SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

AGENDA
October 17, 2018

Marilyn Taylor, Chair
Community Representative

Diane Montreuil
Indigenous Representative

Dario Imbrogno
Community Representative

Sandra Mastronardi
Autism Ontario

Ashleigh Molloy, Vice-Chair
AAIDD

Tyler Munro
Integration Action for Inclusion Representative

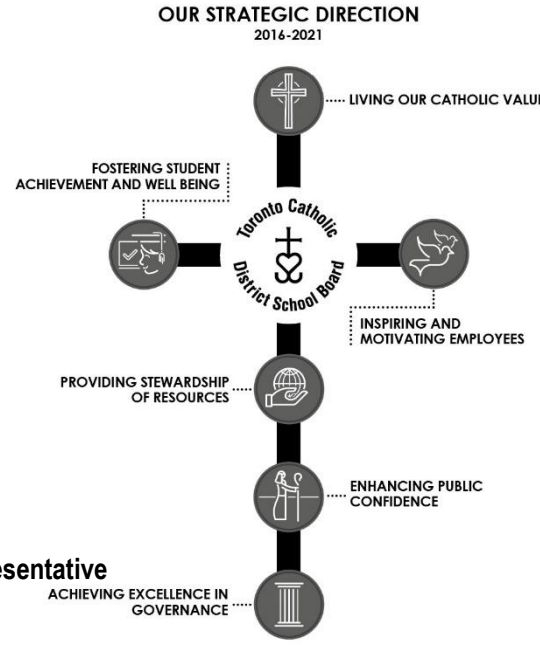
Mary Pugh
VOICE for Hearing Impaired

Gizelle Paine
LD Toronto Chapter Representative

Giselle Romanino
Community Representative

Raul Vomisescu
Community Living Toronto

Glenn Webster
Ontario Assoc. of Families of Children With Communication Disorders



<u>Trustee Members</u>
Ann Andrachuk
Angela Kennedy
Garry Tanuan

MISSION

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.
We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.

VISION

At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

Recording Secretary: Sophia Harris, 416-222-8282 Ext. 2293
Assistant Recording Secretary: Sonia Tomaz, 416-222-8282 Ext. 2298

Rory McGuckin
Director of Education

Barbara Poplawski
Chair of the Board

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AGENDA
THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PUBLIC SESSION

Wednesday, October 17, 2018
7:00 P.M.

Pages

1. **Approval of the Agenda**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

3. **Approval & Signing of the Minutes of the Meeting held September 19, 2018 for Public Session** 1 - 9

4. **Delegations**

5. **Presentations**

6. **Unfinished Business**

   6.a Safe Schools Report: Year-End Statistics and Perceptual Data 10 - 28

   6.b Inquiry from Sandra Mastronardi regarding Autism Ontario 29 - 30

7. **Notices of Matters and Trustee Matters: (for which seventy-two hours' notice has been given)**

8. **Communications**

   8.a SEAC Monthly Calendar Review 31 - 35

   8.b Board Learning Improvement Plan (BLIP) 36 - 55

8.c Report: Autism Ontario Inquiry Regarding Ministry EPO and Other Funds in 2018-19 for TCDSB (To Be Distributed)

8.d Report: Special Education Qualifications among Principals of Schools including those with Intensive Support Program (ISP) (To Be Distributed)

8.e Special Services Information Fair 2018 - Verbal Update

8.f Results of Policy/Program Memorandum 140 (PPM140) 56

9. Matters Referred/Deferred to the Committee by the Board and Other Committees

10. Reports of Officials, and Special and Permanent Committees Requiring Action

11. Reports of Officials for Information

11.a Superintendent Update 57

11.b Equity Action Plan Consultation 58 - 67

12. Inquiries and Miscellaneous

12.a Inquiry from Marilyn Taylor and Sandra Mastronardi regarding Parent Voice Survey

13. Association Reports

13.a Autism Ontario - Early Identification and Intervention for Students with Special Needs 68 - 69

13.b Autism Ontario Minority Report 2018 - Sandra Mastronardi 70 - 117

13.c Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) SEAC Circular, September 2018 - Sandra Mastronardi 118 - 127

14. Update from Trustees on resolutions recommended to the Board by the Committee

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16. Adjournment

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MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2018

PUBLIC SESSION

PRESENT:

External Members: Marilyn Taylor, Chair
Ashleigh Molloy, Vice-Chair
John MacKenzie
Sandra Mastronardi
Tyler Munro
Gizelle Paine
Raul Vomisescu
Glenn Webster

Trustees: A. Andrachuk
A. Kennedy

Staff: L. Maselli-Jackman
V. Cocco
A. Coke
R. Macchia
J. Mirabella
D. Reid
P. Stachiw
E. Moynihan

S. Harris, Recording Secretary
S. Tomaz, Assistant Recording Secretary

1. Roll Call and Apologies

Apologies were tendered on behalf of Rosanna Del Grosso, Dario Imbrogno, Diane Montreuil, Mary Pugh, Giselle Romanino and Trustee Tanuan.

The Chair advised the meeting that Laurie Ricciuto had resigned as a SEAC member.

2. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED by Ashleigh Molloy, seconded by John MacKenzie, that the Agenda, as amended to include the Addendum, Inquiries from Sandra Mastronardi and Tyler Munro and the removal of Item 9c) Verbal Review of Robert's Rules of Order from Marilyn Taylor, be approved.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

3. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

4. Approval and Signing of the Minutes

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by John MacKenzie, that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on June 13, 2018 be approved with the following amendment:

Page 8, Item 13f) replace …available *to* … with … available *for*...

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

9. Communications

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Gizelle Paine, that Item 9d) be adopted as follows:

9d) Presentation regarding Equity Action Plan from Nick D'Avella, Superintendent of Equity, Diversity and Indigenous Education received.

MOVED in AMENDMENT by Trustee Andrachuk, seconded by Sandra Mastronardi, that once the survey has been completed and returned to staff, that it be compiled into a report for the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) to review and to make recommendations to Board.

The Motion, as amended, was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Trustee Andrachuk, seconded by Gizelle Paine, that Item 9e) be adopted as follows:

9e) Report regarding Safe Schools Presentation from Vincent Burzotta, Superintendent Safe Schools, Alternative Education and Student Success Initiative received.

MOVED in AMENDMENT by Tyler Munro, seconded by Gizelle Paine, that staff recommend to Board that the Safe School Department provide the number and percentage of students with and without Individual Education Plan (IEP) that have been suspended.

MOVED in AMENDMENT by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Tyler Munro, that SEAC recommend to Board that staff prepare a report that reflects specific Safe School data of students with special needs, both identified and non-identified.

The Motion, as amended, was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Ashleigh Molloy, seconded by John MacKenzie, that Item 9a) be adopted as follows:

9a) SEAC Monthly Calendar Review received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Ashleigh Molloy, seconded by Gizelle Paine, that Item 9b) be adopted as follows:

9b) Special Services Superintendent Verbal Update received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Trustee Kennedy, seconded by John MacKenzie, that Item 9f) be adopted as follows:

9f) Verbal Discussion regarding Special Services Information Fair 2018 that SEAC recommend to Board that an Information Fair be held on Special Education using the Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant money that has been secured, and that this fair be held before December 2018.

The Motion, as amended, was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Tyler Munro, seconded by Sandra Mastronardi, that Item 9g) be adopted as follows:

9g) Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Policy Document Article on Special Education Inclusion received.

MOVED in AMENDMENT by Trustee Kennedy, seconded by Gizelle Paine:

1) That SEAC recommend to Board that all existing and new policies be reviewed to reflect the OHRC Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities Policy Document;

2) That the Board's Special Education Plan be reviewed and updated to reflect the OHRC Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities Policy Document;

3) That the Board put a policy in place that will be reflective of the OHRC Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities Policy Document; and

4) That a representative from OHRC be invited to speak at a SEAC meeting.

Trustee Andrachuk requested that the Question be split.

Part 1 of the Motion was declared

CARRIED

Part 2 of the Motion was declared

CARRIED

Part 3 of the Motion was declared

CARRIED

Trustee Andrachuk wished to be recorded that she was not in favour of Part 3 of the Motion.

Part 4 of the Motion was declared

CARRIED

The Motion, as amended, was declared

CARRIED

9h) Verbal Discussion regarding Epi-Pen Shortage noted.

9i) Verbal Discussion regarding Student Achievement Well-Being moved to Inquiries and Miscellaneous.

9j) Victim's Rights Policy SS.13 moved to Inquiries and Miscellaneous.

.

MOVED by Trustee Andrachuk, seconded by Glenn Webster, that Item 9k) be adopted as follows:

9k) Ministry of Education Funding Update 2018-19 received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Ashleigh Molloy, seconded by John MacKenzie, that Item 9l) be adopted as follows:

9l) Fundamentals of Math received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

13. Inquiries and Miscellaneous

13c) Verbal Discussion regarding Student Achievement Well-Being noted.

13d) Victim's Rights Policy SS.13 noted.

.

MOVED by Tyler Munro, seconded by Trustee Kennedy, that Item 13e) be adopted as follows:

13e) From Tyler Munro regarding Human Rights Complaints Filed Against the Toronto Catholic District School Board received and referred to staff.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

13f) From Sandra Mastronardi regarding Student Agenda Accessibility noted.

13g) From Sandra Mastronardi regarding 2018-09-11 Governance and Policy Agenda – Access to Students in Schools Policy (S.S.04) noted.

13h) From Sandra Mastronardi regarding Budget Questions Sent to Lloyd Noronha, Executive Superintendent of Business and Chief Financial Officer noted.

13i) From Sandra Mastronardi regarding Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics (STEAM) Camp for International Students and Students with Special Needs noted.

13a) From Sandra Mastronardi regarding Autism Ontario – School Fire Safety and Students with Disabilities unfinished.

Quorum was lost and the meeting ended.

ITEMS NOT DISCUSSED

13b) From Marilyn Taylor and Sandra Mastronardi regarding Parent Voice Survey

14. Association Reports

14a) Autism Ontario Minority Report 2018 – Sandra Mastronardi (Deferred from June 13, 2018 SEAC Meeting)

14b) Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) September 2018 SEAC Circular – Sandra Mastronardi

16. Pending List

SECRETARY

CHAIR

A. SCHOOL SAFETY

Feel *Very Safe* or *Safe*:	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
in school	96%	96%	95%
in the classroom	96%	96%	95%
while eating lunch at school	93%	94%	92%
in the hallways	91%	91%	90%
in the washrooms	86%	86%	85%
at sports/after school events	82%	82%	83%
on the stairs/in stairwells	84%	85%	83%
travelling to and from school	78%	79%	76%
at dismissal time	91%	92%	90%
during indoor recess	93%	94%	92%
outside during recess	81%	82%	81%

B. UNSAFE ACTIONS

Activities *Witnessed/Experienced* in School	Year	Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
Physical Violence	2017-18	31%	47%	11%
	2016-17	36%	45%	11%
	2015-16	33%	46%	11%
Drug Use	2017-18	94%	4%	<1%
	2016-17	95%	4%	<1%
	2015-16	94%	4%	<1%
Inter-Racial Conflict	2017-18	65%	25%	5%
	2016-17	67%	23%	5%
	2015-16	65%	24%	5%
Verbal Abuse	2017-18	34%	31%	13%
	2016-17	36%	31%	13%
	2015-16	36%	31%	13%
Gang Activity	2017-18	88%	8%	1%
	2016-17	89%	8%	1%
	2015-16	87%	9%	1%

Activities *Witnessed/Experienced* in school	Year	Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
Weapons	2017-18	85%	13%	1%
	2016-17	86%	12%	1%
	2015-16	86%	11%	1%
Theft	2017-18	60%	28%	6%
	2016-17	61%	28%	6%
	2015-16	61%	27%	6%
Relationship Violence	2017-18	82%	13%	2%
	2016-17	83%	13%	2%
	2015-16	81%	13%	2%
Harassment based on sexual orientation (Grade 8 only)	2017-18	85%	11%	2%
	2016-17	86%	10%	2%
	2015-16	84%	10%	2%

C. BULLYING

Since September, how many times have you been bullied at school?	Year	Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
	2017-18	67%	21%	6%
	2016-17	67%	22%	6%
	2015-16	65%	23%	7%

The percentages reported in the next two questions are for a subset of students - ***only those students who experienced being bullied at school*** *(n = 3363 or 33% in 2017-2018).*

Since September, in what way(s) have you been bullied at school? *You may choose more than one*	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Verbal (name calling, constant unwanted teasing/joking)	88%	87%	85%
Physical	25%	24%	24%
Social (being excluded, gossip)	47%	46%	48%
Cyber (social media)	16%	15%	15%
Sexual (e.g. in appropriate touching or comments) (Grade 8 only)	12%	11%	10%

Since September, have you told another person about *being bullied?*	Year	Yes
	2017-18	71%
	2016-17	71%
	2015-16	69%

Since September, have you *witnessed* another student being bullied at school?	Year	Yes
	2017-18	62%
	2016-17	60%
	2015-16	60%

The percentages reported in the next two questions are for a subset of students – ***only those students who witnessed bullying at school*** *(n = 6,252 or 62% in 2017-2018).*

Since September, in what form(s) of bullying have you *witnessed*? *You may choose more than one.*	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Verbal (name calling, constant unwanted teasing/joking)	90%	90%	88%
Physical	48%	45%	48%
Social (being excluded, gossip)	58%	57%	58%
Cyber (social media)	27%	26%	26%
Sexual (e.g. in appropriate touching or comments) (Grade 8 only)	15%	16%	16%

Since September, did you report any form of bullying you *witnessed*?	Year	Yes
	2017-18	50%
	2016-17	48%
	2015-16	50%

How much of a problem do you think bullying is in your school?	Year	A large problem	A medium problem	A small problem or Not a problem
	2017-18	15%	27%	56%
	2016-17	14%	25%	59%
	2015-16	16%	26%	57%

A. SCHOOL SAFETY

Feel *Very Safe* or *Safe*	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
in school	92%	91%	91%
in the classroom	95%	93%	93%
in the cafeteria/lunch time	90%	88%	88%
in the hallways	90%	87%	87%
in the washrooms	86%	83%	82%
at sports/after school events	93%	90%	89%
on the stairs/in stairwells	90%	87%	86%
travelling to and from school	86%	82%	84%
at dismissal time	91%	88%	89%
in the parking lot	80%	76%	76%

B. UNSAFE ACTIONS

Activities *Witnessed/Experienced* in School	Year	Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
Physical Violence	2017-18	55%	35%	4%
	2016-17	54%	35%	5%
	2015-16	51%	38%	5%
Drug Use	2017-18	62%	22%	6%
	2016-17	60%	21%	6%
	2015-16	53%	22%	8%
Inter-racial Conflict	2017-18	71%	20%	4%
	2016-17	69%	21%	4%
	2015-16	63%	24%	5%
Verbal Abuse	2017-18	40%	32%	10%
	2016-17	38%	33%	10%
	2015-16	33%	34%	11%
Gang Activity	2017-18	78%	15%	3%
	2016-17	79%	13%	2%
	2015-16	76%	14%	3%
Weapons	2017-18	81%	15%	2%
	2016-17	81%	13%	2%
	2015-16	78%	15%	2%

Activities *Witnessed/Experienced* in School	Year	Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
Theft	2017-18	67%	24%	4%
	2016-17	66%	23%	4%
	2015-16	61%	25%	5%
Relationship Violence	2017-18	79%	16%	2%
	2016-17	77%	16%	2%
	2015-16	75%	18%	2%
Harassment based on sexual orientation	2017-18	83%	12%	2%
	2016-17	81%	12%	2%
	2015-16	77%	14%	3%
Alcohol Use	2017-18	83%	11%	2%
	2016-17	80%	11%	3%
	2015-16	75%	13%	4%

C. BULLYING

	Year	Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
Since September, how often have you been bullied?	2017-18	84%	11%	2%
	2016-17	84%	11%	2%
	2015-16	75%	18%	3%

*The percentages reported in the next two questions are for a subset of students – **only those students who experienced being bullied at school** (n=809 or 16% in 2017-18).*

Since September, what form(s) of bullying have you *experienced*? *You may choose more than one.*	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Verbal (e.g., name calling, constant unwanted teasing/joking)	83%	85%	84%
Physical	26%	25%	23%
Social (e.g., being excluded, gossip)	50%	48%	56%
Cyber (e.g., social media)	30%	31%	29%
Sexual (e.g., inappropriate touching or comments)	15%	15%	16%

	Year	Yes
Since September, did you report any form of bullying you *experienced*?	2017-18	20%
	2016-17	19%
	2015-16	27%

Since September, have you ever *witnessed* another student being bullied at school?	Year	Yes
	2017-18	34%
	2016-17	35%
	2015-16	48%

*The percentages reported in the next two questions are for a subset of students – **only those students who witnessed bullying at school** (n=1761 or 34% in 2017-2018).*

Since September, what form(s) of bullying have you *witnessed*? *You may choose more than one.*	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Verbal (e.g., name calling, constant unwanted teasing/joking)	88%	89%	89%
Physical	43%	43%	45%
Social (e.g., being excluded, gossip)	58%	60%	62%
Cyber (e.g., social media)	39%	42%	48%
Sexual (e.g., inappropriate touching or comments)	18%	17%	21%

Since September, did you report any form of bullying you *witnessed*?	Year	Yes
	2017-18	16%
	2016-17	16%
	2015-16	25%

How much of a problem do you think bullying is in your school?	Year	A Large Problem	A Medium Problem	A Small problem or Not a Problem
	2017-18	10%	16%	68%
	2016-17	11%	17%	70%
	2015-16	11%	17%	69%

A. SCHOOL SAFETY

Feel *Very safe* or *Safe*:	Female	Male
in school	96%	96%
in the classroom	96%	96%
while eating lunch at school	93%	93%
in the hallways	91%	91%
in the washrooms	86%	85%
at sports/after school events	83%	82%
on the stairs/in stairwells	84%	84%
travelling to and from school	78%	79%
at dismissal time	91%	92%
during indoor recess	93%	93%
outside during recess	81%	82%

B. UNSAFE ACTIONS

Activities *Witnessed/Experienced* in School		Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
Physical Violence	Female	37%	46%	10%
	Male	27%	48%	13%
Drug Use	Female	95%	4%	<1%
	Male	94%	4%	<1%
Inter-Racial Conflict	Female	65%	26%	5%
	Male	66%	24%	5%
Verbal Abuse	Female	34%	32%	13%
	Male	35%	30%	12%
Gang Activity	Female	89%	8%	1%
	Male	87%	9%	1%
Weapons	Female	86%	13%	1%
	Male	85%	13%	1%
Theft	Female	60%	30%	6%
	Male	61%	27%	6%

Activities *Witnessed/Experienced* in School		Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
Relationship Violence	Female	83%	12%	2%
	Male	82%	13%	2%
Harassment based on sexual orientation (Grade 8 only)	Female	83%	11%	3%
	Male	86%	10%	2%

C. BULLYING

Since September, how many times have you been bullied at school?		Never	2-3 times	4-6 times
	Female	64%	24%	6%
	Male	70%	19%	5%

*The percentages reported in the next two questions are for a subset of students – **only those students who experienced being bullied at school** (female n = 1808 or 36%; male n = 1525 or 31% in 2017-2018).*

Since September, in what way(s) have you been bullied at school? *You may choose more than one*	Female	Male
Verbal (name calling, constant unwanted teasing/joking)	89%	88%
Physical	15%	36%
Social (being excluded, gossip)	56%	37%
Cyber (social media)	20%	12%
Sexual (e.g. in appropriate touching or comments) (Grade 8 only)	15%	9%

Since September, have you told another person about *being bullied?*		Yes
	Female	74%
	Male	66%

Since September, have you *witnessed* another student being bullied at school?		Yes
	Female	65%
	Male	59%

*The percentages reported in the next two questions are for a subset of students – **only those students who witnessed bullying at school** (female n = 3274 or 65%; male n = 2928 or 59% in 2017-2018).*

Since September, what form(s) of bullying have you *witnessed*? *You may choose more than one*	Female	Male
Verbal (name calling, constant unwanted teasing/joking)	91%	89%
Physical	42%	55%
Social (being excluded, gossip)	67%	48%
Cyber (social media)	31%	23%
Sexual (e.g. in appropriate touching or comments) (Grade 8 only)	16%	13%

Since September, did you report any form of bullying you *witnessed*?		Yes
	Female	51%
	Male	48%

How much of a problem do you think bullying is in your school?		A Large problem	A Medium problem	A Small problem or Not a problem
	Female	15%	29%	54%
	Male	15%	24%	59%

A. SCHOOL SAFETY

Feel *Very Safe* or *Safe*	Female	Male
in school	93%	90%
in the classroom	96%	94%
in the cafeteria/lunch time	92%	89%
in the hallways	90%	89%
in the washrooms	90%	81%
at sports/after school events	94%	93%
on the stairs/in stairwells	91%	90%
travelling to and from school	84%	87%
at dismissal time	92%	90%
in the parking lot	79%	80%

B. UNSAFE ACTIONS

Activities *Witnessed/Experienced* in School		Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
Physical Violence	Female	61%	32%	3%
	Male	48%	39%	7%
Drug Use	Female	62%	23%	6%
	Male	62%	20%	6%
Inter-racial Conflicts	Female	72%	21%	4%
	Male	69%	20%	5%
Verbal Abuse	Female	42%	35%	10%
	Male	38%	29%	9%
Gang Activity	Female	82%	14%	2%
	Male	74%	17%	3%
Weapons	Female	86%	12%	1%
	Male	76%	18%	2%
Theft	Female	69%	23%	4%
	Male	64%	26%	4%
Relationship Violence	Female	82%	14%	2%
	Male	76%	17%	2%
Harassment based on sexual orientation	Female	85%	11%	2%
	Male	80%	12%	2%
Alcohol Use	Female	84%	11%	2%
	Male	83%	10%	2%

C. BULLYING

Since September, how often have you been bullied?		Never	1-3 times	4-6 times
	Female	84%	12%	2%
	Male	85%	10%	2%

*The percentages reported in the next two questions are for a subset of students – **only those students who experienced being bullied at school** (female n = 442 or 16%; male n = 363 or 15% in 2017-2018).*

Since September, what form(s) of bullying have *you experienced*? *Choose all that apply.*	Female	Male
Verbal (e.g., name calling, constant unwanted teasing/joking)	81%	86%
Physical	16%	39%
Social (e.g., being excluded, gossip)	58%	41%
Cyber (e.g., social media)	32%	28%
Sexual (e.g., inappropriate touching or comments)	15%	15%

Since September, did you report any form of bullying you *experienced*?		Yes
	Female	20%
	Male	19%

Since September, have you ever *witnessed* another student being bullied at school?		Yes
	Female	32%
	Male	36%

*The percentages reported in the next two questions are for a subset of students – **only those students who witnessed bullying at school** (female n = 884 or 32%; male n = 868 or 36% in 2017-2018).*

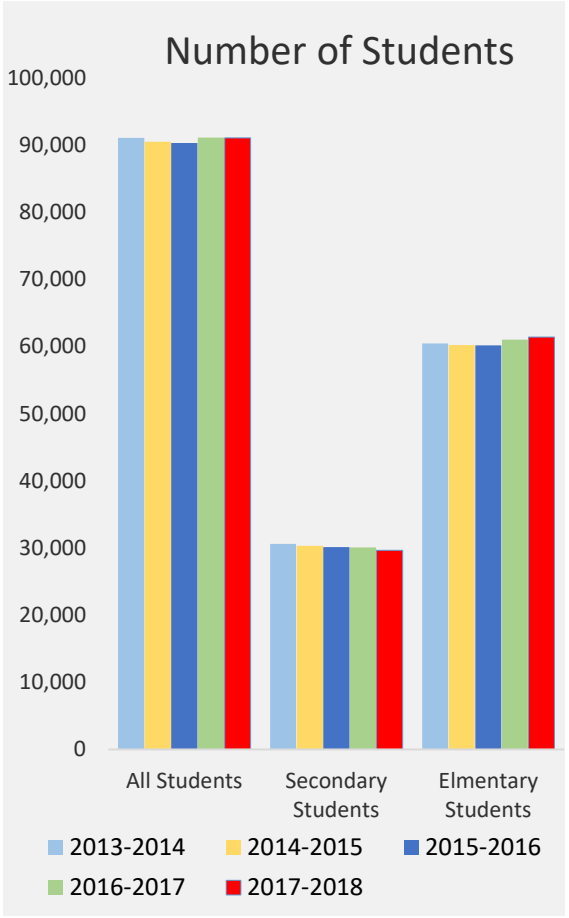
Since September, what form(s) of bullying have you *witnessed*? *You may choose more than one.*	Female	Male
Verbal (e.g., name calling, constant unwanted teasing/joking)	89%	87%
Physical	35%	52%
Social (e.g., being excluded, gossip)	67%	48%
Cyber (e.g., social media)	46%	33%
Sexual (e.g., inappropriate touching or comments)	17%	19%

