

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, November 13, 2019, 7:00 pm

Trustees' Committee Room

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

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OCDSB Transition Planning
Proposal for Transition Counsellor/Coordinator
Ottawa Technical Secondary School (OTSS) School Council
(November 3, 2019, amended)

1. Background

Ensuring that students are well prepared for life after graduation is a critical part of the educational program for all secondary school students. This is no less important for students with exceptional needs. Indeed, *Ontario Regulation 181/98*, section 7(4), states that, for exceptional students who are age 14 or over and who are not identified solely as gifted, the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) must include a transition plan for the student's transition from school to work, further education, and/or community living.¹

A key part of preparing for post-graduation transition is identifying both the skills that a student will need as well as the opportunities available. School boards provide typically developing students with assistance in preparing for future career or vocational path through guidance counsellor services, who provide information about post-secondary educational programs and vocational programs. Such guidance counsellors are not equipped to provide targeted services for special needs students.

An essential part of an effective IEP transition plan is identifying appropriate post-secondary programs, including potential vocational or voluntary opportunities. Other government departments (e.g. Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)²), either directly or through funded agencies, have programs to identify appropriate services for this population. However, there is often a lack of coordination between the Ministry of Education and MCCSS. Past attempts to organize cross ministry coordination for integrated transition planning have failed.³

OCDSB has no formal mechanism to implement effective transition plans. The policy on *Special Education Programs and Services* (Policy P.096.SES) makes no reference to planning for post-graduation. Strategies for preparing for post-secondary life are rarely specifically identified in IEPs, although the IEP has a specifically designated section that is supposed to address this issue. Specific transition advice is provided on an *ad hoc* basis and depends in large on part the interest or motivation of principals/teachers. Moreover, transition planning is rarely started early in the students' secondary school career and is only, if at all, prioritized in the last year of a student's high school career.

¹ O. Reg. 181/98, section 7(4): "Where an individual education plan does not include a plan for transition to appropriate post-secondary school activities and the pupil has attained the age of 14 or will attain the age of 14 within the school year, the principal shall ensure that a transition plan is developed and included in the individual education plan." Also, see SUPPORTING TRANSITIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS, Ministry of Education, Policy/Program Memorandum No. 156, <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm156.pdf>.

² Service Coordination for People with Developmental Disabilities. (www.scsottawa.on.ca)

³ In 2013, a tri-Ministry memorandum was released by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Education [Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disabilities](#), that set out a shared goal working together ("2013 Memorandum").

2. Proposal

In order to effectively implement the legal requirements for transition planning under *Ontario Regulation 181/98* and 2013 Memorandum, we propose that the Board (a) amend Policy P.096.SES to make post-graduation transition planning on of the *Guiding Principles* and *Key Learning Supports* and consider whether a specific Board Procedure on Transition Planning should be developed and (b) expressly set aside dedicated resources to assist parents, students, principals and teachers in developing detailed transition plans (“transition counsellor”). There are two options: (a) identify dedicated support staff at each school where the number of students warrant; or (b) designate a central Board resource person(s) to consult and provide advice to principals, teachers and parents.

3. Role/Objectives

The role of the Transition Counsellor would be to:

- Consult with principals, teachers and parents in the development of an integrated post-secondary transition plan to be included in IEPs;
- Provide advice to students and parents of the program options available for students with special needs;
- Coordinate with the MCCSS and its funded agencies (e.g. Service Coordination) to assist parents, students, principals and teachers to implement integrate transition plans;
- Work with relevant social services organizations to develop a strategy for increasing the number and variety of vocational placements within the community for special needs students; and
- Work with other school boards and outside professionals to develop and promote best practices for transition planning

4. Potential Way Forward

We propose that the OCDSB Special Education Advisory Board (SEAC) adopt a motion, for Board consideration, to require that the District Staff:

- 1) Assess current policies, practices and capacity for development and operationalization of effective transition planning for post-graduation work and/or community living as part of the IEP’s of special needs students;
- 2) Evaluate the reasons for why previous attempts to implement integrated transition planning with other relevant ministries have failed;
- 3) Amend Policy P.096.SES to make post-graduation transition planning one of the *Guiding Principles* and *Key Learning Supports* and consider whether a specific Board Procedure on Transition Planning should be developed;
- 4) Develop options for the implementation of a “transition counsellor” to support principals and teachers in transition planning for such students, who duties would include:

- a) Consult with principals, teachers and parents in the development of an integrated post-secondary transition plan to be included in IEPs;
 - b) Provide advice to students and parents of the program options available for students with special needs;
 - c) Coordinate with the MCCSS and its funded agencies (e.g. Service Coordination) to assist parents, students, principals and teachers to implement integrated transition plans;
 - d) Work with relevant social services organizations to develop a strategy for increasing the number and variety of vocational placements within the community for special needs students; and
 - e) Work with other school boards and outside professionals to develop and promote best practices for transition planning;
- 5) report back to the SEAC and/or the Board in no less than 3 months on progress on this motion.

Adopted by OTSS School Council

October 15, 2019

Amended November 3, 2019

Annex A

Proposal for a Transition Coordinator OTSS School Council

Questions and Answers

Extent of the Problem

How significant is the need for more coordinated transition planning?

It has long been recognized that transition planning for secondary school is a critical objective for multiple government ministries, including the Ministry of Education.

In 2011, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) published a draft [Provincial Transition Planning Framework – Transitional Planning for Young People with Developmental Disabilities](#) to improve transition planning by better defining responsibilities. The framework recognized that:

Transition planning for young people with developmental disabilities can be complicated and complex. The lack of planning and inadequate transition support were described as “one of the most important issues for discussion” by families and individuals in the 2006 report on the transformation consultations. (pg. 2)

As the recently released [Ontario Autism Program Advisory Panel Report](#) (October 2019) noted:

Too often, barriers between service models in different ministries negatively impact children, youth and families and reduce the potential of all services to be delivered efficiently and to maximum capacity. (Pg. 33)

Although this report deals specifically with the OAP, the observations about lack of coordination apply equally to transition planning.

To address these problems, in 2013, a tri-Ministry memorandum was released by the MCYS, MCSS and the Ministry of Education (EDU) entitled [Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disabilities](#) (see below Appendix for text of the 2013 Memorandum). This Memorandum underscored the necessity of a shared partnership between the 3 ministries in developing integrated transition plans. Specifically, the Memorandum stated:

Collaborative planning processes are expected in the development of the Individual Education Plans (IEP) for students with special education needs, including those with developmental disabilities. (Pg. 2)

The Memorandum further stated that:

It is the shared goal of the ministries that district school boards, school authorities, provincial and/or demonstration schools and MCYS/MCSS regional offices will work together to integrate District School Board and MCYS/MCSS processes by revising and building on the current regional protocols to outline a new process that will lead to the development of a single integrated transition plan for every young person with a developmental disability. (pg. 2)

As parents at OTSS, we have never been advised of the regional protocols. We have never been offered integrated planning sessions by the District School Board (DSB) and the other ministries. No single integrated transition plans have been developed for our children. We have no information on whether the DSB has in fact implemented these plans or whether the DSB has regular discussions with other ministry agencies.

In sum, the laudable objectives set out in the 2013 Memorandum have not been realized.

Roles and Responsibilities

What is the role of other provincial ministries (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services) and support agencies (Services Coordination Support)?

As set out above, the responsibility for developing integrated transition plans is a shared responsibility between the 3 ministries. It is no answer to say that it is someone else's job – this is simply passing the buck. As the Ministry of Education stated in the 2013 memorandum, it is the expectation that the DSB will put in place a collaborative planning process.

Service Coordination Support (SCS), a funded agency of the MCSS, has responsibility for providing information on services available for children and adults with developmental disabilities. However, to our knowledge, SCS is not involved in school-related planning, through the IEP or otherwise. There are no integrated plans as contemplated by the 2013 Memorandum. Moreover, there are often long waiting lists to access SCS caseworkers, the implication of which is that parents/students are not able to access caseworker services until the later years of a student's career. This does not create an environment for effective integrated planning.

Does the School Board currently liaise with outside service providers to provide vocational and community participation support?

To our knowledge, there is little, or no, coordination between the DSB and SCS. We are not aware that regional protocols have been actioned. At some schools, individual teachers seek out vocational/community opportunities for their students and build appropriate skills development into their learning plans. But this is dependent upon the motivation of individual teachers. At OTSS, the school administration has invited SCS to attend parent information nights, but their participation is passive - they only present information about their service. We understand that there was a practice of having a specific SCS caseworker assigned to OTSS, but for reasons unknown to us this practice was stopped.

We are not suggesting that the DSB should replace the role of SCS. But we are proposing that processes be put in place to mandate collaboration.

Existing Resources within the District School Board (DSB)

Are there existing resources (guidance counsellors, learning support staff) that can be redeployed to provide these services?

Theoretically yes. However, regular guidance counsellors and co-op education teachers are already massively overwhelmed. Moreover, given that range of programs and needs of this population are complex and continuously evolving, knowledge of the available resources and opportunities requires specialization. This is not a situation where you can send generalists on a weekend course and then expect them to effectively understand the needs of this population. Adding to the duties of existing guidance counsellors is not feasible given the specialized needs of this population and the complexity of the programs. A more effective alternative is having dedicated staff role it is to liaise with SCS and assist principals and teachers with integrated transition planning.

Will a transition coordinator role replace the role of teachers or other learning support professionals in the system with the result that the roles and responsibilities will just be reallocated?

There are teachers and learning support professionals are trying to fulfil this role, but are doing so in addition to their other responsibilities. They need assistance to effectively fulfil this role. A transition coordinator would make them more effective in working with parents to develop transition plans, as they, individually, would not have to spend the considerable time and effort gaining this knowledge and keeping it current

Moreover, a centralized transition coordinator would help disseminate best practices amongst principals, special education teachers and support staff. There are a lot of dedicated teachers who have developed an expertise in this area (e.g. knowing how to set up appropriate work placements, identifying potential employers etc) but this expertise is often lost when the teacher leaves or when principals de-prioritize this function.

Scope of Responsibilities

What should be the scope of responsibilities of the transition coordinator?

There are legitimate questions as how far reaching the role of a transition coordinator should be. Should it be limited to providing support for schools with specialized programs? Should it be limited to a particular type of specialized program (e.g. autism, GLP, or the physical support program)? Our suggestion would be to start small, with a pilot project targeted to a particular population and grow from there.

