



# **SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN 2024-2025**

Updated July 2024



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# Section A: INTRODUCTION



[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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***“We believe that equity of opportunity and equity of access to our programs, services and resources are critical to the achievement of successful outcomes for all those whom we serve, and for those who serve our school system.***

***The Board is therefore committed to ensuring that fairness, equity, and inclusion are essential principles of our school system and are integrated into all our policies, programs, operations and practices.” ~ TDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan***

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The Ontario Ministry of Education has set out expectations for improving the quality of special education programs and services in Ontario and for ensuring greater accountability in the area of special education. These standards support the government’s goal of ensuring that students with special education needs across the province receive the best quality education possible.

School boards are required to have a special education plan, in accordance with [Regulation 306](#) and the ministry policy document entitled [Standards for School Boards’ Special Education Plans](#). Each board is required to maintain a special education plan, to review/amend it annually to ensure it meets the current needs of its exceptional students, and to submit the plan to the ministry for review. The purpose of the special education plan is to provide the Ministry of Education and the public with information about special education programs and services that are provided by the school board.

The TDSB’s Special Education Plan is compliant with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Ontario Education Act, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and other relevant legislation. The plan is organized in sections as outlined in the Ontario Ministry of Education’s *Standards for School Boards’ Special Education Plans*, with the beginning of each section indicating the purpose of that section.

The TDSB values feedback on the Special Education Plan. To provide feedback, comments or suggestions for the following year's Special Education Plan, please click on the feedback link at the beginning of each section. Feedback should be received by March 31, 2025 to be taken into consideration.

# Section B: THE BOARD'S CONSULTATION PROCESS



[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide details of the board's consultation process to the ministry and to the public*

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## **Ministry of Education Directive**

The Ontario Ministry of Education has outlined that each school board's Special Education Plan must describe the consultation process used to review the plan, and must include the following information:

- a statement of how, in accordance with [Regulation 464/97](#) made under the Education Act, the Board ensures that its Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is involved in the annual review of the Board's Special Education Plan
- a description of any majority or minority reports concerning the Board's approved plan that have been received from members of the Board's SEAC, and the Board's response to these reports
- a statement of how members of the community, particularly parents/guardians/caregivers of children who are receiving special education programs and services, are informed of the timelines and methods for providing input into the Board's Special Education Plan
- a summary of feedback received as a result of consultation with members of the community
- information on the results of any internal or external reviews of existing special education programs services within the Board that have taken place in the previous or current school year

- internal and external reviews of the Board's special education programs and services that are planned for the following year.

The TDSB is committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders, including school board staff, students, parents/guardians/caregivers, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), and community associations and agencies, to provide input to the revision process each school year.

In response to the required items above:

1. SEAC has created a Special Education Plan subcommittee that both oversees the annual review of the plan and communicates to members of the community and parents/guardians/caregivers of children who are receiving special education programs and services the timelines for providing input to the Special Education Plan
  - Parents/guardians/caregivers or community members who wish to give input to the plan may do so in a number of ways:
    - contact their school principal
    - contact their School Advisory Council
    - contact the TDSB SEAC
    - use the feedback link provided in each section of the plan
  - A summary of feedback is available in [Appendix G](#)
2. No new external reviews have taken place in the previous or current school year to report on. The Board will continue to explore any attitudinal or system barriers that marginalize students and that impact their academic and well-being trajectory.

The TDSB engaged in an internal review of its Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC) process during the 2023-2024 school year. The review resulted in a recommendation to continue to use the SEPRC process under the TDSB's duty to accommodate students with complex disabilities and/or complex special education needs, as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC). When a new student with complex physical and/or medical disabilities and/or complex safety needs and/or complex special education needs is registering in the TDSB for the first time, the SEPRC process removes barriers by providing differentiated registration support in order to avoid delays in school attendance and to avoid an infringement on the student's rights. For any other student, TDSB will follow Regulation 181/98 and register the student in a regular class in their homeschool. More information on the SEPRC process can be found in [Section G: Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies](#).

A review of TDSB's Special Education model is planned for the 2024-2025 school year.

3. There are no majority or minority reports that have been received.



# Section C: THE BOARD'S GENERAL MODEL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION



[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide the ministry and the public with information on the board's philosophy and service-delivery model for the provision of special education programs and services*

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## **TDSB Vision for Learning**

At the TDSB, we believe in [equity, inclusion, anti-ableism, anti-racism and anti-oppression](#).

The TDSB is committed to creating an equitable school system where the achievement and well-being of every student is fostered through culturally relevant learning experiences in diverse and accepting environments where everyone is included, every voice is heard, and every experience is valued.

In the TDSB, every school determines a learning focus for each of the following areas: Indigenous Education, Well-being & Belonging, and Achievement. Schools engage in learning to support student improvement in these focus areas, determine the evidence and data to be collected, and monitor progress towards achievement of goals.

Learn more in [A Vision for Learning in the TDSB](#).

# TDSB Mission

The TDSB's Mission is to enable all students to reach high levels of achievement and to acquire the knowledge, skills and values they need to become responsible, contributing members of a democratic and sustainable society.

## We value:

- Each and every student's interests, strengths, passions, identities and perspectives on their education
- Partnerships with students, parents/caregivers/guardians, staff, community partners, and education partners
- A strong public education system that promotes full participation by identifying, removing, and preventing accessibility barriers so that all students, including students with disabilities/special education needs and intersecting identities, are provided with opportunities to realize their full potential
- The diversity of students, parents/caregivers/guardians, staff, community partners, and education partners
- Shared leadership and respectful working relationships
- Accountability and innovation
- The contributions of highly skilled and diverse staff
- Digital citizenship and environmental stewardship

# Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP)

Student success drives everything we do in the TDSB. The TDSB's [Multi-Year Strategic Plan \(MYSP\)](#) sets direction and identifies system goals to support approximately 237,000 students in 584 schools.

The MYSP lays the groundwork for how we will transform student learning, create a culture of belonging and well-being, provide access to learning opportunities, strategically and equitably allocate resources, and build strong partnerships. Each student will receive equitable access to programs and resources and increased opportunities that lead to successful learning outcomes.

Measuring our success is critical to knowing we are making a difference for students. Our expectation, and our goal, is that everyone improves.

## Multi-Year Strategic Plan Goals

### EQUITY

Equity is a principle that will continue to guide the TDSB in all that it does. Equity will be foundational to all TDSB work and will be embedded throughout the strategic directions.

### TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

We commit to the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.

### BELONG

All students belong, are engaged, and valued in an inclusive environment.

### ACHIEVE

All students reach high levels of achievement, success, and personal development.

### THRIVE

All students graduate with the confidence, skills, and knowledge to thrive.

### REVITALIZE

All students and staff learn and work in inclusive, safe, and modern environments.

## Special Education Programs and Services

The Toronto District School Board's (TDSB's) Special Education Plan is developed with a commitment to the provision of special education programs and services for students as outlined in the Education Act and the Regulations associated with it, and in alignment with the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP).

### **Inclusion**

The TDSB is committed to creating inclusive learning environments for students with intersecting identities, and to building capacity of staff to serve students with special education needs. The TDSB holds high expectations for students and supports their

achievement and well-being by removing systemic barriers that stand in the way of their success.

Equity of outcome is supported in the TDSB through the provision of a range of special education supports and services for students. This range includes both in-school and itinerant support, short term intervention services, and placements in regular classes as well as self-contained classes.

Ontario Regulation 181/98 requires school boards to consider placing students with exceptionalities into regular classes with appropriate special education services before considering placement in special education classes. In the TDSB, we continue to be responsive to the understanding that as students learn, they develop skills and so their special education service and program needs change over time. Students being welcomed, included and supported in well-resourced neighbourhood schools in age-appropriate, regular classes are able to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of school life. This allows for valuable learning opportunities for groups which have been historically excluded, such as students with disabilities and intersecting identities.

The following TDSB research report and reflective guides highlight the benefits of adopting an inclusive education model, particularly for students with special education needs: [A Case for Inclusive Education](#) and [Equity and Human Rights in Special Education: Critical Reflective Practice Guide](#).

Some students with unique strengths and needs may require more specialized or intensive programs and supports. TDSB staff work with parents/guardians/caregivers to determine the most appropriate supports for their children.

The TDSB will continue to work to ensure that each student is thriving in an accessible, inclusive, and engaging program by:

- following appropriate identification, placement, and review procedures with full and appropriate parent/guardian/caregiver involvement
- assigning teachers with appropriate educational qualifications
- if required, developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) which focus on improved student learning and ongoing review of expectations and services set out in the IEP
- providing equitable practices in the development of all aspects of learning for the exceptional student (i.e., academic, social, cultural, physical, intellectual, behavioural and emotional)
- recognizing all transition processes (i.e., preschool, elementary, secondary, post-secondary, work, community, class-class, activity-activity)
- valuing student, parent/guardian/caregiver involvement and input

- ongoing evaluation of special education services
- ongoing capacity building of staff in applying current teaching and learning strategies and methodologies designed to respond to the identities, lived experiences, strengths and areas for growth of students with special education needs

## The Referral Process

### Parents/Guardians/Caregivers as Partners

Parents/guardians/caregivers know their children best. They know their children's strengths, abilities, needs, and areas for improvement. It is critical that parents/guardians/caregivers provide information about their children and participate in decisions that affect their children's education.

### Concerns About A Child

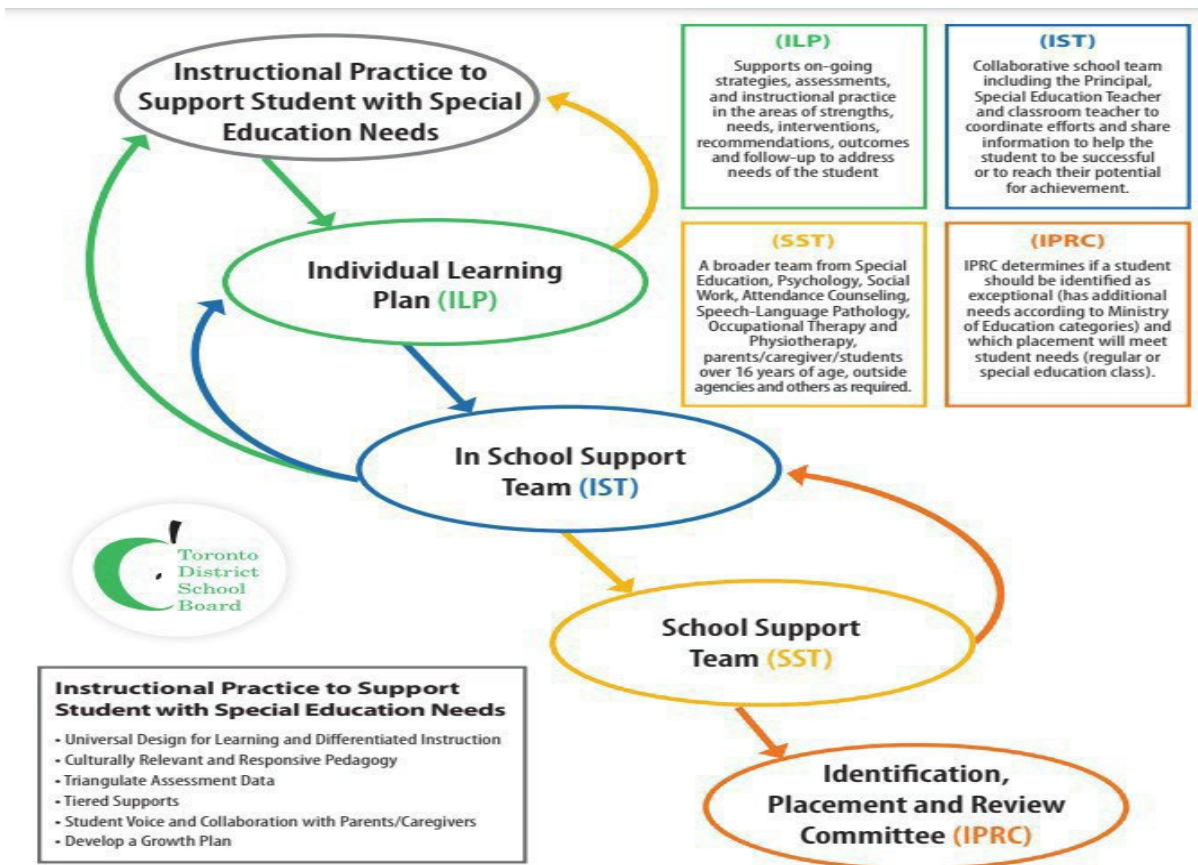
A parent/guardian/caregiver or their child's teacher may identify that a child is having difficulty learning. The teacher(s) may contact the parent/guardian/caregiver to discuss their findings, or parent/guardian/caregiver may reach out to the teacher(s) and principal with concerns they may have about their child. A parent/guardian/caregiver may choose to involve a friend, family member or advocate at any time, and with permission, school staff can communicate with them as well.

### Steps in the Referral Process

The steps in the referral process include:

- Development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP);
- In-School Team (IST) meetings with school-based staff;
- School Support Team (SST) meetings with school-based-staff, Special Education and Inclusion and/or Professional Support Services staff, and
- Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).

## The Referral Process



## Supporting Students Through an Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is the first step in supporting students who may not be meeting their achievement goals. Developing an ILP involves parents/guardians/caregivers and the student (as appropriate) as much as possible, to allow an opportunity for student voice and agency and also parent/guardian/caregiver partnership.

The ILP is a tool used by the teacher to detail, track and monitor on-going assessments, instructional strategies, interventions, recommendations, and follow-up strategies to address the needs of the student. The ILP allows the teacher to compile detailed and specific information about the student's current abilities, strengths, and areas for growth in relation to their identity and lived experiences, based on the learning conditions provided by the teacher. It is implemented and assessed for 6-8 weeks to determine next steps. The teacher(s) continuously assesses student progress, adjusts the ILP as necessary, and evaluates and reports progress to parents/guardians/caregivers and appropriate staff.

If the planned interventions are successful, staff and the student will continue with those interventions. If the student is still experiencing challenges, the steps below are followed.

## **Referral to the In-School Team (IST)**

If focused interventions have been implemented but the student continues to experience challenges, the teacher(s) would present the student to the In-School Support Team (IST) where additional interventions or assistance required to support the teacher(s) and student are explored.

IST meetings are a proactive problem-solving opportunity to support programming and success for the academic, physical, social and emotional strengths and needs of the student. The school team works together to support the student, the parent, and the teacher(s) through planning and implementing supports and strategies, with regular monitoring of progress.

### **Members of the In-School Team**

The members of the IST consists of a core group of individuals, including:

- the student's teacher(s);
- the principal or vice-principal;
- the school special education teacher (if available);
- a guidance teacher/counsellor (especially at the secondary level), and
- the student success teacher (especially at the secondary level).

### **In-School Team Process**

The teacher(s) will have gathered information and reviewed assessment material (e.g., diagnostic assessments, recent work samples, direct observation) and recorded strategies implemented on the Individual Learning Profile (ILP). They share this information at the IST meeting and the IST will review the ILP, on-going strategies, assessments and instructional practice, in areas of strengths, needs, interventions, recommendations, outcomes, and follow-up to support the student.

After the IST meeting, the teacher will work with the student to ensure any additional strategies suggested by the IST are implemented. The teacher will reach out to additional staff for support as needed, including the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant.

Most students' needs can be addressed by the IST. However, if the strategies recommended by the IST have been implemented with little success, the IST can refer the student to the School Support Team (SST).

## Referral to the School Support Team (SST)

Only if it has been determined after careful deliberation with the In-School Team, the teacher and the principal that the strategies are all being implemented with limited success, the student may be presented to the School Support Team (SST).

### Members of the School Support Team

In addition to the school staff listed above, this team offers additional knowledge by including:

- psychologists;
- social workers;
- attendance counsellors;
- speech-language pathologists;
- occupational therapists;
- physiotherapists;
- Child and Youth Workers/ Child and Youth Counsellors, and
- parents or caregivers and students over 16 years of age.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are the most valuable partner in a child's education. Although parental attendance at the IST and SST meetings is not mandatory, parents are strongly encouraged to attend. Parents who cannot attend will be informed about any plan of action recommended at the meeting to address their child's needs. 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.

When a member of the TDSB's Professional Support Services (PSS) such as a psychologist or social worker attends the meeting, parental permission is required if the student is to be discussed by name.

The SST may recommend Professional Support Staff (PSS) support, a return to the IST or a referral to the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).

### Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)

If further assessment is completed and results indicate a need for identification, an IPRC meeting is held to determine whether the student should be identified as exceptional and to determine appropriate placement. For more information on IPRCs, refer to [Section H: The Identification Placement and Review Committee \(IPRC\) Process and Appeals](#).



# Teaching and Learning

The use of evidence-based teaching and learning strategies are essential to supporting all learners, including those with special education needs. Within the Tiered Approach, staff focus on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Differentiated Instruction (DI), and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP).

## The Tiered Approach

A tiered approach to prevention and intervention supports inclusion. It is based on the understanding that effective assessment, instruction, and appropriate intervention strategies are essential to ensuring all students will succeed.

The tiered approach ensures appropriate and timely interventions that leverage the student's strengths and reduce, as much as possible, additional areas for growth. The approach also facilitates early identification of students who may be at risk so that prevention strategies can be implemented.

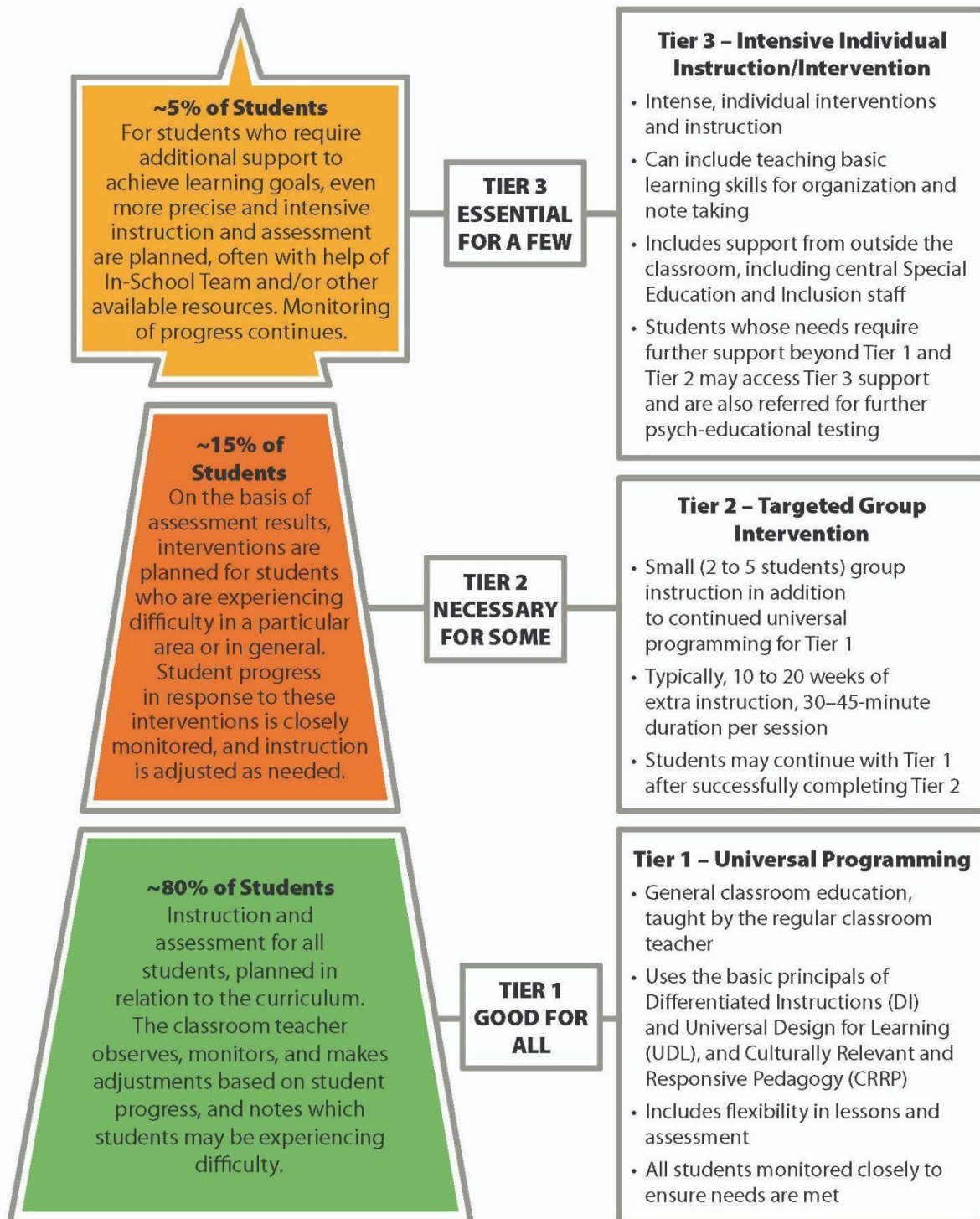
**Tier 1** consists of evidence-based classroom instruction based on the Ontario curriculum. The principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction (DI) are used to ensure a variety of ways students participate in and demonstrate their learning. Teachers choose effective, culturally safe and trauma-informed 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 noting any student with areas for growth.

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

Teachers will gather student information to be presented to the In-School Team (IST) to discuss strategies to better meet the needs of the student.

**Tier 3** uses intentional and focused interventions that provide increased support for students to achieve learning goals. To ensure precise interventions, teams will engage from a holistic perspective utilizing quantitative and qualitative data. Through collaboration with school staff, parents/guardians/caregivers, the student, and any additional agency resources, the team will develop a plan in support of the student's pathway.

# The Tiered Approach to Intervention



The graphic above summarizes the Tiered Approach to prevention and intervention.

## Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

The core concept of UDL is that of “necessary for some and good for all.” UDL comprises instructional and assessment strategies, materials, and tools that respond to the needs of a specific student or group of students.

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 Inclusion, Simplicity, Safety, and Different Modes of Perception.

## Differentiated Instruction (DI)

Unlike UDL, which applies broad-based principles for planning, Differentiated Instruction (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 considers the identity, lived experiences, strengths and areas for growth of the student.

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)
- the *environment* of learning (the context and environment in which students learn and demonstrate learning)

## Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP)

“Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP) recognizes that all students learn in ways that are connected to background, language, family structure, and social or cultural identity. By knowing ‘who their students are’, educators can tailor programs and practices to better meet the needs of their diverse student populations and ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed” (Ministry of Education, Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusive Education).

Culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy involves recognizing that “culture” encompasses various aspects of social and personal identity. It also means acknowledging students’ multiple social and personal identities and the social issues that arise where identities intersect.

Teachers consider the student's intersecting identities and lived experiences in programming for the student. Some considerations for the teacher when incorporating CRRP are:

- How have you used a variety of resources, including community partners (as applicable), to ensure the learning environment and pedagogical materials are accessible to the student and that the life of the student is reflected in the daily workings of the classroom?
- Is the classroom environment and are the resources reflective of the student's intersecting identities (i.e., classroom as the third teacher)?
- In what ways have you presented resources, materials and books from both local and global perspectives?
- How is the student actively engaged and how does the student have voice in their learning?

## **Culture of Shared Responsibility**

The majority of students' needs can be met in the regular classroom in their neighbourhood school. Strategies such as the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Differentiated Instruction (DI), Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP), 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, and Special Education and Inclusion staff collaborate with the school to support professional learning for administrators, teachers and support staff so that educators can meet students' unique needs.

Parents/guardians/caregivers' 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:

- [Learning for all: a guide to effective assessment and instruction for all students, kindergarten to Grade 12](#)
- [Growing Success \(2010\)](#)

# Section D: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide the public with information on roles and responsibilities in the area of special education*

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## **The Ministry of Education:**

- Creates and shares legislative and policy framework, through the Education Act, associated Regulations and Policy/Program Memoranda (PPM)
- Establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model, which consists of Ministry Grants and requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education
- Sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement
- Requires school boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs)
- Establishes Special Education Tribunals to hear disputes between parents/guardians/caregivers and school boards regarding the identification and placement of exceptional pupils
- Establishes a provincial Advisory Council on Special Education to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to special education programs and services
- Operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools for students who are Deaf, blind, or deafblind, or who have severe learning disabilities

- Establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- Monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- Requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- Provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for the exceptional pupils of the Board
- Obtains the appropriate funding and reports on the expenditures for special education
- Develops and maintains a special education plan that is amended annually to meet the current needs of the exceptional pupils of the Board
- Values collaboration with families, community partners and stakeholders, and welcomes input into the Special Education Plan, particularly from parents/guardians/caregivers of children who are receiving Special Education programs and services
  - The consultation process to receive feedback from stakeholders is collected through SEAC's Special Education Plan subcommittee throughout the school year
  - Parents/guardians/caregivers or community members who wish to give input to the plan may do so in a number of ways:
    - contact their school Principal
    - contact their School Advisory Council
    - contact the TDSB Special Education Advisory Committee
- Shares annually, in accordance with [Regulation 464/97](#), its plan with SEAC
  - Members are invited to provide input from their respective associations and agencies, and from community members. This is part of the Board's annual review of the plan
- Reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education
- Provides statistical reports to the Ministry, as required, and as requested
- Prepares a guide for parents/guardians/caregivers to provide them with information about special education programs, services, and procedures

- Establishes one or more Identification, Placement and Review Committees (IPRCs) to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements
- Establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee(SEAC)
- Provides professional development to staff on special education and inclusion

### **The School Principal:**

- Carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, policy/program memoranda, and Board policies
- Communicates Ministry of Education and school board expectations to staff
- Consults with parents/guardians/caregivers and with school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional students
- Provides leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of special education programs, assessments and referrals
- Ensures the development, implementation, and review of students' Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Ensures that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes
- Communicates Board policies and procedures about special education and inclusion to staff, students, and parents/guardians/caregivers
- Ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional students, through an IPRC, is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and Board policies
- Ensures that a transition plan is developed for all students who have an IEP, whether or not they have been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) and including those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness. The transition plan is developed as part of the IEP
- Ensures that parents/guardians/caregivers are consulted in the development of their child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP
- Ensures the delivery of the program as set out in the IEP
- Ensures that appropriate assessments are requested, if necessary, and that parent/guardian/caregiver consent is obtained

## **The Teacher:**

- Carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- Follows Board policies and procedures regarding special education
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of Special Education and Inclusion practices
- Works with Special Education and Inclusion staff and parents/guardians/caregivers to develop the IEP for an exceptional student
- Provides the program for the exceptional student in the regular class, as outlined in the IEP, that is reflective of the student's identity, lived experiences, strengths and areas for improvement, using an anti-oppressive stance and culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy
- Communicates the student's progress to parents/guardians/caregivers, and works with other Board staff to review and update the student's IEP

## **The Special Education Teacher:**

- Fulfills the responsibilities listed above for the teacher
- Holds qualifications, in accordance with [Regulation 298](#), to teach special education
- Monitors the student's progress with reference to the IEP and modifies the program as necessary
- Assists in providing educational assessments for students with IEPs
  - This also applies to Itinerant Special Education Teachers



# **INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION AND EQUITABLE OUTCOMES**

Special Education and Inclusion is part of the Learning Transformation and Equity team. Creating successful learning outcomes for all students is a shared responsibility among all teams within the TDSB, schools, parents/guardians/caregivers and community partners.

## **Associate Director – Instructional Innovation and Equitable Outcomes**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the TDSB school improvement process which focuses on the identities, lived experiences, interests, strengths, and abilities of each student
- Supporting staff to provide what all students need by helping leaders create the conditions for improvements in achievement, well-being and equity in each school
- Ensuring that all students with special education needs are served within the most enabling learning environment
- Challenging all aspects of streaming in the TDSB

## **System Superintendent of Special Education and Inclusion**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the system in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance in the implementation of the Special Education Plan
- Providing leadership to, and working collaboratively with, Special Education and Inclusion Centrally Assigned Principals and staff to build capacity of school staff and maintain consistency across the system
- Actively supporting SEAC members in carrying out their role as a statutory committee that advises the Board on matters related to special education
- Building system capacity by working collaboratively with providers of professional learning across TDSB Departments to ensure the consistent use of professional learning strategies throughout the system
- Providing central coordination of special projects/initiatives (e.g., research projects)

## **Centrally Assigned Principals**

### **Special Education and Inclusion Centrally Assigned Principals – Blind/Low Vision, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Autism and Assistive Technology and SEA Claims**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the system in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the implementation of the Special Education Plan
- Overseeing all areas of Blind/Low Vision, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Assistive Technology and SEA and SIP Claims, and Autism
- Collaborating, developing, implementing and communicating delivery standards for all special education and inclusion programs and services including integral use of technology that is informed by current research-based pedagogy
- Developing, implementing and providing effective professional learning, aligned to the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and as outlined in the Special Education Plan, guided by the TDSB System Standards for Professional Learning in response to the needs of TDSB staff, and students with special education needs
- Responding to critical issues and concerns related to special education
- Working in collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

### **Special Education and Inclusion Centrally Assigned Principals**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services through the effective implementation of the Special Education Plan
- Developing, implementing and providing effective professional learning aligned to the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and as outlined in the Special Education Plan, guided by the TDSB System Standards for Professional Learning in response to the needs of TDSB staff and their students with special education needs
- Collaborating, on an on-going basis, with Learning Centre (LC) Executive Superintendents, Family of Schools (FoS) Superintendents and their respective LC Administrators to ensure that services and programs are responsive to the identities, lived experiences and needs of students, schools, families and communities

- Providing leadership for Special Education and Inclusion Coordinators, Consultants and other central Special Education and Inclusion staff
- Responding to critical issues and concerns related to special education and inclusion
- Supporting school-based staff in meetings with parents/guardians/caregivers and community partners to further an understanding of special education services
- Working in collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

### **Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP) Centrally Assigned Principal**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services through the effective implementation of the Special Education Plan
- Developing, implementing and providing effective professional learning, aligned to the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and as outlined in the Special Education Plan, guided by the TDSB System Standards for Professional Learning in response to the needs of TDSB ECP staff, and students with special education needs
- Coordinating the development and implementation of programs and services using data-informed decision making
- Collaborating with and coordinating between several Ministries and the TDSB in fulfilling the expectations of ECP and ensuring that a Memorandum of Understanding is signed between TDSB and the Agency for each academic year
- Ensuring effective transition processes for students entering or exiting ECP by aligning with TDSB system goals for student success in collaboration with TDSB staff
- Collaborating with Elementary and Secondary Employee Services in order to staff ECP, ensuring equitable hiring practices
- Collaborating with agency partners and Continuing Education Employee Services to determine the needs for summer school programming and overseeing staffing and implementation

- Liaising with the Ontario Administrators' Association for ECPP in order to improve staff/administrator effectiveness through research into best practices
- Assisting senior staff in providing reports to the Board, Ministry of Education and Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

### **Education and Community Partnership Program (ECPP) Centrally Assigned Vice Principals (Elementary and Secondary)**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Working in collaboration with the Centrally Assigned Principal to provide curriculum leadership using an anti-oppressive stance, and building teacher capacity across the developmental continuum, including managing and supervising all aspects of the grade reporting process for all students and facilitating the use of current assessment and evaluation practices through deep implementation of the Ministry's [Growing Success](#) document
- Working effectively with families who have need of agency intervention and assuming a leadership role in the Central Intake Process
- Collaborating with multiple agencies serving elementary and secondary aged students to develop programming that meets their academic, social and emotional needs
- Providing leadership in bi-monthly Partnership Meetings with all agency partners
- Coordinating staff professional learning in the areas of Indigenous Education, achievement, equity and well-being, and serving as a member of the ECPP Leadership Team, Ontario Administrators' Association for ECPP and the Administrative Team
- Taking a lead role in the transitions of students from treatment back to the mainstream school setting, with a focus on inclusion and working towards the least restrictive environment
- Understanding and supporting the Memorandum of Agreement between the TDSB and the specific agency, realizing that this is under the mandate of the Ministry of Education for students who are in ECPP
- Providing leadership with each associated Ministry (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Ministry of Health), in consultation with the principal

## **Coordinators**

### **Central Coordinator of Autism Services**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services
- Coordinating services within the Autism Team
- Providing expertise in programming for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) needs, based on current research and promising practices
- Coordinating services within the Connections for Students initiative for students with ASD transitioning from Intensive Behaviour Intervention (IBI) into TDSB classrooms
- Coordinating the review, development, and implementation of current and identified special education processes and practices, with a focus on needs-based support

### **Central Coordinator of Assistive Technology, Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) and Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Claims**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services
- Liaising with Consultants, Coordinators, Centrally Assigned Principals and Professional Support Services (PSS) to ensure the effective implementation of SEA and SIP claims
- Coordinating the review, development, and implementation of current and identified special education processes and practices, with a focus on needs-based support (i.e., SEA claims, SIP claims, etc.)
- Working together with the SEA/SIP Consultant, Assistive Technology Teachers and Technicians as a member of a team
- Liaising with appropriate Ministry of Education personnel around Special Education business and procedural practices (e.g., SEA claims, SIP claims, standards, regulations, etc.)

