



## SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, November 14, 2018, 7:00 pm

Trustees' Committee Room

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

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# Special Education Staff

## Purpose of the Standard

*To provide specific details on Board staff to the Ministry and to the public*

## Role of the Classroom Teacher

The role of the classroom teacher is to be the front line in the identification of students who may need accommodations/modification of program. Although not all classroom teachers have special education qualifications, they play a vital role in the delivery of services to all special education students. Within the regular classroom, the teacher works with all students to meet their individual needs.

## Role of the Principal

- ensure the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements
- chair Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meetings
- supervise all staff in school

## Role of School-based Learning Support Services (LSS) Staff

*Learning Support Teacher (LST) / Learning Resource Teacher (LRT)*

- play a major role in the delivery of special education and deals with the overall administrative and educational needs of students requiring special education programs /services within the school
- undertake a variety of roles including consulting with and assisting classroom and other special education teachers with early identification, curriculum differentiation and modification, assessment, intervention strategies, the development and coordination of IEPs and in-class or withdrawal support for special education students
- liaise with members of the multi-disciplinary team
- provide the highest level of support offered in a school-based program
- work with a variety of special needs students who require intensive support in core academic areas

*Specialized Program Teacher*

- provide learning opportunities tailored to each student's specific exceptionality, learning style, and special education needs as outlined on the student's IEP so that the student can progress at his/her appropriate level to reach his/her potential within the parameters of the Quality Program Indicators for that specialized class placement.



### *Educational Assistant*

Educational Assistants (EA) are supervised by the school principal in consultation with the classroom teacher. The role may vary from assignment to assignment but usually includes:

- assisting in crisis intervention
- support the planning, organizing, and implementing of the behavior/social/instructional program in cooperation with the classroom teacher
- assisting students in various ways, with safety, behaviour and/or medical needs
- specialized skills and qualifications are required for specific assignments (e.g. Braille, American Sign Language, catheterization) with respect to the EAs assigned to schools

With respect to the allocation of EA to schools, Superintendents of Instruction and the System Principal of Learning Support Services review the allocation. In considering the allocation for the school, the following criteria will be applied:

- students for whom safety of self or others is a factor
- students for whom medical concerns require significant support/intervention within the school environment for a significant portion of the day
- students for whom self-help skills require significant support/intervention within the school environment

## **Role of LSS Staff**

All members of the LSS department work in collaboration with teaching personnel and parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide special education supports and services to meet the needs of students and schools. Under the direction of the superintendent and the leadership team, LSS is comprised of:

- Administrative and support personnel
- Braillist
- Educational assistants
- Itinerant teachers Assistive Technology
- Itinerant teachers of Autism
- Itinerant teachers of the Blind/ Low Vision
- Itinerant teachers of the Deaf/ Hard of Hearing
- Itinerant teacher of Learning Disabilities
- Learning Support Consultants
- Psychology staff
- Social workers
- Speech-language pathologists

### *Braillist*

- produces Braille transcriptions, electronic Braille transcriptions, e-text, large print materials, and tactile diagrams according to specific requirements as requested by the ITB/LV for students
- maintains the program's blind/low vision inventory of teaching materials and equipment, reference books, computers, and technological equipment



- is responsible for conservation, storage and inventory of Braille texts in print and electronically

#### *Itinerant Teachers of Assistive Technology*

- provide training to students who have computer based claims through the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Funding
- provide consultative services to classroom teachers on assistive technology equipment and software
- provide staff training on assistive technology equipment and software
- support the implementation and training of Ministry Licensed software for assistive technology system wide
- provide student training on assistive technology equipment and software

#### *Itinerant Teacher Autism*

- increases capacity of regular classroom teachers to meet the variety of needs of students with Autism
- provides instructional and educational support services to students diagnosed with Autism
- consults with teachers and other LSS team members (e.g. ASD team, SLP)
- reviews and provide resources including research, assistive technology
- provides training and professional development to individual teachers, EA, and/or school staff
- works collaboratively with the Autism Spectrum team and the multi-disciplinary teams at individual schools

#### *Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Coordinator*

- develop an ABA toolkit for all schools
- provides professional development and guidelines on how to use the toolkit and embed ABA strategies into the classroom
- supports the dedicated space pilot; liaison with medical professionals in the community (IBI, ABA)
- supports all autism initiatives, autism awareness month, parent conference
- works collaboratively with the Autism Spectrum team and the multi-disciplinary teams at individual schools

#### *Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA)*

- works to support school staff in understanding how to supports students with autism and behavioural needs
- provides professional development using the task list from the registered behavioural technician course
- models and co-teaches the use of BCBA strategies
- reviews and provides research into the emerging supports available for students with behavioural needs
- works collaboratively with the Autism Spectrum team and the multi-disciplinary teams at individual schools



*Itinerant Teachers of students who are Blind/Low Vision*

- direct instruction in Braille and other tactile learning strategies
- make accommodations/modifications and acquisition of curriculum materials (Braille, tapes, large print)
- provide orientation and mobility instruction (safe travel techniques)
- provide training in specialized equipment including computer hardware and software, optical aids, and other equipment used in the classroom
- provide consultation and support to schools concerning needs related to vision
- provide consultative services and interprets eye reports to teaching staff
- facilitate the transition of students from pre-school/outside agencies to elementary school and from elementary school to secondary school

*Itinerant Teachers of students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing*

- provide assessment, direct instruction, and academic support services to students with hearing losses ranging from mild to profound (K to 12)
- provide consultative services to classroom teachers and school staff, and ongoing guidance to parent(s) of students who are deaf/hard of hearing
- apply an Auditory-Verbal/ Oral approach to maximize the student's auditory potential, speech and language development, and participation alongside his/her hearing peers
- provide training and ongoing management of specialized equipment used in the classroom

*Itinerant Teacher of students who have a Learning Disability*

- increases capacity of regular classroom teachers to meet the variety of needs of students who have a Learning Disability (LD) or Language Learning Disability (LLD)
- provides instructional and educational support services to students diagnosed LD or LLD and who await placement in a system LD/LLD class and their teachers
- develops plans with educational strategies to address key areas of strengths and weaknesses for individual students
- reviews formal assessments
- conducts observations
- consults with teachers and other LSS team members (e.g. ASD team, SLP)
- reviews and provides resources including research, assistive technology
- offers training and professional development to individual teachers, EA and/or school staff
- provides direct support to students to address specific concerns (e.g. memory, organization, language development)

*Learning Support Consultants*

- develop and deliver special education in-service opportunities for staff
- assist teachers with all aspects of special education program and service delivery
- promote current teaching methodologies and instructional practices which reflect the Ontario curriculum and Ministry documents



- identify and support best practices in all specialized classes and provide program support
- facilitate placements in specialized classes
- inform and advise schools regarding Special Education initiatives

LSCs and representatives from Psychology, Social Work, and Speech-Language Pathology are members of central application committees and the following central teams:

#### *The Assistive Technology Team*

- provides support and training board-wide to schools in the area of special education assistive technology
- coordinates the ordering of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) equipment
- coordinate and facilitates training sessions on SEA equipment for students and staff
- provide Professional Development sessions and support to schools board-wide on Ministry Licensed software and SEA
- assists in the completion of special equipment applications

#### *The Autism Spectrum Disorders Team*

- provides direct and consultative program support to schools
- facilitates transitions for students who are both within and new to the OCDSB
- provides ongoing support to students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- assists in the development and implementation of Individual Education Plans, behavioural programs, communication strategies and assessment practices
- provides ongoing support in the area of professional development in partnership with the CHEO School Support Program
- promotes autism awareness in schools and larger community
- supports new ministry initiatives and pilots relating to the field of autism

#### *The Behaviour Support Team / Social-Emotional Learning Teachers*

- provides support to the Behavior Intervention Program (BIP), students, parent(s)/guardian(s), staff, and administration
- provides consultation and classroom observations specific to students who present challenging behaviours
- SELTs (Social-Emotional Learning Teacher) provide consultation and classroom observations specific to students demonstrating stress behaviour or challenging behaviour in Kindergarten to grade 3

#### *The Developmental Disability Support Team*

- provides support to two specialized schools for students with developmental disabilities, Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education and Clifford Bowey Public School
- provides program support for teachers and administration while working with parent(s)/guardian(s) and community agencies to facilitate new admissions



- provides similar support to semi-integrated programs for students with developmental disabilities
- provides professional development to staff and schools relating to supporting students with developmental disabilities

#### *The Early Learning Team*

- provides classroom based and student specific support for Kindergarten educator teams
- the multidisciplinary team includes speech-language pathologists, psychology staff, social workers, educators and educational assistants
- consultation is available to address a range of concerns for Kindergarten students including, language, self-regulation, behavior, development, social skills and well-being
- all LSS Kindergarten supports are now accessed through a common referral process

#### *The Gifted Support Team*

- provides support to schools in the area of programming for students who have been identified gifted
- provides consultation on issues concerning the gifted screening and identification procedures
- creates awareness around supports required for gifted learners
- connects staff with a wide variety of resources, google community, gifted folder, printable resources

#### *Itinerant Educational Assistants (IEA)*

- provide consultative and direct services to students experiencing behavioural challenges
- develop behavior support plans
- assists in the development of Safety Plans and Safe plans
- provides professional development in promoting positive behavior and collaborative problem solving (CPS)

#### **Psychology staff**

- provides ongoing consultation to schools on student related issues
- Engages in early screening and intervention on learning and mental health and developmental issues
- provides both direct intervention and indirect support to students
- provides assessments to students from kindergarten to grade 12
- plays an integral role in responding to threat making, high risk behaviour and tragic events within the school
- Collaborates with community partners and facilitates access to external resources
- involves system consultation through participation in committee work, and special projects.
- Engages in staff training in such areas as suicide prevention, mental health promotion, and behaviour management





- *The legislative underpinnings supporting the service delivery model include the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA), 1991, the Psychology Act, 1991, and the Health Care Consent Act, 1996, Personal Health Information Protection Act 2004, Education Act.*

### **Social Work Staff**

- consult with each assigned school to establish priorities with respect to students, staff and families
- direct intervention with students, families and school staff directed at resolving or managing a range of social, mental health and/or behavioural issues affecting school performance
- crisis intervention typically focusing on assessment and follow up in regard to risk issues including suicide, violence and threat making behaviour
- participate in committees which determine specialized class placements
- provide support to school staff and students in the aftermath of tragic events
- investigation of truancy as mandated in *The Education Act and Regulations*
- prepare and present applications to the Attendance Review Committee and the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee
- provide counseling support and /or supervision of students in the SAL program
- provide support to families facing financial hardship

### **Speech-Language Pathology**

In consultation with the LST and the principal of the school, speech-language pathologists provide an array of service to students from kindergarten through grade 12.

- Scope of practice includes identification, prevention, assessment, consultation and programming/intervention of communication disorders in the areas including language, speech, communication, reading and writing, and augmentative and alternative communication.
- speech-language pathologists facilitate internal and external referrals as appropriate, provide professional development to educational staff and parents, and provide services at all tier levels.
- weighted services are provided to some OCDSB specialized program classes including: language learning disability, and specialized and integrated programs for students with developmental disabilities and autism.
- OCDSB speech-language pathologists provide integral support to teams such as Early Learning and ASD

*The legislative underpinnings supporting speech-language pathology services include The Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA), 1991, and The Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Act, 1991. The Inter Ministerial Guidelines for the Provision of Speech and Language Services, 1988 is also followed in determining type and level of service provided.*



### Tragic Events Response Team

When a tragedy occurs, the school community may play a critical role in responding to the needs of students and staff. The psychology and social work staff at the OCDSB provide support services following a tragic event in the school community on an as-needed basis. Along with school staff, the psychology and social work staff support students, educational staff and parents in the aftermath of crisis by providing a safe haven, disseminating information, identifying individuals at risk, providing mental health services, linking individuals with community services, tracking displaced families, and supporting long-term recovery.