How does this proposal affect the role of parents in developing an appropriate transition plan?

Parents invariably play a critical role. By providing parents with the necessary information and a framework early in their child's secondary school career, parents will be better able to navigate the system and contribute to their child's success.

The OTSS School Council is trying to develop better information products to assist parents (See for example the [Transition Planning document](#), setting out things for parents to do at certain age milestones). Whether parents take advantage of this information is up to them.

How do we ensure equity across the student population so that families who are less able to advocate for their children are not disadvantaged?

A transition coordinator would, in fact, address the inequality that currently plagues the system. Motivated, engaged parents currently have an advantage because nobody is helping those less able to advocate. A transition coordinator would be ideally suited to assist those less able to advocate for themselves.

Budgetary Implications

What impact would this proposal have on the budget of the DSB for Special Education? Would these resources be better spent elsewhere?

The creation of a transition coordinator would have an impact on the DSB budget (salary, administration support etc). The question is whether the coordinator position could provide efficiencies elsewhere in the system, by freeing up teachers and support staff to time to implement the plan (e.g. increasing efficiency by not having individual teachers reinvent the wheel) to outweigh the costs.

It would be useful to explore whether the province or federal government has resources available to support more effective transition planning, given their focus on skills training and increasing independence and self-reliance. As an example, having students learn how to navigate the public transit system saves public funds over the long term by decrease reliance on Para-transport services. This is an area where some creativity is necessary.

More generally, having students better prepared for post-graduation would have overall cost benefits for the social service system generally. We recognize that such cost savings do not accrue to the education system directly. However, a longer-term perspective on cost savings for the province should be considered.

Measuring Performance

What metrics could be adopted to determine whether the resources are being spent wisely?

In the Ministry of Education Special Education Updates from 2016 (See Appendix), the MOE indicated that a parent and young person survey will be launched to determine their satisfaction with the transition planning process.

We have never been surveyed. A survey of the subjective level of satisfaction with the transition planning process would provide some form of metric, although there are inherent problems with surveys as a means of gauging performance (e.g. low response rates).

How does the school board currently evaluate the effectiveness of any teacher or principal? Perhaps the same form of metric could be used in this instance.

Alternatives

Are there options other than a transition coordinator that should be considered?

Invariably yes. These include:

- (i) more training for existing DSB teaching and support staff;
- (ii) increasing support staff in order to free up time for teachers to focus on this area

However, these are things that could have been done to implement the recommendations of the 2013 Memorandum. It appears they were not, at least not on a systemic basis. By formalizing and prioritizing this function, we will be better placed to ensure that we achieve effective transition planning.

Appendix I

Tri-Ministry Memorandum on Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disabilities, January 2013, to Directors of Education

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/jan2013/TransitionPlanDevelop.pdf>

The purpose of this memo is to provide updated tri-ministry direction on integrated transition planning to support young people with developmental disabilities.

The ministries of Children and Youth Services (MCYS), Community and Social Services (MCSS) and Education (EDU) are working collaboratively to build on and improve the continuum of transition supports for young people with developmental disabilities. It is a shared understanding of the ministries that integrated transition planning among youth with developmental disabilities and their 2 families, service providers, school boards, school authorities, provincial and/or demonstration schools supports smooth transitions to work, further education, participation in life activities and community living.

Collaborative planning processes are expected in the development of the Individual Education Plans (IEP) for students with special education needs, including those with developmental disabilities. Similarly, a draft Provincial Transition Planning Framework was introduced in 2011 by MCYS and MCSS to improve transition planning support to young people with developmental disabilities who are preparing to transition to adulthood. Regional protocols were developed by MCYS/MCSS regional offices to guide local transition planning for young people with developmental disabilities in 2012 and a number of school boards participated in the protocol development process. The intent of integrated transition planning is to build on effective collaborative transition planning practices, facilitate a smooth and comprehensive transition experience and to support positive transition outcomes for each young person with a developmental disability and their family/caregiver.

It is the shared goal of the ministries that district school boards, school authorities, provincial and/or demonstration schools and MCYS/MCSS regional offices will work together to integrate District School Board and MCYS/MCSS processes by revising and building on the current regional protocols to outline a new process that will lead to the development of a single integrated transition plan for every young person with a developmental disability. We would like to support you in the development of the revised protocols that will guide the development of a single transition plan for young people with developmental disabilities with a view to implementation beginning in the 2013-14 school year.

To begin the protocol revision process, in February 2013, MCYS/MCSS regional offices and EDU field offices will jointly lead initial meetings with local district school boards and agencies to outline the vision for integrated transition planning processes as well as the next steps for school board involvement in regional protocol revision. These regional meetings will also allow participants to engage in cross-sector discussions to identify practices and local considerations to enhance and support integrated transition planning. Materials to support this process will be distributed for the regional meetings.

As part of the ongoing protocol revision process, other stakeholders will be invited to provide input, including youth with a developmental disability and their families.

This memo forms an addendum to the [2011 Draft Provincial Transition Planning Framework: Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disabilities](#) (attached) to achieve integration with EDU transition planning.

We appreciate your support as we move forward in partnership to improve transition planning supports for students with developmental disabilities and their families.

Ministry of Education, Special Education Update – February 2016

https://www.opsba.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/SpecialEducation_Feb16Update_Accessible.pdf

Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disability, Pg. 20

KEY FACTS

- Protocols continue to be reviewed by regions annually and revised accordingly.
- Monitoring of integrated transition plans continues by MCYS/MCSS Regional Offices.
- A Tri-Ministry memo was released on January 31, 2013 emphasizing the shared goal of the ministries that district school boards, school authorities, provincial and/or demonstration schools and community service providers will work together to integrate current district school board and MCYS/MCSS transition planning processes by revising and building on existing regional protocols.
- The tri-ministry protocols outline an agreement between community organizations and school boards on how they will work together to help support the transition of a young person with a developmental disability to adulthood. The protocols build on existing regional transition processes to provide a more consistent and coordinated approach to supporting young people's transition to adulthood. The protocols specify that:
 - o every young person with a developmental disability will have a transition plan;
 - o planning will begin early; and
 - o transition planning processes will be integrated, consistent, and transparent.
- Integrated transition planning is for young people (age 14 and older) who meet the definition of having a developmental disability under any of the EDU, MCSS and MCYS legislation frameworks or agency criteria.
- Integrated transition planning for young people with developmental disabilities went into effect September 2014. Lead agencies for integrated transition planning are monitoring implementation and reporting back to the ministries.

NEXT STEPS

- A parent and young person survey will be launched to determine their satisfaction with the transition planning process.

Ministry of Education, Special Education Update – February 2015

https://www.opsba.org/What%20We%20Do/Documents/MACSE_SpecEdUpdate_Feb2015.pdf

Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disability, Pg. 21

WHAT'S NEW

- Protocols have been revised and implementation of integrated transition planning began September 2014.
- The next phase is to collect data on the number of young people and adults who have received an integrated transition plan and determine the level of satisfaction young people adults and their families have had with the process. The monitoring of integrated transition plans will provide data that will be used to improve processes going forward so that the experience of young people and their families may be enhanced. MCYS/MCSS Regional Offices are in the process of collecting this data.

KEY FACTS

- The Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disability Protocols are intended to be living agreements that are regularly reviewed and updated by regional offices in consultation with district school boards and community service providers to ensure they remain current with any legislation, regulations, policy, resource or community changes.

NEXT STEPS

- In September 2015, a parent and young person survey will be launched to determine their satisfaction with the transition planning process.



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Wednesday, October 9, 2019, 7:00 pm
Trustees' Committee Room
133 Greenbank Road
Ottawa, Ontario

Members: Rob Kirwan (Community Representative), Christine Boothby (Trustee), Rob Campbell (Trustee), Lyra Evans (Trustee), Cathy Miedema (Association for Bright Children), Katie Ralph (Autism Ontario, Ottawa Chapter), Mark Wylie (Down Syndrome Association), Ian Morris (Ontario Associations for Families of Children with Communication Disorders), Safina Dewshi (Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils, Alternate), Jim Harris (VOICE for deaf and hard of hearing children), Susan Cowin (Community Representative), Sonia Nadon-Campbell (Community Representative), Nicole Ullmark (Easter Seals Ontario), Lisa Paterick (VIEWS for the Visually Impaired)

Association Representatives (Non Voting): Jennifer Titley (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation), Nancy McLaren Kennedy (Professional Student Services Personnel), Nancy Dlouhy (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Operations Committee), Jean Trant (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, SSP), Catherine Houlden (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Teachers)

Staff and Guests: Lynn Scott (Trustee), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Stacey Kay (Manager of Learning Support Services), Dr. Petra Duschner (Manager of Mental Health and Critical Services), Leigh Fenton (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Call to Order

Chair Kirwan called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Jim Harris

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

4. Review of Special Education Advisory Committee Report

4.1 Report 11 September 2019

Moved by Ian Morris,

THAT the report from the 11 September 2019 SEAC meeting be received.

Mr. Morris noted there were instances of missing salutations in the bulleted list in section 6.1 a.

Ms. McLaren Kennedy requested her comment regarding The OCDSB Model for Special Education be revised to read, "Ms. McLaren Kennedy contended that it is important to keep people a part of the community and be aware that inclusion rather than specialized classroom placements should be the goal. Focusing on separating children creates an "otherness" that is not inclusive. She urged the committee to consider whether, to the best of the abilities of District staff, there has been effective management of the existing policy and a move to increase the effectiveness of the system that is in place today. Realizing the potential of the current operating policy is preferable to deviating in another direction and beginning anew."

Moved by Ian Morris,

THAT the report from the 11 September 2019 SEAC meeting be received, as amended.

Carried

4.2 Review of Long Range Agenda

The long range agenda was provided for information.

Trustee Lyra Evans requested resolute timelines for items designated with the term To-Be-Decided (TBD). Superintendent Symmonds responded that there are times where the District is unsure of the timelines, as updates from the government inform many of the items on the long range agenda.

