

# Special Education Advisory Committee

## Leadership Report

February 1, 2021

**Andrew Gold, Associate Director of Leadership, Learning and School Improvement**  
**Angela Nardi-Addesa, System Superintendent of Special Education and Inclusion**



# Land Acknowledgement

"We acknowledge we are hosted on the lands of the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Wendat. We also recognise the enduring presence of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples."



# Agenda

1. Call to Order (quorum) - Land Acknowledgement and Welcome
  - Announce Live Streaming of meeting
  - Revisit rules of decorum and questions procedure
2. Review and Approval of Agenda (including time allocation)
3. Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interests and Approval of SEAC Minutes
4. Leadership Report
5. Trustees Reports/ Introductions
6. Working Groups - Budget/Communication/Sp. Ed. Plan/Action Plans
7. SEAC Members Report
8. Other Business
  - Correspondence –
  - From LDAO call for Presenters
  - From Toronto Family Network email Jan 28 (shared electronically)
  - New SEAC Member Applicants
  - PAAC Survey Results

# Leadership Report

- **Introduction-** Andrew Gold
- **TDSB MYSP: Equity, Anti-Oppression and Anti-Black Racism-** Jacqueline Spence
- **K-Gr.1 IEP Strategy** – Angela Nardi-Addesa, David Cameron, Janine Small and Anastasia Poulis
- **Updates-** Angela Nardi-Addesa

# TDSB MYSP: Equity, Anti-Oppression and Anti-Black Racism



February 1, 2021

System Superintendent Jacqueline Spence

## TDSB's Equity Commitment

- December 2017 Toronto District School Board Engaged in one of the largest consultations which resulted in “The Enhancing Equity Task Force” report
- Report cited many barriers faced by Black students in classrooms and schools
- Director’s Response to the report was interpreted through the priorities in the **Multi-Year Strategic Plan**
- A Strategy for Black Student Achievement and Excellence
- Transforming Student Learning: Toward the Excellence in the Education of Black Students

## 5 Areas of Focus

- Leadership Development
- Pathways & Transitions
- **Special Education**
- Suspensions and Expulsions
- Early Years

# Toward Excellence in the Education of Black Students: Special Education

- **Goal:** To create professional learning models that support inclusion and reduce the over-representation of Black students in Special Education programs (specifically Home School Programs, Intensive Support programs and other congregated programs).
- **Action:** Invest in building the capacity of educators to successfully implement inclusion with groups of Black students by deepening their awareness of the principles of anti-racism and culturally relevant pedagogy



# Discussion, Questions, Wonderings



# Kindergarten to Grade 1 Individual Education Plan (IEP) Strategy

High expectations for learning lead to better academic outcomes and improved well-being for students.

The Special Education team will continue to take steps to address the overrepresentation of Black students in special education programs. Specifically, attention will be directed at interrupting the initiation of IEPs for our early learners in Kindergarten and Grade 1.

Before any child in JK/SK/Grade 1 is placed on an IEP, Principals will ensure conversations and agreement from their SOE before any IEP is initiated for a child in JK/SK and Grade 1.



# Context:

An analysis of the demographics of Kindergarten and Grade 1 students in special education from the 2015-16 to 2019-20 school years suggests:

- Male students, Black students, and students from families with low socio-economic status, such as less parent education, single-parent households, and low family income, were disproportionately high in Kindergarten and Grade 1 special education.
- Additionally, more than half of the students continued to not have an identified exceptionality after three or four school years when they entered Grade 4.

# Context:

In total, 9,945 students had an IEP in Kindergarten or Grade 1 from these five school years. .

**Table 1: Enrollment of JK-Gr.1 Students with an IEP**

School Year	JK	SK	Gr. 1	Total (JK-Gr. 1)
2015-16	568	794	1,592	2,954
2016-17	638	820	1,672	3,130
2017-18	548	844	1,579	2,971
2018-19	546	834	1,538	2,918
2019-20	662	832	1,433	2,927

Among them, 1,924 students, or 19%, had an identified exceptionality through the IPRC (Identification, Placement and Review Committee) process in Kindergarten or Grade 1.

The other 81% of students had an IEP only, i.e., they did not have an identified exceptionality through the IPRC process in Kindergarten or Grade 1.

# Context:

Below is a breakdown of the 1,924 students, or 19%, of students on an IEP with an identified exceptionality through the IPRC (Identification, Placement and Review Committee) process in Kindergarten or Grade 1.

