



REPORT TO

REGULAR BOARD

SEAC MOTIONS RECEIVED BY BOARD AND REFERRED TO STAFF FOR REPORT

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth (Mt 5:5).”

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
January 14, 2019	January 24, 2019	Click here to enter a date.

Linda Maselli-Jackman, Superintendent of Education, Special Services
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INFORMATION REPORT

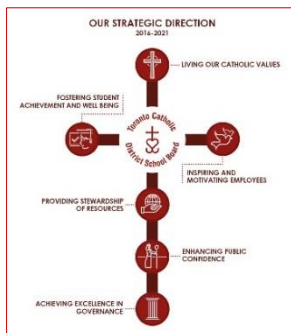
Vision:

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

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 Acting Associate Director
 of Planning and Facilities

L. Noronha
 Executive Superintendent
 of Business Services and
 Chief Financial Officer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SEAC committee has made number of inquiries and motions on a variety of topics related to the provision of services to students with Special Education needs. Those inquiries and motions have been received by the Board and referred to staff to bring back a report to the January 2019 Board meeting.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 15 hours

B. PURPOSE

1. This Information Report is on the Order Paper of the January 24, 2019 Regular Board in response to a variety of SEAC inquiries and/or motions.
2. The inquiries and/or motions addressed in this report are as follow:
 1. That SEAC recommend to Board that Appendix A of the Safe Schools report (September 6, 2018) be amended to provide the following information:
 - a) The total number of students in the TCDSB with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) broken down by Elementary and Secondary students;
 - b) The total number of students that have received a Board or School expulsion broken down by students with an IEP; and
 - c) The total number of students that have received a 265 (1)m Safety Exclusion and that those numbers be broken down by student with an IEP and those not identified.
 2. Suspension Rates at the Toronto Catholic District School Board for the 2017-18 School Year: That the Superintendent of Special Services and the Superintendent of Safe Schools provide some preventative action measures to reduce the expulsion and suspension rates for special needs students with IEPs;

3. Inquiry from Autism Ontario (School Fire Safety and Students with Disabilities):
 - a) What policies and procedures are in place that specifically include the consideration of the varying capabilities and characteristics of students with special education needs when developing, carrying out and monitoring fire safety plan procedures in TCDSB schools?
 - b) What process is in place to provide additional preparation and support for those students that struggle with transition, sensory processing or other needs as specified in their IEP?
 - c) What metrics are in place for monitoring and reporting compliance with the fire safety plan requirements?
4. That Staff investigate the availability of data on how many Individual Education Plan (IEP) Students are streamed into academic v. applied v. locally developed during the transition from Elementary to High School, noting students that have IEPs that are gifted, and, if possible, include the other exceptionality sub-groups;
5. That Staff investigate the availability of data on how many students with an IEP are streamed into University, College, Apprenticeship and Work Placements during the transition from Secondary to Post-Secondary, noting students that have IEPs that are gifted, and, if possible, include the other exceptionality sub-groups;
6. That the IT Department prepare a special page on the Board website to include all information on college and university applications and registrations including the links of any appropriate information to assist special needs students transitioning from Secondary to Post-Secondary;
7. That the three (3) questions in the report (Refer Attachment, page 81 of 2018-12-13 Board Public Agenda) be answered in writing and brought back to SEAC (*Autism Ontario - Early Identification and Intervention for Students with Special Needs*). They are as follow:

- a) What identification strategy is in place for students who present with learning needs after grade one, and what interventions are included in this strategy?
 - b) What do school board policies, teacher federations, and provincial and local legislation and policy dictate in regard to teachers identifying student needs and providing extra help to struggling students in class or before/after school?
 - c) Since fee for service tutors are being recommended to students and parents by local school and board staff to fill in gaps that are not being filled in the classroom/school, what is the obstacle/barrier that local schools and the Board feel they cannot overcome in providing equity in curriculum delivery in support of student achievement for students with special education needs in the classroom?
8. That staff bring back the Parent Voice Survey results and report to SEAC in a timely manner.