## **Central Coordinators of Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Low Vision**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services
- Coordinating the development and implementation of programs and services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Blind/Low Vision, and deafblind students
- Ensuring that the Ministry of Education program and service standards are adhered to, and that Board-wide consistency and coordination are maintained in the delivery of Special Education and Inclusion programs and services for students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and/or students who are Blind/Low Vision
- Acting as a resource and support to TDSB administrators, central and regional staff, school staff, parents/guardians/caregivers and the community with respect to the needs of students who are Blind/Low Vision, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and deafblind
- Liaising with Professional Support Services with respect to assessment needs and ongoing support services
- Providing program-related leadership and expertise to staff
- Liaising with other educational authorities, provincial schools, and community agencies in response to program and service delivery needs
- Conducting assessments with referred students, and consulting with Special Education and Inclusion staff, principals, teachers, and parents/guardians/caregivers regarding possible placements
- Coordinating supports for identified students in conjunction with other School Services staff within the Learning Centre and centrally
- Developing and implementing professional development programs for staff working in the programs
- Coordinating relevant Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claims

## **Special Education and Inclusion Coordinators**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services

- Providing system leadership within each Learning Centre for the coordination of central IPRC meetings for students with exceptionalities
- Collaborating with other Special Education and Inclusion System Coordinators to support the appropriate placement for students
- Providing leadership to schools as assigned in matters related to the coordination of special education and inclusion programs and services, student placement decisions through the IPRC process, and the implementation of [Shared Solutions](#)
- Developing, implementing and providing effective professional learning for TDSB staff in response to the learning requirements of students with special education needs
- Supporting projects involving assistive technology; this can include planning the use of technology in the school, providing support to students and teachers/support staff to incorporate technology into teaching and learning in collaboration with the Assistive Technology/SEA team
- Liaising with Special Education and Inclusion Consultants, System Coordinators and with other Board departments to ensure positive, inclusive outcomes for students
- Providing leadership and direct instruction, modelling, mentoring, coaching and job embedded learning to teachers to support exemplary practices in assessment and instructional strategies, Differentiated Instruction and Universal Design, and decision making based upon research and current best practices to allow students to receive education in the most enabling environment possible
- Liaising with other educational authorities and community services in response to program and service delivery needs

## **Consultants**

### **Special Education and Inclusion Consultants**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting schools in assisting parents/guardians/caregivers who are navigating special education processes
- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services
- Supporting principals in the coordination, facilitation, and leadership of Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) meetings at the school level

- Participating in annual local IPRC Reviews
- Providing support to schools to support parents/guardians/caregivers
- Providing leadership to schools as assigned in matters related to the coordination of special education programs and services, and the implementation of [Shared Solutions](#)
- Supporting and facilitating resource allocation processes focused on student identities, lived experiences, strengths, areas for growth and program needs
- Providing leadership and direct instruction, modelling, mentoring, coaching and job embedded learning to teachers to support exemplary practices in assessment and instructional strategies, Differentiated Instruction and Universal Design, and decision making based upon research and current best practices to allow students to receive education in the most enabling environment possible
- Providing support in projects involving assistive technology, including SEA-funded equipment
- Supporting and collaborating with principals, special education and regular class teachers and parents/guardians/caregivers in the development and monitoring of Individual Education Plans (IEPs), including transition plans, which reflect exemplary programming and assessment, to meet student needs
- Contributing to SST meetings to determine appropriate responses, recommendations and strategies for students with special education needs, based on individual student identities, lived experiences, strengths and areas for growth
- Supporting the principal and SSTs in the SEA, Special Incidence Portion (SIP), IPRC and Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC) processes

### **Special Education and Inclusion Consultants for the ASD Team**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services
- Supporting and collaborating with both special education and regular class teachers in the development and monitoring of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Transition Plans to meet the needs of students with ASD



- Acting as a resource to principals, school staff, school support teams, special education staff, and parents/guardians/caregivers
- Collaborating with Toronto Autism Services and other Intensive Behaviour Intervention (IBI) or Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) service providers to facilitate transition of students
- Providing direct service including modelling strategies with students, demonstrating how to use resources and/or implementing suggestions offered to school-based staff

### **Special Education and Inclusion Consultant for Assistive Technology (SEA/SIP)**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Acting as a resource and providing training as necessary to principals, staff, school support teams, special education staff, instructional leaders, teachers and parents/guardians/caregivers about the SEA and SIP processes
- Auditing and completing SEA and SIP application packages to meet Ministry standards and participating in Ministry audits
- Educating students and staff about software programs and modelling how to use said programs to access the curriculum and meet the goals set out by the IEP
- Overseeing the professional development support for teachers, support staff, students and parents/guardians/caregivers regarding assistive technology programs via online resources and workshops throughout the year

### **Itinerant Teachers**

#### **Special Education and Inclusion Behaviour Itinerant Teachers**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services
- Collaborating with and supporting teachers, in both regular and special education classes, through modeling, co-planning, co-teaching, etc., in the development and implementation of a range of programming interventions, strategies and resources that address the individual identities, lived experiences, strengths and needs of students with behavioural challenges

- Supporting and collaborating with teachers in the development, implementation, and monitoring of Individual Education Plans, Behaviour Support Plans, Safety Plans, ABC Chart Data, functional behaviour approaches and procedures related to [PR 699: Managing Injury Behaviours](#)
- Communicating, as necessary, with teachers, support staff and parents/guardians/caregivers with respect to student behaviour support plans
- Providing expertise in programming and assessment for students with behavioural challenges through mentoring, modelling, and the provision of professional learning opportunities

### **Special Education and Inclusion Blind/Low Vision (BLV) Itinerant Teachers**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership in fostering equity and inclusion, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the development and implementation of programs and services
- Providing direct modelling, job-embedded professional learning and coaching to teachers and students in using BLV assistive technology on an ongoing basis
- Assisting and supporting classroom teachers in accommodating their programs/instructional materials for students who are visually impaired
- Assessing and teaching students to utilize and further develop their visual efficiency skills and to increase their tactile and auditory efficiency skills
- Providing information/goals to schools and collaborating with classroom staff to develop IEPs related to BLV Alternative Curriculum areas and write corresponding BLV Alternative Report Cards
- Teaching students with a visual impairment how to use assistive technology
- Selecting from and implementing a variety of Expanded Core Curriculum programming interventions, strategies and resources (e.g., Unified English Braille, Music Braille Code, tactile diagram reading, abacus skills, assistive technology skills, orientation and mobility skills)
- Working in partnership with the classroom teacher and support staff to enhance the development of the student's independence, communication skills and understanding of a school environment and its expectations
- Liaising with outside agencies such as the CNIB, BALANCE, and ADP

## **Special Education and Inclusion Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) Itinerant Teachers**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing programming and instruction for TDSB students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH), using an anti-oppressive stance
- Assisting and contributing to the development and implementation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students who are DHH
- In consultation with other related professionals (e.g., Audiologist, Speech Language Pathologist, Psychologist), preparing assessment reports to facilitate the determination of appropriate services and supports for students who are DHH
- Using the DHH Alternative Curriculum and Report Card Addendum effectively for students with an exceptionality of DHH
- Remaining current in technology supporting students who are DHH, including hearing aids, cochlear implants, FM systems and other related technologies
- Providing programming and instruction for TDSB students who are DHH
- Designing and assisting in the implementation of an IEP for students in the program focusing on their identities, lived experiences, strength and areas for growth
- Preparing assessment reports to facilitate the determination of appropriate services and supports for students who are DHH
- Using the Alternative Curriculum and Alternative Report Card effectively for students with an exceptionality of DHH
- Remaining current in Hearing Assistive and Remote Microphone Technologies

## **Special Education and Inclusion Assistive Technology (SEA) Itinerant Teachers**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing direct modelling, job-embedded professional learning and coaching to teachers and students in using assistive technology on an ongoing basis

- Supporting teachers/staff in using assistive technology with students so that they are able to access the curriculum and meet the goals set out by the IEP
- Assisting school staff in the development of SEA claims
- Providing and implementing effective professional learning and training regarding system initiatives and assistive technology to school staff and administration

## **Special Education and Inclusion Itinerant Resource Teachers for Secondary Alternative Programs**

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing support for instruction based on students' learning styles, identities, lived experiences, strengths and areas of growth in a variety of settings which will include Secondary Alternative School sites
- Assisting school staff in determining appropriate responses and strategies to support students with special education needs
- Working collaboratively with school staff to effectively support the classroom program for students with special education needs, focusing on their identities, lived experiences, strengths and areas for growth
- Supporting and collaborating with both special education and regular class teachers, as well as students and parents/guardians/caregivers in the development and monitoring of IEPs and transition plans to meet the exceptional needs of secondary students
- Building capacity among in-school staff who are implementing strategies for students with special education needs
- Assisting staff in the implementation of the principles of ABA as outlined in [PPM 140](#)

## **Special Education and Inclusion Resource Teachers**

### **Elementary Resource Teachers**

TDSB continues to move toward inclusionary practices. The Resource Teacher collaborates with the student's regular classroom teacher to address the needs of the student based on their identities, lived experiences and strengths. The Resource Teacher engages in co-planning and co-teaching specific parts of the curriculum and coordinates teaching responsibilities, schedules the student's day, assigns homework, and monitors the student's progress.

## **Elementary Methods and Resource Teachers (MARTs)**

This is a voluntary role for a Special Education and Inclusion teacher within each elementary school, designed to provide support to students and staff. Ongoing professional learning opportunities prepare the Special Education and Inclusion teacher to build capacity with staff by offering Special Education and Inclusion programming expertise and resources in the school.

## **Secondary Curriculum Leader/Assistant Curriculum Leader with Responsibility for Special Education and Inclusion**

In secondary schools, the Curriculum Leader (CL) or Assistant Curriculum Leader (ACL) with responsibility for Special Education and Inclusion provides support, as it relates to Special Education and Inclusion, to students and staff.

## **Elementary and Secondary Resource Program Teacher**

In both elementary and secondary schools, the Resource Program provides students with support from a Special Education and Inclusion teacher.

## **Teacher in Special Education Class - Full Time**

Teachers in full time Special Education classes work with students who require a more intensive level of support than is available through a regular class placement.

## **Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBAs)**

Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBAs) are individuals with graduate-level certification and training in Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). BCBAs utilize the science of ABA to assess behaviours and the environment to decrease challenging behaviours and support skill development. BCBAs work collaboratively with staff to build capacity within schools providing staff with the skills to identify interventions and prevention strategies to decrease the likelihood of students engaging in challenging behaviours, and increase socially significant skills, thus promoting safe and positive classroom inclusion.

BCBAs work as members of the Behavior Prevention Intervention Team and Autism Services Team, bringing expertise in the area of ABA instructional methods. BCBAs support students with a diagnosis of ASD and other students with complex and significant behavioural challenges (Tier 3 level of support).

## **DeafBlind Intervenors**

Deafblind Intervenors work with students who have been assessed by the W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind, Deafblind Resource Department as presenting as “educationally deafblind.” They have been specially trained to intervene between

students who have a dual sensory hearing and vision loss and their environments/classrooms. Following the TDSB tiered approach, Deafblind Intervenor may work with more than one student who is deafblind.

### **Educational Assistants (EAs)**

Educational Assistants (EAs) work under the direction of the principal and/or teacher. They provide assistance in the presentation of a meaningful program by involvement in classroom and playground activities, on excursions, and other areas as directed by the principal and/or teacher. Depending on their qualification categories, they support students with a variety of emotional, behavioural, physical, personal care, medical and academic needs to access the curriculum.

### **Sign Language Facilitators**

Sign Language Facilitators communicate through American Sign Language (ASL) to help make the curriculum accessible to students who use sign language as their primary method of communication.

### **Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)**

Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) are assigned to schools to assist regular or Special Education and Inclusion classroom teachers who have students with special education needs who are “high risk” (safety or medical needs) and who present a constant, immediate and extreme risk to themselves and/or others.

### **SEA Assistive Technologist, Trainers and Technical Facilitators**

Provide direct support and training in the use of specialized equipment to students with SEA (Special Equipment Amount) claims and to the staff who support them. They also set up equipment, load software and apps, connect peripherals and trouble-shoot difficulties with software and hardware.

### **The Parent/Guardian/Caregiver:**

- Becomes familiar with and informed about Board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child
  - Parents/guardians/caregivers new to any Special Education process who require assistance in understanding the system or in addressing questions specific to Special Education should contact the school principal
- Participates in IPRCs, parent/guardian/caregiver/staff conferences, and other relevant school activities

- Actively participates in the development of the IEP
- Becomes acquainted with the school staff working with the student as parents/guardians/caregivers voice is critical in setting up the student for success
- Supports the student at home
- Works with the school principal, teachers and other school staff to solve problems
- Is responsible for the student's attendance at school

## Student Roles and Responsibilities

### The Student:

- Adheres to requirements as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- Adheres to Board policies and procedures
- Participates in IPRCs, parent/guardian/caregiver/teacher conferences and other activities, as appropriate
- Participates in the development of the IEP, where appropriate, to ensure student voice and student agency

## SEAC Roles and Responsibilities

For information on the roles and responsibilities of the TDSB's SEAC, please see [Section E: Special Education Advisory Committee \(SEAC\)](#).

# Section E: SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)



[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide details of the operation of the Board's SEAC to the Ministry of Education and to give members of the public the information to which they are entitled*

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## **The Role of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

[Regulation 464/97](#) of the Education Act establishes the SEAC as a statutory committee that advises the Board on matters relating to special education and sets out its structure and mandate. TDSB SEAC follows the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Operational Procedure PR742.

Under [Regulation 464/97](#), SEAC:

- May make recommendations to the board respecting matters affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional students within the board
- Is provided with opportunities to participate in the annual review of the board's Special Education Plan
- Participates in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education
- Reviews the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education



The members of SEAC represent students with special education needs who attend schools in the Toronto District School Board. During monthly SEAC meetings, members provide input into the Board's annual program and budget planning processes as they pertain to special education.

## Meeting Times and Locations

All meetings for the 2024-2025 school year will be hybrid (in person and virtual). Meeting times and zoom links can be found on the [SEAC website](#).

## SEAC Membership

The committee currently consists of 12 representatives from local associations, 8 community representatives from four Learning Centres of the TDSB and 3 trustees. Alternate representatives attend meetings regularly and participate in discussions, but do not vote unless substituting for an official representative. As the TDSB will have a new organizational structure effective September 2024, this make up may change. Existing members will continue to the end of their current terms.

Some SEAC members are parents/guardians/caregivers of TDSB students with special education needs. In December 2023, a new Chair and Vice-Chair were elected for a one-year term. The complete SEAC membership can be found [here](#).

## Membership Selection Procedures

Eligibility requirements for representatives on SEAC are outlined in [Regulation 464/97](#) of the Education Act. SEAC appointments are for a 4-year term and are renewed at the time of municipal elections. Instructions for applying are posted [here](#).

All SEAC representatives must:

- Be qualified to vote for members of the TDSB Board of Trustees (a Canadian citizen over the age of 18 and resident in the jurisdiction)
- Not be employed by the TDSB

[Regulation 464/97](#) permits a Board to appoint community representatives to SEAC. TDSB SEAC has 8, with an equal number of alternates. Candidates for community representative self-nominate. New nominations are considered in the Fall and Spring of each year. When making community representative appointments, the Board gives additional consideration to:

- Diversity
- Geographical representation from across the TDSB
- Parents/guardians/caregivers with children receiving special education programming in the Toronto District School Board

## **SEAC Input into the TDSB Special Education Plan**

SEAC's input is a critical part in reviewing the Special Education Plan. A SEAC Special Education Plan subcommittee meets regularly and also seeks feedback from the public. Discussions during SEAC meetings and information gathered from SEAC subcommittees provide opportunities for in-depth review of Special Education and Inclusion programs and services.

## **Parents & Caregivers as Partners Conference**

The [TDSB Parents & Caregivers as Partners Conference](#) is organized by parents for parents. SEAC members work collaboratively with other TDSB Community Advisory Committees (CACs) to plan and deliver this annual conference.

In the past, partners have included advisory committees for Mental Health and Well Being; First Nation, Métis and Inuit Communities; Inner City; French as a Second Language; Equity; and parents/guardians/caregivers and central staff from Special Education and Inclusion and Professional Support Services. Through this annual conference, SEAC addresses goals such as inclusion for children with disabilities and special education needs and builds on the opportunity to empower parents/guardians/ caregivers to become informed, proactive and effective advocates for their children.

## **SEAC Contact Information**

All information pertaining to SEAC can be accessed through the links below.

### **SEAC Website:**

[TDSB SEAC Homepage](#)

### **SEAC Liaison:**

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**Email:** [lianne.dixon@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:lianne.dixon@tdsb.on.ca)

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# Section F: EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS



## FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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### ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide details of the board's assessment policies and procedures to the ministry and to make parents aware of the types of assessment tools used by the school board, the ways in which assessments are obtained by IPRCs, and the ways in which assessments are used*

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Ensuring assessment practices and learning conditions are rooted in critical consciousness ensures that no groups of students are marginalized or discriminated against ([hooks 2003](#)). 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](#) provide guidance to schools on policies and procedures for assessment, evaluation, and reporting for Kindergarten and Grades 1 to 12. The policies outlined in Growing Success, described below, reflect the current state of continuously evolving knowledge about learning.

When a teacher observes a student who has some areas for growth at school (e.g., academic, social/emotional, behavioural), the teacher will seek support through the principal and the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant. Collaboratively, they will ensure that instructional intervention strategies focus on the student's identity, lived experiences, strengths and areas for growth. Strategies need to include the following:

- Evidence of Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy, Cultural Safety and Trauma-Informed practices and assessment that reflects the student's identity and lived experiences

- Evidence of Tier 1 and Tier 2 Strategies, Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction
- Evidence of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that records and tracks any strategies implemented by the teacher(s)
- Evidence of implemented strategies recommended by the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant

Most student needs can be met in the regular classroom with Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions that consider the student's identity, lived experiences, strengths and areas for growth. If this is not possible, after careful consideration of the above and communication with parents/guardians/caregivers, the teacher may refer the student to IST and/or SST.

## Assessments by Teachers

Assessment findings provide information relevant for classroom programming, Individual Education Plans, the Provincial Report Card and Identification Placement and Review Committees. Teachers collect assessment information in a variety of ways: formal and informal observations, discussions/conversations/questioning during the learning process, student-teacher conferences, homework, group work, demonstrations/performances, projects, portfolios, developmental checklists/continua, peer and self-assessments/reflections, essays and tests. Assessment is planned at the same time as instruction, to determine what needs to be taught, guide next steps and help both teachers and students monitor and evaluate progress towards achieving learning goals.

### Kinds of Educational Assessment

Teachers carry out educational assessment as part of their on-going work with all students and for students with special education needs, throughout the development, implementation and review of Individual Education Plans (IEP). Teachers use terms such as *diagnostic*, *formative* and *summative* to describe the kinds of educational assessment that can be used for different purposes: *assessment FOR learning*, *assessment OF learning*, and *assessment AS learning*.

**Assessment FOR learning** is the process of collecting information to decide where learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. It is integral to the IEP process and can be diagnostic and/or formative in its use:

- **Diagnostic assessment** occurs before instruction begins so teachers can determine students' readiness to learn new knowledge/skills and identify their instructional needs. Teachers use the information to determine what students already know and can do with respect to the knowledge and skills outlined in the

curriculum expectations. Teachers then work with students to set appropriate learning goals and plan differentiated and personalized instruction/assessment.

- **Formative assessment** is frequent and ongoing, carried out while students are gaining knowledge and practising skills. Teachers use the information to monitor students' progress towards achieving expectations, to provide students with descriptive feedback and coaching for improvement, to plan next steps and to differentiate instruction and assessment in response to student needs.

**Assessment OF learning** is the process by which teachers record and report on student learning. This assessment is summative, occurring at or near the end of a period of learning. The information gathered is used by teachers to evaluate and communicate achievement at a given point in time, on the basis of pre-set criteria. It may also be used to plan further instruction.

For most students in Grades 1 to 12, this kind of assessment looks at achievement of the provincial curriculum expectations against Ministry established rubrics.

- For students with special education needs and for English language learners who require accommodations but do not need to have grade expectations modified, evaluation of achievement is based on the Ministry grade/course expectations and achievement levels.
- When students require modified or alternative expectations, evaluation of achievement is based on the expectations outlined in their IEPs. For this reason, it is important that IEP goals be expressed as specific and measurable outcomes.

**Assessment AS learning** is the process by which teachers help students learn how to be their own best assessors, to become independent learners. This assessment is **formative**, requiring teacher support, modelling and guidance and structured opportunities for students to assess themselves. Students learn how to monitor their own progress, recognize when they need help, advocate for themselves, adjust their approaches to learning and set new goals. These are increasingly important skills for students with special education needs as they progress through the grades.

## Diagnostic Assessment Tools for Teachers

The Ministry of Education released [Policy Program Memorandum No. 155 Diagnostic Assessment in Support of Student Learning](#) to outline how diagnostic assessment tools may be used in support of student achievement. It specifies the shared and individual responsibilities of teachers, principals, and school board staff and their collective

accountability for student achievement. PPM 155 guidelines are focused on the effective use of diagnostic assessment tools to inform teaching and learning practices in the classroom. The guidelines direct that teachers must use diagnostic assessment during the school year, selecting tools from the board's approved list and that they are to use their professional judgment when selecting and using diagnostic assessment tools.

PPM 155 guidelines do not apply to:

- Individual educational and/or professional assessments conducted to determine the special education programs and/or services required by students with special education needs
- Large Scale Assessments like EQAO (Grade 3, 6, 9 and OSSLT), Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRL), Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) and other Ministry mandated assessments.

## **Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT-7)**

The purpose of the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT-7) for Grade 3 students is to provide comprehensive information to classroom teachers about the learning strengths and areas for improvement for all students. Teachers will use the data to plan differentiated assessment and instruction for students.

The results from the CCAT-7 may also be considered by the School Support Team (SST) to determine, along with other information, if further assessment is warranted.

Central staff may also use test results to establish a basis for the evaluation of existing programs and assist in planning appropriate curriculum and instructional programs at the system level. Individual test results will be treated confidentially and any data used for purposes of reporting to the public will be done generically without disclosure of identifying information.

Information about the CCAT-7 administration process is posted on the [TDSB website](#).

## TDSB Approved List of Diagnostic Assessment Tools

Assessment/Tool	Grades/Division	Purpose	Recommended Timelines
Observation Survey	Early Years	Provides a comprehensive overview of a student's level of literacy development; measures students' skills and understanding of reading and writing	On-going
Running Records and Reading Conference	Primary	Document students' reading behaviours to determine a student's instructional reading level; to create dynamic guided reading groups; to allow for documentation of progress over time	On-going for all students; more frequently for those students who are experiencing difficulty with text (i.e., at least once every 2 weeks)
DRA	Primary K – 3 Junior 4 – 6 Intermediate 7 – 8	Provides information about individual student's skills in reading (decoding, fluency, and comprehension); assists in making instructional decisions when grouping students for modelled, shared, guided and independent reading	Senior kindergarten: Spring – only for those students demonstrating an understanding of the concepts of print Grades 1 – 8: minimally twice a year, especially for students who are at level 2 and below in reading and writing
CASI	Junior 4 – 6 Intermediate 7 – 8	Assists teachers in determining students' strengths and learning needs individually, as small groups or whole class profile; provides information on students' attitudes to reading, reading preferences and interests; assists in making instructional decisions when grouping students for modelled, shared, guided and independent reading	Grades 4 – 8: Fall and Spring Reading assessment may be administered in the middle of the year with students who require closer monitoring in reading



Literacy Success Kit	Secondary 9 – 10	Intended for Grade 9 or Grade 10 English courses or any subject; assists teachers in determining students' strengths or learning needs individually, as small groups or whole class profile	Grades 9 – 10: 4 to 6 weeks into the course in a semestered school, or 10 to 12 weeks in a non-semestered school
Le Sondage d'observations	French Immersion K – Grade 1	Provides a comprehensive overview of a student's level of literacy development; measures students' skills and understanding of reading and writing	K to Grade 1: Fall, as appropriate
Alpha Jeunes	French Immersion Grades 1 – 3	Provides information about individual student's skills in reading through miscue analysis of oral reading and assessing a retell of the text in French; Assists in making instructional decisions when grouping students for modelled, shared, guided and independent reading	K and Grade 1: students who demonstrate readiness, as appropriate Grade 1: Spring only Grades 2 to 3: Fall and Spring
Trousse Diagnostique de Lecture	French Immersion Grades 4 – 8	Assists teachers in determining students' strengths and learning needs with respect to reading comprehension and critical thinking skills and to determine appropriate teaching strategies for reading; Assists in making instructional decisions when grouping students for modelled, shared, guided and independent reading	Grade 4: Fall and Spring Grades 5 to 8: once a year in French and CASI once a year in English Middle of the year for students requiring monitoring in French, English or both
<b>Assessment/Tool</b>	<b>Grades/Division</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Recommended Timelines</b>
Burns-Roe Reading Inventory	ELD - LEAP	Determines students' levels of literacy in reading vocabulary, comprehension and decoding skills; information taken into account at the yearly LEAP review (April/May)	Twice per year – beginning and near year-end
ERGO	ESL – Elementary and Secondary	Initial assessment of oral, reading and writing skills; elementary assessment enables teachers to provide the appropriate program,	The tool is used once as initial assessment

		resources and modifications and/or adaptations to an ELL’s program; secondary version is aligned with ESL courses of study for secondary school program placement	
STEPS to English Language Proficiency	ESL	For assessing and monitoring English language learners’ language acquisition and literacy development across the Ontario curriculum (oral, reading, writing)	K to 12 initial diagnostic and at reporting intervals
<b>TDSB Approved Diagnostic Assessment Tools for K-12 Mathematics (Tier 1)</b>			
<b>Diagnostic Tool</b>		<b>Description</b>	
Core Mathematics  Resources Grades K-12		<p><u>Trillium-listed</u> core mathematics resources include materials to assess students’ prerequisite skills, concepts and vocabulary.</p> <p>Core resources contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic assessments for every chapter or unit (e.g. Getting Ready sections).</li> <li>• Additional practice resources</li> </ul> <p>French: Core mathematics resources are available</p>	
Knowledgehook  Grades: 1-10		<p>Knowledgehook is an instructional guidance system that leverages formative assessment in a game-based environment to provide insights into student mathematical learning and intervention materials to support.</p> <p>Knowledgehook contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Warm-Ups,” diagnostic assessments that cover expectations from the previous grade and provide teachers with information to determine the readiness of students for particular concepts</li> <li>• Differentiated activities to assess students’ understanding using visual prompts and virtual manipulatives</li> <li>• Teacher supports, including a background document to build teachers’ math content knowledge for teaching, a misconception chart to support addressing specific errors, and intervention questions to consolidate new learning.</li> </ul>	

	<p>French: Grades 3-10 activities and materials are available</p> <p>Knowledgehook is a district-provided tool. <a href="#">Click here to access Knowledgehook</a></p>
<p>Math Pre-Assessment (Nelson)</p> <p>Grades: 1-8</p>	<p>Math Pre-Assessment provides short, whole-class diagnostic assessments to determine the procedural knowledge and conceptual understanding of students ahead of specific grade-level learning units.</p> <p>Math Pre-Assessment contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developmental trajectories that provide a picture of math development</li> <li>• Diagnostic assessments that help to identify where a student is on the developmental trajectory</li> </ul> <p>Analysis charts to score pre-assessments and next steps for instruction, remediation and intervention</p>
<p>Mathology (Pearson)</p> <p>Grades: K-6</p>	<p>Mathology is an instructional program that provides ongoing assessment opportunities within games, books, and other learning activities, driven by the big ideas in mathematics.</p> <p>Mathology contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic activities that begin with an initial lesson or readiness tasks, based on the previous year’s expectations, to support with instructional decisions</li> <li>• Mathology “Little Books,” activity kits, and math mats to support mathematics learning in different modes</li> </ul> <p>French: Mathologie currently supports K-Grade 3 students</p>
<p>MathUP Classroom (Rubicon) Grades: K-8</p>	<p>MathUP Classroom is a comprehensive, online, K–8 instructional tool that helps build teachers’ knowledge and understanding of mathematics.</p> <p>MathUP Classroom contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic assessments using open and closed tasks for each topic</li> <li>• Activities, online games, lessons, and ongoing assessments for learning</li> </ul> <p>French: K-Grade 6 materials are currently available</p>

<p>What To Look For: Understanding and Developing Student Thinking in Early Numeracy (Pearson)</p> <p>Grades: K-3</p>	<p>What to Look For: Understanding and Developing Student Thinking in Early Numeracy is a professional learning resource with a developmental continuum for early numeracy and sample tasks that can be used to gauge students' numeracy skills.</p> <p>What to Look For contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research-based developmental continua for addition and subtraction in early numeracy</li> <li>• Descriptions of strategies, along with access to videos of students displaying those strategies</li> </ul> <p>Games to push student thinking forward</p>
<p><b>TDSB-Approved Intervention Tools for K-12 Mathematics (Tiers 2 and 3)</b></p>	
<p><b>Intervention Tool</b></p>	<p><b>Description</b></p>
<p>Gap Closing (Ontario Ministry of Education)</p> <p>Grades: 4-12</p>	<p>The Gap Closing package is designed to help teachers of Grades 4-12 provide precisely targeted remediation for students whom they identify as being significantly behind in mathematics. The goal is to close gaps in number sense so that students can be successful in learning grade-appropriate mathematics.</p> <p>Gap Closing contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a diagnostic assessment that is designed to uncover the typical problems students have with that topic</li> <li>• a set of intervention materials that includes a single-task open question and a multiple-question Think Sheet approach that teachers can select from based on the student's learning preferences and readiness</li> </ul> <p>French: Grades 4-6 number sense is available. <a href="#">Click here to access Gap Closing resources</a></p>
<p>Knowledgehook</p> <p>Grades: 1-10</p>	<p>Knowledgehook is an instructional guidance system that leverages formative assessment in a game-based environment to provide insights into student learning and intervention materials to support the development of students' conceptual understanding.</p>

	<p>Knowledgehook contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Warm-Ups,” diagnostic assessments that cover expectations from the previous grade and provide teachers with information to determine the readiness of students for particular concepts</li> <li>• Differentiated activities to assess students’ understanding using visual prompts and virtual manipulatives</li> <li>• Teacher supports, including a background document to build teachers’ math content knowledge for teaching, a misconception chart to support addressing specific errors, and intervention questions to consolidate new learning.</li> </ul> <p>French: Grades 3-10 activities and materials are available.</p> <p>Knowledgehook is a district-provided tool.  <a href="#"><u>Click here to access Knowledgehook</u></a></p>
<p>Leaps and Bounds Toward Mathematics Understanding (Nelson) Grades: 1-8</p>	<p>Leaps and Bounds Toward Mathematics Understanding is developed to help teachers support students who require additional intervention to become more successful in mathematics.</p> <p>Leaps and Bounds contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic assessment tools for each topic with answer keys that identifies gaps based on student responses</li> <li>• Background information for each topic that identifies common errors and addresses why students might be struggling with a particular topic</li> <li>• Multiple supporting activities to help students with developing conceptual understanding</li> </ul> <p>French: À pas de géant vers une meilleure compréhension des maths is available.</p>

# Assessments by Professional Support Services (PSS)

A recommendation for an individual assessment by PSS staff comes through the School Support Team (SST). The SST also considers requests for assessments from parents/guardians/caregivers, qualifying students (of age and with the cognitive capacity to understand), or outside agencies.

School-based community services are offered to students, either in-person or remotely:

- School-Based Rehab Services (Speech Therapy and OT/PT) services provided by the respective Community Treatment Centre (i.e., Children's Treatment Network or Grandview Kids)
- Nursing services for medically fragile students provided through Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS)

School-based community services staff follow the safety procedures and protocols of TDSB and require a safe, private space in schools to provide services. A recommendation for individual assessment requires the agreement of parents/guardians/caregivers or qualifying students. PSS staff will contact parents/guardians/caregivers 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.

Throughout the PSS assessment process, parents/guardians/caregivers or qualifying students are involved and at the conclusion are offered verbal and written feedback about the assessment findings. The services of a cultural or communication facilitator will be offered where necessary. Written reports are provided to parents/guardians/caregivers or qualifying students at, or close to the time of, verbal feedback.

## Child and Youth Services

Child and Youth Workers (CYWs) and Child and Youth Counsellors (CYCs) are members of PSS working in the school/program community. They collaborate with teachers, special education staff and other school community members to identify strengths and needs and offer professional supports for students and families. They participate in In-School Team (IST) and School Support Team (SST) meetings by contributing specialized knowledge. Services are provided through a referral process or through the Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) decision for placement in a classroom with CYW support. A signed referral and the informed consent of the parents/guardians/caregivers or of a student who is 12 years of age or older is always required.

CYWs and CYCs provide specialized supports to students. Their work is culturally responsive, strength-based and collaborative. Services may include counselling and interventions on matters of mental health and well-being, crisis de-escalation, social and life skill development, behavioural support, and school avoidance. An assessment informed by developmental, culturally relevant, ecological, and strength-based perspectives is completed to identify areas for programming. CYWs and CYCs build therapeutic relationships and set clear goals to ensure all students find their own path to success.

Team members are supervised by a principal for operational/day-to-day matters and their managers on professional matters. All Child and Youth Services staff are expected to adhere to the [code of ethics](#) of the Ontario Association of Child and Youth Care and the TDSB Child and Youth Services Standards of Practice. The required qualification for CYWs is a Child and Youth Care Diploma, while CYCs are required to have a Degree in Child and Youth Care or Social Work.

Child and Youth Services may include:

- Discussions with students to establish relationships, identify strengths and areas of growth and encourage student voice
- A review of the student's school records [with parent/guardian/caregiver or student consent (if older than 12 years)]
- Classroom observations
- Discussion with family to obtain relevant history and information about current strengths and areas of growth at home
- Collaboration with school personnel and other professional support services colleagues
- Contact with external agencies and service providers
- Assessment of strengths and areas of growth

- Provision of social and life skill building programming
- Use of daily life events to develop skills, understanding, and goals through genuine co-created relationships
- Group and individual short-term counselling
- Behaviour management support

## **Management of Records**

Records of identified strengths and needs, goals, interventions, programming and supports are maintained in a confidential file of Child and Youth Services as per the TDSB Child and Youth Services Standards of Practice. Rather than an assessment report, Child and Youth Services staff develop student goals, proactive strategies, and programming to meet student needs and enhance student success based on assessment outcomes.

CYCs complete a summary report at the conclusion of support. This is maintained in the confidential Child and Youth Services file and in the Ontario Student Record (OSR), with consent. CYWs on the Behaviour Prevention and Intervention Team also complete reports. These reports are maintained in the Special Education File, the confidential Child and Youth Services file and with consent in the OSR.

## **Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy (OT/PT)**

Occupational Therapists/Physiotherapists (OT/PT) collaborate with regular and special education teachers to provide consultative, culturally relevant and responsive therapeutic programming support and identity-affirming, anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and anti-ableist accommodation strategies for students with physical and/or developmental disabilities, and/or for students with safety/accessibility needs that impede access to programming and curriculum. Occupational Therapists/Physiotherapists provide timely tiered support, build capacity and provide professional learning for educators, in addition to conducting individualized assessments providing relevant neurodiverse and identity-affirming recommendations. OT/PT recommendations may include, but are not limited to, students' adaptive/daily life skills, social and play skills, executive function skills, behavioural function, pre-vocational and community living skills, transitional skills, and gross motor, fine motor and sensory motor development skills. They can provide physical-management, sensory-motor, and programming recommendations, and assist schools with referrals to and adherence of medical recommendations from Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS), as needed.



## Referrals for OT/PT Assessments

OT/PT services assessments are accessed through the School Support Team (SST), where OT/PT staff may attend. Alternatively, OT/PT services assessments may also arise through consultation with the attending Special Education and Inclusion Consultant after the SST meeting.

The referral process requires the informed consent of the parents/guardians/caregivers and/or student 18 years of age or older with the cognitive capacity for decision making. 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.

Assessments are conducted under the [Regulated Health Professions Act](#) by either Occupational Therapists or Physiotherapists registered in the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario and College of Physiotherapists of Ontario, respectively.

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

- A review of the student's school records
- Classroom observations
- An interview with parents/guardians/caregivers to obtain developmental and culturally relevant and responsive 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 school-based identity-affirming recommendations pertaining to gross/fine motor function, mobility (school/community), sensory motor/behaviour, visual motor integration and perception skills, social and play skills, executive function skills, and pre-vocational and community living skills
- Assessment and recommendations to promote safety and culturally responsive independence of activities of daily living skills (e.g., feeding, dressing, personal care), where applicable
- Assessment for equipment needs such as Special Equipment Amount (SEA) and/or supporting community access to the Assistive Devices' Program (ADP)

## Management of OT/PT Assessment Results

The results of OT/PT services assessments are communicated with parents/guardians/caregivers through an interview and/or a written report - utilizing translational and/or communication facilitators where required. Written reports are provided to the parents/guardians/caregivers and/or students 18 years of age or older who have the cognitive ability to understand at the time of verbal feedback. Reports may include, but are not limited to, recommendations for physical management (e.g., mobility, seating and positioning for function), activities of daily living skills, motor skills, executive function skills, behavioural function, social and play skills, pre-vocational and community living skills, physical and mental health and wellness, and sensory integration all considered with reverence through an identity-affirming, culturally responsive and relevant, anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and anti-ableist lens. 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 OT/PT services assessments 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 parents/guardians/caregivers. The consent of parents/guardians/caregivers is required for referral to community services for which the student may be eligible (e.g., Children's Treatment Centres, School Based Rehabilitation Services) or for a student's TDSB OT/PT report to be released to an outside agency.

## Community Resources

For any in-school nursing support, the school team is to refer to the [Home and Community Care Support Services – School Health Support Services](#) (formerly known as the LHIN).

For any in-home supports required, families may self-refer to the [Home and Community Care Support Services – Family Managed Home Care](#). Students with significant medical needs may also access [Holland Bloorview Kids' Rehabilitation Hospital](#) for clinical services within the community; a referral must be generated by a family physician or dentist to access the medical or dental services at this site.

The Home and Community Care Support Services also offers mental health and addictions nursing support; however, the referrals are to be generated by school staff.

