

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

May 13, 2024

Leadership Report

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Webinar #3 for Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

Special Education and Inclusion will be holding two virtual sessions for Parents/Guardians/Caregivers on May 28th and May 29th. These sessions are designed to offer families valuable insights on a range of topics, including Social Emotional Learning, Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy, Speech and Language Pathology, engaging home learning activities and games, effective use of special equipment and technology, fostering well-being, accessing community resources, and accessing links and resources related to summer programs. Please view the morning [flyer](#) and the evening [flyer](#) for more information.

Fact Sheet #2: An Intersectional View of TDSB Students with Special Education Needs

Fact Sheet #2: An Intersectional View of TDSB Students with Special Education Needs is the second in a series of four fact sheets examining a range of topics impacting students with special education needs (SEN) within the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). The first fact sheet provided an introductory overview of TDSB students with SEN in the 2023-24 school year. This fact sheet will explore comparisons between students with SEN in the TDSB, Greater Toronto Area (GTA) school boards and the province of Ontario, as well as the intersections between special education needs and demographic variables such as race, income, and gender.

By offering a detailed snapshot of our current landscape, we hope the fact sheets will serve as a valuable resource for all stakeholders as we work together to support students with special education needs.

Special Education Plan 2024-2025

Each year, school districts review their Special Education Plans and make amendments if needed. The [Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans](#) outlines what must be included in a district's Special Education Plan. The TDSB SEAC Subcommittee submitted their recommendations to staff for amendments to the current Special Education Plan. Staff sincerely 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 amendments will go to the Board of Trustees for approval so that they can be submitted with the full plan to the Ministry.



Update: Special Education Identification, Placement and Appeal Procedure

As previously shared with SEAC, TDSB staff recommended that the decision-making authority related to recommendations of the Special Education Appeal Board (SEAB) pursuant to Ontario Regulation 181/98 be delegated from the Board of Trustees to the Director of Education. At the January 17, 2024 GPC meeting, staff presented an update on the development of a Special Education Identification, Placement and Appeal Procedure (the "Procedure"), which outlined the identification, placement, and appeal processes for exceptional students. The GPC provided comments to the draft Procedure that included a recommendation to delegate decision-making authority of special education appeals from the Board of Trustees to a committee of staff, with trustees recognizing/appreciating challenges of appeal process/practices as they currently exist, supporting the need for specialized knowledge through Special Education and Inclusion staff on the committee, expressing concern/desire to maintain impartiality, suggesting to clarify language around staff representative from another learning center having no prior knowledge of the case, and including a Trustee on the committee. Trustees also supported staff's intention to discuss the recommended appeal process with members of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

On February 12, 2024, staff attended the SEAC meeting to discuss, explain and seek feedback on the proposed Procedure. Feedback from SEAC included support for the development of a procedure clearly outlining the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) and SEAB processes, a call for trained staff to comprise the committee deciding on the SEAB recommendations, and support for trustees to be included on the committee deciding on the SEAB recommendations.

Based on the feedback from both GPC and SEAC, staff are recommending that a three (3) person committee, with final decision-making authority regarding the SEAB recommendations, be composed of the System Superintendent of Special Education and Inclusion, a Trustee with no prior knowledge of the appeal case, and a Superintendent with no prior knowledge of the appeal case.

At the April 24, 2024 GPC Meeting, the committee approved the recommendation by staff, which will now go to the Board of Trustees for final decision at the upcoming Board meeting scheduled for May 22nd.

Deaf Hard of Hearing (DHH) Basketball Tournament

This year, for the first time, two teams of TDSB students participated in the 12th Annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Provincial Basketball Tournament held at Northern Secondary School. Competing along with the Northern Secondary School team composed of the students in the D/HH Intensive Support Program was the newly formed D/HH Itinerant Student Team, made up of seven high school students and their coach, Rohan Robinson, Principal of Wexford PS.



After being undefeated in their round-robin games, the itinerant student team was in second place going into the playoffs. The team became a very cohesive unit under the direction of Coach Robinson, who used Remote Microphone Technology (RMT) by wearing a transmitter that connected to receivers in students' personal hearing devices throughout the game. The D/HH Itinerant Team was successful in the semi-finals and won the championship game with a 3 point lead against EC Drury Provincial School for the Deaf.

Empower and Wilson Reading

Special Education and Inclusion, in collaboration with the Early Years/Literacy Department, have utilized the 2023-24 Priorities and Partnerships (PPF) Funding to purchase 72 Sick Kids Empower Reading programs and associated training sessions to educators for the effective utilization of this reading intervention program. Additionally, 60 Wilson Reading programs for schools already implementing this program have been secured, aiming to further strengthen reading intervention strategies in these schools. Special Education and Inclusion is also providing weekly drop-in sessions for teachers on Wilson Reading to further enhance support in the use of this reading intervention program. These efforts are directed towards deepening the use of Tier 2 and 3 reading intervention strategies and building capacity in using the strategies across TDSB schools.

Unleashing Learning

At this year’s annual Unleashing Learning Conference, technicians on the Assistive Technology Services Team shared resources in the vendor area at the Assistive Technology Table, with teachers showcasing technology to support students in unique ways in a variety of settings. A teacher from the Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP) also presented the *Wellness and Mental Health Supported by Technology* session. The presentation explored a variety of TDSB approved digital and technology tools to support the classroom and home. The session started with the "Whys" and "Hows" of teaching and supporting mental health in classroom routines in the curriculum. Through discussing and experiencing different strategies and resources, participants developed their schema of integrating tools for students with anxiety, hyperactivity, focus and attention challenges and more.

IPRC Data - April 2024

April IPRCs	
Learning Centre 1	353



Learning Centre 2	283
Learning Centre 3	119
Learning Centre 4	316
IPRCs Completed	1071
IPRC Cumulative since August 2022	2738