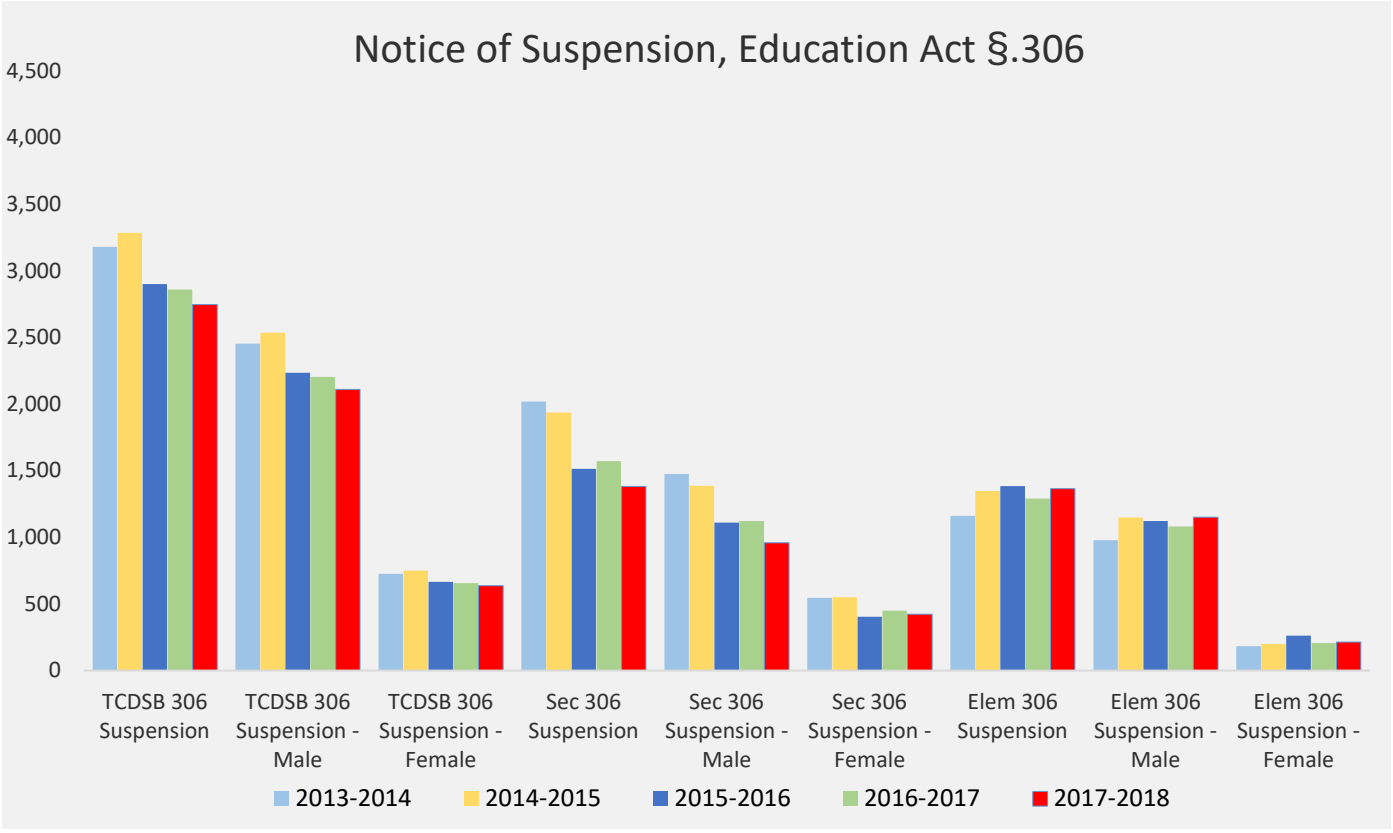
Since September, did you report any form of bullying you *witnessed*?		Yes
	Female	17%
	Male	15%

How much of a problem do you think bullying is in your school?		A Large problem	A Medium problem	A Small problem or Not a problem
	Female	9%	17%	69%
	Male	11%	15%	68%

Notice of Suspension, Education Act §.306

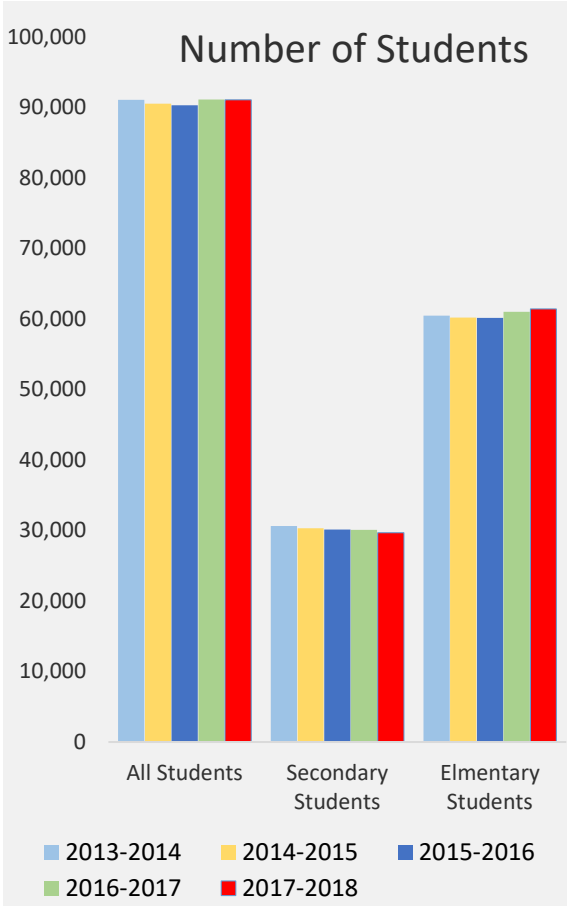
TCDSB	All Students	Secondary Students	Elmentary Students	TCDSB 306 Suspension	TCDSB 306 Suspension - Male	TCDSB 306 Suspension - Female	Sec 306 Suspension	Sec 306 Suspension - Male	Sec 306 Suspension - Female	Elem 306 Suspension	Elem 306 Suspension - Male	Elem 306 Suspension - Female
2013-2014	91,115	30,631	60,484	3,180	2,453	727	2,020	1,475	545	1,160	978	182
2014-2015	90,541	30,319	60,222	3,285	2,536	749	1,936	1,386	550	1,349	1,150	199
2015-2016	90,333	30,149	60,184	2,900	2,234	666	1,515	1,111	404	1,385	1,123	262
2016-2017	91,144	30,109	61,035	2,861	2,204	657	1,571	1,122	449	1,290	1,082	208
2017-2018	91,107	29,673	61,434	2,746	2,110	636	1,381	959	422	1,365	1,151	214

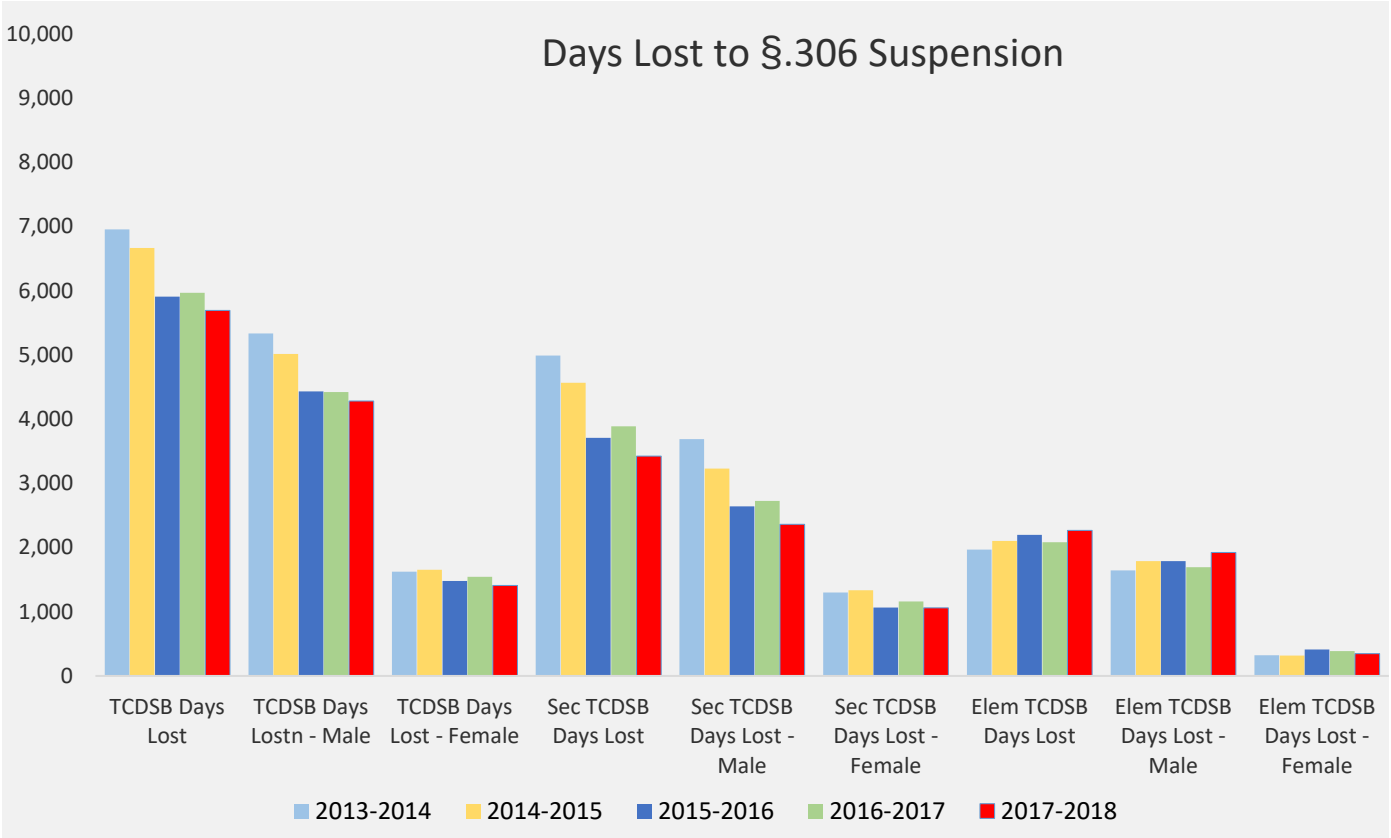




Days Lost to §.306 Suspension

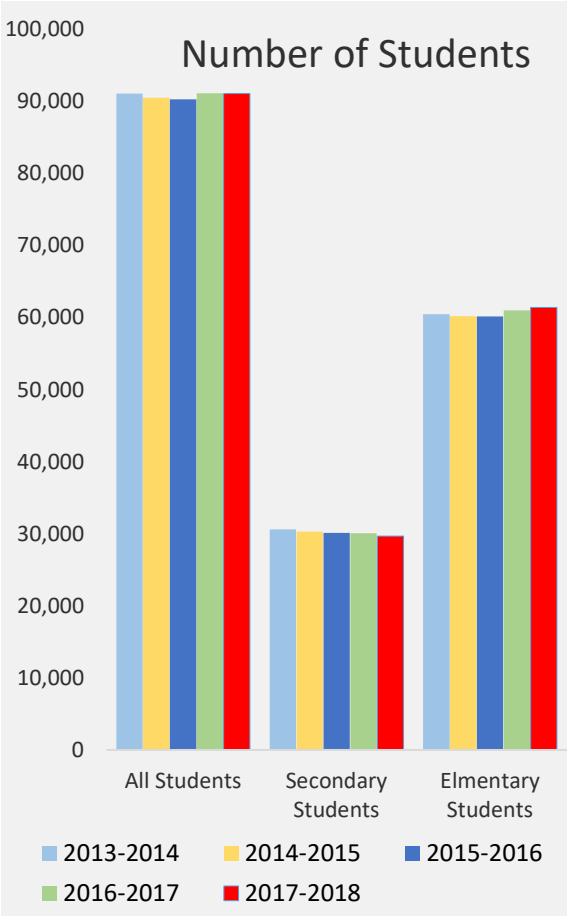
TCDSB	All Students	Secondary Students	Elmentary Students	TCDSB Days Lost	TCDSB Days Lostn - Male	TCDSB Days Lost - Female	Sec TCDSB Days Lost	Sec TCDSB Days Lost - Male	Sec TCDSB Days Lost - Female	Elem TCDSB Days Lost	Elem TCDSB Days Lost - Male	Elem TCDSB Days Lost - Female
2013-2014	91,115	30,631	60,484	6,958	5,335	1,623	4,990	3,689	1,301	1,968	1,646	322
2014-2015	90,541	30,319	60,222	6,669	5,017	1,652	4,565	3,228	1,337	2,104	1,789	315
2015-2016	90,333	30,149	60,184	5,909	4,431	1,478	3,711	2,644	1,067	2,198	1,787	411
2016-2017	91,144	30,109	61,035	5,970	4,425	1,545	3,889	2,729	1,160	2,081	1,696	385
2017-2018	91,107	29,673	61,434	5,694	4,285	1,409	3,424	2,362	1,062	2,270	1,923	347

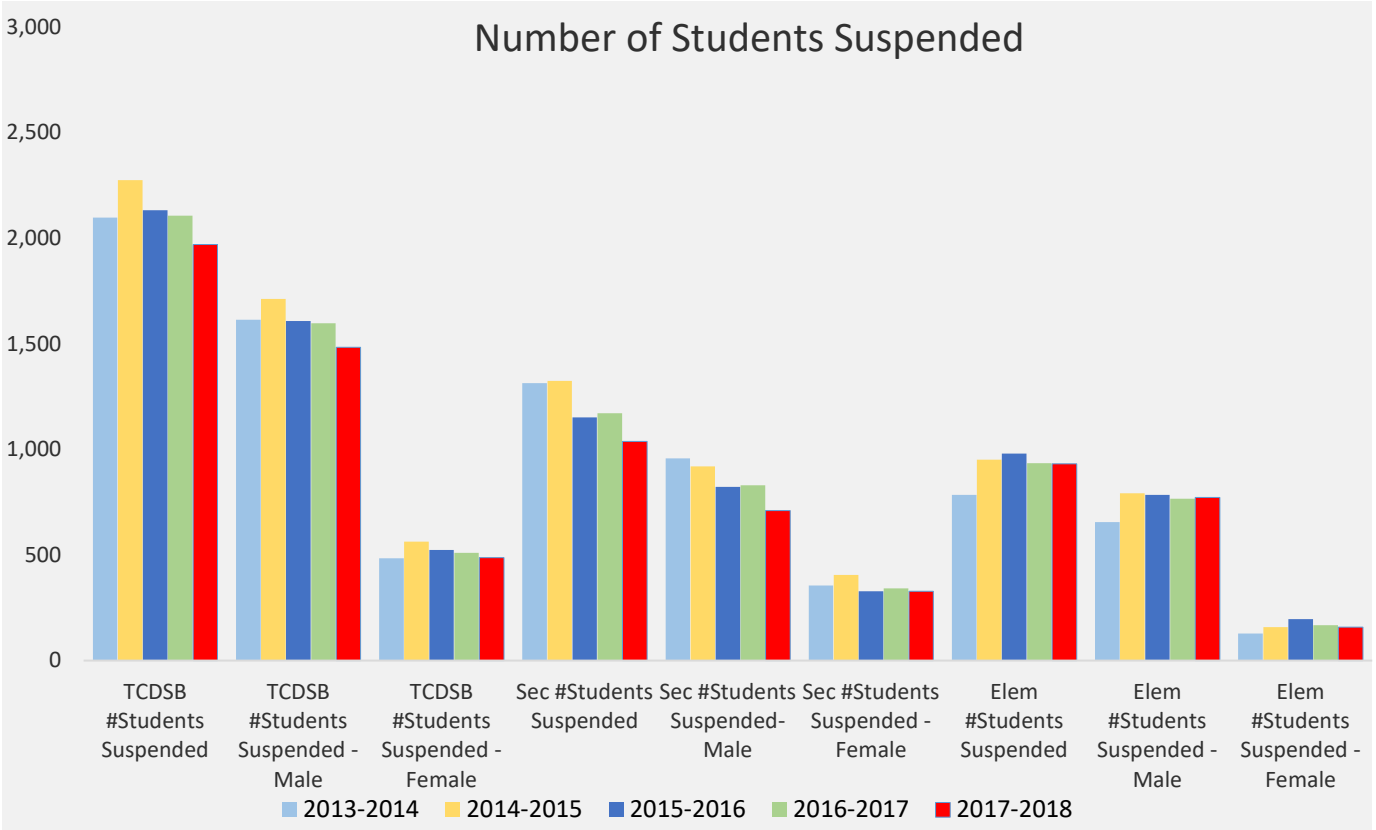




Number of Students Suspended

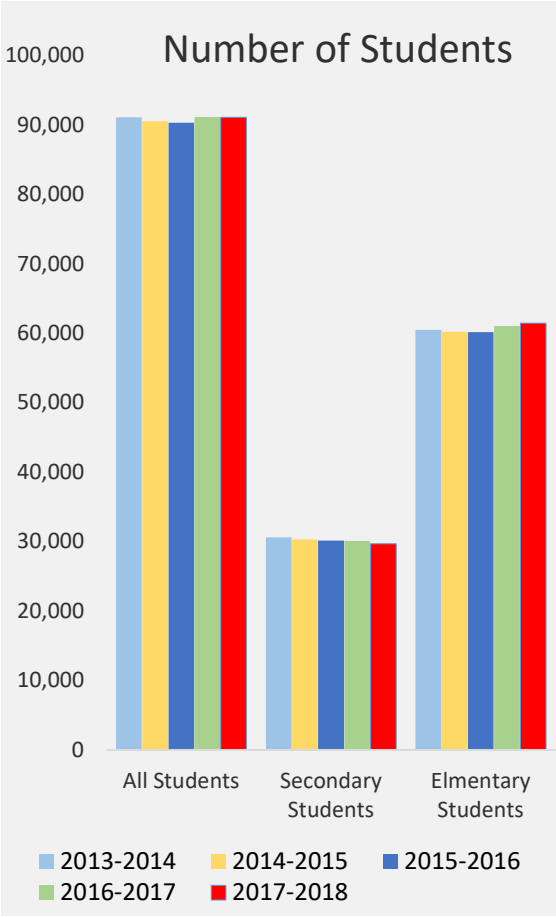
TCDSB	All Students	Secondary Students	Elmentary Students	TCDSB #Students Suspended	TCDSB #Students Suspended - Male	TCDSB #Students Suspended - Female	Sec #Students Suspended	Sec #Students Suspended- Male	Sec #Students Suspended - Female	Elem #Students Suspended	Elem #Students Suspended - Male	Elem #Students Suspended - Female
2013-2014	91,115	30,631	60,484	2,098	1,614	484	1,314	958	356	784	656	128
2014-2015	90,541	30,319	60,222	2,275	1,712	563	1,324	919	405	951	793	158
2015-2016	90,333	30,149	60,184	2,132	1,608	524	1,151	823	328	981	785	196
2016-2017	91,144	30,109	61,035	2,107	1,597	510	1,172	830	342	935	767	168
2017-2018	91,107	29,673	61,434	1,970	1,483	487	1,038	710	328	932	773	159

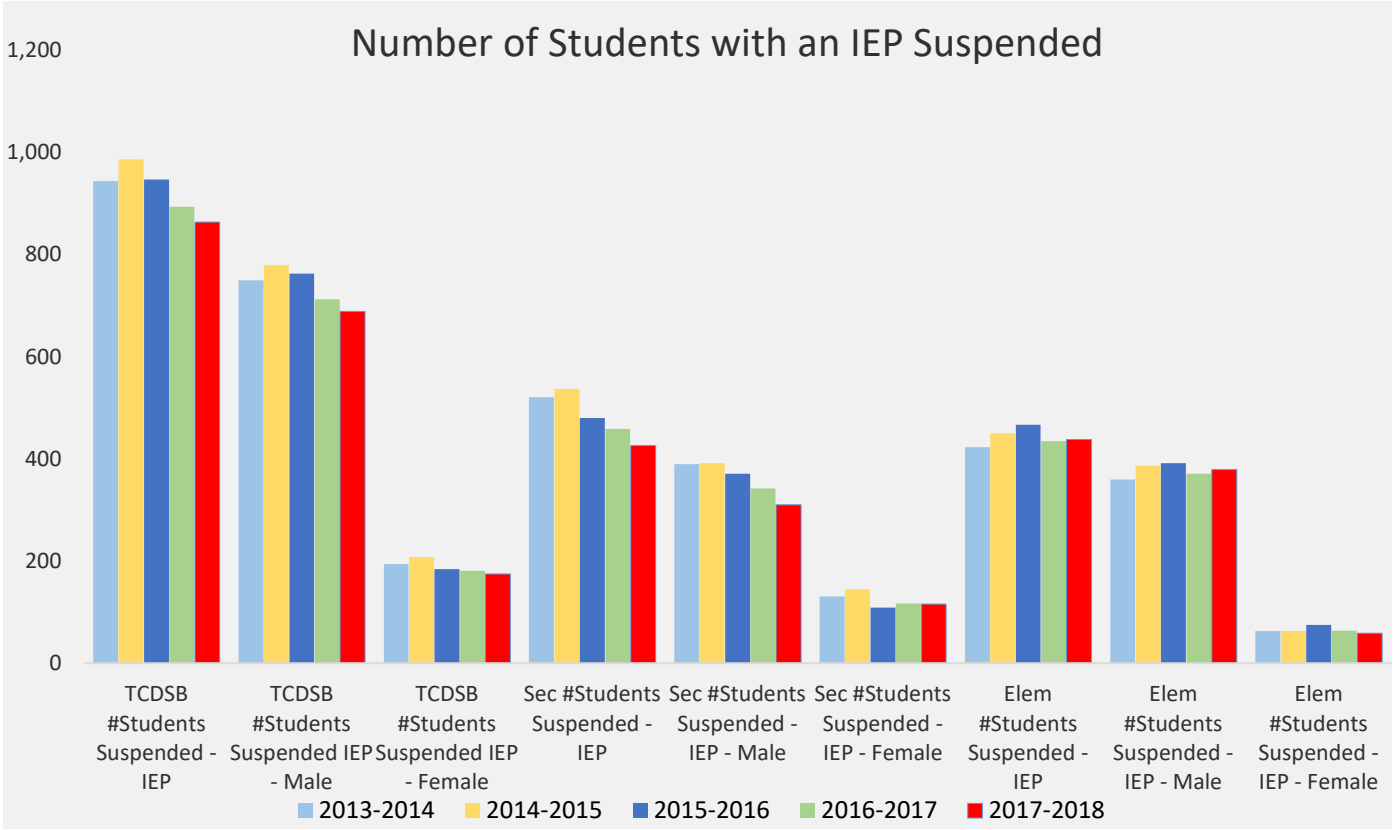




Number of Students with an IEP Suspended

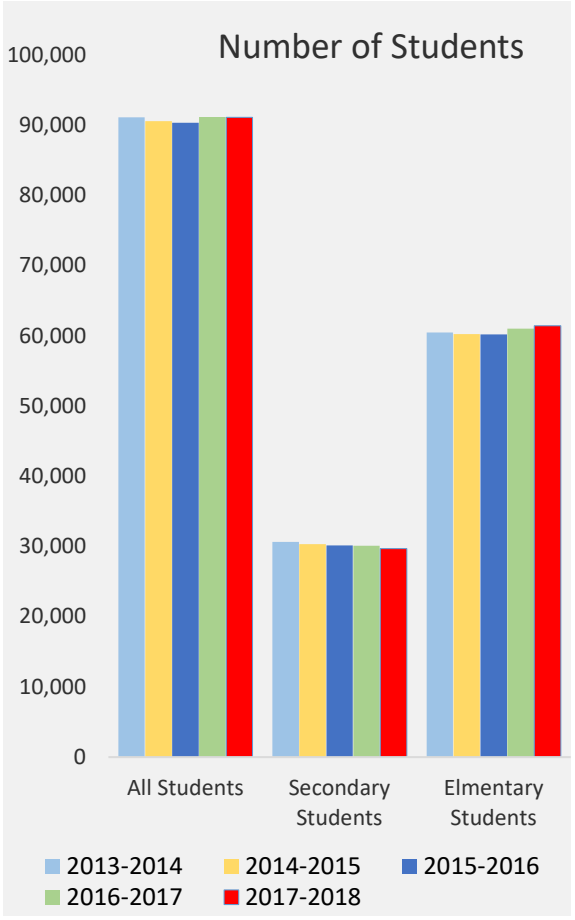
TCDSB	All Students	Secondary Students	Elmentary Students	TCDSB #Students Suspended - IEP	TCDSB #Students Suspended IEP - Male	TCDSB #Students Suspended IEP - Female	Sec #Students Suspended - IEP	Sec #Students Suspended - IEP - Male	Sec #Students Suspended - IEP - Female	Elem #Students Suspended - IEP	Elem #Students Suspended - IEP - Male	Elem #Students Suspended - IEP - Female
2013-2014	91,115	30,631	60,484	944	750	194	521	390	131	423	360	63
2014-2015	90,541	30,319	60,222	987	779	208	537	392	145	450	387	63
2015-2016	90,333	30,149	60,184	947	763	184	480	371	109	467	392	75
2016-2017	91,144	30,109	61,035	894	713	181	459	342	117	435	371	64
2017-2018	91,107	29,673	61,434	864	689	175	426	310	116	438	379	59

