

Tiered Approach to Support Inclusion

Section C:

INCLUSION STRATEGY

Special Education Plan 2020

Tiered Approach to Support Inclusion

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Tiered Approach to Support Inclusion

Educators support students across a variety of settings, and instruction should respond to the individual strengths and needs of all students. Our inclusion strategy identifies a “Tiered Approach” to support inclusion. It is based on the understanding that effective instruction, assessment, and appropriate intervention strategies are essential to ensuring all students can succeed.

The Tiered Approach ensures appropriate and timely interventions to address student needs and significantly reduces the likelihood that students will develop problems that are more difficult to address in the future. The approach also facilitates early identification of students who may be at risk so that prevention strategies can be implemented.

Tier 1 consists of evidence-based classroom instruction based on the Ontario Curriculum. The principles of Universal Design (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction (DI) are used so that there are a variety of ways students participate in learning and demonstrate their learning. Teachers choose effective, culturally relevant instructional strategies for all students in a classroom setting. Assessment in this tier is classroom-based and involves the teacher monitoring the progress of the class and flagging any student experiencing challenges.

Tier 2 more intentional instruction, and short-term interventions, for individual students or for small groups of students, in addition to the Tier 1 programming. Tier 2 requires teachers to identify students who are progressing with difficulty when using Tier 1 instruction and closely monitors through ongoing assessment.

Teachers may develop a student profile to be presented to the In-School Team (IST) to discuss strategies to better meet the needs of the student. The In-School Team consists of the principal, teacher, resource teacher and parents are welcomed.

Tier 3 is for students who require more intense support to achieve learning goals and who are not responding to instructional efforts in Tiers 1 and 2. Instruction and assessment become more personalized.

When the In-School Team has determined that more support/input is required, the teacher will bring the student profile to the School Support Team (SST) to get access to Regional Support Services. The SST consists of the principal, teacher, resource teacher, and support staff as needed (psychologist, speech and language pathologist, social worker, etc.) and parents are always invited. Regional Support Services include access to social work, the autism team, the behaviour resource team, etc.,)

Frequently Used Terms in the Tiered Approach:

Universal Design (UDL)

The core concept of UDL is a teaching strategy that is effective for some, will be beneficial to all. In other words, instructional and assessment strategies, materials, and tools that respond to the special needs of a specific student or group of students can also be useful for all students.

The aim of UDL, allows access to the curriculum for all students. In this model, teachers design learning opportunities and create learning environments that are inclusive, flexible, and accessible for all students regardless of achievement level. The learning principles of UDL are: Universality and Equity; Appropriately Designed Spaces; Flexibility and Inclusiveness; Simplicity; Safety; and Different Modes of Perception.

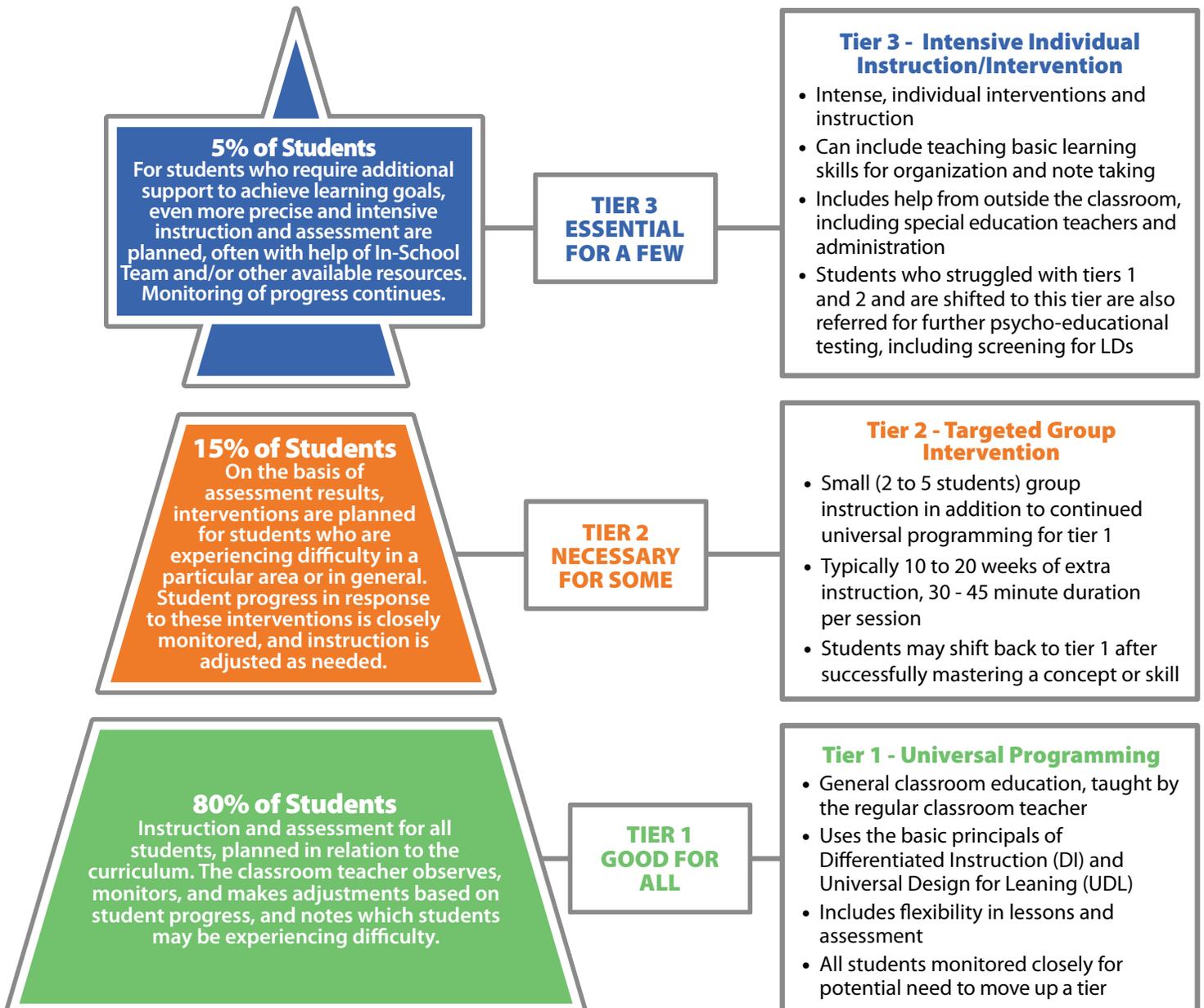
Differentiated Instruction (DI)

Unlike UDL which applies broad based principles for planning, DI focuses on specific strengths, interests, learning styles and needs of the individual student. The instruction is adapted to meet high expectations of achievement and engagement in learning since the planning is suited to meet the characteristics of the individual.

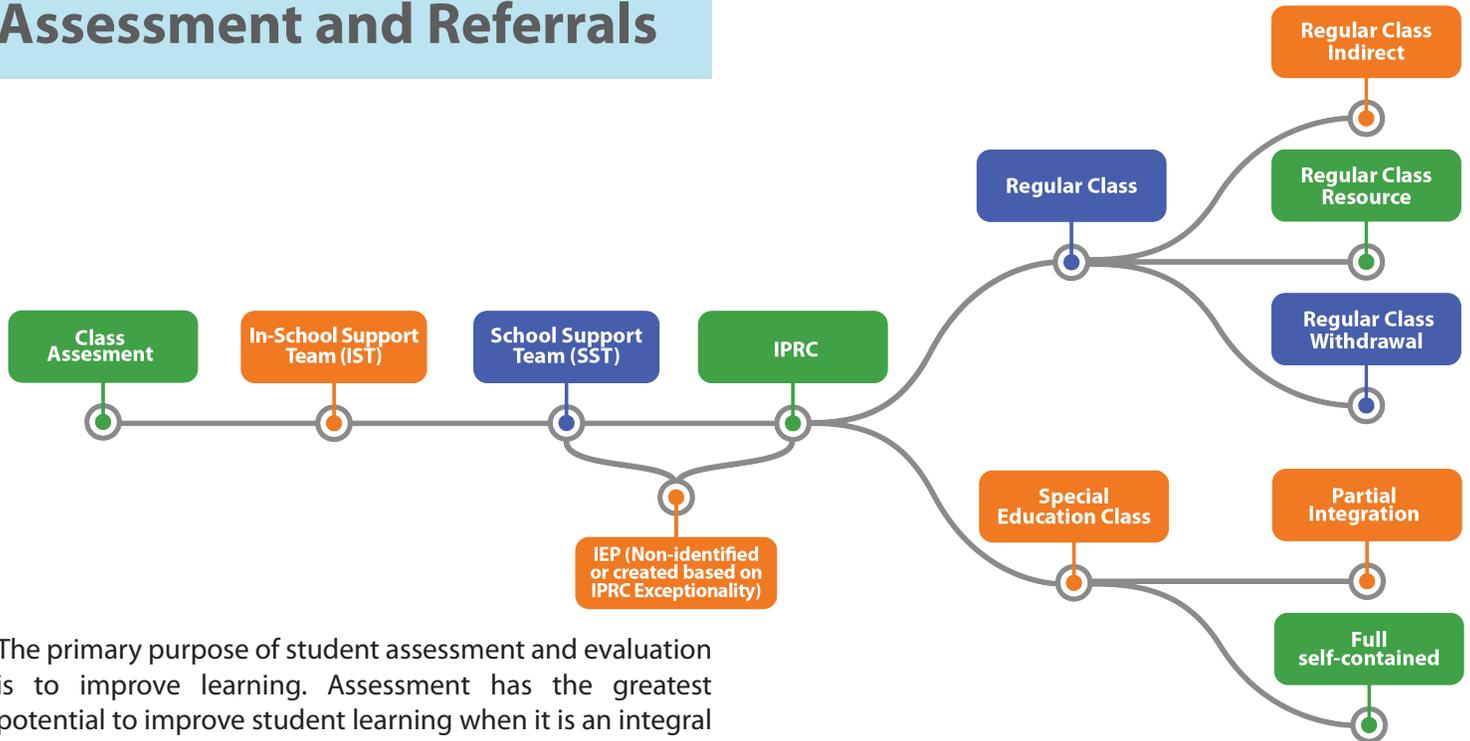
The areas of learning that are differentiated when planning instruction are:

- the *content* of learning (what students are going to learn, and when);
- the *process* of learning (the types of tasks and activities);
- the *products* of learning (the ways in which students demonstrate their learning); and
- the *environment* of learning (the context and environment in which students learn and demonstrate learning).

The Tiered Approach to Intervention



Assessment and Referrals



The primary purpose of student assessment and evaluation is to improve learning. Assessment has the greatest potential to improve student learning when it is an integral part of all classroom activities and when it is used to identify students' strengths and needs to determine the next steps for learning. The Ontario Ministry of Education policy documents [Growing Success: Assessment Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools \(2010\)](#) and [Growing Success – The Kindergarten Addendum](#) provides guidance to schools on policies and procedures for assessment, evaluation, and reporting for grades 1 to 12. The policies outlined in Growing Success (and described below) reflect the current state of continuously evolving knowledge about learning.