A related service offered by the psychology and social work staff at the OCDSB is the Urgent Care Team. The Urgent Care Team comprises psychology staff and social workers who provide consultation to our professional services staff around individual students who may be experiencing extreme stress (e.g., suicidal ideation, extraordinary distress and/or psychotic symptoms). The Urgent Care Team also provides a liaison to the CHEO Emergency Department, who provide assessment and follow-up services.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF — ELEMENTARY PANEL

### Special Education Staff

### FTEs Staff Qualifications

#### 1. Teachers of students with special education needs

Learning Support Teacher/Learning Resource Teacher (includes extension agreement LRT/LST	243.5	Member of the Ontario College of Teachers + Special Education Specialist
Teachers of specialized program (does not include prep and these are system classes on appendix a)	142	Member of the Ontario College of Teachers + Minimum Sp. Ed. Part 1

#### 2. Other special education teachers

Itinerant teachers of Blind/Low Vision	22.15	Member of the Ontario College of Teachers, Minimum of Special Education Part 1, AQ (Deaf, Teaching Students who are Blind, where required)
Itinerant teachers of Deaf/Hard of Hearing		
Itinerant teachers of Social Emotional Learning		
Itinerant teachers of Assistive Technology	4	Member of the Ontario College of Teachers, Minimum of Special Education Part 1
2.4 Learning Support Consultants (includes 1 for	12	Member of the Ontario College of Teachers, with Special Education Specialist or



extension agreement)		equivalent
2.5 Itinerant Teacher LD	1	Teachers + Sp. Ed. Specialist or equivalent
2.6 Itinerant Teacher ASD Team	2	Teachers + Sp. Ed. Specialist or equivalent

### **3. Educational assistants in special education**

Educational assistants (elementary panel)	475.5	Developmental Service Worker (DSW), Child and Youth Worker(CYW) diploma or an equivalent program
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### **4. Other professional resource staff (elementary and secondary panel)**

4.1 Psychologists and Psychological Associates, Psychoeducational Consultants	29.5	Ph.D. or Masters, Psychologists and Psychological Associates are registered with College of Psychologists of Ontario. The Psychoeducational Consultants are supervised by a registered member of the College.
4.4 Speech-language pathologists	27.5	Masters in Speech-Language Pathology, registration with CASLPO
4.8 Social workers	25.5	Master of Social Work and registered with The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers

### **5. Paraprofessional resource staff (elementary and secondary panel)**

Orientation and mobility personnel	0.5	Orientation and Mobility specialist
Transcribers (for blind students)	1.0	Certified Braille transcriber or equivalent knowledge
Brailist		



## SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF — SECONDARY PANEL

### Special Education Staff    FTEs    Staff Qualifications

#### 1. Teachers of students with special education needs

1.1 Learning Support Teacher	40.16	Member of the Ontario College of Teachers + Minimum Sp. Ed. Part 1
1.2 Teachers of specialized programs	78.17	Member of the Ontario College of Teachers + Minimum Sp. Ed. Part 1

#### Other special education teachers

1 Itinerant Teachers (ITAT) Teachers +	2	Member of the Ontario College of Special Education Part 1
Learning Support Consultants	2	Member of the Ontario College of Teachers + Sp. Ed. Specialist or equivalent
<b>Instructional Assistants</b> Instructional Assistants (secondary panel)	184.5	Developmental Service Worker (DSW), Child and Youth Worker(CYW) diploma or an equivalent program



# The Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) Process and Appeals

## Purpose of the Standard

*To provide details of the Board's IPRC process to the Ministry and the public*

## Parental Involvement

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board is committed to ongoing communication with parent(s)/ guardian(s) to work together in a partnership to fulfill the requirements of the IPRC process. Ongoing communication and parental involvement are key components of the IPRC process. An IPRC meeting may be initiated by the school principal upon written notice to the parent of the pupil. The school principal shall initiate an IPRC upon the written request of a parent of the pupil attending the school. Where formal assessments are required, the principal will ensure written consent has been obtained from the parent(s)/guardian(s). As legislation 181/98 of the Education Act prescribes for the IPRC process, parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified of the IPRC meeting, in writing, 10 school days prior to the date of the IPRC meeting and are consulted throughout this process. An IEP is developed in consultation with all partners including the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). Ongoing dialogue with parent(s)/guardian(s), regarding their child occurs during case conferences, regular report card interviews, and as deemed appropriate.

## In-School Team Meeting / Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting

A meeting of school personnel may include the principal, the LST, members of Learning Support Services (as required), and parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or student as required. Its purpose is to discuss a student's learning and social-emotional profiles and to determine, in a solution-focused manner, the most appropriate placement and level of service at the community school.

Tiered intervention strategies are implemented to support students prior to a referral to an IPRC meeting. Such strategies include but are not limited to adaptations to instructions, activities and assignments as well as modifications to assessment and evaluation.

Schools are expected to maintain case conference/team meeting documentation. School-based record keeping includes up-to-date maintenance of student information for the Ontario Student Record (OSR). Conference meeting data and related recommendations follow the student via the OSR to other schools in the event of a transfer, according to the OSR Guidelines.



## The IPRC

At an IPRC, the identification of exceptionality is the result of an extensive and varied compilation of data on the student's academic, physical and/or social/emotional development over an extended period of time. This data collection process involves not only the gathering of information on a student's background, learning profile, and level of achievement, but also involves information about all efforts to assist the student.

The IPRC considers both formal and informal assessment results completed at the school level (e.g. educational assessments) and from outside professionals (e.g. medical doctors, psychologists, psychological associates or psychiatrists), plus information from parent(s)/guardian(s), their advocates and the student and the summary of attempted intervention strategies, in establishing the exceptionality and placement of the student. An IPRC meeting may result in placement in a special education program along the continuum of regular program to more specialized placements within the community school and, in some instances, another setting outside the community school. If deemed exceptional, the exceptionality and definition will appear on the IPRC Statement of Decision.

The IPRC meeting is coordinated and chaired by a principal. Member(s) may include the LST, the classroom teacher(s), and members of LSS, as required for a minimum total of three persons. The IPRC meeting may place students in special school-based programs (regular class, regular class with specialized support, regular class with LST and/or LRT monitoring, regular class with support from the LST and/or the LRT). When an application for a specialized program placement is made, the principal must wait for the referral committee direction before holding an IPRC meeting to place the student in that class (see *IPRC Statement of Decision* form at the end of this section). Each parent/guardian is encouraged to participate in the IPRC meeting and may bring other resources/supports with them.

### The purpose of the IPRC meeting is

- to identify the areas of strength and areas of need of the student
- to determine whether the student is, or is not, exceptional
- to identify a specific exceptionality, or exceptionalities, if applicable
- to recommend an appropriate placement in a program designed to meet the identified needs of the student, or to serve as an annual review for students with special education needs

#### Regulation 181/98

- subsection 6 (8) states "*Within 30 days after placement of the pupil in the program, the principal shall ensure that the plan is completed and a copy of it sent to the parent of the pupil and, where the pupil is 16 years of age or older, the pupil*"
- section 21 states
  1. *The principal of the school at which a pupil's special education program is being provided,*
    - (a) *may on written notice to a parent of the pupil;*



- (b) shall at the written request of a parent of the pupil; and*
- (c) shall, at the written request of the designated representative of the board that is providing the special education program to the pupil; refer the pupil to a committee established by the board that is providing the special education program to the pupil, for a review of the identification or placement of the pupil.*
2. *A request by a parent under the clause (1) (b) may be made at any time after a placement has been in effect for three months but may not be made more often than once every three month period.*
  3. *Subject to subsection (4), the designated representative shall make a request under clause (1) (c) when in his or her opinion it is necessary to do so in order to ensure that a review in respect of the pupil is held under this Part at least once in each school year.*
  4. *Subsection (3) does not apply where,*
    - (a) a committee proceeding with respect to the pupil was held under Part IV during the school year; or*
    - (b) a parent of the pupil gives a written notice dispensing with the annual review to the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided.*
  5. *Within 15 days of giving a notice under clause (1) (a) or receiving a request under clause (1) (b) or (c), the principal shall provide the parent with a written statement of the approximate time when the review meeting will take place."*

## **Documentation Required for IPRC Meetings**

### **Learning Support Services has 5, 818 IPRC records to date for the 2017-2018 academic year.**

The IPRC makes its decision about the exceptionality on the basis of relevant assessments. These may include educational assessments or assessments from outside professionals such as medical doctors, psychologists, psychological associates or psychiatrists. These assessments may have an impact on the final determination, particularly for students with physical problems and vision/hearing deficits. The IPRC makes all placement recommendations according to Ministry placement options.

It is the right of every parent/guardian to request an IPRC meeting, and it is the duty of the Board to convene an IPRC meeting when so requested in writing. For initial IPRCs the OCDSB [Learning Support Services Identification, Placement and Review Parent Guide will be provided to the parent\(s\)/guardian\(s\)](#). Copies are available at each school and on the OCDSB website [Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Website](#). Principals send out this guide with the notification of the initial IPRC Meeting Form (OCDSB 373). For IPRC reviews the OCDSB is committed to sharing a one-page fact sheet entitled *What You Should Know About the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) Process* (see the end of Standard 5). If deemed exceptional, the exceptionality and definition will appear on the IPRC Statement of Decision.

## **What happens at an IPRC meeting?**

- the chair introduces everyone and explains the purpose of the meeting





- the IPRC will review all available information about the child
- the chair encourages open discussion and questions
- discussion of programs and services being considered
- consideration of any information that parent(s)/guardian(s) submit (preferably prior to the IPRC meeting) about the child or that the child submits if he or she is 16 years of age or older

### **The members may**

- review an educational assessment of the child
- review, subject to the provisions of the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, a health or psychological assessment of the child conducted by a qualified practitioner
- interview the child, with parent(s)/guardian(s) consent if the child is under 16 years of age

### **What will the IPRC consider in making its placement recommendation?**

If, after considering all of the information presented to it, the IPRC is satisfied that placement in a regular class will meet the child's needs and parent(s)/guardian(s) agree, the committee will decide in favour of placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services. The committee may decide that the child's needs would best be met through placement in a specialized program.

### **What will the IPRC's Statement of Decision include?**

- whether the IPRC has identified the child as exceptional
- the categories and definitions of any exceptionalities identified, as defined by the Ministry of Education
- the description of the child's areas of strength and areas of need
- the placement
- the recommendations regarding a special education program and special education services
- the reasons to place the child in a special education class

### **What happens after the committee meeting?**

- if parent(s)/guardian(s) agree with the identification and placement, they will be asked to do so by signing their name(s) on the Statement of Decision
- if the IPRC has identified the student with special education needs and if parent(s)/guardian(s) agree with the IPRC identification and placement, an IEP must be developed for the child within 30 days of placement date

### **Statement of Strengths and Needs**

The IPRC must include a *Statement of Strengths* and a *Statement of Needs* for each student with special education needs. The areas of strength and areas of need are identified through assessment. These must be recorded on both the IPRC Statement of Decision and the IEP.





When describing a student's areas of strength, it is appropriate to include information such as the following: a student's preferred learning styles/modalities, previously acquired learning skills, strength in areas such as cognitive processing and communication. The description of the student's areas of need should make evident the reasons that the student requires a special education program and/or services.

It is not appropriate to include information about the following: the need for a type or level of human support, the need for a specific program or service or the need for improvement in a particular subject.

For most exceptionalities, the areas of need do not change significantly over time.

The following list of needs statements is not exhaustive and should be treated as a guideline when completing the IPRC:



## **Needs Statements**

Attention Skills  
 Auditory Perceptual Skills  
 Auditory Skills  
 Braille Skills  
 Communication Skills  
 Creative Thinking Skills  
 Critical Thinking Skills  
 Decoding Skills  
 Emotional Regulation  
 Expressive Language  
 Fine Motor Skills  
 Gross Motor Skills  
 Impulse Control Skills  
 Information Processing Skills  
 Leadership Skills  
 Memory Skills  
 Mobility Skills  
 Non-verbal Communication Skills  
 Numeration  
 Organizational Skills  
 Orientation and Mobility Skills

Receptive/expressive Language  
 Residual Hearing and Auditory Skills  
 Self-advocacy Skills  
 Self-regulation Skills  
 Sign Language Skills  
 Social Skills  
 Spatial Skills  
 Speech/articulation Skills  
 Tactile Perceptual Skills  
 Task Persistence Skills  
 Time Management Skills  
 Visual efficiency  
 Visual motor integration  
 Visual Perception Skills  
 Visual Perceptual Processing  
 Written Expression

Orientation Skills  
 Personal Care Skills  
 Personal Safety Skills  
 Problem Solving Skills  
 Reading Comprehension  
 Receptive Language



## IPRC Review Procedures

An annual IPRC must be held for all identified students. However, an IPRC review may be held as directed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) or the principal, following a 90-day placement in a special education program. A written request by parent(s)/guardian(s) may be made at any time after a placement has been in effect for three months. An IPRC review may not occur more often than once in every three month period (*Reg. 181/98, s.21 (2) The Education Act*). IPRC reviews can be waived with written direction by the parent(s)/guardian(s).

An annual IPRC reviews the following: the student's progress, current statements of strengths and needs, exceptionality and placement.

## Student Exceptionalities

Please refer to the section of the *Special Education Plan - Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities*

## Superintendency Based (SB) IPRC for placement into specialized class programs

Since 2014 the SB IPRC has been available for placement into specialized program classes for specific exceptionalities. The SB IPRC committee is comprised of a principal chair, an OCDSB psychologist/psychological associate and another member of LSS staff (e.g., Learning Support Consultant (LSC), speech-language pathologist etc.). Parents/guardians are invited to the SB IPRC and are valued participants in the process.

Based on feedback from stakeholders a shift for the spring specialized program class placement process was implemented. The SB IPRC is available for any specialized program class exceptionality when the circumstances of the referral warrant this level of central involvement (e.g., Complex student profile, exceptional situations etc.).

For most referrals to specialized program classes:

- A school based case conference with relevant members of the multidisciplinary team and parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be completed and reflected in the referral form;
- In most cases, referral review will provide school teams with specific site offers for consideration by parent(s)/guardian(s). A school based IPRC would then be completed;
- In the case that an offer was not made for the specialized program class requested a school based case conference with central LSS support would be offered to the parent(s)/guardian(s). The goal of the case conference would be to establish shared solutions personalized for the student incorporating all stakeholders.



## The IPRC Appeal Process

It is important that parent(s)/guardian(s) participate in the IPRC process. Should the parent(s)/guardian(s) disagree with the identification and/or the placement statements from the Committee, the system principal of Learning Support Services and/or the superintendent with responsibility for schools should be invited to a follow-up meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Committee members. Every attempt will be made to resolve the concerns at this level.

Should this follow-up discussion not resolve matters, the parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to appeal the recommendations of the IPRC. The appeal can only be based on disagreement with the identification and/or the placement of the student. A statement setting out reasons for the disagreement must be included. The request for an appeal must be made in writing within 15 days of the follow-up meeting or within 30 days of receipt of the statement from the IPRC. (In regards to all matters pertaining to appeals, days shall mean calendar days. Where time is limited and the expiry date falls on a school holiday, the time limit shall be extended to the next day following that is not a school holiday. During summer holidays, which are defined as periods of time that school is not in session, requests for appeals will be deferred to the day following the summer holiday). This request will be directed to:

Director of Education/Secretary of the Board  
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board  
133 Greenbank Road, Nepean, Ontario K2H 6L3  
FAX: (613) 820-6968

## Appeal Board Membership

The Appeal Board shall be comprised of three members selected within 15 days of receipt of the notice of appeal by the Secretary of the Board. These members will include:

- a) one member selected by the OCDSB
- b) one member selected by parent(s)/guardian(s), and
- c) a Chair, selected jointly by the above members. Please note: if agreement cannot be reached, the Chair shall be selected by the District Manager at the Ministry of Education.

The members shall not be employees of the Ministry of Education nor the OCDSB. Nor shall the members have prior knowledge of that matter under appeal.