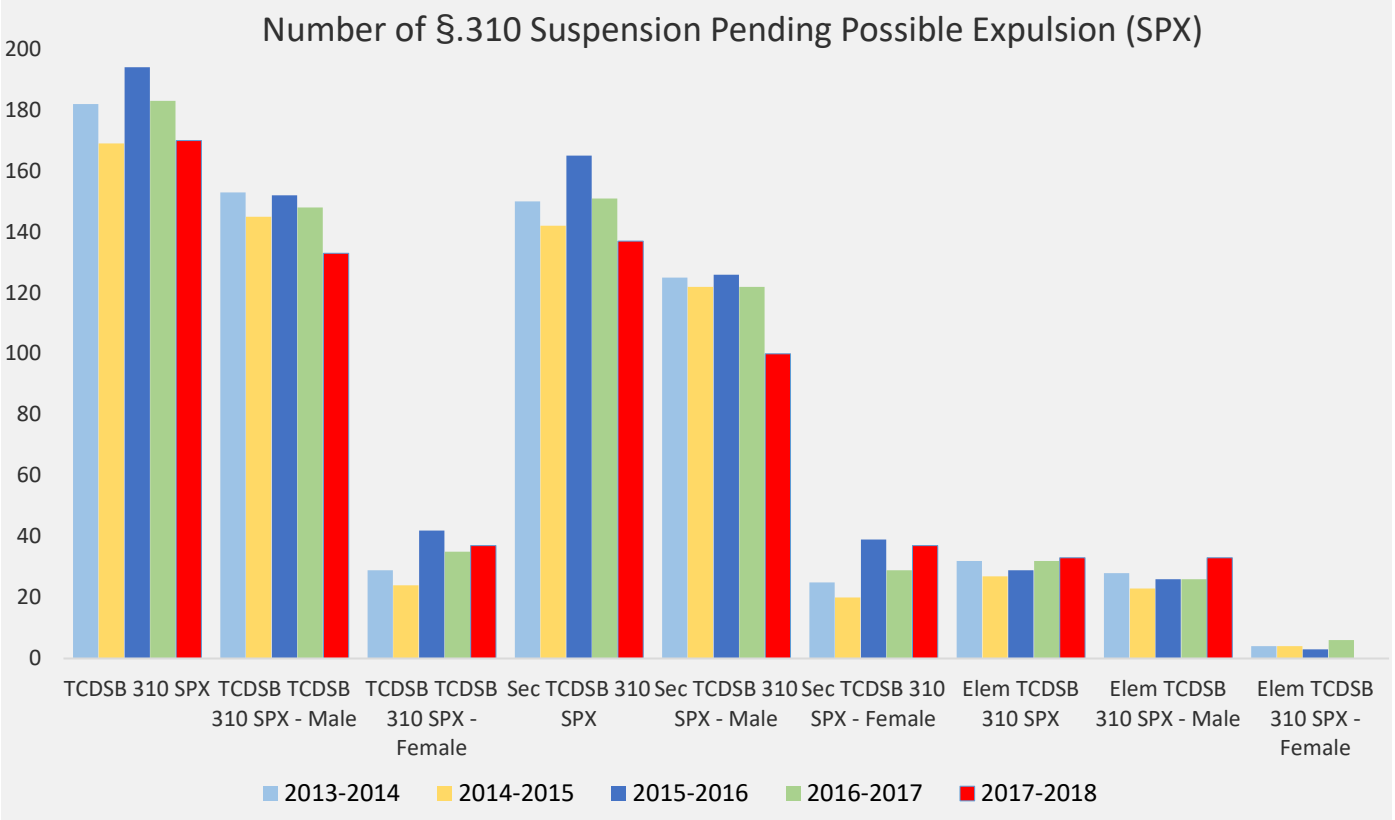




Number of §.310 Suspension Pending Possible Expulsion (SPX) Issued

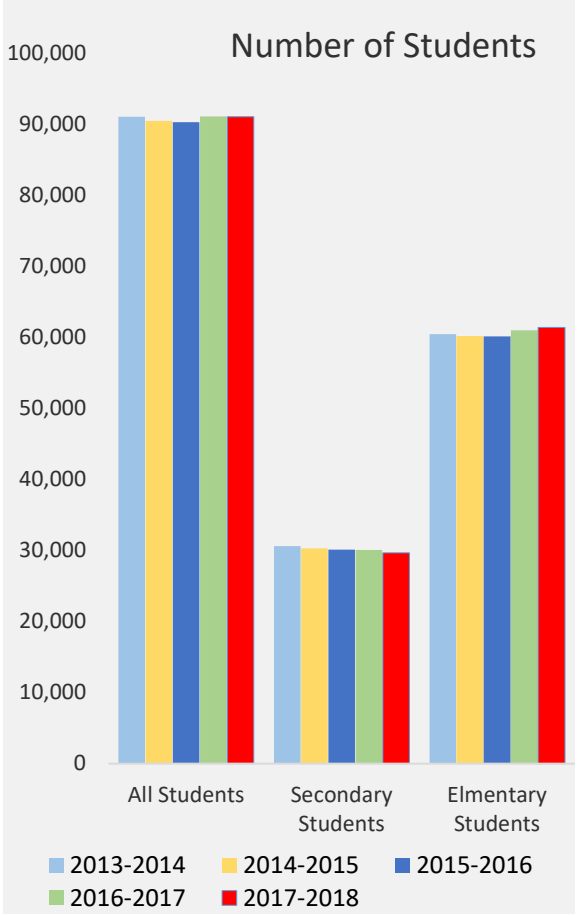
TCDSB	All Students	Secondary Students	Elmentary Students	TCDSB 310 SPX	TCDSB TCDSB 310 SPX - Male	TCDSB TCDSB 310 SPX - Female	Sec TCDSB 310 SPX	Sec TCDSB 310 SPX - Male	Sec TCDSB 310 SPX - Female	Elem TCDSB 310 SPX	Elem TCDSB 310 SPX - Male	Elem TCDSB 310 SPX - Female
2013-2014	91,115	30,631	60,484	182	153	29	150	125	25	32	28	4
2014-2015	90,541	30,319	60,222	169	145	24	142	122	20	27	23	4
2015-2016	90,333	30,149	60,184	194	152	42	165	126	39	29	26	3
2016-2017	91,144	30,109	61,035	183	148	35	151	122	29	32	26	6
2017-2018	91,107	29,673	61,434	170	133	37	137	100	37	33	33	0

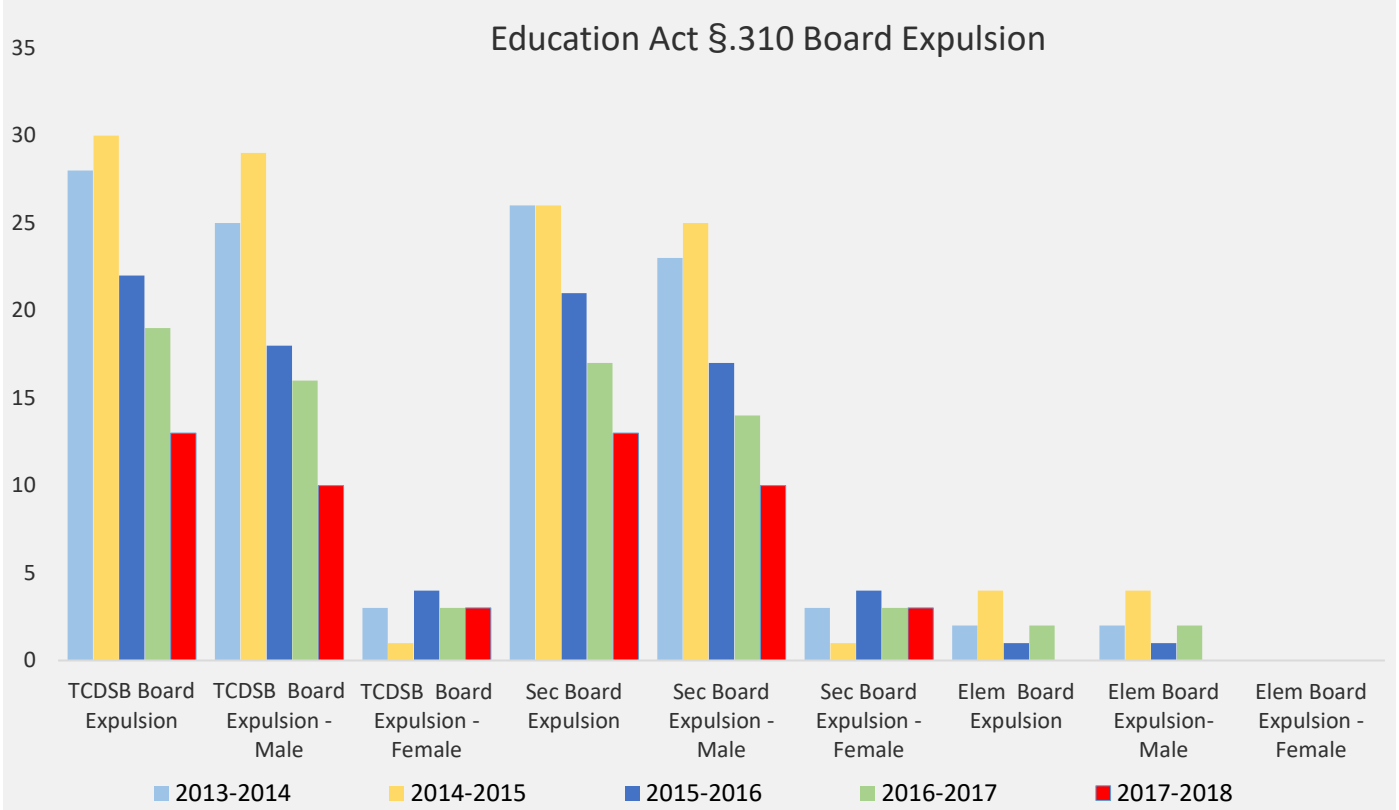




Education Act §.310 Board Expulsions

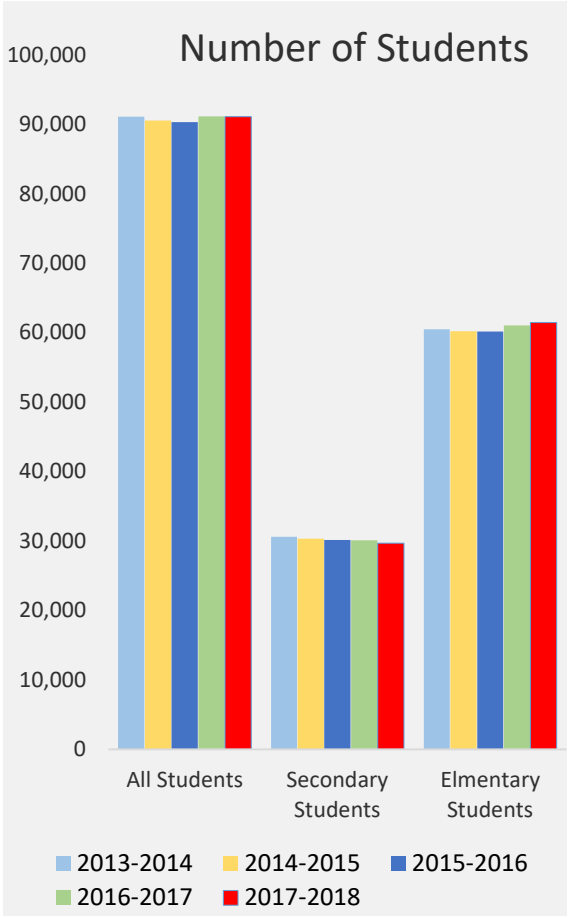
TCDSB	All Students	Secondary Students	Elmentary Students	TCDSB Board Expulsion	TCDSB Board Expulsion - Male	TCDSB Board Expulsion - Female	Sec Board Expulsion	Sec Board Expulsion - Male	Sec Board Expulsion - Female	Elem Board Expulsion	Elem Board Expulsion- Male	Elem Board Expulsion - Female
2013-2014	91,115	30,631	60,484	28	25	3	26	23	3	2	2	0
2014-2015	90,541	30,319	60,222	30	29	1	26	25	1	4	4	0
2015-2016	90,333	30,149	60,184	22	18	4	21	17	4	1	1	0
2016-2017	91,144	30,109	61,035	19	16	3	17	14	3	2	2	0
2017-2018	91,107	29,673	61,434	13	10	3	13	10	3	0	0	0

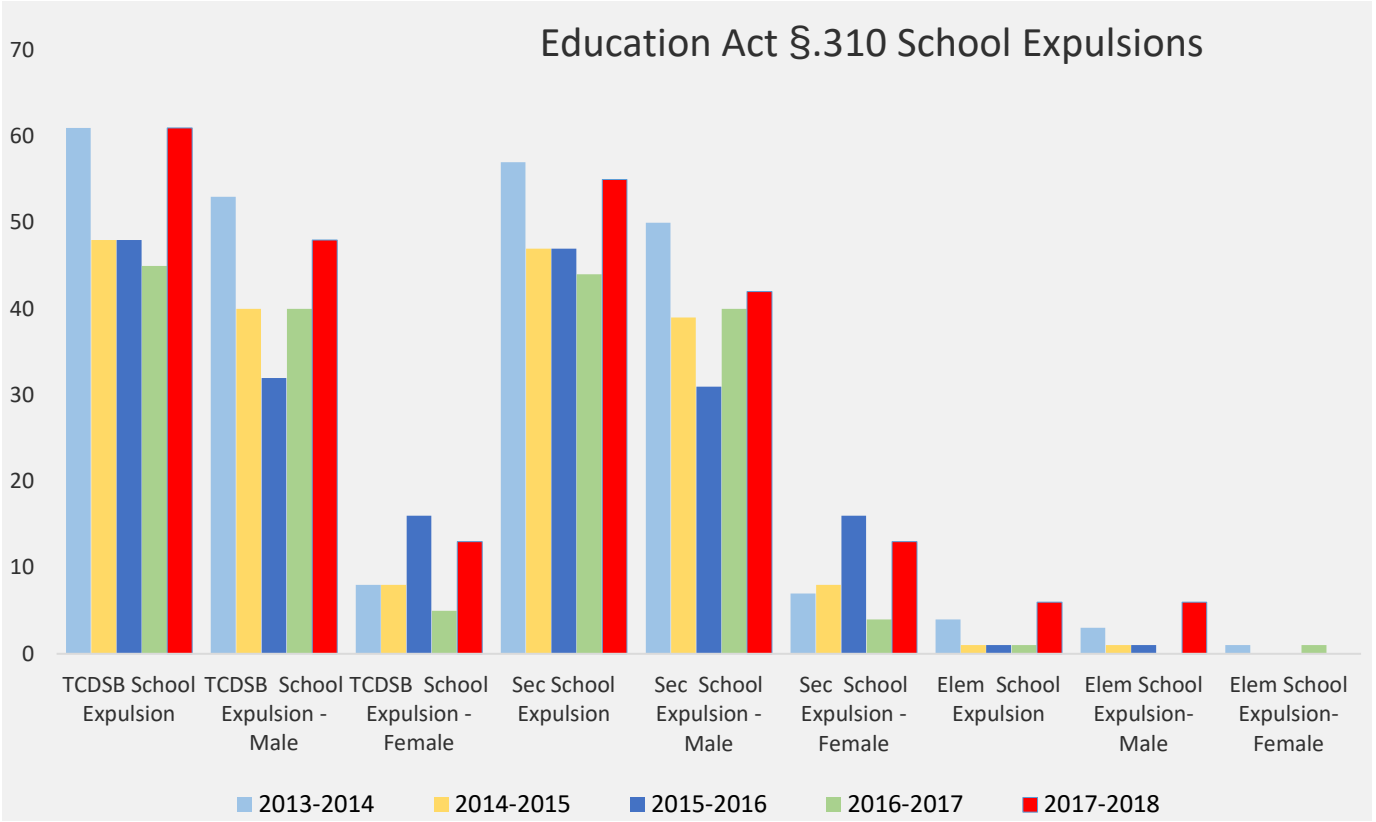




Education Act §.310 School Expulsions

TCDSB	All Students	Secondary Students	Elmentary Students	TCDSB School Expulsion	TCDSB School Expulsion - Male	TCDSB School Expulsion - Female	Sec School Expulsion	Sec School Expulsion - Male	Sec School Expulsion - Female	Elem School Expulsion	Elem School Expulsion- Male	Elem School Expulsion- Female
2013-2014	91,115	30,631	60,484	61	53	8	57	50	7	4	3	1
2014-2015	90,541	30,319	60,222	48	40	8	47	39	8	1	1	0
2015-2016	90,333	30,149	60,184	48	32	16	47	31	16	1	1	0
2016-2017	91,144	30,109	61,035	45	40	5	44	40	4	1	0	1
2017-2018	91,107	29,673	61,434	61	48	13	55	42	13	6	6	0





SEAC Inquiry – September 19, 2018

School Fire Safety and Students with Disabilities

Autism Ontario's mission is "to ensure that each individual with ASD is provided the means to achieve quality of life as a respected member of society". "Autism Ontario is dedicated to increasing public awareness about autism and the day-to-day issues faced by individuals with autism, their families, and the professionals with whom they interact. The association and its chapters share common goals of providing information and education, supporting research, and advocating for programs and services for the autism community"[1].

In alignment with Autism Ontario's provincial mission and priorities, the Toronto chapter strives to bring the local voice and concerns of TCDSB parents to the forefront in the form of formal inquiries (item 13, *Inquiries and Miscellaneous*) at TCDSB Special Education Advisory Committee meetings with the intent of receiving Board staff clarification and information.

It is our understanding that it is a requirement, as per the Ontario Fire Marshall and various Ontario legislation that schools must have a fire safety plan which has been approved by the Chief Fire Official, that supervisory staff be appointed and trained on how to carry out the school fire safety plan and that the drill procedures must be developed and carried out in consultation with the Chief Fire Official. On top of the previously listed requirements and according to Article 2.8.3.2. of Division B of the Fire Code, it is also our understanding that schools must hold three fire drills which includes a total evacuation of the building in each school term, or at least once a month during the summer term in schools attended by children and in day care centres in schools attended by children.

Seeing as the Ontario Fire Code requires a total evacuation of the building during fire drills in schools; when developing the school fire safety plan and before submitting the plan to the Chief Fire Official, it is our understanding that the capabilities and mobility needs of the building occupants which includes students and staff must be taken into consideration and duly noted in the plan.

According to the Toronto Catholic District School Board's policy register; policy number SM.07 *Fire Emergency Procedures*, regulation 3: "each school's Fire Safety Plan will also be posted on the school's portal page".

Due to the varying capabilities and characteristics of students with special education needs, many challenges in effectively enforcing fire safety procedures may be present during drills and in the case of an actual emergency. The auditory over-stimulation and transition away from the structured schedule of the day during a fire drill or actual emergency may cause a heightened sense of fear and confusion for many students with special education needs, students who are deaf and hard of hearing may require additional support and students with mobility impairments may also require additional support. Ensuring that these students are explicitly taught safety procedures and that the necessary human resource/facilities support is available in the case of an actual emergency is essential.

[1] http://www.autismontario.com/client/aso/ao.nsf/web/About+Us

Autism Ontario – Toronto Chapter would like to know:

1) **What policies and procedures are in place that specifically includes the consideration of the varying capabilities and characteristics of students with special education needs when developing, carrying out and monitoring fire safety plan procedures in TCDSB schools?**
2) **What process is in place to provide additional preparation and support for those students that struggle with transition, sensory processing or other needs as specified in their IEP.**
3) **What metrics are in place for monitoring and reporting compliance with the fire safety plan requirements?**

The Toronto chapter of Autism Ontario asks that your written response be included as part of the October 2018 SEAC agenda.

Supplementary information:
https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/sites/default/files/content/ofm/docs/TG-04-2016%20-%20Fire%20Drill%20Guideline.pdf

https://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Documents/SM07.pdf

Annual Calendar of SEAC Business for 2018				
Month	**Annual Activities/Topics**	**Board Events/Deadlines**	**Items to be Addressed from the Pending List**	**Status of Pending Items**
January	- Review of Draft SEAC Calendar - Set SEAC goals for the year - Annual Accessibility Report 2017 - Mental Health Report 2016-17 - Auditor Report – Ministry Funding and Oversight of School Boards - Special Education Plan: special education staffing 2017	- Grade 9 EQAO Testing takes place in Secondary Schools - Long Term Accommodation Program Plan (ongoing)	SEAC requested that the Board to seek a representation of indigenous persons from various organizations at SEAC. (November 2016) SEAC recommends to the Board of Trustees that the community assessment consultation be distributed immediately to Trustees and parents. (December 2017) SEAC recommends to the Board of Trustees that Student Trustees membership in SEAC be considered. (December 2017) SEAC recommend to the Board that the principals, resource teachers and guidance counsellors ensure that parents receive the information from community colleges and universities regarding summer transition programs for the special needs students. (Nov.2017) SEAC recommend to the Board of Trustees that the Accessibility Working Group Committee also include parent representation. "*That SEAC recommend to the Board of Trustees that IT services, but not limited to, be included in the list of Commitments to Accessibility Planning, Section 2.4, page 26*. (December 2017) SEAC recommends that Special Education Programs (S.P.01) policy be renamed to *Special Education Programs and Services.* Also that the term *Special Education Programs and Services* throughout the policy. SEAC recommends that	Completed Jan 2017 Completed Dec 2017 Reviewed in Jan 2017 Communicated Jan 2018 Communicated to pertinent staff for consideration Dec 2017 Communicated to pertinent staff for inclusion in the

			an example of blind/low vision be included as an example. (December 2017)	policy Dec. 2017
February	-Review of SEAC Calendar - Special Education Plan: Review Program Specific Resources for Parents -TCDSB Equity Plan Presentation -Accountability Framework for Special Education -Auditor Report – School Board's Management of Financial and Human Resources -Student Trustees Eligibility to sit on SEAC -Special Education Parent Fair	-Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) -New term begins in Secondary Schools that operate on semesters -Report Cards are distributed (Elementary and Secondary) -Parent-Teacher Conferences	SEAC recommends to the Board of Trustees that Student Trustees membership in SEAC be considered. (December 2017) Investigate SEAC setting up a working sub-committee to propose items related to the suggestions from the Transportation Steering Committee for discussion at the SEAC January 2018 meeting. (December 2017)	Update since January 2018 February 2018
March	-Review of SEAC Calendar -Continue consultation on Special Education Programs and Services -Safe Schools Committee Update -Mental Health Committee Update	Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) takes place		
April	- Review of SEAC Calendar - Financial Report as at January, 2016 2017-18 Budget Consultation - GSN – - March 31st special ed student count - Update to Special Education Programs for 2018-19 - Verbal update on Medical Conditions Forms	ONSIS report on identified students *Autism Awareness Month*	Number of Identification Exceptionalities by Grade Report submitted to the Ministry of Education's Ontario Student Information System (ONSIS) as of October 2017 that we have this as a standing item, with a first report in October and a second report in March. (January 2018)	Added to Agenda in November and April as the report is sent the following month. (Completed April 2018)
May	-Review of SEAC Calendar - SO update - Draft Protocol on Prevalent Medical Conditions - Report on PAST expansion to secondary schools - Student Grants 2018-19	*Budget Consultation continues* *EQAO Assessment*	SEAC requested a report on whether or not the program to assist with social thinking (PAST) could be expanded to the secondary panel. (May 2017) SEAC recommend to the Board of Trustees that they refer the Anaphylaxis Policy to be updated	Completed May 2018 Updated May 2018

	- Pro Grants Application Update *Cancelled on May 16, 2018 due to lack of Quorum* *Reset for May 22, 2018* *Cancelled due to lack of Quorum*		by the Governance and Policy Committee to reflect part a) below. Additionally, SEAC recommend to the Board of Trustees an update to the Anaphylaxis Protocol and Guidelines to reflect b), c) and d) as listed below. a) There is a need to update Policy to reflect transitions of students between two schools, and specifically, but not limited to elementary and secondary schools; b) Initiate communication between elementary and secondary schools regarding anaphylactic needs for students who enroll in the summer secondary transition course; c) Include in the Anaphylaxis Protocol and Guidelines, information on the transition process and general communications with students, including recommendations arising out of CSLIT meetings scheduled for later this year; and d) Include in the Secondary Health and Safety Binder located in schools a page on the communication plan to be used with students and date implemented. (Nov. 2017- previously moved by Board)	
June	• *Review of SEAC Calendar* • *Monthly Update from the Superintendent of Special Services* • *Special Education Plan* • *Budget approval update* • *Status of PRO Grant application*	*EQAO Grade 3 and 6 Testing*		
July		*School Board Submits balanced Budget for the following year to the Ministry*		
August		*Year End for School Board Financial Statements*		

September	*- Review Special Education Checklist* *- Review TCDSB accessibility Plans* *- Updates from MACSE Meeting Highlights* *- Update re Special Needs Strategy* *- Develop or review SEAC annual Agenda/Goals* *-Association Reports: Autism Ontario and LDAO*	*Special Education Report Checklist submitted to the Ministry of Education*		
October	*- Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) Primary Division, Junior Division, Grade 9 and OSSLT Assessment Results* *-Representation sought for Mental Health and Safe Schools Committees* *- Review of Special Education Plan – Model for Special Education* *- Review of Special Education Plan – Transportation* *-Review of Special Education Plan – Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities*	*-EQAO Results for Gr. 3 and 6 Received and OSSLT* *-Reports on Student Numbers of Elementary and Secondary School Students to be submitted the Ministry of Education* *-Engagement and Governance Supports Discussion Guide*		
November	*-Review EQAO results including deferrals, exemptions, participation rates, and accommodations provided for Special Ed. Students and Achievement levels* *-Continue to Review elements of the Special Education Plan* *- Engagement and Governance Supports Discussion* *-Review of elements of the Special Education Plan (Model for Special Education; Transportation; Categories of Definitions of Exceptionalities)* *-Professional Learning Plan* *-Review of Anaphylaxis Policy, Protocol and Guidelines*	*-Engagement and Governance Supports Discussion Guide* ONSIS report on identified students		
December	*-SEAC Elections* *-SEAC Mass and Social*	*Independent review of assessment and reporting*		

	-Policy review of Special Education Programs (S.P.01) *-Multi-year Accessibility Plan*			

Presented to Board on October 4, 2018

Toronto Catholic District School Board

OUR MISSION

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ. We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.