Classroom Screening and Monitoring

Teachers regularly assess and evaluate the progress of their students. If a student is experiencing difficulty in school (e.g. academic, social, behavioural), teachers will review previous and current assessment and evaluation information, communicate with parents/guardians and gather other information around the learning profile of the student. If challenges persist, the student may be referred to an In-School Support Team (IST).

Referral to In-School Support Team

The role of the In-School Support Team (IST) is to review and discuss students who may be having difficulty in school (e.g., academic, social, behavioural) and work collaboratively to develop, monitor and evaluate action plans and strategies to help the student. After the teacher has gathered information and reviewed assessment material (e.g. diagnostic tests, recent work samples, direct observation), the information is recorded on an Individual Learning Profile (ILP) to be shared at the IST. The ILP tracks on-going assessments, instructional levels, interventions,

recommendations, outcomes and follow-up strategies to address the needs of the student. Based on this information, the teacher(s) can provide instruction that is personalized, targeting the critical skills that the student requires. Most student needs can be addressed by the IST.

When the strategies recommended by the IST have limited success, the IST can refer the student to the School Support Team (SST).

Referral to School Support Team

Similar to the IST, the role of the School Support Team (SST) is to review and discuss students who may be having difficulty in school (e.g. academic, social, behavioural) and work collaboratively to develop, monitor and evaluate action plans and strategies to help the student.

In addition to school staff, this team offers additional knowledge by including psychologists, social workers, attendance counsellors, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, parents or caregivers and students over 16 years of age.

Parental and Student Involvement in the IST/SST Process

Parents are the most valuable partner in a child's education. Although parental attendance at the IST and SST meetings is not mandatory, we encourage them to participate. If parents cannot attend, they will be informed about any plan of action recommended at the meeting to address their child's needs.

When a member of the TDSB's professional support services attends the meeting, such as a psychologist or social

worker, parental permission is required if the student is to be discussed by name.

Students over 16 years of age are also encouraged to participate and must be consulted. Students 18 years of age or older must be invited to attend the SST and give permission for their personal information to be shared with their parents.

The SST may recommend a referral to the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).

Referral to an Identification, Placement and Review Committee

A student's assessment findings may suggest to the SST that a referral to the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) would be appropriate for possible identification as an "exceptional pupil". A recommendation to consider a student for an IPRC requires careful analysis of the effectiveness of instructional interventions that have been tried with the student and thorough understanding of the student's learning strengths and needs.

IPRC requests are made by the school principal on recommendation of the SST or following a written request by parent(s)/guardian(s).

The role of the IPRC is to review assessment and evaluation material about a student. They will decide if a student is exceptional and if so, they specify the type of exceptionality and decide an appropriate placement for the student - Regular Class or Special Education Class. Placement in the regular class could involve a special education teacher working with the student for less than half the school day. Placement in a Special Education Class would involve a special education teacher working with the student for more than half the school day.

An annual IPRC review is held for each student identified as exceptional. The student's progress, strengths and needs will be discussed. As with an original IPRC, the committee will decide if a student is exceptional and if so, they specify the type of exceptionality and decide an appropriate placement for the student - Regular Class or Special Education Class.

All meetings listed above can occur both face-to-face and/or virtually using an AODA platform to support families and students.

Educational Programming for Students with Special Education Needs

TDSB uses a systematic approach to providing high-quality, evidence-based assessment and instruction, with appropriate interventions that respond to students'

individual needs. The nature, intensity, and duration of interventions may be decided by teachers individually or in consultation with a school team.

Decisions are based on the learning conditions created by the teacher to set the student up for success and are based on appropriate and ongoing assessment and evaluation that are culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy. Interventions are tiered.

Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism

Students are more successful when they are engaged in their learning. All educators will be responsive to the identities, strengths, interests, gifts, and lived realities of students and will ensure that equitable access, increased opportunities to all pathways and anti-oppressive; anti-racist and inclusive practices are implemented to ensure enhanced learning outcomes for all students.

Teachers are expected to effectively integrate the voices, identities, choices, abilities and lived experiences of students when programming especially students with special education needs. Before any referral to an IST or SST is submitted, planned and intentional conversations that explore equity, anti-oppression and anti-racism for each referral will occur between the teacher, the administrator and parent.

Learning Conditions

When implementing effective classroom learning conditions (e.g., *teaching strategies, assessment, evaluation, third teacher, flex seating, student voice, resources*) educators must consider:

- students' social identities, histories, and lived experiences
- resources and pedagogy used must foster a healthy self-identity by affirming, respecting, and promoting cultural knowledge(s)
- building on students' experiences in ways that promote well-being and belonging

Student as a Learner

- Who is being referred and why?
- How is the identity of the student and lived experiences being leveraged to enhance learning opportunities?

Teacher/Staff as a Learner

- As there are no neutral spaces, what bias or barriers (systemic, attitudinal, other) have been identified and dismantled?
- Does the data shared by the teacher of student assessment and evaluation reflect evidence of Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction principles; culturally relevant and responsive resources, tasks, assessment and evaluation strategies; evidence of student voice; parallel tasks?

- What professional learning opportunities may be required to support the staff in better understanding how to meet the needs of the student?

Culture of Shared Responsibility

The majority of students' needs can be met within the neighbourhood school and in the regular classroom. Strategies such as the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiated instruction, appropriate accommodations and a tiered approach to intervention can support students when working toward their learning goals. School Improvement Coaches, Early Literacy Coaches, Guidance Coaches, including Special Education and Inclusion staff will collaborate with the school to support teacher professional development so that teachers can meet student's unique needs.

Parent/Guardian voices and perspectives inform our planning. As teachers are directly responsible for educational program planning, we continue to create a culture of shared responsibility that supports all students and leads to improved learning and well-being that includes practices from the following documents:

- [Growing Success \(2010\)](#)
- [Knowing and Responding to Learners-A Differentiated Instruction Educators Guide \(2016\)](#)
- [Shared Solutions \(2007\)](#)

The In-School Team (IST) and School Support Team (SST)

The *In-School Team* (IST) and *School Support Team* (SST) are part of a consistent, system-wide process to address the needs of students. Opportunities for team consultation facilitate open discussion of teachers programming, resources and strategies being used as it relates to student's strengths and needs within the context of the local school. The teams collaboratively develop, review, monitor, and evaluate coordinated plans of action and appropriate interventions designed to provide the teacher with strategies to better meet student needs.

Effective In-School and School Support Teams establish:

- Regular and efficient meetings for presenting and analyzing students' strengths and needs, based on the programming and learning conditions being provided by the teacher; discussing a range of support strategies and/or interventions and developing implementation plans. (It is recommended that the IST meets monthly.)
- Clear goals, timelines and staff responsibilities

- Ongoing evaluation of team effectiveness by monitoring and evaluating recommended interventions, supports and follow-up that interrupts the status quo, and ensures equitable, anti-oppressive, anti-racist and inclusive practices
- School-based professional learning plan to support staff with deepening their understanding of how to support students with special education needs
- Student Individual Learning Profile
- Open communication and partnerships among home, school, and community resources
- TDSB schools are required to have an IST/SST process in place and a school administrator must participate in IST/SST meetings

Individual Learning Profile (ILP)

When students have persistent learning challenges, the need for more and different kinds of instructional support is considered. Teachers are expected to collect, maintain and use assessment information to guide programming decisions and identify learning needs. For students who are experiencing difficulties in school the information is recorded in an *Individual Learning Profile* (ILP).

The ILP enables teachers to compile a more detailed and specific collection of information about the student's current abilities, strengths and needs based on the learning conditions provided by the teacher. The ILP tracks ongoing assessments, instructional levels, interventions, recommendations, outcomes and follow-up strategies to address the needs of the student. Based on this information, the teacher(s) will revisit the learning conditions in their classroom, ensure they are creating learning opportunities that are culturally relevant and responsive and provide instruction that is personalized, targeting the critical skills that the student requires. For a look at the elementary and secondary ILP forms see [Appendix D](#).

The ILP is reviewed during consultation with school-based teams called In-School Team (IST) and School Support Team (SST), established to assist teachers in meeting those needs.

At the meeting, a more comprehensive examination of the teacher's programming to address the student's needs are carried out and interventions are recommended. The nature, intensity and duration of interventions are based on evidence recorded in the ILP.

This approach promotes the ability to identify areas required to build capacity with teachers and support staff to appropriately program to meet specific student needs. It also interrupts the historical pathway of special education (IST, SST, ISP, IPRC) and puts the focus on the adult adapting to how to best meet the needs of students. This approach may also provide early identification of students who are at risk and facilitate planning of specific assessment and

instructional interventions should all the appropriate learning conditions and equitable and inclusive practices have been implemented.

The In-School Team (IST) – TIER 1 Level of Support

Intentional conversations that explore equity, anti-oppression and anti-racism for each Referral will occur between the teacher and the administrator to address critical questions:

- Who is being referred and why?
- How is the identity of the student and lived experiences being leveraged to enhance learning opportunities?
- As there are no neutral spaces, what bias or barriers (systemic, attitudinal, other) have been identified and dismantled?
- Does the data shared by the teacher of student assessment and evaluation indicate evidence of Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction principals; culturally relevant and responsive resources, tasks, assessment and evaluation strategies; evidence of student voice; parallel tasks?

Administration, and the Inclusion Consultant will work collaboratively to ensure that staff are provided with resources and learning opportunities to ensure understanding of equity, anti-oppression, anti-racism and inclusion to meet students with special education needs.

We need to ensure that where the perception is that the needs of students can't be met in the regular class, interruption of that belief is confronted and addressed in a supportive manner. Team members review the ILP and collaborate to develop an action plan of intervention strategies to support both the teacher with appropriate program planning that is reflective of the student's identity, voice and lived experiences, and to coordinate efforts among all staff that interact with the student. When an extremely urgent or exceptional situation arises, immediate discussion with the appropriate Support Services or Special Education professional should occur.

IST Members

The IST consists of school-based staff including an administrator and special education teacher – the Methods and Resource Teacher (MART) or Resource teacher in elementary schools. In secondary schools, the IST may include the school-based special education Curriculum Leader (CL) or Assistant Curriculum Leader (ACL), who have responsibilities related to the management and delivery of support to students with IEPs.

The School Support Team (SST) – TIER 2 Level of Support

Most student needs can be addressed by the IST. When the teacher has implemented learning conditions, CRRP strategies and resources recommended by the IST to address the student's needs and the IST subsequently determines if

more support is required, the student should be referred to the SST. All students must be reviewed at an IST prior to a referral to an SST.

Only after careful collaborative examination and discussion that factually illustrate the teacher implemented the appropriate learning conditions which met the expected TDSB practices of equity, inclusion anti-oppression, anti-racist pedagogy, should consideration be given to move to the next level of support of SST.