## Appeal Board Meeting

The Appeal Board will meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and other persons who may contribute relevant information, no later than 30 calendar days following the selection of the Chair of the Appeal Board. The Appeal Board must make its recommendations within 3 days of the meeting's completion. A written report of its recommendations must be provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student (if 16 years of age or older), and the OCDSB. The Chair of the Appeal Board will present recommendations to the Board



within 30 calendar days. All documents submitted to the Appeal Board will remain confidential to the members of the Appeal Board.

Parents have the right to request mediation, as indicated in the *Education Act* and the Board policy on this issue.

Within 30 calendar days of the Appeal Board's decision, the OCDSB notifies the parent(s)/guardian(s)/ student (if 16 years of age or older) whether it accepts or rejects the Appeal Board's decision.

If the parent(s)/guardian(s) disagree with the decision of the Appeal Board, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may further appeal to a Special Education Tribunal under Section 57 of *The Education Act*. Information about making an application to the tribunal will be included with the Appeal Board's decision.

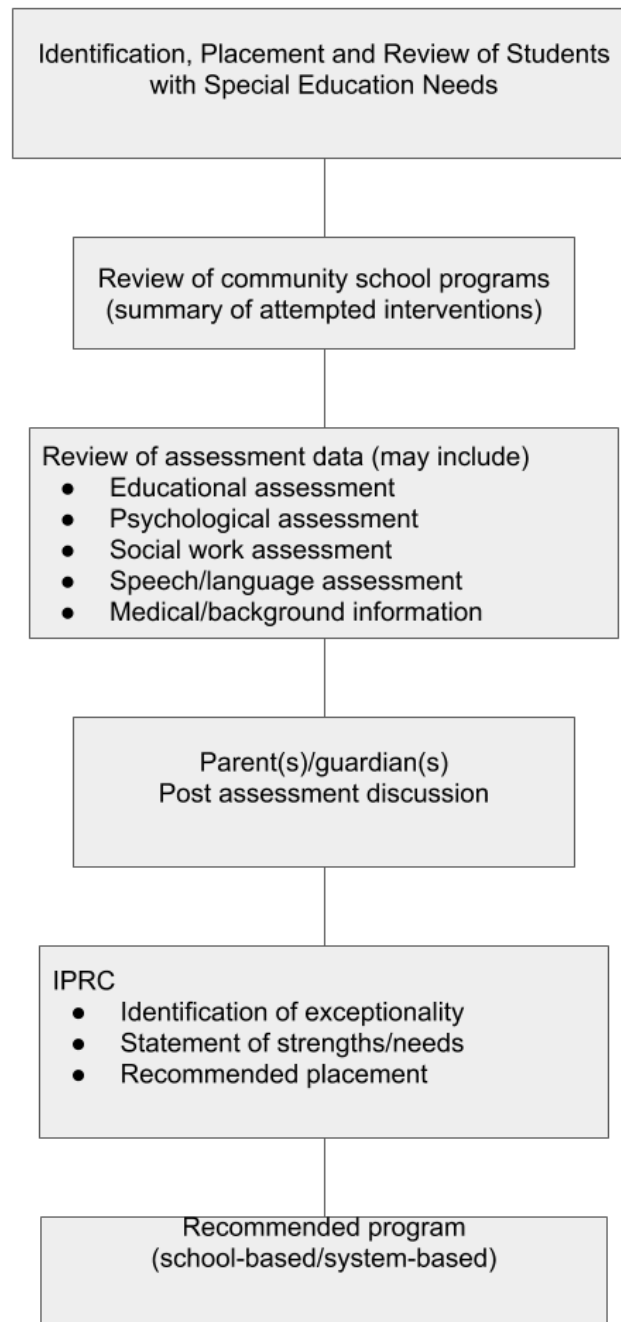
While appeals may be submitted, various interventions end the process.

**In 2017-2018 there were 0 complete appeals.**

**In 2016–2017 there were 0 complete appeals.**



## Identification, Placement and Review of Students with Special Education



# Transportation

## Purpose of the Standard

*To provide details of the Board's transportation policies to the Ministry and to the public*

Transportation providers must, in all respects, meet the requirements of federal and provincial legislation, regulations and standards governing student transportation using vans, school buses and public transit. They must also comply with relevant Ministry of Education requirements and Board policies and procedures governing student safety and transportation. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) is responsible for the provision and administration of all Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) transportation services.

Information about OSTA may be found on their website at [Ottawa Student Transportation Authority website](#).

The Board encourages integration of students with special needs with other students in regular programs as much as possible. In the event integration is not possible, the Board agrees to provide specialized transportation for students with special education needs for whom the Board has received an acceptable medical certificate and/or the Learning Support Services Department has determined that regular transportation is not the best option for a student given the nature of the student's disability or safety concerns.

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), individual school transportation plans are required for students with disabilities to ensure that accessible and appropriate transportation services are provided to them. To request specialized transportation, a Student Request for Accessible Transportation and Personalized Accessibility Plan form must be completed in consultation with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with disabilities. Requests for students with disabilities must be approved by the Board's Learning Support Services Department. Medical requests should be directed to the school principal for approval by the school's Superintendent of Instruction. In addition, transportation operators must comply with all AODA requirements.

To ensure the safety of special needs students, drivers shall deliver each student into the care of a responsible adult. Should any student require assistance getting on, or off the bus, such assistance must be provided by the parent(s)/guardian(s) or school personnel. In the event that a responsible adult is not available, the driver shall report this to OSTA.

Older students in grades 9-12 are exempted from this requirement providing the parent/guardian has given written permission to OSTA, and the school concurs the student does not require supervision when on their own.



For some students with special needs it may be most appropriate for transportation to be provided separately from other students. School teams carefully consider these circumstances and document a request for solo transportation on the Student Request for Accessible Transportation and Personalized Accessibility Plan form. These requests require approval from the Superintendent of Instructions or the Manager of Learning Support Services.

Students in some specialized programs in schools outside their home communities, as supported by Board policy, may be provided transportation without reference to distance units. Students residing within 800m from their designated school may be assessed for their ability to walk to school, with support, on an annual basis. The Board provides transportation for special needs students enrolled in the Summer Learning Program or Care and Treatment (CTCC) programs, also known as, Section 23 programs.

Students attending provincial or demonstration schools are transported by the Board. Provincial and demonstration schools are operated for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities, which may include attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Drivers must complete a Vulnerable Sector Check and participate in sensitivity training and other specialized training when dealing with students with special needs. The OCDSB actively supports and participates in any region-wide school vehicle safety committee or initiatives with a view to improving the uniformity of school bus safety procedures and to assisting school bus drivers to improve their management of students.





## Staff Development

### 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*

### Special education professional development plans are based on

- [The OCDSB Strategic Plan](#)
- [The Exit Outcomes](#)
- feedback from school-based special education staff, Learning Support Teacher (LST), Learning Resource Teacher (LRT), specialized class staff, and Educational Assistant (EA) through an on-going 'needs assessment'
- written and verbal feedback
- requests from school principals and special education teachers for school-based in-service around specific school needs (including teaching staff)
- feedback from Learning Support Services (LSS) staff
- requests from senior administration around in-service requests
- requirements as prescribed in policies and procedures

### Input from SEAC

- all recommendations for staff development are open for consideration
- staff consider input received at each SEAC meeting

### Staff Development priorities are established according to the following criteria

- changes in Ministry requirements
- direction from the Director's Executive Council (DEC)
- changes in Board policy and procedures
- system-level professional development focus
- perceived needs as determined by LSS staff
- requests from schools
- requests from staff



## Staff Development Budget

The LSS Department has spent the following on professional development. These figures are approximate. These figures do not reflect additional costs such as: travel, food, supplies etc.

<b>Release and Professional Development</b>	<b>Amount spent</b>
ACPOSB	\$ 50.00
ASD Pilot Release	\$ 1,818.49
ASIST	\$ 20,496.19
Association for Supervision and Curriculum	\$ 0.00
Assistive Technology	\$ 46,823.00
Autism Aspirations Presentation	\$ 2,352.70
Autism Awareness	\$ 4,695.24
Autism Connections - Release	\$ 594.72
Autism Workshops, Mentorship, Social Thinking Release	\$ 56,171.24
Behaviour Management Training	\$ 37,376.67
Blind /Low Vision	\$ 4,164.91
Bytown OPC	\$ 40.00
Canadian Mental Health	\$ 120.00
Canadian Vision Conference	\$ 850.00
Child/Youth Mental Health Program	\$ 900.00
Children/Youth Mental Health Conference	\$ 452.00
Children's Friendship Workshop	\$ 100.00
Collaborative Problem Solving - Tier 1	\$ 6,500.00
CPS	\$ 43,715.35
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	\$ 10,724.33
Empower Reading Program	\$ 143,705.12
Empower Release	\$ 40,500.53
Geneva Centre for Autism - Recordings/Webinars	\$ 844.00
IBM Conference	\$ 649.75
IEP Online (IOL)	\$ 83,595.00
ILLD Planning Session	\$ 3,530.45
LST Training (New and Returning)	\$ 17,851.03
<b>Release and Professional Development</b>	<b>Amount spent</b>



Meeting the Needs	\$ 1,050.00
Mental Health Release	\$ 526.04
NVCI training	\$ 7,797.00
Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis Conference	\$ 565.00
Ontario Association of School Board Chief Social	\$ 200.00
PEERS training	\$ 2,025.00
Performance Management Training	\$ 2,011.40
Speech/Language PD	\$ 408.23
Suicide to Hope Conference	\$ 600.00
York University	\$ 1,864.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 534,893.56</b>

## Staff Development Relative to Ministry Legislation and Ministry Policy on Special Education

While certain workshops are designed for specific employee groups, many workshops and programs are open to all employee groups.

### Training of Principals and Vice-principals

- mandatory intern program for newly appointed principals and vice-principals based on the Board's performance and selection criteria for principals and vice-principals
- professional learning at District Operations Meetings
- workshops organized for principals and vice-principals, e.g., Assistive Technology, IEP Online Training, Autism Spectrum Transition Planning, ABA, Learning For All and IEP development, IEP Online (IOL) training sessions

### New Teacher Induction Program

The Ministry of Education initiative ensures beginning teachers are matched with a teacher mentor as they join the teaching profession. Great Beginnings is the name of the OCDSB New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). Through the various components of Great Beginnings, new teachers are supported as they build knowledge, skills and self-confidence. New teachers are paired with an experienced teacher mentor who provides support by building relationships to create a collaborative, collegial environment in which new teachers feel supported both emotionally and professionally. They also participate in an extensive and differentiated professional development program designed to address the specific needs of these new professionals in the areas of classroom management, assessment and evaluation, teaching students with special education needs, and literacy and numeracy.



## Orientation

Teachers, vice-principals and principals new to the District are invited to participate in an orientation during late August. Among the items to be discussed with new academic staff are special education roles, expectations, and resources.

## Special Education Workshops for Teachers/Educational Assistants/Professional Support Services Personnel/Administration

The Learning Support Services Department is committed to ongoing professional development for all staff. Learning Support Teachers from all schools were presented with professional development from central staff during their LST Network meetings. During the 2017-18 school year professional development opportunities were limited due to occasional teacher and occasional staff shortages. This year, the following workshops were offered to OCDSB staff:

ABA in Action – Prompting, Reinforcement and Errorless Learning  
 Anxiety and Autism – Considerations for Supporting your Students  
 Anxiety, Stress and Autism – Considerations for Supporting your Students  
 ASD Specialized Program, Elementary and Secondary Sessions  
 ASD Resources Room Model – Best Practices and Conversation  
 ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)  
 ASIST 2  
 Behavior from a Communication Perspective, Part 2  
 Behaviour Intervention Program Professional Development for BIP Staff  
 Behaviour Management Systems Training (BMS)  
 Best Practices in Supporting Students with ASD  
 Communication Strategies for the Early Learner  
 EA Autism Trainings  
 ELIP – (Early Learning Intervention Program)  
 Empower – Comprehension and Vocabulary  
 Empower – Decoding and Spelling, Gr. 2 – 5  
 Empower – Decoding and Spelling, Gr. 6-8  
 Empower – Training Review Gr. 2-5  
 Exploring Autism – Primary/Junior  
 Exploring Autism – Intermediate/Senior  
 Exploring Autism - The Early Years  
 Exploring Autism – Part 2, Applying Your Knowledge  
 Geneva Centre E-Learning Modules  
 Google Galore  
 Guiding Cooperation through Reinforcement  
 Helping Students with High Functioning Autism Survive Middle and High School  
 Inclusion – Making it work for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing  
 LD-SIP Collaborative Learning and Program Monitoring



LD-SIP Kick off Meeting

LLD Assistive Technology Workshop  
Math LD Inquiry

Post-Secondary Transitions for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

RIRO – ECEs Only

RIRO- Teachers Only

Safetalk – (Suicide Alertness for Everyone), (Tell, Ask, Listen, Keepsafe)

Social Thinking and Intro to e-learning for ILLD

Social Thinking for LD-SIP Sites

Structured Teaching for Elementary Teachers

Structured Teaching for Teachers

Supporting Structured Teaching

The Autistic Brain

Three Strategies for Independence

Tools for Social Understanding

Training for New LSTs

Transitions for Students with ASD

VTRA (Violence/Threat Risk Assessment) Training

Working with Students with Visual Impairment

Teachers are also being supported by the Learning Support Consultants (LSCs). At present thirteen LSCs are available to answer questions regarding special education, assist with programming for students, present in-service and assist with assessment and coordination of services to special education students. In addition, the Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Team provides professional development and direct services assisting teachers with students on the ASD spectrum. The Behaviour Support Team provides similar services with regard to students with behaviour problems. The Itinerant ASD Teacher provides services with regards to autistic students and the Itinerant Learning Disabilities/Language Learning Disabilities Teacher provides services with regards to students with learning disabilities or language learning disabilities.