## Psychological Services

Psychological Services staff includes Psychologists, Psychological Associates and Psychoeducational Consultants, who consult with teachers and School Support Teams (SST) about effective classroom programming to address socio-emotional, behavioural and/or learning needs. With the required permission, they conduct a comprehensive individual Psychological Assessment of students' learning, social-emotional, and behavioural functioning to diagnose disorders, identify students' learning strengths and areas of growth, and recommend effective intervention strategies. They also have a role on Identification Placement and Review Committees (IPRCs) in identifying exceptionalities and recommending program placement.

### Referrals for Psychological Assessments

The purpose of a psychological assessment is to better understand the learning, socio-emotional and/or behavioural strengths and areas of growth of a student, in order to help in the delivery of the most appropriate programming.

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 parents/guardians/caregivers 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 what they are consenting to. 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 parents/guardians/caregivers and student 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, academic skills and social-emotional functioning to assess learning strengths and areas of growth

## **Management of Psychological Assessment Results**

As outlined during the informed consent process, the results and recommendations of a psychological assessment are discussed with the parents/guardians/caregivers 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 parents/guardians/caregivers 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 Ontario Student Record (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](#). An electronic copy of the report is uploaded to a confidential records management system within the TDSB.

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.

## **Reviews of External Reports**

TDSB psychology staff review all and document their review of relevant external reports provided to the school by parents/guardians/caregivers in a Consultation Note. The purpose of this process is to document that psychology staff have read the report so as to inform next steps. External reports may include, but are not limited to, Psychological and/or Psychoeducational Assessment Reports, Developmental Assessment Reports, Psychiatric Reports, and Medical Reports.

Once a parent/guardian/caregiver provides the school team with a copy of an external assessment report, the school administrator will generate a permission form, giving permission for TDSB psychology staff to review the report and provide written and verbal consultation to the school team.

A decision will be made by the school administrator as to whether the team will need to convene the School Support Team (SST) to discuss the assessment report and recommendations. The SST will recommend whether or not to proceed to an IPRC.

A copy of the Consultation Note will be provided to the parent/guardian/caregiver, and a copy is placed in the student's OSR. The Consultation Note and a copy of the external report are maintained in the confidential files of Psychological Services in accordance with the [Psychology Act](#) and the [Regulated Health Professions Act](#).

## **Social Work**

School Social Workers are members of PSS and are closely affiliated with schools to provide a variety of support to students, families and school staff. School Social Workers participate on School Support Teams (SST), contributing specialized knowledge, culturally responsive and relevant practices and resources, mental health and wellness strategies as well as healthy home life and student achievement practices. School Social Workers also conduct assessments to identify social, emotional and behavioural factors that can impact a student's ability to make the most productive use of the learning environment.

### **Referrals for Social Work Assessments**

A referral to Social Work can be initiated through the SST, which includes a social worker, through referrals from principals, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers, or through self-referral by students themselves or at any time on an as-needs basis. This includes requests for culturally specific social workers. Social Work assessments require the informed consent of the parents/guardians/caregivers or of a student who is 12 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' experience working with children and youth. 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 parents/guardians/caregivers 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

There is typically no wait time for social work 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 from the parents/guardians/caregivers or from students 12 years of age or older.

## **Management of Social Work Assessment Results**

As outlined during the informed consent process, recommendations and reports are discussed with the parents/guardians/caregivers and/or students (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 Pathology Services**

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 Grade 3 who have oral language delays and disorders that may affect literacy, academic, and social development.

## **Referrals for Speech and Language Assessments**

Speech-Language Pathology assessments evaluate students' communication skills in the areas of oral language (e.g., comprehension, expression, vocabulary, phonological awareness), speech (e.g., articulation, stuttering, voice/resonance), augmentative and

alternative communication (AAC) and related difficulties in literacy development and functional social communication, distinguishing second-language issues (e.g., ELL, ELD) from language disorders.

A Speech-Language Pathology 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 parents/guardians/caregivers, or of the student 18 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.

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 parents/guardians/caregivers 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, articulation, fluency, voice skills and reading and writing skills to assess learning strengths and areas of growth

Average wait times for an assessment vary anywhere from a few months to a year, although the majority of students are seen within six 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 Speech Language Assessment Results**

Speech-Language Pathology 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



parents/guardians/caregivers through an interview. A copy of any written report is provided to parents/guardians/caregivers or qualifying students 18 years of age or older and having the cognitive ability to understand, at or close to the time of verbal feedback.

As outlined during the informed consent process, the results of the speech and language assessment are discussed with relevant teachers and professional support staff for educational planning and programming purposes. A copy of the report is kept in the Ontario Student Record (OSR). The consent of parents/guardians/caregivers 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 of Professional Assessment Information and Privacy**

The [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(MFIPPA\)](#) requires that Professional Support Services (PSS) staff receive explicit written or verbal consent from parents/guardians/caregivers or the 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 or information with persons outside of the TDSB will only occur with the expressed written permission of the parents/guardians/ caregivers, or qualifying student, except as required by law (as per the [Personal Health Information Protection Act](#)). Further information about the privacy rights of parents/guardians/caregivers is detailed in a [PHIPA Privacy Statement](#), posted on the Board's public website under Professional Support Services.

The TDSB Policy [PR 677 Recorded Information Management](#) requires that PSS 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.



# Section G: EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

A dark blue speech bubble icon with the word "FEEDBACK" written in white capital letters inside.

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide details of the board's early identification procedures and intervention strategies to the ministry and to the public*

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All children enter school capable, competent and ready to learn. Full day Kindergarten supports a strong two-year foundation for future learning. The TDSB is committed to creating Early Years learning environments where children feel a sense of joy, belonging and engagement, in spaces where they feel safe, are motivated to learn and are eager to be part of the school experience. The experiences and developments in the early years are broad and are situated in relationships and social competencies which are key aspects of programming in Kindergarten - Grade 2. As educators differentiate instruction in the early years, students should be able to access learning and experiences that are optimal for their own individual growth. In very few cases, Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) are available for students of kindergarten age who have complex needs.

## **Early and Ongoing Identification and Intervention**

Early and ongoing identification and intervention are recognized by the TDSB as contributing to the well-being of all children and to better outcomes for students. The standard of practice includes early identification of learning needs, use of appropriate teaching strategies, ongoing assessment and open communication with parents/guardians/caregivers and students. Following their registration in the TDSB, most children will attend the regular classroom in the neighbourhood school, where ongoing assessment and monitoring is a continuous process. Strategies to identify each student's level of development, learning abilities and areas for improvement are expected to be implemented in all classrooms. Through ongoing assessment, teachers are expected to identify areas of growth in a timely way and design educational programs to accommodate those needs while facilitating each student's growth and development.

As stated in Ministry of Education [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 11](#):

These procedures are a part of the continuous assessment and program planning process which should be initiated when a child is first enrolled in school and no later than the beginning of the program of studies immediately following Kindergarten and should continue throughout a child's school life.

TDSB procedures for early and ongoing identification:

- Comply with Ministry of Education PPM No.11 and the requirements of the TDSB Special Education Plan
- Ensure that schools are able to identify each student's level of development, learning abilities, and needs upon entering the TDSB
- Support successful transitions to school
- Enable teachers to use the information to plan appropriate instruction for all students
- Provide the starting point for ongoing identification and tracking of students atrisk
- Provide relevant data related to student development and needs, which can be used to track students over time
- Provide schools with information to identify trends and patterns in the school community

The TDSB believes it is critical that early and ongoing identification and intervention strategies for students at risk be a priority in all grades, not just the primary grades, enabling the development and implementation of appropriate Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Transition Plans when needed.

### **TDSB Developmental History Form**

[Operational Procedure PR 512](#) explains use of the TDSB [New Student Registration: Developmental History Form](#) in early identification, providing a system-wide process for gathering important information from parents/guardians/caregivers. The form is completed by parents/guardians/caregivers or can be completed with the assistance of school staff.

The school principal ensures there is a scheduled time for parents to meet with the child's teacher to discuss the information provided in the Developmental History Form. Translators/communication facilitators are also arranged by the principal when needed. Parents/guardians/caregivers are asked to share with the school their knowledge about their child's pre-school development, family background and health history. The information collected is used by teachers to support program planning when students first enter school (up to and including Grade 2). The Developmental History Form is filed in the child's OSR and the principal/vice-principal and child's teacher(s) have access to the information in the form. The principal is expected to ensure that school staff review the information and use it to support the learning needs of students.

When completing the form or meeting with the teacher, parents/guardians/caregivers may indicate that their child has special education needs and they are encouraged to share any pertinent documents or assessments from doctors and other professionals. This requires an [Informed Consent for the Release of Confidential Information Form](#) signed by parents/guardians/caregivers.

## Transition Planning for School Entry

At any grade level, some students with special education needs may require transition planning prior to school entry or before attending a new school. Transition planning generally involves the principal or a designate, the teacher, special education staff and the parents/guardians/caregivers. It may require involvement of the School Support Team (SST) to determine the kinds of supports a student will need on entering school. If appropriate, other Board professional staff and agency personnel may be consulted.

Transition planning occurs for a child who is:

- Receiving service through Preschool Initiative programs
- Receiving specialized support in a preschool childcare, nursery school, hospital program, at home, or through private consultants
- Returning from a specialized placement, such as a diagnostic setting
- Exiting an Intensive Behaviour Intervention Program (IBI) to enter full time school (Connections Initiative)

A Transition Plan may recommend the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP). It may recommend referral to the School Support Team (SST) to consider the student's needs. The SST has access to TDSB Professional Support Services staff to assist the teacher in successfully programming for a student with special education needs and for determining appropriate next steps.

A child who requires a school-entry Transition Plan will be monitored through a school team process involving the In-School Team (IST) and/or School Support Team (SST). A child may also be referred to the IST or SST based on information in the Developmental History Form. The school teams may:

- Recommend strategies for in-class and/or home support
- Develop a plan for in-school support
- With parental permission, request additional information (e.g., assessments) from professional support services to clarify the child's strengths and areas of growth (SST only)
- Initiate the process for an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meeting (SST only)

For a small number of eligible students who are newly registered but not yet attending a TDSB school and have complex physical and/or medical disabilities as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC), the SST may request a Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC) meeting. If parents/legal guardians are in agreement, a SEPRC recommendation can facilitate placement in a timely manner in a full-time special education class designed to support students with more complex disability needs.

## **Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC)**

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) believes all students enter school capable, competent and ready to learn. As is set out in the Education Act, TDSB adheres to Regulation 181/98 which states that all students will be welcomed, registered and placed in their neighborhood school in a regular class when new to the school district. TDSB recognizes that there are some new students with complex disabilities and complex medical/physical/safety and/or complex special education needs whose needs cannot be met in a regular class for even a short period of time, as they require specialized equipment and/or a specialized placement.

The Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) protects students with disabilities from discrimination and harassment: “Disability covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. There are physical, mental and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, mental health disabilities and addictions, environmental sensitivities, and other conditions” (OHRC).

As part of the Duty to Accommodate, TDSB implements a process to specifically address timely entry to school for new students with complex disabilities and complex medical/physical/safety needs and/or complex special education needs. This process is called the Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC). The SEPRC is a TDSB-specific operational process that supports entry to school for students who are not yet students of the TDSB and who are within the low incidence disability classification. Students meeting the criteria for a SEPRC may also have a combination of intellectual communication and/or behavioural needs, including persistent challenges in daily living. They may also be students in need of care, treatment or rehabilitation through Education and Community Partnership Programs (ECPPs).

Usually, these are students who have been receiving intensive, full-time special education class support in other school systems including out of province, or specialized preschool/daycare prior to their arrival in the TDSB.

All students who do not have complex medical/physical/safety needs and/or complex disabilities and as per Regulation 181/98, will begin in their homeschool in a regular class with support. For these students, teachers will design an educational program based on the student’s strengths and areas of growth by incorporating principles of Universal

Design for Learning (UDL), Differentiated Instruction (DI) and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP) to monitor the students' progress and development through an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Based on on-going assessment and evaluation and in collaboration with the principal, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) may be considered through the Referral Process.

### **SEPRC Structure**

The SEPRC is made up of the following members:

- Principal (Chair) who is not associated with the student or the student's school
- Special Education and Inclusion Coordinator or centrally Assigned Principal
- Psychological Services Representative or Psychology Manager

### **SEPRC Steps**

Parents/legal guardians of a child with complex disabilities or with complex special education needs whose needs cannot be met in a regular class for even a short period of time as they require specialized equipment and/or a specialized placement seeking an Intensive Support Program (ISP) upon enrollment, pre-register the student in the home school by address. They share any educational, behavioural, medical/health (hearing, vision, physical, neurological), psychological, speech/language, occupational/physiotherapy assessments or other relevant documentation with the school principal. The principal will consult with the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant to determine whether the student meets the criteria for a SEPRC. Parents/legal guardians may decline a SEPRC, in which case their child will attend the homeschool.

The following steps are followed when initiating a SEPRC:

- 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.
- The principal will complete and send the referral package in a timely manner to the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant only for students with complex disabilities or complex special education needs.
- Once the referral package is reviewed for eligibility and approved for a SEPRC by the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant and Coordinator, an invitation letter to a SEPRC meeting is prepared and sent to the parents/legal guardians/caregivers, and a copy is sent electronically to the home school principal.
- Parents/legal guardians return the response form to staff at their home school or confirm their attendance by telephone to staff at the home school, who then notifies the appropriate Special Education and Inclusion Coordinator.

- Parents/legal guardians receive a copy of all documentation to be considered at the SEPRC with the letter of invitation and a copy of the Parent's Guide to Special Education.

### **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 from their specialized preschool/daycare or other school
- 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/assessment
- Student work samples that reflect that the teacher's pedagogy is responsive to the child's identity and lived experiences and is culturally relevant (part of the school presentation)
- Any documents which the parents/legal guardians may deem relevant to a SEPRC

### **Attendance at and Presentations to a SEPRC**

Since students presented to a SEPRC are not yet TDSB students, parents/legal guardians **must** be in attendance for the SEPRC meeting to proceed:

- The principal from the referring school arranges for an interpreter to assist the parents/legal guardians when 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.
- The SEPRC Chair invites parents/legal guardians and any other attendees such as any resource staff currently involved with the student to attend the meeting in order 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.

- Principals work with families to ensure they feel supported through this process by acknowledging and validating their voice, identity, lived experiences, culture and any concerns prior to attending the SEPRC. The Principal ensures that the parent or legal guardian fully understands all documentation, placement options and pathways that the SEPRC may lead to for their child.

### **Functions of the SEPRC**

As part of the TDSB duty to accommodate students with complex medical/physical/safety needs and/or complex disabilities as per the Ontario Human Rights Code, should a parent or legal guardian request an Intensive Support Program (ISP) when registering the new student to TDSB, a SEPRC is arranged to determine eligibility for a special education class placement of a pre-registered but not yet attending student in the TDSB, 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 placement (an IPRC decision is required to formally identify a student as exceptional)
- Provide a written statement of recommendations outlining the student's strengths and areas of growth and any program/services recommendations of the SEPRC

### **Required Follow-Up to the SEPRC**

Where special education class placement has been recommended and accepted by parents/legal guardians, the student will be offered a placement and a visit will be arranged at the offered location.

Referral for a follow-up Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meeting must be made at the school where the special education class (ISP) is located. The IPRC should be convened after the student has been in the ISP for a period of approximately 6 to 9 months and where possible before the end of the school year based on the timelines of the student's entry into the TDSB. An exception to the 6 to 9 month provision involves students in the Diagnostic Kindergarten (DK) Program. Students in Junior Kindergarten will have their program recommendation re-evaluated in the spring at a School Support Team (SST) meeting, to determine if the recommended full-time support should continue for senior kindergarten, and will have an IPRC during their final Kindergarten year in preparation for the primary division.

### **SEPRC 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 TDSB. 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 (decisions of the IPRC can be appealed).

When the parents/legal guardians decide not to accept a SEPRC recommended placement or when special education class placement is not recommended by the SEPRC, the student will attend the neighbourhood school and is provided support through the school's special education resources. The nature of support will be determined through the school's IST (In-School Team) or SST (School Support Team) process.

Parents/legal guardians continue to have the right to request (in writing to the principal) that the student be considered for special education class placement by an IPRC.

### **Student profile is within the SEPRC criteria, but homeschool is preferred**

When a parent or legal guardian of a student with complex disabilities and/or complex medical/physical/safety needs chooses to register at the home school and does not request a SEPRC for direct access to an Intensive Support Program (ISP), the home school will welcome and register the child in a regular class. The principal will collect supporting documentation of the child's complex disabilities and/or complex medical/physical/safety needs. The principal will contact the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant to ensure appropriate support is provided for the student and for classroom staff.

In collaboration with the Early Years Advisory Committee and the Child Care Committee, selected preschool programs and agencies serving students in the Low Incidence category (developmental disability, physical disability) receive correspondence and presentations annually in January regarding the entry process for students new to TDSB. Principals are informed of this process so they may share information with their communities. The selected preschool programs and agencies forward names of potential students to the Special Education Coordinators who then bring names forward to schools for a SEPRC.

## **Entry Plan for Students with Special Education Needs**

### **New students entering Kindergarten and SEPRC**

All new students entering Kindergarten are to register at their homeschool. If a new Kindergarten student has complex disabilities and/or complex medical/physical/safety needs or is enrolled in a specialized preschool/daycare, The Hospital for Sick Children, Holland Bloorview Hospital-Support Kids Rehabilitation or if the student is receiving intensive support that specifically addresses complex disabilities and/or complex medical/physical/safety needs in another school system including out of province, the



SEPRC process may be initiated should the parent or legal guardian make the request. Students in this group should register 9-12 months in advance. This also includes students in need of care, treatment or rehabilitation through Education and Community Partnership Programs (ECPP).

When students are new to Canada and are not affiliated with the supports listed above, the school will collect all medical documentation from the family and work with the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant to support as appropriate.

For new kindergarten students who are not within the Low Incidence category (developmental disability, physical disability) or who do not have complex disability needs, the home school will welcome and register the student. The student will access learning opportunities alongside their peers. The student will be monitored and supported by the classroom teacher with on-going assessment and evaluation, and an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP) as per the Referral Process, if required. An IPRC will take place only if the family is seeking an Intensive Support Program (ISP).

Children who have attained the age of three years and who have a significant hearing loss, may qualify for a special education class placement in TDSB’s Deaf and Hard of Hearing preschool programs.

The chart below refers to the Entry Plan and Timelines for students who fall within the TDSB Low Incidence category of developmental disabilities and physical disabilities including blind/low vision and deaf /hard of hearing, and students with complex medical needs.

<b>Entry Plan for Students with Special Education Needs</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Presentations are made annually to outside agencies regarding the entry process for students new to TDSB.	Special Education Staff Professional Support Services	January
TDSB will send a letter regarding pre- registration to selected preschool programs serving students with special needs.	Special Education Staff	January

A letter will also be distributed through the Early Years Advisory Committee and the Child Care Committee. Principals will be informed.	Early Years Advisory Committee  Child Care Committee	January
Preschool programs/agencies forward names of potential students to Special Education Coordinators.	Preschools//Agencies	Upon receipt of TDSB letter
Special Education Coordinators will notify TDSB schools of pending pre-registrations.	Special Education Staff	Upon receipt of information
<b>Please note the following:</b>		
Children who have attained the age of three years and who have a significant hearing loss may qualify for a special education class placement in our Deaf and Hard of Hearing preschool programs.	Coordinator – Deaf and Hard of Hearing	Ongoing
Children who have an autism spectrum disorder may receive additional transitional support (e.g., Connections for Students).	Coordinator – Autism Services	Ongoing

## Early Years Intervention Programs

Following through on its commitment to meet the needs of all students, the TDSB implements a needs-based delivery model within a full continuum of special education programs and services. Interventions are tiered, offering differing degrees and kinds of assistance to help students be more successful.

Full understanding of a student's learning profile is necessary to determine appropriate programs and services to address learning needs. For all students, including students in kindergarten, teachers collect information through classroom observation and assessment, a review of support strategies, and consultation with parents/guardians/caregivers and special education staff. With parental permission, information from professional assessments and/or community-based resource people is also reviewed. Teachers use this information to plan precise and personalized learning for students.

Interventions and their success are monitored by the classroom teacher, with consultative assistance available to every school. Teachers can consult their In-School Team (IST) for teaching and classroom management strategies to meet the needs of their students. For more complex or persistent issues, they can consult their School Support Team (SST) to access specialized consultation, action-planning, targeted intervention and staff coaching to meet a wide variety of student needs. Teachers are required to keep parents/legal guardians informed about difficulties experienced by their child and the kinds of supportive interventions put in place.

There are three Early Years Intervention programs that are specific to student learning profiles:

- Diagnostic Kindergarten Program (DK)
- JK/SK Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Co-enrollment Program
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Preschool Program

## **Diagnostic Kindergarten (DK) Program**

The Diagnostic Kindergarten (DK) Program is designed to provide careful planning and teaching of specifically targeted skills and alternative curriculum.

Students referred to Diagnostic Kindergarten are within the TDSB Low Incidence disability category (developmental disabilities, physical disabilities). This includes students who have complex medical and/or cognitive needs which may include a combination of intellectual, communication, and behavioural needs, including persistent challenges in daily living.

Diagnostic Kindergarten programs have one teacher, an educational assistant and a noon hour assistant. A partnership between Professional Support Services (PSS) and outside agencies is a valued component in the provision of support to staff and parents/guardians/caregivers. The DK class size is 8; however, enrolment may be impacted by students who are in partial attendance due to their participation in non-TDSB programs [e.g., Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI), medical treatment] or who are integrated for parts of the day in the regular kindergarten program.

Following placement in a DK program and prior to Grade 1, students are referred to an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) to determine if the student is an exceptional learner and to recommend the required supports for the upcoming school year.

### **Eligibility for the Diagnostic Kindergarten (DK) Program**

Kindergarten-aged students are offered placement in Diagnostic Kindergarten (DK) programs following either a decision by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) or, for students not yet attending a TDSB school, the recommendation of a Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC). Only if the JK/SK student is within the TDSB Low Incidence disability category (developmental disabilities, physical disabilities) and has complex medical and/or cognitive needs which may include a combination of intellectual, communication, and behavioural, including persistent challenges in daily living, are they eligible for the DK program.

For DK placement consideration, an IPRC or SEPRC referral is completed and submitted by the school following the established TDSB processes. The following documentation must be provided:

- [Developmental History Form](#)
- At least two of the following:
  - Medical assessment/diagnosis
  - A developmental assessment
  - A psychological assessment
  - A comprehensive speech/language assessment
  - A current observational summary, which includes information around academic skills, activities of daily living, fine and gross motor skills and other relevant information

For students not yet attending school, a preschool/daycare report may also be included. For students already attending school, the following are also required:

- Individual Learning Plan (ILP) indicating recommendation to go to IPRC
- Kindergarten Communication of Learning, if there has been a reporting period
- Individual Education Plan (IEP) if the student has been in school long enough for its development

### [Locations of Diagnostic Kindergarten Programs](#)

## **Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Co-enrollment and Preschool Programs**

The TDSB recognizes the importance of early intervention and can serve students who require Deaf and Hard of Hearing support from the age of 3 through placement in a preschool class. Upon entry to school, students with Deaf and Hard of Hearing needs have access to a Specialist Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. These itinerant teachers have specialized qualifications approved by the Ministry of Education that enable them to recommend the necessary accommodations and/or programming modifications to meet the educational needs of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Based on student need, these teachers work closely with the TDSB Educational Audiologist to determine the appropriate FM technology that works with the student's Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT). When warranted, itinerant teachers facilitate access to the curriculum through direct instruction from kindergarten to completion of secondary school.

The DHH Preschool Program is a half day morning or afternoon program capped at a class size of 8 students. The co-enrollment JK/SK program is a full day program similar to Kindergarten, capped at a class size of 8 students.

### **Eligibility for DHH Co-enrollment and Preschool Program**

Where more intensive support is required, placement in a Special Education Class may be the decision of the IPRC, based on the student's learning profile and severity of hearing loss. Typically, students who are eligible for Special Education Class placement with intensive program support:

- Are identified with a Deaf and Hard of Hearing exceptionality due to a significant hearing loss through a TDSB IPRC; and
- Are assessed as having expressive and receptive language delays due to a significant hearing loss, requiring modifications and/or accommodations, instruction by a specialist teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and a smaller student teacher ratio.

## Section H:

# THE IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS AND APPEALS

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### FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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#### ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide details of the board's IPRC process to the ministry and to the public*

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Most students are successful with assessment and instruction in the regular classroom. Some students require support beyond those ordinarily received through usual 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 and Inclusion.

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 parents/guardians/caregivers do 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, based on 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 each school year

Parents/guardians/caregivers and students aged 16 or older, will receive an invitation and have the right to attend the IPRC meeting either in-person or virtually. In making its decisions, the IPRC will consider a package of information prepared by the student's school, as well as information contributed by anyone else attending the meeting.

Parents/guardians/caregivers receive a copy of the IPRC package in advance, as well as a copy of the [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#), 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 areas for growth, 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 Elementary, 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
- Placement preference of parents/guardians/caregivers

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 identity, lived experiences, learning strengths and needs. IPRC requests are made by the school principal on recommendation of the SST or following a written request by the parent/guardian/caregiver.

The role of the IPRC is to review assessment and evaluation material about a student. The IPRC will decide if a student is exceptional and if so, the committee members will 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 all students identified as exceptional. This is an important process that allows for review of students' progress, especially students in Intensive Support Programs (ISPs). It is the intention that a student in an ISP is there for a short duration and will return to the regular classroom with special education support as needed. Students' progress, strengths and needs are discussed at an IPRC review. As with an original IPRC, the committee will decide if a student is exceptional and if so, the committee specifies the type of exceptionality and determines an appropriate placement for the student: Regular Class or Special Education Class. IPRC meetings are available to parents/guardians/caregivers either in-person or remotely using an AODA platform.

## **IPRC Decisions about Exceptionality**

At the IPRC meeting, the specific nature of the student's learning strengths and needs are identified. Based on 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:

### **Communicational**

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

### **Intellectual**

- Developmental Disability
- Giftedness
- Mild Intellectual Disability

### **Behavioural**

- Behaviour



## Multiple

- Multiple Exceptionalities

The TDSB believes students are better served by listing each of their exceptionalities on the Statement of Decision completed at the IPRC.

## Physical

- Blind/Low Vision
- Physical Disability

For detailed information about the Ministry definitions of exceptionalities and placement criteria used in the TDSB, please refer to [Section J: Special Education Placements Provided by the Board](#).

## IPRC Decisions about Placement

Under Ontario [Regulation 181/98](#), when a student is identified as exceptional, the IPRC will also decide placement for the student, using TDSB criteria and taking into account parent preference. Ontario Regulation 181/98 requires school boards to consider placing exceptional students into regular classes before considering placement in special education classes.

### 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 (IEP), school-based special education teacher support and when required, Professional Support Services (PSS) available to schools on a referral basis.

**Regular Class** is an IPRC placement decision for students with special education needs who receive more than 50% of their instructional time in a regular classroom from a regular class teacher. The IPRC can choose from three Regular Class support settings: Indirect Support, Resource Assistance (Elementary), or Withdrawal Assistance.

**Regular Class with Indirect Support** The student will attend a regular class for the entire school day and receive direct instruction from a regular classroom teacher, who receives specialized consultative services from a special education teacher.

**Regular Class with Resource Assistance (Elementary)** The student will attend a regular class and receive 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 will attend a regular class and receive instruction outside the regular classroom for part of the school day from a special education teacher(s).

In **elementary** schools, Regular Class placement is at the neighbourhood school with support delivered through resource assistance. Indirect Support and Resource Assistance or Withdrawal Assistance is provided by a Special Education and Inclusion teacher on staff. The model of Resource Assistance is responsive to each student's needs.

In **secondary** schools, there are two regular class placement settings available:

**Regular Class with Indirect Support** - provided by the regular subject teachers liaising with the school's Special Education Curriculum Leader (CL) or Assistant Curriculum Leader (ACL) about student needs. Teachers are expected to support students through strategies outlined in their IEP.

**Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance** - provided through either non-credit support and/or credit special education course options for students with IEPs. These include:

- Secondary Resource Program (RSE-non credit)
- Secondary Learning Strategies (GLE- credit)
  - Students with IEPs may earn up to four GLE credits during their high school years.

School-based support is provided by a special education teacher on staff. Support can also include course modifications that permit credit accumulation and access to compulsory and/or optional credit courses designed to provide further learning opportunities.

## Special Education Class Placement

According to the [Ministry of Education](#), before the IPRC considers placing the student in a special education class, it must consider whether placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services will:

- meet the student's needs
- be consistent with the parent's preferences

The [OHRC Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities](#) confirms the need for special education setting options: Before considering placing a student in a self-contained or specialized classroom, **education providers must first consider inclusion in the regular classroom.**

In most cases, with appropriate supports, a student will be accommodated in the regular classroom. However, every student is unique. To provide appropriate accommodation to all students with special education needs, 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 – **Partial Integration** or **Full Time**.

**Special Education Class with Partial Integration** The student will attend a special education class and will be integrated within a regular class for part of the student's instructional program (for a minimum of one instructional period daily). This placement can be delivered through a special education Intensive Support Program (ISP) with daily opportunities for integration.

In TDSB secondary schools, an IPRC decision for Special Education Class with Partial Integration recommends placement in a special education program at an integrated secondary school site with both regular and special education programs. In addition to the Secondary Resource Program (RSE) and Secondary Learning Strategies (GLE) courses, support may also include course modifications that permit credit accumulation and access to compulsory and/or optional credit courses designed to provide further learning opportunities. The Principal of the secondary school shall decide whether the credit will be granted based on the degree of modifications required by the student to access the course concepts, skills and knowledge. The student and parents/guardians/caregivers will be consulted during this process and the school principal makes the final decision regarding the credit.

**Special Education Class Full Time** The student will attend a special education class for the entire school day.

For TDSB elementary/secondary school students, these Intensive ISPs are characterized by smaller 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 for a limited duration and reviewed annually. Successful reintegration into the

regular program is the ultimate goal. Throughout a full-time placement, efforts are made to increasingly integrate the student in regular school programs and activities.

Special Education Class placements are typically located in designated neighbourhood schools. The number and location of the classes are determined by the profiles and numbers of students requiring them across the TDSB. 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 and communication skills.

### **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 TDSB in conjunction with parents/guardians/caregivers. In some very complex cases that meet specified admission criteria, parents/guardians/ caregivers may choose to investigate other options to meet their child's needs. [Special Education and Inclusion - Education and Community Partnership Program \(ECP\)](#) can provide different kinds of care or treatment appropriate to a student's needs.

Parents/guardians/caregivers can initiate direct applications for admission to ECP agencies. ECP also has a central intake process that can be initiated through the home school. School board staff may be able to assist in gathering the required documentation for central intake or for direct parental contact with agencies.

### **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 (SST) for consideration of additional assessment information, resources and strategies to support the educational programming of the student.

### **Family of Schools and Original IPRCs**

Each of the four regional Learning Centres in the TDSB are organized into clusters of schools called Family of Schools. Within each Family of Schools, a team is established to meet as the IPRC for the 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 an IPRC Review. When a change in exceptionality, a move between

schools, or a substantial increase or change in support may be needed for a student, then an IPRC is required.

Principals are invited by Special Education and Inclusion to be the Chair of a Family of Schools IPRC. Principal Chairs are expected to have a deep understanding of Anti-Ableism, Anti-Oppression, Anti-Black Racism, Anti-Indigenous Racism, Human Rights, Equity, Inclusion and Special Education. At times, a Supervisory Officer may join the IPRC as an additional member or as Chair designate. Meetings take place either in-person or virtually in one of the Family of Schools.

The Family of Schools IPRC is made up of the following members:

- Principal (Chair) not associated with the student or the student's school
- Special Education and Inclusion Coordinator (associated with the Family of Schools)
- Psychological Services Professional (generally not associated with the student)

## **The IPRC Process**

Only students enrolled in and already attending a TDSB school are eligible for an IPRC. Principals work with families to ensure they feel supported through this process.

Principals also acknowledge and validate parents/guardians/caregivers voice, identity, culture and any parental concerns prior to attending the IPRC.

Parents/guardians/caregivers should fully understand all documentation, placement options and pathways that the IPRC may lead to. For more information regarding secondary pathways and requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), the Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) and the Certificate of Accomplishment, please refer to the [Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Program Requirements](#).

## **IPRC Referral Steps**

Parents/guardians/caregivers or the principal may request an IPRC:

- The principal makes a request on the 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 and Inclusion 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 and parents/guardians/caregivers
- Within 15 days of a written request by parents/guardians/caregivers for an IPRC, the principal must provide parents/guardians/caregivers with a copy of the [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#) and a written statement of approximately when the committee will meet
- At least ten days before an IPRC meeting, parents/guardians/caregivers 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 parents/guardians/caregivers have any additional documentation for consideration by 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 for an IPRC:

- An educational assessment (as per [Regulation 181/98, s. 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 (e.g., medical diagnosis, audiology report)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team (SST) meeting reflective of culturally relevant and responsive strategies, and containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC
- Other relevant information gathered by the SST
- Student work samples that reflect that the teacher's pedagogy is responsive to the child's identity and lived experiences and is culturally relevant (part of the school presentation)
- Any documents which parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant to an IPRC

- A record of consultation with parents/guardians/caregivers

## **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 and Inclusion. Meetings take place either in-person or virtually at a local school.

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

- Centrally Assigned Principal of Special Education and Inclusion (Chair)
- Special Education and Inclusion 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. 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 and Inclusion Consultant (associated with the school)
- School Special Education Teacher
- School Classroom Teacher

## **Process for Annual Review IPRCs**

Annual Review IPRCs are planned yearly 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 IPRC Reviews are generally at a school within the Family of Schools other than the student's own school. Typically, Central Reviews are held at a Learning Centre Board site.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are encouraged and entitled to attend the annual review for their child. Although parents/guardians/caregivers can give written notice to the school principal to waive the annual review, this opportunity to engage the

school in discussion in establishing goals and support for the upcoming year is essential for programming.

- Parents/guardians/caregivers 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 are considered 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](#), educational assessments may include a range of tools, including classroom observation, classroom assessments, commonly used school board assessments and teacher-created assessments

### **Attendance at the IPRC**

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

### **Presentations to an IPRC**

- The IPRC Chair ensures introductions of all in attendance are made, sets the tone of a welcoming and supportive environment, and invites parents/guardians/ caregivers and any other attendees to participate in the discussions about the student



- Parents/guardians/caregivers introduce themselves as they are critical to this process and their voices and concerns are valued as they know their child best
- The student's school administrator provides context for the IPRC through a general overview of the student's educational history, honouring the child's identity, lived experiences and strengths
- The school staff provides a detailed summary of the student's current strengths and needs, academic performance and presenting issues. Culturally relevant and responsive teaching strategies and interventions that have been 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, and the student's OSR should be available

### **Functions of the IPRC**

The IPRC will:

- Describe and provide a statement of the student's strengths and needs
- Following the discussion at the IPRC, after all the information has been presented and considered, make its decision
- 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 fulltime
- 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 Statement of Decision and any program/services recommendations made

## 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.

## Resolving Identification or Placement Conflict/Issues

In situations where there is disagreement, effective communication is essential to clarify information and resolve conflict/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](#) that outlines steps to be taken in addressing concerns with the school staff and administration. The Parent Concern Protocol establishes procedures for addressing parent/guardian/caregiver concerns related to education. A concern can be a school-related problem or issue affecting a child, families or the community.

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

- Principals ensure that parents/guardian/caregivers receive a copy of the [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#)
- Parents/guardians/caregivers consult with the school principal and/or special education staff to clarify decisions of the IPRC
- The Centrally Assigned Principal of Special Education and Inclusion for the appropriate Learning Centre provides information to all parties to assist with procedures and protocols

Where parents/guardians/caregivers 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 a resolution not be achieved, the parents/guardians/caregivers may proceed with a formal appeal.