Referral to the SST serves a dual support:

- Teachers will share an overview of the learning conditions in the classroom that have been implemented in order to meet the specific needs of the student;
- Share specific student data based on the teachers examples of Differentiated Instruction and UDL, and equally important, this will allow the teacher to share the anti-oppressive, anti-racist, equitable and inclusive pedagogy being used to support the student.

SST Members

The SST includes a broader team of representatives from Special Education, Psychology, Social Work, Attendance Counselling, Speech-Language Pathology, Child and Youth Services, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and students over 16 years of age are invited to attend. With their permission, caregivers and outside agencies can participate as required.

All SST participants bring complementary skills and knowledge to the team consultation, to meet the student's special education needs. The SST can access support from the Autism Services Team and Behaviour Regional Services through the Learning Centre referral process, for consultation and more targeted interventions.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or students (who are 16 and older) must give written or oral permission to discuss the student's needs when a member of Professional Support Services is in attendance at an SST and identifying student information (e.g., name) is used. This practice is in compliance with privacy legislation, the [Personal Health Information Protection Act](#) (PHIPA) the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) (MFIPPA) and TDSB [procedures](#).

Role of Professional Support Services at SST Meetings

At School Support Team meetings, members of Professional Support Services bring knowledge, experience and expertise to the table, to assist the teacher in meeting a student's educational needs and to determine when referrals for additional professional assessments would be helpful. Each service professional is able to assist in the following specific ways:

Child and Youth Services Staff contribute specialized knowledge regarding the connections between social/

emotional development, mental health and well-being, behaviour and student achievement and contribute to the development of classroom programming interventions and behaviour management techniques.

Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists (OT/PT)

contribute specialized knowledge of physical and developmental disabilities and sensory integration disorders – interpreting medical health issues and their effect on learning and providing programming suggestions and curriculum/environmental modification and accommodations to ensure full participation and achievement of students.

Psychologists and other Psychological Services professionals contribute to the development of effective classroom programming interventions and behavior management techniques, especially for high-needs or at-risk students, by providing information about learning profiles, mental health and well-being issues and behavioural strategies.

Social Workers contribute specialized knowledge regarding the connections between social/emotional development, mental health and well-being, family involvement and student achievement. Their connections with outside agencies provide an additional source of potential assistance.

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP) contributes specialized knowledge and resources regarding the connections between language, communication, learning, literacy and social development.

Pre-existing assessment information shared by parents with school staff at SST meetings is useful in helping determine relevant educational goals and effective intervention strategies based on the student's unique learning profile. With parental permission, attending support service professionals can help staff understand assessment findings found in professional reports and interpret critical information that can be used in SST consultation.

Parental and Student Involvement in IST/SST Processes

The active involvement of parent(s)/guardian(s) and students (who are 16 and older) enhances the effectiveness of the IST/SST process and they are valued partners, with an invaluable perspective on the student's development, strengths, weaknesses and interests.

While parental permission and/or attendance at the meeting is not mandatory for In-School Team consultation to take place, parent(s)/guardian(s) should be informed by the classroom teacher about the teacher's concerns, the student's perceived needs and the kinds of instructional interventions being used. If parent(s)/guardian(s) do not participate in the IST consultation, the teacher or principal should inform them about the plan of action recommended at the meeting.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) **must** receive a written invitation to the SST. An invitation will indicate that their child is having difficulty accessing the curriculum or being considered for referral to special education programs or services. While it is hoped that parent(s)/guardian(s) will attend the SST meeting, their permission is not required for teachers to consult with special education teachers about a student's needs and discuss strategies to meet them.

As mentioned earlier, parental permission is required to discuss a student's needs in the presence of a member of Professional Support Services when identifying student information (e.g., name, grade, classroom) is used in the discussion.

If parent(s)/guardian(s) are not in attendance at an SST meeting, the outcome of the meeting **must** be shared with them by the principal (or principal designate) along with a copy of the ILP and information about any recommendations made (i.e., referral for an assessment or an IPRC).

To facilitate participation and ensure parents are accurately informed, interpreters must be provided if requested by the family or deemed necessary by the principal. Once a student reaches the age of 16 years of age, he/she must be consulted. Students over 18 years of age must be invited to attend the SST and give permission for their personal information to be shared with their parents.

Secondary School Team Meetings

Secondary schools have similar support team meetings for consultation and developing action plans to help students meet learning expectations. The teams include the school-based special education Curriculum Leader (CL) and/or Assistant Curriculum Leader (ACL), who are responsible for overseeing special education support for students. Professional Support Services and Secondary Guidance staff are members of the school teams. As with elementary grades, the SST can access support from the Autism Services Team and Behaviour Regional Services through the Learning Centre referral process, for consultation and more targeted interventions.

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services developed for a particular student. It reflects the school board's and the principal's commitment to provide, within the resources available to the school board, the special education program and services needed to meet the identified strengths and needs of the student. The IEP helps teachers monitor the student's progress and provides a framework for communicating information about the student's

progress to parent(s)/guardian(s) and student. [Regulation 181/98](#) governs Ministry of Education expectations for the development of IEPs for students.

Accommodations, Modifications and Alternative Expectations

The IEP outlines any accommodations and special education services needed to assist the student in achieving his or her learning expectations. It also identifies specific, measurable learning expectations that are modified from or alternative to the expectations given in the curriculum policy document for the grade level subject or course.

Accommodations are the special teaching and assessment strategies, individualized equipment, technology and environmental adjustments that are required, in order for the student to access the curriculum and demonstrate learning. Accommodations allow a student to participate in learning without any changes to the knowledge and skills the student is expected to demonstrate. There are three types of accommodations:

- *Instructional* – adjustment in teaching and assessment strategies (differentiated instruction)
- *Environmental* – change or support to the physical environment of the classroom and/or school
- *Assessment* – adjustment in assessment activities/ methods /timing to enable the student to demonstrate learning

Modifications are changes made in the age-appropriate, grade-level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs. Such changes involve either selecting expectations from a different grade level or altering the number and/or complexity of the grade level expectations. Students may still require accommodations to help them achieve the learning expectations in subjects or courses with modified expectations. Some decisions about modifications can impact on student educational pathways. It is important that there be clear communication between parent(s)/guardian(s) and school staff about their use and impact. For example, modifications in secondary grades can impact on credit attainment.

Alternative Curriculum Expectations are learning expectations that are not represented in the Ontario curriculum. Examples include 'self-regulation', 'facilitating transitions' and 'organizational skills'. Secondary school "K courses" are considered alternative curriculum.

Reasons for an IEP

Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism

Equity, anti-oppression, anti-racism and inclusion discussions must occur before any IEP is created. Who is the student being considered and why? What accommodations can be supported in the classroom that do not require an IEP? What support can the teacher be offered to better assist in programming? Is the

IEP necessary for the student to access the curriculum?

It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) are informed about interventions used to assist a student who is having difficulty meeting the grade-level expectations. That communication may include the introduction of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) at some point. IEPs are developed for the following reasons:

- Students identified by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) must have an IEP completed within 30 school days of placement in a special education program ([Regulation 181](#), Section 3)
- An IEP is developed when the principal, in consultation with members of the In-School Team (IST) or School Support Team (SST) determines that a student, who has not been formally identified as exceptional:
 - regularly requires accommodations for instructional or assessment purposes, and/or
 - will be assessed on the basis of modified and/or alternative expectations

The TDSB position is that students who are not exceptional are entitled to receive Resource support for one reporting period without the development of an IEP.

If the recommendation of the In-School Team (IST) or School Support Team (SST) is for continued support beyond that, then an IEP must be developed.

An IEP is...

- A written plan for a student who requires accommodations, modifications to the learning expectations of the age-appropriate grade level, and/or an alternative curriculum
- A written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on a thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs that affect the student's ability to learn and demonstrate learning
- A written plan developed in consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s) teachers, other professionals, and where appropriate, agency personnel and/or the student
- An ongoing record by which teachers monitor, assess, evaluate, and review a student's program and ensure continuity of program
- A flexible, working document that must be reviewed and updated at least once in every reporting period and used in conjunction with the Progress Report Card and the Provincial Report Card
- An accountability tool for the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and everyone who has responsibilities for helping the student meet the IEP goals and expectations

An IEP is not...

- A daily lesson plan itemizing every detail of the student's education or a description of everything that will be taught to the student
- An educational program or set of expectations for all students
- A means to monitor the effectiveness of teachers

[Special Education in Ontario - Policy and Resource Guide](#)

Consultation in IEP Development

When an IEP is to be developed, [Regulation 181/98](#) requires that parent(s)/guardian(s) and students 16 years of age and older be consulted in its development. The opportunity to consult must be offered at the beginning of the IEP development process and any parental/student input must be given due consideration as the IEP is being written. Students younger than 16 may also be involved as appropriate. Where the student is working with agency personnel and written parental permission is given, the consultation process should include the agency staff as well. The standard TDSB consultation letter and response form should be sent home within the first week of a new school year, or of a student's placement in a new program. While development of the IEP is a collaborative process, there are sometimes disagreements. The process for dispute resolution is addressed later in this section.

Ministry Standards for Implementation

The school principal is responsible for ensuring the development, implementation and review of a student's IEP, is in compliance with all Ministry and board requirements, as follows:

- An IEP is developed for every student who has been identified as exceptional by an IPRC. The principal will ensure that an IEP is developed for non-identified students who require a special education program and/or services for a period longer than one reporting period
- An IEP is developed within 30 school days after placement of the student in a special education program (described as Regular Class with Indirect Support, Resource Assistance or Withdrawal Assistance or Special Education Class and a setting of Partially Integrated or Full Time)
- For students identified as exceptional by an IPRC, the strengths and needs outlined in the IEP are based on and consistent with the description contained in the IPRC's statement of decision
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student (if 16 or older) are consulted in the development of the student's IEP and receive a copy
- [Applied Behaviour Analysis \(ABA\)](#) methods are incorporated into the IEPs of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) where appropriate, and relevant school board personnel and community

personnel, either previously or currently working with the student, are invited to provide input and participate in the IEP process

- A Transition Plan must be considered for every student on an IEP and developed unless no action is currently required
- A copy of the IEP is included in the [Ontario Student Record \(OSR\)](#), unless the parent(s)/guardian(s) object in writing (Regulation 181/98, S.8)

TDSB Guidelines for Individual Education Plans

At the current time Ministry documents entitled [Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Resource Guide \(2017\)](#), [The Individual Education Plan: A Resource Guide \(2004\)](#) and [Individual Education Plans: Standards for Development, Program Planning and Implementation \(2000\)](#) continue to be source references for TDSB guidelines for IEP implementation. Guidelines require that:

- Expectations should be written in measurable goals and are usually few in number.
- There should be a clear link between the learning expectations outlined on the various program pages of the IEP and what is reported on the Progress Report Card and the Provincial Report Card.
- If a student is working on modified and/or alternative expectations, a representative sample of the student's learning expectations in each subject, course or skill area must be recorded in the IEP.
- The IEP must be reviewed and updated at least once in every reporting period, to record any needed changes in the student's special education program and services, as a result of continuous assessment and evaluation of the student's achievement of annual goals and learning expectations.
- The June update focuses on providing key information to assist teachers as they begin to program for students in September.

