

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

AGENDA OCTOBER 18, 2017

Marilyn Taylor, Chair
Community Representative

Rosanna Del Grosso
Association for Bright Children

Dario Imbrogno
Community Representative

John MacKenzie
FASWorld

Sandra Mastronardi
Autism Ontario

Ashleigh Molloy, Vice-Chair
AAIDD

Tyler Munro
Integration Action for Inclusion Representative

Gizelle Paine
LD Toronto Chapter Representative

Mary Pugh
VOICE for Hearing Impaired

Giselle Romanino
Community Representative

Raul Vomisescu
Community Living Toronto

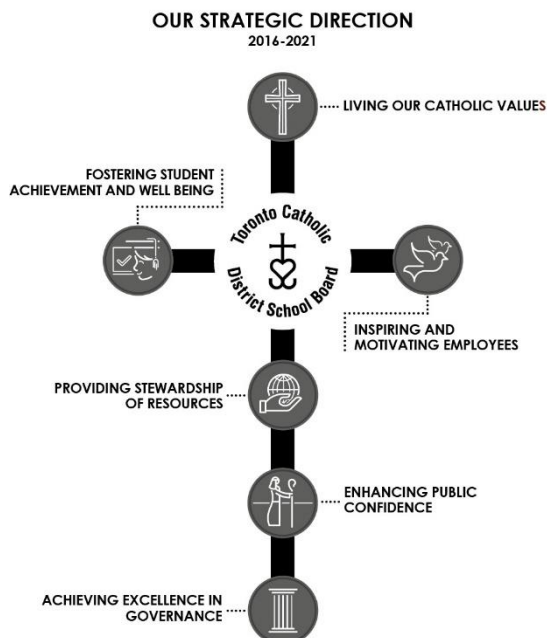
Glenn Webster
Ontario Assoc. of
Families of Children
With Communication
Disorders

Trustees Members

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
Asst. Recording Secretary: Karen Eastburn 416-222-8282 Ext. 2298

Rory McGuckin
Director of Education

Angela Kennedy
Chair of the 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.
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AGENDA THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PUBLIC SESSION

Wednesday, October 18, 2017

7:00 P.M.

	Pages
1. Roll Call & Apologies	
2. Approval of the Agenda	
3. Declarations of Interest	
4. Approval & Signing of the Minutes of the Meeting held September 13, 2017 for Public Session	1 - 12
5. Delegations	
6. Presentations	
7. Unfinished Business	
8. Notices of Matters and Trustee Matters: (for which seventy-two hours' notice has been given)	
9. Communications	
9.a Special Services Superintendent Update - October 2017	13 - 15
9.b SEAC Monthly Calendar Review	16 - 19
9.c Representation for Mental Health and Safe Schools Committees	
9.d Orientation to SEAC - proposed date - November 8, 2017	

9.e	Ministry of Education's response to Autism Ontario Funding Letter	20 - 24
9.f	Engagement Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) Primary Division, Junior Division, Grade 9 and OSSLT Assessment Results	25 - 34
9.g	Education and Governance Supports Discussion Guide	35 - 48
9.h	Special Education Plan - Model for Special Education	49 - 50
9.i	Special Education Plan - Transportation for Students with Special Education Needs	51 - 69
9.j	Special Education Plan - Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities	70 - 75
10.	Matters Referred/Deferred to the Committee by the Board and Other Committees	
11.	Reports of Officials, and Special and Permanent Committees Requiring Action	
12.	Reports of Officials for Information	
13.	Inquiries and Miscellaneous	
13.a	Inquiry from Marilyn Taylor regarding Transition from Secondary School to Post-Secondary School	
13.b	Inquiry regarding Violence in Schools	
	http://www.catholicteachers.ca/OECTA/media/pdfs/News/2017/Safe%20Schools%20For%20All/nr_saferSchoolsforAll_v1_sept21_2017.pdf	
13.c	Inquiry from Trustee Andrachuk regarding the legal analysis of the Education Act Exclusion clause	
	http://www.archdisabilitylaw.ca/node/1174	
14.	Association Reports	
14.a	From Gizelle Paine regarding Learning Disabilities Association of	76 - 78

Ontario (LDAO) SEAC Circular - October 2017

- | | | |
|------|---|---------|
| 14.b | From Gizelle Paine regarding Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) Response to Consultation on Accessibility Standard for Education | 79 - 87 |
| 15. | Update from Trustees on resolutions recommended to the Board by the Committee | |
| 16. | Pending List | 88 |
| 17. | Adjournment | |

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

HELD WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2017
PUBLIC SESSION

PRESENT:

Marilyn Taylor, Chair
Ashleigh Molloy, Vice Chair
Rosanna Del Grosso
Dario Imbrogno
John MacKenzie
Sandra Mastronardi
Tyler Munro
Mary Pugh
Giselle Romanino
Raul Vomisescu
Glenn Webster

Trustee: A. Kennedy
A. Andrachuk - by teleconference
G. Tanuan

Staff: R. McGuckin
D. Koenig
C. Fernandes
A. Coke
M. Kokai
D. Reid
P. Stachiw
E. Szekeres Milne
J. Wilhelm
R. Macchia

S. Harris, Recording Secretary
C. Johnston, Acting Assistant Recording Secretary

1. Roll Call and Apologies

Apologies were tendered on behalf of Gizelle Paine.

Dan Koenig, Associate Director of Academic Affairs, and Rachelina Macchia, Chief IPRC and Assessment were introduced to the meeting.

2. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED by Trustee Andrachuk, seconded by Trustee Kennedy, that the Agenda, to include the Addendum, move Item 14c) Association Reports from Sandra Mastronardi regarding Ontario Autism Program after Item 9a) Kevin Hodgkinson, General Manager of Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG) regarding Student Transportation Update (Verbal), and to add Inquiries from Trustee Kennedy and Sandra Mastronardi, be approved.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

4. Approval and Signing of the Minutes of the Meeting Held on June 7, 2017 for Public Session

MOVED by Trustee Kennedy, seconded by Tyler Munro, that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held June 7, 2017 for PUBLIC Session be approved.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

6. Presentations

MOVED by Rosanna Del Grosso, seconded by Dario Imbrogno, that Item 6a) be adopted as follows:

- 6a) Vince Burzotta, Superintendent, AEAC, Safe Schools, International Education, and Nadia Adragna, Msgr. Fraser-St. Martin Principal, regarding safe Schools Update** received.

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Tyler Munro, that an extension of 15 minutes be approved in order to complete the debate on this matter.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED in AMENDMENT by Tyler Munro, seconded by Trustee Andrachuk, that SEAC recommend to the Board that staff prepare a report that compares the Toronto Catholic District School Board with the Provincial averages in terms of suspensions and expulsions based on secondary/elementary level, gender and special needs (Individual Education Plan).

MOVED in AMENDMENT to the AMENDMENT by Rosanna Del Grosso, seconded by Mary Pugh, that the report also look at the decrease in supervision of the secondary level that correlates with those decreases in the number of expulsions and suspensions by year.

The Amendment was declared

LOST

The Main Motion was declared

CARRIED

9. Communications

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

- 9a) Kevin Hodgkinson, General Manager of Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG), regarding Student Transportation Update (Verbal) received.**

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

14. Association Reports

MOVED by John MacKenzie, seconded by Giselle Romanino, that Item 14c) be adopted as follows:

14c) From Sandra Mastronardi regarding Ontario Autism Program received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Rosanna Del Grosso, that SEAC recommend to the Board that the answers to the questions contained in the Autism Ontario Association report and the Board's response to any motions arising out of this report be brought back to SEAC as a detailed Board staff report to be included in the SEAC public meeting Agenda before the end of this calendar year.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

9. Communications

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

9b) Special Education Superintendent Update September 2017 received

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Giselle Romanino, seconded by Ashleigh Molloy, that Item 9c) be adopted as follows:

9c) SEAC Monthly Calendar Review received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

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

9d) Special Education Plan Checklist received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

Tyler Munro Sandra Mastronardi and Rosanna Del Grosso voted against the Motion.

MOVED by Mary Pugh, seconded by Ashleigh Molloy, that Item 9e) be adopted as follows:

- 9e) Toronto Catholic District School Board's Annual Accessibility Status Report 2016** received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

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

- 9f) Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) 2017 Meeting Highlights** received.

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The Motion was declared.

CARRIED

MOVED by Mary Pugh, seconded by Giselle Romanino, that Item 9g) be adopted as follows:

- 9g) Special Needs Strategy Integrated Rehabilitation Update September 2017** received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

MOVED by Ashleigh Molloy, seconded by Trustee Tanuan, that Item 9h) be adopted as follows:

- 9h) Special Education in Ontario Schools, 2017**
http://www.edu.gov.ca/eng/document/policy/os/onschools_2017e.pdf
received.

The Motion was declared.

CARRIED

MOVED by Glenn Webster, seconded by Dario Imbrogno, that Item 9i) be adopted as follows:

- 9i) Alternative Framework Update** received.

The Motion was declared.

CARRIED

MOVED by Glenn Webster, seconded by Rosanna Del Grosso, that Item 9j) be adopted as follows:

- 9j) **SEAC New Member Application – Laurie Ricciuto** received and that SEAC approve Laurie Ricciuto’s application for SEAC membership.

The Motion was declared.

CARRIED

MOVED by Glenn Webster, seconded by Rosanna Del Grosso, that SEAC recommend to the Board to approve the SEAC membership application from Laurie Ricciuto.

The Motion was declared.

CARRIED

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by Giselle Romanino, that Item 9k) be adopted as follows:

- 9k) **SEAC Association Nomination Alternate for Autism Ontario – Melanie Battaglia** received.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

13. Inquiries and Miscellaneous

MOVED by Ashleigh Molloy, seconded by Tyler Munro, that Item 13a) be adopted as follows:

- 13a) **Inquiry regarding the Horizon Project on Special Education Complaint and Appeal Process in Ontario** received.

<http://www.horizoned.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Special-Education-Complaint-and-Appeal-Processes-in-Ontario-2017.pdf>

The Motion was declared.

CARRIED

MOVED by Sandra Mastronardi, seconded by John MacKenzie, that Item 13c) be adopted as follows:

- 13c) **From Sandra Mastronardi regarding Student Trustees and CSLIT** that the Student Trustees be invited to make a presentation at the October 18, 2017 SEAC meeting on their role in particular to special needs students and to elaborate on the “issues” that students with Autism face as noted in their June 15, 2017 report to Board.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

- 13d) **From Sandra Mastronardi regarding High School Tests and Examination Accommodations** noted.

- 13e) From Sandra Mastronardi regarding Delegation from Kimberley and Hannah Grace Evans on Anaphylaxis at the September 7, 2017 Student Achievement and Wellbeing, Catholic Education and Human Resources Committee Meeting noted.**

MOVED by John MacKenzie, seconded by Glenn Webster, that Item 13b) be adopted as follows:

- 13b) Miscellaneous – Hello-I-am-Sheriauna-Pt-1** received.

Staff will email link to Committee members.

The Motion was declared.

CARRIED

14. Association Reports

MOVED by Ashleigh Molloy, seconded by Trustee Tanuan, that Items 14) and 14b) be adopted as follows:

- 14a) From Gizelle Paine regarding Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) SEAC Circular September 2017** deferred to October 18, 2017 SEAC Meeting.

&

- 14b) From Gizelle Paine regarding Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) Response to Consultation on Accessibility Standard for Education** deferred to October 18, 2017 SEAC Meeting.

The Motion was declared.

CARRIED

17. Adjournment

MOVED by John MacKenzie, seconded by Tyler Munro, that the meeting adjourn.

The Motion was declared

CARRIED

SECRETARY

CHAIR

Special Education Superintendent Update

October 2017

Autism



OCTOBER IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

In Canada, October is Autism Awareness Month. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Autism are both general terms for a group of complex disorders of brain development. These disorders are characterized, in varying degrees, by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication and repetitive behaviours. Prevalence rates of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in Canada are about 1 in 94 children – a ten-fold increase in prevalence in 40 years.

This increase in the number of students with autism has also been observed in the Toronto Catholic District School Board. 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.



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 for students with high functioning Autism. Students are supported through a one-day per week withdrawal program.



Special Education Superintendent Update


October 2017

 Information about resources by Autism Department staff are available on the board's website at [Autism Programs and Services](#). Visuals 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 in October and February.

During the month of October, the following are some of the special events taking place:

 A 3 day course focusing on supporting students with ASD is taking place for Kindergarten Teachers.

 A group of students with Autism who attend the PAST program will be going to Camp Olympia from October 11th – 13th. This initiative is being supported by our student leadership team.

The following are some websites that 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**

*Look forward to information on events being planned in
April for World Autism Awareness Day!*



Special Education Superintendent Update

October 2017

Speech and Language

- The SLP department hosted a one day, interactive workshop for kindergarten teachers and ECEs on October 3rd. Teacher/ECE teams participated in round-table discussions and case studies to identify effective teaching strategies to support students' oral communication skills.
- SLP staff were invited by the TCDSB Early Years team to give mini-presentations at the Collaborative Inquiry for Focus Schools' Early Development Instrument (EDI) discussions.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- The D/HH department is offering an interactive workshop on October 18th for classroom teachers at Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The workshop will focus on strategies to support D/HH students in the regular classroom.

Mental Health and Well-Being

Upcoming Sessions:

October 6: Suicide Awareness Workshop available to all TCDSB staff

Oct. 11-12: K-12 Principals Meeting to Discuss new amendment to TCDSB Mental health Policy (addition of the Mental Health Crisis Response Guidelines), and sharing Ministry Resources for Administrators "Leading Mentally healthy Schools"

Oct. 13: Presentation to Ontario Physical Education Association annual conference "Stronger Together: The connection between HPE and Mental health"

Oct. 19: Introduction to Stop the Stigma PD for new elementary Stop the Stigma Schools (36 schools in total)

Oct. 24-25 Suicide Intervention Training for Mental health Response Team Members

During October all Social Work and Psychology staff were in-serviced on the New Supporting Minds Module "The Mentally Healthy Classroom"

Annual Calendar of SEAC Business for 2017

Month	Annual Activities/Topics	Board Events/Deadlines	Items to be Addressed from the Pending List	Status of Pending Items
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review of Draft SEAC Calendar -Set SEAC goals for the year -Consultation on LTAPP (Long Term Accommodation Program Plan) -Secondary School Course Calendar Update for 2017-18 -April Parent Fair – Call for participants from Associations -SEAC Orientation Presentation Date to be set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) Consultation -Financial Consultation regarding 2016-17 (high level) - Grade 9 EQAO Testing takes place in Secondary Schools - Long Term Accommodation Program Plan 	Request for presentation from Resource Teacher Mr. Pileggi regarding OAPCE Provincial Conference in May 2016 (requested November 2016- Pending List)	Will take place during the Parent Conference in April as a presentation
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>-Review of SEAC Calendar</i> <i>-Mental Health and Well Being Report 2015-16</i> <i>-Share Multi-Year Strategic Plan Update</i> <i>-Consult on Special Education Programs and Services being considered for 2017-18</i> <i>-TCDSB Mental Health and Well Being Strategy 2015-18 (Tabled at Student Achievement January 14th, 2016)</i> <i>- Special Education Plan: Review Program Specific Resources for Parents</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) -New term begins in Secondary Schools that operate on semesters -Report Cards are distributed 	1. Request that the Anaphylaxis and Asthma Policies be provided to SEAC with a presentation and any related documentation on the Anaphylaxis and Asthma policies at the January 2017 SEAC meeting. The presentation was requested include how the policies are applied between the elementary and secondary panels. (requested November 2016)	Completed in February 2017
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review of SEAC Calendar -Continue consultation on Special Education Programs and Services for 2016-17 (Autism AFSE and LD AFSE) -budget consultation -Presentation on Inclusion- M. Dolmage -Coordinated Service Planning – R. Roebuck 	Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) takes place	1. Marilyn Dolmage be invited to a SEAC meeting to do a presentation on her research on <i>Evidence of Effective High School Inclusion: Research, Resources and Inspiration.</i> (February, 2017)	Completed in March 2017