<b>Exceptionality</b>	<b>Count</b>
Autism	1,124
Behaviour	159
Blind and Low Vision	16
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	139
Development Disability	266
Giftedness	4
Language Impairment	21
Learning Disability	33
Mild Intellectual Disability	130
Physical Disability	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,924</b>

# Context:

- Among the 9,945 students who had an IEP in Kindergarten or Grade 1 from these five school years, 71% were boys, and 29% were girls.
- The vast majority (89%) of the students with an IEP were born in Canada, which is 7% more than the proportion of all TDSB JK-Grade 1 students from the same school years (82%).
- Over half (55%) of the students with an IEP in Kindergarten or Grade 1 spoke English as their primary language at home, which is 8% more than the proportion of all JK-Grade 1 students (47%).
- According to student registration records, 69% of the students with an IEP in Kindergarten or Grade 1 lived with both parents at home. This is 12% less than the proportion of all JK-Grade 1 students (81%).

## Context:

Overall, students whose parents had less education level, from low-income families, i.e., from low SES background, were over-represented in the Kindergarten-Grade 1 special education.

### Family Income of JK-Grade 1 Students

Family Income	JK-Gr.1 Students with an IEP (N=2,977)	All JK-Gr. 1 Students (2016-17, N=31,986)	Proportion Difference
Less than \$30,000	32%	23%	+9%
\$30,000 - \$49,999	21%	17%	+3%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	15%	14%	+1%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	10%	10%	-1%
\$100,000+	23%	36%	-13%

### Socio-economic Status of JK-Grade 1 Students

SES	JK-Gr.1 Students with an IEP (N=2,874)	All JK-Gr. 1 Students (2016-17, N=31,339)	Proportion Difference
Low	48%	32%	+16%
Average	32%	35%	-3%
High	20%	33%	-13%

## Context

An analysis was performed to track the SK and Grade 1 students who had an IEP in the 2015-16 school year to the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years when they were in Grade 4.

For these 1,888\* students who had had an IEP in 2015-16 when they were in Kindergarten or Grade 1:

- 146 students, or 8%, did not have an IEP in Grade 4 anymore
- 18% of these 1,888 students had had an identified exceptionality in Kindergarten or Grade 1, the proportion increased to 46% when they were in Grade 4.
- **more than half** (54%) continued to not have an identified exceptionality after three or four school years.

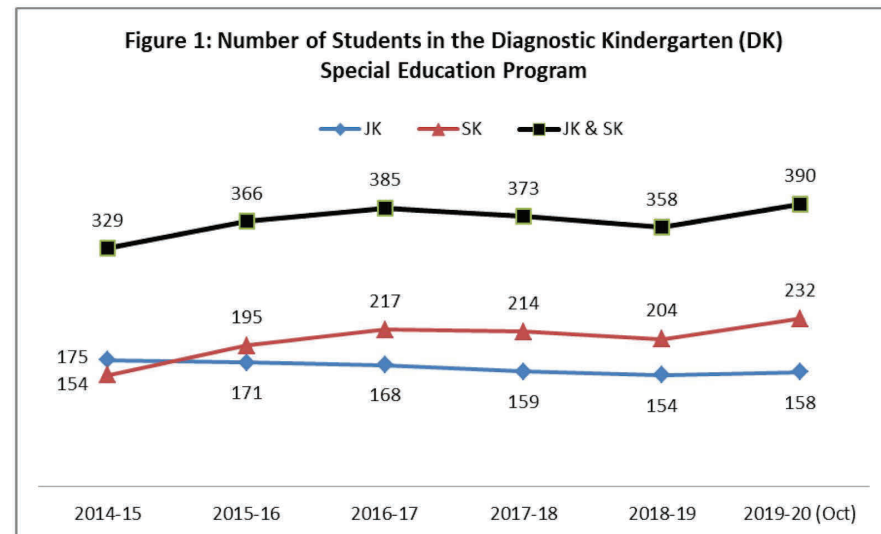
\* students left the Board



# Context-DK

Of the 1,485 students, over three quarters (77%) in the DK program were boys, and 23% were girls. Over half (55%) of the students in the DK program spoke a language other than English at home, which is slightly higher than the Kindergarten student population (52% in 2016-17).