Trustee Boothby requested the addition of Decommissioned Body Break Rooms. It is her understanding that there are schools in Zone 2 where body break rooms are being decommissioned to accommodate an increase in student population. She suggested the discussion focus on the number of decommissioned body break rooms and the identification of methods to replace the programming. Superintendent Symmonds noted that Learning Support Services actively supports principals when they wish to create resource rooms.

Superintendent Symmonds advised that 'Lockdown Procedure Review' be revised to note a 'discussion' on the agenda. Lockdown Procedures in schools are mandated by provincial regulation. Trustee Lyra Evans

requested that the matter be reviewed by SEAC to illuminate the perpetuation of a fear-based culture and the impact of these drills on students. Chair Kirwan requested that Superintendent Symmonds contact the appropriate superintendent governing the Safe Schools Curriculum to acquire the relevant information for the discussion.

Mr. Morris requested that 'Communication Disorder Assistant Update' remain on the long range agenda for a further update in February.

4.3 Motion/Action Tracking Report, Business Arising

The Motion/Action Tracking Report was provided for information.

Ms. Miedema provided an update on item 2, EQAO Data on Gifted Students. She advised she has met with Superintendent Symmonds to discuss a change in the way the data is presented for all special education students, where the information will be aggregated by exceptionality.

5. Action/Discussion/Information Items

5.1 Report 19-091, Specialized Program Class Referral Information 2019-2020

Your committee had before it Report 19-091, providing information on the 2019-2020 specialized program class referral and placement process.

The number of ASD specialized program classes has increased significantly in order to minimize wait lists. Waitlists are fluid as families opt for various support options for their child (e.g., full time school, Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI))

Trustee Lyra Evans queried whether or not the waitlist is re-examined during the staff reallocation in September. Superintendent Symmonds stated that after the main staffing period has been finalized, typically no further classes are added. Manager Kay explained that opening a specialized program class is a complex undertaking with considerations including suitable facilities and geographic distribution across the district. Teachers apply to work in specialized class programs during the spring staffing process and the school community is prepared in advance to welcome special education students effectively to ensure smooth transitions. Superintendent Symmonds added that students on waitlists are provided with support in regular classrooms.

In response to a query from Mr. Morris regarding the age group of students who are being assessed by a speech-language pathologist, Manager Kay acknowledged that early intervention is desirable for best outcomes. She explained that speech-language pathology supports and services are prioritized for students in Kindergarten until grade three. Formalized assessment might be an end point after a number of other

interventions. Speech language therapists are working collaboratively with teachers and early childhood educators (ECEs) to implement whole-class programming to focus on literacy and phonological awareness. Program evaluation has demonstrated the effectiveness of these services. Trustee Boothby expressed concern that the waitlist for psychology assessments is eight to ten months. She asked for clarity on the process should the student wait beyond the end of a school year. Dr. Duschner responded that the eight to ten month waitlist statistic is misleading, as it reflects only formal assessments. At schools, meetings are held with the multi-disciplinary team to discuss student need and a priority list for referrals is developed. A student who absolutely needs a formal assessment would not be waiting more than a few weeks. Other students may be supported in other ways including informal assessments, which include consultation with staff, observation, review of Ontario Student Record (OSR), Individual Education Plans (IEP), or consultation with parents. Progress and ongoing needs would be monitored and if necessary, a formal assessment, including standardized measures would be conducted. Dr. Duschner stated that every school has a multi-disciplinary team comprised of a psychologist, social worker and a speech-language pathologist. The number of times a multi-disciplinary team can meet is dependent on many factors, including whether the school is an elementary or secondary school.

Ms. Meidema queried how the District allocates multi-disciplinary support staff to each school. Manager Kay explained a matrix is used for these determinations such as number of students in schools, and number of specialized program classes and socio-economic status of the community. In a typical elementary school, there is a half-day allocation per week; however, if a school serves 800 students and has four specialized program classes, the allocation may be changed to one full day per week, based on the needs of that school. Professionals have flexibility in their caseload and can adjust their schedules accordingly.

Manager Kay informed the committee that waitlist data was manually collected by professional support services staff in collaboration with the school-based special education team in May/June 2019. Due to the way in which the data was collected, there may be issues with respect to reliability and validity. Chair Kirwan requested clarification from Superintendent Symmonds on the wording in the Board motion of 30 October 2018, moving a "series of updates" on the number of applications and the number of children receiving assessment and placements in all congregated programs. Superintendent Symmonds confirmed the ability of staff to collect information annually into a consolidated report for the committee.

5.2 Report 19-097, Revision to Policy P.096.SES

Your committee had before it Report 19-097, considering a revision to section 3.3 (a) of Policy P. 096.SES Special Education Programs and Services.

Moved by Ian Morris,

THAT SEAC recommend to the Board that section 3.3(a) of Policy P.096.SES Special Education Programs and Services be amended to insert the word 'timely' before the word 'assessments'.

An amendment moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT section 3.3 (a) of Policy P.096.SES Special Education Programs and Services be revised to read: "a range of appropriate and timely assessments and accompanying timely tiered interventions and professional strategies."

Carried, friendly

Moved by Ian Morris

THAT SEAC recommend to the Board that section 3.3(a) of Policy P.096.SES of Special Education Programs and Services be revised to read: "a range of appropriate and timely assessments and accompanying timely tiered interventions and professional strategies." (Attached as Appendix A)

Carried

5.3 Memo 19-103, Support for Mental Health Through an Equity Lens (P. Symmonds ext. 8254)

Your committee had before it Memo 19-103, pertaining to support for mental health through an equity lens.

Superintendent Symmonds reported that consultations on the Draft Mental Health Strategy were completed with the Advisory Committee on Equity and the Indigenous Education Advisory Council. An annual action plan will be created for Mental Health Strategy which will include work to address the motion approved by the Committee of the Whole on 19 April 2019.

Ms. Houlden inquired whether the plan had been examined through an equity lens that specifically considers students with cognitive or developmental disabilities, as these are exclusionary diagnoses for many resources offered in the broader community. Dr. Duschner responded that one of the strategies under the objective of the Culture of Social Responsibility within the Mental Health Strategy is "to explore and expand best practices in supporting the mental health needs concurrent with student special education needs". Mr. Morris queried the available Ministry of Education funding in support of this initiative. Superintendent

Symmonds replied that the Priorities and Partnership Funding (PPF) supports additional mental health workers for secondary schools in the District.

5.4 Memo 19-105, Location of Specialized Program Classes 2019-2020

Your committee had before it Memo 19-105, providing the current locations of all specialized classes in the District.

Ms. Meidema requested the next iteration of the schedule, include the language and grade levels for the gifted classrooms.

5.5 Memo 19-108, Staffing Allocations to Clifford Bowey PS and Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education (P.Symmonds ext. 8254)

Your committee had before it Memo 19-108, providing information regarding staffing allocations to Clifford Bowey Public School and Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education.

Superintendent Symmonds communicated that as originally conceived, these schools were provided academic staffing with a 1:10 ratio as required by the Education Act. Over time, the ratio for academic staffing was adjusted to 1:8 in recognition of the changing profiles of students who had higher needs. There is no regulation requiring Learning Support Teacher (LST), Learning Resource Teacher (LRT) or Education Assistant (EA) staffing allocation. He explained that adding more people into a room crowded with multiple pieces of large equipment, used by students, could hinder existing support.

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

- The LST allocation has increased in the two schools, as they offer leading support to students;
- Certain classroom allocations are adhered to, along with student-specific allocations. Staffing allocations are based on projected enrollment; and
- Presently O.Reg. 298 – Operation of Schools – generally sets the maximum class size for self-contained classes by exceptionality.

Chair Kirwan summarized that the student councils of Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education and Clifford Bowey PS were notified that this memo was on the agenda at SEAC. The District will communicate with the parent advisory groups. Discussion on the delivery of service to the students will begin with the parents of these students. He noted there is not a short-term resolution to such a complex problem.

5.6 Communications Disorder Assistants Update

Manager Kay reported that in the 2018-2019 school year, Maya Rattray, Supervisor of Speech Language Pathology, developed a proposal to use Communication Disorder Assistants (CDAs). Through the approved Board budget, 2.0 FTE were hired in Learning Support Services. CDAs have college-level qualifications and work under the direct supervision of a speech language pathologist. The District is embarking upon its first year of the service delivery model. The CDAs are working at Clifford Bowey Public School and Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education to bolster the supports and services for those students. Supervisor Rattray is working with Program Evaluator McKibbin to develop a monitoring plan to survey the effectiveness of the CDA role.

Mr. Morris congratulated the District on recruiting the participation of CDAs in the service delivery model. He stated that the Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders are interested in ongoing updates.

6. Department Update

6.1 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Symmonds provided the committee with a brief departmental update:

- There are no updates from the Ministry on the change in the Ontario Autism Program. When LSS was consulted, it was communicated that schools require advance time to plan accordingly to meet the needs of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and alignment with the beginning of the school year was strongly suggested; and
- The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has launched a public inquiry into human rights issues that affect students with reading disabilities in Ontario's public education system. A memo is to be circulated to trustees, Special Education Advisory Committee, senior staff and all principals on the subject. The OHRC will release a formal report on findings and recommendations in 2020.

Chair Kirwan requested an update on the use of service animals in schools. Superintendent Symmonds responded that the department will ensure that the schools are aligned with the amendment to the legislation and clearly outline the process families should follow when requesting the accommodation of service animals in schools.

6.2 Special Education Plan (Standards)

- a. The Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) Process and Appeals (Discussion)

Superintendent Symmonds reviewed necessary changes in the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) Process and Appeals Standard. The language will be updated to reflect the change in platform from Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to IEP Online (IOL). A section will be added to explain the procedure of initiating an IPRC. The Parent Guide will be studied to ensure alignment with the Ministry's requirements of an IPRC.

Superintendent Symmonds noted that discussions occurred with Ms. Houlden on the challenges behind the parental ability to waive an IPRC. Ms. Houlden explained that the new language on the OCDSB IPRC invitation reads: "the decision to dispense with the annual review could mean no review would take place and the existing IPRC identification, program and placement would remain in place." Parents are then given the following option: "I exercise my option to have the annual review waived." If selected, it would indicate the parent is choosing to have the annual review waived, but the current language does not supersede a review held in their absence. If the IPRC, which parents believe was dispensed, was held and changes made, this could be very upsetting for families. Not attending and choosing to dispense/waive the annual review with the IPRC are different. She expressed the view that if the school does not plan to dispense with the annual review and plans to make changes to program, placement and/or identification, should be clearly stated to the parents.