## Cost Sharing Arrangements

Some staff development is provided on a cost-sharing or partnership basis with other ministries or agencies.

The following are examples of such cost-sharing arrangements:

- Ministry of Child and Youth Services – Child and Youth Workers
- M.F. McHugh Education Centre (Care and Treatment Program)
- Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario – Connections Program with Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Algonquin College – early health screening for vision, hearing, height etc.
- Ministry of Education – Shared Solutions (Alternative Dispute Resolution)



- Ottawa Catholic School District (OCSB)

#### **Specific Board initiatives related to**

- Inclusive Safe and Caring Program
- Student Success
- Health/Lifestyle
- Bullying Prevention / Intervention programs, etc.
- Substance Abuse

The OCDSB continues to explore all opportunities for cost sharing with other agencies, ministries, and the community of Ottawa-Carleton.

#### **Examples are:**

- Success by Six - school board and community intervention initiative for young learners
- Roots of Empathy - focus is to develop skills of empathy in elementary school children by experiencing the relationship between a parent and infant
- Crossroads Children's Centre
- Rideauwood Addiction and Family Services
- Children's Aid Society of Ottawa

### **Communication of Professional Development**

In-service workshops are communicated to staff via the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board electronic messaging system and posted on our electronic registration system, ePLC. In some instances, invitations for training and workshops are sent to specific schools to reach a target audience.



## MINORITY REPORT

### Regarding Report 18-100 presented at OCTOBER SEAC 2018

Dana Somayaji  
October 14, 2018

#### SECTION A: Background

At the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of 10 October 2018, [Report 18-100 Update to the Elementary Gifted Review](#) was presented for discussion. This report focused on the Gifted Review Advisory Group<sup>1</sup>(GRAG) created by a Board Motion on 20 December 2016 which mandated as follows:

*Staff work with SEAC and an Advisory Group that would include SEAC representation to expand options to be presented to the public to improve the effectiveness of services for gifted students and to increase equity of access for under-represented groups.*

The report summarized GRAG's activities over the past 18 months, along with staff's 'Overview of the Deliverables'. The first of these 'deliverables' is the OCDSB Interest Academy, a non-mandatory, in-class 'Genius-Hour' type program guide which could run in 6-week cycles, and that is similar to other interest-based opportunities which have 'existed in our District for a number of years'.

The second 'deliverable' identified is the *OCDSB Guide to Supporting Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom*, a resource binder/webpage containing current OCDSB strategies, a 'Year at a Glance' guide, and links to resources and research related to Giftedness.

The report states as follows:

*Following the June 2018 meeting... communication was received from some of the community members on the Gifted Advisory Group. These members clearly expressed dissatisfaction with the work completed by staff. They stated that the deliverables were not an adequate reflection of the depth of ideas shared during the meetings of the Gifted Advisory Group.*

and continues:

*At this time, the focus of staffs work must shift from discussion at the Gifted Advisory Group level to implementation of the learning resources.*

concluding that:

*The OCDSB now has an endorsed framework for supporting all learners.*

**This report inadequately acknowledges the *significant* problems surrounding this group. It ignores multiple contributions *and options* presented by Trustee Boothby, Cathy Miedema, Dragos Popa and myself, Dana Somayaji. Furthermore, the non-collaborative staff 'deliverables' are severely lacking in regards to the motion's mandate.**

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<sup>1</sup>Note that this group has been referred to by many names, but as it was originally referred to as the 'Gifted Review Advisory Group' by Director Adams in March 2017, I shall henceforth refer to this group as 'GRAG'.



## SECTION B: Chronological Concerns

### JUNE 2017

On June 8, 2017 I responded, as requested, to the staff's draft version of [Report 17-053](#) Gifted Program Review Update, which was presented on 20 June 2017 at the Committee of the Whole.

My response ([Somayaji Response to Gifted Program Review Update Report 17-053](#)) identified significant concerns with the report, including the misuse of the 'Renzulli' model (who himself believed that gifted learners should learn elsewhere than their regular classroom), and noted the group's lack of real-world parameters. I concluded that 'this report positions the Advisory Group as working towards integration without any further discussion of competing models, which is unacceptable.'

Staff never responded to my concerns, aside from acknowledging a spelling error, and released the June Update without incorporating or acknowledging the input shared by SEAC Vice-Chair Michelle Campbell. She resigned from the group, and as a SEAC Member, on June 7th, 2017.

Report 17-053 insisted that:

*At this point, the group has not determined a new model to be recommended to the Board for gifted learners; however, currently it seems unnecessary to explore other options for program changes but rather to shift our focus on the development of a pilot program.*

So even though we had not fully explored options, staff wanted the group to *stop looking* and instead create a revised model for gifted program to be based on a pilot program *which they don't describe*.

The Gifted Review Advisory Group was now tasked to design a pilot **which would not be brought to the public** until its completion two years later.

*My concerns were never addressed, nor incorporated, into the report.*

### NOVEMBER 2017

Once the group resumed after the summer break, I made my concerns known again, but this time in person at the November 7 GRAG meeting. I reminded the group that our mandate was to create options to be presented to the public, not to create a pilot program. I reminded them we were asked in the May meeting IF, once a new program for gifted learners were developed, a pilot project *should be implemented* before rolling it out in the entire district.

We were not asked if the group should create a pilot project.

I also repeated my concerns that staff was focusing the group effort solely on in-class gifted supports, for the motion never mentions this constraint. After all, the motion was born out of concerns with staff's proposal to eliminate the Specialized Gifted Program in the lower grades without sufficient options.

Staff replied that we **will not discuss congregation** at any time in the group, and this included exploring options to expand access for underrepresented groups to the congregated program.

As I didn't understand how staff could change the mandate of the motion without Trustee approval, I began to reach out for guidance. I approached SEAC Trustees and OCASC with my concerns. Unfortunately as the GRAG update was not on the November SEAC Agenda, I wasn't able to bring my concerns directly to SEAC.

I then reached out to other Trustees, looking for guidance with my procedural concerns, until I had an extremely unsettling meeting with one Trustee. This Trustee questioned my education level and competency, insulted other Trustees, Trustee's children and OCDSB volunteer's children, questioned the ability of children to be identified as gifted at age 5, and when I replied that my daughter was reading novels at 4, questioned my socio-economic status. I left shaken and in fear that this Trustee would seek retribution if I proceeded with the group.

*The next day I resigned from the Gifted Review Advisory Group.*



## DECEMBER 2017

A week later I asked SEAC Chair Kirwan if I could continue on with the work, as an idea came to me on how to possibly expand access to the gifted program to under-represented groups. I realized that I couldn't resign from the group without at least trying to put forth an option.

He allowed my return, and on Dec 6, 2017 at the end of the GRAG meeting, I distributed '[Option B Proposal](#)', which suggested creating an Alternative Program stream designed to meet the needs of high academic achievers.

*This proposal was never discussed.*

## MARCH 2018

Staff asked GRAG to review the three-page 'Draft Pilot Gifted Report' that was slated for the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting, which was to be held on April 17, 2018.

I responded with many questions and concerns.

*My feedback was never discussed or acknowledged.*

## APRIL 2018

Staff requested Trustee Boothby, Cathy Miedema, Dragos Popa and myself to expand on staff's pilot project.

The foundation of our [expanded proposal](#) was based on findings in the [OCDSB Gifted Program Review Final Report](#). We focused on the identified needs presented in the report and proposed a range of approaches and activities to address these needs. We presented multiple option for consideration, along with 'key measurements of success' for each objective. We invested considerable effort to ensure the expand the proposal incorporated staff's plan.

*This expanded proposal was never discussed.*

## JUNE 2018

After nearly two months of no communication from staff regarding the expanded proposal, staff sent their proposed *OCDSB Interest Academy* and *OCDSB Guide to Supporting Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom* to the group on June 7, insisting that the next meeting would be June 11 with no consideration of member's schedule. This gave us **2 business days** to review their materials and prepare our response.

The vast majority of the meeting focused on staff's presentation, with no discussion of the expanded proposal and there was limited time to respond. Although I attempted multiple times to contribute to the discussion, I was cut off or ignored.

*I was not given an opportunity to speak at this meeting.*

## AUGUST 2018: Letter of Complaint

After an additional two months of staff silence, Trustee Boothby, Cathy Miedema, Dragos Popa and myself sent a joint [letter of complaint](#) to Director Adams and the Gifted Review Advisory Group which detailed staff's appalling lack of response pertaining to the expanded proposal. It identified the disturbing lack of communication and collaboration, and we offered to meet again in August or September 2018 to discuss these outstanding issues.

*There has been no response to this letter to date.*

## OCTOBER 2018

Following June's GRAG meeting, the first correspondence from staff arrived on October 5, 2018 - **119 days later**. This email contained only Report 18-100 and its four appendixes. As this was Thanksgiving Friday, this left an insufficient **2.5 business days** for SEAC members to respond accordingly, as SEAC was on October 10, 2018.

## SECTION C: *Prima facie* violation of OCDSB Complaint Policy and Procedure

It is my understanding that staff are required to respond to a letter of complaint within a specified amount of time.

[OCDSB Board Policy P.129.GOV](#) Complaint Resolution Process Policy 4.4(c) states that all complaints are to be acted upon promptly and no later than two working weeks from the date of the complaint, with the goal of actually resolving the complaint within 30 days.

Our complaint letter was ignored by staff. We received no response. We received no meaningful dialogue. We received nothing. **This is a clear violation of staff's own Procedure and Principles.**

## SECTION D: Concerns with the Report 'Deliverables'

It is my position that the *OCDSB Interest Academy*:

- would not be available to all in-class gifted learners, as it would not be made mandatory in every classroom
- already exists in the Board in various forms, so this is not a new option
- does not address the gifted child's need for academic peers; and
- provides *even less* support for gifted learners than staff's recommendations presented in [OCDSB Oct 2016 Report 16-120](#).

Furthermore, the *OCDSB Guide to Supporting Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom* is a list of all the supports *already* available to teachers.

There are no indications how either of these 'deliverables' could be monitored to determine if they actually help improve services in the gifted classroom, nor does the report clearly identify how they help to increase equity of access to the gifted program for under-represented groups.

As options for the Specialized (Congregated) Gifted Program *weren't allowed to be considered or discussed*, these recommendations falls incredibly short of what was mandated in the founding motion.

## SECTION E: Summary of Concerns

For all of the above reasons, I must reject Report No. 18-100 in its entirety.

Report 18-100 *Update to the Elementary Gifted Review* ignores virtually all of Trustee Boothby's, Cathy Miedema's, Dragos Popa's and my significant concerns, recommendations, and contributions.

Most significantly, this report:

- fails to provide a full chronology of GRAG's efforts
- fails to address the significant concerns outlined in *Somayaji Response to Gifted Program Review Update Report 17-053*, as well as concerns outlined in the letter of complaint dated August 21, 2018
- omits two alternative proposals presented to the group, both of which were never discussed at the Gifted Review Advisory Group
- fails to mention that group members only received the Report 18-100 on Friday Oct 5, 2018, **only two and half business days** before its public discussion at SEAC (Thanksgiving weekend at that); and
- omits the fact that the Report was the *first communication from staff to the Group since June 2018*.

## SECTION F: Conclusion

On a personal note, this 18-month process has consumed **at least** 200 hours of my time. Staff and the experts in the group, and to an extent Trustee Boothby, were all paid for their time; Cathy Miedema, Dragos Popa, and I were not.

As a Trustee pointed out, I do not have a Masters in Education. But I have read every single resource that staff has shared with the group, including many of Joseph Renzulli works, numerous pedagogical articles relating to giftedness, the Gifted Program Review Final Report, and the numerous sources contained within.

I have done every 'homework assignment' assigned by Superintendent Grigoriev, including answering list after list of complex questions, to the best of my ability.

I had faith that if I was an active participant that staff would at least *acknowledge* my contributions and we could engage in a healthy discussion. Instead, I have been ignored and silenced. This process has been extremely troubling for multiple reasons, and I cannot let this issue drop without OCDSB staff recognizing the incredible difficulties it has laid on parent volunteers. There are many 'learning-lessons' here, and I hope staff can identify them so trust can be re-established.

I am passionate about this issues as I have seen the profound effects of the Specialized Gifted Program in many children's lives. But please know that I carry this same passion for *all* children in the school board - and *especially* for our Special Education students.

I put this minority report forward in hopes that no other community member will ever endure the amount of disrespect and contempt that I have during a 'consultation' such as this, and with the hope that OCDSB staff will treat its volunteers better in the future.

Thank you,

Dana Somayaji





## MEMORANDUM

**Memo No. 18-129**

**TO:** Trustees  
Student Trustees

**FROM:** Jennifer Adams, Director of Education  
Peter Symmonds, Superintendent of Learning Support Services

**DATE:** 26 October 2018

**RE:** **Response to Notice of Motion re: Tiered Interventions for Elementary Students with Giftedness**

A number of questions relating to tiered intervention, elementary gifted programming and resource allocation were raised at the 16 October 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting. The Committee passed a motion, but asked staff to provide clarification prior to the motion being considered at the Board meeting of 30 October 2018. A summary of the specific questions and answers is detailed below. Over the past two weeks, staff has reflected on the concerns and questions raised by the community and trustees. Staff is very concerned about a motion which privileges one exceptionality over all others. However, staff also recognizes the concerns raised and believe there are three things that could be done to address these issues:

1. Primary Gifted Specialized Program Classes

The Primary Gifted Specialized Program Class is currently located at one site - Roch Carrier Elementary School. Roch Carrier is a K-6 school which currently offers a Primary Gifted Program Class and a Gifted Program Junior Class. As the number of students in the primary program has declined, there has been confusion about how to operationalize the program with a small number of students in grades one and two. Operational changes could be implemented to reduce the confusion and frustration and ensure access to grade one and two students should this level of support be required. Going forward, staff will clarify that the program at Roch Carrier includes:

- Gifted Specialized Program Classes for students in grades 1-6 (Primary/Junior)

This ensures the program offering for students at all grade levels (1-6); the actual number of classes and class configurations will be determined by the students enrolled in the program. For example, one year the primary program could be one class of students in grades 1-3 and one class of students in grades 4-6;

another year it could be three classes (1/2; 3/4; 5/6); another year it could be one class of grades 1-4 and one class of grades 5/6. This approach ensures the program availability but allows for operational flexibility based on students enrolled in each grade. The program criteria would remain the same.