The results show that Black students were significantly over-represented in the DK program, while White and East Asian students were under-represented in this special education Kindergarten program. Similar over-representation patterns were observed for students from lower SES families, and students with foreign-born parents



# Next Steps

We will work to optimize professional learning that promotes inclusive models of education and that deepens awareness of anti-Black racism, critical disabilities and culturally relevant teaching practices.

This will mean confronting and challenging unconscious bias within our schools, and working closely with principals and superintendents to interrupt, interrogate and strategize to ensure that Black students are treated equitably.

This strategy will be closely informed by data, and shaped in close collaboration with all stakeholders.

# Critical Path

Timeframe	Action
September-December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collect data from Research</li><li>• Communication and rollout of plan for implementation in Spring 2021 prior to placement decisions for next school year</li></ul>
January - May 2021	Professional Learning Sessions targeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PSSP Staff</li><li>• Special Education Consultant/Coordinators</li><li>• Administrators</li><li>• Teachers in K-Gr.1</li><li>• DECEs and CUPE support staff who work in Kindergarten and Grade 1 classes</li></ul>
May-June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review impact of Professional Learning and analyze gaps and next steps to continue the work for next academic school year</li><li>• Review IEP data for students in JK-Gr.1 for 2020-2021; did we see a decrease in numbers?</li><li>• Create next steps for September 2021-2022</li></ul>
September-October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue the next phase of support required to ensure the IEP K-Gr.1 Strategy continues to be implemented</li><li>• Create Critical Path for the year</li></ul>

# Discussion, Questions, Wonderings



# Updates: Universal Screening

A process was underway for grade 3 virtual school students to write the CCAT-7 Assessment at home supervised by their Virtual School teacher. This would have required the parents of the grade 3 students to go to the OSR school during the week of February 1-5 to pick up the assessments which are in labeled envelopes and then return the completed assessment in the sealed envelope by Thursday, February 11.

Toronto Public Health has strongly recommended not to proceed until the provincial emergency order has ended on February 10th. We will follow the recommendations of TPH. As such the CCAT-7 Assessment for VS students has once again been delayed.

Once the emergency order has been lifted we will revisit options of how to best move forward with this assessment.

# Updates: In-Person Learning Data

Learning Centre	Number of Schools	Number of Students Attending (Jan 27)	Number of Classes Running (Jan 27)	Number of Teachers Attending (Jan 27)	Number of Support Staff Attending (Jan 27)
LC 1 Total	29	198	66	89	131.5
LC 2 Total	18	99	31	38	71
LC 3 Total	19	77	26	35	55
LC 4 Total	31	282	87	108	140.5
ECCP Total	16	88	24	25	18
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>416</b>

# February Switch

- Prior to the Winter Break, we asked all elementary school families to indicate if they wanted their child(ren) to be considered for a switch from in-person (in-school) to virtual learning (at home) or from virtual learning (at home) to in-person (in-school) learning.
- Following Toronto Public Health (TPH) guidelines, TDSB will **proceed with a final switching opportunity, where space is available, in February 2021 for those families who indicated interest in the December switching survey.**
- We are committed to completing as many requests as possible, with priority given to students who live in neighbourhoods which are at higher risk for COVID-19 based on recent data from TPH. Schools will be working to find appropriate classroom spaces for students who requested a switch, however it is important for families to understand that it will not be possible to accommodate all requests. Additionally, we know that families need stability and we want to ensure as little disruption to learning as possible, including for those students who have not requested a switch.
- The process has not been finalized in how to complete this complex transition. We know that families have questions and we are aiming to provide more information next week to those who requested a switch.
- Families who indicated interest in a switch for their child in the December survey will be prioritized, if space is available. At this time, it is unlikely that we will be able to accommodate any additional switch requests. For more information, families are asked to speak directly to their child's current school principal (Elementary Virtual School or at their in-person school).

# Updates: Assessment Data

## Cumulative Statistics September 2020 – January 2021

	LC1	LC2	LC3	LC4	Total
Completed*	341	209	224	366	1140
In Progress	142	149	184	237	712
Waiting	336	244	368	574	1522
Consultations**	3507	2115	3390	2511	11523

<sup>1</sup>*Referrals Completed:* Assessment cases that have been completed or closed (e.g., parents refused assessment, moved out of board, etc.)

<sup>2</sup>*Consultations:* Refer to direct meetings regarding individual students (e.g., SST meetings, consultations with outside professions, and meetings with teachers or parents/guardians) to support our inclusive special education model



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