Trustee Campbell requested a definition on the roles of expertise for the central referral committees and the IPRC. Superintendent Symmonds confirmed that new language will be added to clarify the difference between the two groups.

Trustee Lyra Evans suggested the addition of language in the standard to explain the appeals process, despite the explanation of appeals found within The Parent Guide. Committee members agreed that The Parent Guide is not accessible to parents due to the density of the language contained within. Superintendent Symmonds stated that it is important that The Parent Guide is in alignment with Ministry standards.

Ms. Dewshi suggested on folio 47 the second bullet be revised to read: "to decide whether or not the student should be identified as exceptional" as written in the Special Education in Ontario Policy and Resource Guide.

b. Provincial and Demonstration Schools in Ontario (Perusal)

Manager Kay communicated that System Principal Hannah and her team added the following bullet point on folio 57, under 'Programs

at this school' which reads: "offer courses in the expanded core curriculum, which includes compensatory strategies, Braille and literacy.

c. Accessibility of School Buildings (Independent Review)

Superintendent Symmonds mentioned that this standard will be updated to reflect the expenditures on accessibility for 2019/2020.

Trustee Lyra Evans requested that Access to Glebe Collegiate Institute be added to the Motion/Action Tracking document with Michael Carson listed as the Action Agent.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Advisory Committee on Equity

Ms. Nadon-Campbell reported that in the meeting of 24 October 2019, she suggested that for Special Education students who require a scribe, that a letter of confidentiality is prepared for the scribe for signature in order to assure the student the disclosed information is classified.

7.2 Parent Involvement Committee

Mr. Morris made the following announcements:

- A speaker series is scheduled for 10 October 2019 by Karyn Kibsey on 'Protecting Your Child: Reducing the Risk of Sexual Abuse';
- The Annual Parent Conference will take place on 9 November 2019 and will feature an interactive process for idea exchanges amongst participants to support the afternoon programming on School Councils; and
- The Parent Involvement Committee has retained an external facilitator to assist in the development of an annual committee workplan.

7.3 Board

Chair Kirwan noted that he will be present at the Board meeting of 22 October 2019.

7.4 Committee of the Whole

Mr. Wylie reported that Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) announced a Request for Proposal for small vans for student transport.

8. New Business

Ms. Titley announced on 10 October 2019, parent 'walk-ins' have been registered in 15 schools in Ottawa to demonstrate support for public education across the city. She highlighted that the Ottawa-Carleton Elementary School

Teachers will be hosting a community forum on 21 November 2019 to bring together different parent groups and communities to discuss public education in Ontario.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:19 p.m.

Rob Kirwan, Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee



POLICY P.096.SES

TITLE: SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Date issued: August 1998

Revised: 28 May 2013

Authorization: 28 May 2013

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 ***and timely*** assessments and accompanying 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



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Long Range Agenda **2019-2020**

1. LD Program Review and Update (Ongoing)
2. Implementation of the Exit Outcomes (Ongoing)
3. Funding Extended Day Program (EDP) Special Education students (TBD)
4. Restorative Communication Exercise (TBD)
5. Ontario Autism Program Update (Ongoing)
6. Impact of Occasional Teacher Shortages on Special Education (LRTs and LSTs, days lost and exclusions) (TBD)
7. Special Education Funding Guidelines Special Equipment Amount (SEA) (TBD)
8. Changes and Impact of E-learning on Special Education Students at the Secondary Level (TBD)
9. Decommissioned Body Break Rooms (TBD)
10. Review Ad hoc Recommendations from the Central Committee (per Trustee Campbell)
11. Lockdown Procedure Review (January)
12. Integration and Support for Special Education Students (January)
13. Storefront Update (February)
14. Communication Disorder Assistant Update (February)
15. Private Assessments (February)

MOTION/ACTION TRACKING REPORT

	Meeting Date	Motion/Action	Action Agents	Requester	Reference/Date	Completed
1	15 November 2017 16 January 2019	ASAR and BIPSAW to utilize and highlight locally developed statistics	READ and Curriculum Services	C. Houlden	READ team alerted. Superintendent Symmonds to follow up with Ms. Houlden.	No
2	09 May 2018	EQAO Data on Gifted Students	READ and LSS	Ms. Miedema(ABC)	Ms. Miedema met with Superintendent Symmonds to discuss a change in the way the data is presented for all special education students, where the information will be aggregated by exceptionality	No
3	11 September	Transportation	P. Symmonds	K. Elmer	Follow-up with OSTA to ensure that students requiring special transportation are on a formal list through an updated database	No
4	9 October	Access to Glebe Collegiate Institute (GCI)	M. Carson	Trustee Lyra Evans	Follow-up on whether the side door at GCI equipped with a ramp, can be outfitted with a doorbell/camera to allow for access during the school day.	No

MOTION/ACTION TRACKING REPORT

5	9 October	Location of Specialized Program Classes 2019-2020	P. Symmonds	Ms. Miedema	Next iteration of the schedule to include the language and grade levels for the gifted classrooms	No
6	9 October	Staffing Allocations to Clifford Bowey Public School and Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education	P. Symmonds	Rob Kirwan	The District will communicate with the parent advisory group on future consultations.	No
7	9 October	Use of Service animals in Schools	P. Symmonds	Rob Kirwan	The District will ensure that the schools are aligned with the amendment to the legislation and clearly outline the process families should follow when requesting the accommodation of service animals in schools.	No



**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**19 November 2019
13 November 2019**

Report No. 19-114

In Year Support for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Developmental Disabilities

Key Contact: Peter Symmonds, Superintendent of Learning Support Services, 613-596-8254

PURPOSE:

1. To seek approval for an increase in staffing to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Developmental Disabilities (DD).

CONTEXT:

2. The District supports students with a range of needs both in regular program classrooms and in specialized program classes. Currently, the District operates 34 elementary and 15 secondary ASD specialized program classes, 25 DD classes at specialized program schools (i.e., Clifford Bowey, Crystal Bay) and 10 DD classes at community schools.

Annually, Learning Support Services (LSS) reviews student needs and provides recommendations for specialized program class openings and/or closings that are considered through the OCDSB Academic Staffing and Budget process. For the 2019-2020 school year, 14 new specialized program classes (9 elementary, 5 secondary) were opened to address projected student needs and to minimize waitlists. The specialized program class referral estimate process was highly predictive of system needs and waitlists for specialized program classes were well managed as of 28 June 2019 for the 2019-2020 school year.

Each year, new students arrive with diverse developmental profiles that were not known to the District during the spring planning process. LSS provides a range of strategies to effectively support transitions for these students, parent/guardians and the receiving school team (e.g., ASD/DD Intake, Emergency EAs, EA allocation in reserve, specialized program class placement).

While a small number of unexpected students is anticipated annually, this fall the District has welcomed an unprecedented number of students with complex ASD and DD profiles. Given that this level of student need was not anticipated during the spring planning process, LSS is working to develop an immediate plan for in year support.

3. Updated Wait List Information

As of 25 October 2019 the following information is available:

- 6 students with DD are waiting for placement at a specialized program school (i.e., Clifford Bowey, Crystal Bay); and
- 21 students with ASD are waiting for placement in an ASD specialized program class.

These students present with a range of complex needs that require a high level of support. Many of these students present with very low developmental levels (i.e., 10 to 18 months), are non-verbal (without communication systems established) and have behaviours of concern (e.g., elopement, self-injurious behaviours).

4. Options for In Year Support

LSS is committed to the development of a plan that ensures student safety, promotes the development of school readiness behaviours as well as the provision of appropriate educational programming and skill development for students waiting for placement. To this end, two options have been evaluated including:

- opening additional specialized program classes during the 2019-2020 school year; and
- providing additional staff (i.e., EAs, Itinerant ASD/DD Teacher) to meet student needs in regular programs.

5. Feasibility Analysis

Consultation with the Planning and Facilities departments indicated significant operational challenges associated with in year specialized program class openings. Significant facilities modifications are required to open both ASD and DD specialized program classes, especially for classes with younger students and students with complex profiles. Facilities work would not be reasonably completed until approximately March 2020 and risks causing major disruption to the learning environment of the host school. From a student accommodation perspective, new portables and classroom relocations would be required that could also significantly impact the host school community.

Opening new specialized program classes involves significant preparation in terms of staff hiring and training, resource acquisition, and communication with the school community. Past experience with specialized program class openings indicates that approximately 2 months are required to complete this important work.

Currently in the District, placement options from regular class to specialized program class exist to support students, including those with complex needs. For some students and their parents/guardians, the regular program is the preferred placement. Personalized to student needs, specific supports and services may include:

- EAs;
- Learning Support Teacher and/or Learning Resource Teacher;
- Multidisciplinary team (Learning Support Consultant, psychology, social work, speech-language pathology);
- Central teams (i.e., ASD/DD, Early Learning, Social Emotional Learning, Augmentative and Alternative Communication); and

By augmenting staff allocations, the level of support to students could be increased to address student needs in the regular program class. However, current labour shortages with specific employee groups could limit the District's ability to hire additional staff (i.e., EAs).

6. Trend Analysis of Student Need

An initial review suggests the following:

- An increase in the number of new elementary students (grades 1 through 8) with more severe presentations of ASD and DD (e.g., new Canadians, out of District transfers); and
- An increase in the number of new Kindergarten program registrants with complex ASD and DD profiles.

LSS has begun the process to better understand the factors that may be contributing to this unexpected increase in the number of new registrants with complex needs. It is not yet possible to determine whether this level of need will be a consistent pattern or an anomaly. During the annual spring planning process LSS will present contingency options should this level of student need become a more consistent pattern.

7. Interministerial Collaborations

The coordination of supports and services for children and youth with developmental disabilities, including ASD and Intellectual Disabilities, continues to be a challenge. Provincially, the Ministries of Education, Health, and Children Community and Social Services share this responsibility. LSS continues to leverage collaborations and partnerships with government and community agencies in support of our students and their families.

It is evident that the support required to meet the needs of students with increasingly complex profiles is a challenge with respect to human resources and budgetary considerations. Ongoing advocacy at all levels is required to ensure that these issues and challenges are well understood by the Ministry of Education and elected officials.