## IPRC Appeal Process

The appeal process is fully detailed in [Regulation 181/98 \(VI, s. 26\)](#). As part of the IPRC process, principals ensure that parents/ guardians/caregivers receive a copy of the [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#) which outlines the entire IPRC process, including how to appeal decisions.

In the TDSB, 4,037 IPRC referrals were initiated during the 2023-2024 school year; there were 0 appeals this year; 929 Central IPRC Reviews that were completed and 9,291 annual IPRC Reviews that took place as many parents/guardians/caregivers had requested in writing to waive the annual IPRC Review.

### **English Language Learners (ELL) with Special Education Needs**

TDSB has a protocol for identifying English Language Learners (ELL) who may also have special education needs. If information from the student's home country, from an 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, students are eligible for ELL or English Literacy Development (ELD) services and Special Education and Inclusion 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](#).

Additional information can be found here: [English Language Learners and Special Education Support in TDSB Elementary Schools Q and A document](#).

Students with special education needs can benefit and thrive in French as a Second Language (FSL) programs. Teachers in FSL programs use assessment strategies to identify strengths and learning needs, provide Differentiated Instruction (DI), and implement a tiered approach of strategies through the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to ensure students are set up for success. Teachers in FSL programs develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with special education needs in FSL, if it is deemed necessary.

The Ministry of Education's policy document entitled [Including Students with Special Education Needs in French As A Second Language Programs \(2015\)](#) states that, "the foundational belief that all students can learn applies to students across all subjects and program areas" (page 3).

TDSB's French as a Second Language Department has adapted the following documents from Ontario's Modern Language Council to help teachers program for students with special education needs:

- [Including Students with Special Education Needs in French As A Second Language Programs](#)
- [Fact Sheet – Special Education & Inclusion in FSL Programs](#)

## **Inclusion in Core French Programs**

Core French is a mandatory part of elementary and secondary school programs. For most students, there will be no exemption from Core French. Please refer to the [Operational Procedure PR597](#) for more information.

# Section I: CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF EXCEPTIONALITIES

FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To make information on the categories and definitions of exceptionalities available to the public, including parents and community associations*

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The *Education Act* identifies five categories of exceptionalities for exceptional students: behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical, and multiple. These categories are designed to address the wide range of conditions that may affect a student's ability to learn, and are meant to be inclusive of all medical conditions, whether diagnosed or not, that can lead to particular types of learning difficulties.

The categories are a useful tool for the identification of students with special education needs. However, a student may present learning needs in many ways in a school setting and may be identified as exceptional within one or more of the categories. The determining factor for the provision of special education programs or services is not any specific diagnosed or undiagnosed medical condition, but rather the needs of the individual student based on an individual assessment of strengths and needs.

The definitions provided by the Ministry of Education for the five categories of exceptionalities and their subcategories follow below.

The ways in which the TDSB's IPRC applies these definitions in making decisions on identification and placement can be found in the [Section J: Special Education Placements Provided by the Board.](#)

# Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

## Behavioural

**Behavioural Exceptionality:** A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

1. an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships
2. excessive fears or anxieties
3. a tendency to compulsive reaction
4. an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof

## Communicational

**Autism:** A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

1. disturbances in rate of educational development; ability to relate to the environment; mobility; perception, speech, and language
2. lack of the representational symbolic behaviour that precedes language

**Deaf and Hard of Hearing:** An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound

**Language Impairment:** A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may:

1. involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and
2. include one or more of: language delay; dysfluency; voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based

**Speech Impairment:** A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm, and stress

**Learning Disability:** One of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that:

1. affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are *at least* in the average range
2. results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range), and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support
3. results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills
4. may typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; memory and attention; processing speed; perceptual-motor processing; visual-spatial processing; executive functions (e.g., self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making)
5. may be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities
6. is *not* the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction

## Intellectual

**Giftedness:** An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated

**Mild Intellectual Disability:** A learning disorder characterized by:

1. an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and support services
2. an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development

3. a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support

**Developmental Disability:** A severe learning disorder characterized by:

1. an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development
2. an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development
3. a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support

## **Physical**

**Physical Disability:** A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of students without exceptionalities who are of the same age or development level

**Blind and Low Vision:** A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely

## **Multiple**

**Multiple Exceptionalities:** A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities that is of such a nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teacher's holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities



# Section J: SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS PROVIDED BY THE BOARD



[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide the ministry and the public with details of the range of placements provided by the board, and to inform the public that placement of a student in a regular class is the first option considered by an IPRC*

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The TDSB is committed to ensuring that all students receive the most appropriate placement to reach their full potential. For students with special education needs, we are committed to:

- providing programs and services wherever possible in home schools; and
- providing a range of placements.

According to the [Ministry of Education](#), before the IPRC considers placing the student in a special education class, it must consider whether placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services will:

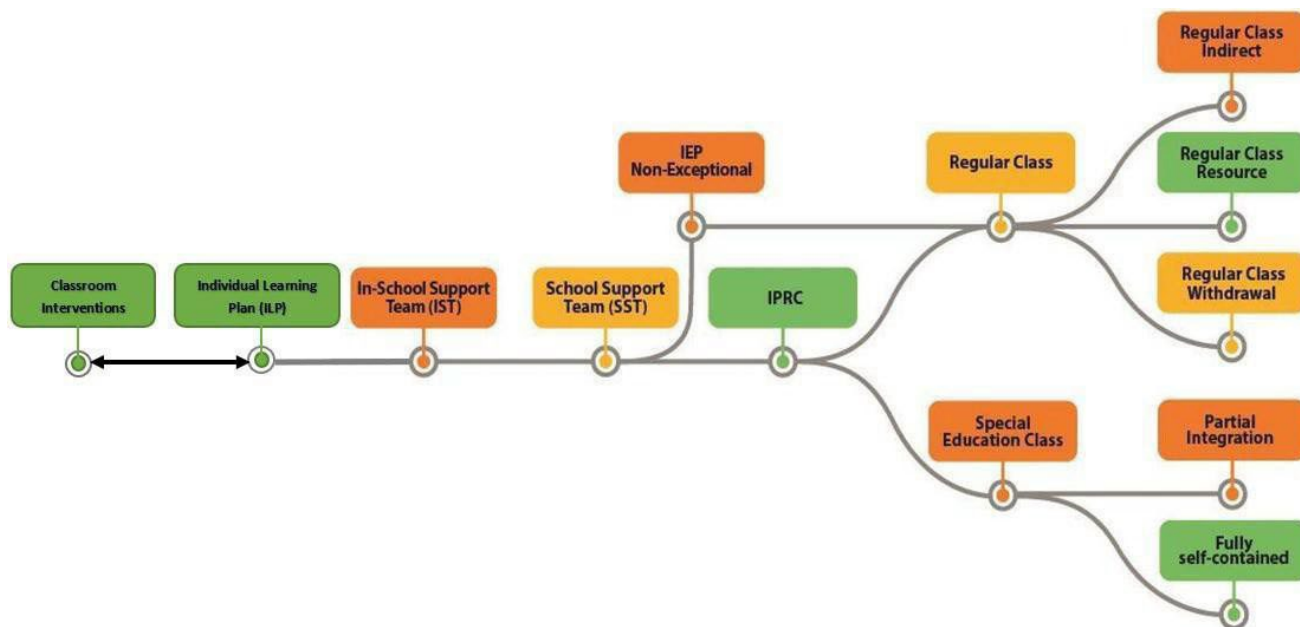
- meet the student's needs; and
- be consistent with the parent's preferences.

The [OHRC Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities](#) confirms the need for special education setting options. Before considering placing a student in a self-contained or specialized classroom, education providers must first consider inclusion in the regular classroom.

In most cases, with appropriate supports in place, a student will be accommodated in the regular classroom. However, every student is unique. To provide appropriate accommodations to all students with special education needs, education providers must, with parental input, assess each student's particular strengths and needs, and consider these against a full range of placements, programs and services.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are critical partners in decision-making regarding their children's education. TDSB staff welcomes input from parents and legal guardians at any time and at the IPRC meeting or SEPRC meeting, and at annual IPRC review meetings. Appropriate accommodations will be decided upon on an individual basis. Ultimately, parents decide whether they accept or decline an offer of placement.

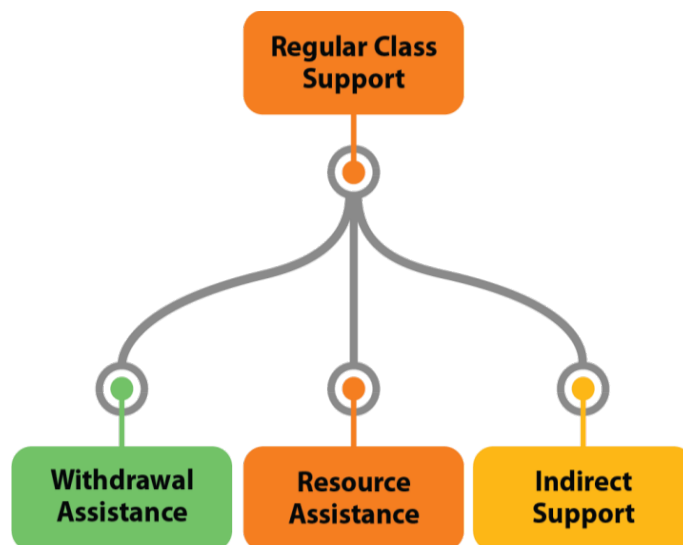
The following chart outlines the referral process for Special Education supports in the TDSB. For more information regarding IPRCs, please see [Section H - The Identification Placement and Review Committee \(IPRC\) Process and Appeals](#)



# Special Education Placements

## Regular Class

Most students identified as exceptional learners can be appropriately supported in a regular classroom setting through the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Placement of a student in a regular class is the first option considered by the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).



**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.

**Regular Class with Resource Assistance** The student attends regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, from a special education teacher within the regular classroom.

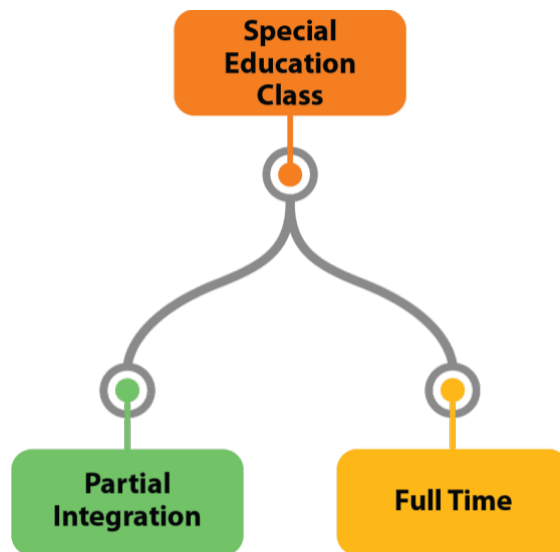
- This is available in Elementary schools.

**Regular Class with Indirect Support** The student attends 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.

## Special Education Class

The IPRC may decide that the appropriate placement for the student is in a special education class. The IPRC must provide reasons for the placement if deciding for a placement in a special education class (partial integration or full time).

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 student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298 (R.R.O.1990, s. 31).



### **Special Education Class with Partial Integration**

The student attends a special education class staffed by a special education teacher and is integrated in a regular class for part of the student’s instructional program (a minimum of one instructional period daily).

In TDSB secondary schools, an IPRC decision for Special Education Class with Partial Integration recommends placement in a special education program at an integrated site with both regular and special education programs.

### **Special Education Class Full Time**

Some students attend a special education class, staffed by a special education teacher, for the entire school day. These classes are referred to as Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) and may be in integrated sites or congregated sites. The location for a full time special education class may be other than the student’s home school. Programs in congregated sites support communities of learners whose complex educational needs require alternative curriculum and specialized services, facilities and resources.

These special education classes are characterized by smaller class sizes with prescribed student-teacher ratios and appropriate support staff. 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.

In most cases, student need for Special Education class placement is expected to be of limited duration, to be reviewed annually with a goal of successful reintegration into the regular program as soon as is feasible.

Special Education Class placements are usually located in designated neighbourhood schools. The number and location of the classes are determined by the needs and numbers of students requiring them across the system.

## Early Intervention Programs

All children enter school capable, competent, and ready to learn. Full day Kindergarten supports a strong two-year foundation for future learning. TDSB is committed to creating Early Years learning environments where children feel a sense of belonging and engagement, in spaces where they feel safe, are motivated to learn, and are eager to be part of the school experience. The experiences and developments in the early years are broad and are situated in relationships and social competencies which are key aspects of programming in Kindergarten - Grade 2. As educators differentiate instruction in the early years, students should be able to access learning and experiences that are optimal for their own individual growth.

In a few cases, Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) are available for students of Kindergarten age, who have complex needs. There are three Early Years Intervention programs that are specific to student learning profiles:

- Diagnostic Kindergarten Program (DK);
- JK/SK Deaf and Hard of Hearing Co-enrollment Program; and
- DHH Preschool Program.

For more information, please see [Section G: Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies](#).

[Locations of Diagnostic Kindergarten \(DK\) Programs](#)

## Placements by Exceptionality

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is committed to inclusion. Each school will welcome all students, and provide an open and inclusive learning environment that recognizes that most students can be served effectively within their neighbourhood school. TDSB will continue to provide Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) for students with more specialized learning needs.

Access to this level of support is by the decision of an Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) or by the recommendation of a Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC), in consultation with the student's parents or legal guardians. A committee first considers if a student's needs can be met in the regular class with appropriate support.

# Behavioural: Behaviour

## Ministry of Education Definition

A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

1. excessive fears or anxieties
2. an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships
3. a tendency to compulsive reaction
4. an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or health factors, or any combination thereof

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Behaviour

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) with alternative programming for teaching intrapersonal and interpersonal skills
- Evidence of how behavioural data analysis has been used to modify programming for the student for in most cases a minimum of one reporting period
- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity and lived experiences
- Anecdotal comments that describe staff interventions in any of the following areas:
  - Focusing and/or maintaining attention to activities or tasks
  - Regulating anxiety
  - Self-advocacy

### b. Educational Assessments

- An outline of learning strengths and areas for improvement
- A behavioural assessment including use of a behaviour analysis tool and a summary of the Antecedent Behaviour Consequence (ABC) Chart data and other data to show the frequency, intensity and duration of the targeted behaviours
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, then the previous Provincial Report Card)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

- Assessment of the student’s adaptive functioning (conceptual, social, practical) such as student work samples; Antecedent Behaviour Consequence (ABC) Chart, Individual Learning Plan (ILP); Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA)

**c. Professional Assessment**

- A Psychological assessment to identify possible underlying factors with implications for programming (e.g., cognitive functioning), considering the child’s ability to be reliably and formally assessed
- Presenting learning and socio-emotional areas of need that are not explained by other factors
- Externalizing/internalizing behavioural manifestations that are impacting student’s ability to cope academically, socially, emotionally, and environmentally
- Professional reports as available

**d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers**

- In addition to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

**Placement Decision of Regular Class**

Students who have an Exceptionality of Behaviour may be offered placement through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class with support in the student’s homeschool. The student will have an opportunity to learn with same-age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

<b>Placement:</b>	<p><b>Regular Class</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom *Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends a regular class for the entire school day and receives direct instruction from a regular classroom teacher, who receives specialized consultations</p>
<b>Location:</b>	Homeschool

<b>Grades:</b>	1 – 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	Ministry of Education regulations for class size
<b>Staffing:</b>	Follows regular class student and teacher ratio

## Placement Decision of Special Education Class

Students who have an Exceptionality of Behaviour may be offered through the IPRC decision to attend a Behaviour Intensive Support Program (elementary only) that may not be housed in their home school. The student will have an opportunity to learn in a smaller class size setting with students who share similar areas for improvement.

The ISP is designed to address the full range of a student’s academic, emotional, and social development, while maintaining a focus on student achievement. Increasing opportunities for successful integration of students within regular programs is expected and a return to a regular classroom is the goal.

In making its determination for placement in a Behaviour ISP, the IPRC will consider the following:

- The student has been identified with a behaviour exceptionality at an IPRC
- The student demonstrates evidence of significant challenges in interpersonal, social and/or emotional development
- The student may require support from staff to develop effective interpersonal strategies, self-advocacy skills and strategies to cope with underlying trauma through such strategies as Restorative Practice
- The student demonstrates a lack of success in a regular classroom setting despite sustained efforts to implement the academic and behavioural interventions outlined in the IEP
- The student has accessed all appropriate local in-school support which may include accessing the Special Education Resource Teacher, the Board Certified Behaviour Analyst, the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant, the Behaviour Prevention Intervention (BPI) Team - formerly Behaviour Prevention Intervention (BPI), the Social Worker assigned to the school or the Urban Indigenous Education Centre Social Worker, Restorative Practice, etc.

<b>Placement:</b>	<b>Intensive Support Program (ISP)</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Across the System Learning Centres in local, designated neighbourhood schools
<b>Grades:</b>	4 – 6
<b>Class Size:</b>	8 students per class
<b>Staffing:</b>	1.0 Teacher and 1.0 Child and Youth Worker (CYW)



## **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Secondary Schools**

There are no Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in the secondary panel for the Behaviour Exceptionality.

Regular subject teachers liaise with the school Curriculum Leader (CL)/Assistant Curriculum Leader for Special Education and are expected to support students through strategies outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Special Education support is provided through the Secondary Resource Program in two ways:

- Resource (RSE) – non-credit course
- Secondary Learning Strategies (GLE) courses – up to four credits during the high school years

Regardless of the form of program intervention, the goals for students identified with Behaviour Exceptionality are to:

- Increase skills in effective interpersonal relationships
- Acquire new skills (e.g., problem-solving, conflict resolution, self-advocacy)
- Transfer skills to other settings
- Increase opportunities for successful integration

### [Locations of Behaviour Intensive Support Programs \(ISPs\)](#)

# Communicational: Autism

## Ministry of Education Definition

A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

1. disturbances in:
  - the rate of educational development
  - ability to relate to the environment
  - mobility
  - perception, speech, and language
2. lack of the representational symbolic behaviour that precedes language

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Autism

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity and lived experiences, and anecdotal comments that describe staff interventions in any of the following areas:
  - Environmental accommodations related to sensory needs
  - Transitions
  - Self-advocacy

### b. Educational Assessments

- An outline of learning strengths and areas for improvement that demonstrates difficulty with academics and verbal and non-verbal communication and alternative programming requirements
- A summary of the Antecedent Behaviour Consequence (ABC) Chart data and other data to show the frequency, intensity and duration of targeted behaviours, where appropriate
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

### c. Professional Assessments

- Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Autism, PDD-NOS or Asperger (considered by DSM5 as ASD) by a regulated, qualified practitioner
- Psychological assessment to include cognitive scores, where deemed appropriate by psychology staff, considering the child's ability to be reliably

and formally assessed. If not appropriate to conduct a formal psychological assessment including standardized testing prior to identification, then observational data collected will be considered to determine student need. This may include performance on Skills of Daily Living/adaptive skills, academic functioning, and other observational data.

- Students can be identified with an Autism exceptionality in the absence of a cognitive assessment.

**d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers**

- In addition to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

## **Procedure, Policy and Memorandum 140**

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are complex neurological disorders that have a lifelong effect on the development of various abilities and skills. ASD is characterized by impairments in both communication and social interaction, as well as unusual patterns of behaviours, interests and activities. The term “spectrum” is used to recognize a range of disorders that include a continuum of developmental severity (formerly Asperger’s Disorder, PDD-NOS, Autistic Disorder). The symptoms of ASD can range from mild to severe impairments in several areas of development ([Effective Educational Practices for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, A Resource Guide, 2007](#)).

All programming for students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) follows the Ministry of Education’s Procedure, Policy and Memorandum (PPM) 140 which states that students with ASD are entitled to receive programming and strategies which incorporate the principles of Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) (ABA) when necessary.

Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) states that a student’s program must include:

- individualization
- data collection
- reinforcement of targeted skills
- generalization of skills to new environment

## **Placement Decision of Regular Class - Elementary**

Students with an Exceptionality of Autism may be offered a placement through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class in their homeschool.

The student will have the opportunity to learn with peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

## Placement Decision of Regular Class - Secondary

Students in the secondary panel are supported through the Special Education Resource program in two ways:

1. GLE - Learning Strategies: a credit course taught by a special education teacher that is available for students with an IEP and may be taken each year of high school for a maximum of four credits
2. RSE: a non-credit course to support students in the resource room

Regular subject teachers liaise with the school Curriculum Leader (CL)/Assistant Curriculum Leader (ACL) for Special Education and support students through strategies outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The goals for students identified with an exceptionality of Autism are to:

- Increase skills in effective interpersonal relationships
- Acquire new skills (e.g., problem-solving, conflict resolution, self- advocacy)
- Transfer skills to other settings

<b>Placement:</b>	<p><b>Regular Class</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom. *Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.</p>
<b>Location:</b>	Homeschool
<b>Grades:</b>	Kindergarten – 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	Ministry of Education regulations for class size
<b>Staffing:</b>	Follows regular class student and teacher ratio

## **Placement Decision of Special Education Class**

Students who have an exceptionality of Autism may be offered to attend an Autism Intensive Support Program (ISP) that may not be housed in their homeschool.

The ISP is designed to address the full range of a student's academic, emotional, and social development, while maintaining a focus on student achievement. Increasing opportunities for successful integration of students with regular programs is expected and a return to a regular classroom is the goal.

Students who are eligible for Special Education Class placement in an Autism program:

- Are identified with the Autism exceptionality by an IPRC
- Have psychological assessment results indicating at least average thinking and reasoning skills
- Show evidence that the student can access the curriculum similarly to most children their age. This information may be obtained from a psychological assessment or, if testing is not deemed appropriate given the complexity of the student profile at that time, psychology staff observation or assessment of a registered and attending student will be required
- Demonstrate evidence of alternative programming needs such as social, communication, and behavioural skills, as shown through professional and/or teacher assessments and recorded on the student's IEP
- Demonstrate the need for more intensive interventions than are available in a regular classroom setting despite indicators of average or above average intellectual development

For students with more than one exceptionality, the offer of placement is based on the student's primary exceptionality. For example, if a student has Developmental Disability Exceptionality as their primary exceptionality and Autism Exceptionality as a secondary exceptionality, the offer of placement will be for the Developmental Disability program.

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Elementary Schools**

The elementary Special Education Class placement for Autism is characterized by support and instruction targeted to the specific individual needs of the students. Increasing opportunities for successful integration of students within regular programs is an important goal of the ISP. The number and location of programs available is determined by the needs of the students requiring intensive support.

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Secondary Schools**

An IPRC decision of Special Education Class with Partial Integration will recommend a student's placement in an Autism program at an integrated school site with both special education and regular programs. Students who attend a secondary Autism ISP receive instruction within their ISP from qualified subject teachers for four compulsory credits in Grades 9 and 10 (English, Math, Science, and

Geography/History) and two compulsory credits in Grades 11 and 12 (English and Math).

The remaining elective and compulsory subjects in all grades in the Autism ISP will be delivered within the regular classroom based on a student’s option selection and their graduation pathway. The special education teacher provides program support to the regular subject teachers. In the ISP, the student to staff ratio is 6:1. When students are integrated in a regular class, the student to teacher ratio is based on the Ministry of Education class staffing ratios. During periods of integration, subject teachers support students through strategies outlined in the IEP.

<b>Placement:</b>	<b>Intensive Support Program (ISP)</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Across the System Learning Centres in local neighbourhood schools
<b>Grades:</b>	1 – 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	6 students per class
<b>Staffing:</b>	1.0 Teacher and 1.0 Child and Youth Worker (CYW) in elementary schools. Secondary schools are staffed by the number of sections required based on the number of students.

[Locations of Autism Intensive Support Programs \(ISPs\)](#)

# Communicational: Deaf and Hard of Hearing

## Ministry of Education Definition

An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Deaf and Hard of Hearing

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity, lived experiences or other relevant evidence collected in collaboration with school personnel, agencies, classroom teacher, parents/guardians/caregivers and student

### b. Educational Assessments

- An outline of learning strengths and areas for improvement that includes both academic and functional factors from school personnel and TDSB Deaf and Hard of Hearing program staff
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card), where applicable
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

### c. Professional Assessment

- An audiologist's assessment indicating permanent bilateral hearing levels falling within the moderate to profound range
- A speech and language assessment [when deemed appropriate by the School Support Team (SST)]

### d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

- In addition to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

The TDSB recognizes the importance of early intervention and can support students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing from the age of 3 through to completion of high school.

Upon entry to school, students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing have access to the support of a Specialist Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. There are varying tiers of support available under the umbrella of the Itinerant Team. Many students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing can be served in regular class placements with support.

## Placement Decision of Regular Class

Students who have an exceptionality of Deaf and Hard of Hearing may be offered placement through the IPRC decision to attend a regular class in the student's homeschool. The student will have an opportunity to learn with same-age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

Itinerant Specialist Teachers of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing support students who have been identified with atypical hearing levels in Regular Class placements through a tiered approach to intervention according to need and in collaboration with classroom teachers and school teams.

**Tier 2 Support** - Students who require more individualized accommodations, including the use of Remote Microphone (RM) technology, receive 1-2 visits per month from an Itinerant Specialist Teacher. This includes the monitoring of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) funded or loaner RM equipment, collaborating with the classroom or subject teacher to monitor needs as they relate to hearing challenges and to promote self-advocacy skills in the educational setting. Students' accommodations are outlined within their IEP.

**Tier 3 Support** - Students who require more intensive support may be identified through the IPRC process as an exceptional learner - Deaf/Hard of Hearing. Students receive withdrawal support from an Itinerant Specialist Teacher to work on the development of specific skills resulting from a significant hearing loss; specifically in the areas of Audition, Speech/Articulation, Language Development, Self-Advocacy and Curriculum Support. This program is reflected in the student's IEP as an Alternative Curriculum. Progress in the areas of the alternative curriculum is reported in the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Alternative Report Card Addendum to the Provincial Report Card.

Itinerant staff supports students with permanent bilateral and unilateral hearing loss, students with ongoing conductive and/or fluctuating hearing losses, as well as students with Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder (ANSO). Itinerant teachers, with the support of the TDSB Audiologist, facilitate trials with Remote Microphone systems for students who have been identified as having an auditory processing disorder by a clinical audiologist and help to monitor SEA funded RM equipment.



<b>Placement:</b>	<p><b>Regular Class</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom. *Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.</p>
<b>Location:</b>	Homeschool
<b>Grades:</b>	Kindergarten - 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	Ministry of Education regulations for class size
<b>Staffing:</b>	Follows regular class student and teacher ratio

## Placement Decision of Special Education Class

Students who have an exceptionality of Deaf and Hard of Hearing may be offered to attend a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Intensive Support Program (ISP) that may not be housed in their homeschool.

The ISP class is designed to address the full range of a student's academic, emotional, and social development, while maintaining a focus on student achievement. Increasing opportunities for successful integration of students with regular programs is expected and a return to a regular classroom is the goal.

Students who are eligible for a Special Education Class placement with Intensive Program Support (ISP) for Deaf/Hard of Hearing are:

- Identified, through a TDSB IPRC, with a Deaf and Hard of Hearing exceptionality due to a significant hearing loss
- Assessed as having expressive and receptive language delays due to a significant hearing loss, requiring modification and/or accommodations, instruction by a Specialist Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and a smaller student teacher ratio

Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing may demonstrate needs in language, speech development, in gaining auditory access to the curriculum and/or require the use of American Sign Language (ASL). The TDSB Deaf and Hard of Hearing programs offer a variety of supports to meet these needs, including itinerant support and special education class placement.

Teachers working in Deaf and Hard of Hearing programs are required, under the Education Act, to hold specialized qualifications approved by the Ministry of Education. Based on student need, Specialist Teachers of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing work closely with the TDSB Educational Audiologist to increase accessibility to the curriculum.

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Elementary Schools**

Elementary Special Education Class placements for students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing are available from pre-school to the completion of Grade 8. Students are placed in Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) through the IPRC or Special Education Placement and Review Committee (SEPRC) process.

All classes are taught by a Specialist Teacher of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing who can determine specific accommodations and/or program modifications to support student success and achievement. Teachers, Educational Assistants - Signing or Oral and Sign Language Facilitators use a variety of communication options to deliver the Provincial Curriculum including oral language, oral language with sign language support, and American Sign Language (ASL). Sign Language Facilitators are allocated based on student needs.

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Secondary Schools**

Placement in a Special Education Class Full Time and Special Education Class with Partial Integration for students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing is available until the completion of secondary school. There are a variety of communication options used in the classes, including oral language, oral language with sign language support, and American Sign Language (ASL). Secondary ISP programs offer a variety of pathways to meet the needs of students. Upon completion, students may go on to enter post-secondary programs at universities and colleges, apprenticeship programs, academic upgrading programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students, the workplace, or Community Living/volunteer opportunities.

At the secondary level, compulsory course class sizes are capped according to Ministry guidelines and are taught by Specialist Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The composition and class size for electives vary based on school organization and student program needs. Students are fully integrated for their elective credits. During periods of integration, subject teachers support students through strategies outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Students with multiple exceptionalities, including Deaf/Hard of Hearing, may be placed in other Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) based on their learning needs and receive support from an Itinerant Specialist Teacher.

<b>Placement:</b>	<b>Intensive Support Program (ISP)</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Across the System Learning Centres in designated local neighbourhood schools
<b>Grades:</b>	Pre-School; Kindergarten - 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	PreSchool and Kindergarten - 8 students Deaf (ASL) - 10 students Deaf (Oral) - 12 Students
<b>Staffing:</b>	<p><b>Elementary:</b> 1.0 Specialist Teacher and 1.0 Educational Assistant, signing or oral Sign Language Facilitators are assigned to some programs based on student need.</p> <p><b>Secondary:</b> Specialist Teacher and Educational Assistants signing or oral and Sign Language Facilitators are assigned based on student need. Secondary schools are staffed per number of sections (classes) required based on the number and needs of students.</p>

[Locations of Deaf/Hard of Hearing \(DHH\) Intensive Support Programs \(ISPs\)](#)

# Communicational: Learning Disability

## Ministry of Education Definition

One of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that:

- Affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are at least in the average range
- Results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support
- Results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills
- May be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; memory and attention; processing speed; perceptual-motor processing; visual-spatial processing; executive functions (e.g., planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making)
- May be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities
- Is *not* the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Learning Disability

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) with alternative programming
- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity and lived experiences, or other relevant evidence collected in collaboration with school personnel, agencies, classroom teacher, parents/guardians/caregivers and student
- Evidence that requires further support in the following areas:
  - Focusing and/or maintaining attention to activities or tasks
  - Regulating anxiety
  - Self-advocacy

#### **b. Educational Assessments**

- An outline of learning strengths and areas for improvement that demonstrates a meaningful discrepancy between age appropriate academic expectations and current academic achievement in literacy and/or numeracy and alternative programming requirements
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC
- Assessment that indicates the need for more intensive interventions in the areas of academics, social interaction and processing verbal and non-verbal information (Report Card, Individual Learning Plan, student work samples)

#### **c. Professional Assessment**

- A psychological assessment of the student indicating average or above average intellectual development, processing difficulty and academic challenges related to the processing difficulty (PPM 8)
- Medical information (e.g., information on vision, hearing and physical condition)
- Academic achievement data that shows that achievement can be maintained only with extremely high levels of effort and/or additional support not solely due to newcomer-related factors, school absenteeism or other factors that affect the academic instruction received
- Evidence that intensive intervention is needed in the development and use of skills in 1 or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, work habits and learning skills
- Evidence that learning needs may be associated with various other complex needs, diagnosed or undiagnosed or with other exceptionalities

#### **d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers**

- In addition to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

### **Placement Decision of Regular Class**

Students who have an exceptionality of Learning Disability may be offered placement through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class in the student's homeschool. The student will have an opportunity to learn with same-age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

Interventions must be focused, specific to learning needs and responsive to the identity and lived experiences of the student. The impact of the interventions must be monitored through ongoing assessment to determine effectiveness. Educators need to reflect on their pedagogy and have continuous responsiveness to student needs.

## Placement Decision of Regular Class - Secondary

A Regular Class Placement for students in the secondary panel is supported through the Special Education Resource program in two ways:

1. GLE - Learning Strategies: a credit course taught by a special education teacher that is available for students with an IEP. The Learning Strategies course may be taken in each year of high school for a maximum of four credits
2. RSE - Resource: a non-credit course to support students in the resource room

Regular subject teachers liaise with the school Curriculum Leader (CL)/Assistant Curriculum Leader (ACL) for Special Education to support students through strategies outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Support can also include course modifications that may permit credit accumulation. Withdrawal assistance can be provided by a special education teacher on staff as part of school-based resource assistance.

<b>Placement:</b>	<p><b>Regular Class</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom. *Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.</p>
<b>Location:</b>	Homeschool
<b>Grades:</b>	1 – 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	Ministry of Education regulations for class size
<b>Staffing:</b>	Follows regular class student and teacher ratio

## Placement Decision of Special Education Class

Students who have an exceptionality of Learning Disability may be offered to attend a Learning Disability Intensive Support Program (ISP) that may not be housed in their homeschool.

The ISP class is designed to address the full range of a student's academic, emotional, and social development, while maintaining a focus on student achievement. Increasing opportunities for successful integration of students with regular programs is expected and a return to a regular classroom is the goal.

Students who are eligible for Special Education Class placement with intensive program support for Learning Disability:

- Are identified with a Learning Disability as their primary exceptionality and may also meet criteria for an additional exceptionality at an IPRC
- Are assessed as having at least average intellectual development (e.g., thinking and reasoning skills)
- Demonstrate evidence of other factors affecting learning. [i.e., any combination of alternative program needs such as attention and executive function difficulties, receptive and expressive language difficulties, anxiety, social/emotional needs, etc., as shown through professional and/or teacher assessments and the Individual Education Plan (IEP)]
- Demonstrate lack of success in a regular classroom setting despite sustained efforts to implement the interventions outlined in the Individual Education Plan

Assessments should show evidence of a need for intensive support programming in a classroom setting with a reduced student-teacher ratio and additional Educational Assistant support. Teacher assessments, in conjunction with the IEP, must show that the student is functioning academically below grade level in both numeracy and literacy by a minimum of:

- Three years in the primary grades
- Three to four years in the junior grades
- Four years in the intermediate/senior grades

Each student diagnosed with a Learning Disability is unique and may require moderate to intense interventions to support their learning. Special Education programming for Learning Disabilities addresses a range of a student's academic, emotional, expressive and receptive communication and social development, while maintaining a focus on student achievement. Regardless of the form of program intervention, the goal for the student is generally to fill the academic gaps that have developed due to the nature of a student's specific learning disabilities, to build on student strengths while addressing areas for improvement, and to address the kinds

of social-emotional and confidence-related needs that can be brought about by a student's persistent academic challenges.

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Elementary Schools**

The elementary Special Education Class placement is characterized by a smaller class size and has Educational Assistant support assigned to the classroom. It is designed to address the range of a student's academic, emotional, and social development, while maintaining a focus on student achievement. Ongoing opportunities for integration with regular programs are embedded within the class schedule. A student's need for a special education class placement is expected to be of limited duration and should be reviewed annually with an eye to successful reintegration into the regular class with a reduced level of support, as soon as is feasible. The recommended class size varies by school division (See table for class size).

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Secondary Schools**

At the secondary level, there are no Special Education Class Full Time placements for students with the exceptionality of Learning Disability. Special Education Class with Partial Integration continues to be an option where students have select subjects delivered in a smaller class environment. Students will take some of their courses in special education classes for students with a Learning Disability exceptionality and they are integrated in regular classes for the other courses.

In the Learning Disability ISP, students receive instruction with their ISP grouping from qualified subject teachers for four compulsory credits in Grades 9 and 10 (English, Math, Science, and Geography/History) and two compulsory credits in Grades 11 and 12 (English and Math).