April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review of SEAC Calendar - Financial Report as at January, 2016 2017-18 Budget Projections for Consultation Purposes - Review of Education assistant and child and youth worker efficiencies in the elementary and secondary panel - Parent Conference Review - Process for Presentations to SEAC - SEAC Orientation 	<p>Parent Resources Event</p> <p>Autism Awareness Month</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alasdair Robertson, Parliamentarian, be invited to a SEAC meeting in early 2017 to provide a concise review of protocols and the Robert's Rules of Order, especially in relation to Motions and what SEAC can recommend. (requested in November 2016) – 2. Staff to provide SEAC with Interim Budget within the same timeline as the Board of Trustees so that they may provide recommendations to the Board on how best to serve special needs students. (requested January 2017)- 3. Staff direct Principals to have a broadcast list of Special Needs students and that the information regarding the TCDSB Special Education Parent Conference be sent electronically to the families of those Special Needs students. (March 2017)- 	<p>Completed April 2017</p> <p>Completed in April 2017</p> <p>Completed April 2017</p>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review of SEAC Calendar -Special Education Plan: Handbook update -Secondary School Safe Arrival procedures for ISP students -SEAC Orientation -ISP class changes - SO update 	<p>Budget Consultation continues</p> <p>Secondary School Admission Policy Consultation</p>	<p>SEAC recommends to the Board to expand the Gifted Program as and additional program enhancement across the School Board (requested January 2017)</p> <p>SEAC recommend to the Board of Trustees that they examine the Safe Arrival Policy to see how it can protect Special Needs students up to the age of 21 or until graduation. (requested February 2017)</p> <p>SEAC recommended to the Board of Trustees to apply for a regional pro-grant to facilitate parent engagement around Special Education. (requested April 2017)</p>	<p>Addressed May 2017</p> <p>Addressed May 2017</p> <p>Discussed May 2017 to return June 2017</p>

			SEAC referred the Consolidated Service Plan to staff to come back in one month's time with a more comprehensive report on what the partnership would look like, what benefits the Board and SEAC would receive from this partnership and whether there would be any financial constraints to the TCDSB. (requested March 2017)	Addressed May 2017
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of SEAC Calendar • Monthly Update from the Superintendent of Special Services • Special Education Parent Guide 2017 • Budget approval update • Status of PRO Grant application 	EQAO Grade 3 and 6 Testing	<p>Superintendent of Education review the status of the recommendation that was made to the Board of Trustees and bring back that information to the next SEAC meeting. (requested May 2017)</p> <p>Request that all email addresses for all SEAC members be included in the Special Education Parent Handbook. (May 2017)</p>	<p>Completed June 2017</p> <p>Completed June 2017</p>
July		School Board Submits balanced Budget for the following year to the Ministry		
August		Year End for School Board Financial Statements		
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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	Changes to the Accessibility policy be brought back to SEAC for review. (requested September 2016)	Completed Sept, 2017
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -EQAO Results for Gr. 3 and 6 Received and OSSLT -Reports on Student Numbers of Elementary and Secondary School 	- Staff update the Special Education Plan and resource documentation accessible to students and parents online to reflect current and accurate information. (requested September 2016)	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<i>Students to be submitted the Ministry of Education</i> <i>-Engagement and Governance Supports Discussion Guide</i>		
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review EQAO results including deferrals, exemptions, participation rates, and accommodations provided for Special Ed. Students and Achievement levels -Review October Report Data -Continue to Review elements of the Special Education Plan -Share process for nomination of new SEAC members 			
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -SEAC Elections -SEAC Social 			



June 23, 2017

The Honourable Mitzie Hunter, M.P.P.
Minister of Education
Ontario Ministry of Education
900 Bay Street
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Hunter:

We have had the opportunity to review your letter of August 24, 2016, in response to the Toronto Catholic District School Board's written request for the Ministry of Education to reconsider the significant cuts being made to Special Education funding that is adversely impacting the 17,000 students with exceptionalities who receive essential learning support services.

The Ministry claims the overall increases in Special Education Grant funding benefits boards across Ontario. However, the fact is that this has been achieved on the backs of major urban boards like the TCDSB. For example, despite the continuing increase in the special education population, the Special Education High Needs (HNA) funding, now called the DSENA Grant, has been spiralling downwards over the past three years: from \$51.7M in 2012-13 to \$47.4M in 2016-17. That is \$4.169M which has been taken from the TCDSB budget and redistributed to other school boards!

Special Education funding has also not kept pace with the special needs associated with the Ministry's introduction of new programs such as Early Years learning (aka FDK). There has been a marked increase in the number of students in Kindergarten arriving with special needs. Many of these students have higher needs requiring additional human resources and intensive support programs. In particular, this is reflected in the 35 percent increase in the number of students diagnosed with autism since the Ministry mandated introduction of FDK. However, due to the nature of the age of these students, they are supported within the regular classroom which places significant pressures on in-class support for all students.

Over the past two years, ongoing Ministry of Education cuts to TCDSB's Special Education High needs (HNA) Grants totalled close to \$7 million. This chronic underfunding by the Ministry

jeopardizes the TCDSB's ability to provide adequate support to its most vulnerable students and poses a significant challenge supporting the growing number of special needs students.

Despite this underfunding, the TCDSB has made a concerted effort over the past two years to reduce its overspending in special services programming. These reductions have come at a significant cost to schools and school communities who are feeling the strain of having to do more with less staff, which creates a negative impact on special needs student's achievement and mental health and well-being.

The Board has not only reduced support staff, but also eliminated 90 percent of agency workers. In addition, Educational Assistant usage has been cut by approximately 100 staff members to deal with the removal of \$1.5 million high needs amount funding (Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount). This is an untenable situation as the number of students requiring special learning support services identified through an IEP has grown exponentially to 17,433 students, or close to 20 percent of the TCDSB's total student population of 90,000, which clearly shows an identified need for increased support to ensure that the needs of Ontario's special needs students are met.

Once again, we urge your Ministry to honour the rights of special needs students. Autism Ontario, Toronto Chapter, respectfully requests that your Ministry reconsider the cuts you have made and restore Special Education HNA funding to previous levels.

Should the Ministry continue to refuse to restore the Special Education funding to appropriate levels, we will have no option but to mobilize the thousands of parents of special needs students through our association and other partners to ensure this is top of mind for all voters and candidates during the next provincial election.

Your attention to this urgent request is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Melanie Battaglia, LL.B., M.A., B.A. (Hons.)

President

Autism Ontario, Toronto Metro Chapter

- c. Angela Gauthier, Director of Education, TCDSB (outgoing)
- Rory McGuckin, Director of Education, TCDSB (incoming)
- John Malloy, Director of Education, TDSB
- Margaret Spoelstra, Executive Director, Autism Ontario
- Kathleen Keane, President, Association for Bright Children of Ontario
- Cristina Fernandes, Superintendent, Special Services, TCDSB
- Uton Robinson, Executive Superintendent, Special Education and Section Programs, TDSB
- Marilyn Taylor, Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee, TCDSB
- David Lepofsky, Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee, TDSB

Ministry of Education

Minister

Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

Édifice Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2



September 18, 2017

Dear Ms. Battaglia,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Autism Ontario's Toronto Metro Chapter about the Toronto Catholic District School Board and special education funding. Please know that your commitment to students with special education needs is appreciated. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

Our government is committed to ensuring that every student has access to the supports they need to succeed in school, including students with special education needs. We are making changes to be more responsive to the needs of all students and to increase our focus on supporting their achievement and well-being.

As you know, the Ministry of Education provides Ontario's 72 publicly-funded district school boards with additional funding through the Special Education Grant (SEG) for students with special education needs to support the incremental costs of the additional programs, services and equipment required to meet their educational needs and to support positive outcomes. This enables equity for all students with special education needs. SEG funding is incremental to the Foundation Grants and other special purpose grants of the ministry's education funding model, the Grants for Student Needs (GSN). School boards have the authority and flexibility to use other GSN funding, as well as the SEG, to meet their responsibility to support students with special education needs. It is important to note that school boards have flexibility in how they use funding for program delivery. Thus, while the ministry is responsible for setting the funding policy that directs allocation of funds to schools boards, it is up to school boards to allocate resources for each school or program according to local needs.

The SEG is projected to increase to approximately \$2.856 billion in 2017-18. This represents an increase of approximately \$69.2 million or 2.5 per cent over 2016-17; and \$1.23 billion or 75.8 per cent since 2002-03. SEG funding is enveloped for special education programs, services and equipment. Any unspent special education funding must be treated as deferred revenue for special education.

.../2

In the case of Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB), its total SEG funding is projected to be over \$120.2 million in 2017-18. This represents an increase of over \$41.4 million or 52.6 per cent since 2002-03.

As you know, the new Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount (DSENA) allocation (formerly the High Needs Amount) was introduced in 2014-15, to better reflect the variation among boards with respect to students with special education needs and boards' ability to meet these needs, thus making the DSENA allocation more fair and equitable. The new DSENA allocation uses three components to reflect this variation: the Measures of Variability, the Special Education Statistical Prediction Model and a Base Amount for Collaboration and Integration. Ministry staff have consulted with stakeholders on the evolution of the DSENA allocation, and we will continue to do so over the coming school year.

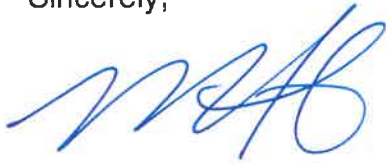
While this transition to a more fair and equitable DSENA model is provincially fiscally neutral, it will have redistributive impacts among boards. As you acknowledged, TCDSB is one of the school boards that is projected to be impacted by this new formula. To mitigate this impact, the new DSENA model is being phased in over four years (2014-15 to 2017-18), and despite declining enrolment in some school boards, the ministry held the provincial DSENA total allocation at \$1.05 billion from 2014-15 to 2016-17, the first three years of the transition to the new model, while increasing the DSENA allocation to \$1.065 billion for 2017-18. These redistributive impacts are the result of phasing out the historical High Needs Amount per pupil amount funding, established in 2006-07, and phasing in the new funding allocation for DSENA. These impacts will result if the board's demonstrated level of need under the new DSENA model and its various factors is different from the funding allocated based on the school board's historical High Needs Amount per pupil amount that dates back to 2006-07.

In addition, as a result of the education sector labour negotiations, the ministry has agreed to establish a Local Priorities Fund (LPF) of \$218.9 million provincewide in 2017-18. The LPF will allow boards to address a range of priorities, including more special education staffing to support children in need, "at-risk" students and adult education. These funds could support about 875 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers and about 1,600 to 1,830 FTE education workers across the province. The actual staffing will vary depending on specific agreements, local discussions and compensation specific to each board, as well as job security provisions, staffing reductions related to declining enrolment and other exceptions. Toronto Catholic District School Board is projected to receive nearly \$10.1 million in LPF funding for 2017-18.

With respect to autism supports, since 2006, the ministry has invested \$120 million through targeted funding outside the Grants for Student Needs to strengthen school board capability to implement PPM 140 and improve the learning environment for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Of this \$120 million investment in ASD, nearly \$57 million has been allocated to training educators to support Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) in classrooms/schools. Through the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years, approximately \$39 million of additional funding is being invested in school boards to help support students as the province transitions to the new Ontario Autism Program (OAP). This investment for student-specific and school-based team support and after school skills development programs will facilitate appropriate transition planning and/or programming.

Once again, thank you for writing to share your concerns and recommendations with me. Please be assured that I understand your concerns, and will keep them in mind as we move forward. I hope you find this information helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MH' or 'Mitzie Hunter', is positioned above the printed name.

Mitzie Hunter, MBA
Minister



REPORT TO

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY (EQAO) PRIMARY DIVISION, JUNIOR DIVISION, GRADE 9 AND OSSLT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

“An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.” Proverbs 18-15

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
September 25, 2017	October 5, 2017	Click here to enter a date.

M. Vanayan, Senior Coordinator, Educational Research
L. DiMarco, Superintendent of Curriculum, Leadership and Innovation
G. Iuliano Marrello, Superintendent of Student Success

INFORMATION REPORT

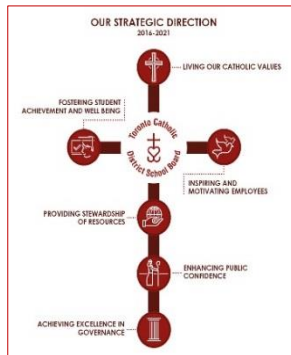
Vision:

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

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.



Rory McGuckin
Director of Education

D. Koenig
Associate Director
of Academic Affairs

A. Sangiorgio
Associate Director
of Planning and Facilities

T.B.D.
Executive Superintendent
of Business Services and
Chief Financial Officer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the results of Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) student achievement on the 2016-2017 EQAO Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Primary Division and Junior Division, the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT). Literacy results are high, with improvements evident over the past five years, in both Grade 3 and Grade 6. In Primary and Junior, mathematics results remain low both in the Board and Province. At the secondary level, Grade 9 applied mathematics scores have shown improvement but continue to be low. In both Grade 9 academic mathematics and OSSLT, the Board mirrors the Province and maintains strong results. The EQAO results continue to point to mathematics and the applied level as an area of focus.

Cumulative staff time spent on this report was 20 hours.

B. PURPOSE

1. This report presents Provincial and TCDSB results on the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) Primary Division, Junior Division, Grade 9 Assessments and the OSSLT. School and Board results from all assessments are released on September 20, 2017.

C. BACKGROUND

1. The Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Primary Division (Grades 1–3) and Junior Division (Grades 4–6) are administered to all Ontario students at the end of the primary division (Grade 3) and at the end of the junior division (Grade 6). The Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics is administered to all Ontario students who are working toward their Grade 9 academic or applied mathematics credit. Students in the first-semester mathematics courses take the test in January; students in the second-semester or full-year mathematics courses take the test in June. The OSSLT is administered to all Grade 10 Ontario students working towards an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) at the end of March or early April. Successful completion of the OSSLT is a requirement for the OSSD.
2. All assessments measure cumulative knowledge and skills and are based on the Ontario Curriculum. Achievement is reported according to the province's four

achievement levels for the Primary and Junior assessments, as well as, the Grade 9 assessments. The provincial standard is Level 3, which corresponds to a 70 to 79 per cent. On the OSSLT achievement is reported as “successful” or “unsuccessful”.

3. The EQAO assessments help to identify trends in student learning at the school, board and provincial levels, inform improvement planning, and strengthen accountability.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. PRIMARY DIVISION STUDENT RESULTS OVER TIME for TCDSB and Ontario