8. Summary and Recommendations

There are significant complexities as the OCDSB considers how best to support students with developmental disabilities, including ASD and Intellectual Disabilities, in the long term. This work will continue in close collaboration with all stakeholder groups.

To ensure support in the regular program for students new to the OCDSB who are waiting for placement in ASD/DD specialized program classes, the following in year supports are recommended:

- 25 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Educational Assistants; and
- 1 FTE Itinerant ASD/DD Teacher.

A hybrid staffing approach with increased EA support and the addition of an Itinerant ASD/DD Teacher would ensure student safety, provide coaching support for classroom teams to facilitate developmentally appropriate educational programming, and promote school readiness skills.

LSS will work collaboratively with Human Resources (HR) to recruit and all additional EAs (e.g., to maximize staffing resources). LSS, HR and school teams will work together to provide training opportunities for new staff. Page 36 of 75

Projections for the number of vacancies at specialized program schools (i.e., Clifford Bowey, Crystal Bay) indicate that the current cohort of students waiting for this type of placement could be accommodated in September 2020 with the existing number of pupil places.

Additional elementary ASD specialized program classes would be required for September 2020 to provide specialized program class placement options for the current cohort of students on the ASD wait list.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

9. The estimated cost associated with the proposed increase to in year staffing is as follows:
- 25 FTE EAs = \$1,417,800;
 - 1 FTE elementary Itinerant Teacher for ASD/DD = \$107,404; and
 - Total in year cost = \$1,525,204.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

10. LSS continues to collaborate with the school teams that are supporting students on the waitlist for ASD and DD specialized program classes to ensure collaborative and transparent communication with parents and guardians.

The information in this report will be shared with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

STRATEGIC LINKS:

11. The presented information directly relates to the key priority areas of Culture of Caring and Social Responsibility. This information will contribute to equity of access, opportunity and outcomes for learners with special education needs and facilitate informed decision making for the system.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board approve the proposed in year increase to staffing (25.0 FTE Educational Assistants and 1.0 FTE Itinerant Teacher) effective immediately, to support students with ASD and DD.

Peter Symmonds, Superintendent of
Learning Support Services

Camille Williams-Taylor
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board



MEMORANDUM

Memo No. 19-119

TO: Trustees
Student Trustees
Special Education Advisory Committee

FROM: Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board
Peter Symmonds, Superintendent of Learning Support Services

DATE: 11 October 2019

RE: **Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Launches *Right to Read* Public Inquiry**

On 3 October 2019, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) launched *Right to Read*, a public inquiry into human rights issues that affect students with reading disabilities in Ontario's public education system. The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board is one of eight Ontario school districts selected for the inquiry to provide a representative sample of boards across the province.

Other district school boards included in the inquiry are:

- Hamilton Wentworth District School Board;
- Keewatin-Patricia District School Board;
- Lakehead District School Board;
- London District Catholic School Board;
- Peel District School Board;
- Simcoe-Muskoka Catholic District School Board; and
- Thames Valley District School Board.

The OHRC is conducting a public inquiry to find out if students with reading disabilities (dyslexia and other learning disabilities that affect reading) have meaningful access to education as required by the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (Code). Specifically, the OHRC will assess school boards against five benchmarks the OHRC has indicated are part of an effective systemic approach to teaching all students to read:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL);
- Mandatory early screening;
- Reading intervention programs;
- Effective accommodation; and
- Psycho-educational assessments (if required).

The inquiry will also recognize systemic and structural issues that may be contributing to human rights issues, including in the areas of teacher training, funding, oversight, monitoring and accountability, data collection, and curriculum design. The OHRC has retained Dr. Linda Siegel, University of British Columbia Faculty of Education, to assist with the inquiry.

The OHRC is carrying out this public interest inquiry pursuant to its powers under the Code. These powers include, but are not limited to:

- The power to request the production of documents, things or information;
- The power to question a person on matters that may be relevant to the inquiry; subject only to the person's right to counsel;
- The power to enter any premises where there may be relevant documents, things or information; and
- The ability to use expert assistance to carry out the inquiry.

The Code places a legal obligation on persons to comply with the OHRC's inquiry requests.

The OHRC will release a formal report on findings and recommendations in 2020.

Should you have any questions please contact Peter Symmonds at 613-596-8254.

Attach.

cc Senior Staff
 All Principals
 Corporate Records

Right to Read

Ontario Human Rights Commission Inquiry into human rights issues that affect students with reading disabilities in Ontario's public education system

Terms of referenceⁱ

October 3, 2019

Reading is a fundamental skill that students must have to navigate their school experience and their later lives. Our public schools should be able to teach students to read. Yet, this may not be the reality for students with reading disabilities.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) is concerned that Ontario's public education system may be failing to meet the needs of students with reading disabilities (dyslexia and other learning disabilities that affect reading). The OHRC is conducting a public inquiry to find out if these students have meaningful access to education as required by the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (*Code*). The United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* also recognizes the right to an inclusive education system directed to the full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth.

A reading disability, formally known as a specific learning disorder with impairment in reading, affects a person's language-based processing skills. Depending on the person, it can be more or less severe and can affect reading fluency, decoding, reading comprehension, recall, writing, spelling, and sometimes speech. Dyslexia is the most common reading disability. It involves difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition, and poor spelling and decoding abilities.

Reading disabilities can exist along with other related disabilities and affect approximately 10% of the population. Reading disabilities are the most prevalent disability among students with special education needs. There are students with reading disabilities in every classroom.

Dyslexia and other reading disabilities are due to brain differences and are not related to a person's intelligence. There is no cure, but with scientific evidence-based and systematic instruction in reading, early identification, effective interventions and accommodations, reading disabilities can be resolved or greatly diminished. Failing to do so has serious academic and life-long consequences for students and their families. Students can lose their sense of dignity and self-worth, develop depression and anxiety, and leave school. They may even be more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system, become homeless, or die by suicide. Parents may struggle to get assessments, interventions and accommodations for their children, and in many cases may be forced to pay for services privately, assuming they can.

The OHRC's work on disability and education

The OHRC is the provincial statutory agency responsible for advancing human rights and preventing systemic discrimination in Ontario. The OHRC has broad powers under the *Code* to:

- Initiate inquiries in the public interest
- Monitor and report on human rights issues
- Engage in litigation, including by filing applications with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTTO) and intervening in other legal proceedings.

The OHRC's [2017–2022 Strategic Plan](#) identifies addressing systemic discrimination in our education system as one of its four strategic priorities. The OHRC recognizes the vital importance of education to an individual's personal, social and economic development, and ability to contribute to the well-being of the community and province.

The OHRC is working to remove systemic barriers that students with disabilities face in accessing educational services, and to increase human rights accountability in Ontario's public education system.

For over two decades, the OHRC has used its mandate to address human rights issues affecting students with disabilities, as well as students with other intersecting *Code*-protected identities such as race, ancestry and sex (see "OHRC initiatives related to education and disability"). Most recently, in 2018, the OHRC released a [Policy on accessible education for students with disabilities](#) along with [Recommendations to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities](#).

Responsibility for public education in Ontario

Ontario's *Education Act* states: "A strong public education system is the foundation of a prosperous, caring and civil society," and that the "purpose of education is to provide students with the opportunity to realize their potential and develop into highly skilled, knowledgeable, caring citizens who contribute to their society."

The *Education Act* goes on to state: "All partners in the education sector, including the Minister, the Ministry and the boards, have a role to play in enhancing student achievement and well-being, closing gaps in student achievement and maintaining confidence in the province's publicly funded education systems."

Under the *Education Act*, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has overall responsibility for developing legislation, regulations and policies for special education. The province's 72 publicly funded school boards are responsible for delivering special education programs and services in accordance with MOE requirements. The MOE is also responsible for funding, setting curriculum, setting requirements for diplomas and certificates, and issuing policy directives and guidelines for school boards. School boards are responsible for most aspects of delivering education to pupils and for providing education programs that meet the needs of the school community, including needs for special education.

Principals are responsible for organizing and managing individual schools, including any budget the school board assigns to the school. Principals are also responsible for the quality of instruction at their school and for student discipline.

Teachers are responsible for preparing lesson plans and teaching classes. They are responsible for supporting their students and evaluating their progress.

The OHRC's inquiry powers

The OHRC is carrying out this public interest inquiry pursuant to its powers under [section 31 of the Code](#). These powers include, but are not limited, to:

- The power to request the production of documents, things or information
- The power to question a person on matters that may be relevant to the inquiry; subject only to the person's right to counsel
- The power to enter any premises where there may be relevant documents, things or information
- The ability to use expert assistance to carry out the inquiry.

The *Code* places a legal obligation on persons to comply with the OHRC's inquiry requests. The information obtained on an inquiry under section 31 may be received into evidence in a proceeding before the HRTO.

Scope of the inquiry

The OHRC will inquire into potential human rights issues affecting students with reading disabilities in Ontario's public schools, including:

1. **Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** Whether Universal Design for Learning, an approach to education that meets the diverse needs of every student, is being applied within Ontario's reading curriculum and in classroom teaching methods
2. **Mandatory early screening:** Whether all students are being screened for reading difficulties in kindergarten (or in Grade 1, where a child does not attend public school for kindergarten) using scientific evidence-based early screening tools
3. **Evidence-based reading intervention programs:** Whether students who have been identified as having reading difficulties through mandatory early screening or psycho-educational assessment have access to timely, scientific evidence-based reading intervention programs
4. **Accommodation:** Whether students who have been identified as having reading difficulties through mandatory early screening or psycho-educational assessment have access to timely and effective accommodation and assistive technology.
5. **Psycho-educational assessments:** The role of psycho-educational assessments and whether students have access to timely and appropriate psycho-educational assessments where needed (in addition to mandatory early screening for reading difficulties)

The OHRC will consider perspectives on definitions of learning disabilities and dyslexia, including whether these terms are appropriately used and understood.

The OHRC will also examine the unique challenges for students with reading disabilities who face other barriers such as living in poverty or being members of intersecting *Code*-protected groups [e.g. newcomer students, English-language learners (students who are learning English at the same time as they are learning the curriculum and developing a full range of literacy skills), racialized students, and students with Indigenous ancestry].