When students are integrated in regular classes, the classes are staffed according to the Ministry staffing guidelines for the subject. During periods of integration, subject teachers support students through strategies outlined in the IEP. The special education teacher provides program support to the subject teachers. Support can include course modifications noted on the IEP that may permit credit accumulation.

<b>Placement:</b>	<b>Intensive Support Program (ISP)</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Across the System Learning Centres in designated local neighbourhood schools
<b>Grades:</b>	1 – 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	Primary: 10 - 12 students Junior: 12 - 14 students Intermediate: 14 - 16 students



<b>Staffing:</b>	<b>Elementary:</b> 1.0 Teacher and 1.0 Educational Assistant  <b>Secondary:</b> 1.0 Teacher and 1.0 Educational Assistant staffed per number of sections (classes) required based on the number of students
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[Locations of Learning Disability \(LD\) Intensive Support Programs \(ISPs\)](#)

# Communicational: Speech Impairment

## Ministry of Education Definition

A disorder in language formulation which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm and stress

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Speech Impairment

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Evidence demonstrating academic needs related to communication

### b. Educational Assessments

- An outline of learning strengths and areas for improvement
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

### c. Professional Assessment

- A professional assessment by a qualified speech-language pathologist or psychologist that determines the primary concern to be an impairment in speech production, which significantly interferes with the student's communication and academic achievement

### d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

- In addition to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

## Placement Decision of Regular Class

Students who have an exceptionality of Speech Impairment may be offered through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class in the student's homeschool. The student will have an opportunity to learn with same-age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

<p><b>Placement:</b></p>	<p><b>Regular Class</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom. * Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.</p>
<p><b>Location:</b></p>	<p>Homeschool</p>
<p><b>Grades:</b></p>	<p>Kindergarten - Grade 12</p>
<p><b>Class Size:</b></p>	<p>Ministry of Education regulations for class size</p>
<p><b>Staffing:</b></p>	<p>Follows regular class student and teacher ratio</p>

## Decision of Special Education Class

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC placement decision for an exceptional student is based on the student's cognitive and learning needs. For students identified with the exceptionality of Speech Impairment, the first placement consideration of the IPRC is Regular Class with support provided through Speech Language Services in collaboration with [Home and Community Care Support Services](#) (HCCSS).

The TDSB does not have classes solely for students with Speech Impairment. Where intensive, targeted support is required to address a student's additional learning needs, a placement in a Special Education Class may be the decision and recommendation of the IPRC and will take into account the needs of the student and the consultation and discussion with the student's parent/guardian/caregiver. The student may be offered placement depending on the individual profile in another Intensive Support Program (ISP) offered within the TDSB.

# Communicational: Language Impairment

## Ministry of Education Definition

A learning disorder characterized by impairment in comprehension and/or use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may:

- Involve one or more of the forms, content, and function of language in communication
- Include one or more of the following:
  - Language delay
  - Dysfluency
  - Voice and articulation development, which may or may not organically or functionally based

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Language Impairment

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity, lived experiences or other relevant evidence collected in collaboration with school personnel, agencies, classroom teacher, parents/guardians/caregivers and student

### b. Educational Assessments

- An outline of learning strengths and areas for improvement
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

### c. Professional Assessment

- A professional assessment by a qualified speech-language pathologist (SLP) that determines the primary concerns to be receptive and expressive language levels, which significantly interfere with the student's communication and academic achievement

### d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

- In addition to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

## Placement Decision of Regular Class

Students who have an exceptionality of Language Impairment may be offered through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class in the student's homeschool. The student will have an opportunity to learn with same-age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

<p><b>Placement:</b></p>	<p><b>Regular Class</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom. * Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.</p>
<p><b>Location:</b></p>	<p>Homeschool</p>
<p><b>Grades:</b></p>	<p>Kindergarten - Grade 12</p>
<p><b>Class Size:</b></p>	<p>Ministry of Education regulations for class size</p>
<p><b>Staffing:</b></p>	<p>Follows regular class student and teacher ratio</p>

## Placement Decision of Special Education Class

For students identified with the exceptionality of Language Impairment, Regular Class with support provided through Speech and Language Services is the first placement consideration. Where intensive, targeted support is needed to address other learning needs in addition to severe language difficulties, placement in a Special Education Class may be the decision of the IPRC.

TDSB does not have ISPs solely for students with Language Impairment.

# Intellectual: Developmental Disability

## Ministry of Education Definition

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

1. An inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development
2. An ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development
3. A limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support

The Provincial Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services definition of developmental disabilities is also consistent with the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities 2008 Act.

Generally, developmental disabilities: affect a person's ability to learn and apply conceptual, social and practical skills in their everyday life; affect a person's intellectual capacity, including the capacity to reason, organize, plan, make judgments and identify consequences and risks; originate before a person reaches 18 years of age; and are likely to be life-long in nature.

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Developmental Disability

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) incorporating areas of alternative curriculum
- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity and lived experiences or other relevant evidence, collected in collaboration with school personnel, agencies, classroom teacher, parents/guardians/caregivers and student

### b. Educational Assessments

- An outline of learning strengths and areas for improvement demonstrating very limited academic and adaptive skills, which are significantly below the range expected for age-appropriate placement
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

**c. Professional Assessment**

- A psychological assessment that indicates that the student’s functioning in meaningful intellectual and adaptive domains typically lies at or below the 1st percentile
- Diagnosis of Global Developmental Delay or Intellectual Disability Unspecified and/or adaptive domains at or below the 1st percentile are
- considered in lieu of a psychological report for those students who are unable to participate in a psychological assessment, or when degree of cognitive impairment cannot be determined

**d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers**

- In addition to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

**Placement Decision of Regular Class**

Students who have an exceptionality of Developmental Disability may be offered placement through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class in the student’s homeschool. Students will have the opportunity to learn with same-age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

Special Education programming for students identified with the exceptionality of Developmental Disability is designed to address the full spectrum of their needs. Students with developmental disabilities demonstrate very limited cognitive and adaptive skills, requiring alternative curriculum expectations designed to maximize student independence. Instructional needs can include functional academics, activities of daily living, communication, social skills, motor skills and experiential learning. Some aspects of an alternative curriculum may be addressed within Regular Class placement.

<b>Placement</b>	<p><b>Regular Class Setting</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom.</p> <p>* Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends a regular class for the entire school day and receives direct instruction from a regular classroom teacher, who</p>
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	receives specialized consultative services from a special education teacher.
<b>Location:</b>	Homeschool
<b>Grades:</b>	Kindergarten - Grade 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	Ministry of Education regulations for class size
<b>Staffing:</b>	Follows regular class student and teacher ratio

## **Placement Decision of Special Education Class**

Students who are eligible for Special Education Class placement with intensive program support for Developmental Disability:

- Are usually identified with the exceptionality of Developmental Disability by a TDSB IPRC. Students identified under other exceptionalities, but with a similar cognitive profile, may qualify for the same type of placement
- Usually function at an intellectual and adaptive level at or below the 1st percentile in a recent psychological assessment
- Experience significant difficulty in functional academics, communication, activities of daily living, motor skills, social skills, and/or social/emotional needs, as indicated through professional assessments such as speech and language assessment, psychological assessment, occupational/physiotherapy assessment, or teacher assessment

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Elementary Schools**

The elementary Special Education Class placement is characterized by a smaller class size with a reduced student-teacher ratio and educational assistant support, as well as a noon hour assistant. The programs have consultative support of Professional Support Services staff, such as an occupational therapist/physiotherapist, speech-language pathologist, psychologist and social worker, who provide input regarding programming strategies to address the needs of each student.

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Secondary Schools**

Special Education Class Full Time placements for secondary students with Developmental Disabilities are characterized by a smaller class size with a reduced student-teacher ratio and educational assistant support, as well as a noon hour assistant. They provide targeted instruction in alternative curriculum. While regular class integration is not offered, planned opportunities for students to be included in the life of the school are expected. The programs have consultative support of Professional Support Services staff, such as an occupational therapist/physiotherapist, speech-language pathologist, psychologist and social



worker, who provide input regarding programming strategies to address the needs of each student.

In a secondary special education placement, students work on an alternative curriculum which is non-credit bearing or K level Ministry courses based on their IEP subject expectations. Students complete their education and leave their secondary school with a Certificate of Accomplishment. It is important to note that a Certificate of Accomplishment does not lead to post-secondary school credit granting programs. A program devoted to addressing the alternative curriculum is available in a Special Education Class placement within the Intensive Support Program (ISP) for students with a Developmental Disability. The number and location of special education classes is determined by the needs of students requiring intensive support. Some of the programs are located in congregated special education schools where highly specialized supports and staff expertise required by some students are available. A collaborative partnership between special education staff in intensive support settings, Professional Support Service, parents/guardians/caregivers and outside agencies is an important factor in meeting the diverse needs of students.

Regardless of the form of program support, opportunities to be included in the culture of the school (whole school activities such as assemblies, special events, etc.) are essential to building student confidence, resilience, and self-esteem. Students with developmental disabilities transition age-appropriately from division to division throughout their school years.

Students complete their secondary schooling and transition out in June of the calendar year in which they turn 21 years of age (Education Act, s. 33). In order for a student to remain in a publicly funded day school until they are 21 years old, they must be able to finish an entire school year ending in June of that year.

<b>Placement:</b>	<b>Intensive Support Program (ISP)</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Across the System Learning Centres in designated local neighbourhood schools
<b>Grades:</b>	1 – 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	10 students
<b>Staffing:</b>	Elementary and Secondary: 1 Teacher and 1.0 EA K in integrated settings, 1.5 EA K in congregated sites, 2.0 EA K in classes with students with multiple physical disabilities, 1.0 Noon Hour Assistant

[Location of Developmental Disabilities \(DD\) Intensive Support Programs \(ISPs\)](#)

# Intellectual: Giftedness

## Ministry of Education Definition

An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Giftedness

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity, lived experiences or other relevant evidence collected in collaboration with school personnel, agencies, classroom teacher, parents/guardians/caregivers and student

### b. Educational Assessments

- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card) Standardized educational assessments (e.g., Developmental Reading Assessment, PRIME, etc.)
- Results from the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test – 7th Edition (CCAT7)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

### c. Professional Assessment

- An individual psychological assessment that the student is functioning at or above the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile on the General Ability Index (GAI) on a recently administered Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – 5th Edition (WISC-V), Canadian norms

### d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

- In addition to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

## With regard to assessments for Giftedness:

- Cognitive or intellectual tests measure the ability to problem solve with *novel* tasks. **There should be no advance preparation for these types of tests.** Efforts to practice these tests in advance will invalidate the results. If it is determined that the student may have practiced or prepared for the test, or has been previously exposed to test items or similar items, testing will stop and results will not be shared. **No further opportunities for reassessment will be offered**
- TDSB Psychological Services staff will only reassess within a 12-month period under special circumstances related to the testing situation (such as if a test is

spoiled due to an unexpected interruption in test administration not related to prior exposure to test items). Staff will consult with a TDSB Manager of Psychological Services. In such cases should a reassessment be deemed necessary due to the test being spoiled, and in consultation with the Manager, it would require either: 1) a different intelligence test be administered due to practice effects; or 2) the student waiting at least two years to be readministered the same intelligence test, due to test-retest effects

- The test of cognitive functioning is administered when the child is at least in Grade 3 and age 8
- Should families make a decision to pursue a reassessment privately, the TDSB will not accept results using the same intelligence test twice within a 24 month period
- It is important to obtain accurate information regarding the student's functioning to ensure that programming meets the true needs of the child.

### **IPRC Determination of Giftedness for English Language Learners (ELL)**

In addition to the considerations noted above under Professional Assessment, when factors of ELL and/or cultural background are considered to have a substantial impact on the measurement of intellectual development, the TDSB IPRC will use the following criteria:

- A score at or above the 98th percentile on the General Ability Index (GAI), Verbal Comprehension Primary Index Scale, Visual-Spatial Primary Index Scale, or Fluid Reasoning Primary Index Scale on the WISC-V, Canadian norms
- To qualify for ELL consideration, there must be evidence that the student has received ELL support or the student is a newcomer and has been in Canada for less time than would make it possible to access ELL support. This support *may* be substantiated by ELL tracking sheets and/or report cards with the ELL box marked. Only the IPRC can determine when the ELL criteria will be used based on documentation and consultation with those who know the student. Student profiles should be considered on a case-by-case basis

### **IPRC Determination of Giftedness for Students with a Learning Disability**

In addition to the considerations noted above under Professional Assessment, for students identified with a Learning Disability, the TDSB IPRC will use the following criteria:

- Assessment information will provide clear evidence that the student has:
  - Indicators of significant above average intellectual development
  - Information-processing needs
  - Academic challenges as a result of complex processing needs
- An outline of learning strengths and areas for improvement that demonstrates a meaningful discrepancy between age appropriate expectations and

academic achievement in literacy and/or numeracy and alternative programming requirements

- The assessment information, along with IEP information, report card information, and consultation, will lead to the student being designated as exceptional with the Exceptionality of Learning Disability, prior to considering the use of the Giftedness/Learning Disability criteria to identify the student with the Giftedness exceptionality
- A score at or above the 98th percentile on the General Ability Index (GAI), Verbal Comprehension Primary Index Scale, Visual-Spatial Primary Index Scale, or Fluid Reasoning Primary Index scores on the WISC-V

Only the IPRC, based on documentation and consultation, can determine when the Learning Disability criteria for Giftedness identification will be used.

## Placement Decision of Regular Class

Students who have an exceptionality of Giftedness may be offered placement through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class in the student's homeschool. The student will have an opportunity to learn with peers and be provided with intentional learning support through the IEP.

<p><b>Placement:</b></p>	<p><b>Regular Class</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom. * Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.</p>
<p><b>Location:</b></p>	<p>Homeschool</p>
<p><b>Grades:</b></p>	<p>4 -12</p>
<p><b>Class Size:</b></p>	<p>Ministry of Education regulations for class size</p>
<p><b>Staffing:</b></p>	<p>Follows regular class student and teacher ratio</p>

## **Placement Decision of Special Education Class**

Students who have an exceptionality of Giftedness may be offered to attend a Gifted Intensive Support Program (ISP) that may not be housed in their homeschool.

Students will be placed in ISPs with space closest to their home. The ISP class is designed to address the full range of a student's academic, emotional, and social development, while maintaining a focus on student achievement.

Students who are eligible for Special Education Class placement with intensive program support for Giftedness, in addition to demonstrating an unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability by meeting the criteria for the exceptionality of Giftedness, may also meet one of the following criteria:

- Demonstrate a significant need for enrichment programming, and/or alternative programming (e.g., thinking, awareness of self/others) requiring differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the student's level of educational potential
- Demonstrate evidence of significant challenges in interpersonal, social, and/or emotional development in the school setting

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Elementary Schools**

For elementary students, a Special Education Class Full Time placement for Giftedness begins in Grade 4. It is characterized by a prescribed student-teacher ratio and targeted instruction to address the range of a student's academic, emotional, and social development. The number and locations of these programs are determined by the needs of students requiring Special Education Class placement, and programs are located to ensure equitable access throughout the TDSB.

Eligible students are placed in the program closest to the student's home school where there is available space. When a program in any given site reaches capacity, this may result in some students being directed to the next closest Gifted ISP site location with available program space. Only one offer is provided – at the nearest location with available space. There are no waitlists.

When placement in a Special Education Class for Giftedness is offered and declined, the student will attend the regular program at the home school. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed in which provision is made for the accommodations required to address the student's learning strengths and needs.

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Secondary Schools**

In secondary schools, the IPRC placement for students identified with Giftedness is Special Education Class with Partial Integration. Students take some of their courses in special education classes for students with giftedness and are integrated with students in regular classes for other courses. Subject courses taught in a Gifted ISP

follow the Ontario curriculum and offer greater breadth and depth to the topics under study.

**Students in Grade 9 and 10** are required to take four special education courses offered for the intellectually gifted. The compulsory courses for schools to offer are English, Math, Science, and Geography (9)/History (10).

**Students in Grade 11 and 12** are required to take two special education courses for the intellectually gifted. The courses for schools to offer are English and Math.

**Secondary School Boundaries for Students with Giftedness Exceptionalities**

Parents/guardians/caregivers and students can find Secondary Gifted program site locations through the [Gifted Program Finder](#).

**Please Note:** It is possible that a program in any given site can reach capacity, which may result in some students being directed to another site with available program space. Students with a gifted exceptionality are guaranteed a spot within a Gifted ISP; however, students are not guaranteed admission to a specific school. Only one offer of placement is provided. There are no waitlists.

When placement in a Special Education Class for Giftedness is offered and declined, the student will attend the regular program at the home school. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed in which provision is made for the accommodations required to address the student’s learning strengths and needs.

Once an offer of placement to a Special Education Class for Giftedness (elementary or secondary) has been declined and a student is attending the regular class, a later requested change in level of support from the regular program to a Special Education Class placement must be done through a Central or Learning Centre Review IPRC to increase the level of support.

<b>Placement:</b>	<b>Intensive Support Program (ISP)</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Across the System Learning Centres in designated local neighbourhood schools
<b>Grades:</b>	4 - 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	25 Students Elementary 30 Students Secondary
<b>Staffing:</b>	Elementary: 1 Teacher Secondary: 1.0 Teacher staffed per number of sections (classes) required based on the number of students

[Locations of Gifted Intensive Support Programs \(ISPs\)](#)

# Intellectual: Mild Intellectual Disability

## Ministry of Education Definition

A learning disorder characterized by:

1. An ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and support services
2. An inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development
3. A potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Mild Intellectual Disability

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity, lived experiences or other relevant evidence collected in collaboration with school personnel, agencies, classroom teacher, parents/guardians/caregivers and student

### b. Educational Assessments

- An outline of learning strengths and areas for growth demonstrating academic and social performance below the range expected for age-appropriate placement
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

### c. Professional Assessment

- There will need to be careful interpretation of assessment and observational data when considering the exceptionality of MID
- Intellectual index *and* adaptive functioning scores generally fall between the 1st to (at or below) the 5th percentiles, for Mild Intellectual Disability identification
- Adaptive domain composite scores should be cautiously interpreted, especially when there is variability between the overall composite/domains and subdomain/skill areas. At least one area (e.g., communication, self-care, functional academics, social/interpersonal skills, etc.) must be well below average (roughly similar to cognitive scores)
- The adaptive criteria is not solely dependent on a test score. Psychological assessment reports provide information about the adaptive score's interpretation

- Consideration is given to a range of sources and collateral information/documentation, including, but not limited to qualitative information provided by the parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver(s) and/or school team, regarding the student's day-to-day functioning, home and school observations, medical documentation, OT/PT and SLP assessment reports, etc.
- All information is considered to best understand the child's strengths and needs

**d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers**

- In addition, to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

**Placement Decision of Regular Class**

Students who have an exceptionality of Mild Intellectual Disability (MID) may be offered through the IPRC decision to attend a regular class placement in the student's homeschool. In this placement, the student will have the opportunity to learn with same-age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP. Students in the regular class placement setting will be taught the Ontario Curriculum for the grade or the secondary course subject. The curriculum may be modified to accommodate the learning needs of the student.

At the secondary level, the degree and number of modifications to a course may in some cases result in a subject credit not being granted. The school principal will decide if the credit is granted to the student and if the secondary course pathway exists and remains intact so that the student is able to move to the next course in the subject pathway.

For students attending regular class, regular subject teachers liaise with the school Curriculum Leader (CL)/ Assistant Curriculum Leader (ACL) of Special Education and support students through strategies outlined in the Individual Education Plan(IEP).

In addition to the Secondary Resource Program (RSE) and Learning Strategies (GLE) courses, support may include course modifications that potentially permit credit accumulation towards a diploma. Students may have access to locally developed, compulsory (LDCC) and/or optional credit courses, designed to provide an opportunity for students to upgrade knowledge and skills. The number of offerings for LDCC courses by a secondary school may vary according to program needs for all students across the entire school.



<b>Placement:</b>	<p><b>Regular Class</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom. *Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.</p>
<b>Location:</b>	Homeschool
<b>Grades:</b>	1 -12
<b>Class Size:</b>	Ministry of Education regulations for class size
<b>Staffing:</b>	Follows regular class student and teacher ratio

## Placement Decision of Special Education Class

Students who have an exceptionality of Mild Intellectual Disability may be offered to attend a Mild Intellectual Disability (MID) Intensive Support Program (ISP) that may not be housed in their homeschool.

The ISP class is designed to address the full range of a student’s academic, emotional, and social development, while maintaining a focus on student achievement. Increasing opportunities for successful integration of students with regular programs is expected and a return to a regular classroom is the goal.

Students who are eligible for Special Education Class placement (ISP) for Mild Intellectual Disability:

- Are identified with the exceptionality of Mild Intellectual Disability by a TDSB IPRC. Students identified under other exceptionalities, but with a similar cognitive profile and instructional needs, may qualify for the same type of placement
- Show evidence of academic and social emotional complex needs in the regular classroom setting and require appropriate accommodations, modifications, alternative programming and Resource, including an appropriate period of time during which professional report recommendations have been implemented

- Assessments show evidence of need for intensive support programming in a classroom setting with a reduced pupil teacher ratio and Educational Assistant support
- Teacher assessments show the students are functioning academically well below grade level in both numeracy and literacy by a minimum of:
  - Three years in the primary grades
  - Three to four years in the junior grades
  - Four years in the intermediate/senior grades

Cognitive skills and intellectual ability involve varying degrees of sensory awareness, attention, processing, memory, and concept development. Students who demonstrate cognitive skills below age expectations usually require program accommodations and modifications to meet their varied learning needs.

Students' cognitive abilities may vary widely and can be measured by a qualified practitioner using norm-referenced individual assessments and an adaptive measures tool. The determination of a student's needs is based not only on the degree of intellectual strengths or weaknesses, but also on the ability of the student to be successful in his or her learning environment.

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Elementary Schools**

The elementary Special Education Class placement is characterized by a smaller class size, Educational Assistant support and a lunchroom supervisor who provides support during lunch. Instruction is targeted to address the full range of a student's academic and adaptive skills, as well as emotional and social development. Intentionally planned opportunities for successful integration with regular class programs are an important component to build success and confidence.

### **Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) in Secondary Schools**

Secondary school Special Education Class placements for students with a Mild Intellectual Disability (MID) are located in some secondary schools and in a small number of regionally based congregated settings. The IPRC decision of Special Education Class with Partial Integration is recommending placement in a special education program at an integrated site with both special education and regular classes where students have select subjects delivered in a smaller class environment. The students will take some of their courses in special education classes for students with a Mild Intellectual Disability exceptionality and they are integrated with students in regular classes for other courses.

Students in Grade 9 and 10 are required to take four special education courses. The recommended courses are English, Math, Science, and Geography/History. Students in Grade 11 and 12 are also required to take four special education courses. Two of the recommended courses are English and Math.

Some secondary students identified with Mild Intellectual Disability may require more intensive support through fully alternative programming and a curriculum of functional numeracy and literacy oriented towards vocational and life skills. For TDSB secondary students, the IPRC decision of Special Education Class Full Time recommends placement in a congregated setting. These programs are characterized by smaller class sizes with a prescribed student-teacher ratio. The programs in these settings build student confidence and self-esteem while developing basic skills that will lead to functional independence. The academic trajectories for students with an MID Exceptionality may lead to an Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) or a Certificate of Accomplishment, which differ from the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). It is important to note that a Certificate of Accomplishment and/or an Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) do not lead to post-secondary school credit granting programs.

<b>Placement:</b>	<b>Intensive Support Program (ISP)</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Across the System Learning Centres in designated local neighbourhood schools or one of the six designated secondary congregated school sites
<b>Grades:</b>	1 – 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	Primary: 12 students Junior: 14 students Intermediate: 16 students
<b>Staffing:</b>	Elementary: 1.0 Teacher and 1.0 Educational Assistant, Lunchroom Supervisor  Secondary: 1.0 Teacher and 1.0 Educational Assistant staffed per number of sections (classes) required based on the number of students

[Locations of Mild Intellectual Disability \(MID\) Intensive Support Programs \(ISPs\)](#)

# Physical: Physical Disability

## Ministry of Education Definition

A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of students without exceptionalities who are of the same age or development level

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Physical Disability

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlining accommodations and/or modifications addressing the student's physical needs
- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity and lived experiences or other relevant evidence collected in collaboration with school personnel, agencies, classroom teacher, parents/guardians/caregivers and student

### b. Educational Assessments

- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

### c. Professional Assessment

- A medical and/or occupational therapy/physiotherapy assessment

### d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

- In addition to information shared at the IPRC meeting, any documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant

## Placement Decision of Regular Class

Students who have an exceptionality of Physical Disability may be offered placement through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class in the student's homeschool. The student will have an opportunity to learn with same-age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

Some students with a physical disability may not meet the criteria for identification of an exceptionality. Some students may only require an accessible learning environment to meet their mobility needs and enable them to access all aspects of

school life. For those students, an IPRC placement decision may be Regular Class in a designated site.

**Placement Decision of Regular Class in Elementary and Secondary Schools (Designated Sites)**

TDSB has selected schools throughout the Board considered designated sites. Designated sites are accessible for students with physical disabilities who only require barrier-free access to a school environment to meet their mobility and safety needs. Students may attend a designated site based on the recommendation of the Special Education and Inclusion team with or without an IPRC. A current medical or OT/PT report outlining needs is required.

An IPRC placement of Regular Class is in age-appropriate classroom settings, with an Individual Education Plan and with the kind and degree of resource support and/or special education services recommended by the IPRC. Students placed at a designated site may attend a regular class or may receive special education support through the school’s Resource Model. They may need to access occasional special education support for mobility and activities of daily living.

<p><b>Placement:</b></p>	<p><b>Regular Class</b>  <b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.   <b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom.  *Elementary   <b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.</p>
<p><b>Location:</b></p>	<p>Homeschool or an Accessible school site</p>
<p><b>Grades:</b></p>	<p>1 – 12</p>
<p><b>Class Size:</b></p>	<p>Ministry of Education regulations for class size</p>
<p><b>Staffing:</b></p>	<p>Follows regular class student and teacher ratio</p>

## Placement Decision of Special Education Class

An IPRC decision about placement for a student with the exceptionality of Physical Disability will depend on the student's needs. For this reason, consideration of barrier-free requirements is a factor when planning locations of all special education programs serving the needs of all exceptionalities. Additionally, a close partnership between Professional Support Services (PSS) and outside agencies will support staff and parents/guardians/caregivers in meeting the student's physical disability needs.

Some students with a physical disability may need additional special education instruction, resources, supports and/or services. For example, they may be identified with a second exceptionality, such as a Communicational or Intellectual exceptionality, and may require additional programming support from a special education teacher. For those students, the IPRC placement decision may be Special Education Class. When offering placement, the Special Education and Inclusion Department looks for the closest match between the documented needs of the student and the kinds of instruction, supports and resources provided in the different special education programs.

### Special Education Class with Partial Integration

Special Education Class with Partial Integration is a placement in which students spend a portion of each day in a regular class setting. Student needs related to mobility, activities of daily living, health and personal care are supported. These classes are supported by Professional Support Services (PSS) personnel, who offer consultative input. They include an occupational therapist/physiotherapist, as well as a speech-language pathologist, psychologist, and social worker.

### Special Education Class Full Time

Students with very complex physical needs, in addition to intellectual, learning, medical and/or communication challenges, may be offered placement in a congregated school where seamless support is provided to meet both academic and personal care needs related to mobility and activities of daily living.

<b>Placement:</b>	<b>Intensive Support Program (ISP) - Physical</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Across the System Learning Centres in local designated neighbourhood schools
<b>Grades:</b>	1 - 12
<b>Class Size:</b>	12 Students

<b>Staffing:</b>	Elementary: 1 Teacher, Educational Assistant Secondary: 1.0 Teacher staffed per number of sections (classes) required based on the number of students, Educational Assistant
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[Locations of Physical Disability \(PD\) Intensive Support Programs \(ISPs\)](#)

# Physical: Blind and Low Vision

## Ministry of Education Definition

A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Blind and Low Vision

In making its determination, a TDSB IPRC will consider the following:

### a. Classroom Documentation

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Student work samples that are culturally relevant and responsive to the student's identity, lived experiences or other relevant evidence collected in collaboration with school personnel, agencies, classroom teacher, parents/guardians/caregivers and student
- Student, parental and school personnel questionnaire and consultation related to vision

### b. Educational Assessments

- A functional assessment (visual or tactile) conducted by the TDSB Blind/Low Vision Program staff
- The most recent Provincial Report Card (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team meeting, containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC

### c. Professional Assessment

- A medical eye exam report from an Optometrist or Ophthalmologist, that indicates a visual field of 20 degrees or less, or visual acuity of 20/70 or worse, after best correction in the better eye. The deficit in visual functioning is the result of an ocular or neurological condition that affects the visual system. This does not include students with visual perceptual or visual processing difficulties unless they also have an identified visual impairment as described above.

### d. Input from Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

- Parental questionnaire related to vision
- Any other documents that parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant to an IPRC



## Placement Decision of Regular Class

Students who have an exceptionality of Blind and Low Vision may be offered placement through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class in the student's homeschool. The student will have an opportunity to learn with same age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

The TDSB Vision Program promotes the acquisition of age-appropriate independence skills for students with visual impairment. Students who are Blind or have Low Vision may require various types of accommodations (rather than modifications) to access the curriculum. The kind and degree of vision support required by students is based on their needs, assessed through a Functional Vision Assessment, Functional Tactile Assessment and/or Learning Media Assessment.

Itinerant Vision Teachers hold specialized qualifications through the Ontario College of Teachers in "Teaching Students who are Blind/Low Vision." This specialized training enables them to make recommendations to support grade or subject teachers regarding curricular and instructional accommodations for the student who is visually impaired. It also qualifies them to determine a student's literacy medium (braille, enlarged print, digital) and assistive technology needs. Generally, as students acquire skills from the Expanded Core Curriculum (a disability-specific curriculum for learners with a visual impairment), reflected in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), they develop greater independence and rely less on direct intervention by Itinerant Vision Teachers.

Support for students who are blind or who have low vision is tiered according to need, offering differing degrees and types of assistance. Students who require minimal support (Tier 1), receive two to three visits a year from an Itinerant Vision Teacher, who plans interventions in consultation with the classroom teacher.

Students who require slightly more individualized accommodations for their blind/low vision-related needs (Tier 2), receive an increased number of visits, such as one visit or more per month (as needed). Students who require more intensive support (Tier 3) for their blindness or low vision-related needs (e.g., braille, visual efficiency training) may be identified as Blind/Low Vision through the IPRC process and receive direct instruction from an Itinerant Vision Teacher. These students are working on developing Blind/Low Vision specific skills, which are documented in their IEP as Alternative Curriculum. Progress in the area of alternative curriculum is reported in the Blind/Low Vision Alternative Report Card Addendum to the Provincial Report Card.

Some students with a visual impairment require additional instruction in age-appropriate travel skills to ensure safety within the school and in the local community. Orientation and Mobility Instructors hold specialized certification that enables them to instruct students with a visual impairment to travel as independently and safely as possible, with or without the use of a white cane or dog guide.

Use of assistive technology is of growing importance to the Blind/Low Vision Program. BLV staff can teach students with low vision how to maximize their remaining vision to access the curriculum, using a laptop computer with screen magnification software. Other advances in assistive technology such as speech output, braille embossers (printer), scanners, portable braille note-taking devices, etc. are helping students who are functionally blind access the curriculum more independently.

<p><b>Placement:</b></p>	<p><b>Regular Class</b></p> <p><b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher.</p> <p><b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom. *Elementary</p> <p><b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.</p>
<p><b>Location:</b></p>	<p>Homeschool</p>
<p><b>Grades:</b></p>	<p>1 – 12</p>
<p><b>Class Size:</b></p>	<p>Ministry of Education regulations for class size</p>
<p><b>Staffing:</b></p>	<p>Follows regular class student and teacher ratio</p>

### Placement Decision of Special Education Class

The TDSB does not have Special Education Class placements solely for students with the Blind and Low Vision exceptionality. All students who receive support through the TDSB Blind/Low Vision Program attend their local schools or, when placed by IPRC, may attend another specialized program that addresses an additional special education exceptionality-related instructional or support need.

# Multiple Exceptionalities

## Ministry of Education Definition

A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities that is of such a nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

TDSB does not use the Multiple Exceptionality category as a broad label and therefore does not have Multiple Exceptionality classes. To better serve students, should a student have more than one exceptionality, each individual exceptionality is listed on the IPRC Statement of Decision.

## IPRC Determination of Exceptionality: Multiple Exceptionality

When a student has more than one exceptionality, a TDSB IPRC identifies each exceptionality as per the process identified for each.

## Placement Decision of Regular Class

Students who have Multiple Exceptionalities may be offered placement through the IPRC decision to attend the regular class in the student's homeschool. The student will have an opportunity to learn with same age peers and be provided intentional learning support through the IEP.

<b>Placement:</b>	<b>Regular Class</b> <b>Withdrawal</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the school day from a special education teacher. <b>Resource</b> - The student attends a regular class and receives direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom. *Elementary <b>Indirect Support</b> - The student attends 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.
<b>Location:</b>	Homeschool
<b>Grades:</b>	1 – 8

<b>Class Size:</b>	Ministry of Education regulations for class size
<b>Staffing:</b>	Follows regular class student and teacher ratio

## Placement Decision of Special Education Class

The definition for Multiple Exceptionality describes students with two or more exceptionalities, whose instructional, compensatory and/or medical needs require both intensive support from one or more special education teachers and the kinds of services provided by professional support services personnel. The IPRC placement for students with documented needs in several exceptionality areas, one of which is cognitive impairment, may be Special Education Class. Other needs may include one or more of the following:

1. Communication
2. Physical
3. Behaviour

A Special Education Class placement for a student with needs in several exceptionality areas may be with partial integration or full time. Following an IPRC placement decision of Special Education Class for a student with more than one exceptionality, Special Education and Inclusion staff look for the closest match between the documented needs of the student and the kinds of instruction, support and resources provided to different instructional groupings of exceptional learners. For students who are identified with more than one exceptionality, the primary exceptionality is considered when making a placement offer.

## Congregated School Sites

In some cases, IPRC placement in a Special Education Class Full Time may be in a congregated school setting. Congregated sites house a number of classes where intensive special education programming is provided for the full school day to meet the needs of students with very complex needs. These programs support communities of learners whose complex educational needs may include a combination of intellectual, physical, medical, communication and/or behavioural needs. Programming also includes alternative curriculum and specialized services, facilities, and resources. The goal is to maximize student independence.

The academic trajectories for students in a congregated site may lead to an Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) or a Certificate of Accomplishment. These differ from an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and it is important to note that the Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) or Certificate of Accomplishment do not lead to post-secondary school credit granting programs.

[Locations of Congregated Sites](#)

# Regional Support Services

The TDSB provides a variety of regional support services to assist staff in need of specific strategies and skills when working with children who have special education needs. The supports offered vary, and may target needs of the whole school, individual classrooms, individual staff members and/or individual students. If the support for the teacher is student-specific, signed parental permission is required.

Regional Support Services include:

- Assistive Technology (AT/SEA) Services
- Autism Services (ASD Team)
- Blind and Low Vision (BLV) Services
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Services
- Behaviour Prevention Intervention (BPI) Team

## **Assistive Technology (AT)/Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) Services**

The Assistive Technology (AT) Team supports assistive technology across the Toronto District School Board, including the implementation of Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) claims. The role of the team is to collaborate with schools, central departments, administrators, teachers, and students to integrate assistive technology as an effective teaching/learning tool in the classroom and to build capacity among in-school staff to share best practices. Ongoing professional learning is provided throughout the year.

The Specialized Equipment Allocation (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. Allocations are done through an internal process that follows the Ministry of Education's Special Education Funding Guidelines for SEA.

