

## **Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting**

**December 13, 2021**

### **Leadership Report**

#### **Leadership, Learning and School Improvement**

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

#### **SEAC Trustee Update**

Please note that Trustee Aarts, Trustee Brown and Trustee Lulka were all appointed for a four year term to the TDSB SEAC in 2018. Recently, Trustee Lulka vacated her seat and has been replaced by Trustee MacLean. We thank Trustee Lulka for her support with SEAC and welcome Trustee MacLean.

#### **Budget Update**

The agenda Item Special Education Budget Allocation for the 2021-2022 school year that was to be presented by Craig Snider and Maris Chiu at the December 13 SEAC Meeting, has been postponed until the January SEAC meeting.

#### **Ontario Autism Program Update**

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) has selected Toronto Autism Network (TAS) to deliver the Entry to School Program as part of the new needs-based Ontario Autism Program (OAP), in the Toronto region. This new program will begin to be implemented in March 2022.


The program will be a six-month, group-based, skill-building program for young children on the autism spectrum (up to 6 years of age), who are entering kindergarten or grade one for the first time. Eligible children will participate in this program before their school start date. The focus of the program will be on preparing children to enter school.

Following the group-based program, Toronto Autism Network will work with a child's identified school to support the child's transition to school. Children who complete the program will receive transition support from the Toronto Autism Network as they enter school, and families and educators will have access to targeted consultation support, upon request during a child's first six months in school to support a successful school transition.

Toronto Autism Network, which comprises six agencies (Surrey Place, Geneva Centre, Strides, Lumenus, Kerry's Place and South Asian Autism Awareness Centre), has approached our Board to inquire about leasing vacant spaces to house some of their clinical teams. The Special

Education and Inclusion team, TDSB Planning team and the Toronto Land Corporation are currently working collaboratively with them to identify suitable spaces and to develop appropriate leasing arrangements.

The Ministry has also selected the Independent Intake Organization (IIO) to deliver services as a single point of access. The IIO will provide a dedicated care coordinator to each family to guide them through their journey. Please see the attachments for further information.

 Ontario Autism Program\_Open Letter-ENG.pdf

 Ontario Autism Program\_IIO-ENG.pdf

### **Switch Dates**

Thank you to Superintendent Diana Panagiotopoulos who is diligently overseeing the upcoming TDSB Switch process. Elementary Switch Forms have been sent to parents/caregivers on Friday, December 3. The communication has been sent to the parents/caregivers of all students who are currently active or pre-reg in Trillium as of November 29, 2021. It was also sent to the parents/caregivers of any child who has been demitted this school year to Home Schooling. The Elementary Switch Form is open from December 3 and closes January 7. Classes will reflect changes due to switches beginning on February 22, 2022.

Parents/caregivers who wish to switch will access their child's Trillium Student Number to log in to the form.

Secondary Switch Forms were sent on Monday, November 29 and closed Monday, December 6, 2021. The communication was sent to the parents/caregivers of all students who are currently active or pre-reg in Trillium as of November 25, 2021. It was also sent to the parents/caregivers of any child who has been demitted this school year to Home Schooling. All changes due to switches will take effect beginning Semester Two, on February 3, 2022.

### **Special Education Amount (SEA) Technology**

[The Ontario Ministry of Education Special Education Funding Guidelines Special Equipment Amount \(SEA\) 2021-22](#) outlines the process and criteria for accessing and using SEA funding to purchase equipment essential to support students with special education needs. The Special Equipment Amount Per-Pupil Amount (SEA PPA) Funding is used for all technology purchases, that is, all computers, software, and computing-related devices identified for use by students with special education needs. Regular district and board technology purchases are not covered by this funding.

These guidelines are updated for every school year. The number of individual SEA claims received by TDSB has been fairly consistent over the past five years. In addition to purchase of individually-assigned devices, there have been significant purchases made towards shared carts of laptops and chromebooks to be used to meet the needs of all students with special education



needs at a particular school in a flexible and responsive manner. The number of software programs available to all students has also increased.

There has been particular attention in purchasing web-based programs, software and apps in recent years. This is due to:

- Changing technology - more web-based programs available. Use of Chrome extensions rather than windows-based software
- Increased use of Chromebooks - in particular in the use of 1:1 devices for grades 5 and 9 in TDSB
- Flexibility of use - programs that can be accessed by any web-enabled device without the need for software installation, and can be used from home and at school

More information pertaining to the use of technology, the impact of technology and budget, will be presented and open for discussion on Monday December 13.