OUR VISION

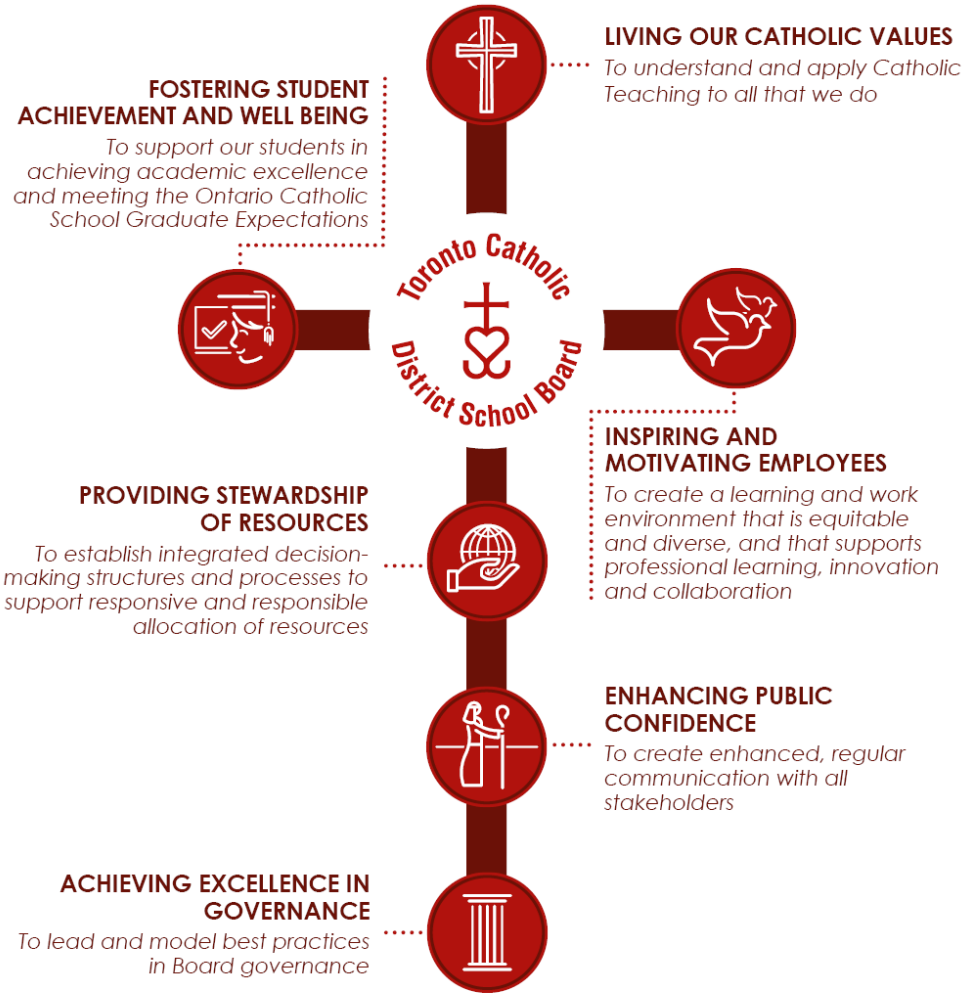
At Toronto Catholic, we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

ROOTED IN CHRIST

"Live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, abounding in thanksgiving." – **Colossians, 2:6-7**

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

2016-2021



https://www.tcdsb.org/Board/MYSP/Pages/MultiYearStrategicPlan.aspx

BOARD LEARNING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2018 - 2021

TORONTO CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD
80 Sheppard Ave East
Toronto, ON M2N 6E8
Phone (416) 222-8282
www.tcdsb.org

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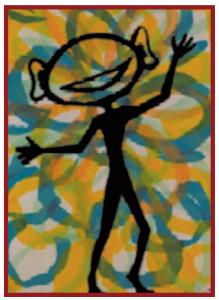
A CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE IS EXPECTED TO BE:

A DISCERNING BELIEVER

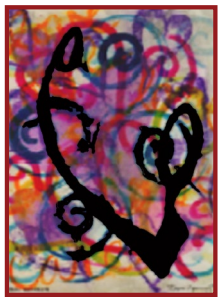


AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

A REFLECTIVE, CREATIVE AND HOLISTIC THINKER

A SELF-DIRECTED, RESPONSIBLE, LIFELONG LEARNER

A COLLABORATIVE CONTRIBUTOR



A CARING FAMILY MEMBER

A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN

BOARD LEARNING IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018 - 2021

It is a Ministry of Education requirement that all Ontario school boards create a **Board Learning Improvement Plan (BLIP)** to guide their System Improvement Learning Cycle. The Board Learning Improvement Plan is a living document that guides, supports and focuses our collective work in classrooms, schools, and the board, to promote student achievement and well-being.

The Board Learning Improvement Plan reflects the **VISION** for education in Ontario, which is to support every child and reach every student through the following priorities:

- **Achieving Excellence: High levels of expectations**
- **Ensuring Equity**
- **Promoting Well-being**
- **Enhancing Public Confidence**

The **2018-2021 Board Learning Improvement Plan** builds on our successes in literacy, numeracy and improved graduation rates within the TCDSB, focusing on the areas that require the most attention. Our plan is informed by a wide range of Ministry, TCDSB and other foundational resources (see Appendix C).

Aligned with the TCDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan (2016 - 2021), and informed by the Ontario Ministry of Education foundational strategies and the School Effectiveness Framework (Appendix B), the Board Learning Improvement Plan has four AREAS OF FOCUS, all of which support our strategic direction to FOSTER STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL-BEING:

A. **HOME, SCHOOL AND PARISH: Nurturing our Catholic Community**

B. **CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING: A Focus on Assessment Practices**

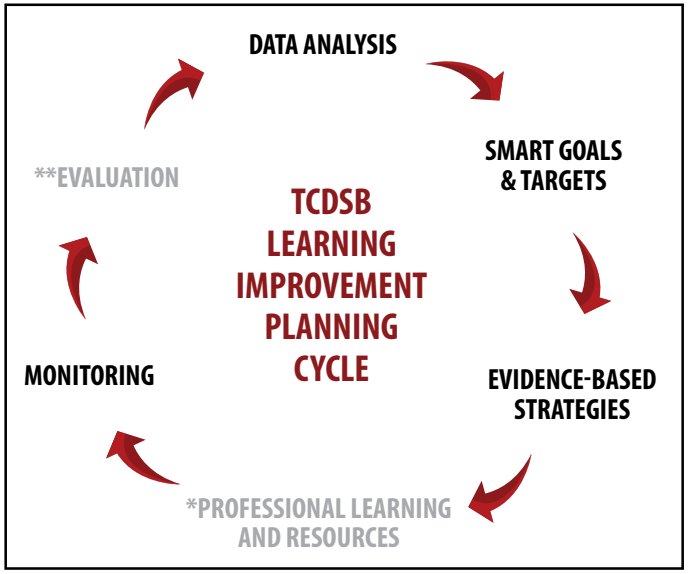
C. **PATHWAYS, PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING: Student Engagement and Well-Being**

D. **SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP: Professional Learning, Collaboration and Engagement**

The TCDSB Learning Improvement Planning Cycle

The TCDSB Learning Improvement Planning Cycle is used at the Board and School level to improve student learning and achievement:

- **Data Analysis** identifies key areas of strength and need (2017 - 2018 baseline).
- **SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) Goals and Targets** are informed by areas of need, building on strengths.
- **Evidence-based Strategies** include classroom strategies and professional learning opportunities.
- **Monitoring** provides a framework for ***ongoing*** feedback using measurement tools and identifying responsibility.



*Professional Learning and Resources:

Board: The Annual TCDSB Professional Learning Plans outline K-12 professional learning opportunities and supporting resources for teachers. These documents are revised annually and presented to the Board in November.

School: School teams, supported by the central resource staff, collaboratively develop professional learning plans with superintendents. These plans are revised annually and posted on the school website by the end of October.

**Evaluation:

Board: The Annual Board Learning Improvement Plan Report Back occurs annually in October.

School: The school professional learning plan is evaluated at the end of each school year.

TCDSB Board Learning Improvement Plan Report Back: OVERVIEW

The following structure will be used for the Annual Board Learning Improvement Plan Report Back in October.

SMART GOAL → **EVIDENCE** → **NEXT STEPS**

The status of each goal will be reported using the following scale:

- On Target - On Track
- Monitor - On Track but requires additional support
- Action Required - Not on track

TCDSB System-wide Surveys

Comprehensive surveys that are administered system-wide will be referenced throughout the document.

	PANEL	SURVEY	SCOPE	N in 2017-2018
STUDENT VOICE	Elementary	Safe and Caring Catholic School Climate	All Grade 6 and 8 students	10,100
	Secondary	Student Transition	Sample of Grade 9 students	3,212
		My School My Voice	Sample of Grade10 and 12 students	5,228
		Safe Schools	Sample of Grade 9 to 12 students	5,144
TEACHER VOICE	Elementary	Teacher Voice	All teachers	1,023
	Secondary	Teacher Voice	All teachers	612
ADMINISTRATOR VOICE	Elementary	Administrator Voice	All principals and vice-principals	131
	Secondary	Administrator Voice	All principals and vice-principals	42
PARENT VOICE	Elementary & Secondary	Parent/Guardian Voice	All parents	2,615

AREA OF FOCUS

A HOME, SCHOOL AND PARISH: NURTURING OUR CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

DATA ANALYSIS

Areas of Strength:

School promotion of Catholic values, virtues, and practices

Nurturing our Catholic Community

Areas for Growth:

Staff and student engagement in faith development opportunities

School-parish connections

*See **Appendix A** for detailed data analysis.*

SMART GOALS & TARGETS

By June 2021, there will be increased engagement in centrally developed initiatives that promote Catholic values in Catholic initiatives:

School submissions for culminating celebrations (The Toronto Catholic Family Film Festival, Parish Family Day, and Spotlight on Your School, in support of the Pastoral Plan): 58% to 70%

Attendance at events and initiatives

- A Catholic Call To Serve: 75% to 80% of secondary schools
- Province Wide Mass/Peace Walk: 75% to 80% of secondary schools
- Retreats
  - Principal: 84% to 90%
  - Vice Principal: 63% to 75%
  - Business Leaders: 38% to 50%
- Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ, Elementary Religious Education program: 2018 - 2019 baseline

By June 2021, positive response on survey questions related to school-parish connections will increase in:

Parent Voice Survey
- 72% to 80%

Student Voice and Teacher Voice Survey
- 2018-2019 baseline

EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES

Central Staff, Field Superintendents, School Administrators, and Classroom Teachers will:

- Implement the new Pastoral Plan, 'Rooted in Christ; we Belong, we Believe, we Become'
- Continue to promote and implement initiatives and strategies that foster a strong home-school-parish connection
- Participate in days of reflection
- Engage in professional learning sessions with a focus on sharing promising practices
- Increase collaboration and communication regarding Catholic initiatives and, supporting resources (liturgies, prayers, songs, pastoral care and bereavement)
- Promote school involvement in faith-based initiatives, which promote innovation and 21C competencies grounded in Catholic Social Teachings and Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations
- Continue to implement curriculum revisions, K-12 (Religious and Family Life Education)
- Use Common Feedback Forms for all centrally developed professional learning

MONITORING

Central Staff will:

- Monitor progress on SMART goals and targets through data collection, using surveys and Common Feedback Forms

Field Superintendents will:

- Review and monitor school progress on targeted goals with a focused on Nurturing Our Catholic Community

School Administrators will:

- Report back to senior staff on participation of staff and students in school, school-parish and system initiatives focused on Nurturing Our Catholic Community

Teachers will:

- Monitor student participation in school, school-parish and system initiatives focused on Nurturing Our Catholic Community

AREA OF FOCUS

B CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING: A FOCUS ON ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

DATA ANALYSIS

Areas of Strength:

Primary and Junior Reading

Primary and Junior Writing

Grade 9 Academic Math

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) Grade 10 students in Academic English

Areas for Growth:

Primary and Junior Math

Grade 9 Applied Math

OSSLT Grade 10 students in Applied English

Achievement for students with special needs

Assessment for, as and of learning practices

SMART GOALS & TARGETS

By June 2021, student achievement in literacy and numeracy will improve in:

EQAO

- Students achieving Levels 3/4:
  - **Primary** Reading 75% to 81% Writing 75% to 81% Math 58% to 64%
  - **Junior** Reading 79% to 85% Writing 81% to 87% Math 47% to 53%
  - **Grade 9** Applied Math 49% to 55%
- Students successful:
  - OSSLT Applied English: 37% to 43%
- Students with Special Needs achieving Level 3/4
  - **Primary** Reading 44% to 50% Writing 51% to 57% Math 27% to 33%
  - **Junior** Reading 48% to 54% Writing: 51% to 57% Math: 13% to 19%
  - **Grade 9** Academic 65% to 70% Applied Math 36% to 42%
- Students with Special Needs successful
  - OSSLT: 46% to 52%

By June 2021, positive responses on system-wide surveys regarding assessment for, as and of learning practices will increase in:

Secondary Student Voice Survey

- Timely feedback on how to improve their work, 62% to 75%

Teacher Voice Survey

- Assessment for, as and of learning (based on a range of questions)
  - 74% - 85% to 80% - 90% in elementary
  - 67% - 76% to 75% - 85% in secondary

Administrator Voice Survey

- Assessment for, as and of learning (based on a range of questions)
  - 53% - 72% to 60% - 80% in elementary
  - 57% - 76% to 60% - 85% in secondary

*See **Appendix A** for detailed data analysis.*

EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES

Central Staff, Field Superintendents, School Administrators, and Classroom Teachers will:

- Engage in collaborative, inquiry-based professional learning focused on assessment for learning
- Use Professional Learning Cycles to address areas of need
- Engage in co-teaching and co-planning
- Embed fair and equitable assessment practices and use culturally responsive resources in all professional learning sessions
- Identify specific subgroups with learning gaps and accessibility challenges (example: special education and ELL) and plan appropriate and timely interventions
- Share effective assessment practices with parents
- Differentiate support based on school and/or student needs
- Support schools in the creation and implementation of the School Professional Learning Plan to support school improvement
- Integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms and schools

MONITORING

Central Staff will:

- Monitor effectiveness of professional learning opportunities using Common Feedback Forms and evidence from collaborative inquiries

Field Superintendents will:

- Use student data and collect artefacts to monitor school progress during School Improvement Team/Student Success Team discussions

School Administrators will:

- Monitor progress on school improvement goals at least three times a year with School Improvement Team/Student Success Team and regularly with all school staff
- Together with teachers, monitor students in identified sub-groups

Teachers will:

- Monitor students using assessment for learning strategies with a focus on students in identified sub-groups

AREA OF FOCUS

C PATHWAYS, PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELL-BEING

DATA ANALYSIS

Areas of Strength:

Elementary students' positive self image

Student Mental Health and Well-being initiative in Secondary

Areas for Growth:

Engagement in Pathways programs [Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM), Dual Credit, Co-op, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), experiential learning]

Student Mental Health and Well-being initiative in Elementary

Secondary students' positive self image

SMART GOALS & TARGETS

By June 2021, there will be an increase in the level of participation in Pathways Programming:

SHSM (Grade 11 and 12 students): 14% to 25%
Dual Credit usage of allocations (filling allocations): 56% to 70%
Central co-op placements: 160 to 210 students
OYAP: 465 to 495 students
Experiential Learning: 35 to 70 school projects

By June 2021, there will be an increase in usage of online tools that promote students' understanding of themselves as learner:

All About Me:
Primary Division: 3% to 15%
Junior Division: 9% to 20%

By June 2021, there will be an increase in positive responses regarding students' understanding of themselves as learners and well-being:

myBlueprint
- 57% to 70% in elementary;
- 52% to 70% in secondary

Grade 3 to Grade 5 Student Voice surveys: 2018-2019 baseline

Teacher Voice surveys
- Students build on experiences to explore and reflect upon interests, strengths, skills and education and career/life aspirations (based on a range of responses): 69% - 72% to 75% -80%

Administrator Voice surveys
- Students build on experiences to explore and reflect upon interests, strengths, skills and education and career/life aspirations (based on a range of responses): 60% - 81% to 70% to 90%

By June 2021, there will be an increase in positive responses regarding Secondary students' self image (based on a range of questions):

Secondary Student Voice surveys: 71% - 83% to 75% - 85%

By June 2021, there will be an increase in "Stop the Stigma" Mental Health and Well-being initiatives from 34 to 80 elementary schools

*See **Appendix A** for detailed data analysis.*

EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES

Central Staff, Field Superintendents, School Administrators, and Classroom Teachers will:

- Engage and support professional learning on student pathways coaching, Dual Credit programs (including accelerated OYAP and School Within a College) and myBlueprint online training
- Engage in myBlueprint sessions and explore online portfolio (students and teachers K-6)
- Promote high quality, equitable SHSM opportunities for all four pathways (workplace, apprenticeship, college and university bound students)
- Create new, diverse and culturally responsive partnerships for Pathways programs with a focus on retail and hospitality
- Increase communication regarding the value of experiential learning
- Implement the Student Mental Health and Well-Being Communication plan and the Ministry's "Everyday Mental Health Activities"
- Promote the creation of School Well-being Teams
- Increase awareness and use of classroom strategies to support mental health and well-being for all TCDSB students by implementing "Supporting Minds" PD series for educators K-12

MONITORING

Central Staff will:
- Monitor and track use of myBlueprint with Google forms and data provided by myBlueprint
- Track student attitudes regarding pathways and post-secondary destinations using Secondary Student Voice survey
- Track elementary and secondary Student Voice survey regarding sense of self
- Track enrolment in Pathways programs (Trillium, My Blueprint, Education Data Collection System [EDCS])
- Monitor progress and implementation of the Student Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy using the TCDSB Mental Health and Well Being Student Reflective Survey

Field Superintendents will:
- Monitor progress in the implementation of School Well-Being Teams using guiding questions
- Monitor implementation of Pathways programs in secondary schools to ensure student needs are being met through a range of experientially learning

School Administrators will:
- Monitor participation in Pathways programming
- Monitor use of myBlueprint

Teachers will:
- Monitor student participation in Pathways programming

AREA OF FOCUS

D SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, COLLABORATION, AND ENGAGEMENT

DATA ANALYSIS	SMART GOALS & TARGETS	EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES	MONITORING
Areas of Strength: ***Promoting a safe, healthy learning environment*** ***Recognizing and supporting excellence*** ***Promoting innovative practice*** **Areas for Growth:** ***Inquiry-based professional learning and teacher involvement*** ***Staff well-being***	**By June 2021, there will be an increase in positive responses regarding the level of inquiry-based professional learning, staff collaboration and engagement, guided by culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy in:** Teacher Voice surveys (based on a range of questions): 65% - 75% to 70% - 80% Administrator Voice surveys (based on a range of questions): 55% - 70% to 65% - 80% Evidence of participation in job-embedded collaborative inquiry will be shared by field superintendents, administrators, central special services and curriculum staff, and classroom teachers (e.g., artefacts, student work, presentations, SO visits, student data, feedback forms): 2018 - 2019 baseline **By June 2021, there will be an increase in positive responses regarding staff well-being:** Teacher Voice (based on a range of questions): 55% - 57% to 65% - 70% Administrator Voice (based on a range of questions): 33% - 40% to 50% - 65% Classroom Support Staff Voice: 2018-2019 baseline	Central Staff, Field Superintendents, School Administrators, and Classroom Teachers will: • Engage in professional learning focused on inquiry, equity, and culturally responsive school and classroom practices • Create conditions that promote collaborative learning cultures (e.g., time to meet, talk, plan, build empathy, trust and respect) and to share and analyze evidence of student learning and assessment • Engage in a cyclical learning process of inquiry: plan, act, observe and reflect, with a focus on culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy • Engage in collaborative professional learning together with school staff to support the learning of our diverse communities • Share knowledge and effective evidence-based instructional practices through co-planning, co-teaching, mentoring, coaching and consulting • Encourage risk-taking, trying new instructional practices and strategies and developing a growth mindset • Acknowledge and celebrate the achievements, gifts and strength of individuals and teams	Central Staff will: • Track participation and progress in system-wide surveys • Report back on professional learning progress and collaborative inquiries using Common Feedback Forms Field Superintendents will: • Report back to Education Council on school programs regarding school learning improvement SMART goals; share evidence of job-embedded collaborative inquiry (e.g., artefacts, student work, presentations, student data) • Regularly monitor School Professional Learning Plans School Administrators and Teachers will: • Collaborate to plan, act, review and monitor progress in meeting school targets
*See **Appendix A** for detailed data analysis.*			

APPENDIX A

DATA ANALYSIS

A. Home, School and Parish: Nurturing our Catholic Community

Areas of Strength:

- Schools promote Catholic values, virtue, and practices (e.g., mass and prayer)
  - Elementary Student Voice: 94% positive
  - Secondary Student Voice: 90% positive
  - Parent Voice: 92% positive
- Nurturing Catholic Social Teachings (Human Dignity, Preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, Solidarity)
  - Elementary Teacher Voice: 88% positive
  - Secondary Teacher Voice: 81% positive
  - Elementary Administrator Voice: 97% positive
  - Secondary Administrator Voice: 93% positive

Areas for Growth:

- School submissions for culminating celebrations (Toronto Catholic Family Film Festival (TCFF), Parish Family Day, and Spotlight On Your School) at 58%
- A Catholic Call To Serve – 75% participation from Secondary Schools
- Province Wide Mass/Peace Walk – 75% participation from Secondary Schools
- Participation in retreats:
  - Principal 165/196 = 85%
  - Vice Principal 70/111 = 63%
  - Business Leaders 29/77 = 38%
- School-parish connection, positive response to:
  - Their child's school is working closely with the parish
    - › Parent Voice: 73%
  - There is a strong connection between school, home and parish
    - › Parent Voice: 71%

DATA ANALYSIS

B. Curriculum, Teaching and Learning: A Focus on Assessment Practices

Areas of Strength:

EQAO (5 year trend – from 2013/2014 to 2017/2018)

- Primary Reading (Level 3/4): increased from 70% to 75%; Primary Writing (Level 3/4): decreased from 81% to 75%
- Junior Reading (Level 3/4): increased from 74% to 79%; Junior Writing (Level 3/4): stable at 81%
- Grade 9 Academic Mathematics (Level 3/4): stable at 83%
- OSSLT - Grade 10 Academic English (successful): decreased from 93% to 89%
- From Grade 3 Primary Reading in 2015 to Grade 6 Junior Reading in 2018, an increase of 9% from 69% to 78% achieving Level 3/4

Assessment Practices (Assessment for, as and of learning) positive response to:

- Giving and receiving timely feedback on how to improve their work:
  - Elementary Student Voice: 81%

Areas for Growth:

EQAO (5 year trend – from 2013/2014 to 2017/2018)

- Primary Mathematics (Level 3/4): decreased from 66% to 58%
- Junior Mathematics (Level 3/4): decreased from 53% to 47%
- Grade 9 Applied Mathematics (Levels 3/4): increased from 44% to 49%
- OSSLT- Grade 10 Applied English (successful): decreased from 52% to 37%
- From Grade 3 Primary Mathematics in 2015 to Grade 6 Junior Mathematics in 2018, a decrease of 18% from 64% to 46% achieving Level 3/4

Assessment Practices (Assessment for, as and of learning) positive response to:

- Giving and receiving timely feedback on how to improve their work:
  - Secondary Student Voice: 62%
- Students and educators build a common understanding of what students are learning by identifying, sharing and clarifying the learning goals and success criteria:
  - Elementary Teacher Voice: 85%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 73%
  - Elementary Administrator Voice: 72%; Secondary Administrator Voice: 76%
- During learning, timely, ongoing, descriptive feedback about student progress is provided based on student actions and co-constructed success criteria:
  - Elementary Teacher Voice: 84%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 76%
  - Elementary Administrator Voice: 61%; Secondary Administrator Voice: 57%
- Students are explicitly taught and regularly use self-assessment skills to monitor, improve and communicate their learning within the context of the Ontario curriculum and/or Individual Education Plan (IEP):
  - Elementary Teacher Voice: 74%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 67%
  - Elementary Administrator Voice: 53%; Secondary Administrator Voice: 64%

APPENDIX A

DATA ANALYSIS

C. Pathways, Planning, and Programming: Student Engagement and Well-Being

Areas of Strength:

Elementary students' sense of their self image, positive responses to Student Voice:

- In general, I like the way I am: 88%
- Overall, I have lot to be proud of: 85%
- A lot of things about me are good: 83%
- When I do something I do it well: 80%
- I like the way I look: 78%
- My school community is aware of the Board's Mental Health awareness initiative for students (e.g., Children's Mental health Awareness Week, Stop the Stigma):
  - Elementary Teacher Voice: 75%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 86%

"Stop the Stigma" Student Mental Health and Well-being initiative in all 32 secondary schools

Areas for Growth:

Participation in Pathways Programming:

- SHSM (Grade 11 and 12 students): 14% within 68 programs
- Dual Credit usage of allocations: 56%
- Central co-op placements: 160 students
- OYAP: 465 students
- Experiential Learning: 35 projects

Students' understanding of themselves as learners, positive response to:

- Online usage of the varied resources within myBlueprint: Elementary 57%; Secondary 52%
- Student usage of All About Me in SK – Grade 6: Primary 3%; Junior 9%
- On school opportunities that help students' discover strengths and interests:
  - myBlueprint Exit survey: 72% in elementary; 62% in secondary
- On participating in activities that explore different areas of study, jobs and careers:
  - myBlueprint Exit survey: 62% in elementary; 65% in secondary
- Students build on experiences to explore and reflect upon interests, strengths, skills and education and career/life aspirations:
  - Elementary Teacher Voice: 69%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 72%
  - Elementary Administrator Voice: 60%; Secondary Administrator Voice: 81%

Secondary students' sense of their self image, positive responses to Student Voice:

- In general, I like the way I am: 83%
- Overall, I have lot to be proud of: 79%
- A lot of things about me are good: 80%
- When I do something I do it well: 82%
- I like the way I look: 71%

"Stop the Stigma" Student Mental Health and Well-being initiative in 34 elementary schools

DATA ANALYSIS

D. School and Classroom Leadership: Professional Learning, Collaboration, and Engagement

Areas of Strength:

Promoting a safe, healthy learning environment, positive responses to:

- I feel safe in school: Elementary Student Voice: 96%; Secondary Student Voice: 92%
- My school is a healthy and active place to be: Elementary Student Voice: 89%; Secondary Student Voice: 77%
- My school is a happy and welcoming place to learn: Elementary Student Voice: 88%; Secondary Student Voice: 80%
- Staff, students, parents and school community promote and sustain student well-being and positive student behaviour in a safe, accepting, inclusive and healthy learning environment:
  - Elementary Teacher Voice: 76%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 75%
  - Elementary Administrator Voice 81%; Secondary Administrator Voice: 83%%
- My child's school is welcoming place to learn: Parent Voice: 89%
- My child feels safe at school: Parent Voice: 89%

Recognizing and supporting excellence: currently at 37 exemplary practice submissions;

Promoting innovative practice: currently at 90% of schools where teachers and administrators are leading 21st Century Innovator sessions.