The SEA *Per Pupil* Amount funds the purchase of computer-based technology including software programs to support students with special education needs. This funding is used to purchase equipment assigned to individual students as well as licenses for programs available to all students in the TDSB. SEA funding also provides training, maintenance and support in the use of all SEA equipment.

The SEA *Claims-Based* Amount funds 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.

The AT/SEA team supports the documentation required for SEA claims, and supports the purchasing, distribution and maintenance of recommended equipment. The Central Coordinator and Consultant also support the documentation required for Ministry Special Incidence Portion (SIP) claims.

The AT/SEA Team includes:

- Central Coordinator
- Central Consultant
- LC Itinerant Assistive Technology/SEA Teachers
- Low Incidence Itinerant Assistive Technology/SEA Teacher
- Secondary Itinerant Assistive Technology Teacher
- Data Business Analyst
- Assistive Technology Specialist
- SEA Technicians
- Assistive Technologist
- Occupational Therapist/Physiotherapist
- Speech Language Pathologists

## **Autism Services**

The Special Education and Inclusion Department works to provide comprehensive service for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This is delivered by a coordinated, multi-disciplinary team, whose function is to assist staff in supporting students diagnosed with ASD. The mission of the ASD Team is partnering with schools to empower school staff to provide effective and appropriate programming for students with ASD.

The Autism Services Team includes:

- Central Coordinator
- Special Education Teacher Consultant
- Speech-Language Pathologist
- Training Assistant
- Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Facilitator
- Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA)
- Child and Youth Counsellor

## **Requesting Autism Services Support**

Requests for the Autism Services Team are decided by the School Support Team (SST) and are generally made to address Tier 3 student needs, once all available support at the school level has been exhausted. When the support being sought is specific to a student, parental permission is required and the school will be provided with the Autism Services Referral Form for parents/guardians/caregivers signatures.

The completed referral form is submitted to the appropriate Team Consultant and assigned to the team for follow up.

The Autism Services Team offers a range of consultative services, which may include:

- Modeling of strategies based on Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) principles, as per [PPM 140](#)
- Program support to the classroom teacher to promote well being, equity and achievement
- Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Safety Plan support
- Transition planning as per [PPM 156](#)
- Professional development in partnership with Special Education and Inclusion staff (i.e., consultants, coordinators)
- Liaison with community partners
- Parent/Guardian/Caregiver engagement
- Support with behaviour assessment
- Consultation with Professional Support Services (PSS)

## **Blind and Low Vision (BLV) Services**

Some students with a visual impairment require the support of a specialist teacher to access the curriculum, referred to as BLV (Blind Low Vision) Itinerant Teachers in TDSB. BLV Itinerant Teachers have specialized qualifications with the expertise to provide curriculum accommodations and disability-specific educational programming for students in K-12.

Students with a visual impairment are all fully integrated into inclusive classrooms that best meet all of their needs. The BLV team works to provide curriculum materials in a variety of alternative formats including large-print, braille, e-text, and audio files to increase accessibility for students in their classrooms.

The BLV Team includes:

- Central Coordinator
- Specialist Teachers of Students who are Blind and have Low Vision
- Orientation and Mobility Instructors
- Braille Transcriber
- Librarian

### **Referral Criteria**

Students who qualify for support from BLV Itinerant Teachers must provide a medical eye report from either an optometrist or ophthalmologist outlining a visual acuity no better than 20/70 or a visual field of 20 degrees or less. Schools may reach out to the team to have a report interpreted before moving forward with a referral.

School staff may make a direct referral for Blind and Low Vision services for students who may require blind/low vision support through the In-school Team (IST) and/or

School Support Team (SST). Requests are typically initiated by the recommendation of the IST/SST which involves the completion of an online Individual Student Referral Access Form. The access form is an information-gathering tool that outlines the school's concerns about a student in the context of the services and supports provided to date. Once the access form is submitted, it is reviewed by central special education and inclusion teams.

An access form does not need to be completed to consult with the Blind/Low Vision Program Coordinator should a student require BLV services upon entry to school. In addition, an access form should not be viewed as a barrier to access support for students who may require immediate BLV support and/or programming. Staff must reach out to the BLV Coordinator as soon as an issue with vision is identified.

### **Referral Process**

When a student is referred to the TDSB Blind/Low Vision Team through a school request, parental request, Early Childhood Vision Consultants (Pre-School), Bloorview School Authority or Sick Kids Hospital, a referral package is generated and sent to the school at which the student is currently registered.

Once the consent forms and medical eye report have been shared with Blind/Low Vision Services, a Functional Vision/Tactile Assessment will be scheduled. The assessment will take place in the school where the student is currently registered, in a separate space. An assessment report will follow, outlining supports if required and what those supports will look like. This report will be shared with the school and family.

### **Preschool Referral Process**

The TDSB Blind/Low Vision team works with all Early Childhood Vision Consultants (ECVC), supporting preschool students in Toronto, through the Ontario Blind/Low Vision Early Intervention Program in the spring of every school year.

Once a student who has been receiving ECVC support is registered at their home school, a preschool referral package will be shared with the student's ECVC. When the package is returned and the ECVC report has been reviewed, a Functional Vision/Tactile Assessment will be scheduled at the school where the preschooler is registered, in the spring before the student is expected to start school. An assessment report will follow, outlining supports if required and what those supports will look like.

## **Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Services**

Some students in the TDSB who have hearing levels falling outside the typical range receive support from Specialist Teachers of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (To DHHs), referred to as DHH Itinerant Teachers in TDSB. DHH Itinerant Teachers have specialized qualifications that enable them to provide expertise to assist in the educational program planning and implementation for Deaf and Hard of



Hearing students attending school (JK to Grade 12), and for preschoolers (for the year before JK) and their families. In addition to supporting students with differing hearing levels, the DHH team also supports trials with Remote Microphone (RM/FM) systems with students who have an identified auditory processing disorder when recommended by the school team.

The DHH Team includes:

- Central Coordinator
- Specialist Teachers of Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing working in itinerant roles
- TDSB Audiologist

### **Referral Criteria**

Students who qualify for support from the DHH Team must have either a recent audiogram indicating a permanent hearing loss, at least three audiograms indicating an on-going fluctuating hearing loss over time, or a report from an audiologist indicating an auditory processing disorder with a recommendation for a RM/FM trial.

For students who arrive at TDSB schools with hearing aids, cochlear implants or using sign language to communicate but are not able to provide a hearing report, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program Coordinator is contacted to discuss next steps. Schools may reach out to the team at any time for assistance to interpret a report before moving forward with a referral.

For students with an auditory processing disorder, the school should implement all school-based accommodations outlined on the assessment report from the clinical audiologist. If, after implementing the recommendations suggested by the clinical audiologist, the IST feels that there is an issue with the student's ability to process information in large group settings, the school can submit a referral.

### **Referral Process**

While the majority of referrals to the DHH team are a result of audiology appointments, schools may also receive reports from parents/guardians/caregivers. In these cases, the school will initiate the referral using the Regional Access Form.

Please note, an Access Form is not needed to consult with DHH program coordinator, should a student require DHH services upon entry to school. In addition, an Access Form should not be seen as a barrier to access support for students who may require immediate support and/or programming.

### **Intake Assessment**

DHH itinerant teachers will conduct an initial intake assessment at the school once the forms have been completed and returned as indicated in the referral package. The itinerant teacher will collaborate with the school team and the family to gather

information to implement necessary accommodations and to suggest recommendations for the appropriate level of support (Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3). Recommendations will be discussed with the parent/guardian/caregiver and will be reflected on the student's ILP or IEP, as appropriate.

DHH Intensive Support Program (ISP) placements may be considered for students who have been assessed as having considerable expressive and receptive language delays due to significant hearing levels which, in addition to accommodations, necessitate modifications, curriculum instruction by a specialist teacher of the deaf and a smaller student teacher ratio.

## **Behaviour Prevention Intervention (BPI) Team**

The mission of the Behaviour Prevention Intervention (BPI) Team is to assist in the understanding and management of challenging behaviour, so that all students may benefit from learning opportunities that contribute to overall academic, social-emotional and behavioural success and enhanced quality of life. The BPI Team promotes the use of positive behaviour supports, an approach to behaviour that is data-driven and relies on the collaboration of all staff to provide a continuum of support with two main goals:

1. Preventing the development or the escalation of challenging behaviours
2. Teaching and reinforcing appropriate school learning and social behaviours across all school settings

On a referral basis, the BPI Team provides a continuum of services, ranging from individualized, student-and family-centered support to classroom consultations and professional learning. Collaborative support is delivered by a coordinated, multi-disciplinary team, which offers specialized support to schools in the area of behaviour assessment, intervention and support. The multidisciplinary nature of the team allows for greater understanding and skillful management of the complex programming needs of some students.

The BPI Team includes:

- Itinerant Teachers - elementary and secondary
- Child and Youth Workers
- Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA)
- Social Workers
- Psychologists

The BPI Team implements the methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), [as per PPM 140](#), and models these practices in the classroom in order to help staff to increase student ability to use the methods themselves. For students whose intense needs require specific interventions for safe management, the team will work with staff to carry out a functional assessment of behaviour and assist in the development of an appropriate Safety Plan.

In addition to providing specific individual student-centered strategies, the team assists schools in re-engineering their classroom environments to more effectively support, teach and reinforce positive, pro-social behaviours in general.

### **Requesting BPI Team Support**

Every school in the TDSB has equal access to the BPI Team through the Learning Centre referral process. Requests for BPI Team services are decided by the School Support Team (SST) in consultation with the school's Special Education and Inclusion Consultant. Such requests are generally made to address Tier 3 needs once all available supports at the school level have been accessed. When the requested support is student specific, the school is provided with the Behaviour Prevention Intervention Consent Form for parent/guardian/caregiver signature. The completed form is submitted to the appropriate BPI Team member and assigned to the team for follow-up.

Services are developed in collaboration with school-based staff and delivered with a focus on enhancing confidence and capacity to manage challenging student behaviour(s), as follows:

#### **For Individual Students**

The BPI Access request is reviewed by the Special Education and Inclusion team at the Learning Centre. As appropriate, the team responds to the school with BPI staff assignment and a BPI Consent Form to be forwarded to parents/guardians/caregivers. When parental informed consent is confirmed by the assigned BPI team member, the team can work with the individual student.

#### **For Classroom Consultations, Professional Learning or Small Group Work**

Classroom consultation services offer an opportunity for classroom staff to receive support and direction about class-wide positive behaviour supports and programming strategies for a particular group of students.

Following consultation with the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant/School Support Team, principals can contact Special Education and Inclusion staff for further information about classroom consultation or professional learning.

### **Specific Supports Provided by the BPI Team**

The BPI Team provides the following support, in collaboration with school staff:

- Observing the student at school and review of the OSR
- Consulting with teaching and other staff and parents/guardians/caregivers
- Assisting staff in completing a functional assessment of behaviour (and the appropriate use of the ABC/Data Recording Chart/Behaviour Log) and in analyzing behavioural data gathered by staff
- Goal setting for student academic and social-emotional achievement

- Recommending environmental changes required to reduce undesired behaviour
- Identifying appropriate replacement behaviour and/or skills that need to be taught
- Team-teaching with classroom staff and modelling recommended strategies, using an anti-oppressive stance, in the classroom
- Assisting in the development of alternate programming for academic and/or intra/inter-personal skills in the IEP (e.g., appropriate accommodations, goals, expectations, strategies, on-going assessments)
- Assisting with the development of Safety Plans
- Helping staff design positive reinforcement systems
- Providing resources and literature to support programming recommendations
- Providing transition support for complex cases and when the student moves from one school or setting to another
- Delivering professional learning sessions on topics related to behavioural challenges
- Supporting parents/guardians/caregivers or family in understanding the factors contributing to the behaviour challenges, interpreting professional assessments, developing transition plans and accessing community supports
- Practicing Life-Space-Intervention with students, and coaching them to perform or adopt a new replacement behaviour
- Helping family/care providers access community agencies, if requested and where appropriate
- Delivering training and support for school staff in the development of classroom and school wide Positive Behaviour Supports

## Change of Placement

The Annual Review process is used to review program and placement for students with exceptionalities in regular class or special education class. For non-exceptional students with an IEP, the IST/SST meeting is the process that is used to review a student's setting in regular class (e.g., Indirect Support, Resource Assistance - elementary, and Withdrawal Assistance).

When determining the need to change a student's placement, teachers use a variety of educational assessment strategies and tools including, but not limited to, direct observation, portfolios, journals, rubrics, standardized and diagnostic tests, projects, and self and peer assessment.

## Alternative Placements

The TDSB strives to meet the needs of all students through various special education programs and services (e.g., Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS), Children's Treatment Centres (CTC), Geneva Centre). In the event that the TDSB cannot meet the needs of students within the board's range of placement options, the Board explores alternative education placement options such as Education Community Partnership Programs (ECP) and the Provincial and Demonstration Schools.

System-wide communication strategies support an understanding of special education programs and services in the TDSB and with external partners (e.g., maintaining website, developing guides for parents, communicating through IST, SST, IPRC meetings, etc.).

## Ways in Which SEAC Provides Advice on Range of Placements

The TDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) may make recommendations to the Board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional students of the Board. SEAC members also support families by acting as a link to staff and to community agencies.

# Section K: INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)



[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To inform the ministry and the public about the ways in which the board is complying with ministry requirements for implementing IEPs*

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An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a plan that describes special education programs, services, or additional support a student receives. This written plan is a working document which describes a student's strengths and areas for improvement, and the special education program, supports and services accessed or provided to meet the student's individual needs.

The IEP helps with monitoring and assessing a student's progress, and is adjusted as the student's strengths and areas for improvement change. It is reviewed and updated at every reporting period. [Regulation 181/98](#) governs Ministry of Education expectations for the development of IEPs for students.

There was no Ministry review of TDSB IEPs in the 2023-2024 school year.

## **Accommodations, Modifications and Alternative Expectations**

An IEP outlines any accommodations and special education services needed to assist the student in achieving their 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 specialized teaching and assessment strategies that may include individualized equipment, technology and environmental adjustments as required by 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. Students are expected to demonstrate all the overall expectations of the curriculum.

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

For examples of accommodations, refer to the [Ontario Ministry of Education’s Individual Education Plan \(IEP\) A Resource Guide](#) and [Appendix E: Examples of Accommodations](#).

**Modifications** are changes made in the age-appropriate, grade-level expectations for a subject or course to meet a student’s learning needs. Such changes involve selecting specific expectations from a different grade level and/or altering the number of the grade level expectations, and/or altering the 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 a student’s educational pathway. It is important that there be clear communication between parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver(s) and school staff about the use and impact of modifications.

“At the secondary level, the principal will determine whether achievement of the modified expectations constitutes successful completion of the course, and will decide whether the student will be eligible to receive a credit for the course. The principal will communicate their decision to the parents and the student” (Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Program Requirements, 2016, p. 41). Credit granting is determined by several factors, including the degree of complexity of the modified specific expectations and the number of expectations through which the student has demonstrated achievement in the course.

For more information regarding secondary pathways, the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and the Ontario Secondary School Certificates, please refer to the [Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Program Requirements](#).

**Alternative Curriculum Expectations** are learning expectations that are not represented in the Ontario curriculum. Examples include functional literacy, facilitating transitions and organizational skills.

Secondary school courses identified as non-credit courses or K level courses are considered alternative curriculum. These courses are written based on student baseline assessment and evaluation from the previous grade/course and are reflected in the student’s IEP. Students taking non-credit courses complete their education and leave secondary school with a Certificate of Accomplishment. It is important to note that a Certificate of Accomplishment does not lead to post-secondary school credit granting programs. For further information regarding secondary diplomas and certifications, see [Ontario Schools K to 12 Policy and Program Requirements](#).

## IEP Accommodations and Modifications in Secondary School Settings

In secondary schools, providing accommodations to students with special education needs should be the first option considered in program planning. Instruction based on the principles of Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP), Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction (DI) are used to meet the diverse needs of learners. If teacher observation and ongoing assessments reveal that students with IEPs with accommodations alone cannot demonstrate achievement of the expectations, even to a limited degree, then modifications are considered.

Teachers are expected to develop appropriate modifications on the IEP 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 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 specific curriculum expectations, and/or decreasing the complexity of the regular specific 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 but cannot reach back and be taught from another grade or from the elementary curriculum
- As a 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
- A student must meet the *Overall* expectations of a specific course to be eligible for the credit to be granted
- Expectations cannot be modified if in doing so it would jeopardize the student's ability to enroll in the next level course and the integrity of the existing course (i.e., the modification for the course does not undermine its status as a prerequisite to the next course in the pathway)
- 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 permitted

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



# Steps and Considerations for the Development of an IEP

## Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism

As stated in the [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#), the TDSB continues to focus on some very important changes that require an examination of biases and a reflection on the impact that power and privilege has on students and their success. Through this reflection, the TDSB is challenging structures and removing barriers that may impact students and their families. The focus on equity, dismantling of anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism, inclusion, human rights and anti-oppression and anti-ableism continues to challenge beliefs and practices that have historically impacted the programs and pathways available to students.

Equity, anti-oppression, anti-racism and inclusion discussions must occur before any IEP is created. Some questions to consider are:

- Who is the student being considered for an IEP and why?
- What accommodations and culturally responsive, relevant, safe and trauma-informed pedagogy can be supported in the classroom that do not require an IEP?
- What support can the teacher be offered to better assist in assessment and instructional practices?
- Is the IEP necessary for the student to access the curriculum?

It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that parents/guardians/caregivers are informed about interventions used to assist a student who is having difficulty meeting grade-level/course expectations. That communication may include the introduction of an 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 student-specific accommodations for instructional or assessment purposes, and/or
  - will be assessed on the basis of modified and/or alternative expectations

The TDSB's position is that students who are not exceptional are entitled to receive resource support for one reporting period (or term) without the development of an IEP. If the recommendation of the IST or SST is for continued support beyond one reporting period, then an IEP should be developed.

In response to the data and to address the over-representation of Black students in special education programs, attention is being directed at interrupting the automaticity of initiation of IEPs for early learners in Kindergarten and Grade 1.

### **Kindergarten - Grade 1 IEP Strategy**

The TDSB has implemented the Kindergarten - Grade 1 IEP Strategy. Before any IEP is created for a child in JK/SK/Grade 1, the principal will consult with their superintendent to review assessments, conditions for learning, attitudinal biases or barriers, explore alternatives and reach agreement before proceeding.

Questions to consider include:

- Who is this student and why are they being considered for an IEP?
- Why is an IEP necessary now?
- What accommodations and culturally responsive, relevant, safe and trauma-informed pedagogy can be supported in the classroom that does 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?

Students who require an IEP will be able to access one if needed.

### **An IEP is:**

- A written plan for a student who requires student-specific accommodations on an ongoing basis and/or 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 areas for growth that affect the student's ability to learn and demonstrate learning
- A written plan developed in consultation with parents/guardians/caregivers, 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, collaborative 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, parents/guardians/caregivers, 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 created, [Regulation 181/98](#) requires that parents/guardians/caregivers and students 16 years of age and older be consulted in its development. Parents/guardians/caregivers are crucial to the IEP process. They contribute essential information in helping the school understand the student's interests, strengths and areas for growth. The opportunity to consult must be offered at the beginning of the IEP development process and also anytime the IEP is being updated and/or reviewed. Any family/student input must be given due consideration as the IEP is being written. Students younger than 16 years of age may also be involved as appropriate. Where the student is working with agency personnel and written parental/guardian/caregiver 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 two weeks of a new school year or a student's placement in a new program. Completed consultation response forms are to be attached to the IEP and stored in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR). While development of the IEP is a collaborative process, there are sometimes disagreements about what is written in the IEP. The process for dispute resolution is addressed later in this section.

### **Ministry Standards for Implementation**

The principal is responsible for ensuring that 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 Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC). The principal may determine that an IEP is to be 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 - Elementary or Withdrawal Assistance or Special Education Class and a setting of Partially Integrated or Fully Self-Contained)
- 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 statement of decision
- The parents/guardians/caregivers and the student (if 16 or older) are consulted in the development of the student's IEP and receive a copy
- Principles of [Applied Behaviour Analysis \(ABA\)](#) are incorporated into the IEPs of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) where appropriate, and relevant school Board personnel and community supports are available
- 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 parents/guardians/caregivers 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 be 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 documentation 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 because 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

## 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 the Ministry of Education's [Policy/Program Memorandum \(PPM\) No. 156: Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs](#), which came into effect on February 1, 2013. 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. As part of the IEP, transition plans must be personalized for students and developed and reviewed in consultation with the parents/guardians/caregivers or students (as appropriate). Consultation should also involve relevant community agencies and/or partners 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/guardians/ caregivers, 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). Different 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.



### For FEW (Tier 3)

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

### For SOME (Tier 2)

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

### For ALL (Tier 1)

- ***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 (with Parent Consultation Form)

The year-end IEP is maintained in the Ontario School Record (OSR) for every year students have an IEP in elementary school. As students leave elementary school, the principal determines whether to maintain in the OSR any IEPs prior 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 are maintained in the OSR until students leave the school system.

If parents/guardians/caregivers 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](#)).

## Preventing and Resolving Conflicts

Parent/guardian/caregiver collaboration in Individual Education Plan (IEP) development provides an invaluable perspective into a student's interests, strengths, identity, lived experiences and areas for growth. Family support for IEP content and implementation is equally important. However, parents/guardians/caregivers may not agree with everything proposed in an IEP. The IEP may also not have everything parents/guardians/caregivers want or the focus in some areas may differ from parental requests. There may even be instances where parents/guardians/caregivers do not agree with the initiation of an IEP. In these situations, effective communication is essential to clarify information and resolve issues. The Ministry of Education document [Shared Solutions](#) is an excellent resource in such circumstances.

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 parents/guardians/caregivers 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 parents/guardians/caregivers the reasons why. The principal is also responsible for the appropriateness of a student's IEP, as stated in the Ministry of Education 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 their 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”* ([IEPs: Standards for Program Planning and Implementation \(2000\)](#)).

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

When a disagreement about the IEP occurs between parents/guardians/caregivers and Board staff, the goal is to center the best interests of the student foremost in all discussions. As per the [TDSB Parent Concern Protocol](#), resolution of the issues will take place through the principal of the school and may include the following sequence of steps:

1. Discussions with parents/guardians/caregivers, student (if 16 or older) and teacher(s) to identify areas of concern and to determine appropriate solutions
2. Scheduling of a School Support Team meeting with the parents/guardians/caregivers and 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 parents/guardians/caregivers. The superintendent may also be consulted and may attend

If all avenues have been exhausted, the Ministry of Education may be contacted for assistance, upon a written request from the parents/guardians/caregivers.



# INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDENT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Student OEN: \_\_\_\_\_ Trillium Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Current School: \_\_\_\_\_ Special Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Original IPRC Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Most Recent IPRC Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Annual Review Waived by Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

## REASON FOR DEVELOPMENT OF IEP

Student identified as exceptional by an IPRC

Exceptionality: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement: \_\_\_\_\_

Student not formally identified but requires special education program/services including modified/alternative learning expectations and/or accommodations, as determined by: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement: \_\_\_\_\_

Educational Rationale: \_\_\_\_\_

## ASSESSMENT DATA

List relevant educational, behavioural, medical/health, psychological, speech/language, and occupational/physiotherapy assessments.

Information Source / Date	Summary of Results

## PROFILE OF STRENGTHS AND GROWTH

Areas of Strength	Areas for Growth







## INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) Transition Plan

Name:

School Year:

No Action Required at present

**INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) CONSULTATION FORM**

Completion of this consultation form will assist teachers to create a profile of "Student First Name" as a learner and to develop a program that addresses needs by capitalizing on strengths. Please complete the sections that are applicable.

**Student's Name:** *"Student First Name and Last Name"*

<b>AREA</b>	<b>FROM THE PARENT/GUARDIAN/STUDENT PERSPECTIVE...</b>
<b>AREAS OF STRENGTH</b> <i>What is "Student First Name" good at?</i>	
<b>AREAS OF NEED</b> <i>In what areas does "Student First Name" need help?</i>	
<b>AREAS OF INTEREST</b> <i>What does "Student First Name" like to do?</i>	
<b>LEARNING GOAL</b> <i>What are the most important things you want "Student First Name" to learn this year?</i>	
<b>LITERACY</b> <i>Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing</i> <i>What is "Student First Name" good at? What does "Student First Name" have difficulty with?</i>	
<b>MATH</b> <i>Concepts, Computation, Problem Solving</i> <i>What is "Student First Name" good at? What does "Student First Name" have difficulty with?</i>	
<b>FACILITATING TRANSITIONS THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY</b> <i>What strategies will best support "Student First Name" as "Student First Name" transitions from activity to activity and location to location throughout the school day?</i>	
<b>TRANSITION PLANNING</b> <i>What actions need to be considered now in planning for "Student First Name"'s transition to the next grade and/or school?</i> <i>What actions need to be considered now in planning for "Student First Name"'s post secondary destination(s)?</i>	

Student's Name: *"Student First Name and last name"*

AREA	FROM THE PARENT/STUDENT PERSPECTIVE...
<p><b>SOCIAL INTERACTION</b></p> <p><i>How does "Student First Name" relate to other students in one-to-one, small group and large group situations?</i></p>	
<p><b>DISABILITY/MEDICAL CONDITION</b></p> <p><i>Please provide us with any resources or additional information about "Student First Name"'s disability/medical condition.</i></p>	
<p><b>SPECIAL EQUIPMENT/ASSISTIVE and/or ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY</b></p> <p><i>What special equipment will "Student First Name" use at school, e.g., walker, stander, voice aids, laptop?</i></p>	
<p><b>INDEPENDENCE</b></p> <p><i>In what areas would you like to see Alireza demonstrate more independence?</i></p>	
<p><b>SAFETY/SELF-REGULATION</b></p> <p><i>Are there any issues related to safety and/or self-regulation, which are unique to Alireza that we should be aware of? What are the best strategies to support "Student First Name"'s safety?</i></p>	
<p><b>KEY INFORMATION</b></p> <p><i>Is there any additional information that you would like to share?</i></p>	

Copy to OSR

Revised March 2023

## Section L:

# SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

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[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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### ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide details of the board's specialized health support services to the ministry and to the public*

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## **Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings**

The provision of health support services to students in school settings is governed by the Ministry of Education [Policy/Program Memorandum 81 \(The Provision of Health Support Services in Schools\)](#) and [Policy/Program Memorandum 161 Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions \(Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy in School\)](#). These policy documents outline the shared responsibility for the provision of health support services amongst the Ministries of Education, Health, and Children, Community and Social Services:

*“Supporting students with health/medical conditions in schools is complex and a whole-school approach is needed where education and community partners, including health care professionals, have important roles to play in promoting student health and safety and in fostering and maintaining healthy and safe environments in which students can learn” (PPM 161).*

The safety and well-being of all students is a shared responsibility of the Board, staff, schools, families, students, health care providers and third-party health care providers. Providing health, medical, and/or disability supports empowers students as confident and capable learners to reach their full potential for self-management of their health, medical conditions and/or disabilities.

The Board collaborates with parents/guardians/caregivers to support a safe environment for their children while at school and during school-related activities. An Individual Plan of Care outlines the management of known conditions and is created for students who are at known risk for specific medical emergencies and who require daily routine management that may occur at school. An Individual Plan of Care will be referenced in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), where applicable, and in accordance with page E13 of the Ministry



of Education Policy and Resource Guide [Special Education in Ontario – Kindergarten to Grade 12](#).

## Partnerships

The 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, Youth Link, and Toronto Central Home and Community Care Support Services. Following extensive consultation, the Core Service Group developed the [MCCSS Guidelines](#).

## Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings - Policy/Program Memorandum No. 81 (PPM 81)

The Ontario Ministry of Education's [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 81: Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings](#) 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 within the school context. Responsibility for the direct provision of these services at the local level is shared by school boards, the Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS) Program of the Ministry of Health, and agencies operating under the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

TDSB establishes its policies for the provision of these support services under [PO92 Student Health Support](#), and the corresponding procedures, including [PR536 Medication](#), [PR563 Anaphylaxis](#), [PR 607 Diabetes Management](#) and [PR714 Asthma Management](#). For more information, please see [PPM 161 Supporting Children and Students with](#) Conditions. These policies define administrative procedures, personnel roles, and routine safeguards. The TDSB works in collaboration with local boards of health and local Home Care Program administrators.

The procedures for the administration of medication provide:

1. That such procedures be applied only to those services, requested by the parents/guardians/caregivers and prescribed by a physician or other health care professional, which must be provided during school hours
2. That a request for the service and the authorization to provide such service be made in writing through [Form 536A – Administration of Prescribed Medication](#) by the parents/guardians/caregivers and the physician, specifying the name of medication, the medical condition, the method of administration including the dosage and time of administration, the frequency, the dates for which the authorization applies, the impact of a missed dose, and the possible side effects, if any

3. That the storage and safekeeping requirements for any labelled medication be stated
4. That a record of administration be maintained which includes the student's name, date of birth, school name, date, name of medication, time of provision, dosage given, name of person designated to administer medication, special instructions for administering medication, and any instructions/comments regarding administration
5. That the telephone numbers of the parents/guardians/caregivers and physician be readily accessible in the school
6. That the medication be administered in a manner which allows for sensitivity and privacy and which encourages the student to take an appropriate level of responsibility for their medication

School boards are responsible for the administration of medication where such medication has been prescribed for use during school hours and where students require assistance with its administration. For students with physical disabilities, 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.

At the request of a school board, the HCCSS Program of the Ministry of Health is responsible for assessing student 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 clinical occupational therapy and physiotherapy, and speech pathology treatment, and may assist school boards in the training and direction of school board staff performing certain other support services if the training services are not available through pre-existing internal school-board staff. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is responsible for ensuring the provision of health support services in children's residential care and treatment facilities.

### **Clarification of PPM 81 Re: Catheterization and Suctioning**

Following implementation of [PPM 81, Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings](#), a Memorandum to Regional Directors of Education differentiated between procedures that may be performed by the student, parents/guardians/caregivers, 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 HCCSS Program Care Coordinators 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.

### Catheterization

Type	Administered by	Provided by	Training and Direction	Consultation
<b>Clean intermittent</b>	Child aide or other personnel; student, as applicable	School Board	Parents/guardians / caregivers, Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
<b>Sterile intermittent</b>	Health Care Professional	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health

Indwelling care of an indwelling catheter is usually performed by the parents/guardians/caregivers and is not required in the school setting.

School board personnel should make arrangements with parents/guardians/caregivers with respect to emergency needs.

### Suctioning

Type	Administered by	Provided by	Training and Direction	Consultation
<b>Shallow surface (e.g., oral or nasal suction)</b>	Aide or other personnel	School Board	Parents/guardians / caregivers, Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
<b>Deep (e.g., throat and/or chest suction or drainage)</b>	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 the TDSB in the treatment facility, it is expected that the present policies under PPM 81 will continue.

## Model for Provision of Specialized Health Support Services

Support Service	Administered by	Provided by	Training and Direction	Consultation
<b>1. Oral Medication</b>	Pupil as authorized	Pupil	Attending Physician	Local Board of Health
<b>1. Oral Medication</b>	Parents/ Guardians/ Caregivers as authorized	Parents/Guardians / Caregivers	Attending Physician	Local Board of Health
<b>1. Oral Medication</b>	Aide or other personnel	School Board	School Board Physician/Parent / Guardian	Local Board of Health
<b>2. Injection of Medication</b>	Pupil as authorized	Pupil	Attending Physician	Local Board of Health
<b>2. Injection of Medication</b>	Parents/ Guardians/ Caregivers as authorized	Parents/ Guardians/ Caregivers	Attending Physician	Local Board of Health
<b>2. Injection of Medication</b>	Health Professional	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health	School Board
<b>3. Catheterization, Manual expression of bladder/stoma, drainage/suctioning, Tube feeding</b>	Health Professional	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health	School Board
<b>4. Lifting and Positioning, Assistance with Mobility, Feeding, Toileting</b>	Aide or other personnel	School Board	School Board and/or Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
<b>5. Therapies: Physiotherapy/ Occupational:</b>	Qualified therapist	Ministry of Health and/or Children, Community, and Social Services	Ministry of Health and/or Children, Community and Social Services	Ministry of Health and/or Children, Community, and Social Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Intensive clinical (treatment)</b></li> <li>• <b>General maintenance exercises</b></li> </ul>	Aide	School Board	School board and/or Ministry of Health and/or Children, Community and Social Services	School board and/or Ministry of Health and/or Children, Community, and Social Services

<b>5. Speech: Speech pathology (treatment of moderate - severe articulation, stuttering and voice disorders)</b>	Speech Pathologists	Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services	School Board and/or Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	School Board and/or Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
<b>6. All Services in Children's Residential Care/ Treatment Facilities</b>	Aides/Health Professional	Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	Ministry of Health

\*The previously known Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) was renamed [Home and Community Care Support Services](#).

### Specialized Health Support Services

<b>Specialized Health Support Services</b>	<b>Agency or position of person who performs the service</b>	<b>Eligibility criteria for students to receive the service</b>	<b>Position of person who determines eligibility to receive the service and the level of support</b>	<b>Criteria for determining when the service is no longer required</b>	<b>Procedures for resolving disputes about eligibility and level of support (if available)</b>
<b>Administration of Prescribed Medications</b>	TDSB Parent(s)/ Guardian(s)/ Caregiver(s), student where applicable, or HCCSS	HCCSS	TDSB Staff and/or HCCSS Care Coordinator	Assessed by TDSB Staff, community-based healthcare professionals, and/or HCCSS Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with HCCSS Care Coordinator
<b>Assistance with Mobility</b>	TDSB, HCCSS – where student has 1:1 nursing	TDSB/HCCSS	TDSB Staff or HCCSS Care Coordinator	Assessed by TDSB Staff and HCCSS Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with HCCSS Care Coordinator
<b>Catheterization</b>	TDSB or HCCS	TDSB/HCCS	TDSB Staff or HCCSS Care Coordinator	Assessed by TDSB Staff, community-based healthcare professionals, and/or HCCSS	TDSB Case Conference with HCCSS Care Coordinator

				Care Coordinator	
<b>Feeding</b>	TDSB or HCCSS – if G-tube	TDSB/ HCCSS	TDSB Staff or HCCSS Care Coordinator	Assessed by TDSB Staff or community-based healthcare professionals and/or HCCSS Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with HCCSS Care Coordinator
<b>Lifting and Positioning</b>	TDSB	TDSB	TDSB Staff	Assessed by TDSB Staff	TDSB Case Conference
<b>Nursing</b>	HCCSS	HCCSS	HCCSS Care Coordinator	Assessed by Community-based Health Care Professionals and/or HCCSS Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with HCCSS Care Coordinator
<b>Nutrition Services Provided by Registered Dietician</b>	HCCSS	HCCSS	TDSB Staff and/or HCCSS Care Coordinator	TDSB Staff and/or HCCSS Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with HCCSS Care Coordinator
<b>Occupational Therapy</b>	TDSB/CTCs	TDSB/CTCs	TDSB Staff and/or CTCs service navigator	TDSB Staff and/or CTCs' service providers	TDSB Case Conference or CTCs' service navigation team
<b>Physiotherapy</b>	TDSB/CTCs	TDSB/ CTCs	TDSB Staff and/or CTCs service navigator	TDSB Staff and/or CTCs' service provider	TDSB Case Conference or CTCs' service navigation team
<b>Speech Therapy</b>	Assessed and referred by TDSB Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) CTCs	CTCs	TDSB SLPs and CTCs' service navigator	CTCs' service provider	TDSB Case Conference or CTCs' service navigation team

<b>Suctioning</b>	TDSB or HCCSS	HCCSS	TDSB Staff and/or HCCSS Care Coordinator	TDSB Staff and/or HCCSS Care Coordinator	TDSB case conference, Parents/ Guardians/ Caregivers as authorized, community-based physician, and/or HCCSS Care Coordinator
<b>Toileting</b>	TDSB	TDSB	TDSB Staff	Assessed by TDSB Staff	TDSB Case Conference

\*The previously known Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) was renamed [Home and Community Care Support Services](#).