### **Census Ad Hoc Committee Update**

As a follow up to our last SEAC Meeting, Amie Presley presented information regarding the upcoming Census Survey. At that time, it was determined to create an ad hoc committee to meet with the Research Team to provide feedback and engage in a discussion as it relates to the Census. On November 25, 2021 the Research Team met with Janine Small and members of the SEAC committee. Thank you M. Rosen, Jordan A. Glass and K. Doyle for taking the time to meet and engage in a discussion with the Research Team. For more information around census details please refer to the [Research and Development website](#).

### **AODA Web and Digital Compliance-Follow Up**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is an Ontario law mandating that organizations must follow standards to become more accessible to people with disabilities (both visible and invisible).

The Accessibility Office encourages staff to attend the Digital Document Accessibility Training to assist with learning how to check documents for digital accessibility using platforms such as Microsoft Word, Outlook and PowerPoint.

We acknowledge that TDSB may still face challenges with critical documents such as IEPs and Report Cards. The Special Education and Inclusion team are working with IT and the TDSB Accessibility Committee to address these issues. We will work with the Accessibility Coordinator, and invite her to join us in January or February for discussion with SEAC and to share the status of the process TDSB is taking to address the accessibility challenge.



### **Itinerant Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) Teachers**




As a follow up to the inquiry that was raised at our last SEAC Meeting, Itinerant Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) teachers support students who are deaf or hard of hearing to access the Ontario curriculum, focusing on the development of communication skills (e.g., speech and language related to their hearing loss). They also play a critical role in building school staff capacity in order to develop and adapt strategies to ensure the student's global development and learning style. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a key component to supporting students and as such itinerant teachers work collaboratively with and through classroom teachers to ensure that IEP goals are developed and embedded throughout that student's day. In alignment with other central special education staff automatic access to IEPs for the students they support, itinerant DHH teachers have equitable display access to IEPs for all students they support and not just write access to those receiving tier 3. In addition, intentional collaboration with classroom teachers to align with TDSB special education goals and inclusionary practices that considers the student as a whole is paramount. We continue to look for ways the SAP IEP system and staff assignment to roles can better support the needs of the users.

### **Guide to Special Education for Parents and Guardians-available in 10 languages**

Special Education continues to identify and interrupt barriers for families, in making it more easy and accessible when requiring special education information. The [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#) for Parents/Guardians has now been translated into the top 10 languages of our TDSB families. The Guide provides information about support and services for students with special education needs. The document identifies the processes such as the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) procedures involved in identifying a student as "exceptional", deciding on program placement and appealing such decisions when parents do not agree with the IPRC.

### **Ministry Guide: Remote Learning Guide for Students with Special Education Needs**

Based on the expectations outlined in the Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 164(2020) and by the Ministry of Education's Learning for All (2013), the Ministry has shared this guide which focuses specifically on ways of thinking, planning and doing that centralize the human rights and abilities of all learners to participate fully in remote learning. This guide provides recommended approaches to supporting students with special education needs remotely regardless of cause, informed by educational research and by effective practices used and developed by school boards and school authorities in Ontario during the COVID-19 pandemic.

-  [Guide to Remote Learning for Students with Special Education Needs.pdf](#)
-  [Remote learning for students with special education needs - Educator tip sheet v1 \(002\).pdf](#)
-  [Remote learning for students with special education needs\\_ Parent tip sheet v1 \(002\).pdf](#)

Remote learning for students with special education needs\_ Student tip sheet v1.pdf

### **Ministry Update with COVID-19**

The [Ministry of Education shared a number of updates](#) related to schools and students across the province. Some of the highlights include:

- Secondary schools are able to return to a regular semester model, starting in February 2022.
- All Ontario public school students will be sent home with [five rapid COVID-19 tests](#) to use over the holidays and throughout the return to in-person learning.
- Elementary schools are also to host virtual-only assemblies and restrict lunches/breaks to classroom cohorts when indoors, where distancing between cohorts cannot be maintained.