The OHRC has selected eight public school boards from across the province to assess their compliance with their obligation to provide equal treatment to students with reading disabilities. This representative sample will allow the OHRC to assess whether systemic issues exist across Ontario's English public elementary and secondary schools.*

The OHRC will request documents, data and information from the following eight school boards:

1. Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
2. Keewatin-Patricia District School Board
3. Lakehead District School Board
4. London District Catholic School Board
5. Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
6. Peel District School Board
7. Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board
8. Thames Valley District School Board.

To select this representative sample of school boards from across Ontario, working with an expert, the OHRC considered a combination of the following: lived experience accounts; population density; different geographic regions; demographic information; data from the Education Quality and Accountability Office including reading test results; boards' Special Education Plans; the proportion of students from different *Code*-protected identities; and public reports.

The inquiry will also recognize systemic and structural issues that may be contributing to human rights issues, including in the areas of teacher training; funding; oversight; monitoring and accountability, including appropriate assessment of student progress; data collection; and curriculum design. In addition to school boards, the OHRC may review the roles of various partners in the education sector, including but not limited to the MOE, faculties of education at Ontario universities, and the Ontario College of Teachers.

The OHRC may examine and report on any other issues relevant to meeting the needs of students with reading disabilities in the delivery of public education in Ontario.

Inquiry process

To carry out the inquiry, the OHRC will:

1. Seek production of documents, data and information
2. Conduct research
3. Retain expert(s)
4. Consult with key stakeholders
5. Receive information from affected individuals, groups, experts, organizations, and other stakeholders through a variety of means.

The OHRC will report publicly on the inquiry process and its findings and will make recommendations based on its findings.

Before making its report public, the OHRC will provide an opportunity for the selected school boards, the MOE, and other education sector partners affected by the inquiry's recommendations to respond.

The OHRC may take further steps available to it under the *Code* to address any issues identified in the inquiry process.

Any revisions to these Terms of Reference will be posted publicly.

Privacy

The OHRC recognizes the potential vulnerability of affected individuals and the sensitivity of information it will receive during the inquiry.

The OHRC will take all reasonable steps to conduct any surveys and interviews in a way that protects the security of the person and respects their confidentiality. The OHRC will not disclose personal information of affected individuals without informed consent.

The OHRC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that personal information that it obtains is treated confidentially and in accordance with statutory safeguards including the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)*.

The OHRC will be governed by its Protection of Personal Information and Privacy Safeguards Policy, and will take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorized access, use or disclosure of personal information as directed by *FIPPA*.

The OHRC will destroy any personal information as soon as reasonably possible after it is no longer required.

*The OHRC is aware that issues may exist within French-language school boards, private schools, and in colleges and universities. As the unique issues in each of these contexts require separate consideration, they are outside the scope of the current inquiry.

ⁱ Source: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/right-read-terms-reference>



MEMORANDUM

Memo No. 19-131

TO: Trustees
Student Trustees

FROM: Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board
Peter Symmonds, Superintendent of Learning Support Services

DATE: 8 November 2019

RE: **Release of the Ontario Autism Advisory Panel Report**

This memo provides an update to trustees regarding the development of a new needs-based Ontario Autism Program (OAP). On 30 October 2019, Todd Smith, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), announced the release of The Ontario Autism Advisory Panel Report, October 2019 which contains recommendations for MCCSS to consider in developing the new OAP.

In the spring of 2019, the Ontario government engaged in a province-wide public consultation process and appointed a new 20-member Ontario Autism Program Advisory Panel (the Panel). This Panel was comprised of parents with lived experience, adults with autism, educators and other experts from a range of disciplines including psychology, behaviour analysis, speech language pathology, rehabilitation services, developmental pediatrics and research.

The Panel was initially tasked to review the results of information and data collected through the public consultation process and to provide advice to the government on how to better support children and youth on the autism spectrum who have complex needs, including through additional direct funding. However, based on feedback from families of children and youth on the autism spectrum and the Panel, in July 2019 Minister Smith expanded the scope of the Panel to provide advice on the design of new needs-based OAP.

The Panel was asked to provide recommendations that would help to inform an approach that is responsive to the individual needs of children and youth to improve their long-term outcomes, and provide advice on the design of a new OAP that is:

- Needs-based and addresses individualized needs of children and youth;
- Sustainable within an annual budget of \$600 million;
- Able to serve as many children, youth and families as possible; and
- Aligned and coordinated with schools and the health system to facilitate a child and youth-centred approach.

The Panel has identified a list of OAP Core Services that include:

- Applied Behaviour Analysis;
- Speech Language Pathology Services;

- Occupational Therapy;
- Mental health services, including time-limited psychotherapy and/or counselling delivered by regulated professionals who have the controlled act of psychotherapy in their scope of practice; and
- Access to technology, including Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), at the recommendation of a regulated health professional or Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA).

The comprehensive report contains many recommendations for MCCSS but also established as part of its guiding principles to seek integration with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Education (EDU). For a list of all of the broad areas considered, please see Appendix A - Categories of Recommendations.

The Panel has recommended that an education advisory committee on autism be formed before the end of 2019 that includes stakeholders from the education sector, MCCSS, MOH, parents and individuals with autism. The Panel has offered to provide recommendations by the spring of 2020 to the Minister of Education on the most effective ways to meet the needs of students on the autism spectrum, including ways to align MCCSS and EDU services for autistic students, as well as the implementation of education-related policies, programs and professional development.

While there are many recommendations contained in the report, those that directly relate to education are provided in Appendix B - Recommendations to the Ministry of Education. The Panel affirmed their belief that these options should be funded by EDU.

One of the ongoing challenges faced by our families and the District is the uncertainty regarding the transition to the new needs-based OAP. The Panel has made two recommendations regarding the transition which will impact how and when students transition back to school. Both recommendations involve establishing a care coordinator who will meet with families as their current plans approach their completion date. While MCCSS has not provided a response as of yet, should this recommendation be accepted and implemented, it would allow the District to establish protocols for communication with care coordinators and provide adequate time to plan for an effective transition to school.

Currently, MCCSS is considering the recommendations of the Panel and developing a new needs-based OAP for implementation in April 2020. To date, there has not been a response from EDU.

At this time, there is no change to the District's practices regarding our programs and services to support students with autism. Learning Support Services continues to monitor MCCSS and EDU announcements and will provide updates as details become available.

The full report is available [online](#).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Peter Symmonds at peter.symmonds@ocdsb.ca

cc Senior Staff
 Special Education Advisory Committee
 Manager of Board Services
 Corporate Records

Appendix A - Categories of Recommendations

The Ontario Autism Program Advisory Panel has made several recommendations in the following categories:

1. Entering the OAP
2. Services and Supports
 - a. Specific Care Pathways
 - b. Early Intervention
 - c. Mental Health Services
 - d. Urgent Response Services
 - e. Foundational Family Supports
 - f. OAP Core Services
 - g. Respite
 - h. Targeted Supports
3. Needs Determination, Assessment and Care Planning
 - a. Defining Need
 - b. Care Coordinator
 - c. Importance of Clinical Assessment
4. Capacity Building and Oversight
 - a. Capacity Building
 - b. Oversight and Accountability
 - c. Evaluation
5. Alignment with Other Ministries
 - a. Ministry of Education
 - b. Ministry of Health
6. Implementation Considerations
 - a. Implementation Committee
 - b. Transition to the OAP
 - c. Communication Strategy
 - d. Service Delivery

Appendix B - Recommendations to the Ministry of Education¹

The education advisory committee on autism should endeavour to:

- Design best practice guidelines to address school board implementation of special education policy and regulations specific to autistic students/students on the autism spectrum to support effective programming and consistency across the province
- Review the implementation of Regulation 181/98, Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils, as it pertains to students on the autism spectrum and create best practice guidelines to support adherence to this regulation across school boards
- Conduct a review of school board adherence to Individual Education Plan (IEP) Standards
- Implement a process for collecting data on the topic of both formal and “soft” exclusions, modified days and students being sent home
- Phase out the practice of using seclusion rooms in a systematic manner that maintains the safety of all children and youth and school board personnel. Review policies related to classroom removal/exclusions (e.g. use of calming, exclusion or sensory rooms) and establish standards to ensure safe and ethical use that contributes to student success
- Develop guidelines to ensure that parents are aware of all special education programs and services at their local school and in their local school board and their rights by:
 - Ensuring that upon entry to school families are provided with a package detailing the special education programs and services available, including information related to the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process and the Ontario School Roadmap for Children with Special Needs
 - Informing parents of a child or youth on the autism spectrum registered to attend a public school of their legal right to an IPRC, regardless of their specific Board
 - Developing an IPRC package for families, including the Ontario School Roadmap for Children with Special Needs upon registration to any public school in Ontario
- Design and implement strategies to mitigate the negative impact of policy changes such as class size and e-learning expansion on autistic students
- Review the 2016 advice/report from the Multi-Sector Working Group on the Transition to Postsecondary Education for Students with Disabilities with an Early Focus on Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Consider this advice regarding the core components of an individualized transition process, transition partners’ roles and responsibilities, and responsive environments to help students with ASD get the right support at the right time, as one of many ways to strengthen the mandated transition planning process out of secondary school into adult life.

The following recommendations are aimed at improving access to integrated community and school-based supports for students on the autism spectrum to support meaningful access to education. The Advisory Panel recommends:

- Develop protocols to facilitate meaningful collaboration between OAP providers and the accepting school. This may include continuing Connections for Students, as well as identifying and removing barriers to direct observation and support within the school
- Support wraparound services by developing mechanisms to allow meaningful collaboration between the school team, and clinicians/therapists
- Undertake a comprehensive review of provincial policies including Policy and Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 140, Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and PPM 149, Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals,

¹ The Ontario Autism Advisory Panel Report, October 2019, pp.33-39.

Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals with a focus on resolving conflicting messages and integrating approaches to reduce the potential for barriers

- Support development of collaborative partnerships among Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs), regulated health professionals such as Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Occupational Therapists (OTs) and educators in schools to determine the most effective ways to integrate these services into a child or youth's education plan. Consideration should be given to the integration of more direct service as appropriate and based on student need
- Expand the Pilot to Improve School-Based Supports for Students with ASD focusing on dedicated space. Continue to evaluate the outcomes of the pilot and use that information to design program components that are supported by evidence from the pilot
- Dedicate space in schools for all therapies such as ABA, OT and SLP
- Expand Care, Treatment, Custody and Corrections (CTCC) programs to guide ongoing service development for students. These classrooms offer the opportunity for collaboration between OAP service providers with expertise in ABA, educators, as well as regulated health professionals including OTs, SLPs and mental health professionals. These classrooms should be expanded to ensure ongoing access to evidence-based school and community agency collaboration within the education system
- Expand the number of mental health workers and Educational Assistants (EAs) to support autistic students/students on the autism spectrum in schools with due consideration of appropriate representation in both elementary and secondary schools

To enhance access to evidence-based ABA, OT and SLP supports for children and youth on the autism spectrum in school boards, PPM 140 and PPM 149 should be modernized to include updated, evidence-based standards for the implementation of ABA educational practices and those services provided by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals.

The Advisory Panel recommends:

PPM 140 and PPM 149

- Include a broad range of services, both consultative and direct, which consider the varied needs of students on the autism spectrum
- Require the staff designing and implementing ABA educational practices to have the appropriate qualifications (e.g. BCBAs, Registered Behaviour Technicians)
- Reduce barriers to access to facilitate strong partnerships between schools and external agencies, including OAP ABA, SLP and OT providers
- Develop strategies to support adherence to best practice standards
- Add a parent/student survey to monitor implementation
- Implement requirements for ongoing data collection and analysis.

PPM 149

- Reduce barriers to access by facilitating strong partnerships between schools, external agencies and external regulated health professions, regulated social services professionals and paraprofessionals for students on the autism spectrum.

Improved professional learning and training supports for educators and professionals supporting students on the autism spectrum is recommended through the following:

- Review Ontario's Initial Teacher Education and relevant Additional Qualification Courses to enhance content related to the development, implementation and monitoring of IEPs, behavior and safety plans for students with special education needs, including students on the autism spectrum
- Ensure that all members of the child or youth's education team receive the training required to support the mental health needs of students on the autism spectrum

- Develop a provincial in-service curriculum for educators, educational assistants (EAs) and school administrators specific to supporting students on the autism spectrum, including registered behavior technician training. Basic training should also be provided to office, and caretaking staff and bus drivers
- Ensure that appropriate training is provided for all educators working with non-speaking, minimally speaking and unreliably speaking autistic students on AAC. Training and communication support should be collaborative in nature and involve experts in communication training for children and youth on the autism spectrum, including SLPs, OTs, and BCBAs
- Work with relevant ministries to ensure that the curricula for postsecondary programs for teachers, developmental services workers, child and youth workers, early childhood educators, educational
- support workers and regulated health professionals include content related to best practices in supporting children and youth on the autism spectrum, including an understanding of common co-occurring conditions and learning requirements
- Review the current positive practices in Ontario's school boards to promote consistency and continuity of EAs working with students on the autism spectrum to minimize in-year staffing changes where possible. Where this is not possible, ensure that policies and practices are in place to support warm transfers and seamless transitions.

The School-based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS) program, delivered by Children's Treatment Centres, should be utilized to achieve the government's goals of cross-ministerial integration to improve services to students on the autism spectrum through the following:

- Review and amend PPM 81, Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings that splits the responsibility for speech and language between SBRS and school boards' SLPs to allow all SLPs working in the school setting to intervene using a holistic approach that addresses the speech and language challenges of children/youth on the autism spectrum
- Standardize the interpretation of the SBRS mandate across the province, specific to autistic students/students on the autism spectrum. At present, the interpretation of the SBRS mandate varies. The mandate is interpreted more narrowly in some areas of the province thereby restricting the scope of practice for therapists
- Recognizing that the needs of children and youth on the autism spectrum are not well met by consultative models alone, amend the service delivery model of the SBRS occupational therapy program
- (which is primarily consultative) to embrace tiered service delivery models which provide consultative approaches, and group and direct therapy approaches depending on the needs of the child/youth
- Consult with key stakeholders (stakeholders from education, MCCSS, SLP, OT, parents and people with lived experience) prior to any transitions in service provision or changes in service delivery model in the SBRS program. Approach to transitions should have as a guiding principle that any change should prioritize the minimization of disruption to continuity of care (including disruptions during the school year) and/or any reduction in service levels for children and youth on the autism spectrum.



Special Education Staff

Purpose of the Standard

To provide specific details on board staff to the Ministry and to the public.

Special Education Staff 2018-2019	Staff Qualifications	Elementary Panel FTE	Secondary Panel FTE
1. Teachers of Exceptional Students			
1.1 Learning Support Teacher / Learning Resource Teacher	Special Education Part 3 (Specialist)	242.75	38.67
1.2 Teachers of Specialized Classes	Minimum of Special Education Part 1	142	85.83
2. Other Special Education Teachers			
2.1 Itinerant Teachers of Blind / Low Vision	Minimum of Special Education Part 1, AQ - Teaching Students who are Blind	8.25	0
2.2 Itinerant Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	Minimum of Special Education Part 1, AQ - Deaf Education	11.3	0
2.3 Itinerant Teachers of Social /Emotional Learning	Special Education Part 3 (Specialist)	3.0	0
2.4 Itinerant Teachers of Assistive Technology	Special Education Part 3 (Specialist)	4.0	2.0
2.5 Learning Support Consultants	Special Education Part 3 (Specialist)	14.0	3.0





3.0 Educational Assistants in Special Education		
Educational Assistants	Developmental Service Worker (DSW), Child and Youth Worker(CYW) diploma or an equivalent program	720.0
Other Professional Resource Staff		
4.1 Psychologists and Psychological Associates, Psychoeducational Consultants	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	28.8
4.2 Speech-Language Pathologists	Masters in Speech-Language Pathology, registration with CASLPO	29.0
4.3 Social Workers	Master of Social Work and registered with The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers	28.8
Paraprofessional Resource Staff		
5.1 Orientation and mobility personnel	Orientation and Mobility Specialist	1.0
5.2 Transcribers (for blind students) Brailist	Certified Braille Transcriber or equivalent knowledge	0.5
5.3 Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Coordinator	ABA certificate courses	1.0
5.4 Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)	Successful completion of the BCBA exam through the Behavior Analyst Certification Board	1.0





A. District Level Support

The following individuals / teams / personnel are available to support the staff in schools:

- Superintendent of Learning Support Services
- System Principals of Learning Support Services
- Managers of Learning Support Services / Mental Health and Critical Services
- Multi-Disciplinary staff
- Assistive Technology Team
- Learning Support Consultants
- Itinerant Teachers (Deaf / Hard of Hearing and Blind / Low Vision)
- Itinerant Educational Assistants
- Professional Student Services Personnel (Social Workers, Psychologists, Speech Language Pathologists)

District Level Staff Roles / Descriptions

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 staff 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

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

Itinerant Teacher Autism

- increases capacity of regular classroom teachers to meet the variety of needs of students with Autism; provides professional development and in class support;
- provides instructional and educational support services to students diagnosed with Autism, including support in the development of ABA strategies;
- consults with teachers and other LSS team members (e.g. ASD team, SLP,)
- provides professional development to all school staff including principals, EA's, ECE, teachers etc.;
- reviews and provide resources including research and assistive technology;
- works collaboratively with the Autism Spectrum Disorder team and the multi-disciplinary teams at individual schools;
- Supports IEP development, programming and transition plan development;

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Coordinator

- develops an ABA toolkit and resources to support ABA strategies 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; liaises with medical professionals in the community who provide IBI and ABA support (e.g. CHEO, Portia, etc.);
- supports all Autism initiatives such as; Autism awareness month, parent /guarding conferences and events;
- works collaboratively with the Autism Spectrum Disorder team and the multi-disciplinary teams at individual schools;
- Supports pilot projects and evidence-based social skills development initiatives;

Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA)

- works to support school staff in understanding how to support 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 related to emerging supports available for students with behavioural needs;
- works collaboratively with the Autism Spectrum Disorder team and the multi-disciplinary teams at individual schools;
- supports and mentors staff enrolled in the Registered Behaviour Therapy (RBT) course and oversees the implementation of these strategies into their regular school duties;

Itinerant Teachers of Blind/Low Vision

- direct instruction in Braille and other tactile learning strategies;
- develop accommodations/modifications and acquisition of curriculum materials (Braille, tapes, large print, etc.);
- provide orientation and mobility instruction (i.e., 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 related to vision;
- provide consultative services and interpretations of vision reports to teaching staff;
- facilitates the transition of students from pre-school/outside agencies to elementary school and from elementary school to secondary schools;
- supports the development of IEPs, programming, and transition plans;
- monitors student needs and provides feedback to school related to supports required as student needs fluctuate;

Itinerant Teachers of the 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;

Learning Support Consultants (K to 12)

- develop and deliver special education professional development for staff;
- assist school teams 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 and direction;





- identify and support best practices in all specialized classes and provide program support;
- central referral to specialized classes committee member;
- Supports IEP development, programming and transition plans

District Level Central Teams

The Assistive Technology Team

- provides support and training district-wide to schools on assistive technology purchased through Special Equipment Amount (SEA) funds;
- coordinates the ordering of SEA equipment;
- coordinates and facilitates training/professional development sessions on SEA equipment and software for students and staff;
- assists in the completion of special equipment applications;

The Autism Spectrum Disorder Team/ Developmental Disability Support 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) and a developmental disability (DD);
- assists in the development and implementation of IEPs, behavioural programs, communication strategies and assessment practices;
- provides ongoing support in the area of professional development in partnership with the CHEO School Support Program;
- supports new Ministry initiatives and pilots related to the field of Autism;
- responds to multi-disciplinary team requests for support as needed;
- provides professional development to the District and the community;
- supports PPM 140 and ABA practices in schools;
- provides resources to schools to support environmental accommodations and recommendations for sensory rooms / spaces;
- provides support to two specialized schools for students with developmental disabilities, Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education and Clifford Bowey Public School and all specialized classes for ASD and DD district-wide;
- provides program support for teachers and administration while working with parent(s)/guardian(s) and community agencies to facilitate new admissions;
- supports an intake process which provides information to schools and parents upon entering into the OCDSB;





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 Early Learning Team

- provides class wide 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 and planning for students who have been identified with giftedness;
- provides consultation and recommendations pertaining to giftedness identification procedures;
- creates awareness around supports and connects staff with a wide variety of supports available to support students with giftedness;