Areas for Growth:

Inquiry-based professional learning and collaborative instruction, positive responses to:

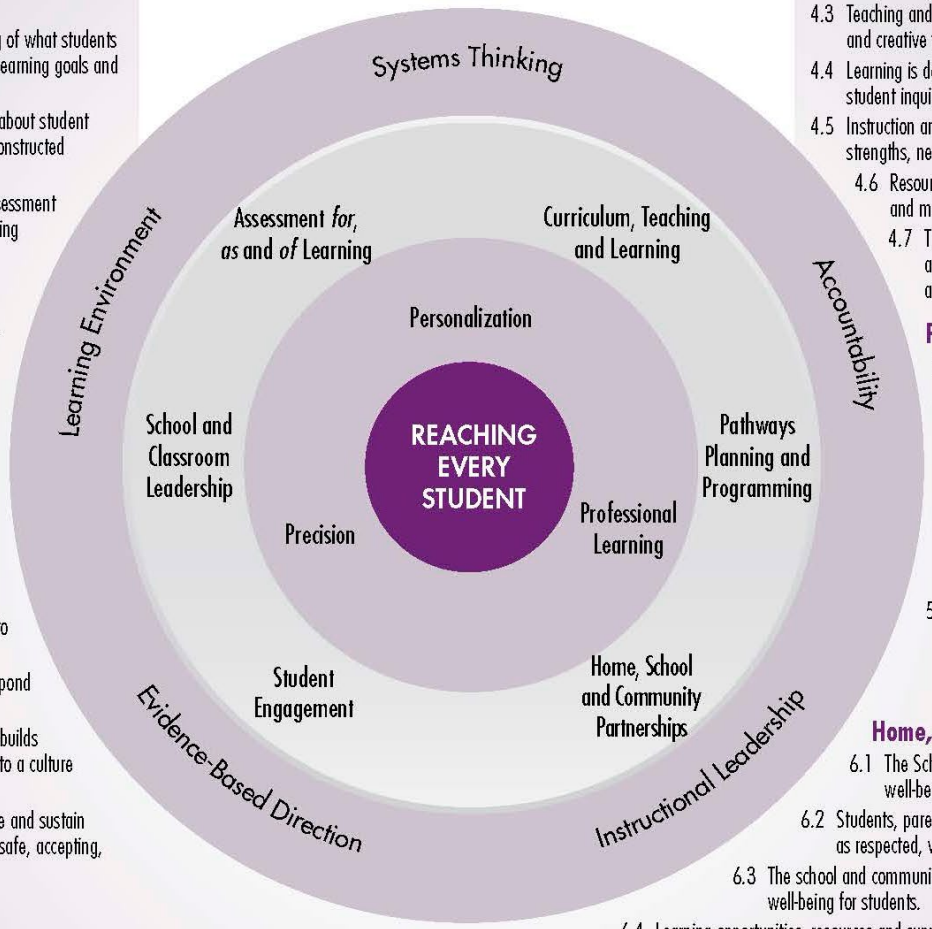
- Collaborative instructional leadership builds capacity to strengthen and enhance teaching and learning:
  - Elementary Teacher Voice 76%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 69%
  - Elementary Administrator Voice 67%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 72%
- Job-embedded and inquiry-based professional learning builds capacity, informs instructional practice and contributes to a culture of learning:
  - Elementary Teacher Voice 70%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 64%
  - Elementary Administrator Voice 56%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 72%
- There is a strong culture of collaboration within our Catholic school community
  - Elementary Teacher Voice 78%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 72%
  - Elementary Administrator Voice 82%; Secondary Teacher Voice: 81%

Teacher and administrator well-being, positive responses to:

- In the last 6 months, too much time pressure at work has caused me worry, "nerves" or stress:
  - *Sometimes, Once in a while, not at all*
    - Elementary Teacher Voice 57%; Secondary Teacher Voice 55%
    - Elementary Administrator Voice 35%; Secondary Administrator Voice 40%
- In the last 6 months, I have experienced worry, "nerves" or stress from mental fatigue at work:
  - *Sometimes, Once in a while, not at all*
    - Elementary Teacher Voice 56%; Secondary Teacher Voice 55%
    - Elementary Administrator Voice 36%; Secondary Administrator Voice 37%

APPENDIX B

K–12 School Effectiveness Framework
A support for school improvement and student success



Assessment *for, as* and *of* Learning

1.1 Assessment is connected to the curriculum, collaboratively developed by educators and used to inform next steps in learning and instruction.

1.2 A variety of relevant and meaningful assessment data is used by students and educators to continuously monitor learning, to inform instruction and determine next steps.

1.3 Students and educators build a common understanding of what students are learning by identifying, sharing, and clarifying the learning goals and success criteria.

1.4 During learning, timely, ongoing, descriptive feedback about student progress is provided based on student actions and co-constructed success criteria.

1.5 Students are explicitly taught and regularly use self-assessment skills to monitor, improve and communicate their learning within the context of the Ontario curriculum and/or Individual Education Plan (IEP)

1.6 Assessment *of* learning provides relevant and meaningful evidence to evaluate the quality of student achievement at or near the end of a cycle of learning and to determine next steps.

1.7 Ongoing communication about learning is in place to allow students, educators and parents to monitor and support student learning.

School and Classroom Leadership

2.1 Collaborative instructional leadership builds capacity to strengthen and enhance teaching and learning.

2.2 Processes and practices are designed to deepen understanding of the curriculum and refine instruction to improve student learning and achievement.

2.3 Organizational structures are coherent, flexible and respond to the needs of students.

2.4 Job-embedded and inquiry-based professional learning builds capacity, informs instructional practice and contributes to a culture of learning.

2.5 Staff, students, parents and school community promote and sustain student well-being and positive student behaviour in a safe, accepting, inclusive and healthy learning environment.

Student Engagement

3.1 The teaching and learning environment is inclusive, promotes the intellectual engagement of all students and reflects individual student strengths, needs, learning preferences and cultural perspectives.

3.2 Students' stated priorities that reflect the diversity, needs and interests of the student population are embedded in School Improvement Plans (SIPs).

3.3 Students are partners in dialogue and discussions to inform programs and activities in the classroom and school that represent the diversity, needs and interests of the student population.

3.4 Students demonstrate a wide range of transferable skills such as teamwork, advocacy, leadership and global citizenship.

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

4.1 A culture of high expectations supports the belief that all students can learn, progress and achieve.

4.2 A clear emphasis on high levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy is evident throughout the school.

4.3 Teaching and learning in the 21st Century is collaborative, innovative and creative within a global context.

4.4 Learning is deepened through authentic, relevant and meaningful student inquiry.

4.5 Instruction and assessment are differentiated in response to student strengths, needs and prior learning.

4.6 Resources for students are relevant, current, accessible, inclusive and monitored for bias.

4.7 Timely and tiered interventions, supported by a team approach, respond to individual student learning needs, and well-being.

Pathways Planning and Programming

5.1 Comprehensive education and career/life planning programs meet the learning needs, interests and aspirations of all students.

5.2 Opportunities for authentic learning experiences and experiential learning exist in all classrooms, schools and community programs.

5.3 Students, parents, families, and educators understand the full range of pathways, programs, options and supports that are available.

5.4 Students build on in-school and out-of-school experiences to further explore and reflect upon their interests, strengths, skills and education and career/life aspirations.

Home, School and Community Partnerships

6.1 The School Council has a meaningful role in supporting learning, well-being and achievement for students.

6.2 Students, parents and community members are engaged and welcomed as respected, valued partners in student learning.

6.3 The school and community build partnerships to enhance learning opportunities and well-being for students.

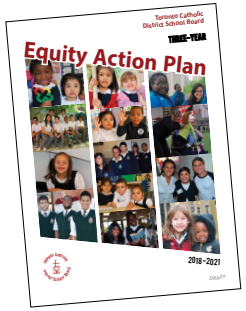
6.4 Learning opportunities, resources and supports are provided to help parents support student learning and have productive ongoing parent-teacher-student conversations.

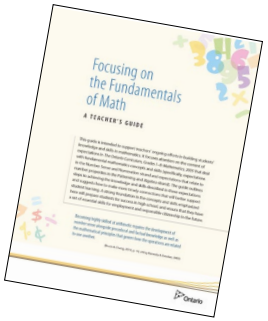
2013

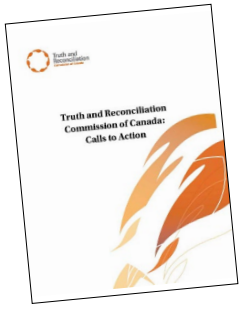
TCDSB Board Learning Improvement Plan: RESOURCES

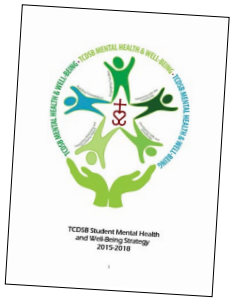
The following **RESOURCES** have informed our plan:

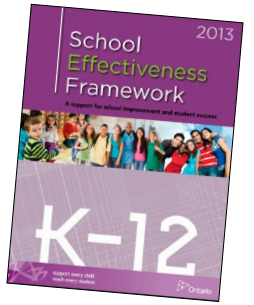
- TCDSB Equity and Inclusive Education (2018 - 2021)
- Focusing on the Fundamentals of Math (2018)
- Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy (2015-2018)
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action (2015)
- Achieving Excellence: A renewed Vision for Education in Ontario (2014)
- Promoting Well-Being in Ontario's Education System (2014)
- School Effectiveness Framework (2013)
- Creating Pathways to Success (2013)
- Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (2011)
- Growing Success (2010)
- Supporting English Language Learners (2008)
- Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students With Special Education Needs (2005)











NOTES:

TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL
BOARD TRUSTEES 2018 - 2019

Wards		
1.	Joseph Martino	416-512-3401
2.	Ann Andrachuk	416-512-3402
3.	Sal Piccininni	416-512-3403
4.	Patrizia Bottoni	416-512-3404
5.	Maria Rizzo, Vice-Chair	416-512-3405
6.	Frank D'Amico	416-512-3406
7.	Michael Del Grande	416-512-3407
8.	Garry Tanuan	416-512-3408
9.	Jo-Ann Davis	416-512-3409
10.	Barbara Poplawski	416-512-3410
11.	Angela Kennedy	416-512-3411
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SEPTEMBER 2018

REPORT TO SEAC
Monitoring the Implementation of Policy/Program Memorandum 140
2018

In May, 2007, the Ministry of Education released Program/Policy 140, *Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).* This policy provides direction to school boards to support their use of applied behaviour analysis (ABA) as an effective instructional approach in the education of many students with ASD.

In order to monitor implementation, the Ministry of Education created an annual self-assessment survey for school boards. The survey is completed in April by all schools that have a student with ASD. The provincial survey examines the following 4 indicators, which are investigated using 33 questions. This year 93.8% of the schools completed the survey.

Each year in April, the surveys are forwarded to school Principals in an electronic format. Respondents indicate their level of Implementation by using the following indicators: *all of the time, most of the time or some of the time.* To assist schools with the completion of the survey, an implementation guide was created by the TCDSB Autism Team. Each school is asked to complete the survey and then the results are summarized at the board level. Each board submits their results to the Ministry of Education.

The following are the findings for TCDSB:

Indicator/Outcome	All or Most of the Time 2015/16	All or Most of the Time 2016/17	All or Most of the Time 2017/18
1. Principles of ABA are incorporated into the IEPs of students with ASD, as appropriate	91.8%	88.6%	91.2%
2. Transition planning is used to support students with ASD for a variety of transitions	90.4%	89.5%	90%
3. Multidisciplinary teams are involved	92%	89.3%	89.8%
4. School staff working with students with ASD are knowledgeable about ASD	78.7%	64%	77.5%

TCDSB Autism Team staff continually assesses the areas of need that require further growth by providing support, modelling, resources and training to school staff to increase their knowledge of ASD and ABA strategies to support this growing group of students. This includes:

- Focused professional development for staff in order to build capacity around ABA strategies
- Workshops focusing on ABA strategies throughout the year for support staff and staff new to the board
- Reviewing transition resources and supports for staff working with students with ASD
- Continuing to build capacity within schools to support students with ASD

Peter Stachiw
Chief of Autism Services and Programs

SPECIAL SERVICES

Special Education Superintendent Update
October 2018

OCTOBER IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

In Canada, October is Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that includes impairments in language, communication skills, and social interactions combined with restricted and repetitive behaviours, interests or activities.[1] Today prevalence rates of ASD in Canada are approximately 1 in 66.[2]

An increase in the number of students with Autism has been observed in the Toronto Catholic District School Board. Currently there are over 1,700 students with Autism in our schools, making this the third largest exceptionality in the board.

The TCDSB offers a range of programs, services and resources to support students, staff and families.

- Multi-disciplinary staff on the Autism Team are available on a referral basis to help support schools and students in building capacity around best practices focusing on ABA strategies.
- Connections For Students is an Ontario government initiative, intended to facilitate the transition of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders from Autism Intervention Programs (AIPs) to school. This initiative partners schools boards with AIP providers.
- The Program to Assist Social Thinking (PAST) is an elementary school program for students with high functioning Autism. Students are supported through a one-day per week withdrawal program.
- Information about resources available through the Autism Department are available on the board's portal **Autism Programs and Services** . Resources and materials for board staff can be accessed at **Autism Team Site**.
- Parent workshops for students transitioning into secondary school and for students transitioning into post-secondary will be offered again this year.

During the month of October:

- A group of students with Autism who attend the PAST program will be attending an overnight Outdoor Education experience at Teen Ranch.
- Weekly tip sheets around best practices focusing on ABA Strategies will be shared with schools.

The following websites may be of interest for those looking to learn more about Autism.

Autism Ontario: ***www.autismontario.ca***
Autism Canada: ***www.autismcanada.org***

For additional information, please contact Autism Programs and Services at 416-222-8282 ext. 2799
Watch out for information on events being planned for World Autism Awareness Day on April 2nd!

[1] American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5 (5th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association.
[2] Public Health Agency of Canada. (2018). Autism Spectrum Disorder among Children and Youth in Canada 2018: A Report of the National Autism Spectrum Disorder Surveillance System. Ottawa, ON.

SEAC Equity Consultation

Student Engagement & Achievement:

	Barrier	Recommendation
IEP	1. Low level of functionality a. Poor student consultation (student over age 16 or to support self-advocacy skills learning during transition years) b. Lack of SMART goals that support successful, individual growth in achievement c. Poor implementation of individualized accommodations d. Low incidence of individual review of IEP at regular intervals to assess and/or update IEP (in consultation with parent/student/staff) e. Inconsistent engagement/consultation with student's teachers/support staff and/or school based/community paraprofessionals	Recommend that Board, in consultation with SEAC and in collaboration with staff prepare a parent-friendly and student-friendly resource that will be made available to both parents and students (if 16 years of age or older) at the beginning of each school year. That both resources include a statement of the TCDSBs commitment to the requirements of the IEP process according to and not limited to the Education Act, the OHRC, the Ontario Ministry of Education and other related legislation and inclusive of the Board's policies and procedures. That both resources be made available and fully accessible in both hard copy and digitized formats.
Student supports	Flawed framework *Staff Supports:* a. Staff to student ratio not meeting needs b. Not always knowledgeable (general special education and/or individual student needs) c. Being tasked with curriculum modification and/or delivery when this is not their job d. "Here today, gone tomorrow". Variability of staff placements even if needs persist *PPM 140, Transition, Behaviour, Safety Plans:* a. Minimal or no ABC data collection to inform improved, individualized programming, services or staff support for students b. Effective transition plans not being communicated to or implemented by school staff c. Behaviour and/or safety plans not developed or implemented appropriately creating an environment with lack of structure/framework to support the student/staff Assistive technology a. Lengthy application process resulting in lack of timely accommodation of student needs b. Limited training for student and often no	Recommend to the Board that a fully comprehensive audit be conducted with a focus on Special Education programs, services and supports. That the audit focus on an assessment of student achievement and any gaps, challenges and barriers that students with special education needs (both identified and non-identified) are faced with in obtaining the delivery of equitable programs, service and support needs. That the specific targets to be audited be determined in consultation with SEAC.

	training for parent to support at home learning c. "Heat ticket" processes for repairs or updates often take weeks to months, leaving student at a disadvantage. School and board staff often suggest to parent that they purchase a personal device and load assistive tech software themselves from "free trial" links *Extra help or tutoring at school:* a. Curriculum content is secretly modified when the student demonstrates difficulty in completing tasks and homework b. Student learning assessment requirements are manually removed from student assessment record to facilitate a "pass" c. Answer sheets are provided with teacher instruction to student to "work backwards" d. Students and parents are told to hire a tutor when teachers are not providing help at school or when accommodations are not being provided e. Teachers are not always making themselves available to offer remedial help	
Inclusion	a. Lack of actual or represented student voice that captures the range of topics that impact on students with special education needs b. Students with special education needs are not being fully recognized for their abilities and are often overlooked for merit awards and other opportunities c. Extra-curriculars that require specific skills sets which may require personnel support or accommodations to participate are not inclusive or welcoming for students with special education needs d. Parents are being asked to take their children with complex special education needs home when needed accommodations are not available.	Recommend that Board take into consideration all relevant provincial and school board legislation, policies, procedures and best-practices and in consultation with SEAC provide a statement on "inclusion" and what parents, student and stakeholders can expect. Recommend that Board conduct a review of the number of informal "soft-suspensions" that are creating an exclusive setting for students that require and have a human right to accommodation in TCDSB schools. That the Board consider creating a "Refusal to Admit" policy that sets a specific standard and criteria for the exclusion of students from school property. That this policy be created in consultation with SEAC.

Parent Engagement:

	Barrier	Recommendation
IPRC	1. No information provided such as *Parent Guide to Special Education*, programs, supports or services 2. Not informed of their rights in IPRC process (to request an IPRC, to bring an advocate or interpreter, their right to think about the proposed placement and not sign, to refuse to sign and appeal decision) 3. Meeting is often time-limited to 5-10 minutes and time is mostly used by school staff; leaving little time for any input or questions from the parent	Recommend that Board, in consultation with SEAC and in collaboration with staff prepare a parent-friendly and student-friendly resource that will be made available to both parents and students (if 16 years of age or older) at the beginning of each school year. That both resources include a statement of the TCDSBs commitment to the requirements of the IPRC process according to and not limited to the Education Act, the OHRC, the Ontario Ministry of Education and other related legislation and inclusive of the Board's policies and procedures. That both resources be made available and fully accessible in both hard copy and digitized formats.
IEP	1. Lack of informed parent input (no parent-friendly guide provided/available through TCDSB on IEP) 2. Completed IEP often provided to parent on or after the mandatory completion deadline in October with a request for signature and for the IEP to be returned to the school 3. Lack of collaboration between school, parent, TCDSB Special Services personnel and community paraprofessionals pushes completion of IEP forward causing SMART goal-setting and implementation of necessary accommodations process to fail the student 4. Low incidence of individual review of achievement of IEP SMART goals and accommodations at regular intervals to assess and/or update IEP 5. Inconsistent engagement/consultation and communication between parent and child's teachers/support staff/school based paraprofessionals (including community based paraprofessionals)	Recommend that Board conduct a review of any identifiable gaps and/or barriers in the IEP process with a combined focus on parental/student consultation and a particular focus on the quality of goals and the adherence to governing legislation, policies and procedures at all related levels that define rights, responsibilities, obligations and best-practices. That the TCDSB ensure that students' strengths and needs are appropriately identified and that the Individual Education Plan for each student is created and

		implemented through the lens of equity and inclusion. That staff training and professional development be reviewed and refreshed in consultation with SEAC to include all relevant provincial and local legislation, policies and procedures that supports equity and success for students with disabilities and with special education needs (both identified and non-identified)
Communication	*TCDSB Website:* a. Information unavailable or difficult to find b. Information not in parent friendly terms c. Information is not up to date or links are no longer available (error 404) *School Communication:* a. No gateway of communication about availability of programs, services, supports at local school level b. Inconsistent or teacher refusal to communicate with parent of child with diverse or complex needs c. Reluctance of school staff to address parent concerns about child's needs not being met d. Requests for SBST meetings or TCDSB Special Services staff assessments/supports not always met in a timely manner or ignored e. Parents are not informed of their rights or options in advocating for their child's needs	Recommend that Board consider a sub-section on special education under the "PARENT" portal of the TCDSB website to contain information and links determined in consultation with SEAC.

Procedural:

Barrier		Recommendation
Website & Accessibility	a. Important information is not clear and easy to find b. CPIC Teleconference is not an accessible means to attend meetings since the device does not provide clear access to what is said and those meeting members present do not include members on the phone in discussion or provide any materials being shared at the meeting (CPIC = committee tasked by MoE to make recommendations to board about any barriers)	Recommend to Board that staff conduct a full review of the TCDSB website in consultation with parent and student representatives, SEAC and other community stakeholders so as to streamline and update the information available.
Accountability &	a. Reports and Board based plans that reflect student achievement or student based data do not automatically provide special education	Recommend to Board that as an inclusive Board, when

Transparency	student based data nor do they reflect inclusion of the strengths and needs of this demographic i. Safe Schools data ii. Mental Health & well-being iii. MYSP iv. BLIP v. EQAO vi. …et cetera b. The Special Education Plan has not been formally reviewed in its entirety in at least or over five years and information posted is outdated c. No transparent or accountable system-wide review process for IEPs d. Board policies are not reviewed by SEAC to ensure that policies are considered, written and reviewed through the lens of special education before being broadly approved by the Board of Trustees e. Scheduling of SEAC and Board meetings does not permit items of importance to be reviewed by SEAC with an opportunity for questions or recommendations to come before the Board of Trustees when the same item is discussed and approved by Trustees	student data, analysis and success are being considered in discussions and in reports; that students in receipt of special education programs, services and supports are included as both inclusive of all student reporting *and* as a separate subset of analytical data in the same report provided to the Board of Trustees and to any or all relevant committees of the Board.
SEAC	a. Lack of orientation or reference handbook b. Membership is not consistently displayed or current on the Board website c. Verbal reports at meetings lack transparency, accountability and fall short of the board's duty to accommodate its "employees" (committee members) d. Lack of transparency and accountability to stakeholders since meetings are neither live streamed nor do the minutes provide any information on discussions or verbal information received/provided at SEAC which is relevant for parents and stakeholders e. SEAC motions/recommendations to Board are not reported back to SEAC f. Important information that requires SEAC input is not provided to the committee in a timely manner that allows members the opportunity to confer with their respective association councils in order to provide informed recommendations g. Sub-committees are not permitted and neither is any SEAC work done via email which further impairs the ability of SEAC to review and provide recommendations on information relevant to its mandate and that comes before the Board of Trustees at four different Board level committees	

SEAC Equity Plan Consultation

Identify barriers to serving students with special needs.