All TDSB schools are using a web-based application to develop IEPs. The application continues to bring more efficiency to IEP development and allows monitoring of the stages of IEP development, which has significantly improved compliance with the expectation that the IEP be completed within 30 school days of a student's placement in a program. (See [Appendix B](#) for a facsimile of a blank IEP.)

IEP Accommodations and Modifications in Secondary School Settings

In secondary schools, providing accommodations to students with special needs should be the first option considered in program planning. Instruction based on principles of Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction are used to meet the diverse needs of learners. If classroom teacher

observation and ongoing assessments reveal that, students on IEPs with accommodations alone cannot demonstrate achievement of the expectations even to a limited degree, then modifications are considered.

Teachers are expected to craft appropriate modifications that are effective in helping improve individual student success and support credit accumulation. However, some subject/course expectations cannot be modified and an entire course cannot be modified without impact on credit attainment. For more about secondary course planning see [Choices Course Selection and Planning Guide](#).

For most secondary school courses, modified expectations will be based on the regular curriculum expectations for the course, but will reflect changes by decreasing the number of regular curriculum expectations, and/or decreasing the complexity of the regular curriculum expectations for the course.

- Some *Specific* expectations considered to be minor can be deleted.
- A selection of the Specific expectations can be modified in terms of their breadth or depth and other measures of complexity.
- As a general rule, very few Overall expectations can be omitted entirely from a course, but selected Overall expectations can be modified in terms of breadth or depth, etc.
- A student must meet most of the Overall expectations of a specific course, including those modified, to be eligible for the credit.
- Expectations cannot be modified if in doing so it would jeopardize the student's ability to enroll in the next level course; i.e., the modification does not undermine its status as a prerequisite.
- All secondary courses can be modified with the exception of [The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Credit Course \(OSSLC\)](#). Achievement of the expectations in this course represents achievement of the literacy requirement for graduation; consequently, no modifications of the expectations are permitted¹.

Students may still require accommodations to help them achieve the learning expectations in subjects or courses with modified expectations.

The final decision as to whether or not a credit will be granted is made by the principal. Credit granting is determined by a number of factors, including judgments about the degree of complexity of the modified expectations and the number of expectations through which the student has demonstrated achievement in the course.

The IEP Transition Plan

As a part of the IEP, any provisions of the regulation that apply

to the IEP also apply to the transition plan. The TDSB adheres to Ministry of Education [Policy/Program Memorandum \(PPM\) No. 156, Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs](#), which came into effect on September 2, 2014. PPM 156 directs that transition plans be considered for ALL students who have an IEP and developed when needed, whether or not the students are deemed to be exceptional. At the Board's discretion, transition plans MAY be developed for students who receive special education programs and/or services but do not have an IEP and/or have not been identified as exceptional. The school principal is responsible for ensuring that student transition plans are developed, implemented and maintained in accordance with the requirements.

Requirements for Transition Plans

Effective transition plans provide the foundation for successful transitional experiences that build student resilience. As part of the IEP, transition plans must be personalized for students; developed and reviewed in consultation with the parent(s)/guardian(s) or student (as appropriate). Consultation should also involve relevant community agencies and/or partners (as necessary) and/or a post-secondary institution (where appropriate). Every transition plan must include the following elements:

- Specific and realistic transition goals and required support needs. The goals must reflect the strengths, needs and interests of the student.
- The actions required, now and in the future, to achieve the stated goals. The actions must build on the student's identified strengths, needs and interests.
- Roles and responsibilities – The person or agency responsible for or involved in completing each of the identified actions. (i.e., the student, parents, educators, providers of specialized support and services, community agencies)
- Timelines for the implementation and/or completion of each of the identified actions.

If a student *does* not need a transition plan, the plan should state that no action is required at this time.

A Tiered Approach to Transition Planning

Transition planning is *targeted* and uses a *tiered* approach to address context variables and individual student needs. Planning for transitions is incorporated into the program pages of the IEP with specific goals and strategies to facilitate the transition(s).

Differing kinds of school-based transitions require different degrees of support. Simpler transitions might involve a student transitioning from activity to activity within a classroom or between locations within the school. More complex transitions might involve changes to students' pathways in terms of location, school and/or program and may require significant support from adults.

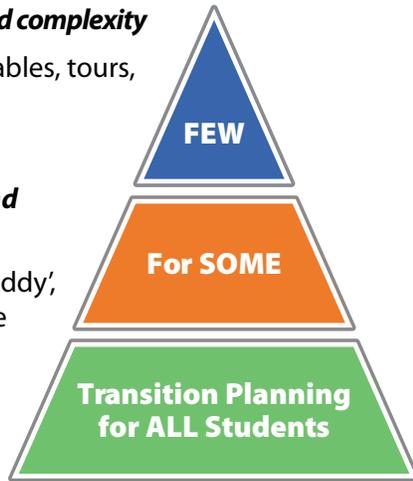
¹The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Credit Course (OSSLC) Grade 12, 2003, p. 13

For FEW

- **Increased number and complexity**
- Individualized timetables, tours, visits and materials

For SOME

- **Increased degree and specificity**
- Partnering with a 'buddy', following a timetable
- Transition materials, summer transition program



For ALL

- **Broadly held and common needs**
- School visits, orientation nights,
- Tours, teacher transition meetings

A tiered approach to transition planning means that transition plans will vary from student to student as well as over time, based on student need and the context for transitions. A student's IEP must also address planning for life after school – to further education, from school to work and for life in the community. Examples include:

Education Transitions

- School Entry – new to school, new to Board, school to school, entry to school in JK, from an outside agency to school
- Within School – between grades, from one program area or subject to another
- Exit to post-secondary – pathways to college, university, work, etc.

Community Transitions

- Links to Resources – transition to agencies, services, funding and/or respite
- Recreation and Leisure – support to access after school programs, summer camps
- Managing in the Community – TTC training, mobility in the community, life skills beyond school (e.g., cooperative work experience placements; preparing for independent or assisted living)

Employment Transitions

- Unpaid Volunteer – various opportunities that would allow students to meet the criteria of 40 volunteer hours for graduation and/or develop experiences for future pathways, co-op placements
- Paid – part-time work, apprenticeships

Filing and Storage of the IEP

The year-end IEP is maintained in the [Ontario School Record \(OSR\)](#) for all of a student's years in elementary school. As students leave elementary school the principal determines whether to maintain in the OSR any IEPs previous to the current school year. This decision is either for the purpose of improving instruction or to maintain a history of strategies used to provide appropriate interventions and support. At the secondary level, all semester or year-end IEPs should be maintained in the OSR until students leave the school system.

If parent(s)/guardian(s) do not want the IEP stored in the OSR, they must make a written request to the principal for it to be removed (as per [Regulation 181/98](#), s. 8).

Process for Dispute Resolution

Parental collaboration in IEP development provides invaluable perspective on a student's interests, strengths and needs. Parental support for IEP content and implementation is equally important. However, parent(s)/guardian(s) may not agree with everything proposed in an IEP. It may not have everything parent(s)/guardian(s) want or the focus in some areas may differ from parental requests. There may even be instances where parent(s)/guardian(s) do not agree with the initiation of an IEP. In these situations, effective communication is essential to clarify information and resolve issues. The Ministry document [Shared Solutions](#) is an excellent resource.

Ultimately, the school principal is responsible for the initiation, development, implementation and review of a student's IEP and for ensuring there is opportunity for consultation with the parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to its completion. With the support of the In-School Team or School Support Team, the principal determines whether or not to introduce an IEP and communicates to the parent(s)/guardian(s) the reasons why. The principal is also responsible for the appropriateness of a student's IEP, as stated in the Ministry IEP Standards document:

“Although the IEP is developed collaboratively, the principal is ultimately responsible for each student's plan. The principal must sign the IEP to indicate his or her assurance that the plan is appropriate to the student's strengths and needs and that it meets all of the standards outlined in this document.”

While the principal is not obliged to accept every/any parental suggestion for the content of the IEP, the principal must give due consideration to parental suggestions/requests. The principal must also inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the reason(s) for not including a suggestion or request.

When a disagreement about the IEP occurs between parent(s)/guardian(s) and Board staff, the goal is to have the best interests of the student foremost in all discussions. As per the TDSB Parent Concern Protocol (Appendix D), resolution of the issues will take place through the principal of the school and may include the following sequence of steps:

1. Discussions with the parent(s)/guardian(s), student (if 16 or older) and teacher(s) to identify the areas of concern and to determine appropriate solutions.
2. Scheduling of a School Support Team meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s), including appropriate staff to discuss issues or concerns, answer questions and seek mutual understanding.
3. If the dispute regarding the IEP remains unresolved, a meeting may be arranged by the school principal, to include the parent(s)/guardian(s). The Learning Network Superintendent may also be consulted.

If all avenues have been exhausted, the Ministry of Education may be contacted for assistance, upon a written request from the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Identification and Placement in Special Education

Some students have needs that may require support beyond those ordinarily received through regular instructional and assessment practices. Students who have behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities may require access to additional instructional programs and/or services available through special education.

For students who require modifications from the age-appropriate grade level expectations in a particular course or subject, instruction from teachers with more specialized training or experience in meeting exceptionality specific needs, smaller instructional groupings and supports or services from Professional Support Services personnel, **be formally identified by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee as “exceptional pupils”.**

The Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)

Ontario [Regulation 181/98](#) of the Education Act provides information about the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC). It sets out the procedures involved in identifying a pupil as “exceptional”, deciding the pupil’s placement and appealing such decisions when the parent does not agree with the IPRC.

The general function of an IPRC is to identify the specific nature of the student’s learning strengths and needs and, on the basis of the evidence presented and discussions held at the meeting, to:

- Decide whether or not the student should be identified as exceptional
- Identify the areas of the student’s exceptionality, according to the categories and definitions of

exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education and the TDSB criteria set out in this Plan

- Decide an appropriate placement for the student, giving first consideration to placement in a regular class with appropriate special education programs and services and taking parental preferences into account
- Discuss recommendations for programs and/or services
- Review the identification and placement at least once in each school year

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and students aged sixteen or older, have the right to attend the IPRC meeting and will receive an invitation. In making its decisions, the IPRC will consider a package of information prepared at the sending school by teachers who work with the student, as well as information contributed by anyone attending the meeting. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) receive a copy of the IPRC package in advance, as well as a copy of the TDSB Guide to Special Education for Parent(s)/Guardian(s), which answers frequently asked questions about the IPRC process.