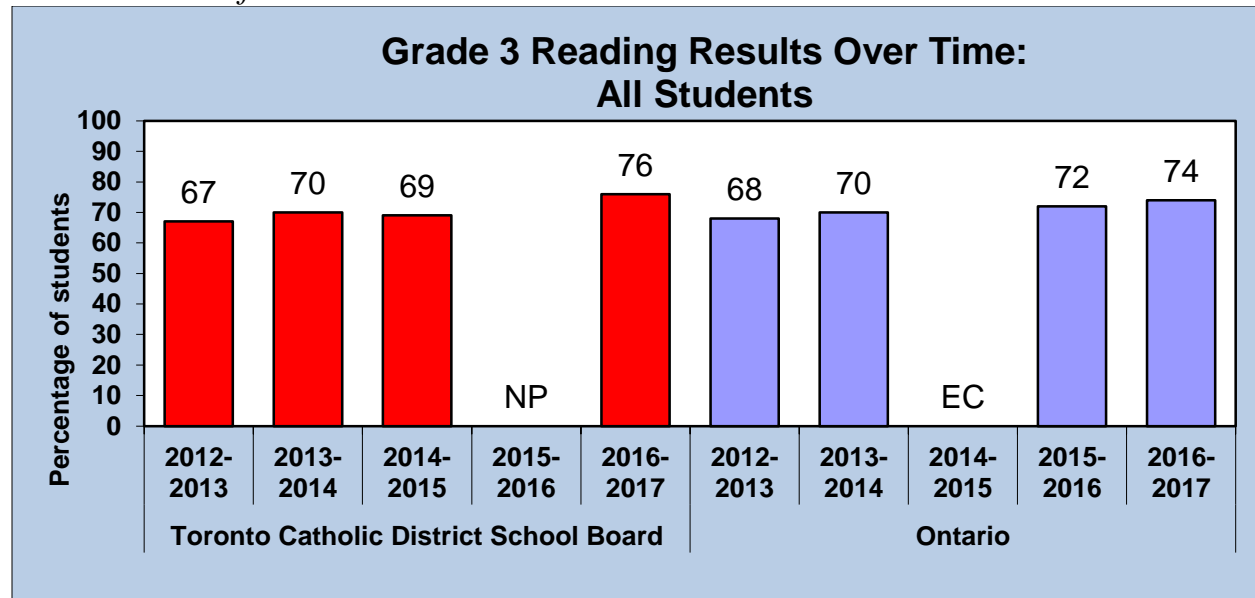
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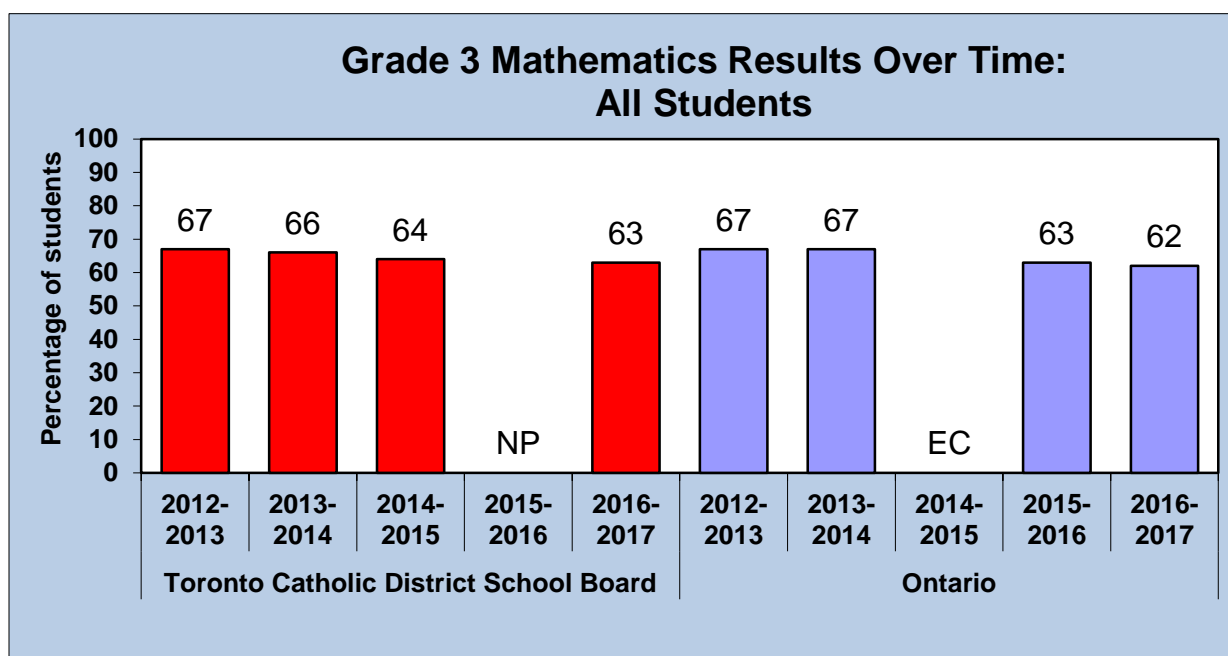
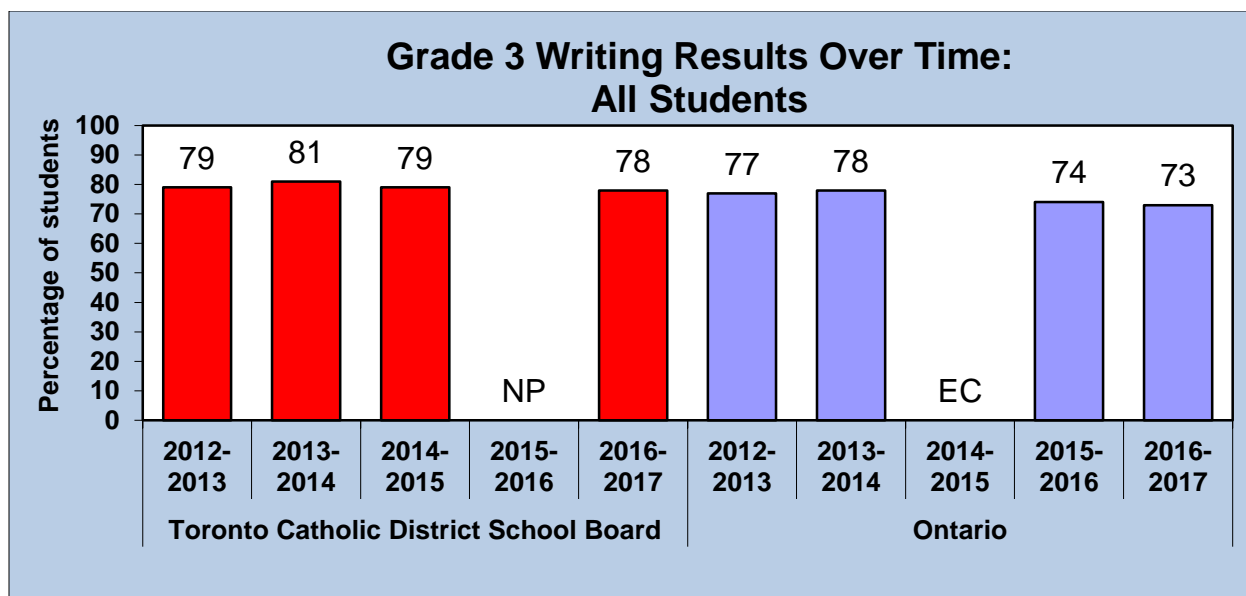
EC = Due to exceptional circumstances in 2015 (labour disruptions in a significant proportion of schools in Ontario), provincial data were not available.

NP = Elementary schools in the TCDSB did not participate in the 2016 assessments, due to ongoing labour issues.

Percentage at or above the provincial standard – Levels 3 and 4

Total number of TCDSB Grade 3 students in 2016-2017 = 6153





Over the past five years, the percentage of Grade 3 students who performed at or above the provincial standard:

- increased from 67% to 76% in reading in the TCDSB, increased from 68% to 74% in Ontario;
- remained relatively stable in writing in the TCDSB (this year at 78%) and, decreased from 77% to 73% in Ontario; and,
- decreased from 67% to 62% in math in both the TCDSB and Ontario.

There has been a steady improvement in the Board and Province primary reading results. TCDSB results for primary writing have been relatively stable over the past 5 years, while primary writing results for Ontario have decreased. Currently, the Board results for primary reading and writing are above Provincial results. Primary mathematics results decreased in both the TCDSB and Ontario, and Board mathematics results are consistent with the Province.

2. JUNIOR DIVISION STUDENT RESULTS OVER TIME for TCDSB and Ontario

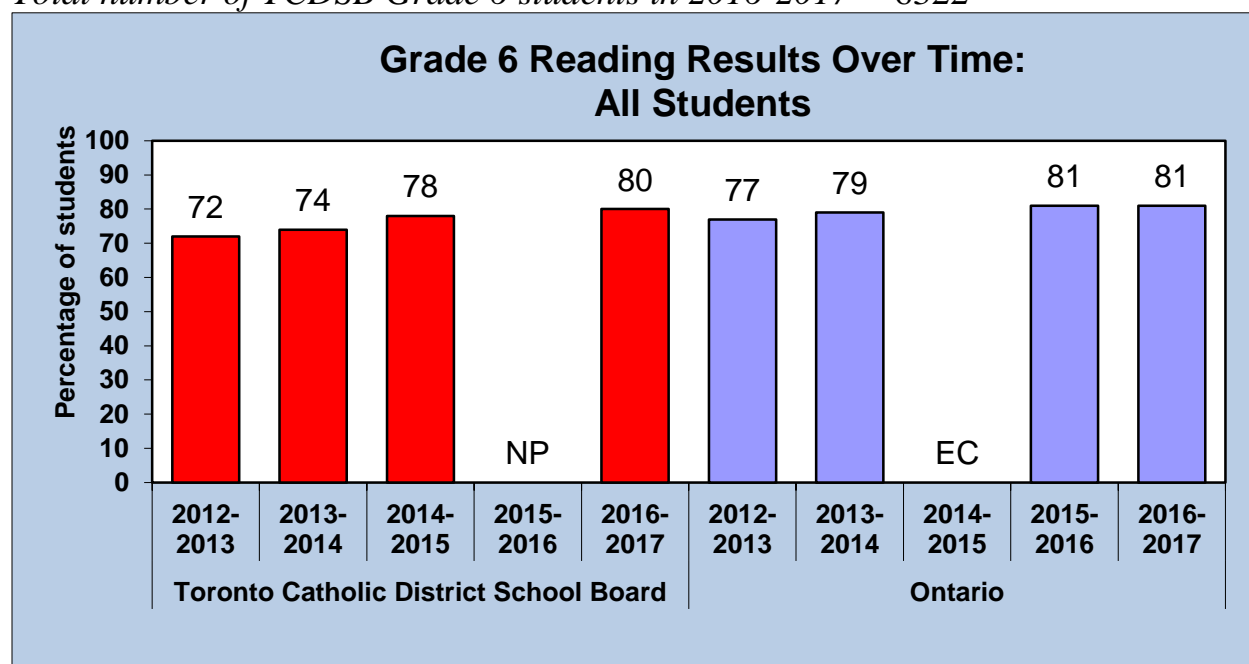
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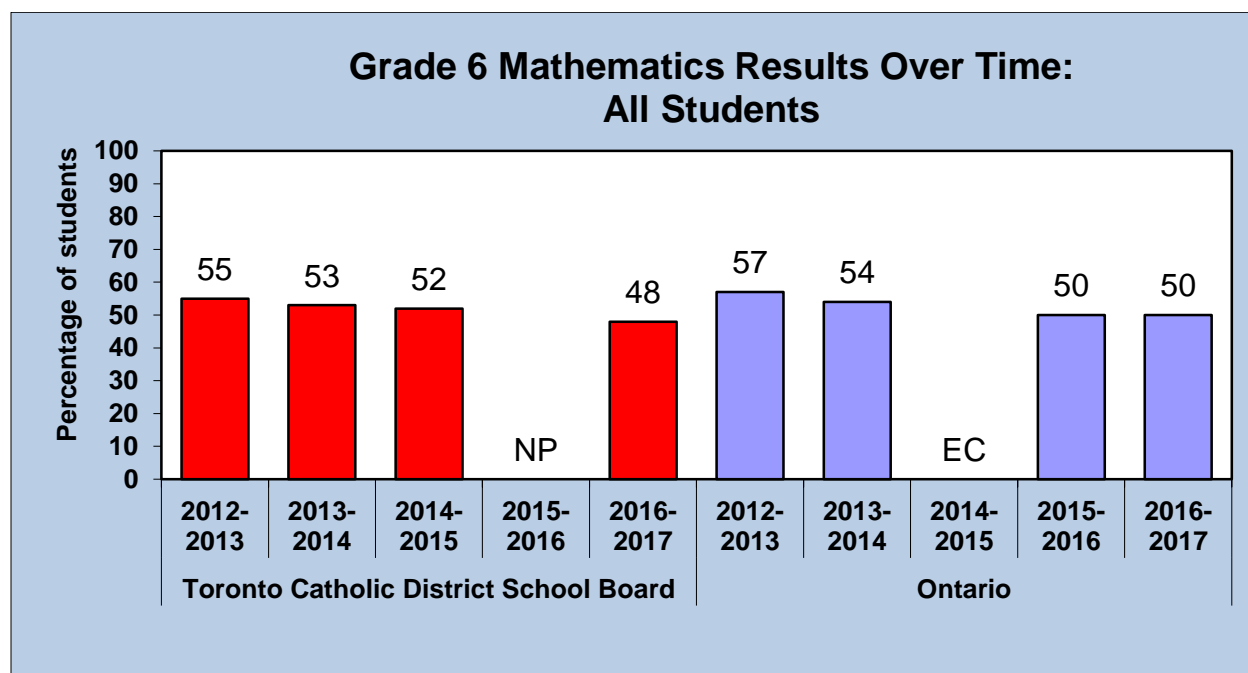
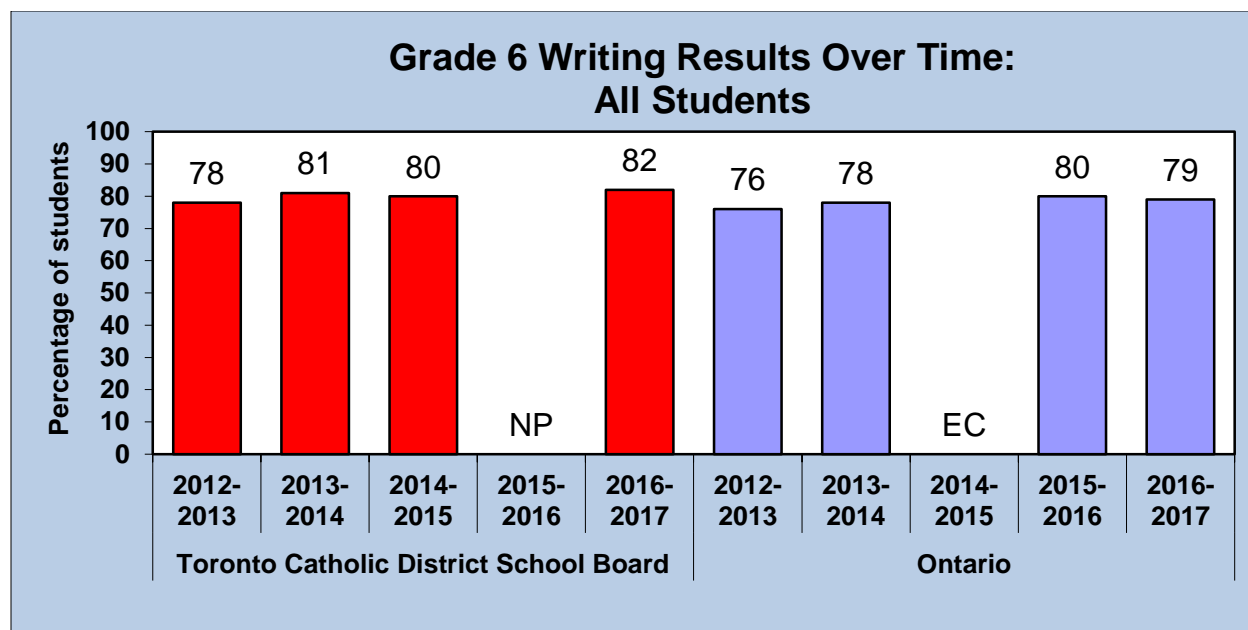
EC = Due to exceptional circumstances in 2015 (labour disruptions in a significant proportion of schools in Ontario), provincial data were not available.

NP = Elementary schools in the TCDSB did not participate in the 2016 assessments, due to ongoing labour issues.

Percentage at or above the provincial standard – Levels 3 and 4

Total number of TCDSB Grade 6 students in 2016-2017 = 6322





Over the past five years, the percentage of Grade 6 students who performed at or above the provincial standard

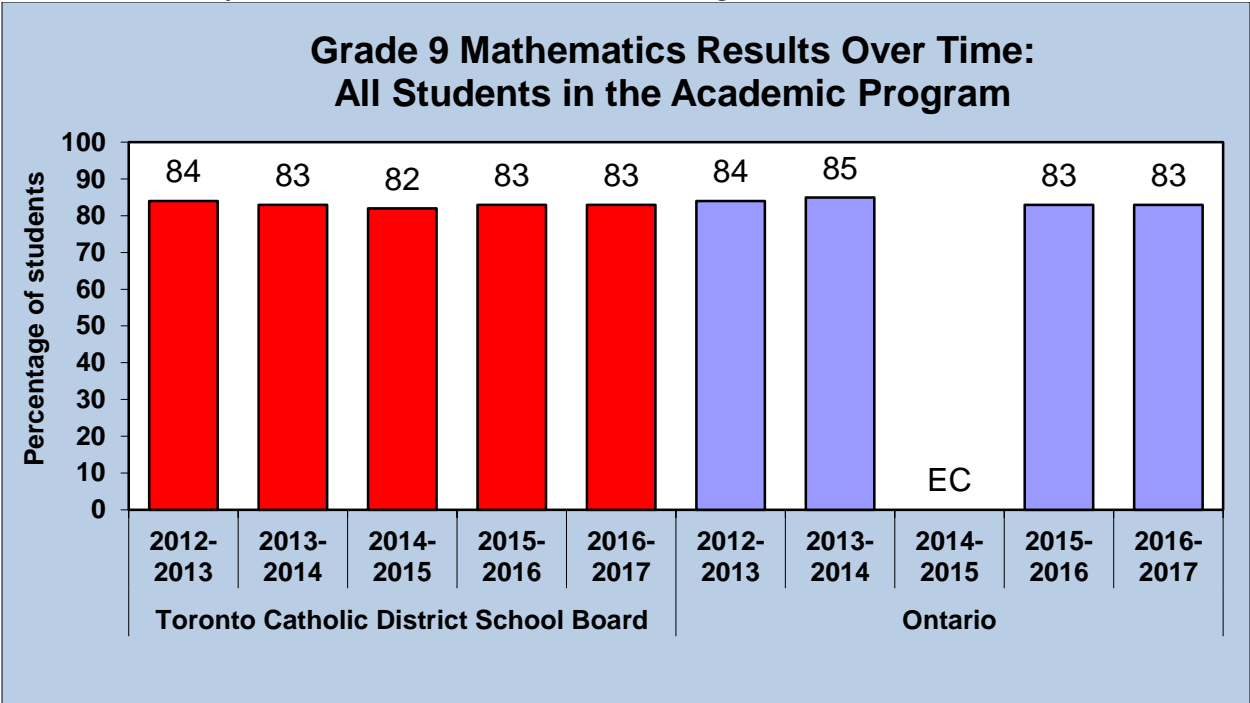
- increased from 72% to 80% in reading in the TCDSB; increased from 77% to 81% in Ontario
- increased from 78% to 82% in writing in the TCDSB; increased from 76% to 79% in Ontario, and,
- decreased from 55% to 48% in math in the TCDSB; decreased from 57% to 50% in Ontario.

