



MEMORANDUM

Memo No. 19-025

TO: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

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

DATE: 1 February 2019

RE: **Learning Support Services Operational Review of the Process for Identification, Needs Assessment and Placement**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide context to support a SEAC discussion to inform the Learning Support Services (LSS) Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement. The full report will be presented to Committee of the Whole (COW) on 5 MAR 2019.

CONTEXT:

On 30 October 2018, the Board passed the following motion:

THAT staff be directed to undertake an operational review of the process for identification, needs assessment (including the use of tiered interventions as a support for all students, and as identification and placement evidence), and placement for all exceptionalities;

THAT a report be provided to the Board no later than February 2019, with a proposed outline and timeline for the operational review, and an update on any changes in practice introduced in the wake of the discussion of this motion; and,

THAT staff produce a series of updates, beginning no later than the end of October 2019, detailing the number of applications and the number of children receiving assessments and placements in all congregated programs, by exceptionality, at both the elementary and secondary levels, and details of waitlists for all congregated programs by geographic zone.

The motion emerged from COW and SEAC discussions identifying the need to:

- improve parent/guardian understanding of the Identification, Placement, Review Committee (IPRC) process, specifically related to identification and placement;

- ensure consistency of practice with respect to use of the IPRC as it relates to placement across schools in the district; and
- provide greater clarity and improved communication of practices regarding assessment of student needs and the tiered approach to intervention.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

The LSS Operational Review of the process for identification needs assessment, and placement for all exceptionalities is an opportunity to further the District's commitment to continued growth and operational improvement. In order to ensure that the operational review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement provides meaningful, relevant feedback that can be translated into future work plans, a clear scope of the work is required. In the context of this work, a "clear scope" means a defined purpose with clear focus for inquiry informed by specific guiding questions. Importantly, however, a clearly defined scope for this operational review does not limit the District's opportunity to explore further areas for improvement in the future.

In order to objectively and efficiently accomplish this review, the District will contract external consultant to complete this work. In addition to providing expertise in the area of operational practices and processes, an external consultant will be able to advise on effective methodology to best achieve the goals of this operational review. In order for an external consultant to undertake this work effectively, a clearly defined scope is required.

LSS Operational Review Proposed Timelines

The following timelines and actions are presented for input in advance of the LSS Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement:

Dates	Actions
13 February 2019	SEAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define the deliverables expected upon completion of the Review • to provide input regarding the goals and scope of work related to the process of identification, needs assessment, and placement for all exceptionalities
5 March 2019	COW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of the scope of work and plan for the LSS Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement
6 March 2019	SEAC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide input on the qualifications/criteria for selection of external consultant
26 March 2019	Board approval of the motion from previous COW discussion
March to May 2019	Request for Proposal (RFP) including defined scope of work and project mandate to select external consultant
Summer 2019	Finalize review methods with the external consultant for Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement
September 2019	Update report to SEAC on the progress of the Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement
Fall 2019	Complete Review activities
Winter/Spring 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final report of consultant presented to SEAC Final report to SEAC and COW (including final report of the external consultant) on the outcome of the LSS Operational Review related to the process for identification, needs assessment and placement for all exceptionalities with recommendations for next steps

N.B.: An updated timeline will be provided following the selection of the external consultant.

Scope of Work to Inform the LSS Operational Review

A critical component to ensuring that the LSS Operational Review provides value to informing the district practice with respect to identification, needs assessment and placement for all exceptionalities is to clearly define and narrow the scope of work associated with each component.

At the SEAC meeting on 13 February 2019, committee members will be invited to engage in a discussion to identify the key goals and deliverables that would be the desired outcome of the Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement. The Committee will be asked to identify specific deliverables via consensus for each of the following:

Identification:

Needs Assessment:

Placement:

STRATEGIC LINKS:

The LSS Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement for all exceptionalities is aligned with the OCDSB 2015-2019 Strategic Plan in the areas of Learning (i.e., improve and increase access to the educational pathways for every student) and Engagement (i.e., develop strategies to enhance communication and dialogue with and among staff, students, families).

cc Trustees
 Manager Board Services
 Corporate Records