In determining a student’s exceptionality and placement, the IPRC considers the following:

- The student’s documented cognitive profile, learning strengths and needs and/or medical diagnoses
- The categories of exceptionality defined by the Ministry of Education and the TDSB criteria set out in this Plan
- The placement settings (Regular Class with Indirect Support, Regular Class with Resource Assistance, Regular Class with Withdrawal Support, Special Education Class with Partial Integration or Special Education Class Full Time) and degrees of support required by the student
- Parental preference

IPRC Decisions about Exceptionality

At the IPRC meeting, the specific nature of the student’s learning strengths and needs are identified. On the basis of evidence presented and discussions held at the meeting, the IPRC will decide whether or not the student is an exceptional pupil, according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education. The categories are:

Communication

- Autism
- Learning Disability
- Language Impairment
- Speech Impairment
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Intellectual

- Developmental Disability
- Giftedness
- Mild Intellectual Disability

Behaviour

- Behaviour

Multiple

- Multiple Exceptionalities

Physical

- Blind/Low Vision
- Physical Disability

For detailed information about the Ministry definitions of exceptionalities and placement criteria used in the TDSB, please see the [SECTION D: Inclusion Delivery Model by Exceptionality](#).

IPRC Decisions about Placement

When a student is identified as exceptional, the IPRC will also decide placement for the student, using Toronto District School Board criteria and taking into account parental preference. The goal of special education placement is to determine the recommended learning environment, supports and services to maximize the individual student's potential. In making a placement decision, the IPRC will consider placement in *Regular Class* or *Special Education Class*.

Under [Regulation 181/98](#) of a student is identified as exceptional, the IPRC will also decide placement for the student, using Toronto District School Board criteria and taking into account parental preference. The goal of special education placement is to determine the recommended learning environment, supports and services to maximize the individual student's potential. In making a placement decision, the IPRC will consider placement in Regular Class or Special Education Class.

Regular Class Placement

Most students identified as exceptional learners can be appropriately supported in a regular classroom setting through the development of an Individual Education Plan, school-based special education teacher support and when required, professional support services available to schools on a referral basis.

Regular Class with a specified support setting describing appropriate special education services is the IPRC placement decision for students with special education needs for whom *more than 50%* of instructional time is delivered by *a regular class teacher in a regular classroom*. The IPRC can choose from three Regular Class support settings – Indirect Support, Resource Assistance and Withdrawal Assistance.

- **Regular Class with Indirect Support** The student is placed in a regular class for the entire school day and receives direct instruction from a regular classroom teacher, who receives specialized consultative services from a special education teacher.
- **Regular Class with Resource Assistance** The student is placed in a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom.
- **Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance** The student is placed in a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.

For *elementary school* students, Regular Class placement is at the neighbourhood school with support delivered through Resource. Indirect support and in-class or withdrawal assistance is provided by a special education teacher on staff. The model of resource assistance can vary from school to school dependent on school configuration and student needs. Sometimes, where instructional groupings permit, withdrawal assistance is delivered by the special education teacher in the Home School Program Grade 6-8.

In *secondary school* settings, regular subject teachers liaise with the school's Special Education Curriculum Leader (CL) or Assistant Curriculum Leader (ACL) about student needs and are expected to support students through strategies outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Special course options for students on IEPs include Secondary Resource Program (RSE) and Secondary Learning Strategies (GLE). Withdrawal assistance can be provided by a special education teacher on staff as part of school-based Special Education Resource. Support can also include course modifications that permit credit accumulation and access to locally developed, compulsory and/or optional credit courses designed to provide an opportunity for students to upgrade knowledge and skills. For more information, see Secondary School Support.

Special Education Class Placement

The new [OHRC Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities](#) confirms the need for special education setting options:

“At the primary and secondary levels, before considering placing a student in a self-contained or specialized classroom, education providers must first consider inclusion in the regular classroom. [200] In most cases, appropriate accommodation will be accommodation in the regular classroom with support. However, every student with a disability is unique. To provide appropriate accommodation to all students with disabilities, education providers must, with the assistance of parental input, assess each student's particular strengths and needs, and consider these against a full range of placements, programs and services. Ultimately, appropriate accommodation will be decided on an individual basis.”

Special Education Class is the IPRC placement decision for those students with special education needs for whom 50% or more of instructional time is delivered by a special education teacher in a special education classroom, where the pupil-teacher ratio conforms to [Regulation 298](#) (R.R.O.1990, Section 31).

There are two settings for Special Education Class placement – *with Partial Integration* or *Full Time*.

- **Special Education Class with Partial Integration** The student is placed in a special education class and is integrated with a regular class for parts of the student’s instructional program (a minimum of one instructional period daily).

In TDSB *elementary schools* for students in grades 6 to 8, this placement can be delivered in the neighbourhood school for at least 50% of the day through the Home School Program (HSP) or through placement in a special education class “Intensive Support Program (ISP)” with daily opportunities for integration. Please note that the HSP program will continue to be phased out as we move toward inclusionary practices.

In TDSB *secondary schools*, an IPRC decision for Special Education Class with Partial Integration is recommending placement in a special education program at an integrated site with both regular and special education programs. In addition to the Secondary Resource Program (RSE) and Secondary Learning Strategies (GLE) courses, this placement may include access to locally developed, compulsory and/or optional credit courses, developed at the school to provide students with the opportunity to upgrade their knowledge and skills.

- **Special Education Class Full Time** The student is placed in a special education class for the entire school day.

For TDSB *elementary school* students, these “Intensive Support Programs (ISPs)” are characterized by small class sizes (with prescribed pupil-teacher ratios) and appropriate support staff personnel. They serve instructional groupings of learners who have large skill and knowledge gaps and similar kinds of specialized, exceptionality-related resource and/or service needs. They offer programming and instruction targeted to the individual and shared needs of the students in the class and the specialized resources/services designed to address those needs. The location for a full time special education class may be other than the student’s home school.

In most cases, student need for Special Education Class placement is expected to be of limited duration, to be reviewed annually. Successful reintegration into the regular program is the potential goal. Throughout a full time placement, efforts are made to increasingly integrate the student in the regular school programs and activities.

Special Education Class placements are typically located in neighbourhood schools. The number and location of the classes are determined by the profiles and numbers of students requiring them across the system. In some cases, IPRC placement in a Special Education Class Full Time may be in a “congregated” school setting. These programs support communities of learners whose complex educational needs

require alternative curriculum and specialized services, facilities and resources. The goal is to maximize student independence.

Sometimes a student’s combined cognitive and learning profiles will result in dual-exceptionality identification by the IPRC. For example, a student could be identified with the exceptionalities of Intellectual Giftedness and Communication (Learning Disability). Based on the nature of the instructional supports required by the student and the best instructional grouping match to meet the student’s learning needs, the Special Education Department may offer placement for either Giftedness or Learning Disability and will make program recommendations on how both exceptionalities are to be supported.

External Options for Full Time Support

For students with very complex learning needs that require highly specialized instructional expertise, the IPRC may suggest that the student be referred to a provincial committee for admission to one of the Provincial Schools. These include Provincial Schools for Blind, Deaf or Deafblind students and Provincial Demonstration Schools for students with severe learning disabilities. Referrals to Provincial and Provincial Demonstration Schools are coordinated by the school board in conjunction with parent(s)/guardian(s).

In some very complex cases that meet specified admission criteria, parent(s)/guardian(s) may choose to investigate other options to meet their child’s needs. Special Education – Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP) can provide different kinds of care or treatment appropriate to a student’s condition. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) make direct applications for admission to ECP facilities. School board staff may be able to assist in gathering the required documentation.

IPRC Recommendations about Special Education Services or Programs

The committee may make additional recommendations regarding special education programs and special education services. These recommendations may include referral to a School Support Team for consideration of additional assessment information, resources and strategies to support the educational programming of the student.

Learning Network and Original IPRCs

Each of the four regional [Learning Centres](#) in the TDSB is organized into clusters of schools called Learning Networks. Within each Learning Network, a team is established to meet as the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) for the other schools within the Networks in that Learning Centre. These IPRCs meet when students are being considered for the first time (an Original IPRC) or for Review IPRCs, when a change in exceptionality, a move between schools, or a substantial increase or change in support may be needed for a student.

Principals who are knowledgeable about special education policy and procedures are invited by the Special Education Department to be the Chair of a Learning Network IPRC. At times, a supervisory officer may join the IPRC as an additional member or as Chair designate. Meetings take place in one of the Learning Network schools.

The Learning Network IPRC is made up of the following members:

- Principal (Chair) not associated with the student or the student's school
- Special Education Coordinator (associated with the Learning Network)
- Psychological Services Professional (not associated with the student)

Central IPRC

Central IPRCs (Original or Review) are arranged when identification issues of greater complexity or involving unusual circumstances arise. The Chair of a Central IPRC is a Centrally Assigned Principal for Special Education. Meetings take place at the Learning Centre.

The Central IPRC is made up of the following members, all of whom are attached to the Learning Centre:

- Centrally Assigned Principal of Special Education (Chair)
- Special Education Coordinator (associated with the Learning Centre)
- Manager of Psychological Services (associated with the Learning Centre)

School-Based IPRC (for the Annual Review)

Annual Review IPRC meetings must be planned for all identified students. These "Level 1" Review IPRCs are held at the student's current school when the current placement is on-going and there are NO expected changes in exceptionality, moves between schools, or substantial increases in support required. The Chair of the Review IPRC is the School Principal or Vice Principal designate.

The School-Based Review IPRC is made up of the following members:

- School Principal (Chair) or Vice-Principal (designated Chair)
- *And any two of the following:*
 - Special Education Consultant (associated with the school)
 - School Special Education Teacher
 - School Classroom Teacher

The IPRC Process

Only resident students enrolled in and already attending a TDSB school are eligible for consideration by a TDSB IPRC.

IPRC Referral Steps

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or the principal may request an IPRC:

- The principal makes a request on recommendation of the School Support Team. Parental requests must be made in writing to the principal
- The principal completes the IPRC Referral and submits all the required documentation to the appropriate special education representative, using the web-based SAP CRM application
- Where new documentation becomes available after the initial submission, the principal ensures that it is shared with the IPRC
- Within 15 days of a written request by parent(s)/guardian(s) for an IPRC, the principal must provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with a copy of the TDSB Guide to Special Education for Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and a written statement of approximately when the Committee will meet
- At least ten days before an IPRC meeting, parent(s)/guardian(s) must receive a written invitation, with notice of the time and place of the meeting and a copy of all documentation to be considered at the IPRC
- Principals must inquire in advance of the meeting whether the parent(s)/guardian(s) have any additional documentation for the consideration of the IPRC. The principal must then forward this documentation to the IPRC, to be received at least five days prior to the meeting

Documents Required for an IPRC

The following documentation is generally required:

- An educational assessment (as per Regulation 181/98: Subsection 15 [1])
- The most recent Provincial Report Card/Kindergarten Communication of Learning (and where the most recent report card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card must also be included.)
- An Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- A psychological assessment (with respect to most exceptionalities) and/or other relevant professional assessments (i.e., medical diagnosis, audiology report)
- A completed Individual Learning Profile (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC
- Other relevant information gathered by the School Support Team
- Student work samples (part of the school presentation)
- Any documents which parent(s)/guardian(s) may deem relevant to an IPRC
- A record of consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s)

Attendance at the IPRC

- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and students 16 years of age or older are invited to attend and participate. Every effort is made to accommodate the schedules of all attendees.
- The school principal arranges for an interpreter to assist the parent(s)/guardian(s) where appropriate.
- A referring school administrator and the teacher(s) who know(s) the student best and who can speak about the student's strengths, needs, programming, interventions and assessments must attend.
- Resource people may attend where clarification of information is required. Typically, the TDSB Professional Support Services staff who have authored a report do not attend the IPRC.
- An advocate for the parent(s)/guardian(s) may provide support or speak on their behalf.
- Meetings can be held either face to face or virtually using an AODA platform.