TCDSB and Ontario results in junior reading and writing are high and have improved over the past five years. In reading, results for TCDSB students are consistent with results for all students in Ontario. In writing, results for TCDSB students remain higher than Ontario results. Junior mathematics results have decreased in both the Board and the Province.

3. GRADE 9 MATHEMATICS RESULTS OVER TIME for TCDSB and Ontario

NOTE:
EC = Due to exceptional circumstances in 2015 (labour disruptions in a significant proportion of schools in Ontario), provincial data were not available.

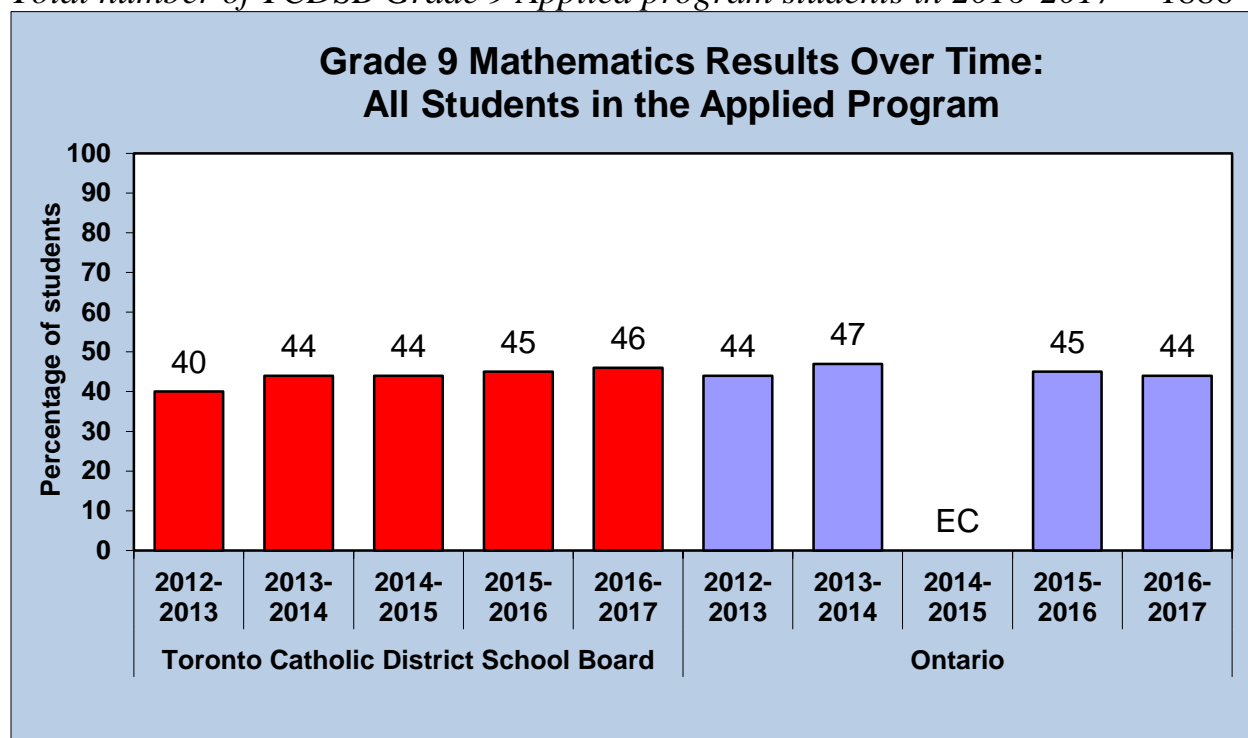
ACADEMIC PROGRAM
Percentage at or above the provincial standard – Levels 3 and 4
Total number of TCDSB Grade 9 Academic Program students in 2016-2017 = 4571



APPLIED PROGRAM

Percentage at or above the provincial standard – Levels 3 and 4

Total number of TCDSB Grade 9 Applied program students in 2016-2017 = 1886



Over the past five years, in Grade 9 math, the percentage of students at or above the provincial standard:

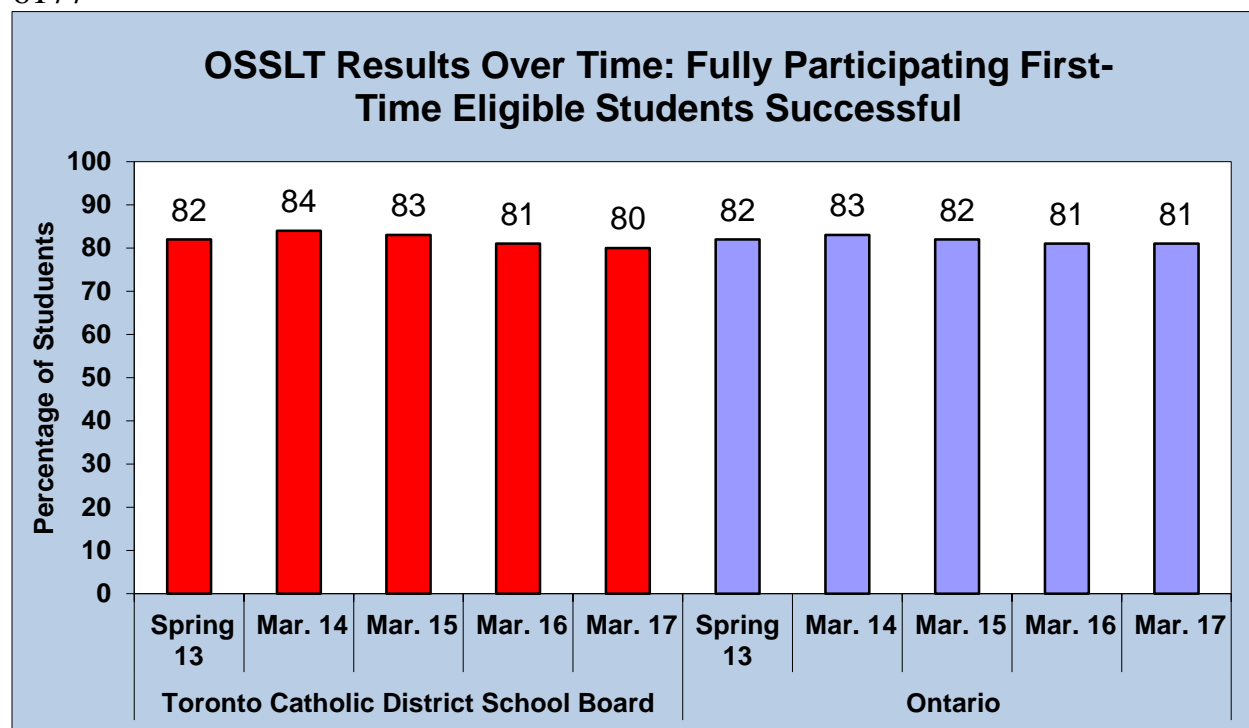
- remained relatively stable for TCDSB and Ontario students in academic courses, this year both at 83%, and
- increased from 40% to 46% for TCDSB students in applied courses, and has been variable in Ontario, this year at 44%.

In Grade 9 applied mathematics, there have been steady improvement for results in the Board over the past 5 years, while results for the Province have decreased over the past 4 years. TCDSB applied mathematics results are above the applied mathematics results in Ontario. In Grade 9 academic mathematics, results have been relatively stable and high in both the Board and Province; Board results are at par with the Province.

4. THE ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERACY TEST RESULTS OVER TIME for TCDSB and Ontario

Percentage of First-time Eligible students successful

Total number of First time eligible TCDSB students writing the test in 2016-2017 = 6177



OSSLT results in the Board and Province are high and have slightly decreased over the past 4 years. 80% of TCDSB students were successful on the March 2017 OSSLT and are consistent with Provincial results at 81%.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Overview of Results

Literacy results are high, with improvements evident over the past five years, in both Grade 3 and Grade 6. In Primary and Junior, mathematic results remain low both in the Board and Province. At the secondary level, Grade 9 applied mathematics scores have shown improvement but continue to be low. In both Grade 9 academic mathematics and OSSLT, the Board mirrors the Province and maintains strong results. The EQAO results continue to point to mathematics and the applied level as an area of focus.

2. Learning and Improvement Planning

Deeper analysis of the 2016-2017 EQAO results at both the system and school level is underway and will inform the revision of learning and plans for our school communities and for the board. These assessment results will be used in conjunction with other data to coordinate plans for improving student achievement and well-being consistent with the TCDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan and Ministry of Education initiatives, to inform our Board Learning and Improvement Plan. Further details will be presented in upcoming reports to Board.

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.

Ministry of Education

Leadership, Collaboration and
Governance Branch
13th Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Tel.: 416-325-2623
Fax.: 416-326-4063

Ministère de l'Éducation

Direction du leadership, de la collaboration et
de la gouvernance
13^e étage, édifice Mowat
900, rue Bay
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Tél.: 416-325-0450
Télec.: 416-326-4063



MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education

FROM: Bruce Drewett
Director
Leadership, Collaboration and Governance Branch

DATE: September 13, 2017

SUBJECT: Engagement on governance supports

The Ministry of Education is engaging with its education partners on several governance topics to identify and support effective practices that strengthen board governance, including:

- Integrity commissioner and trustee code of conduct
- Trustee honoraria
- Electronic participation in board and committee meetings
- Student trustee term of office and election process
- Broadening the director of education qualifications

We are seeking feedback from the following board advisory committees:

- Audit Committee
- Special Education Advisory Committee
- Parent Involvement Committee
- Indigenous Education Advisory Committee
- Equity/Diversity/Inclusion Committee

We are asking for your help to engage members of these committees by ensuring that they receive the attached cover letter and discussion guide. These materials provide background information and questions on each topic for their consideration.

Committees are asked to submit their responses by **November 13, 2017**.

If you have any questions, please contact Kyle Kubatbekov, Senior Policy Advisor, at kyle.kubatbekov@ontario.ca or (416) 325-7692.

Thank you very much for supporting this important engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce Drewett". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Bruce Drewett

Attachment: Cover letter to board advisory committees
 Discussion guide

Ministry of Education

Leadership, Collaboration and
Governance Branch
13th Floor, Mowat Block
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Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Tel.: 416-325-2623
Fax.: 416-326-4063

Ministère de l'Éducation

Direction du leadership, de la collaboration et
de la gouvernance
13^e étage, édifice Mowat
900, rue Bay
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Tél.: 416-325-0450
Téléc.: 416-326-4063



September 13, 2017

To: Members of
Audit Committee
Special Education Advisory Committee
Parent Involvement Committee
Indigenous Education Advisory Committee
Equity/Diversity/Inclusion Committee

Dear Member:

Strong and healthy school board governance is important to the achievement of our goals articulated in [*Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario*](#). The ministry appreciates the importance of providing supports to our elected boards that contribute to building strong, accountable and transparent governance, inspire public confidence and lead to positive student outcomes.

Ongoing conversations with our education partners continue to inform the focus and format of supports to school boards, and help to identify effective practices that strengthen board governance.

To this end, the Ministry of Education is engaging with our education partners on several governance topics. Some topics — including the trustee honoraria formula and electronic meeting participation rules — have been raised by our partners who have identified the need to update and strengthen these governance supports. As part of this engagement, we are also seeking feedback on effective practices that could support boards in their efforts to strengthen local accountability and transparency frameworks.

We invite your committee to join this important conversation by sharing your feedback on the following topics:

- Integrity commissioner and trustee code of conduct
- Trustee honoraria
- Electronic participation in board and committee meetings
- Student trustee term of office and election process
- Broadening the director of education qualifications

The attached discussion guide provides background information and questions on each topic for your consideration.

We value diverse cultural, linguistic, geographic and ability perspectives, and look forward to advice from all individuals and groups, including those from First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Francophone, and northern, rural and remote communities.

Please e-mail your responses and any questions you may have to LDB-DDL@ontario.ca by **November 13, 2017**. You can also mail your written submissions to:

Ministry of Education
Leadership, Collaboration and Governance Branch
900 Bay Street, 13th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

We welcome and value your input as we work together to foster high levels of public confidence in our education system. We look forward to receiving your submissions.

Thank you,

Bruce Drewett
Director

Discussion Guide

School Board Governance Supports

Introduction

The academic success and well-being of students in schools across the province relies on the focused and collaborative efforts of school boards, educators, school and system leaders, parents and guardians, and other education stakeholders. Working in partnership toward the goals of achieving excellence, ensuring equity and promoting well-being, we can continue to foster high levels of public confidence in our education system.

Recognizing how important strong and healthy governance is to the achievement of our shared goals articulated in [*Achieving Excellence: Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario*](#), it is essential to provide supports to school board trustees and to promote effective governance practices. Ongoing dialogue with our education partners continues to inform the focus and format of those supports, and to help identify those practices that foster accountable and transparent governance.

Scope

This discussion guide provides background information and questions on each topic for your consideration:

1. Integrity commissioner and trustee code of conduct
2. Trustee honoraria
3. Electronic participation in board and committee meetings
4. Student trustee term of office and election process
5. Broadening the director of education qualifications

Please e-mail your responses or comments to LDB-DDL@ontario.ca.

Alternatively, you can mail your responses to:

Ministry of Education
Leadership, Collaboration and Governance Branch
900 Bay Street, 13th Floor
Toronto, ON
M7A 1L2

Please provide your response by **November 13, 2017**.

We value diverse cultural, linguistic, geographic and ability perspectives, and look forward to advice from all individuals and groups, including those from First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Francophone, and northern, rural and remote communities.

To help us make the most effective use of your comments, please consider identifying your school board or, if you prefer, your geographic region of the province (for example, northwestern Ontario) or whether you live in a rural or urban area.

If you are providing comments on behalf of an organization, please provide its name. If you are providing comments on behalf of a school board, please provide its name and indicate whether the submission has been endorsed by a board resolution.

Please note the ministry may summarize and share your input, including with other ministries and the public. Names of organizations and persons who indicate an affiliation may also be shared.

Discussion Topics

1. Integrity Commissioner and Trustee Code of Conduct

Strong, accountable and transparent school board governance contributes to Ontario's four goals for publicly funded education: achieving excellence; ensuring equity; promoting well-being; and enhancing public confidence. Every day, Ontario's school board trustees strive to achieve the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct to realize these goals in their local communities.

Together with our education partners, the Ministry of Education is exploring promising practices that will support trustees to foster strong, accountable and transparent governance. As part of this conversation, the Ministry is asking for input on the trustee code of conduct and a possible role for the office of an integrity commissioner to enhance local accountability and transparency frameworks.

Integrity Commissioner – Background

In Ontario, integrity commissioners are an integral part of the accountability framework for Members of the Provincial Legislature, and for many municipalities. An important part of their role is to provide education and advice to elected officials on ethical matters affecting them in their day-to-day activities. For example, in providing conflict of interest advice, the Ontario Integrity Commissioner helps prevent ethics violations before they occur.

On May 30, 2017, the Government passed *Bill 68, Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act, 2017*, which contains provisions amending the role and appointment of the municipal integrity commissioner. If/when these provisions are proclaimed, municipalities would be required to provide all members of municipal council with access to an integrity commissioner, who would:

- provide education and advice to members on their obligations under the member's code of conduct, other rules governing the ethical behaviour of local members, and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act; and
- investigate complaints under the member's code of conduct and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

Currently, there are no legislated requirements for an integrity commissioner in school boards, but nonetheless, boards have the ability to create this position individually. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) appointed an integrity commissioner following the

recommendations in the 2015 Report of the TDSB Governance Advisory Panel (“the Hall Report”). When the Hall Report was released the Minister of Education committed to engaging education partners on possible accountability offices for school boards.

Trustee Code of Conduct – Background

Currently, there is no legal requirement for school boards to have a trustee code of conduct; however, the Minister of Education has authority under the Education Act to require boards to have a trustee code of conduct and to include specific provisions as part of their code of conduct.

Under the Education Act, only a trustee can bring forward a code of conduct complaint against another trustee. The board must look into the complaint. If the board finds that a trustee has contravened the code of conduct, the board may:

- censure the trustee
- bar the trustee from attending all or part of a board or committee meeting
- bar the member from sitting on committees for a period of time specified by the board.

Almost all Ontario school boards have posted on their website a trustee code of conduct, which sets out rules of conduct and ethical behaviour that all members of the board agree to uphold and respect.