C. BACKGROUND

This report-back to the January 24, 2019 Board is provided in response to various SEAC inquiries and/or motions made during the November and December SEAC meetings, that have been received by the Board, and referred to staff.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. SAFE SCHOOLS REPORT 2017-18

The following information is provided in addition to what was reported in *Appendix A* of the 2017-18 Annual Safe Schools report.

i) The total number of TCDSB students with an IEP, broken down by Elementary and Secondary panels is:

Elementary:	10, 582
Secondary:	6, 082
Total:	16, 664

ii) Total number of students that have received a Board or School Expulsion, broken down by students with an IEP is:

Board expelled students with an IEP:	9
School expelled students with an IEP:	34
Total students in Board with an IEP is:	16,664

iii) Total number of students that have received a 265 (1)m Safety exclusion and broken down by students with an IEP and those not identified:

The Annual Safe School Report is directly linked to Safe School Legislation. However, Safety Exclusions under 265 (1)m of the Education Act are not tracked by the Safe School department as they are not associated with Safe Schools legislation; nor is there any requirement for the Board to report those to the Ministry of Education. Safety exclusions are not considered disciplinary and also include Police exclusions which school Principals are mandated to adhere to until an active police investigation is complete. In any event, there is an expectation that the student will return to a school of the TCDSB. Exclusions are thus not a metric that is linked to the Safe Schools Annual Report. Instead, Safety Exclusions deal with programming alternatives that support a successful academic and social-emotional transition back to a school.

2. TCDSB 2017-18 SUSPENSION RATES: PREVENTATIVE ACTION MEASURES

The Superintendents of Special Services and Safe Schools provide preventative action measures to reduce the expulsion and suspension rates for students with IEPs/Special Education needs just as they do for all other students.

i) The Safe School Department offers yearly presentations to both Principals and Vice-Principals on various aspects of Safe School legislation that impact directly on student learning as well as on safe, accepting, and inclusive school environments. As per PPM 145 presentations are done outlining the significance of *Mitigating and other Factors* as they apply not only to students who hold an IEP, but to all students.

(ii) When necessary personal consultations are done with Principals before a final determination on potential discipline is reached.

(iii) In cases with students who hold an IEP, the Safe School Department, in certain situations, will refer the Principal to the Special Services Department where additional expertise is required.

(iv) Additionally, the Safe Schools Department offers numerous Safe School Professional Development Modules to Board staff on various topics including the use of progressive discipline and how to de-escalate situations of inappropriate student behavior.

3. INQUIRY FROM AUTISM ONTARIO (SCHOOL FIRE SAFETY AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES)

i) There is a variety of policies and procedures that are in place to address school fire safety, including for students with Special Education needs. The needs of all students, as well as those with Special Education requirements, are taken into consideration when developing, carrying out, and monitoring fire safety plan procedures in TCDSB schools.

Considerations made when developing school Fire Safety Plans:

1. Principals are responsible for the development of each school's fire safety plan;

2. Included in those documents are the plans for the safe evacuation of all students who require Special Education services;

3. Plans for the safe evacuation of students with special needs are co-created with the input of staff who provide Special Education services to students;
4. A promising practice for Principals is to invite, early in the school year, the local Fire Department to oversee and provide feedback for a school fire drill.

Additional Supports for Students with Sensory Processing or Other Transition Planning Needs

Special Education program teachers and staff provide ongoing awareness instruction about the fire or other "*Threats to School Safety*" drills so that students become familiar with the circumstances surrounding the drill situation. An example of a Fire Emergency Procedures poster is found in **Appendix A.**

Scaffolded (incremental) instruction is provided to students with Special Education needs regarding what to expect in the drill/evacuation situation, particularly regarding the sights, sounds, activity levels required for such situations. An example of a Fire Drill Visual Schedule is found in **Appendix B.**

Special Education staff engage in regular classroom practice for the drill situation (outside of the school-wide drill situation itself) so that students have multiple opportunities to gain familiarity with what is required in the school-wide evacuation drill situation.