Presentations to an IPRC

- The IPRC Chair ensures introductions of all in attendance are made and invites parent(s)/guardian(s) and any other attendees to participate throughout the discussions about the student.
- The student's school administrator provides context for the IPRC through a general overview of the student's educational history. The student's OSR should be available.
- The school staff provides a detailed summary of the student's current strengths and needs, academic performance and presenting issues. Teaching strategies and interventions implemented are shared indicating their degree of success, along with current assessment data. Edited and unedited work samples must be available to provide a sense of the student's potential and ongoing classroom performance.

Functions of the IPRC

The IPRC will:

- Describe and provide a statement of the student's strengths and needs
- Determine whether a student is exceptional and specify the area(s) of exceptionality
- Decide an appropriate placement for the student—Regular Class or Special Education Class
- Decide the support setting for the student based on the placement:
 - Regular Class – with indirect support, resource assistance or withdrawal assistance

- Special Education Class – with partial integration or full time
- Discuss and make written recommendations regarding any additional special education programs and services needed
- Where the committee has decided that the student should be placed in a special education class, state the reason for that decision
- Provide in writing a "Decision of the IPRC" outlining the decisions of the IPRC and any program/services recommendations made

IPRC decisions are determined by a simple majority, in the presence of all attendees.

Deferral of IPRC Decisions

On rare occasions, the IPRC may defer its decision(s). A deferral is possible if the IPRC needs more time to review information, receive new information or consider its decision. This sometimes happens when there is new information introduced or professional reports pending (i.e., medical, psychological, speech/language, occupational therapy or physiotherapy, etc.) which have implications for IPRC decision-making.

Process for Annual Review IPRCs

Review IPRCs are planned annually for all students who have been identified by an IPRC as exceptional. Level 1 and Level 2 Reviews are held at the student's own school. Level 3 Reviews are generally held through a Learning Network IPRC. Typically, Central Reviews are held at an Education Centre.

- A Review IPRC meeting must be held within the school year, unless the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided has given the parent(s)/guardian(s) the option to waive the annual review and has received written notice from the parent(s)/guardian(s) waiving the annual review.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may request a Review IPRC be held any time after a student has been in a special education program for three months.
- The most recent Provincial Report Card/Kindergarten Communication of Learning and other current educational or professional assessments constitute the documentation given consideration at the Annual Review. It is expected that the student's progress, strengths and needs will be discussed within the context of the IEP, where parental permission has been provided.
- As indicated in the Ministry of Education document, [Learning for All \(2013\)](#), educational assessments may include a range of tools, including: classroom observation, classroom assessments, commonly used school board assessments and teacher-created assessments.

Resolving Disputes

In situations where there is disagreement, effective communication is essential to clarify information and resolve issues. The goal is to have the best interests of the student foremost in all discussions. The Ministry of Education document [Shared Solutions](#) is an excellent resource for all parties to reference should disputes arise. TDSB also has a Parent Concern Protocol (Appendix D) that outlines steps to be taken in addressing concerns with the school staff and administration.

As part of the IPRC process, the following kinds of communication take place:

- Principals ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) receive a copy of the TDSB Guide to Special Education for Parent(s)/Guardian(s) ([Appendix A](#))
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) can consult with the school principal and/or special education staff to clarify decisions of the IPRC
- The Centrally Assigned Principal of Special Education for the appropriate region can provide information to all parties to assist with procedures and protocols

Where parent(s)/guardian(s) would like reconsideration of a decision made by an IPRC, they may ask to have the IPRC reconvened to present new information or clarify the IPRC findings. Should resolution not be achieved, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may proceed with a formal appeal.

Appeal Process

The appeal process is fully detailed in [Regulation 181/98](#), Part VI, Subsection 26, "Appeals from Committee Decisions." As part of the IPRC process, principals ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) receive a copy of the Guide to Special Education for Parent(s)/Guardian(s) which outlines the entire IPRC process, including how to appeal decisions.

Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC)

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is committed to making sure that students with special education needs receive the appropriate programs and/or services to meet those needs from the day they first begin attending a TDSB school.

Students new to the TDSB with extremely complex medical needs may be considered for immediate placement in an intensive support special education program. Usually, these are students who have been receiving intensive, full time special education class support in other school systems including out of province, specialized preschool/daycare and other (e.g., Holland Bloorview/Sick Kids) prior to their arrival in the TDSB.

Special Education Class placement normally requires an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) decision, which cannot take place until the child has been attending for sufficient time to permit school staff to collect the required information and documentation. To address this delay and avoid the disruption to a student's schooling that would be caused by a program move part way through the year, the TDSB developed a process for expedited (but conditional) placement of students who are newly pre-registered (on paper) but not yet attending a TDSB school.

A SEPRC meeting is optional. A SEPRC should only be initiated if the child has **extreme complex medical needs** that are medically documented and when parents believe that placement in a TDSB special education class (Intensive Support Program) would better meet their child's needs. Students who would go through the SEPRC process would also likely qualify for the same level of support when an IPRC is eventually held. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may refuse the opportunity for a SEPRC meeting and have their child attend their neighbourhood school.

Subject to parental preference, the principal will consult with the Inclusion Consultant to review the medical documents shared by the parents to confirm if a referral to a SEPRC is appropriate and to consider the child for possible Special Education Class placement.

When parents decline participation in a SEPRC, they do not forgo their right to request an IPRC once their child is attending school. When parents agree to participate in a SEPRC, they can still decline a recommended placement and have their child attend the neighbourhood school.

SEPRC Structure

The membership of a SEPRC is the same as for an IPRC. The TDSB has the following SEPRC structures:

• Membership for Learning Network SEPRCs

Each of the four regional [Learning Centres](#) in the TDSB is organized into clusters of schools called Learning Networks. Within each Learning Network, teams are established to meet as the SEPRC for schools within the Network. Principals who are knowledgeable about special education policy and procedures are invited by the Special Education Department to be the Chair of a Learning Network SEPRC. The committees are made up of the following members:

- Principal (Chair) who is not associated with the student or the student's school
- Special Education Coordinator
- Psychological Services Representative

• Membership for a Central SEPRC

The Central SEPRC is made up of the following members, all of whom are attached to the Learning Centre:

- Centrally Assigned Principal of Special Education (Chair)
- Special Education Coordinator
- Manager of Psychological Services

SEPRC Referral Steps

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) pre-register the student in the home school by address and share any educational, behavioural, medical/health (hearing, vision, physical, neurological), psychological, speech/language, occupational/physiotherapy assessments or other relevant documentation that addresses the medically complex special education needs of their child with the principal.

The principal will explore the opportunity for a SEPRC with the Special Education Consultant meeting if the parents support the possibility of special education class placement immediately upon enrollment and would like a SEPRC meeting to be considered. Parents can **decline** a SEPRC and their child will attend the home school.

The principal may request access to central resources for the purpose of carrying out an observation, gathering additional information about the child's needs or clarifying existing documentation.

Once the referral package is approved by the Special Education Consultant and Coordinator, an invitation letter to a SEPRC meeting is prepared and sent by the Office Administrators in the Special Education Department to the parent and a copy is sent electronically to the home school principal.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) return the response form to staff at their home school or confirm their attendance by telephone to staff of the home school, who then notifies the appropriate Special Education Coordinator.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) receive a copy of all documentation to be considered at the SEPRC with the letter of invitation and a copy of the TDSB Guide to Special Education for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Documents Required for a SEPRC

The documentation presented to the SEPRC mirrors that required for students who are presented to an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) seeking a similar placement and may include:

- An educational assessment
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent report card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card is also included)
- An Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- A psychological assessment
- Other relevant professional assessments (e.g., speech-language, OT/PT, medical)

- A [Developmental History Form](#) (for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 2 aged students)
- A current professional observation
- Student work samples (part of the presentation)
- Any documents which parent(s)/guardian(s) may deem relevant to a SEPRC

Attendance at and Presentations to a SEPRC

Since students presented to a SEPRC are not yet TDSB students, parent(s)/guardian(s) **must** be in attendance for the SEPRC meeting to proceed:

- The principal from the referring school arranges for an interpreter to assist the parent(s)/guardian(s) where appropriate
- **An administrator from the referring school must attend** to provide a general overview of the student's history and to understand the full context of the SEPRC discussion and recommendation to guide follow-up action at the school
- Parents are encouraged to invite any resource people currently involved with the student to attend the SEPRC meeting
- The SEPRC Chair invites parent(s)/guardian(s) and any other attendees to participate in discussions about the student, to determine current strengths, needs, academic performance and presenting issues. Work samples, if available, are reviewed to provide a sense of the student's potential and performance in the current setting

Functions of the SEPRC

When parent(s)/guardian(s) are in agreement, a SEPRC is arranged to determine eligibility for special education class placement of a pre-registered but not yet attending student and to make a recommendation about such placement. The SEPRC will:

- Determine whether the support available in a special education class would be appropriate for a student when starting to attend a TDSB school
- For *programming purposes* only, note whether the student meets the requirements for an exceptionality based on TDSB criteria. (An IPRC decision is required to formally identify a student as exceptional.)
- Provide a written statement of **recommendations** outlining the student's strengths and needs and any program/services recommendations of the SEPRC

SEPRC recommendations are determined by a simple majority, in the presence of all attendees. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) make the final decision about accepting or declining SEPRC recommendation(s).

Required Follow-Up to the SEPRC

Where special education class placement has been recommended and accepted by parent(s)/guardian(s),

the student will be offered placement and a visit will be arranged. Referral for a follow-up Identification, Placement and Review Committee meeting must be made at the school where the special education class is located. The IPRC should be convened after the student has been in the program for a period of approximately 6 to 9 months. An exception to the 6 to 9 month provision involves students in kindergarten intensive support programs (e.g., Kindergarten Intervention Program, Diagnostic Kindergarten). Students in junior kindergarten will have their program recommendation re-evaluated in the spring at an SST meeting, to determine if the recommended full time support should continue for senior kindergarten and have an IPRC during their final kindergarten year in preparation for the primary division.