2. Improved messaging within the District

In the course of the discussions on this topic, it has become clear that there is a need for improved messaging to staff throughout the District. This includes more clarification about the use of tiered interventions; the process for placement of students in a specialized program class; and our commitment to the Gifted program. The feedback received indicates that the decline in enrolment in the elementary gifted program classes may in part be affected by a lack of clarity by staff about the availability of gifted specialized program class offerings, specifically for students in grades one and two, and the viability of these classes. As a system we need to ensure that all staff are aware of the full range of supports for gifted students and that our schools are equipped to support gifted learners in the regular classroom and in specialized program classes.

3. Improved messaging to parents

The need for improved messaging to parents is twofold; there is a need for improved messaging about tiered intervention and programming for gifted students generally so that all parents are aware of the supports and resources available for gifted learners. In addition, the need for improved communication with parents of students who are being supported through tiered intervention and/or specialized class placement. This is an area that will require some work centrally and work at the school level to ensure parents are getting timely feedback.

The motion approved at Committee presents three concerns; it treats one exceptionality differently from all others; the language in the first clause is unclear in terms of how the program access is to be managed; and it directs a broad based policy review which may not be warranted and will require considerable time which could otherwise be spent on improving program delivery.

Staff does not recommend treating one exceptionality differently than others. The tiered approach to intervention, universal design for learning, and differentiated instruction are evidence-based approaches to supporting all learners, including those with giftedness. Staff believe that Tier 3 supports and the specialized program class model should be available to serve students requiring the highest level of support and whose needs cannot be met in the regular classrooms with accommodations and modifications.

The first clause of the motion incorporates language which is based on an older version of the criteria sheet and is not current practice. It seeks to suspend the use of tiered intervention, suggests that students be granted access to the program based on “wanting access” plus criteria, but also maintains the need for an IPRC. Staff is concerned that this is unclear and creates expectations in the community that cannot be

achieved operationally. Additionally, psychology staff in Learning Support Services has expressed concern that the implementation of the motion as currently worded may put them in conflict with the professional obligations of their college.

The motion also directs a review of the Board's Special Education Policy. The undertaking of a comprehensive policy review has significant workload implications and pedagogically, tiered interventions are a recognized standard of practice. Staff is of the opinion that the concerns raised about tiered intervention, learning supports and program access for gifted students can be addressed through the strategies noted above. The undertaking of a comprehensive policy review may actually impede progress.

### **Summary of Detailed Questions Raised by Committee and Parents**

The following information is provided to the Board in response to the questions raised:

#### **1. What can be done to correct the mixed messaging parents are receiving regarding tiered interventions?**

In the course of the Gifted discussion, it has become clear that there is confusion about tiered intervention and a need for additional communication and clarification within the District and with the parent community. This includes more information about the tiered approach to intervention, information about access to specialized program classes, and there is also a need to address the delays some families are experiencing in ensuring suitable supports are in place for their children. For families receiving supports, there is a need for consistent communication with parents that clearly articulate both the interventions in place and their child's performance as a result of those interventions.

Clarification regarding messaging is noted as an action item above.

In addition, enhancements to the parent portal of the District website will also allow parents direct access to resource information that will help to explain the kinds of supports that might be expected to support their child in the regular classroom (see Question #8).

#### **2. Why would we treat the gifted exceptionality differently from other exceptionalities and what are the resource implications?**

Staff does not recommend treating one exceptionality differently than others. The tiered approach to intervention, universal design for learning, and differentiated instruction are evidence-based approaches to supporting all learners, including those with giftedness. Staff believe that Tier 3 supports and the specialized program class model should be available to serve students requiring the highest level of support and whose needs cannot be met in the regular classrooms with accommodations and modifications.

In terms of resource implications, the most significant implication is for transportation costs. Caution should be exercised in interpreting these estimates due to the variability

of the assumptions on which they are made (e.g., number of students requiring transportation, length of trips, etc.). The estimates for transportation implications are presented in Appendix A. Based on the assumption of approximately 700 students placed in specialized program classes for giftedness, the District would have to reallocate approximately \$800,000 from other programs to accommodate an increased expenditure for transportation.

In addition, OSTA has determined that 80% of elementary gifted students are transported on small vehicles - vans and cars. Due to the current driver shortage, OSTA has indicated that they would not have the capacity to accommodate a significant increase in the number of elementary students requiring small vehicle transportation.

**3. What is the total number of elementary gifted specialized program classes and how has that number changed over time?**

There are currently 20 specialized program classes (2018-2019) for students with giftedness in grades 1 to 8. This represents a reduction of 10 classes since 2013-2014. Additional information is provided in Appendix B.

**4. How many students in grades 1-4 meet the cognitive criteria for giftedness?**

Currently, 52 students are identified with giftedness through the IPRC process between grades 1 and 4 across the District. It should be noted that not all of these students would meet the profoundly gifted (99.6<sup>th</sup> percentile) criteria for placement into a specialized program class.

**5. What is the total number of elementary students identified with giftedness and where are they being served?**

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
<b>Identified Gifted</b>	1,096	1,070	985	850	675
<b>Specialized Program Class</b>	692	677	633	543	416
<b>Regular Program</b>	404	393	352	307	259

**6. What are the regulatory requirements for Identification, Placement, and Review Committees and is the motion in compliance with the legislation?**

Identification, Placement and Review Committees (IPRC) are set out through Ontario Regulation 181/98. The role of the IPRC is to:



- determine whether the student is, or is not, exceptional;
- identify a specific exceptionality, or exceptionalities, if applicable;
- identify the areas of strength and areas of need of the student;
- recommend an appropriate placement in a program designed to meet the identified needs of the student; or
- serve as an annual review for students with special education needs

The regulation stipulates that the committee must consider all information it considers relevant (e.g., education assessment, with consent a psychological assessment or medical information, parent input, etc.). This would also include an indication of how the child is performing in the regular classroom to assist in determining strengths and needs and whether a specialized program class would better meet the needs of the student. This information is also reviewed by the school's multi-disciplinary team when considering a referral to a specialized program class.

It is the opinion of staff that in the absence of an understanding of the supports implemented in the regular class placement, it is inappropriate to determine a student's strengths and needs. Moreover, it would be impossible to determine without these details, if a regular class placement would or can meet their needs or if the student's needs could better be met in a specialized class placement.

#### **7. What is the criteria for admission into the gifted specialized program class?**

The criteria for the gifted specialized program class is attached in Appendix C.

#### **8. Why was the criteria for admission into the gifted specialized program class changed?**

Criteria for all specialized program class placements are reviewed and amended annually. Report No. 15-029 *Specialized Programs Criteria Sheet Update (Revised)* provides some background information. Please note that the criteria sheets in that report have subsequently been amended and updated to reflect best practice and current understanding of supports for students. Prior to 2014, the criteria sheets for each exceptionality had been reviewed separately and, as a result, the criteria sheets varied considerably with several inconsistencies across the exceptionalities. In addition, significant changes to the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), the release of Learning for All (2013), and updates to the assessment materials (i.e., release of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-V) further necessitated changes to the criteria sheets.

#### **9. Where can parents find information regarding supports for gifted students?**

The resource “Special Education Service Delivery Model in the OCDSB: A Guide for Parents Of Students With Giftedness” can be found at:

<https://ocdsb.ca/cms/One.aspx?portalId=55478&pageId=213809>

Further, with the addition of the OCDSB Guide for Supporting Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom and the OCDSB Interest Guide, parents and educators would have additional resources to enhance their understanding of and ability to meet the needs of all learners, including those with giftedness.

**10. Staff comment regarding the request to produce an annual report, beginning no later than the end of May 2019, detailing the number of applications and the number of children receiving placements in all congregated programs at both the elementary and secondary level. The report shall also include the details on any waitlist for all congregated programs, by Geographic Zone.**

It would be exceptionally challenging to present accurate data prior to the end of the school year. Offers for placements occur on an ongoing basis and often right to the end of June each year. The most accurate snapshot of data regarding the outcomes of the spring referral and placement process would be the following October.

The special education policy and elementary program framework, which speaks to the use of tiered intervention has been included as Appendix D and E, respectively.

Please contact Peter Symmonds, Superintendent of Learning Support Services at 613-596-8211 ext. 8254 if you should have any questions.

Attach.

cc     Senior Staff  
        Manager Board Services  
        Corporate Records

## Elementary Gifted Specialized Program Class Transportation

Estimated Transportation Costs based on Enrolment	
2013-2014	\$1,911,000 plus HST
<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>\$1,136,000 plus HST</b>

Transportation mode*	
Small vehicle	80%
Presto pass	13% (intermediate only)
walking	7%

\*reflective of 2018-2019 requirements



	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>
<b>Number of Gifted Specialized Program Classes (Elementary)</b>	30	30	30	30*	23
<b>Enrolment</b>	692	677	633	543	416

\*In 2016-2017, an additional overlay specialized program class for gifted was approved to minimize disruptions as Cedarview M.S. shifted from a grades 6 to 8 model to a grades 7-8 model.



## Criteria for Specialized Gifted Program

The Specialized Gifted Program is for a student who has been identified as gifted and whose needs may be better met in a specialized setting. Evidence from targeted Tier 1, 2 and 3 school-based interventions suggest that the student would benefit from a congregated intensive specialized program. The program is in English only for grades 1 through 4. French immersion gifted or English gifted (with core French) is available from grades 5 through 12.

Evidence is required that interventions at Tier 1, 2 and 3 have been applied over time based on the learning needs of the student. Based on evidence from these interventions, it is expected that the student will benefit from a specialized gifted program at this time.

<b>Designation:</b>	Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Secondary
<b>Class Size:</b>	Grades 1-3; up to 20 students Grades 4-8; up to 25 students
<b>Resources:</b>	One teacher with special education qualifications

### Referral Criteria:

#### **Cognitive Profile (all grade levels):**

- when composite scores differ by 23 standard score points or more, a determination will be made as to whether the specialized gifted program will provide the best support to the student, based on all information provided

#### **Primary (grades 1-4):**

- assessed on the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT-7 for 2017-2018 school year or previous CCAT as applicable) with scores at the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile on two of the three scales and at least the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile on the third scale, followed by consultation with psychologist or psychological associate; **OR**
- identified as having a gifted profile in current psychological report based on individual assessment results from the WPPSI-IV, WISC-V or Stanford-Binet yielding a Full Scale (FSIQ) score or General Ability Index (GAI) score at least at the 99.6<sup>th</sup> percentile

#### **Junior/Intermediate (grades 5-8):**

- CCAT-7 (for 2017-2018, or previous version accepted prior to 2015-2016) with scores at the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile in two of the three scales and at least 90<sup>th</sup> percentile on the third; **OR**
- WISC-V or Stanford-Binet FSIQ and/or GAI score at least at the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile

#### **Secondary (grades 9-12):**

- student coming from OCDSB specialized gifted class in grade 8 (no further assessment required)

### **Academic Profile**

- individual achievement assessment results in the domains of reading comprehension and math problem solving (e.g., WIAT-III preferred) to determine learning profile

### **Social/Behavioural Profile**

- may demonstrate a range of emotional, social and/or behavioural responses (e.g., disengagement, frustration, low self-esteem, anxiety, withdrawal, inattention, distractibility) and/or a learning style that precludes effective learning in the community school

### **Required Documentation**

- psychological report or CCAT;
- all psychological assessments must be completed within the last 2 years and 11 months or verification from an OCDSB school psychologist or psychological associate that an assessment completed more than 2 years and 11 months ago continues to be valid;
- educational assessment within the last 12 months (reading and math problem solving composites are sufficient, include writing sample demonstrating the student written expression skills);
- evidence is required that interventions at Tier 1, 2, and 3 have not resulted in student having acquired prosocial developmentally appropriate skills and/or have not resulted in progress over time;
- Learning Support Services referral form detailing interventions at Tier 1, 2 and 3 to address the challenges and rationale as to why student needs cannot be addressed in the community school

### **Additional Documentation (if available)**

- current report card or preschool report;
- current IEP;
- additional assessment reports (most recent medical, speech-language, IBI occupational/physiotherapy, social work);
- list of community agencies involved with student (e.g., Crossroads Home Program, etc.);
- Parent questionnaire;
- anecdotal report (list behavioural, academic and social challenges; include a list of interventions);

**The student's progress will be monitored regularly and reviewed through the annual IPRC process to ensure appropriate placement to support student learning needs.**






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## POLICY P.096.SES

**TITLE: SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

**Date issued: August 1998**

**Revised: 28 May 2013**

**Authorization: 28 May 2013**

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### 1.0 OBJECTIVE

To provide for the education of students with special education needs.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this Policy:

- 2.1 **Accommodation** means a system of special teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment that help a student learn and demonstrate learning.
- 2.2 **Assessment** means the process of gathering, from a variety of sources, information that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving curriculum expectations in a subject or course.
- 2.3 **Differentiated Instruction** means an approach to instruction designed to maximize growth by considering the needs of each student at his or her current stage of development and offering that student a learning experience which responds to his or her individual needs.
- 2.4 **District** means the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.
- 2.5 **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** means a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student based on a thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs and shall be used as both a document and as an accountability tool.
- 2.6 **Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC)** means the committee set up by the school board to consider the exceptionalities of students referred to them.

- 2.7 **Modification** means changes made to age-appropriate grade-level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs.
- 2.8 **Student with Special Needs** means a student who requires special education services, including any student who has been formally identified as exceptional by the IPRC process as well as students who may not have been formally identified but who may require services including, but not limited to, modified programs or accommodations.