For school-wide evacuation drill situations the Principal will provide to Special Education staff advanced warning of the drill so that they can prepare students for the impending transition.

Special education classroom staff preparations for students might include the following:

- a. Familiarization for all students and staff of the primary and alternate evacuation routes;
- b. Social stories to review each step of the evacuation drill situation;

- c. Preparation of students with sensory stimulation challenges for the noise of the fire alarm;
- d. Preparation of students with vision challenges for the onset of rapid movement and the most effective exit pathway to be taken to navigate furniture and human obstacles;
- e. Preparation for non-ambulatory students regarding the safe-zone location for those students and their supervising staff at which Fire Department personnel will be able to locate them for safe evacuation.

In situations requiring real-time emergency evacuation support, the first Fire Department team to arrive on the scene are those usually dispatched to locate and evacuate non-ambulatory students. The next team to arrive will address the potential fire situation itself.

Carrying Out Fire Safety Plans

There are a number of actions to be taken when carrying out Fire Safety Plans. For those steps, please refer to **Appendix C**.

Monitoring Fire Safety Plan Procedures

Fire safety plans are created in accordance with the Board's Threats to School Safety/Health and Safety requirements.

A sample Student School Emergency Evacuation Response Plan (AODA February 2012), whose contents contain various categories of students' identifying information, is found in **Appendix D**.

Principals will ensure that the original completed Student Emergency Evacuation Response form (with any attachments) is accessible to all staff in the event of an emergency and a copy filed in the school office.

All personal information collected on this form and any attachments will be used for Student School Emergency Evacuation Response purposes only and will remain confidential as per MFIPPA unless written consent is obtained

from the student's parent(s) or guardians (completion of Section 8 - *Acknowledgment and Release*).

Metrics for Monitoring Compliance with Safety Plan Procedures

1. Staff is reminded to become familiar with the nearest fire exit;
2. Schools will have 3 fire drills per term;
3. Staff and students who need assistance evacuating the building must advise the Principal so that an "Emergency Evacuation Response Plan" can be created.
4. Fire Department staff and the school Principal review the plan once yearly (usually during the first fire drill of the year), and make any necessary revisions.
5. The Board and employee unions have a Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) that oversees the implementation of the fire safety plans at each school.

Board Committee Oversight

The TCDSB has two staff members serving as the Co-ordinator of the Occupational Health and Safety Department and Safety Supervisor who are available for assistance and/or consultation by Board staff as required for any issue related to the fire safety plan at a school.

Joint Health and Safety Committees exist for both the Elementary and Secondary panels.

The Province of Ontario requires a Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) in workplaces with at least 20 employees. The school is such a workplace, with the majority of schools having 20 or more employees. However, there are no local school-based or site-based JHSCs. Instead, the TCDSB has three multi-site, central JHSCs comprised of management and

worker members. All JHSC members must be TCDSB employees as per Section 9(7) and 9(10) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Section 9(7) prescribes that... "at least half the members of a committee shall be workers employed at the workplace who do not exercise managerial functions".

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, a JHSC serves as an advisory body to the employer on health and safety issues relating to employee safety. The JHSC also conducts regular workplace safety inspections.

JHSCs do not have decision-making authority and therefore, are not legally accountable. Instead, the TCDSB as the Employer is required to maintain and establish JHSCs. The TCDSB is legally accountable for its JHSCs.