School boards determine the content of their trustee code of conduct locally. Although they vary from one school board to another, most codes of conduct include rules relating to civil behaviour, the use of board resources, and avoidance of personal advantage, including rules around acceptable gifts. School boards may also have other policies, rules and procedures that govern the ethical behaviour of trustees. These may address issues such as workplace harassment, treatment of confidential information and other matters.

Discussion Questions

1. What effective practices and structures could support school boards to strengthen board accountability and public confidence?
2. What role could an integrity commissioner play in fostering strong, accountable and transparent board governance?
3. Should there be minimum provisions for a trustee code of conduct required for all school boards? If so, what would those be?
4. In addition to those already contained in the Education Act, should there be a broader range of sanctions for code of conduct violations?

2. Trustee Honoraria

Trustees play an important role in publicly funded education in Ontario. In our diverse boards across the province, trustees work toward the goals of achieving excellence, ensuring equity, promoting well-being, and fostering high levels of public confidence in our education system.

The board of trustees sets the vision for the school board, develops policies, allocates resources, and sets the goals that lay the foundation and drive programs and operations in the board. Collectively, they create the board's multi-year strategic plan for student achievement and well-being. They recruit and monitor the performance of the director of education to ensure the board's progress in meeting its goals. In carrying out their role, trustees engage in a number of important activities, including:

- Preparing for and attending regular board meetings and participating on various committees. Certain committees of the board are required by law to have trustee members: the Audit Committee, the Parent Involvement Committee, the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee, and the Special Education Advisory Committee.
- Responding to calls, e-mails and queries from constituents.
- Engaging with parents and communities to ensure their concerns and priorities are brought to the decision-making table.
- Hosting community meetings, attending school council meetings and other community events and school functions.
- Advocating for public education and engaging with municipalities and other levels of government to support education priorities.

The focus of their work can vary depending on the board's goals and on internal and external factors (e.g. growing and declining student enrolment). In a board that embraces good governance practices, trustees demonstrate responsiveness and strive for excellent communication with partners and constituents, which contributes to the time a trustee must commit to fulfill her or his role.

Outgoing trustees set the trustee honoraria policy for the four-year term of office, prior to elections for the new term of office. There are maximum amounts determined by a formula set out in a regulation made under the Education Act:

- Annual **base amount** limit of \$5,900 for each trustee, with an additional \$5,000 for the chair and \$2,500 for the vice-chair.
- Annual **enrolment amount** limit based on the board's prior year student enrolment numbers. The enrolment amount fluctuates with enrolment growth or decline. The enrolment amount limit for a trustee can vary from \$100 – \$300 in the smallest boards per trustee per year, to \$16,000 – \$22,000 in the largest boards. The chair and vice-chair are entitled to a higher enrolment amount, from \$500 – \$5,000 for the chair and from \$250 – \$2,500 for the vice-chair depending on enrolment.

- **Attendance amount** limit of \$50 for attending meetings of certain board committees¹.
- **Distance amount** limit of \$50, applies to geographically large boards for travel exceeding 200km to attend a meeting of the board or certain committees².

Discussion Questions

1. Should the formula for calculating the level of trustee honoraria be simplified?
2. If so, what components of the current formula should be preserved?
3. Which ones should be changed?
4. Should any components be added?

^{1, 2} These are the Audit Committee, the Parent Involvement Committee, the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee, and the Special Education Advisory Committee.

3. Electronic Participation in Board and Committee Meetings

Currently, trustees can attend board meetings electronically; however, each trustee must physically attend at least three board meetings in the 12 months beginning December 1 of the first year and ending November 30 of the following year.

The board chair or his/her designate must attend all meetings of the board or the committee of the whole board in person. In addition to the board chair, at least one additional trustee and the director of education or his/her designate must be physically present at the meeting.

For committee meetings, the requirement is for the chair or his/her designate and the director of education or his/or her designate to be present in person.

Some school boards in Ontario have large geographic jurisdictions, ranging from 40,000 km² to over 65,000 km². Trustees in these boards may need to travel a full day each way to attend meetings.

Discussion Questions

1. What impact, if any, do the current electronic meeting rules have on the leadership of the board?
2. Are there appropriate circumstances for a board or committee chair to participate electronically? If so, what are those circumstances?
3. What practices and resources could facilitate effective meetings where the chair or other members participate electronically?

4. Student Trustee Term of Office and Election Process

Student trustees represent the interests of students by bringing the voice of students, and their multiple perspectives, to the board table. Working side by side with school board trustees, they provide input on policies that directly affect students in their board schools. Student trustees do not have a binding vote on matters before the board or its committees. However, with only a few exceptions, they have the same opportunities to participate at board and committee meetings as any other board members.

Each year, school boards are required to provide for the election of 1-3 student trustees. Student trustees must be elected either directly by students of the board, or indirectly by student representative bodies such as student councils. However, unlike school trustees who are elected under the same election rules across the province, school boards have some flexibility to determine how the student trustees in their board will be elected. There are many different ways in which student trustees are nominated and elected to office. For example, in some boards, any secondary student may be nominated for student trustee and every secondary student has the right to vote for a student trustee representative. In other boards, the student council in each secondary school elects one or more students to a Student Senate; the student trustee(s) is then elected by, and from, the Student Senate.

To be eligible for the office, a student must be a full-time pupil in the senior division of the board. This requirement does not apply to a student who may not be able to attend a full-time program because of being enrolled in a special education program for exceptional pupils.

Student trustees are elected for a one-year term of office, beginning on August 1 of the election year and ending on July 31 of the following year.

Discussion Questions

1. How can boards increase the student voice in decision-making?
2. How can student trustees be supported to be successful in their role? What effective practices can you share from your board, or boards that you are familiar with?
3. The Education Act and regulations provide for a one-year term of office for student trustees. What are the benefits of a one-year term? What are the challenges?
4. What are the benefits and challenges of a longer term of office?
5. Thinking about the student trustee election process in your board and in boards that you are familiar with, what works well? What could be improved?
6. Should there be greater consistency in the election process for student trustees among school boards? What are the benefits and challenges of having a more consistent process?
7. How can boards promote awareness of the student trustee position within the larger student body?

5. Broadening the Director of Education Qualifications

In its 2015 report, the Toronto District School Board Governance Advisory Panel stated that current rules make it difficult for boards to recruit individuals for the position of director of education from jurisdictions outside Ontario. Currently, candidates from other jurisdictions, including those working in equivalent positions, are required to complete a very rigorous and time-consuming prior-learning assessment and recognition process.

Under the Education Act, the director of education is the chief executive officer and chief education officer (CEO) of the board. The director reports to the board, and also acts as its secretary.

Working closely with the board of trustees, the director of education supports the development of the multi-year strategic plan, which sets long-term strategic priorities and goals of the board. The director is also responsible for implementing and monitoring the implementation of the plan.

As CEO, the director of education is responsible for day-to-day management of the organization, which includes responsibilities for managing all facets of school board operations and implementing board policies.

To qualify for the position of director of education, an individual must be a supervisory officer in Ontario with teaching qualifications. This requires the successful completion of the Supervisory Officer's Qualification Program (SOQP). The Program includes the study of theories and practices of supervision, administration and business organization.

To enrol in the SOQP, applicants must be a certified teacher with five years of teaching experience, hold a master's degree and either principal's qualifications or two years of experience in education administration.

Ontario is the only province in Canada that requires a special credential for supervisory officers and directors.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the necessary competencies for a director of education?
2. How can Ontario school board leaders be supported to prepare for the role of director (e.g. to have the necessary governance, business and Human Resources skills)?
3. How can we increase the number of qualified candidates for director of education positions?
4. How could we make the qualification requirements and recruitment process in Ontario more appealing to potential candidates from other jurisdictions?

5. How can we support the professional learning of directors after they are appointed?
6. What supports do boards need to successfully identify and evaluate director candidates?

Resources

If you have additional questions about the current school board governance framework or the key themes of the review, please refer to the resources below:

- [Good Governance: A Guide for Trustees, School Boards, Directors of Education and Communities](#)
- [Ontario Education Act](#)
- [Ontario Ministry of Education website](#)
- [Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario](#)
- [Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques](#)
- [Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association](#)
- [Ontario Public School Boards' Association](#)
- [Council of Ontario Directors of Education](#)

Contact

If you have any questions, please contact Kyle Kubatbekov, Senior Policy Advisor, at kyle.kubatbekov@ontario.ca or (416) 325-7692.

Model for Special Education

Provision of Special Education Programs and Services Within Toronto Catholic District School Board

Philosophy of Special Services

“Our commitment is to every student. This means ...[ensuring] that we develop strategies to help every student learn, no matter their personal circumstances.”

-Reach Every Student: Energizing Ontario Education, 2008

In partnership with families, the parish and the community, our Catholic education system is directed at developing the full spiritual, physical, academic, cognitive, social and emotional wellbeing of each student. Through their learning experiences, students develop a sense of self-worth and dignity as people of God and are able to make a useful contribution in a complex and changing society. Inherent in these beliefs is the recognition that all students, regardless of exceptionality, are entitled to education in the most enabling environment. The exceptional student is a unique child of God and has a right to be part of the mainstream of education, to the extent to which it is practical and beneficial.

In order to provide an education in the most enabling environment, TCDSB advocates the principle of inclusion as part of a continuum of services/programs which includes modification of the regular class program, withdrawal, intensive support programs, itinerant services and alternative curriculum where required.

“...The integrity of Catholic education does not and cannot rest solely on the shoulders of a few individuals or belong only to certain groups of people...”

“We are bound together by a common faith and in common service.”

-Fulfilling the Promise (Pp. 6-7)

“Only by helping every student reach his or her potential can we hope to close the achievement gap between groups of students.”

-Learning for All, 2013 (p.12)

Inclusion of students with special educational needs in our schools can be summed up in the following quote:

“We invite you to become active participants in the process of Catholic Education. We urge you to bring your energy, enthusiasm and generosity to the task of building a Catholic community within your school and to shaping the vision of Catholic education.”

-This Moment of Promise (P. 22)

Parental Involvement in Education within the Toronto Catholic District School Board

The Toronto Catholic District School Board recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children. To this end, the Toronto Catholic District School Board recognizes and promotes the involvement of parents in all decisions that are made with regard to their children.

Parents are invited to be partners in the process utilized to address the learning needs of the child.

They are encouraged to share information, voice their opinions, express concerns and are recognized as valued partners in the education of each child to his/her full potential.

OLD:

In partnership with families, the parish and the community, our Catholic education system is directed at developing the full spiritual, physical, academic, cognitive, social and emotional wellbeing of each student. Through their learning experiences, students develop a sense of self-worth and dignity as members of the people of God and are able to make a useful contribution in a complex and changing society.

Inherent in these beliefs is the recognition that all students, regardless of exceptionality, are entitled to education in the most enabling environment. The exceptional student is a unique child of God and has a right to be part of the mainstream of education, to the extent to which it is practical and beneficial.

In order to provide an education in the most enabling environment, TCDSB advocates the principle of integration as part of a range of services/programs which includes modification of the regular class program, withdrawal and congregated placement, itinerant services and alternative curriculum where required.

Inclusion of the special needs student in our schools can be summed up: "We invite you to become active participants in the process of Catholic Education. We urge you to bring your energy, enthusiasm and generosity to the task of building a Catholic community within your school and to shaping the vision of Catholic education"

The Moment of Promise (p. 22)

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Parents are invited to be partners in the process utilized to address the learning needs of the child.

They are encouraged to share information, voice their opinions, express concerns and are recognized as valued partners in the education of each child to his/her full potential.

Transportation for Students with Special Education Needs

Transportation for students with special education needs is facilitated by the Toronto Student Transportation Group. Transportation is provided as required for all exceptional students at the elementary and secondary level, with the exception of students identified as gifted. Due to fiscal restraints the TCDSB is not able to provide transportation for students identified as gifted. The program for gifted is offered in selected regional schools and the students who attend the one day a week withdrawal program are responsible for their own transportation.

This issue of transportation for gifted has been raised by SEAC and will be included in the proposed consultation process and transportation review committee. Deliberations are contingent on Ministry funding changes which were proposed and delayed.

Exceptional students who attend programs within their own community are provided the regular transportation service in place for the school if it is appropriate. If alternate transportation arrangements are required they are provided.

Students approved to attend Provincial and Demonstration Schools are provided transportation services according to Ministry of Education guidelines.

The chart below outlines the 2017-2018 transportation budget for the TCDSB in regards to Special Education:

Account Name	Budget
Vision, Hearing & Speech	\$2,743,029
Medical & Handicapped	\$6,294,012
Special Education	\$3,518,199
Section 23	\$ 626,739
Remedial Language	\$ 119,742
Special Transit Fares (Scholars)	\$ 116,118
Special Transit Fares (Children)	\$ 0.00
Special Education Transit Fares (Adults)	\$ 12,228
Developmentally Disabled	\$ 624,136
Ontario Schools Deaf & Blind	\$ 43,787
KLP	\$ 647,349
PAST	\$ 231,900

Co-op Education	\$ 444,995
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If the student's needs are such that he/she needs to be transported separately, then those decisions are made. As a specific example one student required transportation with the assistance of a health care attendant. These accommodations were provided. Process for deciding whether a student will be transported with other children or transported separately:

In TCDSB, decisions regarding how children will be transported is made on an individual basis. If a child can be transported with other children, that is the preferred method. When the regular home to school bus is possible (if the child's needs allow for them to use this type of bus), this bus is used. Placement in an ISP class through the IPRC process (Gifted excluded) ensures transportation is provided for the exceptional students, provided sufficient funding is available as approved by the School Board. The form of transportation can be via bus, taxi, van or wheelchair bus. The decision on which type of method is dependent on the needs of the child. Some children who come from the same area and are accessing the same service at the same school are not able to access the same mode of transportation due to emotional or physical needs. The need to transport children separately is determined based on discussions with the parent, principal and the Superintendent.

How Transportation Is Provided For Students in Care, Treatment and Correctional Facilities

Decisions regarding the transportation of children in care to their local school, or the school in which the programming they require is provided, is made in the same way as for children living with their parents; it is made on an individual basis. Principals, Superintendents and those providing care work together to provide the children with as seamless a transfer when they move to care as possible.

Children in treatment receive services throughout the day for a portion of the day or all of the day. Children who receive treatment for a portion of the day are generally transported individually for their treatment and returned to their school. Children who attend treatment centres all day for their classes, are assessed on an individual basis to determine what best suits their needs.

Transportation to Demonstration Schools:

Students who attend are provided transportation. Ministry does refund boards for 100% of the costs of transportation to the Demonstration Schools. There are currently no TCDSB students attending Provincial Schools at this time.

The Provincial piece of the Special Education in Ontario was seen as partially meeting the Standards set out in the Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans. The following criteria was assessed by the Ministry as requiring more clarification.

How TCDSB Provides Transportation to Children Who Attend Provincial Schools

In TCDSB, decisions regarding how children will be transported to the provincially run schools is made on an individual basis. Children who require additional attendants (health-care professionals, for instance) have that care provided on the mode of transportation as well. The cost of transportation to Provincial Schools is 100% refundable.

For children who attend day schools they are transported by wheel chair accessible vehicle, mini bus, or school purpose minivans, depending on their needs from their home to the school.

Students who attend Residential Schools are provided transportation through the lead Board who in the GTA have the transportation facilitated by one of the local School Districts. They are picked up on Sunday evening and returned to their homes on Friday evening. The Provincial Schools and the agencies involved with the children determine the programming needs for the children and the type of transportation required.