### 3.0 POLICY

#### 3.1 Policy Statement

The District believes every student is able to learn and to benefit from learning, and upholds the right of each student with special needs to an instructional program appropriate to that student's needs which enables him or her to achieve to the best of his or her ability. The term students with special needs includes all students who are receiving special education programs and services, whether or not they have been identified as exceptional.

#### 3.2 Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles shall govern the education of students with special needs:

- a) promoting early identification and intervention;
- b) ensuring a focus on the whole child;
- c) providing a range of services for the student, subject to available resources;
- d) ensuring every reasonable attempt is made to support participation by the student in school activities;
- e) emphasizing the value and importance of communication and consultation with the parents/guardians of children with special needs;
- f) recognizing the necessity for the provision of support for staff to develop the necessary skills and teaching strategies to work with students with special needs; and
- g) ensuring the accommodation of students with special needs to the point of undue hardship for the District.

### 3.3 Key Learning Supports

The special education policy shall be achieved through the delivery of a variety of learning supports including, but not limited to:

- a) a range of appropriate assessments accompanied by timely tiered interventions and professional strategies;
- b) a continuum of placement options;
- c) equitable application of the specialized class location model using geographically defined catchment areas and designated schools to ensure fair access to specialized programs;
- d) appropriate student/teacher ratios as governed by the *Education Act*;
- e) Individual Education Plans (IEPs) subject to regular review and outcome-based evaluation;
- f) a clearly communicated IPRC process, with consistent procedures;
- g) integration opportunities within the student's school;
- h) multi-disciplinary professional supports for students with special education needs;
- i) timely access as required to appropriate equipment and materials; and
- j) timely access to information for parents about programs and services.

### 3.4 Enrolment and Placement

As required under the *Education Act*, the District will provide a Special Education Program for the enrolment and placement of each student with special needs.

### 3.5 Special Education Report

As required under the *Education Act*, the Special Education report of the OCDSB shall be reviewed annually by SEAC and the Board and shall be made readily accessible on the District website.

## 4.0 **SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES**

### 4.1 Programs and Support Services for Students with Special Needs

- a) The District shall ensure that the Ministry of Education Curriculum Guidelines are the basis for Special Education Programs. The special needs of each student can be accommodated by using a

variety of teaching methods , support personnel, resources, equipment and special materials.

#### 4.2 Service Delivery

- a) The Special Education service delivery of the District is based on a continuum of placement options ranging from non-specialized classes with special education resource support to specialized classes and schools where needs dictate. Specialized class locations shall be based on geographically defined catchment areas and designated schools. Special Education Programs and Services and school catchment areas will be reviewed regularly in consultation with various stakeholders.
- b) The special needs of each student should be met by accommodations, modifications, and/or alternative expectations, including, but not limited to, a variety of teaching methods, and/or special equipment including, but not limited to, adaptive technology, and appropriately trained specialized personnel.

#### 4.3 Identification, Assessment, Accommodation

- a) Students who may have special needs will be identified and assessed regularly and as appropriate. Assessments shall be undertaken in consultation with parents/guardians, after initial written consent has been received.
- b) Accommodations and modifications for the purposes of academic assessment/evaluation should be considered in accordance with District and Ministry policy relevant to assessment, evaluation, and reporting of student achievement (P.083.CUR and PR.584.CUR) to account for the requirements for assessments administered at beyond the District level (EQAO, PISA etc.).
- c) The principal is responsible for ensuring that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed, implemented and updated in alignment with OCDSB reporting periods where:
  - i) a student has been formally identified as exceptional by an IPRC
  - ii) a student has not been formally identified but requires an ongoing special education program and/or services, including modified or alternative learning expectations and/or accommodations,
- d) The IEP shall be developed in partnership with parents/guardians and shall include SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely).

- e) The IEP involves the following five phases:
  - i) Gather information about the student;
  - ii) Set the direction for the student;
  - iii) Develop the IEP as it relates to the student's special education program and services;
  - iv) Implement the IEP; and
  - v) Review and update the IEP.
- f) Students with special needs may be referred to an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) set up by the District. The principal may, on written notice to a parent of a student, and shall, at the written request of a parent, refer a student to the District IPRC.
- g) Once the decision of the IPRC is received, the principal and superintendent of shall make every effort to work with the parent/guardian to resolve any concerns about the decision. In the event of a disagreement about the IPRC decision, the process for appeal outlined in P.117.SES Special Education Appeal Board Policy shall be followed.
- h) Students identified as exceptional must be provided with appropriate special programs and/or services designed to build on their strengths and meet their needs.
- i) The District shall ensure a process for appropriate access to special education programs. The process will be transparent, consistent, and equitable, and subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).
- j) The District shall ensure regular opportunities are provided for the training and development of staff to support students with special needs. This may include training in the areas of instructional practice, accommodations, academic, socio-emotional and cultural sensitivity.

#### 4.4 Communication

The District is committed to communicating clearly and regularly with parents/guardians of students with special needs and will do so on matters including:

- a) the full range of services available;
- b) the IPRC process, including the appeals process;
- c) implementation practice and progress of IEPs; and

- d) Ministry guidelines for the delivery of Special Education Programs.

#### 4.5 Performance Measures

- a) The Board is committed to developing and maintaining special education programs and services that are based on best practice models, including evidence based data, ongoing assessment and measurement of objectives. These will be reviewed on a cyclical basis, to ensure that they remain effective and are current with evidence-based research findings.
- b) The District will continue to develop and will maintain Quality Program Indicators to help guide the implementation of special education programs and services in a consistent manner.

#### 4.6 Transportation

- a) The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, through its agent for transportation services, the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority, (OSTA) accepts responsibility for appropriate home-to-school transportation for exceptional students who meet the criteria set out in OCDSB Student Transportation Policy P.068.TRA.
- b) Under the authority of *The Education Act*, the Board, through its agent for transportation services, the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority, agrees to provide transportation for Ottawa-Carleton District School Board students attending Provincial and Demonstration Schools.

## 5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

*The Education Act, Ontario*

R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 298/Reg. 306

Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils, O.R. 181/98

Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools

OCDSB *Special Education Plan*

The Individual Education Plan (IEP): A Resource Guide

Board Policy P.083.CUR: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting of Student Achievement

Board Policy P.058.HS: Occupational Health and Safety

Board Policy P.068.TRA: Student Transportation

Board Policy P.032.SCO: Safe Schools

Board Policy P.125.SCO: Board Code of Conduct

Board Policy P.117.SES: SEAB

Board Procedure PR.556.TRA: Student Transportation




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## POLICY P.139.CUR

### TITLE: CHANGES TO PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM DELIVERY STRUCTURES AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Date issued: 31 January 2017

Last revised:

Authorization: Board: (31 January 2017)

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## 1.0 OBJECTIVE

To ensure that programs and program delivery structures at OCDSB elementary schools are clearly documented and managed in such a way as to provide programs to meet the needs of students across the district at large, within the context of the *Elementary School Program Framework*.

## 2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Specialized programs** means enhanced programs which are offered to students based on identified criteria of need.
- 2.2 **Equity of access** to programming means the practical considerations of program delivery such as location, site capacity, etc.
- 2.3 **Equity of opportunity** means the philosophical ideal of fairness for all as reflected in educational programs and services that are designed for all students.
- 2.4 **Program delivery structure change** means a significant alteration in the way program is delivered which impacts on the enrolment of other schools.

## 3.0 POLICY

- 3.1 The Board supports offering equity of access and opportunity to programs in the District for all of its students.
- 3.2 The Board's model for elementary school program delivery is the designated community school model which seeks to provide programming options for elementary school students in their designated school, as close as possible to their home community.
- 3.3 Every elementary school will have a defined geographic attendance boundary that the school serves. The geographic boundaries may differ by program.

- 3.4 Changes of program and program delivery structures may be initiated either at the school level by the principal or centrally by a superintendent. When changes are initiated that could impact special education programs or program delivery structures, the superintendent responsible for special education shall be consulted. Consultation regarding implementation at a particular school will occur with the school council and the student council.
- 3.5 The Board shall approve the introduction of, changes to, and/or elimination of:
- a) Elementary program delivery structures (i.e. English, Alternative, Middle French Immersion, Early French Immersion) at a single school or more broadly;
  - b) Specialized program delivery structure models that have district wide impact (English as a second language, specialized special education programs); and/or
  - c) any changes that can reasonably be expected to have a significant effect on school enrolment.
- 3.6 Admission to specialized programs may be based on admission criteria, which shall be common to all sites offering the same program, as approved by the Superintendent of Instruction and/or the appropriate central Superintendent.
- 3.7 Transportation to elementary schools is provided as per Ottawa Student Transportation Authority transportation policy.
- 3.8 The Director of Education is authorized to issue such procedures as may be necessary to implement this policy.

## **4.0 APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Elementary School Program Framework, 31 January 2017

## **5.0 REFERENCES**

*The Education Act*, Ontario, 2000

Board Policy P.077.PLG: Designated Schools/Student Transfers

Board Procedure PR.568.PLG: Designated Schools/Student Transfers - Elementary

Board Procedure PR.569.PLG: Designated Schools/Student Transfers - Secondary

Board Procedure PR.629.CUR: Changes to Programs and Program Delivery Structures at Secondary Schools



## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAM FRAMEWORK**

The Elementary School Program Framework provides the framework for schools and program delivery models to ensure optimal learning environments for students in elementary programs.

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The Elementary School Program Framework provides a structural model for elementary programming in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.
- 1.2. The OCDSB will offer a range of programs to meet the needs of students across the District. All elementary programs include instruction in English and French as a Second Language.
- 1.3. This framework will guide decision making on issues related to elementary programming, including the number of programs offered at each elementary site, and placement of specialized programs. Decisions using the framework will reflect the best educational research practices and align with current Ministry of Education curriculum policy documents.

### **2.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 The District's model for elementary school program delivery is a designated community school model which seeks to provide programming options for elementary school students in their designated school as close as possible to their home community.
- 2.2 The Elementary School Program Framework:
  - a. Seeks to ensure the provision of optimal learning environments for all elementary students and support student success through a range of program offerings;
  - b. ensures equitable access to programs for students throughout the school District;
  - c. recognizes the importance of minimizing transitions for students during their school years; and
  - d. recognizes that program viability and sustainability are important factors in establishing and/or modifying elementary school programs to ensure that elementary students have access to quality program offerings delivered in a fiscally responsible manner.
- 2.3 The Board acknowledges a number of core characteristics (goal-oriented, innovative/creative, collaborative, globally aware, and resilient) and skills (ethical decision-makers, digitally fluent, academically diverse, effective communicators, and critical thinkers) as critical components of all student learning.
- 2.4 The Board recognizes the impact of socio-economics on student learning and well-being and the importance of differentiated resources in ensuring equitable outcomes for students in the District."

### 3.0 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

#### 3.1 School Configuration Models

The elementary school configuration model will be either kindergarten-grade 6 (K-6) or kindergarten-grade 8 (K-8) in alignment with a secondary school configuration model of grades 7-12 or grades 9-12 school organizations. The school configuration model will be implemented over time as the district considers accommodation reviews.

#### 3.2 Number of Programs in Schools

The District offers elementary programs in:

- Single Track Sites (1 program only; e.g., English with Core French);
- Dual Track Sites (2 programs; e.g., English with Core French and Middle French Immersion);
- Triple Track Sites (3 programs; English with Core French, Middle French Immersion, and Early French Immersion).

The District recognizes the preference for multi-track schools wherever practical in reducing transitions and supporting the community school model. It is important that enrolment ensure adequate flexibility for student placement and allow for teacher collaboration.

#### 3.3 School Size

The optimal number of students in any elementary school may vary depending on the number and nature of District and specialized programs located in that school, the location of the school or offerings dependent on the needs of the school's student population. The District is committed to providing a range of program options within local communities for all students.

#### 3.4 Factors in Determining School Size and Number of Program

The District is committed to providing rich learning environments with healthy and sustainable programs. There are many factors that impact decision-making related to school size and the number of programs offered at a school. These factors include, but are not limited to: community school model considerations, equity, transportation, student transitions, District boundaries, population changes, enrolment; enrolment capacity; utilization rate; size of school building; number of programs currently offered; location of the school; the impact of program offerings on other schools and programs; program demand; community interest; and resource allocation.

#### 3.5 Full-Day Kindergarten

The District offers a two-year, full-day, bilingual kindergarten program provided by a team consisting of teachers and early childhood educators. Students in kindergarten receive instruction in both English and French (50/50). The program focuses on play-based inquiry and includes four key components or frames: belonging and contributing; self-regulation and well-being; demonstrating literacy and mathematics behaviours; and, problem solving and innovating.

#### 3.6 Elementary Program Options

The District has a rich offering of programs. Beginning in grade one, students have access to four English language elementary programs incorporating French as a Second Language:

- a. English Program with Core French (Grades 1-8)  
Students in the elementary English Program receive instruction in the English language in all subject areas as well as instruction in French through Core French (40 minutes daily).
- b. Early French Immersion (Grades 1-8)  
Students in the Early French Immersion Program receive instruction in both English and French. In grade 1, students receive 80 percent of instruction in French. In grades 2-6, students receive 60 percent of instruction in French. In grades 7-8, students receive 50 percent of instruction in French.
- c. Middle French Immersion (Grades 4-8)  
Students in the Middle French Immersion Program receive instruction in both French and English. In grades 4-6, students receive 66 percent of instruction in French and in grades 7-8, students receive 50 percent of instruction in French.
- d. Alternative Program with Core French (Grades 1-8)  
Students in the Alternative Program receive instruction in English in all subject areas as well as instruction in French through Core French (40 minutes daily). The program is founded on the following tenets: cooperative and non-competitive environments; innovative and differentiated approaches to teaching and learning; differentiated assessment and evaluation; child-centred and directed approaches to learning; multi-age groupings; integrated curriculum; and, extensive family and community involvement.