4. SECONDARY CURRICULUM PATHWAY STREAMING OF STUDENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS

When students move from the Elementary to the Secondary panel, they are required to make course selections for Gr. 9 that fall into one or more of the following curriculum pathways:

- a) Academic (which can lead to University or Mixed (University/College) courses in Gr. 11 and 12);
- b) Applied (which can lead to College or Mixed (U/C) courses in Gr. 11 and 12);
- c) Locally Developed (which can lead to Workplace courses in Gr. 11 and 12);
- d) Open-level courses are offered in grades 9 and 10 for students in all course streams, with or without an IEP, in a variety of subject areas.
- e) Alternative (non-credit-bearing courses).

There is a rigorous process undertaken to assist Gr. 8 students with their Gr. 9 course selections which includes the following steps:

- i) The Gr. 8 teacher, Special Education teacher and parents review with students their course selections. Based on progress achieved to date, recommendations are made regarding the course pathway/stream in which the student would be most suitably placed. It is possible that not all courses chosen are in the same stream.
- ii) In early Spring, an Exchange of Information meeting takes place between the appropriate Elementary school staff and that of the of the receiving Secondary school.
- iii) Parents/Guardians are required to review and sign-off on the recommended course selections.
- iv) Course selections and registration packages are sent to the receiving Secondary schools by the students/families.

Gr. 9 English Course Selections for September 2018

The following chart reflects the level of English course chosen by current-year Gr. 9 students with an IEP. If there was no English course chosen, then the Math course was used:

Legend:

- B/LV = Blind or Low Vision
- D/HH = Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- DD = Developmental Disability
- LI = Language Impairment
- LD = Learning Disability
- MID = Mild Intellectual Disability
- ME = Multiple Exceptionalities
- N/A = Not Applicable (no identified exceptionality)
- PD = Physical Disability

Grade 9 Students With IEP	Autism	Behaviour	B/LV	D/HH	DD	Gifted	LI	LD	MID	ME	N/A	PD	Grand Total
Academic	18	3	1	2		183	11	69			264	2	553
Alternative (No Credit)	21				5			1	1	12	3	1	44
Applied	13	7		3	1	1	33	158	5		359	2	582
Locally Developed	14	2		2	1		24	39	28		59	1	170
Grand Total	66	12	1	7	7	184	68	267	34	12	685	6	1,349

5. Post-Secondary Pathways for Secondary Students with an Individual Education Plan

Aggregate data pertaining to students' post-secondary destinations is not collected currently at a Board level. We are currently investigating ways in which this data can be accessed from each secondary school and collated to provide the data as an aggregate at a Board level.

Secondary schools will have the following information about their students' post-secondary endeavours as a result of exit plans made with them by Guidance and Special Education staff during their Gr. 12 or final year of secondary school:

- a) University application(s);
- b) College application(s);
- c) Apprenticeships; and
- d) Workplace destinations.

Schools will not necessarily have collected information about the results of students' applications to post-secondary education institutions, apprenticeship programs, or workplace destinations. There is currently no requirement for students and/or families to share with the secondary schools any results of applications to post-secondary institutions.

The Superintendent of Student Success has inquired with the Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAC) and the Ontario Colleges Application Centre (OCAS) regarding the availability of this information. They have replied and the requested information is not available to be shared with the Board.

6. Post-Secondary Institution Application and Other Information Links on the TCDSB Website

Currently, on the TCDSB public-facing website, there is no single repository of information regarding access to post-secondary education institutions or other pathway destinations.

Individual Secondary schools provide on their websites post-secondary destination access information according to the unique needs of their student populations.

The Superintendent of Special Services is liaising with the IT and Student Success Departments to determine possibilities for information collection and media-based sharing strategies (possibly including such things as web-links) in order to enable all students and their parents/guardians to have universal access to a broad-range of destination pathway planning information.

7. Autism Ontario Inquiry - Early Identification and Intervention for Students with Special Needs

i) Early Identification Strategy:

According to Policy/Program Memorandum No. 11, “Early Identification of Children’s Learning Needs” (1982), every school board in Ontario must have procedures in place to identify the level of development, learning abilities, and needs of every child who is enrolled in the school, and to ensure that educational programs are designed to accommodate those needs and to facilitate the child’s growth and development. These procedures are part of a process of continuous assessment and program planning that should be

initiated when a child is first enrolled in school and that should continue throughout a child's school life (Growing Success, 2010, p. 70).

