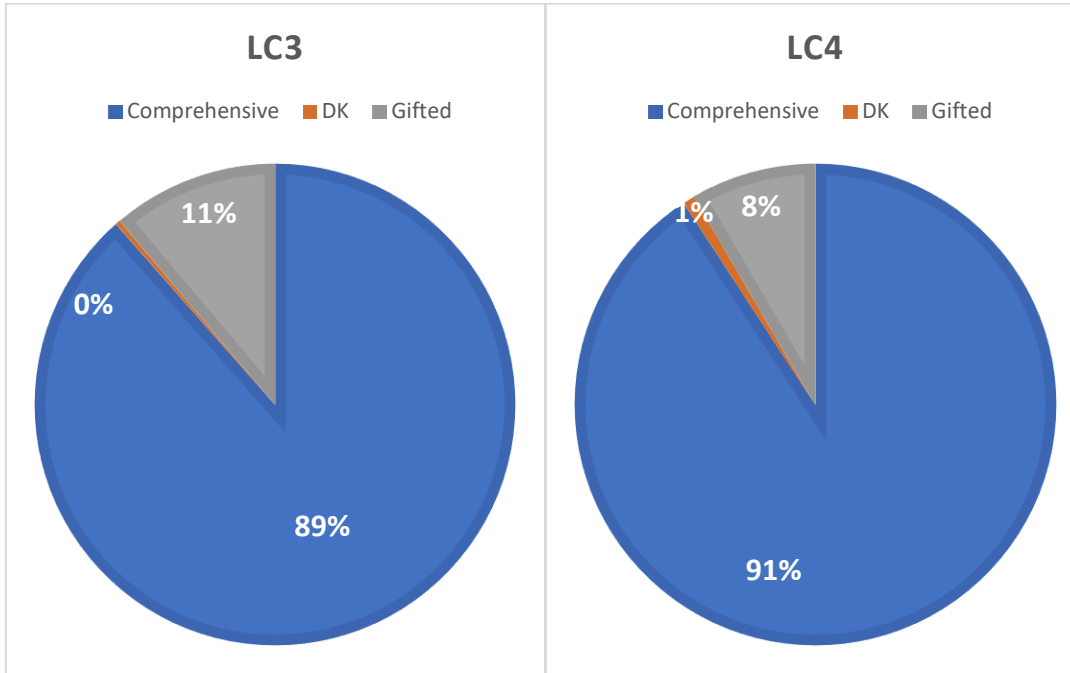


This chart showcases total referrals (Comprehensive, DK & Gifted) for each LC.

The chart below showcases the breakdown of the waitlist per LC for Comprehensive, DK and Gifted.







****The waitlists do vary, and part of this variance includes the following (2021 numbers)**

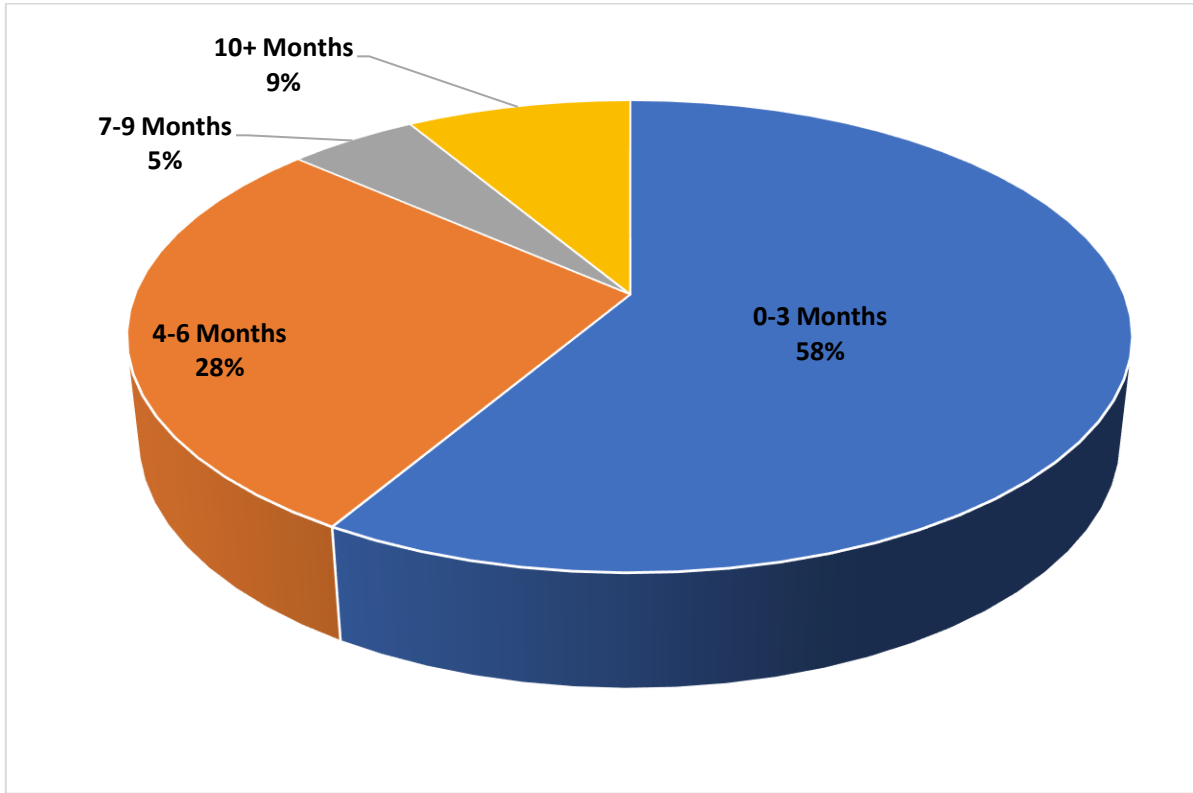
Learning Centre	Number of Schools	*Elementary Student Population	*Secondary Student Population	*TOTAL Student Population
1	134	42, 430	20, 258	62, 688
2	136	41, 428	16, 877	58, 305
3	133	40, 878	15, 589	56, 467
4	157	49, 445	17, 837	67, 277

Higher referral numbers in LC4 are attributed to:

- LC4 has 20 plus schools more than the other LC's
- LC4 has 5000-10,000 more students than the other LC's

Comprehensive /DK Assessments Aged Waitlist	0-3 Months	4-6 Months	7-9 Months	10+ Months	TOTAL
April 2023	533	255	45	78 <i>(all under 12 months)</i>	911





Psychological staff are continuing to put effort in to comprehensive assessments, that are 6 plus months plus.

Below are some rationales why 6-month comprehensive referrals remain on the waitlist:

- 1) Parent/Guardian want to continue with the assessments and the students are in virtual school where only a portion of psychoeducational assessments can be completed virtually. These students and parents/guardians a being offered local school spaces and administrative buildings to support the completion of in person testing but have declined.
- 2) Students who left, in between testing, to go out of the country/city/province and want to remain on the wait list.
- 3) Student who enrolled into virtual school in between testing and want to remain on the waitlist.
- 4) Student and parents/guardians who are not responding to the staff and staff are working with the school and Attendance Counselors to locate.

Gifted Assessments Aged Waitlist	0-3 Months	4-6 Months	7-9 Months	10+ Months	TOT
April 2023	26	18	0	0	44