1. Vehicles – General Requirements Regular Transportation

- (a) All vehicles used by the Bidder in the provision of Services under the Contract (including spare vehicles) shall be properly licensed, equipped, maintained and inspected with the applicable provisions of the Highway Traffic Act of Ontario, the Public Vehicles Act of Ontario and the Regulations made thereunder and all other applicable statutes, by-laws, regulations and orders from all authorities and governments having jurisdiction over the transportation of students, as amended from time to time.
- (b) Wheelchair vehicles must meet safety standards as required under the Highway Traffic Act under Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers and as amended and conform to C.S.A. D409 Standards.
- (c) All such vehicles must be manufactured to the most current C.S.A. D250 Standards for “School Buses”, or with the CAN3-D409 C.S.A. Standards “Motor Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Persons”. A certificate of compliance with the standards shall be supplied to the Board(s) for its inspection for each of the vehicles to be utilized in the provision of the Services.
- (d) Vehicles used in the provision of the Services shall be a maximum of twelve (12) years old during the Term and average age of seven (7) years.
- (e) Where cars, or mini-vans are used, the passenger doors shall be equipped with child-proof locks which would prohibit the doors from being opened from the inside of the vehicle but would allow the doors to be opened from the outside of the vehicle. All vehicles shall be equipped with a back-up alarm.
- (f) The ambulatory, service and emergency doors on the vehicles shall be padded at the top edge.
- (g) All vehicles are to have their Event Data Recorders associated with the vehicle’s engine enabled.
- (h) The Bidder shall provide the most efficient vehicles available in order to perform the Services as economically as possible. Vehicles as large as eighty-four (84) seats or as small as four (4) seats may be used. Vehicle loading shall conform to the following seating capacity:
 - (i) Mini-Vans – five (5) passengers;
 - (j) Vans – fourteen (14) to twenty-four (24) passengers; a thirty (30) inch seat length is required to fit two (2) individuals per seat. Thirty (30%) percent of vehicles this size must hold eighteen (18) students.
 - (k) Large Bus seventy (70) to eighty-four (84) passengers.
- (l) The Bidder shall, at the time of submitting the Proposal, provide the Board(s) with the complete specifications of all vehicles that the Bidder proposes to use in the provision of the Services and yearly thereafter.
- (m) The Board(s) shall be entitled, at any time during the Term, to require delivery of a current, valid mechanical fitness certificate on any vehicle(s) at its sole discretion and at no cost to the Board(s).
- (n) The interior of all vehicles is to be maintained at all times in a clean and sanitary condition, acceptable to the Board(s). The exterior of the vehicles will be washed as needed to ensure a clean and professional appearance.

- (o) All vehicles shall be owned by the Bidder or shall be vehicles to which the Bidder shall be entitled to exclusive use and possession under chattel leases or conditional sales agreements from either the manufacturer thereof or a financial organization or institution involved in the financing thereof.
- (p) All vehicles in use to transport Board students that have GPS/AVL and/or video recording devices will be required to display a sign provided by the Consortium so that passengers are aware of their use on those vehicles.
- (q) The Bidder is encouraged to use fuel conservation and anti-idling technology wherever possible and feasible. The Boards' may implement an incentive program as a means to help the Bidder realize greater environmental efficiencies.
- (r) The Bidder will be required to adopt the Boards' 'Healthy School Bus Plan' as a means to minimize environmental damage.
- (s) If in the future the Ministry mandates the use of child seats on school buses the Bidder will purchase integrated seats where necessary and legislated by law. Older vehicles not equipped with integrated seats will require car seats to be installed. The Bidder will purchase the car seats and bill the appropriate Board for the cost of the seat. All labour costs for the installation of the car seats shall be borne by the Bidder.

2. Vehicles – Wheelchair Requirements

- (a) Wheelchair vehicles must have a minimum rated capacity of three (3) electric wheelchairs and two (2) ambulatory passengers. All wheelchairs in the vehicle shall be secured facing forward.
- (b) For every one hundred fifty (150) buses a Bidder operates as part of this Contract (am/pm count) they shall make available a large seventy-two (72) passenger integrated wheelchair bus with a minimum of two (2) wheelchair spaces for use by schools on charter trips.

All Wheelchair vehicles must be able to accept a variety of wheelchair configurations including, but not limited to, manual, electric, high back, reclining, and any combination of these types.

3. Drivers' Qualifications and Responsibilities

- (a) Drivers shall have and maintain in good standing at all times an Ontario Class B or Class E School Purpose Vehicle driver's license and any additional licenses required by the Public Vehicle Act, the Highway Traffic Act (Ontario) and/or the Toronto Licensing Commission By-Laws. Drivers shall satisfy all governmental requirements, and be trained according to the Ministry of Transportation and Communications "Training Guidelines for Drivers of Transportation Services for Physically Disabled Persons". A clear vulnerable sector search must be completed prior to transporting students.
- (b) All drivers must be trained in School Bus Safety Programs and Orientation/Evacuation Drills as outlined in Appendix F. New drivers shall be given a two week period to obtain this training.
- (c) All drivers must comply with the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 545, Licensing Article XV Chapter 545-208.

The Bidder shall provide each driver with a wallet-sized identification card bearing a photograph of the employee, suitable identification, and the employer's name and address. This identification shall be visible to students and parents as they enter the vehicle.

The Bidder shall ensure that the driver of each vehicle utilized in the provision of Services shall at all times have in his/her possession on the vehicle or access to via dispatch an up-to-date list of the students being transported on such vehicle indicating their full names, pick-up addresses, destinations, schedule times and any other special instructions. The transportation on any vehicle of any persons other than bona fide students of the Board is expressly forbidden unless the prior authorization of the Consortium is obtained.

Drivers must not smoke at any time during their route. Smoking on any vehicle, at any time, is not permitted even when passengers are not present. Smoking is not allowed on any school or Board property.

Drivers must not eat or drink on the bus while loading, unloading, or driving.

Drivers will under no circumstances strike or use undue physical force on any student.

Drivers shall report any student conduct problem immediately to the School Principal. Recurring problems will be reported to dispatch to be relayed to the Transportation Supervisor at the Consortium.

Drivers shall not give students any food, beverages, or toys.

Drivers are not to take pictures or videos of the students.

Drivers shall not leave students unattended in the vehicle. The engine is to be turned off and the ignition key removed by the driver when leaving the vehicle and all proper precautions shall be taken to ensure that the vehicle cannot be set in motion.

Drivers shall ensure that all seatbelts and harnesses are properly secured and fastened around the student at all times.

Students must be picked up at their Board designated pick up location, delivered to their respective schools and returned to their designated drop-off location.

Drivers must make sure the vehicle doors are closed and the safety locks are used at all times when the vehicle is in motion.

All drivers shall maintain listening radio contact with central dispatch at all times during the trip. The idling of school bus motors while waiting to pick up or drop-off students outside schools is prohibited except in those cases where the medical conditions of the students or the extreme temperatures require that the vehicle remain idling.

Buses must use the designated bus loading zones marked at each school unless otherwise specified. Vehicles must not be driven in excess of eight (8) kilometres per hour when on the school property.

Driving is totally prohibited while the children are at play in the school yard.

At no time may the number of students in any vehicle exceed the manufacturer's specifications.

Under no circumstances shall students be required to stand on the vehicle.

Students incapacitated because of age or other conditions must be left in the care of a responsible adult when dropped off at school and when returned home.

Students identified with a purple tag must be met by a child recognized adult or older sibling/student that will be responsible for the student.

The driver must perform a child check of the vehicle at the end of each trip for any sleeping students or abandoned articles.

Bus supplies (i.e. windshield washer fluid, oil, power steering fluid etc.) shall not be stored near the driver or inside the passenger compartment of school busses.

Seat belt cutters for all buses shall be located within reach of the driver's seat.

Busses to be kept clutter free. The dash, front steps, areas near the emergency equipment and all emergency exits must be kept clear. No loose boxes or other items to be kept inside the bus.

The Bidder is required to have the driver perform a dry run of their routes in the week prior to the commencement of each school term, preferably the last Wednesday prior to the start of the school year.

The Bidder must provide confirmation that the dry run took place. Failure to provide supporting documentation will be subject to penalties as outlined in Section 22 of the RFP.

Drivers should be provided the Ontario Ministry of Transportation's Fleet Smart training or equivalent in order to reduce driving habits that are not conducive to fuel conservation. The Bidder must provide confirmation that the training took place. Failure to provide supporting documentation will be subject to penalties as outlined in Section 22 of the RFP.

The Bidder shall ensure that every driver is provided with a copy of Appendix B – Performance Requirements.

4. WHEELCHAIR SERVICE

Parent/guardian and/or school staff and drivers are collectively responsible for ensuring that each wheelchair is properly fastened and that each student is secured by a seatbelt. The driver of each vehicle shall ensure that each student in the vehicle is secured by a seatbelt properly fastened while the vehicle is in motion. The bidder shall be liable for any injury resulting from the failure of a driver to ensure that each student transported is secured properly fastened at all times while a vehicle is motion.

Students in this category must be transported and secured in vehicles specifically designed for this purpose.

The driver will assist physically handicapped children when and where necessary. All wheelchair-locking devices shall be properly secured immediately after entering the vehicle.

There shall be no more than one (1) wheelchair loose or free in the vehicle ready for unloading at any time with driver in attendance.

5. Students with Special Needs

- (a) The Bidder shall safely transport those students with developmental handicaps, designated for transportation from time to time by the Board, from the nearest curb side in front of their residences to their respective schools and return to the nearest curb side in front of their residences at the time designated for each student in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Contract.
- (b) Parents/guardians are responsible for their students to and from said curb side and are instructed to have students ready at the time designated for pick-up so that no vehicle shall be required to wait longer than two (2) minutes on average to pick-up a student after the regular pick-up time.
- (c) For student(s) designated as being medically at risk, the Bidder will transport safely and securely any necessary equipment or apparatus (e.g. a ventilator, oxygen supply, suctioning device, etc.) for such students, as required when directed by a Board.
- (d) **Booster Seats** – Are the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide a Government approved booster seat that conforms to current safety guidelines. The seats must be inspected by the safety Supervisor of the Bidder and the drivers are to be instructed as to how to properly install the seat. If a second seat is required the carrier is to purchase an approved unit and bill the Board for the seat. The carrier is to maintain a record of all Booster seats that are in use and those paid for by the Board.
- (e) **Car Seats** – Are the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide a Government approved car seat that conforms to current safety guidelines. Car seats are to be inspected by the safety Supervisor of the Bidder and the drivers are to be instructed as to how to properly install the seat. If a second seat is required the carrier is to purchase an approved unit and bill the Board for the seat. The carrier is to maintain a record of all Booster seats that are in use and those paid for by the Board. Car seats are not to be installed in any seat adjacent to an emergency exit or emergency exit window.

- (f) Harnesses – Where required and approved by the parent/guardian and medical practitioner, the Board will provide harnesses. Drivers will be instructed as to how to properly install them by the Bidder. Students in vests/harnesses shall not be located in any seat adjacent to an emergency exit or emergency exit window.

6. School Bus Safety Programs and Orientation/Evacuation Drills

The Bidder must provide safety orientation and evacuation drills for all drivers, permanent or temporary, a minimum of once annually. The Bidder must provide the Board with the date(s) and agenda for any such orientation or drills and the Board shall have the option to attend such orientation or drills. All such orientation or drills shall include a reference to the evacuation signs posted in the vehicle. The Bidder is required to keep accurate records of all employees training and make them available to the Board when requested. Board staff will be available to assist in the delivery of programming around the evacuation drill and item listed below.

The Bidder must perform an evacuation drill with students on their to school trip before the end of October. Bidders will be required to work with the schools to identify the best time to perform these evacuation drills.

The programs shall consist of at least the following:

INITIAL TRAINING

- | | |
|--|--------|
| • Awareness of sensitivity for Special Needs Students & AODA Requirements | 4 hrs. |
| • Awareness of racial and Ethnocultural Issues (Human Rights) | 2 hrs. |
| • First Aid, Epipen | 6 hrs. |
| • Bus Evacuation, Accident Procedures, Fire Extinguisher | 3 hrs. |
| • Student Management, Maintaining Bus Discipline (Conflict Management) | 4 hrs. |
| • Lost Child, Late Bus, Late Parent, Child Check, and Ride Refusals Procedures, and Ride Refusals Procedures, Authorized Stops | 2 hrs. |
| • Defensive Driving | 6 hrs. |
| • Dealing with Street Cars and Traffic Management | 30min |
| • Restraint Systems – How to secure and release students in restraints | 30min |
| • Purple Equals Parent Program | 30min |

ANNUAL REFRESHERS

- Student Management, Bus Discipline 2 hrs.
- Human Rights and Racial Ethno Cultural Issues 1 hr.
- Bus Evacuation, Accident Procedures 1 hr.
- EpiPen 1 hr.
- Lost Child, Late Bus, Late Parent, Ride Refusals, Child Check, and Authorized Stops 1 hr.

EVERY THREE YEARS

- Defensive Driving 6 hrs.
- First Aid 6 hrs.

OLD - Transportation for Students with Special Education Needs

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Exceptional students who attend programs within their own community are provided the regular transportation service in place for the school if it is appropriate. If alternate transportation arrangements are required they are provided.

Students approved to attend Provincial and Demonstration Schools are provided transportation services according to Ministry of Education guidelines.

The chart below outlines the 20011/2012 transportation budget for the TCDSB in regards to Special Education:

<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Budget</i>
<i>Vision, Hearing & Speech</i>	<i>\$1,942,682</i>
<i>Medical & Handicapped</i>	<i>\$4,743,648</i>
<i>Special Education</i>	<i>\$2,863,955</i>
<i>Section 23</i>	<i>\$ 333,336</i>
<i>Remedial Language</i>	<i>\$ 174,507</i>
<i>Special Transit Fares (Scholars)</i>	<i>\$ 186,879</i>
<i>Special Transit Fares (Children)</i>	<i>\$ 2,068</i>
<i>Special Education Transit Fares (Adults)</i>	<i>\$ 4,700</i>
<i>Developmentally Disabled</i>	<i>\$ 811,760</i>
<i>Ontario Schools Deaf & Blind</i>	<i>\$ 0.00</i>
<i>Gifted</i>	<i>\$ 0.00</i>
<i>KLP</i>	<i>\$ 560,000</i>
<i>PAST</i>	<i>\$ 280,000</i>

PAL	\$ 120,000
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If the student's needs are such that he/she needs to be transported separately, then those decisions are made. As a specific example one student required transportation with the assistance of a health care attendant. These accommodations were provided. Process for deciding whether a student will be transported with other children or transported separately:

In TCDSB, decisions regarding how children will be transported is made on an individual basis. If a child can be transported with other children, that is the preferred method. When the regular home to school bus is possible (if the child's needs allow for them to use this type of bus), this bus is used. An IPRC guarantees transportation for the exceptional students provided sufficient funding is available as approved by the School Board. That transportation can be by bus, taxi, van or wheelchair bus. The decision on which type of method is dependent on the needs of the child. Some children who come from the same area and are accessing the same service at the same school are not able to access the same mode of transportation due to emotional or physical needs. The need to transport children separately is determined based on discussions with the parent, principal and the Superintendent.

How transportation is provided for students in care, treatment and correctional facilities

Decisions regarding the transportation of children in care to their local school, or the school in which the programming they require is provided, is made in the same way as for children living with their parents; it is made on an individual basis. Principals, Superintendents and those providing care work together to provide the children with as seamless a transfer when they move to care as possible.

Children in treatment receive services throughout the day for a portion of the day or all of the day. Children who receive treatment for a portion of the day are generally transported individually for their treatment and returned to their school. Children who attend treatment centres all day for their classes, are assessed on an individual basis to determine what best suits their needs.

Vehicles – General Requirements

1.1 All vehicles used by the Proponent in the provision of Services under the Contract (including spare vehicles) shall be properly licensed, equipped, maintained and inspected with the applicable provisions of the Highway Traffic Act of Ontario, the Public Vehicles Act of Ontario and the Regulations made thereunder and all other applicable statutes, by-laws, regulations and orders from all authorities and governments having jurisdiction over the transportation of students, as amended from time to time.

1.2 Wheelchair vehicles must meet safety standards as required under the Highway Traffic Act under Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers and as amended and conform to C.S.A. D409 Standards.

1.3 All such vehicles shall conform to the most current C.S.A. D250 Standards for “School Buses”, or with the CAN3-D409 C.S.A. Standards “Motor Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Persons”. A certificate of compliance with the standards shall be supplied to the Board for its inspection for each of the vehicles to be utilized in the provision of the Services.

1.4 Vehicles used in the provision of the Services shall be a maximum of twelve (12) years old during the Term.

1.4.1 Where cars, station wagons or mini-vans are used, the passenger doors shall be equipped with child-proof locks which would prohibit the doors from being opened from the inside of the vehicle but would allow the doors to be opened from the outside of the vehicle. The locking system for the passenger doors of station wagons should be controlled by the driver through power locks and shall have an alarm to warn the driver if the door has been opened or is not securely latched.

1.4.2 All vehicles shall be equipped with a back-up alarm.

1.4.3 The ambulatory, service and emergency doors on the vehicles shall be padded at the top edge.

1.5 The Proponent shall provide the most efficient vehicles available in order to perform the Services as economically as possible. Vehicles as large as 84 seats or as small as 4 seats may be used. Vehicle loading shall conform to the following seating capacity:

1.5.1 Standard Size Cars – 4 passengers;

1.5.2 Mini-Vans – 6 passengers;

1.5.3 Station Wagons – 7 passengers;

1.5.4 Vans – 20 passengers;

1.5.5 Large Bus 72-84 passengers.

1.6 All Proponents shall, at the time of submitting the Proposal, provide the Board with the complete specifications of all vehicles that the Proponent proposes to use in the provision of the Services.

1.7 The Board shall be entitled, at any time during the Term, to require delivery of a current, valid mechanical fitness certificate on any vehicle(s) at its sole discretion and at no cost to the Board.