Any formal identifications of exceptionalities, whether it be Autism or others, follow the established IPRC process. Once students are identified and/or placed in a Special Education program, the strategy for supporting students is locally developed based on the placement.

Once a TCDSB school receives information via an outside report or medical letter verifying a diagnosis, it is in turn reviewed by the appropriate school board service provider. Based on the information reviewed, the service provider can complete a Psycho-Educational assessment file note indicating whether or not the student meets TCDSB criteria for an identification.

Specific to Autism, an external assessment report or doctor's letter is received on its own merit. However, if more information is required for clarification purposes, there may be the need for an exchange of information meeting with the diagnosing doctor. This is the case regardless of a student's grade.

The TCDSB Special Services Autism Department has a multi-disciplinary team that can be accessed through the referral process. However, a student's diagnosis of Autism doesn't presuppose the involvement of the Autism Team. Involvement of this team is determined on a per-needs basis with a priority given to students whose diagnosis prevents them from achieving meaningful access to the curriculum.

Before a referral is considered, the responsibility is on the school to follow the School Based Support Team (SBST), Case Conference, and School Based Support Learning (multi-disciplinary) Team (SBSLT) process. School staff are required to show that they have been proactive in trying different strategies to support the student. The interventions available to students with Autism are locally determined, but can include support from support staff, support from the Special Education teacher (as determined by placement), access to the SBSLT members, or access to the Autism Team.

The goal of the Autism Team is to provide supports and services so that students are successful at school through building capacity within the schools. Services are provided using a tiered approach as outlined in the *Learning for All* (2013) document.

ii) Identifying and Supporting Student Needs:

Ministry curriculum documents exist for each of the subject areas in Elementary and Secondary levels of education. However, there are two foundational curriculum documents that provide teachers with detailed information and resources which promote learning for all as well as effective and appropriate instructional and assessment practices, in order to mitigate learning gaps and promote students' engagement in their own learning. They are:

a) Growing Success (2010)

b) Learning for All (2013)

Teachers routinely make professional judgments in order to ensure effective implementation of teaching and learning strategies that promote respect for individual student needs as well as collaborative learning opportunities. Teachers endeavour to create learning environments in which students feel valued and confident enough to take risks, make mistakes, and engage in learning growth opportunities. Students, according to their ability, are encouraged to become partners in their own learning.

In differentiating instruction according to students' interests, a teacher endeavours to increase the likelihood that any given lesson or project is highly engaging and personally meaningful for each student in the class. Teachers who know students' interests can vary projects, themes, and examples used in instruction to reflect those interests (Learning for All, 2013, p.18).

Teachers routinely make themselves available to provide additional support to students beyond formally-scheduled class times. The degree of support provided in these contexts will vary by student and can be established in response to collaboration between students and their teachers, and/or parents/guardians and teachers, particularly if persistent concerns emerge regarding knowledge acquisition.

iii) Addressing Learning Gaps:

It is not the policy of the TCDSB to promote fee-for-service on-line or other learning programs, or tutoring support for students enrolled in this Board.

Utilizing the concept of “universal design for learning,” it is the collective responsibility of all teachers to create the most equitable learning conditions for all students in order to promote their learning and maximize their potential. Schools and classrooms are places that are intended to promote learning for all.

8. TCDSB Parent Voice Survey

The results of the TCDSB Parent Voice Survey were shared publically in an information report entitled, “Parent Voice Survey Results 2018” that was tabled during the August 23, 2018 Regular Board meeting.

This will be brought back to SEAC as requested in the October 17, 2018 motion.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. A future update regarding the progress of the Special Services and IT teams’ work regarding the establishment of post-secondary information links on the Board’s public-facing website will be provided.

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.