The Ministry also reminded families to review the established [federal international travel policies](#) – including the [guidelines for unvaccinated, school-aged children](#) – in advance of the December break in an effort to prevent absences in January related to post-travel requirements.

TDSB will continue to keep families updated as local plans for the TDSB are determined.

### **Specialty Clinic for Students with Complex Care Needs**

Holland Bloorview has arranged a specialty clinic for students with complex care needs aged 5-11 the next two Fridays: *Friday, December 10 and Friday, December 17 in the Coriat Atrium.*

These clinics are child and family-friendly, sensory-friendly and fully accessible vaccine clinics. Please see the [flyer attached](#) for more information.

Details:

- Children's activities, quiet room, nurses with clear masks available.
- Accommodation requests taken during registration process.
- Language translation and ASL available
- In addition, children 12 years of age+ (born 2009 or earlier) can receive their first and second dose.
- Offering only approved children's vaccine, Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 mRNA vaccine (Comirnaty)
- Holland Bloorview staff will be on site to provide support.

Should you have further questions, please contact: [info@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:info@hollandbloorview.ca) | text or phone: 416-400-8876 M-Fr 9am – 5pm

### **Specialized Schools and Programs Draft Policy Update**

TDSB has reached the halfway mark for the Specialized Schools and Programs Draft Policy consultation process. As you recall, the draft policy consultation and survey was launched on November 1st. TDSB hosted three public consultations webinars, one on Thursday, November 18 and two on November 22, 2021.

Over the last several weeks, communication efforts to all stakeholders has drawn:

- 659 individuals participated in the three webinar consultations on either November 18 or 22,
- 14 082 new unique visits to the Specialized Schools and Program Policy website last week,
- 327 new unique visits to the Policy Consultation website last week,
- 1141 people completing the survey

Paper copies of the surveys are available at schools upon request. The online survey will remain open and accessible via our [policy website](#) until December 17.

### Psychological Assessments-November 2021

Provided below is the report of assessments completed in November.

November	LC1	LC2	LC3	LC4	Total
Completed	81	56	96	69	302
Referrals	72	126	155	66	419
<b>Cumulative stats from September 2021</b>					
Completed	160	296	178	141	775
In Progress	142	180	196	210	728
Waiting	201	148	221	427	997
Total Referrals	560	721	657	901	2839

### IPRC November 2021



<b>November IPRCs</b>	
<b>IPRC Completed</b>	<b>219</b>
<b>IPRC Scheduled</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>IPRC Cumulative since August 2021</b>	
<b>IPRC Cumulative since August 2021</b>	<b>953</b>

### **Professional Learning**

Assistive Technology Team focus was on creating and delivering PD for support staff and to lead them through an engaging session with the goal of applying learning immediately in their classrooms to support students. We had over 198 educators who were in attendance which included: EAs, SNAs, CYWs, Teachers, Admins, OAs, ECEs, Lunchroom Supervisors, and a Community Support worker

Assistive Technology Team offered:

- Read and Write for Support staff
- Read and Write ESL/ELD Focus
- Using the iPad Apps in DD and DK classrooms
- Using ActivInspire
- SEA Equipment in SAP CRM

Special Education and Inclusion has delivered Professional Learning for staff where over 991 staff attended which included Principals, Vice Principals, Teachers, Coordinators, Consultants, Psychologists.

The following Professional Learning was offered:

- LC/LN Central IPRC Chair and Committee Member
- Annual IPRC Review Chair and Committee Member Training
- Supporting Intensive Support Programs with Simultaneous Learning
- K-Gr.1 IEP Strategy PHASE I
- Gr. 2-Gr. 12 IEP School Review - PHASE I



Our Autism Team provided the following Professional Learning as well as 17 PreRecorded Webinars for staff (consisting of coordinators, consultants, Principals, Vice Principals, teachers, Child Youth Workers, Early Childhood Educators, Special Needs Assistance, Psychologists, etc.) on on some of the subjects below as well as a variety of other subjects:

- Positive Reinforcement
- ABC's of ABA: Using Basic ABA Strategies In The Classroom
- Tier 1 Strategies in the Kindergarten Classroom
- Supporting the Transition to Secondary for Students with Autism – Professional Learning Series
- Leadership Passport - Transformational Work of Special Education and Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Oppression and Anti-Black Racism
- ABA Data Collection: Functional Behaviour Assessment