The Alternative program is offered in a number of designated, single track sites across the District and students access the program based on their geographic boundary.

### 3.7 Special Education Programs

The District offers a continuum of support through a tiered intervention model ranging from the regular classroom with special education resource support to specialized classes and schools. Students are offered placements according to established criteria. Specialized class locations are based on a geographic model. More detail about special education delivery is outlined in P.096.SES.

### 3.8 Specialized Programs English as a Second Language/ English Literacy Development

Specialized services and supports are provided to students identified as English as a Second Language (ESL) using the Steps to Language Proficiency (STEP) assessment. Students identified as English Language Learners and as having limited prior schooling may receive supports and interventions in a regular classroom or in an English Literacy Development (ELD) congregated class in the intermediate division.





## SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

**Wednesday, October 10, 2018, 7:00 pm**  
**Trustees' Committee Room**  
**133 Greenbank Road**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**

**Members:** Dragos Popa (Association for Bright Children of Ontario), Samantha Banning (Autism Ontario, Ottawa Chapter), Mark Wylie (Down Syndrome Association), Linda Barbetta (Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton), Michael Bates (Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton), Ian Morris (Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders), Dana Somayaji (Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils), Donna Owen (Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils), Terry Warner (VOICE for deaf and hard of hearing children), Christine Boothby (Trustee), Anita Olsen Harper (Trustee), Keith Penny (Trustee), Sonia Campbell-Nadon (Community Representative), Rob Kirwan (Community Representative), Tina Morden (Community Representative)

**Non Voting Members:** Tom Bickford (Professional Student Services Personnel), Jean Trant (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, SSP), Catherine Houlden (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Teachers), Kimberly Elmer (Ottawa-Carleton Secondary School Administrators' Network)

Staff and Guests: Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Chris Ellis (Trustee), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Curriculum Services), Jennifer Offord (Principal Curriculum Services), Jenny Dewan (System Vice-principal of Learning Support Services), Cheryl Plouffe (Psychologist), Carmelina Falcucci (Learning Support Consultant - Gifted Program), Christopher Hiltz (Instructional Coach), and Nicole Guthrie (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Call to Order

Chair Somayaji called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Trustee Blackburn advised she would be recording the meeting.

2. Approval of the Agenda

**Moved by Mark Wylie,**

**THAT the agenda be approved.**

**-Carried-**

3. Delegations

3.1 Julian Janes, First Avenue Public School, Parent Council

Mr. Janes speaking on behalf of First Avenue Public School Parent Council advised that the school's population has been negatively impacted by the decline in enrolment in the school's congregated Gifted Program. The school went from 105 students in grades 1 through 6 in 2014 to only 29 students in grades 5 and 6 at present. He maintains that the District is in contravention of its Policy P.139.CUR, Program Delivery Structures at Elementary Schools, and that the parent council was not consulted. Mr. Janes added that the First Avenue PS Parent Council strongly supports Trustee Boothby's notice of motion.

In response to a query from Trustee Boothby regarding enrolment in 2015, Mr. Janes advised that the school had a fullsome congregated gifted program in

2015 with students in grades 1 through 6. First Avenue Public School was one of the primary centres for gifted specialized programming. He expressed the view that the introduction of tiered interventions has resulted in the continued degradation of the program and that currently, the school has only 2 specialized gifted classes at grades 5 and 6 and that within 2 years the entire program will be gone.

In response to a query from Trustee Olsen Harper, Mr Janes indicated that he spoke with staff regarding enrolment and was informed that the program was not at risk.

In response to a query from Ms. Barbetta, Mr. Janes advised that First Avenue Public School was a primary Gifted centre and students from across the city used to access the program. He noted that the First Avenue Public School Parent Council is concerned about the decline in enrolment and wants the program to remain in the school. He noted that the First Avenue PS Parent Council was not consulted on the changes to the Gifted program.

In summary, Mr. Janes noted that the Board has not made a decision to discontinue the program but through unauthorized District programming changes the program has decreased to the point of closure.

#### 4. Member Information

Ms. Houlden advised that the Ottawa City Council has approved the renaming of an ice rink in the Goulbourn Recreation Complex for OCDSB Special Olympic Champions Katie Xu and Jack Fan.

Chair Somayaji introduced new members Samantha Banning, Autism Ontario; Jim Harris, VOICE for deaf and hard of hearing children; and Linda Barbetta, Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton, appointed at the 25 September 2018 Board meeting.

##### 4.1 Appointment of Community Representatives

Chair Somayaji advised that member associations have until November 23, 2018, to provide a letter advising the Manager of Board Services of the names of their member and alternate. She noted the community representative process has also begun. A link to the application for community representatives is available on the District website.

Trustee Boothby advised that the appointment of community representatives is the responsibility of a membership sub-committee which is comprised of the three trustees appointed to SEAC, with the assistance of the Superintendent of Learning Support Services and the Manager of Board Services. She noted the questions used in the interview process of the candidates require an update and encouraged committee members to provide suggestions to improve the questions to ensure the sub-committee can better assess the candidate's strengths and knowledge of special education within the District.

5. Review of Special Education Advisory Committee Report

5.1 Report 08, 12 September 2018

Moved by Trustee Boothby,

THAT Special Education Advisory Committee Report 8, dated 12 September 2018, be received.

Trustee Boothby requested that the first and second sentence of paragraph three on page 7 be revised to read: "Superintendent Symmonds advised that in June 2018 there was a presentation of materials to the Gifted Advisory Group in relation to the Interest Academy and supports for the gifted learner in the regular classroom, the two documents created by LSS staff in consultation with the Gifted Advisory Group."

**Moved by Trustee Boothby,**

**THAT Special Education Advisory Committee Report 8, dated 12 September 2018, be received as amended.**

**-Carried-**

5.2 Review of Long Range Agenda

The long range agenda was provided for information.

Ms. Barbetta confirmed a presentation by LDAO-C in December.

Mr. Warner requested that item 7 be deferred until November.

5.3 Motion/Action Tracking Report, Business Arising

The Motion/Action Tracking report was provided for information.

Ms. Barbetta advised that item 1 could be removed. She noted that strategies to engage students with dyscalculia are firmly part of the renewed math strategy.

6. Action/Discussion/Information Items

6.1 Memo 18-123, Elementary Gifted Specialized Program Class Enrolment (P. Symmonds, ext. 8254)

Your committee had before it Memo 18-123, Elementary Gifted Specialized Program Class Enrolment providing the enrolment numbers, by school, for the elementary Gifted Specialized Program. The memo was provided for information as a result of a request from a trustee.

6.2 Report 18-100, Update to the Elementary Gifted Review (P. Symmonds, ext. 8254)



Your committee had before it Report 18-100, Update to the Elementary Gifted Review. The report outlines the status of the work completed by staff and the Gifted Advisory Group on the Board motion regarding Gifted programming and to stand down the Gifted Advisory Group.

During discussion, and in response to questions, the following points were noted:

- The report is intended to be a response to the letter received from several members of the Gifted Advisory Group included on page 77;
- The report includes the OCDSB Guide for Supporting Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom and the OCDSB Interest Academy: A vehicle for accessing the curriculum through inquiry-based learning. A Guide for Educator Teams;
- Ms. Falcucci, Gifted Consultant, working with Dr. Plouffe created the OCDSB Guide for Supporting Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom. The guide is intended to be used as a reference tool for staff. Staff can access resources for programming and planning to meet the needs of gifted students in the regular classroom. A "Year at a Glance" is also included which outlines legislative requirements, District policies and procedures and best practices to guide educators and support staff in meeting the needs of students with giftedness;
- Dr. Plouffe advised that the OCDSB Guide includes information on instructional supports, student assessments, exit outcomes, student well-being, other supports and equity considerations. She advised that the document is available in both a hard copy binder and online. It is designed to be added to and enhanced as staff use the information with gifted learners;
- The online version is currently only available to staff. The intent is to make the content available to both staff and parents once a decision is made to implement the pilot program. At present, there is no timeline for either the sharing of online content or the pilot program launch;
- At the request of Mr. Kirwan the hard copy binder will be added to the SEAC library;
- Both the OCDSB Guide and the OCDSB Interest Academy were shared with the Gifted Advisory Group;
- System Principal Offord and Instructional Coach Hiltz advised that the OCDSB Interest Academy was based on the work of Instructional Coach Hiltz and the "Genius Hour" program he designed and implemented for students at Fisher Park/Summit Alternative School. The OCDSB Interest Academy is an inquiry-based, project oriented learning framework which allows students to explore the curriculum in ways that are interesting to them. The OCDSB Interest Academy contains a sample 6 week project cycle that any teacher can use to assist all students in the regular classroom;

- The OCDSB Interest Academy has not been formally piloted in the District, but variations of inquiry-based or passion-based programs have been used by interested teachers in the District for several years;
- Superintendent Baker advised that District teachers are using inquiry-based learning with their students. Through the work of the Gifted Advisory Group, Learning Support Services (LSS) and Curriculum Services (CS) were able to create a best practices document that can be used by all teachers;
- In response to a query from Mr. Popa concerning the use of the OCDSB Interest Academy and its impact on equity of access for under-represented groups, Superintendent Symmonds advised that the OCDSB Interest Academy can assist educators in making instructional decisions to support all students in the regular classroom which include under-represented groups. Superintendent Symmonds submitted that as it is implemented throughout the District it will be one way to further address the need within under-represented groups;
- There are currently no metrics associated with the OCDSB Interest Academy. If the decision is made to proceed with a pilot, a small control study of use can help identify success and an evaluation plan will be created;
- Dr. Plouffe stated that research and data support the use of project and inquiry-based learning for student success;
- The OCDSB Interest Academy would be a part of a student's core day. The Gifted Advisory Group discussed the pilot and its possible implementation at three schools in the District which have a significant population of under-represented groups as well as schools with existing Gifted specialized program classes;
- In response to a query from Mr. Kirwan regarding issues related to legislative and collective agreements, Superintendent Symmonds advised that both the OCDSB Guide and the OCDSB Interest Academy were designed within the parameters related to appropriate legislation and collective agreements;
- The OCDSB Interest Academy is based on a 6 week cycle and could be run multiple times over the course of the school year. The program is flexible and can bring together students from different grades with common interests and provides educators with a timetable to include the work in the regular school day. The tool can be used by teachers to personalize the curriculum for students;
- Instructional Coach Hiltz advised that he had received provincial funding for classroom research through the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP). One of the goals of the TLLP is for the teachers to share their practices with others for the broader benefit of Ontario's students. The grant focused on the concept of a "Genius Hour". Teachers and principals from across the District participated in the inquiry-based learning exercise with their students and gathered anecdotal evidence on the experience. Student self-reflection was also used to measure the success of the project. The

District's TLLP project report, which summarized the learning, was shared with other teachers from across the province and provided to the Ministry. A copy of the report will be provided to the committee;

- The Director tasked a multi-disciplinary staff team including Learning Support Services, Human Resources, Planning, and Curriculum Services to operationalize the ideas discussed by the Gifted Advisory Group. This led to the creation of the OCDSB Guide and The OCDSB Interest Academy. Prior to this, there was no clear documentation for the supports for gifted students in the regular classroom, while many practices were in place they were not readily available to teachers;
- Communication was received from several members of the Gifted Advisory Group. They expressed dissatisfaction with the work completed by staff and felt that the learning resources that were created by the District were not an adequate reflection of the ideas shared during the meetings of the Gifted Advisory Group;
- Table 1 outlines the common elements of the work of staff and the work of the Gifted Advisory Group members;
- The District's Google+ community, which has over 200 subscribers, provides an online space for teachers to connect, share resources/materials, and learn about meeting the needs of students with giftedness;
- LSS staff continue to support coaching, modeling, IEP development for educators in the classroom and professional staff continue to offer support through Multi-Disciplinary Teams. LSS is offering New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) training in relation to supporting students with giftedness;

Rob Kirwan assumed the Chair

- In response to a query from Trustee Boothby regarding the use of the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT 7) as outlined on page 26, Superintendent Symmonds advised that there was no waiting list. Ms. Falcucci added that if a parent requests a CCAT 7, the request is discussed by the school team and the Multi-Disciplinary team and if evidence warrants it the CCAT-7 is administered;
- The shift to the implementation of the learning resources and the discontinuation of the Gifted Advisory Group was not discussed by the Gifted Advisory Group;
- Superintendent Symmonds noted that the Gifted Advisory Group is not an official steering committee and had no official timeline. The original plan was that the Gifted Advisory Group would meet three times between January and June of 2017 to complete their work. The Gifted Advisory Group met a total of 8 times;

- Chair Kirwan noted that after the initial report to COW on the progress of the Gifted Advisory Group in June 2017, the work continued as the parties involved were not making progress;
- In response to a query from Trustee Penny regarding communication with members of the Gifted Advisory Group, Superintendent Symmonds responded that it is the recommendation of staff to stand down the Gifted Advisory Group. He noted that the Advisory Group has experienced many challenges. Superintendent Symmonds added that he was not confident that the Gifted Advisory Group could make further progress given the current level of dissatisfaction and challenges within the group;
- Trustee Boothby expressed the view that she was in support of the pilot program but noted the pilot appears to be rooted within the work of CS rather than LSS. She noted that the Gifted Advisory Group was clear in its communication to staff that the OCDSB Interest Academy be a program for all students in the school, not just students with giftedness;
- Vice Principal Dewan clarified that the pilot that was proposed to the Gifted Advisory Group had two parts, the OCDSB Guide and the OCDSB Interest Academy and that many LSS staff worked on the project to ensure there was a focus on gifted learners. LSS staff would be involved in the creation of an evaluation plan for a pilot program;
- Mr. Popa commented that there are currently no performance indicators to judge whether or not the pilot would work or to validate the notion that gifted students in the regular classroom were meeting or exceeding expectations;
- Ms. Barbetta commented that the Gifted Review contains EQAO data, graduation rates, and suspension and expulsion rates for students with giftedness and that gifted students appear to be doing well;
- Ms. Somayaji advised that in the Gifted Review, data indicates 67% of parents feel that the academic needs of their child are not being met;
- Ms. Somayaji indicated that she was concerned about the committee's ability to adequately respond to the report owing to the timing of its release to the members;
- Mr. Morris commented that the learning resources created will be valuable additions to the classroom and will enrich the classroom experience. He added that pathways to specialized Gifted classes still remain as needed;
- Mr. Morris queried how the learning resources will be implemented and supported to ensure growth, Superintendent Symmonds responded that with the assistance of CS, the OCDSB Guide and the OCDSB Interest Academy would be utilized at a few select District schools and modifications and adjustments will be made as required. The learning resources will help inform and influence teachers in their practice. The learning resources will aid both new teachers and those already familiar with gifted students, and supported by CS they will continue to develop;
- Mr. Morris anticipated a rise in both parent and student satisfaction as a result of the implementation of the learning resources;

- Mr. Warner expressed the view that the learning resources that were created as a result of the Gifted Advisory Group are valuable. He thanked Superintendent Grigoriev and Superintendent Symmonds for their efforts and encouraged staff to take the necessary steps to move the pilot program forward;
- Chair Kirwan expressed frustration with the lack of notice and the availability of the report. He noted that members had a limited amount of time to consider the information within the report;
- Mr. Warner noted that SEAC has varying opinions on the report and the members are divided with respect to their support for the staff recommendation;
- Mr. Morris expressed the view that the Gifted Advisory Group would serve a role in the monitoring of the pilot but that given the animosity among the current members of the Gifted Advisory Group suggested that SEAC could assume the role of the Gifted Advisory Group; and
- Ms. Somayaji expressed her frustration with the report. She noted that she and several other members of the Gifted Advisory Group did not support the pilot and reject the findings of the Gifted Advisory Group.