Itinerant Educational Assistants (IEA)

- provide consultative and direct services to students experiencing behavioural challenges, including the development of behavior support plans;
- provide consultation to school staff on behaviourally related issues;
- assist in the development of student plans (safety plans, safe plans, and Behaviour Management Plans);
- provides professional development in promoting positive behavior;

Psychology Professional Staff

- provides ongoing consultation to schools on student related issues;
- engages in early screening and intervention on learning, student development, and mental health;
- provides both direct or indirect support or intervention to students;
- provides assessments for students K - 12;





- plays an integral role as a school multi-disciplinary team member and is the key point person to respond to threat making, high risk behaviour, and tragic events within the school;
- collaborates with community partners and facilitates access to external resources, when appropriate;
- participates in central referral committees for specialized classes;
- engages in staff training in such areas as suicide prevention, mental health promotion, and behaviour management

Social Work Professional Staff

- consults with each assigned school to establish priorities with respect to students, staff and families;
- provides direct intervention with students, families and school staff directed at resolving or managing a range of social, mental health and/or behavioural issues affecting all students;
- provides crisis intervention typically focusing on assessment and follow up in regard to risk issues including suicide, violence and threat making behaviour
- participates in central referral committees for specialized classes;
- provides support to school staff and students in the aftermath of tragic events
- investigates truancy as mandated in the *Ontario Education Act and Regulations* and assists with student and parent re-engagement in school;
- provides counseling support of students in the SAL program where required;
- provides support to families facing financial hardship;
- may provide interventions at all levels of the Tiered-Approach to Intervention district-wide;

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 / DD Teams;





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 / guardians 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, and supporting long-term recovery.

Urgent Care Team

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.

B. School Level Support

The following supports are available within schools:

- School Principals (and Vice-Principals where applicable);
- Classroom Teachers
- Learning Support Teachers and Learning Resource Teachers
- Specialized Classroom Teachers / Staff
- Educational Assistants
- Early Childhood Educators (Elementary panel only)

School Level Staff Roles and Descriptions

School Principal

- ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements is developed and followed;
- chairs Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meetings;
- supervises all school staff;
- consults with parent(s)/guardian(s) and with school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for students with special education needs;
- ensures that parent(s)/guardian(s) are consulted in the development of their child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP;
- ensures the delivery of the program as set out in the IEP;





- ensures that appropriate assessments are requested if necessary and that parental/guardian consent is obtained;
- provides the parent guide, and other relevant documents to parent(s)/guardian(s);

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.

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

- play a major role in the delivery of special education and deal 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 exceptional learners;
- 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 exceptional students who require intensive support in core academic areas;

Specialized Program Classroom Teacher

- provide learning opportunities tailored to each student's specific exceptionality, learning style, and special education needs as outlined on the student's IEP;
- Support students to progress at their appropriate level and reach their potential within the parameters of the Quality Program Indicators for the specialized program 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 prevention and intervention;
- supporting 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;

School EA allocations are reviewed and approved by the school Superintendent of Instruction.

Early Childhood Educator (ECE)

- assists in implementing and planning education to Kindergarten children;
- assesses the development of Kindergarten children through observation and monitoring;
- upholds a classroom environment that is healthy physically, and social learning
- relays information to families;
- undertaking of duties assigned by the principal in regards to the Kindergarten program.





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.

The OCDSB Learning Support Services Staff Development Plan

The overall goal of the LSS Staff Development Plan is to build capacity of Special Education staff, classroom teachers, support staff, and administrators to provide them with access to information, materials, and skills necessary to implement and support programming for exceptional students. The OCDSB continues to focus on student achievement rooted in the Ontario Curriculum, EQAO assessments, and alternative programs and goals specific to the individual learner. These focus areas are also linked to the goals in the following District frameworks:

- [The OCDSB Strategic Plan](#)
- [The Exit Outcomes](#)

LSS Staff Development Plans incorporate feedback from school-based special education staff, (learning support teacher (LST), learning resource teacher (LRT), specialized classroom staff, and through an ongoing evaluation of system needs. In addition, the following are other ways staff provide input for staff development planning:

- written and verbal feedback;
- requests from school administrators 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 legislation and District policies and procedures;

In addition, we are required to follow specific regulations and mandates from the Ministry of Education. Priorities in the area of staff development are determined by Ministry of Education initiatives and Board initiatives. The following factors are considered:

- 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;





Professional Development Input from SEAC

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

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.

Release and Professional Development	Amount spent
ABA Release	\$19,642.40
American Ed. Research Association Conference	\$326.85
American Ed. Research Association Membership	\$320.89
APPIC Match (Psychology)	\$391.26
ASD Webinar (Brett DiNovi)	\$81.14
Autism Awareness Conference	\$2519.90
Autism Certificate Course for Educators	\$700.00
Autism Intervenor Course	\$1,876.00
Autism Presentation to Staff & Parents (D.J. Weiss)	\$2,601.32
Autism & Stress	\$1,370.94
Autism Webinar (Dr. J. Weiss)	\$175.00
Behaviour Management Systems Training Release	\$39,225.36
Blind /Low Vision Workshop Release	\$1,715.05
Brain Based Learning /Behavioural Challenges	\$5,234.16
Bytown OPC	\$ 40.00
Cannabis in Schools	\$615.85
Cannabis Workshop	\$100.00
CASLPO	\$750.00
CPI Membership Renewals (2 staff)	\$350.00
CPI Trainer Certification	\$4,279.87
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Workshop Release	\$9,136.63
Empower Reading Program	\$132,898.17
Empower Reading Program Training Release	\$ 60,000.00





Geneva Centre for Autism - Webinars	\$373.00
Geneva Symposium (Autism)	\$12,136.00
Hanen Centre Training - SLP (3 staff)	\$2,903.55
ITAT Training Release	\$6,254.00
Inquiry Based Learning for Students with ASD	\$2,100.00
ILLD Workshop Release	\$ 3,530.45
New LST Training/Networking	\$2,325.33
Mental Health Conference	\$635.00
Mental Health Law for Children And Adolescents	\$615.85
National Association for Gifted Children Conference	\$1,460.60
NVCI training (Membership Fee- 2 staff)	\$350.00
Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis Conf.	\$847.50
Ontario College of SLPs membership	\$271.20
Osgoode Law Professional Development	3412.85
SafeTalk (2 Sessions)	\$523.67
Stress and Autism	\$1,370.94
Registered Behaviour Technician Course (21 Staff)	\$7,093.00
Total	\$ 534,893.56

Principals and Vice-Principal Intern Program / Training Opportunities

- mandatory intern program for newly appointed principals and vice-principals;
- ongoing 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, etc.

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.

Special Education Workshops for OCDSB Staff

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 meeting. During the 2018-19 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
- ABA School Team Training
- Anxiety, Stress and Autism – Considerations for Supporting your Students
- Art of Play
- ASD Mentorship
- ASD New Teacher Training
- ASD Pilot Program - Ozobots Training
- ASD Specialized Program, Elementary and Secondary Sessions
- ASD Resources Room Model – Best Practices and Conversation
- ASD Working with Challenging Behaviours and Teaching Independence
- ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)
- Autism Awareness Conference
- 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
- Brain Based Learning and Behavioural Challenges
- Cannabis in Schools
- Communication Strategies for the Early Learner
- Addressing Mental Health in Autism -Presentation by Dr. Jonathan Weiss
- Early Learning Strategies
- EA Autism Trainings
- 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 - The Early Years
- Geneva Centre E-Learning Modules
- General Learning Program - Program Planning - TBC
- Guiding Cooperation through Reinforcement
- Inclusion – Making it work for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing





- Intermediate DDP - Developing Communication and Language
- ILLD - Executive Functioning
- ILLD - Grade 6 Transitions
- Inquiry Play Based Learning for Students with ASD
- LD-SIP Collaborative Learning and Program Monitoring
- LD-SIP Kick off Meeting
- LLD Assistive Technology Workshop
- LST Network Sessions
- Math LD Inquiry
- Mental Health Law for Children and Adolescents
- Post-Secondary Transitions for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Registered Behaviour Technician Training
- SafeTALK – (Suicide Alertness for Everyone), (Tell, Ask, Listen, Keepsafe)
- SLIP - Speech Language Intervention Program
- 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
- Working with Students with Visual Impairment

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.;
- Ottawa Catholic School District (OCSB);

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.





Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

Purpose of the Standard

To provide information on the categories and definitions of exceptionalities available to the public, including parent(s)/guardian(s) and community associations.

The chart of student exceptionalities, set out by the Ministry of Education, which is in alignment with the Education Act, is organized by exceptionality category, specific exceptionality identification, and specific exceptionality definition. An identification of an exceptionality is not the same as a diagnosis provided by a psychologist or medical professional.

Category	Exceptionality	Definition
Behavioural	Behaviour	<p>A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance; and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships; a) excessive fears or anxieties; b) a tendency to compulsive reaction; d) an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof.
Communicational	Autism	<p>A severe learning disorder that is characterized by disturbances in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rate of educational development; • ability to relate to the environment; • mobility; • perception, speech, and language; b) lack of the representational symbolic behavior that precedes language.





Category	Exceptionality	Definition
Communicational (Continued)	Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing	An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.
	Language Impairment	A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication b) include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language delay • dysfluency • voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.
	Speech Impairment	A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm, and stress.
	Learning Disability	One of a number neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that: <p>Affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are <i>at least</i> in the average range;</p>





Category	Exceptionality	Definition
Communicational <i>(Continued)</i>	Learning Disability <i>(Continued)</i>	a. results in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or b. academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills; • may typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; memory and attention; processing speed; perceptual-motor processing; visual-spatial processing; executive functions (e.g., self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making); • may be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities; • is <i>not</i> the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction.





Category	Exceptionality	Definition
Intellectual	Giftedness	An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.
	Mild Intellectual Disability	A learning disorder characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service; b. an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development; c. a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.
	Developmental Disability	A severe learning disorder characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development; b. an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development; c. a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.
Physical	Physical Disability	A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or developmental level.





Category	Exceptionality	Definition
Physical (continued)	Blind and Low Vision	A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that, even with correction, affects educational performance adversely.
Multiple	Multiple Exceptionalities	A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities, that is of such nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