Barrier	Recommended Action to Address Barrier
1. Technology/SEA Equipment	• Students are not given opportunities to access assisted technology support in a systematic way. If students have successful parent advocacy, students gain supports but it depends on the knowledge base of the parent, financial resources and their understanding of the school system and how to navigate it. Technology supports should be accessible to all students with exceptionalities not just those who have been formally identified as exceptional • Board provided technology and equipment is limited leaving it up to the individual school bloc budgets or parent councils to fundraise for this shortfall. This system in itself provides a barrier for students attending schools in non-affluential neighborhoods who can benefit from technology supports
2. Support and Training of Technology/SEA Equipment	• Support and training of students, families and teaching staff on the use of technology tools if students get access to technology resources training and understanding on how to use those tools isn't equitably available as many of the teachers themselves do not understand the programs and cannot support the technical needs of the student. This means longer transition time to academic success even with the appropriate tools. • When SEA equipment is provided students have mandatory training (3hours) with the device, the teachers are able to go with the student for training provided they have classroom coverage and they want to attend the training. It is not mandatory for the teacher to attend training. • Reading/Writing programs for students are not user friendly and editing scanned documents are not easy to format, this makes it difficult for

	students to access curriculum and complete assignments electronically • Students are not allowed nor encouraged to bring home their SEA equipment this makes it difficult for the student to learn how to use and practice on their device, accessing materials and homework and be able to practice typing skills • All boards within Ontario should share their applications, software and tools used for SEA assistive technology on a public site so students transferring in and out of boards can access equal levels of education quality
3. IEPs	Demonstrated consistency in deploying IEP in school. Many parents find that the IEP plans are not being administered in full. Components are being followed but often lack of resources, follow up through the process and leaves areas that are not being adopted. Teachers often note lack of supports and expertise within the school/school admin or school board for this barrier
4. Psycho-Educational Assessments	• Complaints from parents that board documents are difficult to understand and not tangible enough for them to undertake. They require formal supports to understand what is being said by board psychologists as we (LDATD) often end up having to explain and support transition with many students who are new to the IEP process. Also, many parents experience their own LDs or language barriers which further compounds the situation • For many years LDs has been the highest percentage of exceptionality in the TCDSB but recently numbers have been declining, is this because there are now less students who have LDs or less students having board psycho-educational assessments provided therefore having the decrease in LD identifications • Waitlists for board psycho-educational assessments continue to be a problem in some areas. Families with single incomes, without high range income or families without extended health care benefits may not be able to afford their own psycho-educational assessment and rely heavily on the school board to provide one for them or families rely heavily on the advice of the school and school based support team to refer a student for one

	• All psycho-educational assessments prepared by the board should automatically include a SEA recommendation for assisted technology
5. Age Barriers	Parents call us as they have concerns about a child in kindergarten or grade 1 and are often told by schools that the student is ″too young to test and receive resources″. Research supports early interventions as crucial. Parents and teachers often see when children are struggling first but in some cases LD students are not being formally identified or supported until they are several grade levels below or if at all
6. Programming	• Certain programming is not available to all students with LDs despite most of those programs being offered to the students with more severe learning disabilities exclusively in ISP classrooms (Jump Math, Empower, Lexia Reading, SEA equipment training) • Programs like Empower require a student to have an IEP in order to attend the program, however those students do not have access to board paid transportation unless they have been formally identified with an LD please note that Empower programs start as early as grade 2 and psycho-educational assessments are normally completed when a student is in grade 3 or 4 • Students who have been formally identified as gifted are the only students within the board who do not have access to paid board transportation despite them qualifying for the gifted program and being identified this limits accessibility for those who want to attend the program but do not have the means to travel to a different school, please note that these children start this program as early as grade 5 • JUMP Math is a newer math program that has been supported by the TCDSB and has proven to be of great assistance to students with LDs this program is not available to all schools unless the individual school can pay for materials and certifying staff to teach the program. This system again

	leaves it up to the individual school bloc budgets or parent councils to fundraise for this shortfall. This system in itself provides a barrier for students attending schools in non-affluential neighborhoods who can benefit from the programming • Speech programming for younger students are not being referred for services at the school level unless parent advocacy is involved. This leads to students being referred in later grades when early interventions are crucial. More PD should be provided to teachers and staff to educate them on what a speech and language problem and disorders sound like so students can be referred earlier for services
7. Afterschool Programming	• Afterschool programming should be allowed with the proper paperwork in place. The need to have school staff on site while afterschool programming is being run by an outside agency is not beneficial to students and their needs, programs are often not run at all at schools as board employees will not stay to ″supervise″ these programs
8. Association Relations and Access to Information	• Parents do not have the access to the different Associations SEAC represents unless they are directly contacted by the parent themselves and provided information by the SEAC representatives. Parents are unaware of the supports within their communities' pre and post identification leaving them lost and frustrated in the system until a diagnosis or placement has been made. The board does not communicate or share viable information to their parents about programming and services available outside of their own educational institutions and their own limited resources. • The board needs to start looking at respected associations as community partners and be open to dialogue to improve student success • The TCDSB website is not an effective tool to search or find information • SEAC minutes are motion records only they are not verbatim and a lot of

	important dialogue is missed being captured at these meetings, these minutes could serve as another resource for parents looking to access information on special education. If the board does not want to provide verbatim minutes then perhaps they can record our meetings and post them on the TCDSB website
9. Student Safety and Supports	• Individual school agendas should be AODA and made available for students to access through their SEA equipment in a manner that allows them to edit and make notes on • Parents, teachers, principals and school admin would benefit from taking mandatory PD training on sensitivity to help them properly communicate with parents and other staff about their children and their exceptionalities. Parents have communicated stories where students are being bullied, written off, made fun of and being talked down to by staff and other students • All elementary schools should have a full time counselor/social worker present at the school to support student's needs, achievement and overall wellbeing. • Educational assistants/child and youth workers are needed more and more as classroom sizes increase, the needs of the students are ever changing any additional support within a school is beneficial. Having children lost or running off school property is a huge safety concern for students and principals do not have the means to provide this level of supervision without additional staffing • Schools that have specialty classes (like ME) should be in new or converted accessible buildings with elevators and ramps, some of these classes are being held in older buildings that are not accessible to students. There have been times when students are being moved up and down flights of stairs in wheelchairs by hand by the EAs or CYWs

SEAC Inquiry – October 17, 2018

Early identification and intervention for students with special education needs

Autism Ontario's mission is "to ensure that each individual with ASD is provided the means to achieve quality of life as a respected member of society". "Autism Ontario is dedicated to increasing public awareness about autism and the day-to-day issues faced by individuals with autism, their families, and the professionals with whom they interact. The association and its chapters share common goals of providing information and education, supporting research, and advocating for programs and services for the autism community"[1].

In alignment with Autism Ontario's provincial mission and priorities, the Toronto chapter strives to bring the local voice and concerns of TCDSB parents to the forefront in the form of formal inquiries (item 13, *Inquiries and Miscellaneous*) at TCDSB Special Education Advisory Committee meetings with the intent of receiving Board staff clarification and information.

Society as a whole recognizes the long-term benefits of early identification and intervention in supporting children with special education needs. An environment where student needs are identified early; either through parent disclosure or teacher assessment and/or identification creates opportunities for the application of a skill-set learning framework that will follow the child into their adolescent years and into adulthood thus creating a higher probability of long-term success. Although the TCDSB, according to its website has an early identification strategy which is limited to students from JK to grade one; student needs often present further along the developmental continuum and should be treated with the same level of priority to ensure uninterrupted equity based growth in student achievement.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission recently released its *Policy on accessible education for students with disabilities* and the report states that, "while the Ministry of Education has devised its own framework for identifying "exceptional pupils," it is the Ontario Human Rights Code and human rights case law that establishes that education providers have a legal duty to accommodate the disability-related needs of students to the point of undue hardship. This legal duty exists whether or not a student with a disability falls within the Ministry's definition of "exceptional pupil," and whether or not the student has gone through a formal IPRC process, or has an IEP"[2]. According to the list of examples of accommodations from this document which are dependent on a student's individual needs, it includes assistance from specialized professionals and in-class supports which includes tutors.

It is understood that curriculum demands in a classroom with students with varying needs may prove to be a challenge for educators however, when the curriculum is delivered in a manner that does not allow a student with special education needs to receive, process and apply the curriculum in an equitable manner, this places that student at a disadvantage and creates a negative trajectory that then excludes the student from benefitting from the many opportunities for success that a stable and enriched education provides.

[1] http://www.autismontario.com/client/aso/ao.nsf/web/About+Us

[2] http://www.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/Policy%20on%20accessible%20education%20for%20students%20with%20disabilities_FINAL_EN.pdf#overlay-context=en/users/aspeller

Autism Ontario – Toronto Chapter would like to know:

1) **What identification strategy is in place for students who present with learning needs after grade one and what interventions are included in this strategy?**
2) **What do school board policies, teacher federations and provincial and local legislation and policy dictate in regard to teachers identifying student needs and providing extra help to struggling students in class or before/after school?**
3) **Since fee for service tutors are being recommended to students and parents by local school and Board staff to fill in gaps that are not being filled in the classroom/school, what is the obstacle/barrier that local schools and the Board feel they cannot overcome in providing equity in curriculum delivery in support of student achievement for students with special education needs in the classroom?**

The Toronto chapter of Autism Ontario asks that your written response be included as part of the November 2018 SEAC agenda.

Supplementary information:

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/os/onschools_2017e.pdf
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/guidelines-accessible-education/appropriate-accommodation
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/opportunity-succeed-achieving-barrier-free-education-students-disabilities/elementary-and-secondary-education#fn73
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/Policy%20on%20accessible%20education%20for%20students%20with%20disabilities_FINAL_EN.pdf#overlay-context=en/users/aspeller
https://www.tcdsb.org/ProgramsServices/SpecialEducation/EarlyIdentification/Pages/default.aspx

Minority Report

2018

The voice of Ontario's Autism community.

There's an estimated 100,000 people with ASD.

Imagine a community that sees the potential in each and every one of them.

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Autism Ontario – Toronto Chapter

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Background

Autism Ontario is the province's largest collective voice representing Ontario's autism community. Under the informed leadership of the provincial board of directors and through the many committed and skilled staff and volunteers at both provincial and at each local chapter who organize and support parent to parent contact, we strive to increase public awareness about autism and about the multitude of everyday challenges and barriers faced by individuals with Autism, their families, and the diverse professionals with whom they interact. Both the provincial association and its local chapters share common goals of providing information and education, supporting research, and advocating for programs and services while providing much needed support for the thousands of members within the autism community. Autism Ontario continues to listen and advocate on behalf of individuals and families affected by autism in the Ontario education system and knows through every day parent to parent contact that school related issues continue to remain one of the most significantly reported areas of challenge to families and individuals affected by ASD.

Introduction

Through its long standing representation and engagement on the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee, the Toronto Chapter of Autism Ontario has had the opportunity to be both continually informed on and regularly participate in and contribute to the varied discussions concerning special education program and service delivery to the many exceptional students of the board. Through our consistent SEAC representation, the Toronto Chapter of Autism Ontario has also participated in and contributed at SEAC meetings during the yearly TCDSB special education budget presentation, safe schools presentation, accessibility report and mental health and well-being report and many other aspects relevant to the committee's mandate. Through our representation we've done our best to bring forward the voice of the autism community with recommendations that we feel would positively impact

those living with and affected by autism and other exceptionalities as recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

As a standing member of the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee, the Toronto Chapter of Autism Ontario has the opportunity to participate and contribute through engaged and relevant discussion, through specific member directed inquiries and through committee approved motions meant to advise the TCDSB Board of Trustees on matters within the committee's terms of reference and that affect all exceptional students of the Board. Ontario Regulation 464/97: *Special Education Advisory Committees* states that every district school board shall establish this committee. According to this regulation, the Special Education Advisory Committee's role and responsibilities allow the committee to make recommendations to the district school board respecting matters affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board. The same Ontario legislation provides each Special Education Advisory Committee with the opportunity to participate in the annual review of the board's Special Education Plan, participate in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education and to be presented with and provided the opportunity to review the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education.

On occasion, it may become necessary for individual SEAC members to present a minority report to the committee that outlines a particular member's association concerns. A minority report does not always represent the views of the majority of SEAC members but once received by the committee, it is heard and then decided if the minority report will replace the views of the majority or if it will simply be received. Once the Minority Report is received by SEAC, it is included with the minutes of the meeting at which time it is presented and submitted to the Board of Trustees. According to the Ontario Ministry of Education document Standards for School Board Special Education Plans, requirements of the standard for the Board's consultation process; "a description of any majority or minority reports concerning the board's approved plan that have been

received from members of the board's SEAC and the board's response to these reports" must be included with the Board's annual special education plan submission to the Ministry of Education (MoE, Ontario Ministry of Education - Parents - Special Education Page B3).

Executive Summary

As has become customary since 2010, the members of the TCDSB Special Education Advisory Committee have been consulted on the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Accountability Framework for Special Education (AFSE). The TCDSB established the Accountability Framework for Special Education in an effort to measure the student achievement of students with special education needs on an annual basis. Through the framework created, the Board has conducted annual reviews of special education programs and services within its Board. The intended purpose for these reviews is to examine special education program and service effectiveness and to ensure ongoing and continued improvement across all of the exceptionalities. An analysis of student achievement is also provided across the exceptionalities and the Accountability Framework committees set and implement strategies that are exceptionality-specific with the intended purpose of improving student outcomes though the goals and strategies listed in the annual framework document

The Chapter Leadership Council for the Toronto Chapter of Autism Ontario have reviewed the AFSE, in particular relation to the emphasis placed on EQAO assessment to assess the achievement status of students with special needs and to the goals pertaining to "autism" and have identified several concerns with this report that we feel impact the community which we serve.

The Toronto Catholic District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee currently has representation on the TCDSB's Safe Schools Advisory Committee and on the Mental Health Advisory Committee. Regular verbal reports are shared with SEAC through the members that represent SEAC on these committees.

At the request of SEAC and according to the regular review of the SEAC calendar; key TCDSB department staff members also make presentations that are meant to inform SEAC on the many issues that relate to special

education and to the achievement of the diverse learners attending TCDSB schools.

Many key elements that relate to special education programs and the services that impact on the achievement and well-being of students with autism and other exceptionalities were inquired about and discussed at SEAC meetings throughout the 2017-18 year. The Superintendent of Special Services, the Associate Director and Special Services department leads are also in attendance at every SEAC meeting to provide answers and clarification to SEAC member inquiries and concerns.

This report would like to acknowledge that the Toronto Chapter of Autism Ontario is in full support of the mindset that effective programming and service delivery is undoubtedly essential in supporting and promoting individual and system-wide learning achievement and lifelong success in students with diverse learning needs. Our opinion is that; only when assessment data which is collected in a manner that is relevant to student learning achievement and reflects the learning profile of the student, where appropriate, agreeably has the potential for providing a window through which student success and the efficacy of system learning improvement goals and system wide professional development can be measured.

The Toronto chapter leadership, through regular family and student discussions relating to challenges in education, feel that given the spectral nature of autism, a narrowed approach may present some challenges in determining system-wide student learning achievement trends or to develop and/or implement one specific goal that will serve all students identified with this exceptionality. Given the unique etiology of autism, a “broad strokes” approach to assessment and goal setting may further create barriers and greater gaps in learning and well-being due to the numerous internal and external factors that affect individual student learning and especially assessment practices and outcomes for each unique student on the autism spectrum.

There are an abundance of factors that affect the achievement and mental health and well-being of students with autism and that impact on their short term and long term success. Some of these factors are (not limited to):

- availability and access to qualified special education teachers and support staff
- requirement for special education related professional development for staff working with students
- access to appropriate programs and services for students on the spectrum
- the absence of an autism specific model for inclusion
- a funding model that was created in 1997 and does not account for nor adequately provide for the varied needs of the multitude of students in receipt of special education programs and services in Ontario schools.

The following report hopes to cover the most commonly reported themes among the many challenges and barriers in attaining an equitable education for students with autism spectrum disorder attending Toronto Catholic District School Board schools.

Accountability Framework for Special Education

The current Accountability Framework for Special Education (AFSE) was first presented at the February 21st 2018 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting. The Toronto Chapter of Autism Ontario, through their appointed representative had several questions and concerns which were not permitted due to a limitation of three questions placed on the member during discussion of the item. Ultimately, our association representative on SEAC wished for it to be recorded that she was not in favour of the draft Accountability Framework for Special Education and it is duly recorded as such in the minutes.

One of the concerns that the Toronto chapter of Autism Ontario has identified can be found on page four of the AFSE (TCDSB, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting agenda).

Special Education Needs (based on predominant exceptionality)	Number of Students	Percent of Total Group
Autism	1763	10.4
Behaviour	188	1.10
Blind and Low Vision	15	0.09
Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing	97	0.57
Developmental Disability	141	0.83
Giftedness	2408	14.15
Language Impairment	840	4.94
Learning Disability	2920	17.16
Mild Intellectual Disability	373	2.19
Multiple Exceptionalities	182	1.07
N/A	8016	47.10
Physical Disability	73	0.43
Speech Impairment	2	0.01
	17018	100.0

Number of exceptional students by predominant exceptionality.

The chart shown on the previous page which is taken directly from the current AFSE identifies students by their exceptionality and shows that there are 1763 or 10.4% of the total TCDSB special education enrollment identified as students with autism with a 108% increase since 2010 compared to the charted data on page 84 of the March 18, 2018 SEAC agenda (TCDSB, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting agenda). The chart also lists a category of "N/A" which is our understanding to be students that have not been formally identified but that require some level of special education related support or accommodation and this category is shown to include a total documented number of 8016 which makes up 47.10% of the total special education student enrollment (17,018); just shy of half. According to Ontario Regulation 181/98 *Identification and Placement of Exceptional Students*, and the Ontario Individual Education Plan policy documents, it is permissible for school boards to prepare an IEP for students without the requirement to be formally identified through an IPRC (MoE, Supporting the Ontario Leadership Strategy, Principals Want to Know).

Judging by the very large percentage of non-identified students receiving special education support coupled with a recent announcement by Canada's chief medical officer that states that approximately 1 in 66 children and youth are diagnosed with ASD in Canada (Government of Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada), it is likely that out of the 8016 of "non-identified" students, there is the potential to see a fair sized increase in the number of students that would fall under the identified category of autism spectrum disorder. The Toronto chapter of Autism Ontario feels that building a framework on the categorical knowledge of actual *identified* needs would create a more precise and comprehensive needs assessment not only for stakeholders but for the TCDSB when evaluating student achievement, setting clear and measurable goals, when developing a professional development plan and in particular when justifying to the Ministry of Education and other related ministries; the large scale need to address the many shortfalls in program and service delivery, qualified staffing and special education funding for students with special education needs in the province of Ontario.

With the understanding that the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) mandate is a stated dedication to “enhancing the quality and accountability of the education system in Ontario and to work with the education community. This will be achieved through student assessments that produce objective, reliable information, through the public release of this information and through the profiling of the value and use of EQAO data across the province” (Mandate, EQAO). The EQAO mission statement is “to provide assessments, evaluation and information that support accountability and continuous improvement of Ontario’s publicly funded education system” (Mission Statement, Strategic Plan 2016-2019, EQAO).

It should also be duly noted that there are no EQAO assessment details available for the grade three and grade six student cohorts in the 2015-2016 assessment year cycle.

On page six of the AFSE under the sub-section 2.(a); “areas of relative strength”, there is a noted increase in the number of students with autism that wrote the grade three assessments in 2016-2017. The increase noted reflects a 45% increase in the number of identified participating students with autism in grade three presumably due to an increase in enrolled students with there being 91 students identified with autism in the 2014-2015 assessment cycle and 132 identified students with autism two years later in the 2016-2017 assessment cycle.

The exemption rates, according to the EQAO data charts for students with autism document that the grade three reading component of the assessment shows a 6% decrease in exemption rates, the writing and math equivalent indicates a 5% decrease in the exemption rate. It is a positive step forward to see that the exemption rates have slightly decreased however the exemption rates have remained consistently high, ranging between 29-35% which still reflects a markedly high exemption rate in comparison to the exemption rate for all students with special education needs which range between 6-9%. Exemption rates have remained consistently high over the last several years notwithstanding goals and

strategy implementation in previous accountability frameworks for special education that were specifically directed to “reduce the exemption rates for students with Autism” (TCDSB, Accountability Framework for Special Education 2015-16).

The EQAO assessment percentage values noted as “highlights” for students with Autism included on pages six and seven of the AFSE report are noted to be referencing the values noted in the EQAO assessment results percentage charts in Appendix B of the AFSE. The “highlight” values do not appear to correspond with the actual charted values.

a. **Areas of Relative Strength:**

i. Gr.3
- increase in number of students with Autism that wrote the assessment (from 91 to 132)
- 6% more students wrote the assessment (less exemptions)

ii. Gr.3 Writing – maintained steady at 39%
iii. Gr. 6 Reading – increase from 28% to 33%
iv. Gr. 6 Writing – increase from 38% to 43%
v. Gr. 9Applied Math – increase from 41% to 47% and above province at 37%

b. Areas for Growth:

a. Grade 3 reading - decrease from 33% to 29% in student achievement at level 3 and 4
b. Gr. 3 Mathematics – decrease from 39% two years ago to 23%
c. Gr. 6 Math – slight decrease from 20% two years ago to 19%
d. Academic – decrease from 100% to 86% (due to very small sample size)

c. **Grade 10 OSSLT** (Reported by percent of students successful)

i. Full Time – decrease from 54% successful to 52% and at the same level as province (52%)
ii. Part Time – decrease from 35% to 34% but at same level as province (34%)

iii. Students with Autism completing OSSLC is 42%, increase of 3%; same as provincial level (42%)
iv. Deferred students have decreased by 1% to 11% for Full Time students and maintained at 10% for Part Time students

Pg. 6-7 of Accountability Framework for Special Education

The following charts on pages 14-16 of this minority report have been captured directly from Appendix B of the TCDSB Accountability Framework for Special Education and include the actual EQAO data that is stated to be highlighted in the image on the previous page of this report.

The data in the following charts has been captured and reported in the TCDSB AFSE over a three year cycle and the 2015-16 cycle does not include any assessment data available due to job action by Ontario teachers during the assessment period.

Reading Grade 3

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 1,033		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 1,046		2014 - 2015 N = 91		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 132	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	32	3%	NP	NP	43	4%	4	4%	NP	NP	5	4%
Level 3	372	36%	NP	NP	431	41%	26	29%	NP	NP	33	25%
Level 2	428	41%	NP	NP	387	37%	15	16%	NP	NP	34	26%
Level 1	81	8%	NP	NP	70	7%	4	4%	NP	NP	7	5%
NE 1	18	2%	NP	NP	17	2%	3	3%	NP	NP	3	2%
No Data	13	1%	NP	NP	13	1%	2	2%	NP	NP	4	3%
Exempt	89	9%	NP	NP	85	8%	37	41%	NP	NP	46	35%

Writing Grade 3

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 1,033		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 1,046		2014 - 2015 N = 91		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 132	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	13	1%	NP	NP	4	<1%	2	2%	NP	NP	0	0%
Level 3	566	55%	NP	NP	569	54%	34	37%	NP	NP	52	39%
Level 2	333	32%	NP	NP	354	34%	14	15%	NP	NP	28	21%
Level 1	19	2%	NP	NP	16	2%	0	0%	NP	NP	0	0%
NE 1	5	<1%	NP	NP	9	1%	3	3%	NP	NP	1	1%
No Data	15	1%	NP	NP	15	1%	2	2%	NP	NP	5	4%
Exempt	82	8%	NP	NP	79	8%	36	40%	NP	NP	46	35%

Math Grade 3

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 1,046		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 1,062		2014 - 2015 N = 91		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 132	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	27	3%	NP	NP	26	2%	7	8%	NP	NP	7	5%
Level 3	309	30%	NP	NP	300	28%	28	31%	NP	NP	25	19%
Level 2	475	45%	NP	NP	481	45%	14	15%	NP	NP	38	29%
Level 1	120	11%	NP	NP	145	14%	2	2%	NP	NP	8	6%
NE 1	20	2%	NP	NP	15	1%	2	2%	NP	NP	3	2%
No Data	12	1%	NP	NP	12	1%	2	2%	NP	NP	5	4%
Exempt	83	8%	NP	NP	83	8%	36	40%	NP	NP	46	35%

Reading Grade 6

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 1,230		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 1,287		2014 - 2015 N = 91		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 130	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	18	1%	NP	NP	20	2%	2	2%	NP	NP	4	3%
Level 3	532	43%	NP	NP	597	46%	24	26%	NP	NP	39	30%
Level 2	521	42%	NP	NP	541	42%	22	24%	NP	NP	46	35%
Level 1	60	5%	NP	NP	35	3%	7	8%	NP	NP	2	2%
NE 1	6	<1%	NP	NP	7	1%	2	2%	NP	NP	0	0%
No Data	12	1%	NP	NP	11	1%	1	1%	NP	NP	1	1%
Exempt	81	7%	NP	NP	76	6%	33	36%	NP	NP	38	29%

Writing Grade 6

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 1,230		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 1,287		2014 - 2015 N = 91		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 130	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	31	3%	NP	NP	33	3%	6	7%	NP	NP	6	5%
Level 3	553	45%	NP	NP	644	50%	28	31%	NP	NP	49	38%
Level 2	521	42%	NP	NP	489	38%	20	22%	NP	NP	33	25%
Level 1	25	2%	NP	NP	24	2%	1	1%	NP	NP	2	2%
NE 1	4	<1%	NP	NP	11	1%	1	1%	NP	NP	1	1%
No Data	15	1%	NP	NP	11	1%	2	2%	NP	NP	1	1%
Exempt	81	7%	NP	NP	75	6%	33	36%	NP	NP	38	29%

Math Grade 6

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 1,228		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 1,287		2014 - 2015 N = 91		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2016 - 2017 N = 130	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	29	2%	NP	NP	25	2%	4	4%	NP	NP	5	4%
Level 3	160	13%	NP	NP	161	13%	15	16%	NP	NP	19	15%
Level 2	401	33%	NP	NP	390	30%	13	14%	NP	NP	27	21%
Level 1	521	42%	NP	NP	605	47%	18	20%	NP	NP	37	28%
NE 1	17	1%	NP	NP	18	1%	6	7%	NP	NP	2	2%
No Data	13	1%	NP	NP	9	1%	1	1%	NP	NP	1	1%
Exempt	87	7%	NP	NP	79	6%	34	37%	NP	NP	39	30%

The charts on the following page reflect the EQAO grade 9 math assessments and the grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) assessment results. Note that these assessments were not impacted by any teacher job action during the 2015-16 assessment cycle.