# Section M: EQUIPMENT

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### ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To inform the ministry, board staff members and other professionals, and parents about the provision of individualized equipment for some students with special needs*

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## Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) Funding

The Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) funding from the Ministry of Education assists with the costs of equipment essential to supporting students with special education needs in accessing the curriculum, in accessing an alternative program and/or course, and in attending school. SEA funding is made up of two components (Formula Component and Claims-Based Component) which are allocated by the TDSB through an internal process that follows the Ministry of Education's Special Education Funding Guideline for SEA found in the [Specialized Equipment Allocation \(SEA\) 2024-25 Directives](#).

### **Portability/Transferring Equipment**

Where appropriate, students' equipment (e.g., a SEA Chromebook) should be made available in any setting where it may be used to access learning. This could include the immediate school environment, home, or before/after school programming.

When a student who has received Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) equipment funded by SEA moves from the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) to a different school board, school authority, Education and Community Partnership Program (ECPP), or hospital school authority in Ontario, the equipment must accompany the student. However, if the new district school board, school authority, ECPP, or hospital school authority deems it impractical, the equipment may remain behind.

When making a decision about transferring such equipment, both parties consider factors such as a student's best interests, software compatibility and the efficiency of completing a transfer. The final decision as to whether it is practical to transfer such



equipment will be made by the new district school board, school authority, ECPP or hospital school authority. The new district school board will be responsible for any shipping or handling costs associated with the timely and effective transfer of equipment. SEA Equipment does not transfer to private schools, post-secondary institutions, employment settings, home-schooling, or out of province/country schools.

## **SEA - Claims-Based Component**

The Claims-Based Component supports the purchase of any single item (any equipment-type technology related or not) costing \$5,000 or over before taxes for an individual student with disabilities or special education needs.

### **Criteria for Eligibility**

Eligible students are those for whom specialized equipment is determined to be directly required and essential for attending school, accessing the Ontario curriculum, and/or supporting or augmenting a board-determined alternative program and/or course.

Students do not have to be identified as exceptional pupils through the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process to be eligible for equipment funded through SEA. However, students must be receiving special education programs and services and the use of SEA-funded equipment must be indicated in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The student's equipment needs must be documented by an assessment or assessments from an appropriately qualified professional for claims-based components.

### **Examples Claims-Based Component Items:**

- customized gross motor equipment
- ceiling lifts, portable person lifts and/or harnesses
- specialized communication devices such as eye gaze

## **SEA - Formula Component**

The SEA Formula Component funds the purchase of any equipment type, technology related or not, training, maintenance, and repairs related to that equipment, for students with special education needs. This funding is used to purchase equipment assigned to individual students as well as licenses for specific programs. This funding is also utilized to support training in the use of SEA devices and with the integration of assistive technology to effectively meet the needs of students, and also to support the maintenance of devices and inventory management.

## **Examples of Formula Component Items:**

- hardware and peripherals/accessories
- print enlargers for students with low vision
- computer hardware for Blind/Low-Vision
- adjustable desks
- Braille
- symbol or letter voice translators
- FM systems
- sensory input equipment
- positioning devices for sitting, standing and lying
- personal care items such as change tables or commodes
- assistive technology programs, apps and software
- mid-tech or high-tech Alternative and Augmentative (AAC) devices
- warranties and/or service contracts for SEA equipment
- training and professional learning for students and staff on the use of SEA-purchased equipment and assistive technology programs

## **Assistive Technology (AT) and SEA (SEA) Team**

The AT and SEA Team supports students and staff to effectively use assistive technology and SEA equipment across the TDSB. The role of the team is to collaborate with centrally-assigned teams, administrators, teachers, support staff and students to integrate assistive technology as an effective teaching and learning tool in the classroom, and to build capacity of school-based staff to share best practices and create environments where assistive technology is used to support engagement, representation and action and expression (Universal Design for Learning principles).

Professional learning and training provided by the AT and SEA Team is done through culturally relevant and responsive programming and through the lens of identity-affirming, anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and anti-ableist accommodation strategies for students with special education needs.

The team provides district-wide opportunities for:

- school-based staff to engage in Professional Learning Communities focussing on the use, implementation and integration of assistive technology and sharing of best practices;
- school-based staff to use a co-planning and co-teaching model of support to incorporate the use of assistive technology to promote inclusion opportunities as outlined in the SIP goals of the school;
- direct instruction on the various AT tools and programs to support students in a wide variety of classroom settings;
- parents/guardians/caregivers, through a public website, conferences, printed resources, user guides and videos, to learn about using available AT tools and programs;

- school-based staff to access support during the development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) around embedding appropriate AT tools and programs to match students' learning profiles; and
- mentorship and instruction to system leaders to embed and incorporate AT tools and programs to align with other central initiatives.

Additional information and resources for parents are available on the [TDSB AT and SEA website](#).

# Section N: ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

## FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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### ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide the ministry with further details of the board's multi-year plan, which was previously submitted to the Ministry of Education for improving accessibility for students with physical and sensory disabilities, and to provide the public with this information*

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The TDSB is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment which actively promotes and supports human rights and accessibility for persons with disabilities. We are committed to actively removing barriers, whether visible or invisible, so that all members of our community can fully participate in TDSB activities.

The TDSB has a variety of [resources](#) and [policies and procedures](#) in place for staff, students and community members that ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians and Disabilities Act.

The TDSB's [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2020-2025](#) outlines how the Board is ensuring compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians and Disabilities Act and moving towards a more inclusive environment.

The TDSB's Major Capital and Renewal Projects Status Update for improving accessibility to its school buildings, grounds, and administration offices, including resources dedicated to providing barrier-free access, is publicly posted. Summaries of the Board's progress in implementing the capital expenditure plan are outlined in the semi-annual capital reports. Members of the public can obtain a copy of the January 2023 semi-annual capital report update [here](#) and the November 2023 report update [here](#) (pages 75-86). The Capital Revitalization Strategy Report from January 2024 can be found [here](#) (pages 47-55). The next Major Capital and Renewal Projects Status Update report will be provided to the Board in Spring 2024 and will be publicly posted to this [web portal](#).

The TDSB supports accessibility through:

- [Customer Service](#)
- [Information and Communications](#)
- [Employment Transportation](#)
- [Design of Public Spaces](#)

## School Buildings

While all new TDSB schools are designed to meet or exceed current accessibility standards, most of our older schools were not built with accessibility in mind. Currently, the TDSB has 160 buildings that are accessible, 78 that are somewhat accessible, and 332 that are not accessible.

## New Schools and Additions

All new schools and additions must meet the accessibility requirements of the Ontario Building Code (OBC) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The Ministry provides the funding to meet these requirements and, as a result, all new TDSB schools and additions are accessible.

## Upgrading Existing Schools

There are two challenges when it comes to making existing schools accessible:

- The amount of funding needed, and
- The kind of funding the TDSB receives

The first challenge is the magnitude of funds needed. An investment of at least \$1 billion would be required to make all existing schools accessible. The second challenge is the nature of the funding that the TDSB receives from the Ministry of Education.

The TDSB receives School Condition Improvement (SCI) funding to address urgent and high priorities in the Board's \$4 billion repair backlog. Investing this money can help improve accessibility. For example, replacing deteriorated parking lots provides opportunities to increase the number and location of accessible parking spaces, and allow for barrier free paths of travel to school buildings.

But there are significant limitations in what can be achieved with SCI. If a space or a building component is not listed in the Repair Backlog, then it is not eligible for SCI funding. For example, if a ramp or elevator does not currently exist, even though they may be needed, school boards cannot use SCI to install them.

To address this challenge, the TDSB is requesting permission from the Ministry of Education to use \$10 million annually from Proceeds of Disposition (POD), which is the money generated from the sale of surplus school properties. Permission to use POD would enable the TDSB to make strategic investments into improving accessibility.

## **Prioritizing Investments: Creating Accessible K-12 Pathways at the Catchment Level**

Given the wide gap between the \$1 billion plus needed to make all schools accessible, and the \$10 million annually that may be available, prioritizing investments is particularly important. To this end, staff have examined the number of existing Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K to 12) accessible pathways in the TDSB's 78 catchment areas. A K-12 accessible pathway means that a child with special needs can start in kindergarten and move through the grades to the end of high school within accessible schools, and in the company of their peers.

The goal would be to ensure that there is at least one accessible K-12 pathway in all catchment areas. Currently, 14 of the TDSB's 78 catchment areas have at least one K-12 accessible pathway; 64 areas do not have any.

At \$10 million a year in PoD funding, staff estimate that it will take at least 11 years to create at least one K-12 accessible pathway in all 78 catchment areas.

### **Next Steps**

In 2021, the Board of Trustees approved a report called "Making Schools More Accessible". Staff are currently preparing a follow up report that will go to the Board in the Spring of 2024. The report will detail the plan for creating at least one K-12 accessible pathway in all catchment areas.

### **Designated Accessible Elementary and Secondary School Sites**

The TDSB has selected schools throughout the district that are deemed "Designated Sites". These sites are accessible for students with physical disabilities who require barrier-free access to a school environment to meet their mobility and safety needs. Students may be placed at a designated site by the recommendation of the family once a current medical or Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy (OT/PT) report outlining needs is submitted to the school principal. The school principal will collaborate with the school superintendent and the Special Education and Inclusion team to respond to the requested needs in a timely manner.

### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Advisory Committee**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Advisory Committee is a group of staff from a wide range of departments who advise and provide recommendations to the Accessibility Coordinator or other TDSB departments on matters related to accessibility for people with disabilities. The committee is guided by the [TDSB's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#) and their role is to help promote inclusive and accessible policies, programs and services, and to develop greater awareness and understanding of accessibility issues, policies, programs and services are inclusive and accessible to all members of the TDSB

community, and to identify and address any barriers to accessibility that may exist. This includes reviewing and providing feedback on accessibility standards, developing accessibility plans, and promoting awareness and understanding of accessibility issues.

## Accessibility Coordinator

The Board has an Accessibility Coordinator who has the responsibility to address consistency and integration of practices across the TDSB and to provide leadership in all matters related to implementation and compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and related regulations. Currently reporting to the Associate Director of Organizational Transformation and Accountability, the Accessibility Coordinator provides system leadership to ensure awareness of and compliance with AODA legislation, Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR) and the Ontario Human Rights Code. Providing subject matter expertise, the Accessibility Coordinator also acts as a system advocate for all aspects related to AODA. Additional responsibilities include, but are not limited to, research and analysis of best practices in accessibility standards, developing, reviewing and updating policies and procedures in accordance with AODA legislation and best practices, as well as fostering equity and inclusion in the development and implementation of programs and services.

## Reports

- Information on accessibility and the TDSB built environment, which includes interior and exterior features of schools, is outlined in the report called "[Making School Buildings and Sites More Accessible](#)".
- Accessibility profiles of individual schools are also available on the left hand sidebar of school homepages, available at <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Find-your/School>.
- TDSB's [AODA Self-Certified Accessibility Report - November 2021](#)
- 2021 [Accessibility Compliance Report - Accessibility Directorate of Ontario](#)
- A web page has been set up on the TDSB public website that identifies TDSB's top capital priorities. The business cases describing each capital priority are also included on the [Capital Priorities site](#).

# Section O: TRANSPORTATION

FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide details of the board's transportation policies to the ministry and to the public*

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## Transportation of Students with Special Education Needs

The Toronto District School Board is committed to providing safe and reliable transportation for resident students in accordance with the Education Act, Section 21 and the [Operational Procedures \(PR 504\)](#) of the TDSB [Transportation Policy \(PO20\)](#).

Transportation is provided for students who are placed by the [Identification, Placement, and Review Committee \(IPRC\)](#) into a special education program that is not located in their home school and who meet eligibility criteria.

The Special Education and Inclusion Department does not oversee transportation. These guidelines have been developed to provide general information about the transportation service for students who are eligible for transportation, and to outline the responsibilities of all parties involved in the safe transportation of students. Further information can be obtained through the school principal.

Additional information and all forms can be found on the [Student Transportation site](#).

### **Transportation and IPRCs**

When a special education placement is offered at a school other than the home school, transportation needs are discussed with the parents/guardians/caregivers to determine if transportation arrangements are required. If so, the sending school arranges for the parents/guardians/caregivers to complete a Student Transportation Application form and forwards it to the transportation office once the school section is also completed.



In order to minimize safety or other related concerns due to unnecessary time in transit, Special Education and Inclusion staff, in consultation with the Transportation Department, chooses an appropriate placement closest to the student's home address with available space.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are asked to ensure that all relevant information as it pertains to the student's ability to access transportation is documented, any limitations clearly identified, and a Safety Plan, if needed, is noted on Page 2 of the application or forwarded as an attachment.

The transportation office forwards a copy of the application form to the receiving and sending schools for applications not approved only, indicating on the form the reason for the application being denied. Approved applications will be processed and schools will receive an update notice through [BusPlanner Web](#) regarding changes and route information. In late August, the administrator of the receiving school will ensure that school bus information (bell times, pick-up and drop-off locations, documented student disabilities/accessibility issues, etc.) is correct for the students at their school. Parents/guardians/caregivers are provided with a copy of the [Transportation Brochure for Students with Special Needs](#). The brochure highlights roles and responsibilities of the various parties, including the boarding, securement, and de-boarding of students from transportation vehicles.

## **Method of Transportation Service**

For eligible students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 5, transportation is provided by contracted carrier services (70 and 18 passenger buses, wheelchair buses, mini-vans or taxis). Each student is entitled to a total of two trips per day. Mid-day routes are intended for students attending half-day programs. Methods include:

- School to school transportation
- Designated site-to-school transportation as a result of an IPRC or for a qualifying medical condition, approved accommodation or exceptional circumstances that require transportation support
- Home-to-school transportation for students with special education needs in district-wide programs
- Mini-van or taxi service for eligible students in warranted circumstances

For students in Gifted programs up to and including Grade 5, the method of service is school to school or school to designated stop (stop determined by Student Transportation Services). Students must walk to a school or designated stop to meet the bus. Parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for the supervision of students before they board and after they disembark from the school bus. Transportation service is not provided from the home or daycare addresses (unless the address is located at a TDSB designated stop).

For all eligible students in Grades 6 to 8, TTC tickets are provided at the request of parents/guardians/caregivers. Grade 6 students may be provided with bus transportation if the most direct TTC route requires more than one transfer. A recent policy change allows students age 13 and under to ride the TTC for free. Students in Grades 9 to 12 may receive TTC tickets, provided the distance and financial criteria are met.

Whether a student with special education needs rides with other students and/or is transported via a ride-alone is determined by factors such as social/emotional and medical needs. The back of the student transportation form provides the parent/guardian/caregiver and school the ability to provide detailed information that needs to be taken into consideration (i.e., Independent Student Transportation Plan - ISTP). This information assists in determining the individual needs of a student along with the program, such as vehicle type and any necessary accommodation to ensure the student is transported safely in the appropriate type of vehicle. If there is nothing outstanding, the student would usually be placed on a small 18 passenger bus, minivan or taxi with other students depending on need and routing in the area.

If there are concerns that come about after the student is transported via usual transportation accommodations that indicate another type of vehicle or ride-alone is required, another form would need to be completed such as a Ride Alone Recommendation Form. This form would provide transportation staff with further information as to the reasons for the request and what actions have been taken to address the concerns. Further consultation with the school and parents/guardians/caregivers would assist in determining the final outcome/solution to ensure the students are transported safely.

## **Requirements and Responsibilities**

### **Changes to Transportation Arrangements**

#### **1. Temporary Cancellation of Service**

If a child will be absent from school due to illness or for other reasons, parents/guardians/caregivers are required to inform the transportation company.

Parents/guardians/caregivers must notify the transportation company before 7:00 a.m. or the evening beforehand, when transportation is to be resumed following their child's absence (A directory of companies is listed at the end of the Provision of Transportation section).

#### **2. Permanent Cancellation/Changes of Pick-up and Drop-off Locations.**

The transportation company and its drivers are not authorized to accept changes to pick-up and drop-off locations (either permanent or temporary). Changes to transportation must be communicated by completing an updated transportation application and re-submitting it to the attending school office, which may require up to 10 working days to process.

If there is a permanent cancellation of service or change in pick-up and drop-off location, parents/guardians/caregivers are required to advise the principal of the school where the child attends. The principal must then ensure that a student transportation form is completed and forwarded to Student Transportation to cancel or change information.

### **3. Requiring Return from School Only**

When a student is on two-way transportation and comes to school by other means of transportation on any occasion, the parents/guardians/caregivers are required to call the transportation company to ensure that the transportation company returns their child from school to the designated drop-off location (e.g., If a child is brought to school in the morning, the bus company needs to be informed that the child will need a ride back in the afternoon).

#### **Pick-up and Drop-off**

It is essential that a responsible adult be present for a child at both pick-up and drop-off.

It is not possible for daily transportation services to be reorganized to accommodate parents/guardians/caregivers work or daycare schedules. Parents/guardians/caregivers may designate an alternate adult (i.e., caregiver) to be present for a child's pick-up and drop-off. However, parents/guardians/caregivers must inform the school and the bus company if someone unexpectedly will be meeting their child at the end of the school day (the alternate person must have a picture ID available to show the driver).

#### **Parents/guardians/caregivers Responsibilities:**

The success of transportation services depends on parents/guardians/caregivers assuming the following responsibilities:

- Parents/guardians/caregivers are expected to have the child ready for transportation at least 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time, and to be prompt in meeting the vehicle at the usual drop-off time.
- If the child misses the bus, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians/caregivers to transport the child to school. A student who is regularly late for pick-up may lose the privilege of being transported.
- Parents/guardians/caregivers are encouraged to maintain open communication with the driver about the unique characteristics of their child (e.g., social/emotional concerns, seizure information, anxiety, vision or hearing impairment). This is in the best interests of the child, especially if an emergency situation were to occur.
- Parents/guardians/caregivers should initially discuss transportation concerns with the school principal. If the concern cannot be resolved at the school level, the school principal should contact the Student Transportation office.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are asked to keep the following in mind:

- In September, routes may not settle for up to 4 weeks.
- Drivers do their best to pick up and drop off children on time and strive to ensure that schedules are kept. However, bus schedules are affected by traffic, weather, student conduct, and promptness of caregivers in meeting the vehicle.
- It is not always possible to maintain consistent drivers or pick-up and drop-off times. Transportation schedules may vary throughout the year when new students begin school in an area or when students transfer to another school.
- No consumption of food or drinks is allowed on buses due to the hazard of choking or the possibility of food allergies.

Drivers are expected to report to the principal in writing when a student's behaviour is causing difficulties or an unsafe condition on the bus. The principal will contact the parents/guardians/caregivers to seek cooperation in resolving the concern.

If the concern cannot be resolved, parents/guardians/caregivers may be requested to provide alternate transportation for their child.

### **Driver Responsibilities**

The transportation company shall transport students from the nearest curbside in front of their pick-up location to their respective schools and return to the nearest curbside in front of their drop-off location. Parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for their child to and from the curbside.

No student shall be left by a driver at the student's designated location for drop-off unless the student is met by a responsible adult, designated by parents/guardians/caregivers. A driver will not leave a student unattended or with a person unknown to them. If a responsible person is not available to meet the student upon arrival from school, the driver may be instructed to exercise the following options after notifying dispatch:

- Continue to drop off the remaining students on the run and return to the drop-off location
- Deliver the student to the emergency contact person, if available and within reasonable distance
- Return the student to the school if staff is available to receive the student
- Deliver the student to the nearest Police Division or Children's Aid Society

The driver must call the parents/guardians/caregivers of new students on SPED (small buses) to advise them of the pick-up and drop-off times the evening before transportation service is to start. The school is responsible for notifying parents/guardians/caregivers of pick-up and drop-off times for students traveling on 72

Passenger (big bus). The driver must notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of any change in pick-up or drop-off times.

## **Seat Belts, Seat Belt Covers, Car Seats, Booster Seats, Safety Vests**

### **Car Seats**

- Car seats may be used on 18-passenger buses for daily home to school transportation
- Car seats must be used for students who require them because of their medical condition and/or if the student's weight is under 40 lbs

### **Booster Seats**

The following is mandatory by law for a student riding in a minivan or taxi:

- If student is between 40 and 80 lbs, under 145 cm tall and up to 8 years of age, a booster seat is required
- All car and booster seats must be Transport Canada approved, have a current validation date, and be tethered into the school vehicle as required by the Ministry of Transportation before transportation can start
- Parents/guardians/caregivers must provide the car or booster seat and must leave them on the vehicle for the school year
- Trained staff from the bus company will inspect and install the car seat or booster seat

### **Seat Belts, Seat Belt Covers, Safety Vests**

Students who remove their seat belts or seat belt covers and fail to remain seated while in transit or students who are aggressive to other students create an unsafe condition for both students and driver. A safety harness/vest may be required to provide safe transportation. If a student requires a safety harness/vest, a Safety Harness/Vest Request Form must be completed and authorized by a medical practitioner. Where appropriate and prior to a request for a safety harness vest, a seat-belt buckle guard/cover may be considered. Additional equipment may be required to further secure a safety harness vest, by adding other apparatus.

### **Collective Responsibility**

Parents/guardians/caregivers, school staff and drivers are collectively responsible for ensuring that each student is secured by a seat belt and/or in a car seat or safety vest, where applicable:

- Parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for securing their child when the bus arrives in the morning and when unloading in the afternoon

- School staff is responsible for unloading in the morning and securing students when they are dismissed from school
- The driver is responsible for ensuring that students are safe and secure while the vehicle is in motion

## **Transportation for Students in Wheelchairs or with Severe Mobility Limitations**

Transportation may be provided, regardless of distance, for students who have a medical condition or disability that severely limits walking. A medical certificate, along with a TDSB Medical Form to Determine Eligibility obtained from the school principal and signed by a physician are required. The Board reserves the right, with the signed consent of parents/guardians/caregivers, to discuss transportation issues with the physician.

- Transportation is not provided to students due to the medical condition of the parents/guardians/caregivers. The Board is currently reviewing parent/guardian/caregiver medical condition, in cases where it would prevent the student from attending school, if there are no other viable options
- Transportation is not provided for students attending any school or specialized program at their request, even when distance or medical condition is a factor
- Students utilizing walkers are not permitted to use wheelchair ramps

### **Parents/Guardians/Caregivers and Staff**

- At school, staff must physically assist the child to and from the wheelchair bus, and at home parents/guardians/caregivers must assist the child between the residence and the vehicle
- Parents/guardians/caregivers and staff are responsible for securing all personal chair restraints such as wheelchair seat belts, harnesses, and trays

### **The Driver**

- The driver is responsible for ensuring that all “Q Straint” belts are secured on the wheelchair vehicle
- Only the driver or authorized personnel shall operate the wheelchair ramp. Parents/guardians/caregivers and school staff may not assist with this task
- In a circumstance where the student rocks in the chair to the point where the chair is in danger of tipping over, the driver may need assistance holding the wheelchair on the ramp to ensure the child’s safety

## Cancellation of Service Due to Inclement Weather

Inclement weather may force the closure of schools and/or the cancellation of transportation service.

- Radio, television stations and the TDSB website will communicate a public-service announcement to inform parents/guardians/caregivers about school closures and transportation cancellations
- If parents/guardians/caregivers are concerned about inclement weather, they have the right to keep their child at home (especially in the case of medically fragile students), even if transportation is not canceled by the TDSB

## September Start-up

Transportation planning for the next school year begins in the spring of the current school year, when parents/guardians/caregivers receive a Student Transportation Application from the school. Parents/guardians/caregivers are required to complete the Student Transportation Application and return it to their child's school according to the due date. The applications should be forwarded to the Transportation Department by way of the child's school office as soon as possible, but no later than the end of June. Applications not received by the end of June may result in transportation not being ready by the first week of school.

Please note that transportation service will not start for a student unless the Transportation Department has a completed application on file.

For students routed on 72-passenger vehicles, route information is posted at the program school the week prior to school beginning in September. For students routed on smaller vehicles, parents/guardians/caregivers are contacted prior to the first day of school by the bus driver to advise them of their pick-up and drop-off times. If contact is not made prior to the first day of school, parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for contacting the school to find out which transportation company is providing the service, in order to confirm the times.

Parents/guardians/caregivers may also register for the Parent Portal located on the [TSTG \(Student Transportation Group\) website](#) to view their child's transportation information.

In an emergency, information on the application may be released to a medical practitioner. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians/caregivers to keep the school and transportation company up to date on any changes to their child's medical health. **It is critical that phone numbers for parents/guardians/caregivers and emergency contacts are accurate at all times throughout the year.**

## Finding Your Child's Transportation Information

### 1. Transportation Portal:

Access information specific to your child's transportation, including route number, stop location, times and bus company contact details. [Learn more and register.](#)

### 2. Toronto Student Transportation Group:

Phone: 416-394-4287

Fax: 416-394-3806

Email:

[transportation@torontoschoolbus.org](mailto:transportation@torontoschoolbus.org)

Website:

[www.torontoschool.or](http://www.torontoschool.or)

### 3. Your School:

Schools have access to transportation information and may post the big bus routes on the main doors of the schools when they open in late August. Route maps identifying all the stops for large capacity buses are also available on the [Toronto Student Transportation Group website.](#)

## Transportation Company Contact Information

Student transportation in the TDSB is provided by a number of transportation companies, which may change from year to year. Parents/guardians/caregivers should refer to the transportation notification they receive prior to the start of the school year to learn which company will be transporting their child, and record the contact telephone number in a convenient location.

(AR)	Attridge Transportation	416-255-5199
(FTCL)	First Student Toronto	416-444-7030
(DT)	Dignity Transportation	416-398-2109
(MC)	McCluskey Transportation	416-246-1422
(SH)	Sharp Bus Lines	416-477-4804
(ST)	Stock Transportation West	416-244-5341
(SC)	Stock Transportation East	416-754-4949
(SN)	Stock Transportation North	416-757-0565
(SW)	Switzer Carty Transportation	905-361-1084
(WA)	Wheelchair Accessible Transit	416-884-9898
(FX)	First Student Ajax	905-683-2350
(V)	Voyago	647-952-3815



## Transportation Safety

Transportation safety is critical at all times. A list of mandatory performance requirements can be found in [PR 504: Transportation of Students](#).

Additionally, all transportation suppliers must adhere to strict safety requirements. In the event of unsafe practices, transportation may be suspended.

### Safety Criteria Used by the TDSB

The safety criteria used by the Board in the tendering and in the selection of transportation providers for exceptional students include the following:

- Wheelchair vehicles must have a minimum rated capacity of three (3) electric wheelchairs and two (2) ambulatory passengers. All wheelchairs in the vehicle shall be secured facing forward
- Drivers shall ensure that all seat belts and harnesses are properly secured and fastened around the student at all times
- Parents/guardians/caregivers and/or school staff and drivers are collectively responsible for ensuring that each wheelchair is properly fastened and that each student is secured by a seatbelt. The driver of each vehicle shall ensure that each student in the vehicle is secured by a seatbelt properly fastened while the vehicle is in motion. The transportation company shall be liable for any injury resulting from the failure of a driver to ensure that each student transported is secured properly and fastened at all times while a vehicle is in motion
- Students in this category must be transported and secured in vehicles specifically designed for this purpose
- The driver will assist students with physical disabilities when and where necessary. All wheelchair-locking devices shall be properly secured immediately after entering the vehicle
- For students designated as being medically at risk, the transportation company will transport safely and securely any necessary equipment or apparatus (e.g., a ventilator, oxygen supply, suctioning device, etc.) for such students, as required when directed by the Board
- As per the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Education and Ontario School Bus Association defined Driver Qualifications, it is the responsibility of the transportation company to ensure that full criminal background checks are performed for all drivers during the hiring process

- The criminal background check must be a full Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS). The VSS of any driver must be available for viewing upon request by the Board within 24 hours of the request. It is also a mandatory requirement of the Board that the carrier perform an annual offense declaration with each driver confirming that there have been no charges/convictions since their last disclosure. Proof of the annual declaration must also be maintained by the carrier and available for viewing upon request within 24hours

## **Appeal Process**

Parents/guardians/caregivers may appeal the decisions made regarding transportation. The appeal process is outlined in [PR 504, Section 3.2 \(Appeal Form 504D\)](#).

# Section P: PROVINCIAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO



FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide the public with information about the Provincial and Demonstration Schools that are operated for students who are Deaf, blind, or deafblind, or who have severe learning disabilities, which may include attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)*

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The Ministry of Education operates Provincial Schools and Demonstration Schools throughout Ontario for Deaf, blind, deafblind, and students with severe learning disabilities. Access is usually by way of an IPRC recommendation. Provincial Schools and Provincial Demonstration Schools:

- are operated by the Ministry of Education
- provide education for students who are Deaf or blind, or who have severe learning disabilities
- provide an alternative education option
- serve as regional resource centres for students who are Deaf, blind, or deafblind
- provide preschool home visiting services for students who are Deaf or deafblind
- develop and provide learning materials and media for students who are Deaf, blind, or deafblind
- provide school board teachers with resource services
- play a valuable role in teacher training provide learning materials/media for students who are Deaf or deafblind (and to develop these resources)
- provide school board teachers with resource services and teacher training for teachers in Ontario school boards
- provide alternative format materials through Alternative Education Resources for Ontario (AERO)

# Demonstration Schools

Each provincial Demonstration School has an enrolment of forty students. The language of instruction at the Amethyst, Sagonaska, and Trillium schools is English; at Centre Jules-Léger, instruction is in French. Application for admission to a provincial Demonstration School is made on behalf of students by the school board, with parental consent. The Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities (PCLD) determines whether a student is eligible for admission. Although the primary responsibility to provide appropriate educational programs for students with learning disabilities remains with school boards, the ministry recognizes that some students require a residential school setting for a period.

The Demonstration Schools were established to:

- provide special residential education programs for students between the ages of 5 and 21 years
- enhance the development of each student's academic and social skills
- develop the abilities of the students enrolled to a level that will enable them to return to programs operated by a local school board within two years

In addition to providing residential schooling for students with severe learning disabilities, the provincial Demonstration Schools have special programs for students with severe learning disabilities in association with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). These are highly intensive, one-year programs.

The Trillium School also operates Learning for Emotional and Academic Development (LEAD), a special program for students with severe learning disabilities who require an additional level of social/emotional support.

An in-service teacher education program is provided at each Demonstration School. This program is designed to share methodologies and materials with teachers of Ontario school boards. Information about the programs offered should be obtained from the schools themselves

Application for admission is made by the TDSB with parent consent, and eligibility is determined by the Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities.

<b>Sagonaska School</b>	350 Dundas Street West, Belleville, ON K8P 1B2	Tel: 613-967-2830 Fax: 613-967-2482
<b>Trillium School</b>	347 Ontario Street South, Milton, ON L9T 3X9	Tel: 905-878-8428 Fax: 905-878-7540

<b>Amethyst School</b>	1090 Highbury Avenue, London, ON N5Y 4V9	Tel: 519-453-4408 Fax: 519-453-2160
<b>Centre Jules-Léger</b>	French Language School 281 rue Lanark, Ottawa, ON K1Z 6R8	Tel: 613-761-9300 TTY: 613-761-9302/9304 Fax: 613-761-9301

The TDSB presently has two students attending the Trillium School.

## Provincial Schools

### Provincial Schools for the Deaf

Provincial Schools for the Deaf include Ernest C. Drury School (Milton), Robarts School (London), Sir. James Whitney School (Belleville), and Centre Jules-Léger (Ottawa). These schools provide elementary and secondary school programs for deaf students from preschool level to high school graduation. The schools use the Ontario curriculum, and parallel courses and programs provided in school boards. Each student has their special education needs met as set out in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Admittance is determined by the Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296.

Schools for the deaf:

- provide rich and supportive bilingual/bicultural educational environments which facilitate students' language acquisition, learning, and social development through American Sign Language (ASL) and English
- operate primarily as day schools
- provide residential facilities five days per week for those students who do not live within reasonable commuting distance from the school

Each school has a Resource Services Department which provides:

- consultation and educational advice to parents of Deaf and hard of hearing children and school board personnel
- information brochures
- a wide variety of workshops for parents, school boards, and other agencies
- an extensive home-visiting program delivered to parents of Deaf and hard of hearing preschool children by teachers trained in preschool and Deaf education.

<b>Ernest C. Drury School</b>	255 Ontario Street South Milton, ON L9T 2M5	Tel: 905-878-2851 TTY: 905-878-7195 Fax: 905-878-1354
<b>Robarts School</b>	1090 Highbury Avenue, P.O. Box 7360, Station E, London, ON N5Y 4V9	Tel/TTY: 519-453-4400 Fax: 519-453-7943
<b>Sir James Whitney School</b>	350 Dundas Street West, Belleville, ON K8P 1B2	Tel/TTY: 613-967-2823 Fax: 613-967-2857
<b>Centre Jules- Léger</b>	French-language School for the Deaf 281 rue Lanark, Ottawa, ON K1Z 6R8	Tel: 613-761-9300 TTY: 613-761-9302/9304 Fax: 613-761-9301

The TDSB presently has seventeen students attending Ernest C. Drury School and one student attending Sir James Whitney School.

## **Provincial School for Visually Impaired, Blind and Deafblind Students**

W. Ross Macdonald School (Brantford) is a residential school operated through the Ministry of Education and provides education for students who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. It provides an educational alternative placement for students who are blind, visually impaired, or deafblind. The school:

- Provides a provincial resource centre for students who are visually impaired and deafblind
- Supports local school boards through consultation and the provision of special learning materials, such as braille materials, electronic texts, and large-print textbooks
- Offers professional services and guidance to ministries of education on an interprovincial, cooperative basis

Programs are tailored to the needs of the individual student and:

- are designed to help students learn to live independently in a non-sheltered environment

- follow the Ontario curriculum developed for all students in the province
- offer a full range of courses at the secondary level
- offer courses in special subject areas such as music, broad-based technology, family studies, physical education, and mobility training
- are individualized, to offer a comprehensive life skills program
- are delivered by specially trained teachers
- provide home visiting for parents and families of preschool deafblind children to assist in preparing these children for future education

<b>W. Ross Macdonald School</b>	350 Brant Avenue, Brantford, ON N3T 3J9	Tel: 519-759-0730  Fax: 519-759-4741
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The TDSB presently has five students attending W. Ross Macdonald School.

## Transportation

Provincial schools operate primarily as day schools with transportation provided by school boards. The provincial schools work with the TDSB transportation department to arrange transportation for students attending their day program. Residential facilities are offered from Monday to Friday for students who live too far from the school for daily travel. When necessary, an attendant is provided.

For more information about Demonstration Schools or Provincial Schools, contact:  
 Ministry of Education Provincial Schools Branch  
 255 Ontario Street  
 South Milton, ON  
 L9T 2M5  
 Tel: 905-878-2851  
 Fax: 905-878-5405

## Section Q:

# COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES

### FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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#### ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide the ministry and the public with details of the board's strategies to ensure a smooth transition for students with special needs who are entering or leaving a school*

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The Ministry of Education [Policy/Program Memorandum No.149: Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Services Professionals and Paraprofessionals](#) provides direction to school boards concerning the review and/or development of a local protocol for partnerships with external agencies for the provision of services in Ontario schools by regulated health professionals, regulated social services professionals, and paraprofessionals. It outlines the requirements for reviewing and/or developing a local protocol and specifies the requirements for implementation and for reporting to stakeholders.

