

SEAC Equity Consultation

Student Engagement & Achievement:

Barrier		Recommendation
IEP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low level of functionality <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Poor student consultation (student over age 16 or to support self-advocacy skills learning during transition years) b. Lack of SMART goals that support successful, individual growth in achievement c. Poor implementation of individualized accommodations d. Low incidence of individual review of IEP at regular intervals to assess and/or update IEP (in consultation with parent/student/staff) e. Inconsistent engagement/consultation with student's teachers/support staff and/or school based/community paraprofessionals 	<p>Recommend that Board, in consultation with SEAC and in collaboration with staff prepare a parent-friendly and student-friendly resource that will be made available to both parents and students (if 16 years of age or older) at the beginning of each school year. That both resources include a statement of the TCDSBs commitment to the requirements of the IEP process according to and not limited to the Education Act, the OHRC, the Ontario Ministry of Education and other related legislation and inclusive of the Board's policies and procedures. That both resources be made available and fully accessible in both hard copy and digitized formats.</p>
Student supports	<p>Flawed framework</p> <p><i>Staff Supports:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Staff to student ratio not meeting needs b. Not always knowledgeable (general special education and/or individual student needs) c. Being tasked with curriculum modification and/or delivery when this is not their job d. "Here today, gone tomorrow". Variability of staff placements even if needs persist <p><i>PPM 140, Transition, Behaviour, Safety Plans:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Minimal or no ABC data collection to inform improved, individualized programming, services or staff support for students b. Effective transition plans not being communicated to or implemented by school staff c. Behaviour and/or safety plans not developed or implemented appropriately creating an environment with lack of structure/framework to support the student/staff <p>Assistive technology</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lengthy application process resulting in lack of timely accommodation of student needs b. Limited training for student and often no 	<p>Recommend to the Board that a fully comprehensive audit be conducted with a focus on Special Education programs, services and supports. That the audit focus on an assessment of student achievement and any gaps, challenges and barriers that students with special education needs (both identified and non-identified) are faced with in obtaining the delivery of equitable programs, service and support needs. That the specific targets to be audited be determined in consultation with SEAC.</p>

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

Parent Engagement:

Barrier	Recommendation
IPRC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No information provided such as <i>Parent Guide to Special Education</i>, programs, supports or services 2. Not informed of their rights in IPRC process (to request an IPRC, to bring an advocate or interpreter, their right to think about the proposed placement and not sign, to refuse to sign and appeal decision) 3. Meeting is often time-limited to 5-10 minutes and time is mostly used by school staff; leaving little time for any input or questions from the parent
IEP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of informed parent input (no parent-friendly guide provided/available through TCDSB on IEP) 2. Completed IEP often provided to parent on or after the mandatory completion deadline in October with a request for signature and for the IEP to be returned to the school 3. Lack of collaboration between school, parent, TCDSB Special Services personnel and community paraprofessionals pushes completion of IEP forward causing SMART goal-setting and implementation of necessary accommodations process to fail the student 4. Low incidence of individual review of achievement of IEP SMART goals and accommodations at regular intervals to assess and/or update IEP 5. Inconsistent engagement/consultation and communication between parent and child's teachers/support staff/school based paraprofessionals (including community based paraprofessionals)

		implemented through the lens of equity and inclusion. That staff training and professional development be reviewed and refreshed in consultation with SEAC to include all relevant provincial and local legislation, policies and procedures that supports equity and success for students with disabilities and with special education needs (both identified and non-identified)
Communication	<p><i>TCDSB Website:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Information unavailable or difficult to find b. Information not in parent friendly terms c. Information is not up to date or links are no longer available (error 404) <p><i>School Communication:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. No gateway of communication about availability of programs, services, supports at local school level b. Inconsistent or teacher refusal to communicate with parent of child with diverse or complex needs c. Reluctance of school staff to address parent concerns about child's needs not being met d. Requests for SBST meetings or TCDSB Special Services staff assessments/supports not always met in a timely manner or ignored e. Parents are not informed of their rights or options in advocating for their child's needs 	Recommend that Board consider a sub-section on special education under the "PARENT" portal of the TCDSB website to contain information and links determined in consultation with SEAC.

Procedural:

Barrier		Recommendation
Website & Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Important information is not clear and easy to find b. CPIC Teleconference is not an accessible means to attend meetings since the device does not provide clear access to what is said and those meeting members present do not include members on the phone in discussion or provide any materials being shared at the meeting (CPIC = committee tasked by MoE to make recommendations to board about any barriers) 	Recommend to Board that staff conduct a full review of the TCDSB website in consultation with parent and student representatives, SEAC and other community stakeholders so as to streamline and update the information available.
Accountability &	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reports and Board based plans that reflect student achievement or student based data do not automatically provide special education 	Recommend to Board that as an inclusive Board, when

Transparency	<p>student based data nor do they reflect inclusion of the strengths and needs of this demographic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Safe Schools data ii. Mental Health & well-being iii. MYSP iv. BLIP v. EQAO vi. ...et cetera <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. The Special Education Plan has not been formally reviewed in its entirety in at least or over five years and information posted is outdated c. No transparent or accountable system-wide review process for IEPs d. Board policies are not reviewed by SEAC to ensure that policies are considered, written and reviewed through the lens of special education before being broadly approved by the Board of Trustees e. Scheduling of SEAC and Board meetings does not permit items of importance to be reviewed by SEAC with an opportunity for questions or recommendations to come before the Board of Trustees when the same item is discussed and approved by Trustees 	<p>student data, analysis and success are being considered in discussions and in reports; that students in receipt of special education programs, services and supports are included as both inclusive of all student reporting <i>and</i> as a separate subset of analytical data in the same report provided to the Board of Trustees and to any or all relevant committees of the Board.</p>
SEAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lack of orientation or reference handbook b. Membership is not consistently displayed or current on the Board website c. Verbal reports at meetings lack transparency, accountability and fall short of the board's duty to accommodate its "employees" (committee members) d. Lack of transparency and accountability to stakeholders since meetings are neither live streamed nor do the minutes provide any information on discussions or verbal information received/provided at SEAC which is relevant for parents and stakeholders e. SEAC motions/recommendations to Board are not reported back to SEAC f. Important information that requires SEAC input is not provided to the committee in a timely manner that allows members the opportunity to confer with their respective association councils in order to provide informed recommendations g. Sub-committees are not permitted and neither is any SEAC work done via email which further impairs the ability of SEAC to review and provide recommendations on information relevant to its mandate and that comes before the Board of Trustees at four different Board level committees 	