Appeal Process

There is no formal appeal process for SEPRC recommendations. The students under consideration are not yet attending school under the jurisdiction of the school board. The SEPRC function does not provide a decision about exceptionality and can only make a recommendation about conditional placement in a special education class, requiring a follow-up IPRC (whose decisions can be appealed).

When the parent(s)/guardian(s) decide not to accept a SEPRC recommended placement, or when special education class placement is not recommended by the SEPRC, the student attends the neighbourhood school and the school's special education resources will be available to provide support. The nature of support will be determined through the school's IST (In-School Team) or SST (School Support Team) process. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) continue to have the right to request (in writing to the principal) that the student be considered for special education class placement by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee.

Support Staff (PSSE) Assessment

Special Education works in collaboration with the PSSP department. A recommendation for an individual assessment by PSS staff comes through The School Support Team (SST). The SST also considers requests for assessments from parent(s)/guardian(s), qualifying students (of age and with the cognitive capacity to understand) or outside agencies.

School-based community services will continue to be offered to our students, either in-person or remotely.

- School-Based Rehab Services (Speech Therapy and OT/PT) services provided by the Community Treatment Centre/ Network

- Nursing services for medically fragile students provided through the Local Health Integrated Networks (LHINs).

They will need to follow the safety procedures and protocols of TDSB and will require a safe, private space in schools to provide services.

A recommendation for individual assessment requires the agreement of parent(s)/guardian(s) or qualifying student. The PSS staff will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) or qualifying student, to seek "informed consent" before beginning the assessment. This ensures shared understanding of the reasons for the assessment, the nature of the assessment, the risks, benefits and possible outcomes of the assessment, as well as how information from the assessment will be managed and shared. Issues of where and how the record will be stored and the limits to confidentiality are outlined. The informed consent process and permission form can be found in Appendix C (1).

Throughout the PSS assessment process, parent(s)/guardian(s) or qualifying students are involved and at the conclusion, they are offered verbal and written feedback about the assessment findings. A cultural or communication facilitator will be offered where necessary. Written reports are provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) or qualifying student at, or close to the time of verbal feedback.

Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Assessments

Physiotherapists / Occupational Therapists (OT/PT) collaborate with regular and special education teachers to provide therapeutic programming support and accommodation strategies, for students with physical and/or developmental disabilities. They also conduct assessments of students' adaptive skills and of their gross motor, fine motor and sensory motor functions. They can provide physical-management recommendations and assist schools with referrals to Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN). For a full list of specific OT/PT supports and services, see Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services under Engagement and Well-Being Department Roles and Responsibilities.

Referrals for OT/PT Assessments

Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy assessments are accessed through the School Support Team (SST) (which includes the OT/PT staff member), using a referral process that requires the informed consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or student 18 years or older. The informed consent process ensures a shared understanding of the reasons for the assessment, the nature of the assessment, the risks, benefits and possible outcomes of the assessment, the types of OT/PT service that may be provided to the student and how information from the assessment will be managed and shared.

The assessments are conducted under the [Regulated Health Professions Act](#) by occupational therapists and physiotherapists registered in the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario and College of Physiotherapists of Ontario, respectively.

OT/PT assessments may include, but are not limited to:

- A review of the student's school records
- Classroom observations
- An interview with parent(s)/guardian(s) to obtain developmental and relevant family and medical history
- An interview with school personnel, the student, and support service colleagues
- Contact with hospitals, rehabilitation centres, and community agencies
- Provision of specific gross/fine motor function, mobility (school/community), sensory motor / behaviour and visual motor skills
- Assessment of activities of daily living skills (e.g., feeding, dressing, personal care)
- Assessment for equipment needs (Assistive Devices Program (ADP) and Special Equipment Amounts (SEA))

Management of Assessment Results

The results of the occupational and physiotherapy assessment are communicated with parent(s)/guardian(s) through an interview. Written reports are provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) or qualifying student, at or close to the time of verbal feedback. Reports include recommendations for physical management (e.g., mobility, seating and positioning for function), activities of daily living skills and sensory integration. As outlined during the informed consent process, the results may be discussed with relevant teachers and professional support staff for educational planning and programming purposes.

Records from an OT/PT assessment are kept in confidential files, which are maintained in accordance with the regulations and provisions of the Professional Colleges and the Regulated Health Professions Act. Locations of copies of the report are discussed with parent(s)/guardian(s). The consent of parent(s)/guardian(s) is required for referral to community services for which the student may be eligible (e.g., Community Care Access Centre: School Health Support Services) or for a student's physical management and registration report to be released to an outside agency.

Psychological Assessments

Psychological Services staff includes Psychologists, Psychological Associates and Psychoeducational Consultants, who consult with teachers and School Support Teams (SST) about effective classroom programming and behaviour-management techniques to prevent and remediate learning and behaviour problems. With

the required permission, they conduct comprehensive individual psychological assessment of students' learning and social-emotional development to diagnose disorders, identify students' learning strengths and needs, and recommend effective intervention strategies. They also play an important role on Identification Placement and Review Committees (IPRC) in identifying exceptionalities and recommending program support. For a full list of how they support students and schools, see Psychological Services under Engagement and Well-Being Department Roles and Responsibilities.

Referrals for Psychological Assessments

The purpose of a psychological assessment is to better understand the learning and/or socio-emotional strengths and needs of the student, in order to help in the delivery of the most appropriate programming while the student is at the Toronto District School Board.

Psychological assessments are accessed through the School Support Team (SST) (which includes a Psychological Services professional) using a referral process that requires the informed consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student under the age of 18, or of a student who is 18 years or older and has the appropriate level of cognitive ability to understand. The informed consent process ensures a shared understanding of the reasons for the assessment, the nature of the assessment, the risks, benefits and possible outcomes of the assessment, as well as how information from the assessment will be managed and shared.

The staff conducting the assessment is either a member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario or works under the direct supervision of a member of the College of Psychologists. Psychological Services staff are governed by the [Psychology Act](#), the [Regulated Health Professions Act](#), the [Health Care Consent Act](#), the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(MFIPPA\)](#), and the [Education Act](#) when working in a school board.

A psychological assessment may include the following:

- A review of the student's school records
- Interviews with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to obtain developmental, family, and medical history
- Interviews with school personnel and the student
- Classroom observation
- An assessment (standardized and informal measures) of the student's cognitive abilities to assess learning strengths and needs
- An assessment (standardized and informal measures) of the student's social-emotional functioning to assess strengths and needs
- An assessment (standardized and informal measures) of the student's academic skills to assess academic strengths and needs

The length of wait for a psychological assessment varies. The average wait time for a psychological assessment once a referral has been initiated is typically less than one year. The SST determines the priority in which students will be seen relative to the nature and complexity of student needs and all referral requests from the school.

Management of Assessment Results

As outlined during the informed consent process, the results and recommendations of a psychological assessment are discussed with the parent(s)/guardian(s) or qualifying student and with staff of the TDSB who are directly involved with the student. A cultural or communication facilitator will be offered and arranged, if necessary. A copy of any written report is provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) or qualifying student, at or close to the time of verbal feedback. A copy is also given to the school, to be placed in the student's OSR.

The original written report, assessment measures, notes, and other information obtained during the assessment are maintained in the confidential files of Psychological Services in accordance with the Psychology Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act. Psychological Services will not release any information to persons or facilities outside of the TDSB without written consent, except as may be required by law.

Social Work Assessment

School Social Workers are closely affiliated with schools to provide a variety of support to students, families and school staff. They participate on School Support Teams (SST), contributing specialized knowledge and resources to aid deeper understanding of the connections between social-emotional development, mental health and wellness, home life and student achievement. They also conduct assessments to identify social, emotional and behavioural factors that can impact a child's ability to make the most productive use of the learning environment. For a full list of Social Work supports and services, see the section on Social Work and Attendance Services under Engagement and Well-Being Department Roles and Responsibilities.

Referrals for Social Work Assessments

A referral to Social Work can be initiated through the School Support Team (SST) (which includes a social worker), or at any other time on an as needed basis, through referrals from principals, staff, parents, or self-referral by students themselves. Social Work assessments require the informed consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or of a student who is 16 years of age or older.

The informed consent process ensures a shared understanding of the reasons for the assessment, the nature of the assessment, the risks, benefits and possible outcomes of the assessment, the types of service that may be provided to the student, as well as how information from

the assessment will be managed and shared.

School Social Workers possess a Master of Social Work degree, with a minimum of three years post-graduate experience working with children and youth, under the supervision of an M.S.W. Clinical Supervisor. All Ontario Social Workers are regulated by the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers and subscribe to a set of professional ethics and standards of practice.

A Social Work assessment may include:

- Interviews with the student
- An interview with the parent(s)/guardian(s), to obtain relevant family and social history
- Interviews with Support Services colleagues and school personnel
- A review of school records
- With consent, contacts with community agencies
- Classroom observations

Waiting times are not an issue since service is initiated as soon as possible upon receipt of a request for service. A referral form is completed, and informed consent is obtained of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or of students older than 16.

Management of Assessment Results

As outlined during the informed consent process, recommendations and reports are discussed with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or student (dependent on the nature of the referral, the age of the student or where professionally determined as appropriate by the social worker). With permission, relevant information is shared with school personnel and, where applicable, professional staff from community agencies.

[Standards of Practice of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers](#) regulating Social Work records are adhered to. Registered Social Workers ensure that records are current, accurate, contain relevant information about students, and are managed in a manner that protects the student's privacy. Social Work records are stored in confidential Social Work files in secure locations at the regional Education Offices.

Speech Language Assessments

Speech Language Pathologists participate on School Support Teams (SST), contributing specialized knowledge and resources to aid deeper understanding of the connections between communication, learning, literacy, and social development. They also conduct assessments and collaborate with regular and special education teachers to design language, literacy, and social communication programming. Services are prioritized to support younger students from Kindergarten through the primary grades who have oral language delays and disorders that may

affect literacy, academic, and social development. For a full list of available supports and services, see the section on Speech and Language Services under Engagement and Well-Being Department Roles and Responsibilities.

Referrals for Speech and Language Assessments

Speech Language assessment evaluates students' communication skills in the areas of oral language (e.g., comprehension, expression, vocabulary, phonological awareness), speech (e.g., articulation, stuttering, voice/resonance) and related difficulties in literacy development and functional social communication, distinguishing second-language issues (e.g., ESL, ELD) from language disorders.

Speech Language assessment is initiated through the School Support Team (SST) (which includes the speech language pathologist) using a referral process that requires the informed consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s), or of the student when aged 18 years or older. The informed consent process ensures a shared understanding of the reasons for the assessment, the nature of the assessment, the risks, benefits and possible outcomes of the assessment, the types of service that may be provided to the student as well as how information from the assessment will be managed and shared.