Grade 9 - Academic

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 228		2015 - 2016 N = 272		2016 - 2017 N = 239		2014 - 2015 N = 21		2015 - 2016 N = 21		2016 - 2017 N = 22	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	8	4%	4	1%	13	5%	3	14%	2	10%	6	27%
Level 3	157	69%	177	65%	147	62%	18	86%	15	71%	13	59%
Level 2	32	14%	58	21%	48	20%	0	0%	1	5%	1	5%
Level 1	28	12%	29	11%	24	10%	0	0%	1	5%	1	5%
Below Level 1	1	<1%	1	<1%	5	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%
No Data	2	1%	3	1%	2	1%	0	0%	2	10%	0	0%

Grade 9 - Applied

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 715		2015 - 2016 N = 845		2016 - 2017 N = 679		2014 - 2015 N = 17		2015 - 2016 N = 17		2016 - 2017 N = 31	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	43	6%	54	6%	45	7%	2	12%	3	18%	5	16%
Level 3	198	28%	245	29%	167	25%	5	29%	5	29%	10	32%
Level 2	288	40%	332	39%	263	39%	7	41%	7	41%	10	32%
Level 1	115	16%	156	18%	147	22%	1	6%	1	6%	4	13%
Below Level 1	53	7%	45	5%	38	6%	1	6%	0	0%	1	3%
No Data	18	3%	13	2%	19	3%	1	6%	1	6%	1	3%

OSSLT - FTE

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 1,182		2015 - 2016 N = 1,184		2016 - 2017 N = 1,221		2014 - 2015 N = 56		2015 - 2016 N = 55		2016 - 2017 N = 62	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	508	56%	503	56%	502	53%	32	74%	27	71%	32	84%
Not Successful	393	44%	388	44%	441	47%	11	26%	11	29%	6	16%
Fully Participating	901	76%	891	75%	943	77%	43	77%	38	69%	38	61%
Absent	13	1%	7	1%	8	1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
Deferred	268	23%	286	24%	270	22%	13	23%	17	31%	23	37%

OSSLT - PE

	All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)						Students with Special Needs identified as Autism					
	2014 - 2015 N = 848		2015 - 2016 N = 976		2016 - 2017 N = 971		2014 - 2015 N = 35		2015 - 2016 N = 37		2016 - 2017 N = 45	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	170	35%	135	27%	150	32%	8	40%	5	28%	3	15%
Not Successful	311	65%	372	73%	321	68%	12	60%	13	72%	17	85%
Fully Participating	481	57%	507	52%	471	49%	20	57%	18	49%	20	44%
Absent	50	6%	81	8%	75	8%	0	0%	0	0%	3	7%
Deferred	66	8%	67	7%	59	6%	5	14%	3	8%	4	9%
OSSLC	251	30%	321	33%	366	38%	10	29%	16	43%	18	40%

Note: Successful and Not Successful percentages are based on those Fully Participating.

The EQAO “level 3” line item percentage value documented in the charts in Appendix B of the AFSE; documents that students with autism are scoring well below the provincial values, board values and considerably and consistently below the values presented for all students with special education needs in all three panels in grade three, in the literacy panels in grade six and slightly below their peers in the grade nine academic math

assessment. Level 3 scoring according to EQAO represents that “the student has demonstrated the required knowledge and skills to a considerable degree. Achievement meets the provincial standard” (EQAO, Explanation of Terms).

The Toronto chapter of Autism Ontario has become increasingly concerned that the student achievement and the well-being of students on the autism spectrum is being negatively impacted by board reporting and learning improvement practices that do not directly or accurately reflect the strengths and needs of this large and varied demographic of students. We feel that the information gathered and presented in a “broad strokes” manner for the purpose of assessing student achievement targets which will then be used to inform a learning plan for exceptional students and for the educators that teach them must be prepared fully considering the spectral nature of autism spectrum disorder and addressing the variety of needs that impact the learning achievement and well-being of each individual student with autism.

We are adamant believers in that the formative K-12 years are critically important to a student’s learning of the many skills required to become innovative learners on their journey to becoming independent, contributing adults. We strongly support the idea that in providing a safe and caring learning environment for all students with special needs, in particular with autism; that student mental health must also be recognized as a key element of well-being and student achievement so that students with varied needs feel included amongst their peers in the life of the school and reflected in the curriculum that is taught in the classroom.

For the past several AFSE cycles, the goal and strategies for students with autism were largely centred around the high exemption rates for students on the spectrum. A new framework goal has been presented this year although the exemption rates still remain consistently high. The current cycle’s Accountability Framework’s new goal for 2017-18 is noted as: “the self-regulation of students in the PAST program will be tracked. By the end of the school year, more students in the PAST program will be able to

identify their emotions independently, identify a reason for their emotion and identify a strategy addressing the emotion. The focus is to track the progress of the students in identifying and using strategies to address their emotions to demonstrate overall improvement in self-regulation. The most effective strategies used to teach this curriculum where students are successful will be recorded to create resources that can be shared to build capacity within the schools to support students with Autism".

The P.A.S.T. Program, otherwise known as the Program to Assist with Social Thinking (TCDSB Special Services, P.A.S.T. Program Brochure 2017-18), is an intensive support/one-day per week withdrawal program which is currently operating out of five TCDSB schools. The class generally has six students classified as Asperger Syndrome, high functioning Autism or Autism level 1 and focuses on students from grades three to six. Each P.A.S.T. Program ISP class is taught by one qualified special education teacher and supported by one child and youth worker. Staff from the student's home school is often invited to visit the program and spend the day and if the student has dedicated support staff personnel at the home school, that individual will attend with the student to further support him/her in the P.A.S.T. Program setting.

The P.A.S.T. program provides a focus on the enhancement of the perspective taking abilities of the students in this class. The skill areas addressed within this context are intended to build the ability to understand the emotions of self and others, communication, cooperative play, the development of relationships and the capacity to understand their diagnosis and self advocacy skills (Special Education Program Overview and Improvement Planning 2016, Autism, Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance). Given the small number of students versus high number of staff ratio in this ISP class, it creates a learning environment which permits explicit instruction and outcome opportunities that are likely less possible in a mainstream class setting. Parent input also suggests that there is little to no social peer interaction between the students in the P.A.S.T. Program and the students of the host school and outdoor recreational time is often if not always scheduled at a time when the students from the host school are

not outdoors. The students in the P.A.S.T. Program have little to no interaction with anyone other than their program class peers and the program staff on the day that they attend this program.

There is no debate that self-regulation skills acquisition is an important element of a child's development (Autism Speaks, What are the Positive Strategies for Supporting Behavior Improvement). It is understood that a student's ability to self-regulate directly impacts on their ability to advocate for, support and sustain their inclusion in the daily aspects of the classroom and in everyday life. There is however, still a large disparity as noted in assessment data and exemption rates between students identified with autism and their typical peers and between assessment data and exemption rates for students with special needs as noted in the AFSE.

The intended outcomes of this cycle's AFSE goal for students with Autism as noted in the AFSE is "if students are explicitly taught strategies to be flexible in their thinking, to understand their emotions and to play cooperatively, then there will an improvement in their self-regulation skills". This is a fine goal for an intensive setting such as the P.A.S.T. Program where the student to staff ratio is so that the dynamic will permit staff to easily intercept negative behaviours and interject opportunities to build on self-regulatory skill concepts within the context where it can be best learned. The AFSE further states "using checklists and feedback from the teachers in the PAST program, the data will be tracked to measure success. This is a 3-year goal that will follow the group of Year 1 students. In addition, the committee's goal is to communicate with all classrooms what effective self-regulation techniques have been found in order to assist all students with autism to reach their full potential"; this part of the AFSE goal intended outcome begs to ask the question; wasn't this already being done? Checklists have and are already being employed by the P.A.S.T. Program teachers and staff according to the TCDSB program brochure. It should also be noted that according to PPM 140, checklists should already have been a regular practice by teachers in mainstream classes and in all other placements as well.

According to the most current P.A.S.T. Program brochure; “The PAST Program teacher and a support staff make scheduled visits to the home-school to support the classroom teacher, provide peer training and to monitor the generalization of targeted skills. Weekly checklists are provided to the parent and classroom teacher to record student’s performance of targeted skills. Regular communication with parents is encouraged” (TCDSB, PAST Program Brochure 2017-18).

It should be noted that the P.A.S.T. Program, albeit a very useful program for students with HFASD; serves a small number of students from within the larger sub-set of students affected by high-functioning autism and due to the fiscal constraints within the special education funding envelope provided by the province and its impact on school board budget priorities; it does not appear that a broad expansion of the P.A.S.T. Program ISP classes will be offered at this moment. The program curriculum and concepts instilled and delivered through this program would definitely benefit a much larger number of students on the spectrum however the criteria for student eligibility to the program is highly specific and refined due to the very small number of placements that are available.

Safe Schools & Mental Health

The Toronto Chapter of Autism Ontario would like to note that during the making of this minority report, particularly the research that went behind it; it was found that there is little to no Ontario research available on the learning trajectories and outcomes of students with autism, relating to their increased risk for bullying and the high co-morbidity rates for mental health disorders and other diagnosed related disorders for individuals on the autism spectrum. National and international research has often proven the direct impact and relation that physical, environmental and social factors play in determining the outcomes for these individuals leading well into adulthood. There appear to be very little Ontario research or any creation of a research based framework meant to address this very serious phenomenon that is creating multiple barriers for Ontario children and

youth with autism from achieving to their fullest potential in a safe and supportive learning environment. The safe and caring adult and peer interactions that are experienced at school, and how both positively and negatively impact directly on the individual's achievement and mental and physical well-being directly affect the individual's ability to function well into adulthood. There has been very little Ontario research to document this transition or to define or implement any working strategy for improvement or timely access to support and services after age 18.

What is Bullying? "Ontario's provincial legislation defines bullying as: repeated aggressive behaviour by a student where the behaviour is intended to have the effect of or the student ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of, causing harm, fear or distress to another individual. Bullying can take many forms, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, and harm to an individual's reputation or property and cyber bullying. The bullying also has the potential to create a negative environment at a school for an individual. The bullying occurs in a relationship where there is a real or perceived power imbalance based on factors such as size; disability; sexual orientation; gender identity; sexuality; race/ethnicity/religion; or other issues" (PREVNet Ontario Policy & Legislation Resources).

Over the past several decades, a large body of international and national research has grown to show that bullying in its many forms is reported at an alarmingly higher rate for students with disabilities (Canadian Human Rights Commission, CHRC report: For persons with disabilities in Canada, education is not always an open door). Past studies have documented reported bullying rates for students with ASD ranging as high as 94% (Hebron and Humphrey).

There are several possible factors that may contribute to the victimization of students with ASD by their peers; some of those factors are that they are more socially isolated, generally less accepted and less liked by their peers and they are more often socially excluded and ridiculed for their atypical behaviour. Children and youth on the spectrum also often lack the typical

social support and friendship networks that have been shown to protect or insulate children and youth from the negative effects of peer bullying (The Effects of Psychological Trauma on Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: a Research Review).

A child or youth with ASD has a great deal of difficulty navigating the social landscape around them and the pragmatic language deficits that they often face also places them in a position of being unable to recognize and respond to acts of bullying, especially when it is an everyday occurrence (Humphrey and Hebron, Bullying of children and adolescents with autism spectrum conditions: a 'state of the field' review).

Peer aggression and victimization often present in a variety of forms. Peer aggression (such as physical hostility, negative peer pressure and teasing, shunning and social rejection) and peer victimization grossly affects children with autism more often than their typically developing peers (Humphrey and Hebron, Bullying of children and adolescents with autism spectrum conditions: a 'state of the field' review). The characteristics which are typical in children and youth with autism spectrum disorder coupled with contextual factors have been directly linked to higher rates of peer aggression and peer victimization towards this demographic (Rotheram-Fuller, Kasari and Chamberlain). Youth who have experienced peer victimization have also been found to suffer consequent loneliness, depression, low self-esteem, anxiety and suicidal ideation at a greater rate than their peers.

The March 21st 2018 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting agenda included "*Questions arising out of the Accountability Framework Report".* These questions were driven by Board of Trustee discussion surrounding the AFSE at the March 1st 2018 Student Achievement and Well-Being meeting where the staff answers were also directed to be referred to SEAC. One of the pressing questions asked by the board of Trustees was "do we have any information on whether students with IEPs are being bullied / feel safe?" The charts that follow were provided by TCDSB staff and include data that parallels responses of students with

IEP's with typically developing students in how they answered the questions contained in recent safe schools climate surveys. See the charts below and on the following page:

2016-2017 (Spring 2017)

SCCSC – Grades 6 & 8

Group (IEP):	Since September, how often have you been bullied at school?			
	Never	2-3 Times	4-6 Times	7+ Times
No IEP N=4103	69.6%	20.7%	4.9%	4.9%
Not Sure N=4146	67.0%	21.3%	5.9%	5.9%
IEP N=2031	62.5%	24.3%	5.9%	7.3%

↓ 7.1% ↑ 2.4%

SCCSC – Grades 6 & 8

Group (IEP):	How safe do you feel in your school?			
	Very Safe	Safe	Unsafe	Very Unsafe
No IEP N=4103	39.3%	56.6%	2.9%	0.6%
Not Sure N=4146	35.5%	60.1%	3.2%	0.5%
IEP N=2031	40.2%	55.2%	3.0%	0.7%

SCCSC – Grades 6 & 8

Group (IEP):	How safe do you feel walking/travelling to and from school?			
	Very Safe	Safe	Unsafe	Very Unsafe
No IEP N=4103	25.4%	54.7%	10.5%	1.9%
Not Sure N=4146	24.0%	53.8%	11.6%	1.8%
IEP N=2031	26.9%	51.8%	11.8%	2.0%

The first question in the attached charts provided by TCDSB staff to SEAC is "since September, how often have you been bullied at school?" and the possible choices to answer from are; never, 2-3 times, 4-6 times and 7+ times. According to the results in the chart above, 7.1% *less* of students in grades 6 & 8 with an IEP have *never* been bullied as compared to students in grades 6 & 8 without an IEP and 2.4% of students with an IEP

responded that they had been bullied 7+ times *more* than students without an IEP. Similar trend values are presented in the data collected for the grades 9-12 Safe and Caring Catholic School Climate Survey in the chart below.

2016-2017(Fall 2016)

Safe Schools Survey – Grades 9-12

Group (IEP):	Since September, how often have you been bullied at school?			
	Never	1-3 Times	4-6 Times	7+ Times
No IEP N= 3036	85.7%	10.5%	1.7%	2.1%
Not Sure N= 1102	85.6%	11.0%	1.2%	2.2%
IEP N= 1124	82.2%	11.0%	2.4%	4.4%

↓ 3.5%

↑ 2.3%

Safe Schools Survey – Grades 9-12

Group (IEP):	How safe do you feel in your school?			
	Very Safe	Safe	Unsafe	Very Unsafe
No IEP N= 3036	29.2%	63.0%	4.4%	1.3%
Not Sure N= 1102	31.5%	59.8%	3.8%	1.7%
IEP N= 1124	30.5%	59.2%	5.1%	2.7%

Safe Schools Survey – Grades 9-12

Group (IEP):	How safe do you feel walking/travelling to and from school?			
	Very Safe	Safe	Unsafe	Very Unsafe
No IEP N= 3036	20.9%	62.2%	11.3%	2.2%
Not Sure N= 1102	18.9%	61.5%	12.0%	2.3%
IEP N= 1124	23.0%	58.2%	11.4%	3.4%

These tallied results of the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Safe and Caring Catholic School Climate survey (SCCSC) for students in grades 6 & 8 in the Spring of 2017 and for grades 9-12 in the Fall of 2016

distinctly show that students with IEP's feel less safe and are bullied at school significantly more than their typically developing peers.

At a higher level; it is evident that there *is* demographic specific data collection which would lead one to believe that it is to be followed by a critical system analysis and discussion on how to best create plans for system learning improvement and frameworks to support student achievement and well-being as is supported through Ontario Ministry of Education policy and legislation (Promoting a Positive School Climate: A Resource for Schools).

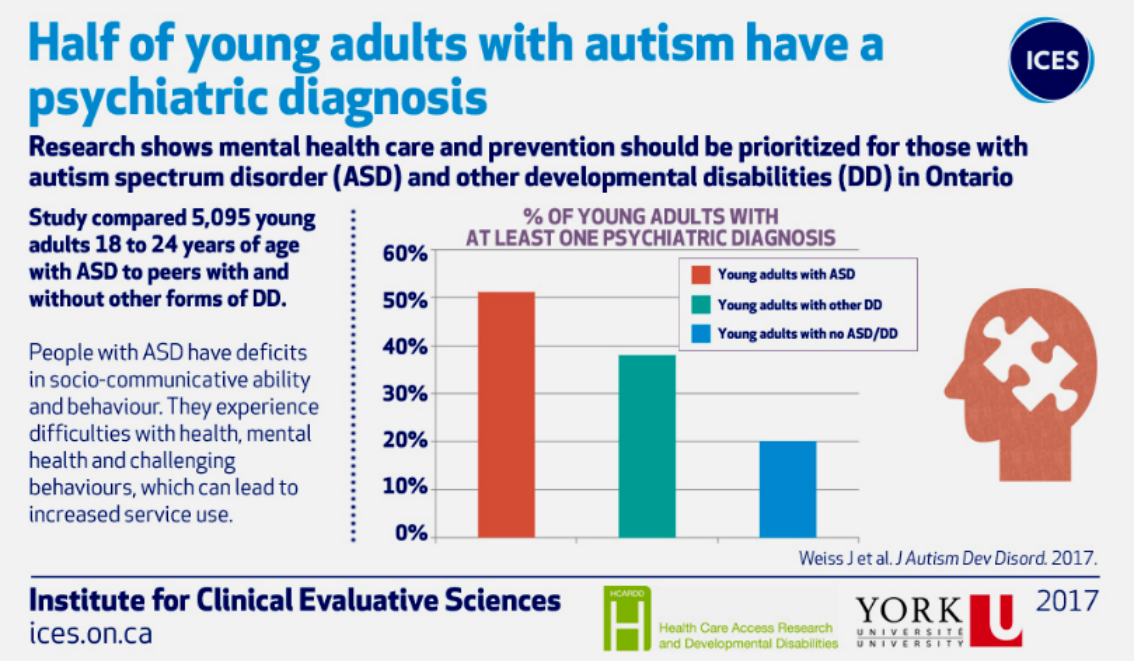
The data in the charts clearly identifies that there are challenges and barriers and gaps that evidently exist in providing a safe and caring environment for special needs students since the data clearly shows the disparity between students with IEP's and their typically developing student cohorts.

The responsibility for maintaining a safe and caring environment for all students as documented in Ontario policy and legislation lies with all teachers (including occasional teachers brought in to cover increasing teacher absenteeism challenges), support staff, vice-principals, principals, supervisory officers, directors of education and those working in non-school-board positions which would include volunteers, school bus drivers, etc., and also with the municipally elected school board Trustees that govern over school board policies and ensure that they are properly implemented. It is imperative that students feel safe in all of the environments in which they learn which includes, but is not limited to; "classrooms, school buses, science and technological studies labs, schoolyards, cafeterias, gyms, off-site facilities and worksites, co-op educational programs and work placements, field trip locations, arenas and sporting venues. Considerations of safety also include the manner in which College members interact with students and the manner in which students are permitted to interact among themselves" (Professional Advisory - Safety in Learning Environments: A Shared Responsibility).

Considering the data results, greater attention should be given to the evidence that shows that an individual's mental health and well-being can greatly impact on the susceptibility for self harm and suicidal ideation and have serious long-term effects on their mental health and well-being (Arseneault). According to the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP/ACPS), suicide is the second leading cause of death amongst 10 to 19 year olds in Canada. An article printed in volume 7, Issue 1 of the journal of *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders* places children with autism from ages 1-16, at 28 times greater risk than typical children for suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. From the same cohort of children assessed in this same study, 14% had suicide ideation or attempted suicide (Suicide ideation and attempts in children with autism). These are definitely alarming rates.

Another study undertaken in 2014 also highlighted the heightened risk for suicide amongst youth and adults with Asperger Syndrome. This report documented that 35% of the surveyed study cohort had attempted suicide. This particular study concluded that individuals with AS are at a much greater risk than the general population for attempting suicide (Paquette-Smith, Weiss and Lunsky).

Despite the national data that reveals that children, youth and adults with autism would benefit from exceptionality specific, timely intervention in the field of mental health, "children with ASD are reported to have more unmet needs for specialty and therapy care. Individuals with ASD often experience many barriers to service receipt across the lifespan, as a result of waitlists, a lack of resources, and inadequate service provider skills" (Weiss, Isaacs and Diepstra).



https://www.ices.on.ca/~/media/Images/News_releases/2017/July-Dec/WeissLunskyASDpsychFIN.ashx?la=en-CA

The importance of building awareness around the ongoing bullying of students with disabilities and of the state of their mental health and well-being is paramount. The ongoing review of and implementation of system wide and tailored to fit local need goals is necessary to the learning achievement and mental health and well-being of students with special needs, particularly with autism and to the intended cessation of their continued victimization.

Inclusion

"Necessary for some, good for all". This is a term that has been often used over the years when referring to the framework of inclusion in education. "Necessary for some" implies the divergent need for support and instructional and assessment strategies that allows access to the curriculum for students with diverse needs and ideally, "good for all" suggests how the implied adoption of the strategies, tools and resources used and implemented for diverse learner populations would also serve to

broadly benefit typically developing students in the inclusive classroom setting (L4All - ABA Placemat).

Positive, desired outcomes occur when all of the players within the education system work cooperatively to support all students' learning and well-being. This systemic congruity coupled with the uniqueness of the human essence has the potential to support the "necessary for some...good for all" mindset starting from overreaching governance procedures to the practices which are implemented in the daily rituals of the local school classroom. A reluctance to update teaching/learning practices and the insistence on using one set framework, a one-size-fits-all approach without taking into consideration the diverse learning needs within the classroom will undoubtedly create insurmountable gaps and challenges and barriers to the achievement and to the well-being of the diverse student population. Furthermore, the failure to incorporate flexibility in pedagogy and to implement consistent reviews of learning and teaching practices also has the potential to lead to barriers and gaps in student achievement, mental health and well-being and to create barriers in the accessibility to inclusionary practices for students with diverse learning needs.

The Ontario Ministry of Education mission statement, as stated on their website speaks of equality for *every* student and child. It speaks to the promise of quality education outcomes delivered by continuously evolving, exemplary educators committed to driving success for all from cradle to grave. (MoE - Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario):

Mission Statement

Ontario is committed to the success and well-being of every student and child. Learners in the province's education system will develop the knowledge, skills and characteristics that will lead them to become personally successful, economically productive and actively engaged citizens.

Ontario will cultivate and continuously develop a high-quality teaching profession and strong leadership at all levels of the system. Our education system will be characterized by high expectations and success for all. It will be responsive, high quality, accessible and integrated from early learning and child care to adult education.

Together, we will build on past achievements and move forward with ambitious goals.

http://edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/excellent.html

The concept of inclusion definitely requires a collaborative, layered approach that includes a steady flow of communication from a top-down transparent and accountable framework to the critically informed data sharing from the bottom-up. This consistent and constantly evolving model of informed decision making must include all voices; from the politicians in provincial government to school board governors in the boardrooms through to the educators and student voice in the classroom and extended through to the parents at home. Student voice should include the diversity that every classroom and every school board in the province of Ontario seemingly represents. Creating an educational model that truly reflects equity and inclusion for those with disabilities, particularly on the spectrum, must include opportunities for the integration of their perspectives and for the development of policies and educational practices that reflect these students' individual strengths and needs. The Ontario curriculum for all subjects and all panels must reflect the learning needs of all students with disabilities throughout each and every curriculum document to ensure truly measurable full-spectrum success for all

.

Social Inclusion vs. Exclusion

Social exclusion according to the Collins Dictionary is defined as "the act of making certain groups of people within a society feel isolated and unimportant". Therefore, from a logical perspective, social "inclusion" would be defined as the act of making certain groups of people within a society feel supported and important.

The need to belong in society is undoubtedly an inherent characteristic of all human beings and it is a strong influence that guides our cognitive reasoning, our emotions, and our behavior (Baumeister and Leary). When the need to belong is not met, it is very likely that feelings of loneliness may begin to impact the individual (Heinrich and Gullone, The clinical significance of loneliness: a literature review). Loneliness usually comes from when there is a discrepancy between the interpersonal relationships people want and the perception of the quality and quantity of

these relationships (Peplau and Perlman). While it is sometimes normal to occasionally feel lonely, it is also understood that persistent and increased feelings of loneliness should be clinically addressed. This reasoning is supported by research findings that demonstrate that loneliness is often associated with mental health disorders like anxiety disorders and depression, and even with a person's physical complaints and diseases (Heinrich and Gullone, The clinical significance of loneliness: a literature review).

Medical professionals in North America use the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) which was revised in May of 2013. This manual is widely used to evaluate autism spectrum disorder (ASD) by the following diagnostic criteria:

"A. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, as manifested by the following, currently or by history (examples are illustrative, not exhaustive, see text):

1. Deficits in social-emotional reciprocity, ranging, for example, from abnormal social approach and failure of normal back-and-forth conversation; to reduced sharing of interests, emotions, or affect; to failure to initiate or respond to social interactions.
2. Deficits in nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction, ranging, for example, from poorly integrated verbal and nonverbal communication; to abnormalities in eye contact and body language or deficits in understanding and use of gestures; to a total lack of facial expressions and nonverbal communication.
3. Deficits in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships, ranging, for example, from difficulties adjusting behavior to suit various social contexts; to difficulties in sharing imaginative play or in making friends; to absence of interest in peers." (Autism Speaks, DSM-5 Diagnostic Criteria)

Clearly, the diagnostic criteria for autism spectrum disorder speaks distinctly to the many deficits in understanding, developing, reciprocating and maintaining friendships and positive, healthy relationships for those on

the spectrum. These deficits are intrinsically present early on in the behaviour of a child on the spectrum and have the risk of becoming an embedded behaviour and becoming more pronounced as the child transitions to adolescence and into adulthood if the individual is not provided with structured support in trying to learn how to understand and navigate the social landscape around them within the related environmental context. (Autism Ontario: Knowledge Base: Increasing Social Involvement).

There is a very large component of the K-12 learning that is based on the social experience. Without appropriate support, students with ASD often if not always, do not have the capacity to integrate socially which inevitably has a negative impact on their academic, emotional, psychological, physical and of course, social outcome. Furthermore, from a safe schools perspective, the inability to understand the many associated factors related to social communication also places individuals on the spectrum at a much higher risk for victimization, in which national and international research has found some of the highest victimization rates amongst this population.

Learning at school has long since transformed far beyond the one room schoolhouse and focussed learning on only the three R's. Although the "three R's" are still embedded in the daily curriculum taught in Ontario schools today, education has evolved into addressing "the whole child" in order to promote learning. Society has definitely learned a great deal about child development and its relationship to successful learning over the last several decades. "Scientists have shown us how nature and nurture, in concert, shape a child's early and continuing development--the importance of both working together is no longer in question. We know that children do not develop and learn in isolation, but rather grow physically, socially, emotionally, ethically, expressively, and intellectually within networks of families, schools, neighborhoods, communities, and our larger society" (ASCD).