1.8 *The interior of all vehicles is to be maintained at all times in a clean and sanitary condition, acceptable to the Board. The exterior of the vehicles will be washed at least once a week.*

1.9 *All vehicles shall be owned by the Proponent or shall be vehicles to which the Proponent shall be entitled to exclusive use and possession under chattel leases or conditional sales agreements from either the manufacturer thereof or a financial organization or institution involved in the financing thereof.*

1.10 *All vehicles when transporting Board students, at the discretion of the Board, shall display a sign "Under contract to the Toronto District School Board/Toronto Catholic District School Board".*

1.11 *Proponents are encouraged to use fuel conservation and anti idling technology wherever possible and feasible. The Boards may implement an incentive program as a means to help Proponents realize greater environmental efficiencies.*

1.12 *Proponents will be required to adopt the Boards' 'Healthy School Bus Plan' as a means to minimize environmental damage.*

1.13 *If in the future the Ministry mandates the use of child seats on school buses the Proponents will purchase integrated seats where necessary and legislated by law. Older vehicles not equipped with integrated seats will require car seats to be installed. The Proponents will purchase the car seats and bill the appropriate Board for the cost of the seat. All labour costs for the installation of the car seats shall be borne by the Proponent.*

2. Vehicles – Wheelchair Requirements

2.1 *Wheelchair vehicles must have a minimum rated capacity of three (3) electric wheelchairs and two (2) ambulatory passengers. All wheelchairs in the vehicle shall be secured facing forward.*

3. Driver's Qualifications And Responsibilities

3.1 Drivers shall have and maintain in good standing at all times an Ontario Class B or Class E School Purpose Vehicle driver's license and any additional licenses required by the Public Vehicle Act, the Highway Traffic Act (Ontario) and/or the Toronto Licensing Commission By-Laws. Drivers shall satisfy all governmental requirements, and be trained according to the Ministry of Transportation and Communications "Training Guidelines for Drivers of Transportation Services for Physically Disabled Persons".

3.2 All drivers must be trained in School Bus Safety Programs and Orientation/Evacuation Drills as outlined in Appendix F. New drivers shall be given a two week period to obtain this training.

3.3 The Proponent shall provide each driver with a wallet-sized identification card bearing a photograph of the employee, suitable identification, and the employer's name and address. This identification shall be presented upon request of a parent/guardian or any official or academic member of the Board.

3.4 The Proponent shall ensure that the driver of each vehicle utilized in the provision of Services shall at all times have in his/her possession on the vehicle an up-to-date list of the students being transported on such vehicle indicating their full names, pick-up addresses, destinations, schedule times and any other special instructions. The transportation on any vehicle of any persons other than bona fide students of the Board is expressly forbidden unless the prior authorization of the Transportation Department of the Board is obtained.

3.5 Drivers must not smoke, eat, drink or use foul language while loading, unloading or transporting students in their vehicles. Smoking on any vehicle, at any time, is not permitted even when passengers are not present.

3.6 Drivers shall assist students to and from vehicle or dwelling in necessary cases.

3.7 Drivers will under no circumstances strike or use undue physical force on any student.

3.8 Drivers shall report any student conduct problem immediately to the School Principal. Recurring problems will be reported to the Transportation Supervisor of the Board.

3.9 Drivers shall not give students any sweets or toys.

3.10 Drivers are not to take pictures of students without the consent of the students' parent or guardian.

3.11 Drivers shall not leave students unattended in the vehicle for unnecessary periods. The engine is to be turned off and the ignition key removed by the driver when leaving the vehicle and all proper precautions shall be taken to ensure that the vehicle cannot be set in motion.

3.12 Drivers shall ensure that all seatbelts and harnesses are properly secured and fastened around the student at all times.

3.13 Students must be picked up at their Board designated pick up location, delivered to their respective schools and returned to their designated drop-off location.

3.14 Drivers must make sure the vehicle doors are closed and the safety locks are used at all times when the vehicle is in motion.

3.15 Students on crutches, or otherwise physically handicapped, should be given help to the school door. Parent/guardian is expected to help their child into the vehicle.

- 3.16 All drivers shall maintain listening radio contact with central dispatch at all times during the trip.
- 3.17 The unnecessary idling of school bus motors while waiting to pick up students outside schools is prohibited.
- 3.18 Buses must use the designated bus loading zones marked at each school unless otherwise specified.
- 3.19 The school bus must not be driven in excess of eight (8) kilometres per hour when on the school property. Driving is totally prohibited while the children are at play in the school yard. TCDSB prohibits buses in school yards at all times.
- 3.20 At no time may the number of students in any vehicle exceed the manufacturer's specifications.
- 3.21 Under no circumstances shall students be required to stand.
- 3.22 Students incapacitated because of age or other conditions must be left in the care of a responsible adult when dropped off at school and when returned home.
- 3.23 The driver must make a check of the vehicle at the end of each trip for any sleeping students or abandoned articles.
- 3.24 The Proponent is required to have the driver perform a dry run of their routes in the week prior to the commencement of each school term.
- 3.25 Drivers should be provided the Ministry's Fleet Smart training or equivalent in order to reduce driving habits that are not conducive to fuel conservation.
- 3.26 The Proponent shall ensure that every driver is provided with a copy of Appendix B – Other Performance Requirements.

4. Wheelchair Service

- 4.1 Parent/guardian and/or school staff and drivers are collectively responsible for ensuring that each wheelchair is properly fastened and that each student is secured by a seatbelt. The driver of each vehicle shall ensure that each student in the vehicle is secured by a seatbelt properly fastened while the vehicle is in motion. The Proponent shall be liable for any injury resulting from the failure of a driver to ensure that each student transported is secured properly fastened at all times while a vehicle is motion.
- 4.2 Students in this category must be transported and secured in vehicles specifically designed for this purpose.
- 4.3 The driver will assist physically handicapped children when and where necessary. All wheelchair-locking devices shall be properly secured immediately after entering the vehicle.
- 4.4 There shall be no more than one (1) wheelchair loose or free in the vehicle ready for unloading at any time with driver in attendance.

5. Developmental Delayed

5.1 *The Proponent shall safely transport those students with developmental handicaps, designated for transportation from time to time by the Board, from the nearest curb side in front of their residences to their respective schools and return to the nearest curb side in front of their residences at the time designated for each student in accordance with the terms and conditions of the RFP.*

5.2 *Parents/guardians are responsible for their students to and from said curb side and are instructed to have students ready at the time designated for pick-up so that no vehicle shall be required to wait longer than two (2) minutes on average to pick-up a student after the regular pick-up time.*

5.3 *For student(s) designated as being medically at risk, the Proponent will transport any necessary equipment or apparatus (e.g. a ventilator, oxygen supply, suctioning device, etc.) for such students, as required when directed by the Board.*

5.4 *Booster Seats – Are the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide a Government approved car booster seat that conforms to current safety guidelines. The seats must be inspected by the safety Supervisor of the Proponent and the drivers are to be instructed as to how to properly install the seat.*

5.5 *Car Seats – Will be provided by the Board where they are deemed necessary under current regulations. Car seats are to be inspected by the safety Supervisor of the Proponent and the drivers are to be instructed as to how to properly install the seat.*

5.6 *Harnesses – Where required and approved by the parent/guardian, the Board will provide harnesses. Drivers will be instructed as to how to properly install them by the **Proponent**.*

6. BASIC FIRST AID

6.1 The following is a sample course outline for basic first aid and is provided to offer a guideline for course content. Proponents are required to provide with their submission a copy of the first aid course outline they are currently providing their drivers.

Basic First Aid – Sample course outline

- a. Outline of: What is First Aid
 - The Law and First Aid*
 - Protecting Yourself*
- b. Scene assessment for Emergencies (SAFE)
 - Environment, Primary Assessment, Secondary Assessment*
 - Continuing Care (until medical help arrives)*
- c. How breathing works
- d. Causes of Respiratory Emergencies
 - Airway obstructions, mechanical problems, suffocation*
- e. Choking – Signs & symptoms
- f. First Aid for Choking
 - Conscious & unconscious adults and children*
- g. Artificial Respiration & Methods
 - Assisted breathing, hyper-ventilation*
- h. Cardiovascular Emergencies
 - Heart attacks, strokes*
- i. CPR for adults and children
- j. Severe bleeding
- k. Shock
- l. Fainting
- m. The nervous system
- n. Head and Spinal Injuries
- o. EpiPen Training

7. Bus Safety Programs And Orientation/ Evacuation Skills

*The Proponent must provide safety orientation and evacuation drills for all drivers, permanent or temporary, a minimum of once annually. The Proponent must provide the Board with the date(s) and agenda for any such orientation or drills and the Board shall have the option to attend such orientation or drills. All such orientation or drills shall include a reference to the evacuation signs posted in the vehicle. The Proponent is required to keep accurate records of all employees training and make them available to the Board when requested. Board staff will be available to assist in the delivery of programming around the evacuation drill and item nos. **Error! Reference source not found.** and **Error! Reference source not found.**, below.*

The Proponent must perform an evacuation drill with students on their to school trip before the end of October. Proponents will be required to work with the schools to identify the best time to perform these evacuation drills.

The programs shall consist of at least the following:

Initial Training

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Awareness of sensitivity for Special Needs Students | 4 hrs. |
| 2. Awareness of racial and Ethnocultural Issues (Human Rights) | 2 hrs. |
| 3. First Aid, Epipen | 6 hrs. |
| 4. Bus Evacuation, Accident Procedures, Fire Extinguisher | 3 hrs. |
| 5. Student Management, Maintaining Bus Discipline (Conflict Management) | 4 hrs. |
| 6. Lost Child, Late Bus, Late Parent and Ride Refusals Procedures, Authorized Stops | 2 hrs. |
| 7. Defensive Driving | 6 hrs. |

Annual Refreshers

- | | |
|--|--------|
| Student Management, Bus Discipline | 2 hrs. |
| Human Rights and Racial Ethnocultural Issues | 1 hr. |
| Bus Evacuation, Accident Procedures | 1 hr. |
| Epipen | 1 hr. |
| Lost Child, Late Bus, Late Parent, Ride Refusals, Authorized Stops | 1 hr. |

Every Three Years

- | | |
|-------------------|--------|
| Defensive Driving | 6 hrs. |
| First Aid | 6 hrs. |

NOTE: The School Principals may request safety programs for students.

Categories of Exceptionalities

The Education Act identifies five categories of exceptionalities for exceptional students:

- behavioural,
- communicational,
- intellectual,
- physical, and
- multiple.

These broad categories are designed to address the wide range of conditions that may affect a student's ability to learn, and are meant to be inclusive of all medical conditions, whether diagnosed or not, that can lead to particular types of learning difficulties.

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

The definitions accepted by the Ministry of Education for the five categories of exceptionalities and their subcategories are provided in the chart below. Note that the ministry's definition of the term learning disability was revised, in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 8, "Identification of and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities" (2014); the new definition is provided below.

Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

BEHAVIOURAL

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

- a. an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships;
- b. excessive fears or anxieties;
- c. a tendency to compulsive reaction;
- d. an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof.

COMMUNICATIONAL

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

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

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

- **Language Impairment:** A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may:
 - a. involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and
 - b. include one or more of: language delay; dysfluency; voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.

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

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

INTELLECTUAL

- **Giftedness:** An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.
- **Mild Intellectual Disability:** A learning disorder characterized by:
 - a. an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and support services;
 - b. an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development;
 - c. a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self support.
- **Developmental Disability:** A severe learning disorder characterized by:
 - a. an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development;
 - b. an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development;
 - c. a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

PHYSICAL

- **Physical Disability:** A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of students without exceptionalities who are of the same age or development level.
- **Blind and Low Vision:** A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.

M U L T I P L E

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

OLD -Categories of exceptionalities in Ontario

The following are the five categories of exceptionality recognized by the province of Ontario and used in Identification Placement and Review Committees. There may be some flexibility within the categories for the purposes of identifying a student as “exceptional” under the Ministry definition.

1. behaviour
2. communication
3. intellectual
4. physical
5. multiple

These broad categories include the following definitions:

1. Behaviour

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

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

2. Communication

Autism

A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

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

Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

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

Language Impairment

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

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

Speech Impairment

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

Learning Disability

A learning disorder evident in both academic and social situations that involves one or more of the processes necessary for the proper use of spoken language or the symbols of communication, and that is characterized by a condition that:

- is not primarily the result of:
 - impairment of vision;
 - impairment of hearing;
 - physical disability;
 - developmental disability;
 - primary emotional disturbance;
 - cultural difference;
- results in a significant discrepancy between academic achievement and assessed intellectual ability, with deficits in one or more of the following:
 - receptive language (listening, reading);
 - language processing (thinking, conceptualizing, integrating);
 - expressive language (talking, spelling, writing);
 - mathematical computations; and
- may be associated with one or more conditions diagnosed as:
 - a perceptual handicap;
 - a brain injury;
 - minimal brain dysfunction;
 - dyslexia;
 - developmental aphasia.

3. Intellectual

Giftedness

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

Mild Intellectual Disability

A learning disorder characterized by:

- an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service;
- an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development;
- a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

Developmental Disability

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

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

4. Physical

Physical Disability

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

Blind and Low Vision

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

5. Multiple

Multiple Exceptionalities

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

LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR

September 2017

Welcome to the 2017-18 school year.

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.

The topics covered by this SEAC Circular:

1. Planning for the SEAC year
2. Draft **Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade12 (Policy and Resource Guide)** released
3. Deadline extended for input on an **Accessibility Standard for Education**
4. Update on **Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services**
5. MACSE June meeting highlights

List of Supplementary Materials:

1. PAAC on SEAC calendar 2017-18
2. LDAO Response to Consultation on an Accessibility Standard for Education
3. Next Steps Memo on Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services
4. MACSE June Meeting Highlights
5. LDAO Response to Consultation on Guidelines on Accessible Education

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 SEAC year

It is good practice for SEACs to start the school year by developing or revising an annual plan. Each year PAAC creates a PAAC on SEAC calendar with important dates and reminders, in order to facilitate such planning. The 2017-18 version is attached, and is also on the PAAC on SEAC website (<http://www.paac-seac.ca/>)

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/>).

2. Draft Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade12 (Policy and Resource Guide) released

The long awaited replacement for **Special Education: A Guide for Educators (2001)** has been released as a draft. The Ministry will convene a working group composed of education sector experts who will, over the next 12 to 18 months, review IEP related resources within the document. The draft document can be downloaded at:
http://edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/os/onschools_2017e.pdf.

This new Guide includes content from both policy and resource materials. Policy documents (e.g. Standards for Special Education Plans, and for IEPs) are unchanged, but new information has been added to update resource documents. Key sections of the Guide include:

- Part A: Legislation, Policy and Funding
- Part B: Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans
- Part C: Early Identification, Assessment and Transition Planning
- Part D: The Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) Process
- Part E: The Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Part F: Other Programs and Services

The Categories and Definitions are mostly unchanged, although the new definition of Learning Disability, adopted in the revised PPM 8, is included. Since the document is draft, new definitions could be added as they are approved.

The section on Early Identification, Assessment and Transition Planning has quite a bit of new material, including transitions into school and within school settings. The concepts of ongoing assessment **of** learning and **for** learning are explained, and there is discussion of the role of school team meetings.

The section on the IPRC is based on Regulation 181/98, which hasn't changed. The section on IEPs, follows the format of the Ministry IEP template, which is included as an appendix. It is nice to see that this template now explicitly includes a space for parent comments, in addition to just a parent signature. The IEP Standards are also in the appendix.

SEAC members should familiarize themselves with the new document, and consider asking for a presentation at SEAC. LDAO SEAC members can send comments or concerns to dianew@LDAO.ca.

3. Deadline extended for input on an Accessibility Standard for Education

In the June LDAO SEAC Circular, information was provided on a consultation on a proposed Accessibility Standard for Education, under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). In preparation for the establishment of a Standards Development Committee, a survey had been set up to look at possible scope of the committee's mandate. A Memo to Directors on July 31, 2017 extended the deadline for completion of the survey to October 16, 2017. The survey can be accessed at:

- English: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EducationSurveyEN>
- French: <https://fr.surveymonkey.com/r/SondageAccessibilite>

Those who did not participate in the survey last spring have another chance. I have attached the response LDAO submitted, for those who are interested.

4. Update on Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services

The Ministries involved in the Special Needs Strategy (EDU, MCYS & MOHLTC) have pressed the restart button on the planning for Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services. Local steering committees have been asked to discontinue working on final proposals for integrating services, and the ministries will establish a provincial advisory group of clinical experts, sector partners and education stakeholders to provide advice to the ministries on a tiered service delivery model. From now until April 1, 2018, contracts for rehabilitation services will be moved from LIHNs to Children's Treatment Centres. The ministries' plan during the transition is to maintain service continuity for children and their families who are receiving or waiting for these services. The memo also states that "where DSBs currently provide occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech-language pathology, these services will remain in place." SEACs should ask how the rehabilitation services provided by their school boards will be affected.