Assessments are conducted by speech-language pathologists, registered in Ontario under the [Regulated Health Professions Act](#) and may include the following:

- A review of the student's school records
- Interviews with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to obtain developmental, family, and medical history
- Interviews with school personnel and the student
- Classroom observation
- An assessment (standardized and informal measures) of the student's receptive and expressive language skills to assess learning strengths and needs
- An assessment (standardized and informal measures) of the student's articulation, fluency and voice skills to assess strengths and needs
- An assessment (standardized and informal measures) of the student's reading and writing skills to assess strengths and needs in these areas

Average waiting times vary anywhere from a few months to a year, although the majority of students are seen within 6 months. Assessments are provided for students according to prioritized needs. The SST determines the priority in which students will be seen relative to the nature and complexity of student need and all referral requests received.

Management of Assessment Results

Speech and language reports are stored in confidential speech language pathology files in the Education Offices, according to the [Records Regulation of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario](#)

(CASLPO). The results of speech and language assessments are communicated with parent(s)/guardian(s) through an interview. A copy of any written report is provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) or qualifying student, at or close to the time of verbal feedback.

As outlined during the informed consent process, the results of the speech and language assessment will be discussed with relevant teachers and professional support staff for educational planning and programming purposes. A copy of the report is kept in the OSR. The consent of parent(s)/guardian(s) is required for referral to community services for which the student may be eligible or to release a student's speech and language report to an outside agency.

Sharing Professional Assessment Information and Privacy

The [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(MFIPPA\)](#) requires that Professional Support Services staff receive explicit written or verbal consent from parent(s)/guardian(s) or student (when of age and with the cognitive capacity to understand), to share information that they collect with school staff (e.g., educational assistants, teachers, principals). This permission is discussed during the informed consent process.

The sharing of assessment findings <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/04p03> or information with persons *outside* of the school board will only occur with the expressed written permission of the parent(s)/guardian(s), or qualifying student, except as required by law. Further information about the privacy rights of parent(s)/guardian(s) is detailed in a [PHIPA Privacy Statement](#), posted on the Board's public website under Professional Support Services.

Finally, the TDSB Policy [PR 677 Recorded Information Management](#) requires that Professional Support Services files are retained for a minimum of ten years after graduation age (which in most cases is either 18 or 21). This requirement is in accordance with professional guidelines.

Students who are referred for an assessment are often seen within the school year in which the request is made. Referrals not seen by the conclusion of the school year will be prioritized on a wait list for assessment in the following school year. A variety of factors, such as length of time on the waitlist, nature of the referral question, age of the student and urgency for assessment results, will be used to prioritize referrals on a wait list.

Specialized Health Support Services

TDSB continues to partner with the Toronto Region Core Service Group, which includes Surrey Place Centre as the lead agency with overall responsibility for implementing

the model, Community Living Toronto, Family Service Toronto, YouthLink and Toronto Central LHIN, now known as Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). Following extensive consultation, the Core Service Group developed the Toronto Region implementation plan.

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 81 (PPM 81)

Ministry of Education [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 81: Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings](#), which addresses delivery of services that extend beyond educational services and are not included in the normal preventive health programs already provided by boards of health to school children. Responsibility for the direct provision of these services at the local level is shared by the school boards, the Home Care Program of the Ministry of Health, and agencies operating under the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

At the request of a school board, the Home Care Program of the *Ministry of Health* is responsible for assessing pupil needs, and for providing such services as injection of medication, catheterization, manual expression of the bladder, stoma care, postural drainage, suctioning, and tube feeding. The Ministry of Health is also responsible for intensive physio-occupational and speech therapy, and for assisting school boards in the training and direction of school board staff performing certain other support services. The *Ministry of Community and Social Services* is responsible for ensuring the provision of health support services in children's residential care and treatment facilities.

The *school boards* are responsible for the administration of oral medication where such medication has been prescribed for use during school hours. For physically disabled pupils, the school boards provide such services as lifting and positioning, assistance with mobility, feeding and toileting, and general maintenance exercises. Boards are also responsible for necessary speech remediation, correction, and rehabilitation programs.

Clarification of PPM 81 Re: Catheterization and Suctioning

Following implementation of PPM 81, a Memorandum to Regional Directors of Education differentiated between procedures that may be performed by the pupil, the parent, or other trained personnel, and procedures requiring the services of a qualified healthcare professional. The following points of clarification were made in the Memorandum:

- Clean catheterization and shallow surface suctioning are recognized as part of a child's normal toileting and hygiene needs
- School board administrators are encouraged to meet with the local Home Care Program directors to review, and where necessary, make any appropriate modification to current practices

In response to PPM 81 and to provide further clarity around responsibilities, TDSB Operational Procedure [PR 580](#) – Clean Intermittent Catheterization and Suctioning, Lifting, Positioning, Physical Management and Activities of Daily Living, was established. The current TDSB Model for Provision of Specialized Health Support Services follows in chart form.

Catheterization

| Type | Administered by | Provided by | Training and Direction | Consultation |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Clean intermittent | Child aide or other personnel | School Board | Parent Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health |
| Sterile intermittent | Health Care Professional | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health |

Indwelling care of an indwelling catheter is usually performed by the parent and not required in the school setting. School board personnel should make arrangements with respect to emergency needs.

Suctioning

| Type | Administered by | Provided by | Training and Direction | Consultation |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Shallow surface (e.g. oral or nasal suction) | Aide or other personnel | School Board | Parent Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health |
| Deep (e.g. throat and/or chest suction or drainage) | Health Care Professional | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health |

Where a child is admitted to a treatment program operated and/or funded by the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Community and Social Services and attends an educational program offered by a school board in the treatment facility, it is expected that the present policies under PPM No. 81 will continue.

Model for Provision of Specialized Health Support Services

| Support Service | Administered by | Provided by | Training and Direction | Consultation |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Oral Medication | Pupil as authorized | Pupil | Attending Physician | Local Board of Health |
| | Parent(s)/Guardian(s) as authorized | Parent(s)/Guardian(s) | Attending Physician | Local Board of Health |
| | Aide or other personnel | School Board | School Board/Physician | Local Board of Health |
| 2. Injection of Medication | Pupil as authorized | Pupil | Attending Physician | Local Board of Health |
| | Parent as authorized | Parent(s)/Guardian(s) | Attending Physician | Local Board of Health |
| | Health Professional | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health | School Board |
| 3. Catheterization, Manual expression of bladder/stoma, Postural drainage/suctioning, Tube feeding | Health Professional | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health | School Board |
| 4. Lifting and positioning, Assistance with mobility, Feeding, Toileting | Aide or other personnel | School Board | School Board and Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health |
| 5. Therapies: | | | | |
| Physio/Occupational: | | | | |
| • Intensive clinical (treatment) | Qualified therapist | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health |
| • General maintenance exercises | Aide | School Board | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health |
| Speech: Speech pathology (treatment of moderate-severe articulation, stuttering and voice disorders) | Speech Pathologists | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health |
| 6. All Services in Children's Residential Care/ Treatment Facilities | Aides/Health Professional | Ministry of Community and Social Services | Ministry of Community and Social Services | Ministry of Health |

Specialized Health Support Services

| Specialized Health Support Services | Agency or position of person who performs the service (e.g., LHIN, Board staff, parent, student) | Eligibility criteria for students to receive the service | Position of person who determines eligibility to receive the service and the level of support | Criteria for determining when the service is no longer required | Procedures for resolving disputes about eligibility and level of support (if available) |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| Administering of Prescribed Medications | TDSB or LHIN | LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Assistance with Mobility | TDSB LHIN – where student has 1:1 nursing | TDSB/LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Catheterization | TDSB or LHIN | LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Feeding | TDSB LHIN – if G-tube | TDSB/LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Lifting and Positioning | TDSB or LHIN | TDSB/LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Nursing | LHIN | LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Nutrition | LHIN | LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Occupational Therapy (PH and DD Programs only) | TDSB, LHIN | TDSB/LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Physiotherapy (PH and DD Programs only) | TDSB, LHIN | TDSB/LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Speech Therapy | LHIN – referred by TDSB Speech-Language Pathologists | LHIN | TDSB Speech-Language Pathologists and LHIN Case Manager | LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |
| Suctioning | TDSB or LHIN | LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | Parent(s)/Guardian(s) as authorized |
| Toileting | TDSB | TDSB/LHIN | TDSB Professional Staff or LHIN Case Manager | Assessed by TDSB Professional Staff and LHIN Case Manager | TDSB Case Conference LHIN Case Manager |

Please Note: In June 2017, CCAC was renamed Local Health Integration Network - <http://healthcareathome.ca/torontocentral/en>

Special Equipment Amount (SEA)

The Special Equipment Amount (SEA) funding from the Ministry of Education is intended to assist with the costs of equipment essential to support students with special education needs. SEA funding is made up of two components: a SEA Per Pupil Amount and a SEA Claims-Based Amount, which is allocated by the board through an internal process that follows the Ministry of Education's [Special Education Funding Guideline for SEA](#), which is posted on the Ministry website.

The SEA Claims-Based Amount continues to support the purchases of non-computer based equipment to be utilized by students with special education needs, including hearing support equipment, vision support equipment, personal care support equipment and physical support equipment. This component of the SEA allocation continues to be claim-based with an \$800 deductible.

The Assistive Technology Team was formed to support assistive technology across the Toronto District School Board, including the implementation of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claims. The role of the team is to collaborate with schools, administrators, teachers, and students to integrate assistive technology as an effective teaching/learning tool in the classroom and build capacity among in-school staff to share best practices.

Ongoing professional learning is provided throughout the year.

This can include:

- Sessions on assistive technology, including Ministry licensed software (for staff and parents)
- Online web casts
- Newsletters featuring information on resources and projects
- Co-planning and co-teaching sessions using Universal Design for Learning for staff
- Numerous printed resources and videos available online for staff and parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Supporting the development of IEPs to match students' learning strengths to assistive technology tools

All resources can be found on the external TDSB Special Education website pages: [Assistive Technology](#)

Special Incidence Portion (SIP)

School boards may apply to the Ministry of Education for Special Education Incidence Portion (SIP) funding for staff support to ensure the health and safety of both students who have extraordinarily high needs related to their disabilities and/or exceptionalities and of others at school.

The Ministry continues to fund claims approved through the process set out in the [SIP Funding Guidelines, Special Education Funding Guidelines, Special Incident Portion \(SIP\)](#).

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/2021/2020-21-sip-guidelines-en.pdf>

English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Education

TDSB has a protocol for identifying English language learners who may also have special education needs. If information from the student's home country, from initial assessment, or from early teacher observation indicates that the student may have special education needs, the student will be referred to the appropriate school team.

When Special Education needs have been identified, either in the initial assessment or through later assessments, students are eligible for English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Literacy Development (ELD) services and special education services simultaneously.

The TDSB has a process consisting of three phases which details considerations that may help determine if a psychological assessment should be recommended for English language learners whose progress is of concern. This process is found in the TDSB document entitled "[English Language Learners: School- Based Considerations Prior to Referral for Psychological Assessment](#)"

[ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT IN TDSB ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: Q. AND A.](#)