Although academic learning goals are significantly important to student achievement, the balance of educating the whole child in supporting

student achievement and mental health and well-being cannot occur if academics are the only focus. When student Individual Education Plans are written, many "social" related IEP goals *if* included in a student's IEP as alternative goals are usually written around and may include goals defining appropriate greeting mannerisms, reciprocating the teacher's greeting using eye contact upon entering the classroom and perhaps interacting with peers using a respectful tone.

The IEP, especially at the elementary level and before the student turns 16, is usually written by the special education teacher and then presented to the parent. Parent consultation often occurs but not always. The classroom teacher is often but not always consulted and then is informed of the student's IEP goals once the parent has signed off on the IEP. Throughout this process, there is often a large gap in informing and engaging the student in the expectation that they are to meet their determined goals with the assumption that the parent will review and explain the IEP to their child. It is essential for the success of any goal that student consultation occurs and that any goal is developed around the expectations within the contextual setting. It is crucial to the success of any goal that the structure to measure the progress of the goals is applied in a timely and cooperative manner. If the goal has been adequately met or if it hasn't; there must be a process where all parties invested in the student's success reconvene so that adjustments to the existing goal or a completely new goal can be considered. Ontario policy and direction surrounding IEP monitoring and review states that as a minimal standard; the IEP is to be reviewed at each reporting period (November, January and June of each school year) however as a working document, there is the capacity to review and report on a student IEP more frequently than that.

Simply having a child with autism present in the classroom doesn't necessarily mean they are included.

The manner in which social inclusion/exclusion is defined and the degree of implications, complexities and lack of awareness around social inclusion/exclusion and how it impacts on the lives of individuals with autism and their families greatly reflects on the disconnect between theory and practice around the disjointed strategies and lack of framework in creating inclusive environments.

Professional Development

Who is the educator and what is their role in supporting student achievement and mental-health and well-being for students in the classroom? According to the Ontario College of Teachers *Additional Qualification Course Guideline Teaching Students with Communication Needs (Autism Spectrum Disorders)* professional educators are described as "innovative scholars and practitioners, critical pedagogues who forward social and ecological justice" The image below further describes the identity of the educator and is taken from page 3 of the document:

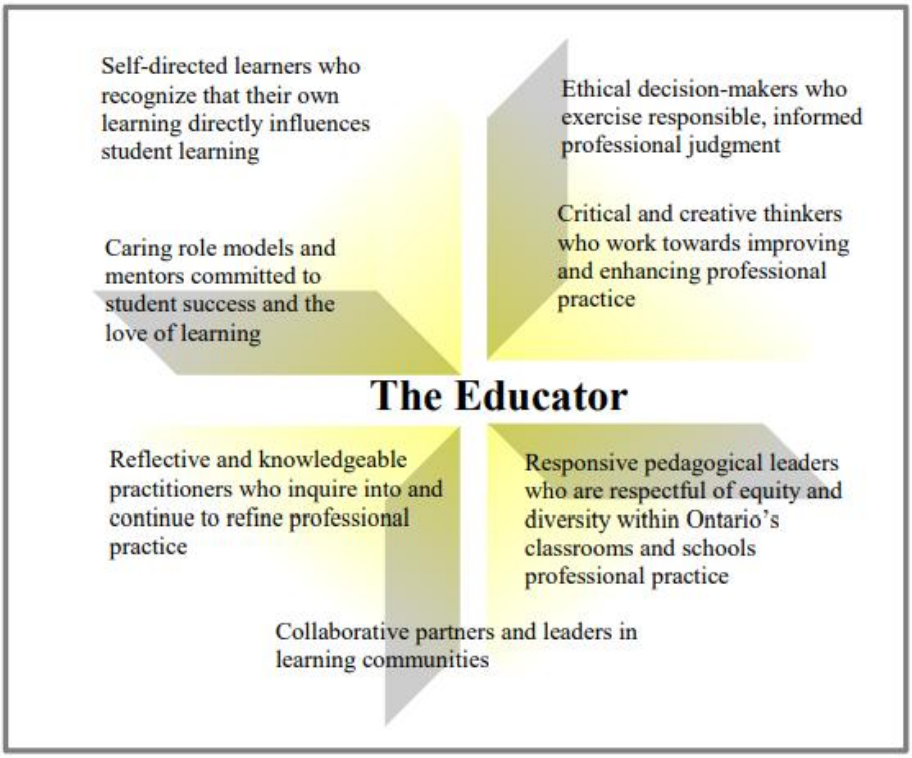


Image of the Educator, (OCT)

Educator professional development is essential in creating and supporting an equitable and differentiated learning experience for all types of learners in Ontario schools (Edugains - Differentiated Instruction Educator's Package (2016)). The Ministry of Education requires that educators attend three professional development days for all Ontario school boards which address three identified priorities across the province (MoE, Policy/Program Memorandum 151:Professional Activity Days Devoted to Provincial Education Priorities). Many advances have been made over the last few decades in understanding and in building the capacity to learn from and teach students with autism in an inclusive, regular classroom setting and there is a bounty of documentation to draw from.

One of the measures that were legislated in Ontario in 2007 was Policy/Program Memorandum 140 *Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*. The purpose of PPM 140, as outlined by the Ontario Ministry of Education, is "to provide direction to school boards to support their use of applied behaviour analysis (ABA) as an effective instructional approach in the education of many students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). This memorandum establishes a policy framework to support incorporation of ABA methods into school boards' practices. The use of ABA instructional approaches may also be effective for students with other special education needs" (MoE - Administrators). The Ontario Ministry of Education has also developed and implemented an annual process to monitor the implementation of PPM 140 by school boards; since 2008 the Ministry of Education has conducted annual surveys of school boards regarding their compliance with requirements set out in PPM 140. The surveys are not conducted by the Ministry of Education per se, rather they are internal staff surveys which are then submitted to the Ministry of Education. The results of the recent TCDSB PPM 140 survey was recently shared with SEAC at the October 2017 public meeting (TCDSB SEAC Agenda - November 15, 2017) and its analysis demonstrated that there was a decrease in compliance in all four of the required indicators, in particular in target number four which reflects the autism knowledge base of staff working with students with ASD.

Indicator/Outcome	All or Most of the Time 2015/16	All or Most of the Time 2016/17
1. Principles of ABA are incorporated into the IEPs of students with ASD, as appropriate	91.8%	88.6% ↓ 3.2%
2. Transition planning is used to support students with ASD for a variety of transitions	90.4%	89.5% ↓ 0.9%
3. Multidisciplinary teams are involved.	92%	89.3% ↓ 2.7%
4. School staff working with students with ASD are knowledgeable about ASD	78.7%	64% ↓ 14.7%

Although Policy/Program Memorandum 140 has an intended focus on students with Autism, “the use of ABA instructional approaches may also be effective for students with other special education needs” so in theory, it should be a practice that is effectively embedded in the knowledge base for teacher and staff professional development and in instructional and assessment practices in every classroom setting.

The provision of special education programming using ABA methods is definitely not a “one-size-fits-all” type practice and in fact, reflects the very spectral nature of autism. It is essential that teachers and associated staff are educated on and empowered with the skills and knowledge to understand the many facets of autism spectrum disorder, learn how to effectively create and review the individual student profile for each student with ASD and then apply ABA methods to ensure an equitable and productive learning environment for students on the spectrum.

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)

Applied Behaviour Analysis methods are definitely not restrictive to those students on the lower half of the spectrum but can and should be used to support positive learning outcomes in students on the upper half of the spectrum as well and can be used, as stated earlier in this report, with students with all special education needs as well.

ABA methods are scientifically based principles of learning and behaviour which are meant to replace problematic behaviours with useful or positive

ones. Using this approach, it is important to clearly define and record the behaviour intended to be changed. The antecedent negative behaviours are analyzed, as are the triggers determined to bring on the negative behaviours and that may be maintaining the child "stuck" in the negative behaviours. This analysis and data collection is also used to help inform and develop the positive behaviours to be introduced.

Reliable data collection must be collected on a regular and ongoing basis in order to analyze the student's progress of desired skills acquisition and to identify and update a learning plan for any new skills or behaviours that are required to be taught or to determine if the current strategies being used are not proving effective in achieving the student learning goals. The generalization of skills learned throughout a variety of contexts should also be taught, with the end result being to enable the student to develop ongoing independence skills. Policy and program memorandum 140 also requires that school board staff which includes teachers, support staff and school administrative staff plan for the transition between various activities and settings involving students on the spectrum (Psychology Today - Applied Behavior Analysis).

PPM 140, PPM 156 & the IEP

The previous section in this report provided a short summary of policy and program memorandum 140 (Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) (2007)). The directions outlined in PPM 140 require that the principal ensure that ABA methods are appropriately incorporated into the Individual Education Plans (IEP) of students with ASD. The principal must also ensure that all "relevant school board personnel and community personnel who have previously worked and/or are currently working with a student with an ASD are invited to provide input and participate in the IEP process" (MoE, Special Education In Ontario - Kindergarten to Grade 12, Section E4). Another requirement under PPM 140 also states that "principals are required to ensure that a plan for transition is in place for students with ASD. Transitions may include: entry to school; transition

between activities and settings or classrooms; transitions between grades; moving from school to school or from an outside agency to a school; transition from elementary to secondary school; transition from secondary school to postsecondary destinations and/or the workplace" (MoE, Policy/Program Memorandum 140: Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)).

Transition planning is also very important for all students and is an essential contributor to success for students with special education needs, particularly for those on the autism spectrum. Policy and program memorandum 156, Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs that supports and directs transition planning came into effect as of September 2nd 2014 and the primary requirement listed is that "The school principal is responsible for ensuring that student transition plans are developed, implemented, and maintained in accordance with the requirements of this memorandum".

All transition plans are developed as part of the IEP and these are developed for all students who have an IEP (excluding gifted). Relevant and appropriate consultation with parents, students, post-secondary institutions and community agencies and/or partners is also required as needed. Transition plans are also required to be reviewed regularly along with the review of the student IEP. The physical, emotional and learning needs must be taken into account when developing an appropriate transition plan for students and according to PPM 156, it is required that "every transition plan will identify specific transition goals, support needs, the actions required to achieve the goals, roles and responsibilities, and timelines for the implementation and/or completion of each of the identified actions" (MoE, Policy/Program Memorandum 156: Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs).

The standards that were developed eighteen years ago in 2000 by the Ontario Ministry of Education on the development, program planning and implementation of student Individual Education Plans still remain the standard today for school boards across Ontario. It is required that under

Ontario Regulation 181/98 “Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils” (Ontario, Ontario Regulation 181/98: Identification and Placement of Exceptional Students) that principals ensure that all students identified as exceptional by an IPRC receive an Individual Education Plan within 30 school (Ontario, Ontario Regulation 137/01) days of their placement. Under Ontario Regulation 181/98, the IEP must include an appropriate student transition plan for students 14 years of age and older. Although Ontario Regulation 181/98 explicitly directs transition planning for students over the age of 14, Ontario Ministry policy requires that a transition plan be developed for all students from K-12 and who have an IEP (MoE, Ontario Ministry of Education - Parents - Special Education). Also, as discussed earlier in this section, the requirements of PPM 140 must be included in development, planning and implementation of the IEP.

It is recommended that the student on the spectrum be provided as much of an opportunity where appropriate, to provide input and be involved and engaged in every aspect of the process discussed herein.

Conclusion

This minority report presented by the Toronto Chapter of Autism Ontario has outlined some of the areas of which we hold the most concern at this time. These concerns have grown out of discussions with Toronto families and through input received from families throughout the province of Ontario. We all know that fulsome education is essential and has the potential to positively impact on a person's life outcome. We also know that government is investing more into creating globally competent graduates and we *know* that our children, youth and adults with disabilities have the potential and the right to be included in these goals.

Under the preceding leadership, the Ontario government had released a three-year goal to fulfil an Ontario equity action plan which stated in a letter from the then Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter; "All students deserve to have every opportunity to reach their full potential and succeed personally and academically, with access to rich learning experiences that provide a strong foundation of confidence that continues throughout their lives. Schools should be safe and welcoming places where all students have the tools they need to achieve success and follow their chosen pathways to life after graduation including work, college, apprenticeship or university" **(**ONGovernment**)**. This same report acknowledges that "existing structures, policies, programs and practices may unintentionally disadvantage certain student populations" (pg. 13-14) and that "while we have achieved much for students, we continue to observe poorer outcomes for disproportionate numbers of students" (pg. 14) in reference to among other groups, students with special education needs and further, the report states that "students with special education needs are overrepresented in the data on suspensions and expulsions" (pg. 16). Yet another barrier to student success for students with autism within the "students with special education needs" umbrella is that the same Ontario Equity Action Plan report states on page 14 that "a disproportionate number of students ... with special education needs are enrolled in applied courses and are underrepresented among students who graduate and go on to pursue postsecondary education".

The Toronto Catholic District School Board's Pastoral Plan was launched on May 9th 2018 amid 730 attendees; parents, students, teachers, principals and administrators.

The TCDSB Pastoral Plan is centred on creating an environment in our schools where "we belong, we believe, we become". In essence, these three ideals articulate what students with disabilities and their parents strive for every day in our schools and in their daily lives. We belong; we are entitled to receive an equitable education in this province and in our schools and we have the right to feel that we are included in every aspect of our education and reflected in its curriculum. We believe; we believe in our potential to achieve greatness and to be supported in learn to become fully functioning adults, able to contribute our many skills and abilities in whatever pathway *we* choose. We become; our disability does not define who we are. Just like any other student, we have the ability to learn. Just like any other student, we have the ability to contribute. Just like any other student, the manner in which you treat us greatly impacts on our ability to see our own value and it impacts on our ability to trust in humanity. Just like any other student, we feel the joy and fulfillment of success and the promise of a future built on that success as we become witness to our faith in our ability to become successful graduates and fully functioning members of society.

At the TCDSB's Pastoral Plan's launch, Cardinal Thomas Collins said, "you've got to become more than you are, more than you think you can be, we need to become something extraordinary" (The Catholic Register). This statement speaks to a collaborative effort; many hands, many minds, many hearts invested in creating an extraordinary result out of the contribution that *you* as educators and safe and caring adults will make on the development of every one of our children and in particular to those who need the most of your attention and support.

The Toronto Chapter of Autism Ontario would like to thank you for reading and considering this report. We respectfully ask that this report be included with the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Special Education Plan submission to the Ontario Ministry of Education as part of its compliance with consultation requirements and we look forward to your response regarding the recommendations that are provided on pages 46 and 47 of this report.

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Recommendations:

1. That the AFSE be continually reviewed throughout the year and that all progress towards achieving the goals be reported to SEAC on a monthly basis as a written summary.
    a. That an in-depth analysis be undertaken to assess the large number of N/A students that are receiving special education programming and supports without having been identified through the formal IPRC process and that a written report be provided to SEAC.
    b. That an in-depth analysis be undertaken to determine the reason for the large gaps in provincial assessment data for students with autism and that the TCDSB investigate possible implementation of programs, services and professional development to close the gaps and that this information be provided to SEAC in a written report.
    c. That the representative members from SEAC for each exceptionality; be invited to participate in any exceptionality reviews and in the goal setting process for the AFSE.
2. That all safe schools reporting always include and provide a sub-set of data collection, analysis and reporting for students with special education needs so that any gaps and challenges can be flagged and improved upon and that this data be shared with SEAC.
3. That all students with IEPs in grades 6 & 8 and 9-12 (both identified and not) be specifically surveyed each year on how they are impacted by their school climate (including bullying) and how school climate affects their learning and their mental health and well-being and that this information be shared with SEAC.
4. That the TCDSB look to investigate into the possible development of a professional development bank of modules on autism and the self-regulation connection to student achievement and well being with the intention for it to become a regular presentation/discussion at minimum for each term/semester school's PLC meetings.
5. That the requirements of Policy and Program Memorandum 140 and 156 and how they relate to student achievement and well-being be

shared and discussed with all school staff in each school at the beginning of each school year

6. That each school be required to complete a mental health and well-being plan, separate from and similar to the safe schools plan and that both plans be kept current and publicly posted and accessible to parents and stakeholders.
    a. That this plan and any policies and/or procedures relating to its implementation be prepared in collaboration with SEAC.
7. That each TCDSB employee be educated on how to identify the “invisible” markers that may indicate that a student may require mental health support and that all TCDSB employees be guided on how to see themselves as a contributor in helping to seek access to support for that student especially when there is the threat for self-harm, suicidal ideation and suicide.
    a. That a professional development module be developed in collaboration with SEAC for use at school staff meetings in support of student mental health and well-being.
8. That the TCDSB provide SEAC with a report on how inclusion is supported for all students in receipt of special education programs and services both identified and non-identified (and by exceptionality if possible).
    a. That this report include all aspects of inclusion: academic, physical and social and that the report also highlight where students with special needs have been offered (or where there are barriers to) the same opportunities that typical students are eligible for and have access to in order to fully participate is all aspects of school life (academic, physical and social).

AutismONTARIO
Toronto

LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR

September 2018

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) SEAC Circular is published 5 times a year, in September, November, February, April and June.

The following are some topics that your SEAC should be looking at. Action items and/or recommendations for effective practices will be underlined.

Feel free to share any of this information or the attachments with other SEAC members. As always, when you are planning to introduce a motion for the consideration of SEAC, it is particularly important that you share all related background items with your fellow SEAC reps.

As we start the new school year, we welcome a new **Minister of Education**, Lisa Thompson, and a new (Acting) **Director of the Special Education/Success for All Branch,** Claudine Munroe.

The topics covered by this SEAC Circular:

1. Planning for the school year
2. Municipal and Trustee elections
3. Education consultations
4. OHRC *Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities*
5. LD Awareness month

List of Supplementary Materials:

1. PAAC on SEAC Annual Calendar
2. LDAO Awareness month posters

Note: You can access the SEAC Circular and supplementary materials at www.ldao.ca/about/public-policy-advocacy/seac-circulars/.

You can access Ministry memos by date at:
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/

1. Planning for the school year

The attached **PAAC on SEAC Annual Calendar** can be used to help plan SEAC activities over the coming school year. It is essentially the same as the draft included with the June SEAC Circular, as there have not been any new initiatives announced by the Ministry at this point.

The *PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook* (2016) outlines effective practices to help SEACs develop an annual plan (see: **Section 3 SEAC Roles & Responsibilities,** http://www.paac-seac.ca/home/paac-on-seac-effective-practices-handbook-for-seac-members/section-3-seac-roles-and-responsibilities/3-1-annual-planning/)

The PAAC on SEAC Annual Calendar for SEAC 2018-19 is also posted on the PAAC on SEAC website (www.paac-seac.ca) along with the PAAC on SEAC Annual Report 2017-18

2. Municipal and Trustee elections

On October 22, 2018 there will be elections for municipal governments and school board trustees for a new four year term.

When school boards elect new trustees, the membership on SEACs changes as well. In some school boards sitting members, excepting trustee members, may have their terms carried over, but other school boards may require new nominations from parent associations for the new term. Parent association SEAC members and alternates should check their school board's procedures.

3. Ministry of Education consultations

On August 22, 2018 the Office of the Premier announced that the government would be holding province-wide public consultations on education with parents, educators and interested individuals from across the province, to start in September 2018. See: Consultation into Education Reform. Parents are to be asked what elements they want to see included in a *Parents' Bill of Rights,* as part of the province-wide consultation.

The announcement includes a list of topics, but no specific questions, and a list of consultation methods, e.g. an online survey and telephone town halls. However, no links or consultation specifics have been released to date. SEACs can ask staff to notify members once consultation details are released.

4. OHRC *Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities*

Following a consultation to which LDAO and PAAC on SEAC submitted responses, the Ontario Human Rights Commission released a revised *Policy on accessible education for students with disabilities* on September 10, 2018, This policy document replaces *Guidelines on accessible education* (2004).

According to the announcement, the policy:

- recognizes that education is vitally important to a person's social, academic and economic development
- reflects a broad definition of disability
- provides students and families with up-to-date information about their human rights and responsibilities
- offers practical guidance to education providers to meet their legal duty to accommodate
- reminds schools of their obligation to maintain accessible, inclusive, discrimination and harassment-free spaces.

SEACs should ask to have a presentation concerning the implications of the new policy document on the special education procedures and practices in their school board.

5. LD Awareness month

October is Learning Disabilities awareness month. LDAO SEAC members are asked to share the attached posters.

Questions? Email Diane Wagner at dianew@LDAO.ca or call (416) 929-4311 Ex. 22 (Mon.)

PAAC on SEAC
Special Education Advisory Committee
Annual Calendar of SEAC Business

PAAC on SEAC encourages school boards to use the PAAC on SEAC Handbook of Effective Practices for SEAC Members as part of the training. A copy of the handbook can be downloaded at www.paac-seac.ca

SEAC On-Going SEAC Activities

- Request notification of all Ministry of Education announcements related to special education and ensure SEAC Chair is registered on the SEAC E-learning site
- Provide orientation to new members and on-going professional development for all SEAC members
- Provide opportunities for SEAC members to provide presentations and updates about their association/organization
- Consider ways to enhance parent engagement and collaboration in special education in every program/initiative
- Evaluate SEAC effectiveness and identify ways to improve meetings

Glossary - A glossary for all of the terms and acronyms underlined in the calendar is in the attached appendix.

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF SEAC BUSINESS for 2018-19		
Month	**Annual Activities**	**2018-19 Activities**
September	• Confirm Special Education Report Checklist submitted to Regional Office in July • Review *ODA Accessibility Plans* (due Sept. 30) • Develop or review SEAC annual agenda/goals	**Request information on:** • BIPSA special education goals and performance indicators for 18-19 • PD Day plans for 18-19 related to special education

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF SEAC BUSINESS for 2018-19		
Month	**Annual Activities**	**2018-19 Activities**
October	• Develop process for review of 2018-19 Special Education Plan • Request update on last EQAO results: including deferrals, exemptions, participation rates, accommodations provided for students on an IEP and achievement levels.	
November	• October Report (OnSIS) Data: Request numbers of exceptional students, placement data, suspensions expulsions data • IEP Update: Request confirmation that all first term IEP reviews are completed	Check the EduGains website to see all of the IEP Samples (see Additional Resources below)
December	• Special Education Programs and Services receive information on any changes being considered for 2019-20 and the process for review of Special Education Plan	
January	• Financial Update: Re: 2018-19 special education grants, expenditures and reserve fund amount, and 2019-20 budget process	
February	• Review proposed changes to special education programs and services in Special Education Plan • Request an IEP Update	Review parent resources to ensure they are user friendly and easy to understand
March	• Continue discussion of special education programs and services • Request an update on the BIPSA process	
April	• Request preliminary budget for special education • Request data reported to OnSIS in March	Monitor and participate in public consultations on Special Education Plan

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF SEAC BUSINESS for 2018-19		
Month	**Annual Activities**	**2018-19 Activities**
May	• Information update and discussion re. Special Education Plan/Report Checklist and budget	Monitor participate in public and consultations on Special Education Budget
June	• SEAC recommendations regarding special Education Plan/Report Checklist and Budget • Request Special Education data (including IEP and IPRC) for September meeting • Develop draft SEAC annual agenda and goals	Make recommendations to Trustees on the 2019-20 Special Education Plan and Budget. Develop a plan for SEAC activities in 2019-20

Additional SEAC Resources:

A broad overview of special education and details of many legal requirements are captured in the newly released, Special Education In Ontario Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Resource Guide (2017 draft) available at:
http://edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/os/onschools_2017e.pdf

The role of SEAC is defined in Regulation 464/97 on Special Education Advisory Committee available at:
www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_970464_e.htm

Other Ministry resources including, Standard Documents and Resource Guides are available on the Ministry of Education Website at
www.edu.gov.on.ca

For more information on SEAC and links to key documents, check the new SEAC web pages on the Ministry of Education website at:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/seac/

For copies of all Memorandums sent from the Ministry to school boards, check the website: (Note that Memo's are sorted by date, and check the most recent months.)
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/

The Ministry of Education IEP Samples for each exceptionality are available on EduGains website at:
www.edugains.ca/newsite/SpecialEducation/transitions.html

The Ministry of Education also has a website with their annual Calendar of activities at:
https://www.teachontario.ca/community/explore/calendar-of-education-events

Don't DIS my ABILITIES!

October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month.
Help stop the stigma and realize the ABILITIES!

ldao • Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
The right to learn, the power to achieve

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SEAC PENDING LIST AS AT OCTOBER 17, 2018

1. Include suspension statistics for all students with Individual Education Plan (IEP), as well as for students not identified be provided to the Special Education Advisory Committee (February 2018)

2. Board provide SEAC with a progress report on the four recommendations listed on page 109 of the agenda, that have not yet been acted on namely:

- *An attendance support program for school board employees;*
- *A performance management plan for non-academic staff;*
- *A centralized database for employee behavior complaints*; and
- *Case management software for centralized tracking of special-education service referrals and backlogs.*

3. SEAC recommend to the Board that the Board request from the Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (CPIC) some funding in order to be able to engage parents at the Special Education Parents Fair. (February 2018)

4. SEAC recommends that Singapore Math, Beast Canada and the Spirit of Math programs be added as parent resources on the Toronto Catholic District School Board's website

5. SEAC recommends that we look at the Singapore Math, Beast Canada and Spirit of Math programs as possibilities vetted by the Math Curriculum Department.

6. SEAC agrees with the recommendations put forward by the Board of Trustees that the provincial data be included where available, and that the outcome of the recommendations be brought back to SEAC.

7. SEAC recommends that the Superintendent of Special Education reach out to Student Trustees to strike a Special Education Sub-Committee so that student voices can be represented.