5. MACSE June meeting highlights

Meeting highlights from the June MACSE meeting are attached. Note that "MACSE unanimously endorsed a call for a ministry-sponsored SEAC conference in the spring of 2019", when there would be newly appointed SEACs following the 2018 school board elections.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) is preparing to revise its Guidelines for Accessible Education, which were last amended in 2009. MACSE agreed to make this the focus of its next community collaboration engagement so as to inform a discussion at its meeting in October.

Note: Both LDAO and PAAC on SEAC were asked to provide input to OHRC on revising the Guidelines. The LDAO submission is attached.

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

LDAO Response to Consultation on an Accessibility Standard for Education

July 2017

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) and its community-based chapters represent the interests of persons with learning disabilities (LDs) throughout Ontario. In the publically funded school system, students with LDs make up about 40% of students receiving special education supports and services, and many students with LDs go on to postsecondary studies at colleges or universities. LDAO supports the decision to add an Accessibility Standard for Education to the standards already in place under the Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities Act (AODA), and welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the scope of the proposed education standard. LDAO also provided input to the submission of PAAC on SEAC, and distributed information about the online survey to LDAO chapters and SEAC members.

The following outlines LDAO perspective on the questions and the issues raised in the online survey.

Accessibility Awareness and Training

4. What could your school, college or university do to improve their awareness and consideration of the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities?

In the elementary/secondary sector:

- Preservice training of educators, mentoring of first year teachers and ongoing professional development should include awareness of accessibility needs of different types of disabilities, while always promoting an individualized approach for each student. While the new preservice curriculum includes some information on special education, in order to serve the students with special education needs found in every classroom, it would be useful for all classroom teachers to take the basic Special Education Additional Qualification (AQ) course.
- School boards could partner with parent associations to provide professional development for educators. Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs) also have an important role to play in improving accessibility awareness.

In the postsecondary sector:

- Currently there is a one time accessibility overview mandated. Consideration may be given to annual or more than once a year accessibility overviews with a deeper focus. Since collective agreements may interfere, a postsecondary-wide committee should be struck to see how development and implementation could be accomplished institution-wide, especially to faculty, full and part time. This may be part of a 'super' credential that faculty could earn that would be of value for them to earn.

5. What resources or policies have you seen as most effective to support awareness of accessibility needs in your school, college or university?

In the elementary/secondary sector:

- Some school boards run day long sessions for parents and educators, coordinated by the Special Education department in partnership with SEACs.
- Some SEACs have created pamphlets or one-pagers for parents and educators, e.g. on IEPs.
- Designated PA days focussing on accessibility needs and special education processes can be very useful. One PA day a year used to be mandated for special education topics. This should be re-instated.
- Some school boards have developed professional development for all educators based on a **Learning for All** approach (www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/learning.html). This approach is a good start, but should not replace individualized programming for students with learning disabilities, based on their profile of strengths and weak processing.

In the postsecondary sector:

- Availability of trained staff to work with faculty upon request, as part of the accommodation process, should be continued or further developed. Currently some institutions are quite good at doing this and they might share effective practices. Policies without promotion or designated resources are seldom useful. Some institutions have awareness days that can be quite impactful and these should be adequately resourced and continued.

6. What challenges do students with disabilities face when accessing supports, programs, or services in their school, college or university?

In the elementary/secondary sector:

- Parents are the ones who initially are seeking supports, programs and services for their children. While some schools encourage parents in this process, others are reluctant to provide information on options. In many cases this depends on the attitude of the school principal.
- Although every school board is required to create a Parent Guide to Special Education in their board, too often this is not made available to parents until they are far along in the process. If parents do not find one of the parent associations that can provide information on their rights and how the process works, they can flounder for years without getting support for their child.
- Parents are often not included in school team meetings where educators plan steps in meeting the educational needs of their child.

- Some schools will offer to create an IEP, but do not tell parents about the formal identification process (IPRC) or actively discourage parents from going this route.
- Even when there has been an IPRC and an IEP, implementation often depends on the willingness of teachers, and the persistence of parents. Some teachers do not understand the individual needs of the student and are reluctant to implement accommodations.
- IEPs that make use of drop-down menus do not adequately individualize programming for students according to their needs.
- Access to psychoeducational assessment is a huge barrier for students with learning disabilities. Most school boards have long waiting lists, and private assessments are very expensive. Parents who have a group medical plan may get some help in paying for private assessments. There is two-tiered system of access to assessment. Assessment reports are required for some IPRC identifications, but more importantly they are needed for an individualized approach to provision of supports, programs and services.
- Information about the availability of accessible versions of text through Alternate Education Resources Ontario (AERO) is sparse or non-existent in the elementary/secondary sector. Every teacher should know about this and understand the process at their institution to implement since e-text can be a major source of support for so many students.

In the postsecondary sector:

- Students with learning disabilities usually require an updated psychoeducational assessment in order to access accommodations and services at the postsecondary level. Secondary schools are reluctant to assess students in their last year or two of high school, and assessment at postsecondary is difficult to access on a timely basis. The Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD) helps, but is only available to students who are financially eligible for an OSAP loan.
- There is little or no continuum of services or information from secondary to postsecondary unless the student is aware and takes the initiative to access them. Despite a wide range of services available, students either don't know about them, don't feel that they would be beneficial, or are fearful that using them may compromise their standing academically.
- Instructors and faculty are often not aware of availability of accessible versions of text. Even when e-texts are available through AERO, faculty and instructors still persist in using other reading material that is not easy to convert to e-text, which puts many students at a disadvantage.
- Many faculty in postsecondary still don't believe that accommodations level the playing field without giving an advantage, and therefore resist providing accommodations.

7. In your experience, what resources, tools, or policies are most effective to promote better awareness of available supports and facilitate appropriate accommodations?

In the elementary/secondary sector:

- School board Parent Guides can be useful if they clearly describe the steps of the process of getting supports, programs and services, outline all options, and are provided early to parents who are seeking help for their child.
- A policy of parent involvement that takes seriously the knowledge a parent has of their child, and works toward a partnership approach, can be very productive.
- For parents, LDAO offers information about available supports and services, and promotes understanding of processes for accessing appropriate accommodations, through its local chapter network, and provincially through its [LD@home](#) website.
- For educators, LDAO provides a wealth of information on evidence-based programming for students with learning disabilities through its [LD@school](#) / [TA@l'école](#) websites and its annual [Educators' Institute](#).

In the postsecondary sector:

- In some institutions, the office for students with disabilities is a well-staffed and managed unit with a credible reputation; in others, it is less so. The government needs to ensure that institutions understand the importance of this service and ensure it is adequately funded and managed well.
- Funding for offices for students with disabilities has not kept up with the increasing numbers of students seeking services. This has often resulted in less opportunity for students to have regular contact with a disability advisor, and some students are not able to get appointments until there is a crisis. In many cases, the availability of ongoing support might avoid crises, and prevent drop out due to failed courses.
- Transition programs provide specific supports, which need to be continued, developed and deliberately worked on through secondary-postsecondary partnerships. Without dedicated staff and structure, transitions are hit and miss. Transition support needs to start before the students enters their postsecondary program and continue at least through the first year.

Information, Communication, and Inclusive Decision-Making

8. What barriers do students with disabilities or their parents face in participating in decisions that affect accessibility in their schools, colleges or universities?

In the elementary/secondary sector:

- Parents' understanding of their child's strengths and needs are often not taken seriously enough, or parents feel intimidated by educators and/or administrators.
- Parents may not understand the special education process, their rights and options. This is especially true of recent immigrants. Parents may too readily accept the school's statement

that there is not enough funding for the supports their child needs.

- Some parents assume that everything they have been promised will actually happen, and trust the school to carry on with the plan. Sometimes this assumption is accurate, but often parents need to monitor how plans are being implemented.
- Students may not learn self-advocacy skills and may not understand their strengths and weaknesses. Many young teens are reluctant to participate in decision-making or even to access accommodations, since they do not want to appear different from their peers.

In the postsecondary sector:

- Parents and students may be unaware of supports available at postsecondary. They also may not realize the difference between supports they are used to receiving in secondary school, and what is available in postsecondary. Some students struggle until midterms and do not seek help until it is too late to drop courses without penalty.
- Parents are often actively discouraged by postsecondary institutions from any participation in decision-making, even when their young adult wants them to attend meetings as support.

9. In your experience, what resources, tools, or policies help to promote early engagement by persons with disabilities (or their representatives) in educational decisions and planning?

In the elementary/secondary sector:

- Students should be involved early in the development of their IEP, and teachers should listen to students' understanding of what they need in order to learn best.
- Specific teaching of self-advocacy skills can start in elementary school and continue throughout secondary grades. Students need to learn about their specific profile of strengths and weak areas, and learn what teaching approaches and strategies work best for them. They need to become comfortable with asking teachers for help. This is gradual process, and students differ in their readiness to self-advocate, so asking for help should not be a prerequisite for getting accommodations at the elementary/secondary level.

In the postsecondary sector:

- Participation in a transition program is the most important factor in preparing students to participate in educational decision-making and planning. Students learn self-advocacy skills that are appropriate at postsecondary levels, and make connections with the personnel at the office for students with disabilities.

Transition Planning

10. What challenges do students with disabilities face in transitioning across educational institutions or when completing programs that bridge partner institutions?

In the elementary/secondary sector:

- Students transitioning to and from care/treatment and/or correctional facilities face a disruption in their educational programming. Often the Individual Education Plan does not follow immediately with the student. This can happen with transitions between schools as well.
- Students transferring back to home school boards from Provincial Demonstration schools may find it difficult to access the kinds of supports and accommodations they benefitted from at the Demonstration school, e.g. technical support may not be available for use of assistive technologies. Transition support from the Demonstration schools is available but not always to the extent needed.
- Students transferring to a new school board who have been identified through the formal IPRC process have to go through a new IPRC in the new board. Sometimes the criteria for provincial identification are interpreted differently by the new school board, and the IPRC statement of the old board is not accepted. This can mean that a student does not receive the programs and services they had in the old board. Sometimes the previous IEP is not accepted either.

In the postsecondary sector:

- Lack of access to updated psychoeducational assessment can be a barrier, or assessments done through the school may not have sufficient information for postsecondary education.
- Access to accommodations is based on different criteria at the postsecondary level compared to the elementary/secondary level, and secondary schools do not necessarily explain this to students and parents.
- Parents and students are often not aware of the differences in supports that are available in postsecondary education, e.g. modifications of curriculum and re-explaining of exam questions are usually not allowed.
- Parents and students may not be aware of, or understand the importance of, transition programs provided by postsecondary institutions. All students should receive information about transition programs from their secondary school resource teachers or guidance counsellors.
- Delays in accommodations can happen when there are transfers between postsecondary institutions; for example, the second institution may not have sufficient information up front, assistive technology may not be the same at each place.

11. What challenges do students with disabilities face when planning for employment, for post-secondary education or training, or for community living?

For transfers to postsecondary education:

- See answers to question 10.

For transfers to apprenticeship programs:

- Very few students come with psychoeducational assessments from previous educational settings. Students are usually out of their college apprenticeship program before testing can be completed to identify appropriate supports and accommodations. There is no time in the transition to apprenticeship to ensure that needed services are in place, for example, text books in alternate format for those with learning disabilities, or extra time for written tests. It could be more efficient in this context to have a universal design approach, e.g. all students would have access to e-text formats and extra time if needed. This approach would benefit students who have unidentified disability-related accommodation needs, as well as other students who struggle in classroom settings or whose first language is not English or French.

For transfers to employment:

- Students are often reluctant to disclose disability needs in the employment application process or at work, for fear of stereotyping or negative attitudes. Often this fear is justified since awareness of disabilities, especially invisible disabilities, is not high in the employment sector.
- Students may not have a good understanding of how their profile of strengths and weakness fits with requirements of different employment sectors. Ideally this should be a role of the office for students with disabilities.
- Students may not get enough details about required duties in posted job descriptions, making it hard for them to match prospective jobs with their areas of strength and weakness.
- The types of accommodations that helped a student be successful in their studies may not be suitable to the type of job they are seeking. Students need to have a better understanding of what accommodations might be appropriate in the workplace.

12. In your experience, as a student, parent, or professional, what resources, tools, or policies have been effective to support smooth transitions?

- Specific training in self-advocacy that starts at elementary levels and continues through transition to postsecondary levels.
- Provision of postsecondary multi-day transition programs that take place before students start a postsecondary program, and provide continued support through the first year. Recently the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development has discontinued specific funding for these transition programs, and competing budgetary priorities at postsecondary institutions may put such transition programs in jeopardy.
- [Transition Resource Guide](#) and website.
- LDAO chapter presentations to parents and students by representatives from offices for students with disabilities at local colleges and universities.

Inclusive and Accessible Learning Spaces

13. What challenges do students, instructors, staff and the public with disabilities face in navigating their educational built environment?

- The built environment is not a huge issue for most students with learning disabilities, with the exception of wayfinding for some students. These students will need longer to learn how to find their way around a new building or campus. For some, maps will help, while others would benefit from written instructions.

14. In your experience, what resources, tools, or design practices can best support improved accessibility in existing, often older, buildings? NA

15. What other elements should be considered to enhance the physical accessibility of K-12 schools, colleges and universities? NA

Additional Barriers to Accessibility in Education

16. As a student or parent, what other accessibility barriers have you experienced in pursuing your or your child's education, and how could they be addressed through a new accessibility standard for education?

- Parents and students who contact LDAO often struggle with appeal mechanisms and dispute resolution processes. In the elementary/secondary sector, disputes about implementation of accommodations or attitudes of teachers are most common, and there are no appeal mechanisms for these.
- School boards need to develop a progression of informal to formal dispute resolution processes. [*Shared Solutions – A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Education Needs*, 2007](#), provides some useful tools for informal dispute resolution. Formal dispute resolution might be handled at a school board ombudsman's office, or another arms-length body.
- Appeal and dispute resolution processes at postsecondary levels can be complicated and students feel that they experience a power imbalance. It is often not clear where the role of the office for students with disabilities fits when there are student conflicts with faculty or academic departments. On one hand, staff could advocate for students and support accommodations that have been granted, but on the other hand, keeping good relationships with faculty is also a goal.
- An Accessibility Standard for Education should mandate a system of dispute resolution processes that are user friendly for parents and students.

17. As a professional in the education sector, what other barriers have you experienced in providing an accessible, inclusive education, and how could they be addressed through a new accessibility standard for education?

- The attitude of some faculty regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in professional programs and internships continues to be a constant source of frustration for students.

- An Accessibility Standard for Education could make it clearer to faculty that reasonable accommodation applies to all students with disabilities.

Summary

LDAO commends the Ontario government for following through on its promise to develop an Accessibility Standard for Education. The initial survey should provide wide-ranging suggestions on the scope of such a standard. LDAO agrees with the goals of increasing awareness of accessibility needs, removing barriers to informed participation by parents and students in accessing programs, services and accommodations, and enhancing transition planning. The development of accessible dispute resolution processes should be added to the mandate.

In many cases, there are accessibility policies in place from the Ministries involved, but what is lacking is accountability for implementation of policy. There are few standards in place that apply across school boards or across postsecondary institutions.

In development of standards, it will be important to remember that 'one size does not fit all'. There must always be an individualized approach to program planning and accommodation, based on the needs of the student. While social inclusion is a goal for all students, a philosophy of educational inclusion that does not allow for intensive educational interventions in another setting to the regular classroom, will disadvantage many students with learning disabilities. Similarly, while principles of universal design are important, they will not by themselves remove all accessibility barriers. There must be room for an individualized approach to accommodation.

LDAO looks forward to working with the Accessibility Directorate, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development in the development of a new Accessibility Standard for Education.

SEAC PENDING LIST AS AT OCTOBER 18, 2017

1. SEAC requested that the Board to seek a representation of indigenous persons from various organizations at SEAC. (November 2016).
2. Staff to update the Special Education Plan and resource documentation accessible to students and parents online to reflect current and accurate information (requested September 2016).
3. Staff to consider increasing Empower in high schools when the budget is balanced and the accumulated deficit is eliminated and bring it back to SEAC pending balanced budget (requested in 2015).
4. SEAC recommended to the Board of Trustees to investigate the costs to possibly promote SEAC Special Education information through innovative technological methods. (requested April 2017).
5. 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).
6. SEAC requested answers to the questions contained in the Autism Ontario Association report and the Board's response to any motions arising out of this report be brought back to SEAC as a detailed Board staff report to be included in the SEAC Public Meeting agenda before the end of this calendar year (September 2017) – awaiting Board approval.