## TDSB Early Intervention Initiatives

The Ministry of Education provides additional funding for special education (JK to Grade 3) to school boards. This enhanced funding supports early interventions, additional specialist teachers and professional supports, and also helps fund effective early interventions that improve outcomes for students with disabilities and special education needs. This funding is being used by the TDSB to support early intervention programs for primary students:

- Entry Plan for Students with Special Needs, to establish entry procedure, roles, responsibilities, and timelines

TDSB has also used additional funding to support other government initiatives, including:

- Transition from Toronto Preschool Speech and Language Services (TPSLS)



## **Entry Plan for Students with Special Education Needs**

Most students with special education needs coming into the TDSB will be registered and will begin school in the regular class with support, as per Regulation 181/98. Some students with disabilities and/or special education needs which are extremely complex, who are newly registered but not yet attending a TDSB school may, through a Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC), receive a recommendation for placement in a full time special education class upon enrolment. If a new JK/SK student is enrolled in a specialized preschool/daycare, or The Hospital for Sick Children, or Holland Bloorview Hospital-Support Kids Rehabilitation; or the student is receiving intensive support that specifically addresses complex medical needs in another school system, including out of province, the SEPRC process will be considered.

When approaching a TDSB school for registration, parents/guardians/caregivers are encouraged to share all pertinent information with the school principal about the special education needs of their child. With parental permission, principal consultation with the School Support Team (SST) will determine whether or not a referral to a Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC) is appropriate. For more detailed information regarding the Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC), see [Section G: Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies](#).

## **Toronto Autism Service Network - Entry to School Program**

Entry to School (ETS) is a program offered by the Ontario Autism Program (OAP). ETS is provided through the Toronto Autism Service Network (Surrey Place, Strides, Lumenus, Geneva Centre for Autism, SAAAC, and Kerry's Place), with Skill Building Classrooms across Toronto. The TDSB collaborates with the Toronto Autism Network in planning for a smooth and effective transition to school for students being served through the Entry to School initiative.

A Transition to School Protocol has been developed between Entry to School/Toronto Autism Network and the TDSB.

## **Transition from Toronto Preschool Speech and Language Services (TPSLS)**

The Toronto Preschool Speech and Language Services (TPSLS) was established in 1998, funded through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The mission of the TPSLS is to provide speech and language services to preschool children up to school entry in kindergarten.

The communication needs of students transitioning from the TPSLS to school services vary from mild to severe or profound. These children often have comprehensive educational programming and planning needs. Early and ongoing information sharing and collaboration between TPSLS staff and school board staff are advised. For preschool children with mild communication needs, transition may be handled through written reports and telephone consultation. With the consent of parents/guardians/caregivers, transition discussions should be initiated as early as possible by TPSLS staff for children in Junior Kindergarten whose communication needs are significant.

- The family contacts the principal of the local school about their child's needs and provides written consent for the exchange of information between TPSLS and the TDSB
- TPSLS then forwards reports to the school principal and the school speech-language pathologist to assist with planning for the child's needs
- Transition planning takes place to discuss the child's progress, needs and current TPSLS programs and services received
- The principal identifies the next steps and accesses appropriate and available services and programs for the child

## **Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Preschool Programs**

The TDSB recognizes the importance of early intervention and can support students who require Deaf and Hard of Hearing support from the age of 3 through placement in a preschool class. Upon entry to school, students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing have access to the support of a Specialist Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. These itinerant teachers have specialized qualifications approved by the Ministry of Education that enable them to recommend the necessary accommodations and/or program modifications to meet the educational needs of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Based on student need, these teachers work closely with the TDSB Educational Audiologist to determine the appropriate FM technology that works with the student's Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT). When warranted, itinerant teachers facilitate access to the curriculum through direct instruction from Kindergarten to completion of secondary school.

## **Alternate Placements**

Education and Community Partnership Programs (ECPPs) support students with their education during times of need for care, treatment, or rehabilitation. Transitions are a normal part of an ECPP and may include transitioning back to the community day school, an alternative education program or work, community living or post-secondary destinations. Transitions may take a few weeks or a few months. Students may also transition into and out of an ECPP on more than one occasion.

Effective planning is especially important for students transitioning into or out of ECPPs. ECPP staff plan and facilitate effective transitions so that students receive both continuous education and ECPP services with minimal disruption when they enter or exit an ECPP. ECPP staff facilitates transitions using personalized and precise transition plans that reflect the strengths, interests and needs of each child or youth, and provides the foundation for successful transition experiences. In some cases, students may have received various educational assessments as part of their participation in care, treatment, and rehabilitation. These assessments are often included in the transition package with parental permission through two-way consent.

All students are provided with a case conference to facilitate their transition. Students who have been outside of the TDSB for a year or less may transition back without reassessment. For students new to the TDSB or who have been in ECPP for more than a year, a Special Education Program Recommendation Committee (SEPRC) or Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC) may be required to facilitate placement.

## **The Toronto District Elementary School (TDES) and The Toronto District Secondary School (TDSS)**

The Toronto District Elementary School (TDES) and The Toronto District Secondary School (TDSS) serve students from JK to Grade 12 whose needs are supported in a variety of instructional settings through multidisciplinary approaches, in partnership with agencies.

A student in TDES/TDSS is a client of an agency funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services or the Ministry of Health. The agency provides services in one of the following categories:

- Care (e.g., hospitals, young mothers)
- Treatment (e.g., child/youth mental health centres)
- Corrections (e.g., open detention/custody)

TDSB offers intensive support through the partnership between the Ministry of Education and other ministries. TDES/TDSS meets the well-being needs of the child (i.e., cognitive, social, emotional, physical). Alongside receiving services provided by the agency, students are taught by TDSB teachers who follow the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum.

ECPP schools serve students who benefit from intensive wraparound support in order to attain equitable outcomes in achievement and well-being. The focus of ECPP schools is to serve students whose primary need or needs reside outside of education. Each program is offered in partnership with a treatment centre, health care, or clinical partner to address the primary need or needs of the student. Goals in

Education Plans and agency treatment plans are aligned, as teams collaborate to holistically meet the complex needs of each student.

Schools, along with parents/guardians/caregivers, may advocate for students to receive a placement within one of the programs through the TDSB referral process initiated at the school support team meeting where a recommendation can be made for ECPP consultation support. This is followed by the intake processes through the Toronto central point of access for children and youth mental health HelpAhead or agencies' direct referral processes. Alternatively, parents/guardians/caregivers may contact HelpAhead or community agencies directly.

As students prepare to leave day treatment and return to a TDSB school, an in-depth transition plan is developed to support the successful integration back into a TDSB school in collaboration with ECPP staff, Special Education and Inclusion staff if needed, the agency, the homeschool, the family, and when appropriate, the student. School administrators are responsible for ensuring successful admission or transfer of students from one program to another and can be supported by staff from Special Education and Inclusion.

### **Structure of TDSB ECPP**

- A host school (sometimes)
- A principal facilitates the partnership and oversees the educational program
- A vice-principal oversees day-to-day contact with the teacher and agency staff
- A teacher delivers individualized instruction
- In some instances, an EA supports instruction

### **Community Agency**

- An agency site (sometimes)
- An agency director facilitates the partnership
- A program manager oversees the treatment program
- Agency staff work in concert with the TDSB teacher to deliver individualized support

### **ECPP**

- Staffed by TDSB and the agency, with a dual focus on education and treatment. Agency is responsible for a treatment plan so students can reintegrate into home, school and community
- Elementary teachers are responsible for transdisciplinary programming
- Secondary teachers are responsible for subject-specific curriculum

- Access is available through central intake or agency process and demission through agency process or parents/guardians/caregivers withdrawal, followed by an IPRC or a case conference

Programs and partnerships are updated often. For more information about ECPP and agency partners, visit the [TDSB ECPP website](#).

## **Programs Offered by Other Boards of Education**

Aside from the Provincial and Demonstration Schools, the TDSB does not access programs offered by other boards of education.

# Section R: STAFF DEVELOPMENT



[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

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## ***Purpose of the Standard***

*To provide details of the board's professional development plans for special education staff to the ministry and to the public*

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The TDSB is a learning organization that believes that capacity building is key to ensuring equity of outcomes for all students. Focusing on capacity building helps to ensure coherence and alignment of special education and inclusion practices across the district, which allows us to better serve students with special education needs. Our staff development model provides on-going opportunities for staff at all levels to engage in professional learning and training in multiple ways, including through job-embedded, self-directed and mandatory sessions.

## **Professional Learning Plan**

Differentiated professional learning is determined by the goals in the TDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), local School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and data/evidence collected through a variety of sources.

Staff at all levels as well as union and association partners provide input into areas for learning. The TDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) receives information on staff development through the Leadership Report, and they also provide recommendations on areas of focus for staff professional learning.

Staff are engaged in several types of professional learning opportunities throughout the school year to help them better serve students with special education needs. These learning opportunities include compliance training such as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Supporting Children with Prevalent Medical Conditions, and mandatory learning such as the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Strategy and Chairing Identification and Placement Review Committee (IPRC) Meetings. Other professional learning opportunities are school-specific, based on the goals of the School Improvement Plan (SIP). New Special Education Teachers

participate in professional learning opportunities through the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) and also participate in additional topic-specific learning sessions. The Special Education and Inclusion Department, in collaboration with the Leadership and Learning Department, also provides professional learning opportunities specifically targeted to new teachers and newly-appointed administrators. Any staff member may also engage in self-directed learning based on professional and personal growth goals. Over the next two years, we will focus on the following four areas for professional learning:

1. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples(UNDRIP)
2. Inclusion (anti-ableism), Equity (anti-oppression) and Well-Being;
3. Learning Conditions; and
4. Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy.

## Areas of Learning Focus

### **The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)**

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: [Calls to Action](#) (43, 62 & 63 specifically for education) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples [UNDRIP](#) (Article 14 specifically for education) are frameworks to engage in building respectful, reciprocal, relevant and responsible relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, caregivers, families, and communities. Within the context of what is known as Canada, the effects of the Residential School System and [intergenerational trauma](#) impacts many survivors' families and possible engagement with school. The processes and procedures associated with Special Education and Inclusion should be done in ways that are trauma-informed and culturally safe, considering how social and historical contexts, as well as structural and interpersonal power imbalances, shape experiences within schools.

A belief in Indigenous Education is that everyone has gifts to share. When serving students with special education needs, it is important to remember that each student has gifts, and that educators have responsibilities for co-creating and enhancing the conditions for those gifts to be shared, honoured and affirmed. To enhance the conditions in classrooms and special education, the [4R Framework](#) of respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility (Kirkness and Barnhardt) is a tool that supports educators to work in good relationship with First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, caregivers and parents.

## **Inclusion, Equity and Well-Being**

The transformational actions being taken to support inclusion are interconnected to equity, anti-ableism and well-being. Special Education and Inclusion staff continue to implement a strategic and coordinated approach to lead to the thoughtful and

intentional systemic change and the cultural shifts necessary to make a difference in schools and classrooms as it relates to serving students with special education needs and intersecting identities.

Students are more successful when they are engaged in their learning. A focus on providing educators opportunities to deepen their understanding of how to effectively affirm and be responsive to the identities, lived experiences, strengths, interests, and gifts of students is required to ensure equity of access and equity of learning outcomes for all students. Professional learning will lead to anti-oppressive, anti-racist, anti-ableist and inclusive practices, and consequently, increased opportunities to all pathways for all students.

## **Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Programming**

Professional development continues throughout the year to support schools with developing and implementing effective IEPs that are personalized and precise to a student's specific strengths and areas for growth. In addition, the Special Education and Inclusion Department staff will continue to work with school staff to look at IEPs with intentionality in alignment with the goals of the K-1 IEP Strategy and the Grades 2- 12 IEP Review.

Intentional work is being implemented to address recommendations by SEAC to ensure that parents/guardians/caregivers, and where appropriate, students are informed and included in every step of the development and implementation of the IEP.

## **Learning Conditions**

Learning conditions and the operating environment of a classroom support a dynamic interrelationship between students, staff, and teaching and learning.

A quality learning environment optimizes students' independence to access learning opportunities and resources and is pivotal in providing students with an equitable chance for long-term success.

When implementing effective classroom learning conditions (teaching strategies, assessment, evaluation, third teacher, flex seating, student voice, culturally relevant, responsive and safe resources and pedagogy, etc.) educators must:

- consider students' intersecting identities and lived experiences
- use resources and pedagogy that foster a healthy self-identity by affirming, respecting, and promoting cultural knowledge



- build on students' experiences in ways that promote well-being and belonging
- consider the teacher/staff member as a learner
  - What biases or barriers (systemic, attitudinal, other) have been identified and dismantled?
  - Does data shared by the teacher of student assessment and evaluation indicate evidence of Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy principles?
  - Is there an opportunity for ongoing professional learning?

**Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** means designing innovative ways to make curriculum accessible in any learning situation/context, for individual learners with different backgrounds, learning styles and abilities.

Principles of UDL focus on adapting teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment to suit the learner rather than the other way around. It means creating flexible materials and methods before they are offered to students and understanding that the kinds of support needed by one student can be beneficial for all the students (necessary for some, but good for all). For example, if one student needs colour coding as a method of organizing notes, all students in the class may find this strategy helpful. UDL means planning learning opportunities that will extend the learning of all students, whatever their level of achievement, and helping each student reach their potential (Rose & Meyer, 2002).

**Differentiated Instruction (DI)** is based on the idea that because students differ significantly in their strengths, lived experiences, interests, learning styles, and readiness to learn, instructional approaches need to be adapted to match these differing characteristics and to provide multiple learning paths for students. The learning content, process, products and environment can be differentiated in any learning situation to support student learning to achieve greater success (Tomlinson, 2004).

Instructional interventions are monitored by the classroom teacher. When a student begins to show signs of persistent learning difficulties or advanced abilities, full understanding of how a student learns is needed to decide the best ways to use the student's strengths to address areas for growth. This is achieved through a review of classroom support strategies, educational assessments and consultation with parents/guardians/caregivers and/or students.

Information is gathered and reviewed by teachers through development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and through consultation at a variety of In-School Support Team (IST) and School Support Team (SST) meetings. With parental permission, information from existing professional assessments and/or community-based resource people is also collected and reviewed. Teachers and staff use this information to create a learning plan that is differentiated to best support the student's unique learning needs.

**Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP)**, as per the Ontario Ministry of Education, refers to an inclusive education system in which students must see themselves reflected in the curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, so that they can feel engaged in and empowered by their learning experiences. Students need to experience teaching and learning that reflect their needs and who they are.

Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP) recognizes that all students learn in ways that are connected to background, language, family structure, and social or cultural identity. By knowing 'who our students are', educators can tailor programs and practices to better meet the needs of their diverse student populations and to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

## **TDSB's Budget Allocation Dedicated to Staff Development in Special Education**

The Special Education and Inclusion Department allocates specific funds to support professional learning and to build the capacity of all TDSB staff in the area of Special Education and Inclusion. This will ensure alignment and coherence with regard to special education practices and processes across the district, and promote shared responsibility and shared accountability for improved outcomes for students with special education needs.

## **Cost-Sharing Arrangements with Other Ministries or Agencies**

When appropriate, the TDSB enters into agreements to facilitate staff development. Several agencies and institutions have partnered with the TDSB including, but not limited to, the Ontario Ministry of Education, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Hospital for Sick Children, Turning Point Youth Services, Massey Centre, Geneva Centre for Autism, Children's Treatment Network, and Kinark Child & Family Services.

## **Communication of the TDSB's Special Education Plan and Professional Development Opportunities**

TDSB staff are made aware of the Special Education Plan and professional learning TDSB staff are made aware of the Special Education Plan and professional learning opportunities through various communications tools, including memos, a monthly Special Education and Inclusion newsletter for all staff, on the TDSB internal and external websites, MyPath, System Leaders' Weekly, DirectLine, and through staff, department and learning network meetings. The Special Education and Inclusion Department receives input from staff directly, through their supervisors and in conversations with unions and associations around areas for learning, and the department creates and facilitates sessions to align with these learning needs.

# Section S: SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF



[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

## **Purpose of the Standard**

*To provide specific details on board staff to the ministry and to the public*

The charts below include information on the types of staff who provide special education programs and services, and outline the range of programs and services offered and the qualification required for the categories of staff listed. This is **projected staffing** for the 2024-2025 school year and may change.

## Elementary Panel

Special Education Staff	FTEs	Staff Qualifications
<b>Teachers</b>		
<b>Teachers of exceptional students</b>		
1.1 Teachers for resource- withdrawal programs	620	Special Education Additional Qualification
1.2 Teachers for self-contained classes	662.5	Special Education Additional Qualification and other qualification as per special education class
<b>Other special education teachers</b>		
2.1 Itinerant teachers	55	Special Education Additional Qualification, Teaching Students of the Deaf, Teaching Students of the Blind
2.2 Coordinators	16	Special Education Additional Qualification
2.3 Consultants	35	Special Education Additional Qualification

2.4 Assistive Technology/Special Equipment Amount Teachers	5	Special Education Additional Qualification
<b>Educational Assistants in Special Education</b>		
3.1 Educational Assistants	806	Two-year community college diploma (ECE, DSW) with 6 months related experience providing intensive support to children/adolescents with high-risk needs, or an equivalent combination of education and experience
3.2 Special Needs Assistants	587	Two-year community college diploma (e.g. ECE, DSW) with 3 months related experience providing intensive support to children/adolescents with moderate to severe special needs, or an equivalent combination of education and experience
3.3 Child and Youth Workers	210.5	Child and Youth Care or Child and Youth Worker Diploma with minimum one year's experience working with youth/adolescents in a school setting or equivalent combination of education and experience; experience working with children/adolescents from equity seeking communities
<b>Other professional resource staff</b> Please note these include both elementary and secondary staff.		
4.1 Psychologists	74	Doctorate and/or Masters degree in Psychology with registration with the College of Psychologists of Ontario

4.2 Psycho-Educational Consultants	19	Doctorate degree and/or Master's degree in Psychology and are not registered. They are in the process of being registered with the College of Psychologists of Ontario
4.3 Psychological Associates	28	Master's degree in psychology & are registered with the College of Psychologists of Ontario
4.4 Speech-Language Pathologists	82.5	Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology & registration with the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO)
4.5 Audiologists	1	Master's degree in Audiology & registration with the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO)
4.6 Occupational Therapists	24	Master's degree or equivalent in occupational therapy & registration with the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
4.7 Physiotherapists	9	Master's degree or equivalent in Physiotherapy & registration with the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
4.8 Social Workers	141	Master's degree in Social Work & registration with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW)
4.9 Child and Youth Counselors	8	Bachelor degree in Child and Youth Care or Social Work with one to two years experience working with children/adolescence in a school setting

## Paraprofessional resource staff

Please note these include both elementary and secondary staff.

5.1 Orientation and Mobility Personnel	3	Two-year college diploma in related field and current certification by The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired plus two years' experience instructing visually impaired students to navigate independently, or an equivalent combination of education and experience
5.2 Oral Interpreters (for deaf students)	11	Two-year community college diploma in related field (e.g., ECE, Educational Assistant, DSW) with 3 months related experience working with students with language delays, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Knowledge of hearing aid use and management and speech training communication
5.3 Sign Interpreters (for deaf students)	12	Two-year community college diploma in related field (e.g., ECE, DSW) with 3 months related experience working with students with language delays, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Fluency in sign language
5.4 Sign Language Facilitators	3	Three-year community college diploma (English ASL Diploma) with two years' experience working with deaf persons of all ages in an educational setting, or an equivalent combination of education and experience

5.5 Transcribers (for blind students)	1	Two-year Community College Diploma in related fields plus three years related experience or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Certification in Literary Braille Transcription through the Canadian Institute for the Blind
5.6 Interveners (for deaf- blind students)	10	Two-year community college diploma through an accredited program in deaf/blind studies (e.g., George Brown College) with two years of experience working with students who are deaf/blind in an educational setting, or an equivalent combination of education and experience
5.7 Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA)	7	Master's Level Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA)
5.8 ABA Facilitator	4	Bachelor Degree in related field with one to two years' related work experience or equivalent combination of education and experience; training in Applied Behaviour Analysis principles from a recognized institution

## Secondary Panel

Special Education Staff	FTEs	Staff Qualifications
<b>Teachers</b>		
<b>Teachers of exceptional students</b>		
1.1 Teachers for resource-withdrawal programs	137	Special Education Additional Qualification
1.2 Teachers for self-contained classes	329.5	Special Education Additional Qualification and other qualification as per special education class

<b>Other special education teachers</b>		
2.1 Itinerant Teachers	12	Special Education Additional Qualification, Teaching Students of the Deaf, Teaching Students of the Blind
2.2 Coordinators	See Elementary Panel	Special Education Additional Qualification Specialist
2.3 Consultants	See Elementary Panel	Ontario College of Teachers' Certificate of Qualification. TDSB - Permanent - Elementary or Secondary Affiliated teacher. A minimum of three years successful teaching experience in either the elementary or secondary panel Special Education Part 1 or equivalent experience/qualifications, working toward Special Education Specialist qualifications
<b>Educational assistants in special education</b>		
3.1 Educational Assistants	345	Two-year community college diploma (ECE, DSW) with 6 months related experience providing intensive support to children/adolescents with high-risk needs, or an equivalent combination of education and experience
3.2 Special Needs Assistants	104.5	Two-year community college diploma (e.g., ECE, DSW) with 3 months related experience providing intensive support to children/adolescents with moderate to severe special needs, or an equivalent combination of education and experience



3.3 Child and Youth Workers	157	Child and Youth Care or Child and Youth Worker Diploma; with minimum one year's experience working with youth/adolescents in a school setting or equivalent combination of education and experience; experience working with children/adolescents from equity seeking communities
<b>Other professional resource staff</b>		
4.1 Psychologists	See Elementary Panel	Psychologists and Psychological Associates have a Doctorate and/or Masters degree in Psychology degree in Psychology and/or a Master's degree in Psychology, and are registered with the College of Psychologists of Ontario
4.2 Psycho-Educational Consultants	See Elementary Panel	Doctorate degree and/or Master's degree in Psychology and are not registered. They are in the process of being registered with the College of Psychologists of Ontario
4.3 Psychological Associates	See Elementary Panel	Master's degree in psychology & are registered with the College of Psychologists of Ontario
4.4 Speech-Language Pathologists	See Elementary Panel	Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology & registration with the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO)

4.5 Audiologists	See Elementary Panel	Master's degree in Audiology & registration with the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO)
4.6 Occupational Therapists	See Elementary Panel	Master's degree or equivalent in occupational therapy & registration with the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
4.7 Physiotherapists	See Elementary Panel	Master's degree or equivalent in Physiotherapy & registration with the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
4.8 Social Workers	See Elementary Panel	Master's degree in social work & registration with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW)
4.9 Child and Youth Counselors	See Elementary Panel	Bachelor degree in Child and Youth Care Services or Social Work with one to two years experience working with children/adolescence in a school setting
<b>Paraprofessional resource staff</b>		
5.1 Orientation and Mobility Personnel	3 (shared with elementary)	Two-year college diploma in related field and current certification by The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired plus two years' experience instructing visually impaired students to navigate independently, or an equivalent combination of education and experience

5.2 Oral Interpreters (for deaf students)	3	Two-year community college diploma in related field (e.g., ECE, Educational Assistant, DSW) with 3 months related experience working with students with language delays, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Knowledge of hearing aid use and management and speech training communication
5.3 Sign Interpreters (for deaf students)	6	Two-year community college diploma in related field (e.g., ECE, DSW) with 3 months related experience working with students with language delays, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Fluency in sign language
5.4 Sign Language Facilitators	6	Three-year community college diploma (English ASL Diploma) with two years' experience working with deaf persons of all ages in an educational setting, or an equivalent combination of education and experience
5.5 Transcribers (for blind students)	1 (shared with elementary)	Two-year Community College Diploma in related field plus three years related experience or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Certification in Literary Braille Transcription (through the Canadian Institute for the Blind)
5.6 Interveners (for deaf-blind students)	6	Two-year community college diploma through an accredited program in deaf/blind studies (e.g., George Brown) with two years of experience working with students who are deaf/blind in an educational setting, or an equivalent combination of education and experience

# Section T: APPENDICES

**Appendix A:** TDSB Special Education and Inclusion Guides for Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

- [Guide to Special Education](#)
- [Guide to the Referral Process](#)
- [Guide to Individual Education Plans \(IEPs\)](#)
- [Guide to Identification, Placement and Review Committees \(IPRCs\)](#)

**Appendix B:** [English Language Learners: School-Based Considerations Prior to Referral for Psychological Assessment](#)

**Appendix C:** [English Language Learners and Special Education Support in TDSB Elementary Schools Q and A](#)

**Appendix D:** [Professional Support Services Referral Form](#)

**Appendix E:** [Examples of Accommodations](#)

**Appendix F:** [2024-2025 Special Education Plan Checklist](#)

**Appendix G:** [Amendments to the TDSB Special Education Plan](#)

**Appendix H:** [TDSB 2024-2025 Special Education Plan Feedback Survey](#)

# Section U: GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

## Glossary of Terms

**Ableism** – a set of stereotypes and practices that devalue and discriminate against people with disabilities. It assumes that the bodies and minds of non-disabled people are the “default,” placing value on them based on society’s perceptions of what’s considered “normal” (Talila Lewis).

**Accommodations** – teaching strategies, supports, and/or services required to help a student access the curriculum and to demonstrate learning. The Ontario curriculum expectations for the grade are not altered for a student receiving accommodations only.

**Alternative Expectations** – expectations not derived from an Ontario curriculum document or that are modified so extensively that the Ontario curriculum expectations no longer form the basis of the student’s educational program. Examples of alternative programs or courses include social skills, speech remediation, and personal care programs.

**Articulation** – refers to the production of speech sounds.

**Barrier Free** – a building/structure that is physically accessible, including access to all areas and equipment within the building/structure.

**Basic Living Skills (aka daily living skills, functional life skills)** – the skills that people require to meet their basic needs at a given age level (e.g., self-feeding, self-dressing, and toileting skills). As the social environment and expectations become more complicated, basic living skills encompass such things as the ability to use public transportation, shop, and ask for directions.

**Composite Score** – on a test of intellectual ability, the aggregate score produced from various sub-test scores.

**Cultural Safety** – based on Irihapeti Ramsden’s ideas, an approach that combines knowledge and respect for Indigenous cultures with self-reflection, empathy, and the

requirement to be aware of and to challenge unequal power relations between individuals and within families, communities, and societies. It is particularly important in health care, education, social work, and the justice system. It is important to create a learning environment that is respectful and that makes students feel safe and comfortable not only physically, socially, and emotionally but also in terms of their cultural heritage. A culturally safe learning environment is one in which students feel comfortable about expressing their ideas, opinions, and needs and about responding authentically to topics that may be culturally sensitive. Teachers should be aware that some students may experience emotional reactions when learning about issues that have affected their own lives, their family, and/or their community, such as the legacy of the residential school system. Before addressing such topics in the classroom, teachers need to consider how to prepare and debrief students, and they need to ensure that resources are available to support students both inside and outside the classroom ([refer to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies 2019](#)).

**Disability** – a term that covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and others not (e.g., physical, mental, and learning disabilities; hearing or vision disabilities; epilepsy; environmental sensitivities). A disability may be present from birth, may be caused by an accident, or may develop over time. The term disability is interpreted in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code (refer to [The Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)).

**Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP)** – educational programs in a variety of settings to address student needs that have not been met in the traditional school model.

**Educational Assistant (EA)** – if assigned, someone who assists teacher(s) to provide support for students with special education needs in special education classes and/or regular classes.

**Equity** – ensures Equality of opportunities and outcomes for all by responding fair and proportionality to the needs of individuals. Equity is not the same as equal treatment because it recognizes a social-cultural Power Imbalance that unfairly Privilege some while oppressing other and therefore focuses on redressing Disparity – meeting individual needs to ensure fair access, outcomes and participation that results in Equality, acknowledging historical and present Systemic Discrimination against identified groups and removing Barriers, eliminating Discrimination and remedying the impact of past Discrimination and current Oppression. Equity practices ensure fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people, with consideration of individual and group diversities and Intersectionality of multiple social identities, access to Privileges and impacts of oppression. Equity honours and accommodates the specific needs of individuals/groups (refer to [TDSB Equity Policy 037](#)).

**Exceptional Student** – defined by the Education Act as “a pupil whose behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical, or multiple exceptionalities are such that they are considered to need placement in a Special Education Program.” Students are identified according to the categories and definitions provided by the Ministry of Education.

**Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC)** – a committee composed of at least three persons appointed by the Board, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer of the Board, that decides whether or not a student should be identified as exceptional, that identifies the areas of a student’s exceptionality according to the ministry’s categories and definitions of exceptionalities, that decides an appropriate placement for the student, and that reviews the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

**Inclusion** – an attitude toward the need and right to “belong” to one’s community. An inclusive classroom is a place where all students experience a sense of belonging and social citizenship (e.g., membership, inclusion, shared power, and value) (Parekh, 2014). An inclusive classroom modifies the environment to fit the student, not the student to fit the environment. In addition, an inclusive classroom rejects deficit thinking and is a space where all identities and cultures (including disability culture) are celebrated. An inclusive classroom prioritizes the right to participation and focuses on setting a positive climate where social engagement and friendships can be promoted ([Underwood, 2013](#)).

**Inclusive Education** – education that is rooted in anti-oppressive practice, ensuring equity in content, pedagogy, access and climate based on the principles of acceptance, inclusion and learning designed to meet the individual needs of all learners to achieve fair and successful outcomes. Students see themselves reflected in the curriculum, school staff teams, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

**Individual Education Plan (IEP)** – a plan developed (in consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s), and the student, where the student is 16 years of age or older) for each student who has been identified as exceptional by the IPRC process. It is a working document that describes the strengths and needs of an individual exceptional student, the special education program, and services established to meet that student’s needs, and how the program and services will be delivered. It also describes the student’s progress. An IEP may be developed for a student who has not been formally identified as exceptional by an IPRC, but who requires a special education program or services to attend school, achieve curriculum expectations or demonstrate learning.

**Informed Consent** – with the exception of special education teachers, the involvement of professionals requires informed consent from a parent(s)/guardian(s) or student who is of age in order to initiate an individual assessment. In all instances, parent(s)/guardian(s), or students who are of age, are contacted to obtain their informed consent to ensure they understand the reasons for the assessment, the nature of the assessment, the risks and benefits of the assessment, and possible outcomes of the assessment. Issues of where and how the record will be stored and the limits to confidentiality are also outlined.

**Intersectionality** – the overlapping, in the context of an individual or group, of two or more prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code, or other factors, which may result in additional, compounded biases or barriers to equity for that individual or group.

**IPRC Annual Review Meeting** – a meeting held every school year unless the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from the parent(s)/guardian(s), waiving the Annual Review. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may request an IPRC Review meeting any time after a student has been in a special education program for three months.

**Modifications** – changes made in the grade level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs. These changes may involve developing expectations that reflect knowledge and skills required in the curriculum for a different grade level, and/or increasing or decreasing the number of regular grade-level curriculum expectations, and/or increasing or decreasing the complexity of the regular grade-level curriculum expectations. For each secondary school course with modified expectations, it is important to indicate clearly in the IEP the extent to which the expectations have been modified. Depending on the extent of the modification, the principal will determine whether achievement of the modified expectations constitutes successful completion of the course and will decide whether the student is eligible to receive a credit for the course. The principal's decision must be communicated to the parents/guardians/caregivers and the student.

**Oppression** – prolonged, systemic, abuse of power or control by one group of people (the dominant group) at the expense of others (the oppressed) and maintains a cultural imbalance of power which socially supports mistreatment and exploitation of all groups of 'less powerful' individuals. This results in unjust advantages, status and benefits for one group over the other and is maintained by social beliefs, economic and institutional structures and subtle and overt cultural practices. Because oppression is institutionalized in our society, target group members often face Barriers and limitations in many aspects of social participation i.e. school, health care, social services,



employment, parenting, housing, etc. Oppression actively provides unearned Privileges and protections to some members of our community, allowing them to ignore the presence of Discrimination and or Barriers to fair and equal access and opportunity such as Classism, Racism, Ableism, Sexism, Homophobia, Transphobia.

**Percentile** – expressed in a number between 0 and 100, that tells what percentage of individuals in a group receives a score between certain points. A percentile of 78 says that the person scored higher than 78% of the group. This should not be confused with the percentage score on a test.

**Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)** – an advisory committee established in accordance with Regulation 464/97 of the Education Act. SEAC makes recommendations to the Board concerning any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services. The TDSB and SEAC work together to protect the rights of students with special needs.

**Special Education Per-Pupil Amount (SEPPA)** – funding that is determined according to a formula based on each board’s total enrollment of secondary and elementary students, including those students with special needs.

**Special Education Program** – an educational program for an exceptional student that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meet the needs of the exceptional student.

**Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA)** – funding provided to school boards to assist with the costs of equipment essential to support students with special education needs.

**Trauma-Informed Practices** – trauma can be defined as the emotional, psychological, and physiological response from heightened stress and accompanies experiences of threat, violence, and life-changing events.

Trauma-informed practices in the context of schools aims to change the mainstream paradigm “from one that asks *what is wrong with you* to one that considers *what happened to you*. Trauma-informed institutions can recognize the presence of trauma symptoms and promote healing environments through trauma-informed practices predicated upon safety, trust, collaboration, choice and empowerment, as well as building strengths and skills” (refer to [Trauma Informed Schools](#)).

**TTY** – a teletypewriter communication device used by people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or have severe speech impairment.

## Special Education Acronyms

Acronym	Description
<b>ACL</b>	Assistant Curriculum Leader (Secondary Panel only)
<b>AODA</b>	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
<b>AQ</b>	Additional Qualification Course
<b>ASD</b>	Autism Spectrum Disorder
<b>BEH</b>	Behaviour
<b>CAP</b>	Centrally Assigned Principal
<b>CAS</b>	Children's Aid Society
<b>CL</b>	Curriculum Leader
<b>CPI</b>	Non-Violent Crisis Prevention Intervention Training
<b>CRRP</b>	Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy
<b>CYC</b>	Child and Youth Counsellor
<b>CYW</b>	Child and Youth Worker
<b>DD</b>	Developmental Disability
<b>DI</b>	Differentiated Instruction
<b>EA</b>	Educational Assistant
<b>Ele</b>	Elementary
<b>FOI</b>	Freedom of Information
<b>HCCSS</b>	Home and Community Care Support Services
<b>IEP</b>	Individual Education Plan
<b>ILP</b>	Individual Learning Plan
<b>IPRC</b>	Identification, Placement, and Review Committee

<b>ISP</b>	Intensive Support Program (full time special education class)
<b>IST</b>	In-School Team
<b>LD</b>	Learning Disability
<b>MART</b>	Methods and Resource Teacher (Elementary Panel only)
<b>MID</b>	Mild Intellectual Disability
<b>OSR</b>	Ontario Student Record
<b>OT/PT</b>	Occupational Therapy / Physical Therapy
<b>PD/PL</b>	Professional Development / Professional Learning
<b>PD</b>	Physical Disability
<b>PHIPA</b>	Personal Health Information Protection Act
<b>PI</b>	Partially Integrated Delivery Model
<b>POR</b>	Position of Responsibility
<b>PSSP</b>	Professional Support Services Personnel
<b>Psych</b>	Psychology
<b>RA</b>	Resource Assistance
<b>RES</b>	Resource Program
<b>SEA</b>	Special Equipment Amount
<b>SEAC</b>	Special Education Advisory Committee
<b>SEPPA</b>	Special Education Per Pupil Amount
<b>SEPRC</b>	Special Education Program Recommendation Committee
<b>SIP</b>	Special Incidence Portion
<b>SLP</b>	Speech-Language Pathologist
<b>SNA</b>	Special Needs Assistant

<b>SOE/SO</b>	Superintendent of Education / Supervisory Officer
<b>SST</b>	School Support Team
<b>SW</b>	Social Worker
<b>UDL</b>	Universal Design for Learning
<b>VP</b>	Vice-Principal
<b>WA</b>	Withdrawal Assistance Delivery Model