**Moved by Trustee Penny,**

**THAT SEAC recommends to the Board**

**A. THAT the OCDSB formally acknowledge the contributions of the Gifted Advisory Group;**

**B. THAT staff be directed to implement a pilot program which utilizes both the OCDSB Guide for Supporting Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom and the OCDSB Interest Academy: A vehicle for accessing the curriculum through inquiry-based learning. A Guide for Educator Teams as soon as may be practical; and**

**C. THAT SEAC fulfills the role of the Gifted Advisory Group in monitoring the pilot program to ensure it improves the effectiveness of services for gifted students and increases equity of access for under-represented groups.**

**-Carried-**

### 6.3 Gifted Advisory Group Letter

A copy of the letter from several members of the Gifted Advisory Group was provided for information.

Trustee Boothby noted that after the Gifted Advisory Group was presented with the OCDSB Guide and the OCDSB Interest Academy documents in June 2018, the Gifted Advisory Group was asked whether or not they wished a pilot to move forward. The letter was written after the meeting to express concern with

the two learning resources and the absence of the input provided by the members after the March 2018 meeting. The letter conveys the disappointment of the signatories. She added that although the signatories appreciate and recognize the value of the two resource documents for parents and staff, they have still not received direct feedback on the inputs they provided.

Mr. Popa expressed the view that the scope and detail provided within the resource material provided at the June 2018 meeting did not meet the stated mandate nor the results the signatories had expected. The learning resources, in their opinion, did not address what they envisioned was required to support gifted students in the regular classroom.

Ms. Somayaji expressed her frustration with the Gifted Advisory Group. She felt the consultation was inadequate and that staff did not consider the input members provided. She noted that the District was in violation of their own complaints resolution policy as the letter was not acted upon within the timelines outlined with the policy. The letter was submitted to the Director and other staff in August and the signatories received a response on 10 October 2018.

Chair Kirwan advised that a formal complaint could be made through a delegation to the Committee of the Whole, Board or to SEAC.

Mr. Warner noted that while he appreciated the efforts of the letter's signatories, it stands as a minority report for a few of the members of the Gifted Advisory Group and not the entire membership.

Ms. Somayaji noted that the four signatories of the letter were the only non staff participants. She added that the other external members were paid consultants.

#### 6.4 Notice of Motion, Trustee Boothby Congregated Elementary Gifted

Trustee Boothby indicated that she would be tabling the motion as listed on page 92 at the 16 October 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting.

During a discussion of the motion, and in response to questions the following points were noted:

- Trustee Boothby expressed the view that an operational program change to a system of tiered intervention in 2015, has led to a precipitous drop in congregated gifted program enrollment and that the program change was not authorized by the Board. The intent of the motion is to have staff return to the process used prior to the introduction of tiered intervention whereby a parent of a gifted student with a completed formal assessment would be offered the opportunity for a congregated placement. The motion also allows for the collection of data that will enable the District to better gauge demand and assist the Board in making a decision regarding the continuation of the congregated gifted program;

- The graph on page 94 highlights the decline with the most profound effects on grades 1 through 4 with no students currently enrolled in congregated gifted in grades 1 and 2. The District advertises that it offers congregated gifted programming for students in grades 1 through 8;
- In response to a query from Trustee Olsen Harper, Trustee Boothby indicated that the Ministry document, *Learning for All*, does not specifically mandate the application of tiered interventions;
- Mr. Bickford advised that some gifted students may require congregation for emotional or behavioural issues and some who could be placed in congregated classes choose to remain in the regular classroom with their peers. The current process allows for the multidisciplinary team to recommend a congregated class if they feel it would benefit the student;
- Superintendent Symmonds clarified that students do not have to display emotional or behavioural issues in order to access specialized program classes for giftedness;
- Mr. Bickford commented that the pilot program as outlined in the OCDSB Guide and the OCDSB Learning Academy would provide further support to students who score slightly less on the cognitive assessment than the prescribed criteria;
- Superintendent Symmonds noted that should the motion be accepted, gifted students who meet the cognitive assessment criteria would be offered a path to specialized programs, regardless of the full profile of the student and without considering academic achievement, the student's day to day experience, social and emotional factors that contribute to the picture of the whole child;
- Ms. Houlden suggested that tiered interventions create more accountability for teachers. With tiered interventions, staff can investigate a variety of options and interventions without arriving at immediate conclusions. Teachers can provide rich programming experiences for all students through the use of tiered interventions. Tiered interventions have become part of a teachers practice to help students thrive rather than remove them from the regular classroom. Teachers now have more access to tools, resources and strategies to help students and parents and students are choosing to remain in the regular classroom as a result. This may explain the decline in enrollment for congregated gifted;
- Trustee Boothby commented that it is difficult to gauge the demand for congregated programming when parents are not familiar with tiered interventions and parents no longer have a choice;
- Ms. Houlden commented that based on information presented by Dr. Hogan at the 17 January 2018 SEAC meeting, students who have completed private assessments do have the option for specialized classes but the numbers were small. Trustee Boothby noted that she was not provided with detailed figures and that the information she received was based on a 5-year trend;

- Ms. Campbell-Nadon queried how the decline in enrolment can be blamed on the introduction of tiered interventions. Ms. Campbell-Nadon suggested that formal cognitive assessments are costly and that tiered interventions by classroom teachers are more cost effective and can be performed within the school;
- Trustee Boothby noted that parents of gifted students have expressed to her their frustration with the lack of information regarding tiered interventions and agreed with Ms. Campbell-Nadon that the District should be providing more information to parents on the subject. But the gifted community has expressed the view that tiered interventions have made it difficult for parents to access congregated classrooms and that the option for placement to a congregated class is no longer offered to parents who come to the school with a private assessment;
- Trustee Penny commented that an operational decision was made by the District to implement a strategy of tiered interventions which appears to have negatively impacted the congregated gifted program and yet the decision to implement the strategy was not made by the Board. He added that Trustee Boothby's motion seeks evidence to help inform District policy and practice;
- In response to a statement by Trustee Boothby regarding tiered interventions, Superintendent Symmonds clarified that a student's response to interventions is reviewed regularly by teachers and discussed at multidisciplinary team meetings where suggestions for teachers are made to support the student;
- Superintendent Symmonds was unsure whether or not the assumption that tiered interventions caused the decline is accurate;
- Mr. Bickford commented that the request for a report on the applications and the number of children receiving placements in all congregated programs in the timeline indicated in the notice of motions would be impossible. He advised that evidence could be found by surveying parents of gifted students on whether or not they were given a choice of congregated programming. He suggested that trustees would want information on whether or not they feel their children's needs are being met in the regular classroom, were they offered congregated gifted and do they want more information on tiered interventions to make a policy decision;
- Trustee Boothby noted that she has not received an annual report on the status of special education classes in recent years;
- In response to a query from Ms. Morden, Trustee Boothby advised that part A of the motion is specific to gifted. Parents of children who have met the criteria and are identified as gifted would be offered a choice for their child to remain in the regular classroom or be placed in a specialized class. She added that part A is specific to gifted as she is unaware of similar complaints and trends within other exceptionalities, however, part A of the motion includes all exceptionalities;



- Mr. Morris advised that congregated classes are a tier 3 intervention provided when lower level interventions are no longer effective. Interventions are based on needs and outcomes and not program selection. He noted that it may be within the purview of the Board to protect congregated classes at several sites to ensure the programming is available as required. He noted he could not support the motion as written;
- Mr. Popa encouraged the members to review the charts on pages 94 through 97. He noted that students accepted into the congregated gifted program at the primary level are represented by a single digit. No new students have been placed in grades 1, 2 and 3 and should the trend continue the program will disappear within a few years;
- The notice of motion will be presented at the 16 October 2018 Committee of the Whole; and
- Ms. Morden queried the integrity of data that would be gleaned from a return to the process prior to 2015. Placement in a congregated class is an option and has not been removed. She queried the validity of the data as requested if the only measurement is parental choice without input from teachers or professional staff.

## 7. Department Update

### 7.1 Special Education Plan

Superintendent Symmonds advised that the Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings, Accessibility of School Buildings and Coordination with Other Ministries/Agencies sections of the OCDSB Special Education Plan do not provide for many opportunities for input from members. Most of the content is stipulated by the Ministry. He noted that Superintendent McCoy spoke at the 27 September 2018 SEAC meeting on the matter of accessibility.

Mr. Bates queried the timing of the discussion of the Special Education Plan. He had hoped the sections could be placed earlier in the agenda to ensure a more fulsome discussion.

Superintendent Symmonds advised that the following sections of the Special Education Plan will be discussed at the November meeting:

- IEPs
- IPRC Process and Appeals
- Transportation
- Staff Development

Chair Kirwan advised that the Special Education Plan in its entirety is available on the District's website.

### 7.2 Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Symmonds announced that the Board has appointed a new Director of Education, Camile Williams-Taylor. Ms. Williams-Taylor will officially

assume the role January 2019. Ms. Williams-Taylor has been a senior executive with the Durham District School Board since 2011 and has considerable experience with special education and equity.

Superintendent Symmonds advised that the Parent Conference will be held on 3 November 2018 and that there will be sessions dedicated to special education. He added that the focus of the conference is mental health and that the keynote speaker is Peg Dawson, author of Smart but Scattered.

Superintendent Symmonds noted that a team from LSS will be attending the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) conference. He added that another team will be attending the Geneva Conference for autism.

In response to a query from Trustee Olsen Harper regarding the per pupil amount and an increase in funding to support Indigenous students, Superintendent Symmonds responded that a memo from the province indicated that there may be funding from the province for Districts that meet the criteria for a graduation coach. He added that the District does not have further information on the criteria and have not received any further information on the subject.

## 8. Committee Reports

### 8.1 Advisory Committee on Equity

Trustee Olsen Harper advised that ACE met on 27 September 2018 and discussed the expansion of community voice, increasing connections between trustees and the confirmation of administrative support for ACE.

### 8.2 Parent Involvement Committee

Ms. Campbell-Nadon advised the first meeting of the Parent Involvement Committee will be held on 17 October 2018.

### 8.3 Board

There was no report.

### 8.4 Committee of the Whole

Ms. Somayaji noted that the COW reviewed the purchase of new portable classrooms which featured a lengthy discussion on the cost of transporting the portable. COW also discussed the provision of air conditioning in classrooms used for the District's Extended Day Programs during the summer months. Chair Kirwan advised that the item was deferred pending a review of the budget.

### 8.5 Committee of the Whole Budget

Chair Kirwan advised that he will speak with Chief Financial Officer Carson about the possibility of a budget presentation to an upcoming SEAC meeting.

8.6 Advisory Committee on Extended Day and Child Care Programs

There was no report.

9. New Business

Mr. Morris noted that the Ontario Human Rights Commission recently released its policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities. Superintendent Symmonds advised that the document identifies several recommendations that will impact special education students in the District.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

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Rob Kirwan, Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee





## **SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **Long Range Agenda** **2018-2019**

1. LD Program Review and Update (ongoing)
2. Pilot Project for Elementary Gifted Program Delivery (December)
3. Implementation of the Exit Outcomes (Ongoing)
4. The role of the Early Childhood Educator (TBD)
5. VOICE suggestions for improving in classroom supports for deaf hard of hearing students (November)
6. LDAO-C presentation (December)



## **MOTION/ACTION TRACKING REPORT**

	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Motion/Action</b>	<b>Action Agents</b>	<b>Requester</b>	<b>Reference/Date</b>	<b>Completed</b>
1	09 March 2016	Monitoring data from the LD program be shared with SEAC, when available	P. Symmonds, A. Hannah	C. Ellis	Ongoing	
2	18 May 2016	Share Special Needs Strategy program guidelines when available, for an opportunity to provide formal support, at the will of the Committee	P. Symmonds	C. Ellis		No
3	15 November 2017	Amend the SEAC page of the website to include links to minutes, agendas and committee member information.	Board Services	D. Owen		Yes
4	15 November 2017	ASAR to utilize and highlight locally developed statistics	READ and Curriculum Services	C. Houlden		
5	09 May 2018	EQAO Data on Gifted Students	READ and LSS	Mr. Popa	Superintendent Symmonds to approach the READ team with a request for EQAO data for gifted students.	