



Special Education Superintendent Update

June 2020

Transition to High School Support for Parents of ME/DD-ISP Students


<https://sites.google.com/tcdsb.ca/meddtransitiontohighschool/home>

Transition to High School Support

FOR PARENTS OF ME/DD - ISP STUDENTS

Welcome

Hello and welcome to the support site designed to help parents and students with the transition from elementary school to high school for students who are entering ME/DD - ISP classes. This site has many resources for you to access at any time and will help to prepare you for the transition to high school.



Recorded Presentation

Watch the presentation for parents of students transitioning to a ME/DD ISP program. This presentation will go through the transition to high school process.

[Click Here - Frequently Asked Questions Tab](#)

Parent/Guardian Letter

Your child/daughter will be getting high school when we start to school. Thank you for this, we know it's a big step and we know how important it is for you.

Your child/daughter will be attending high school when we start to school. Thank you for this, we know it's a big step and we know how important it is for you.

The following are included in this letter:

- Parent/Guardian Letter
- Parent/Guardian Questionnaire
- Parent/Guardian Checklist
- Parent/Guardian Checklist
- Parent/Guardian Checklist

We are all looking forward to this new journey. The Parent/Guardian Letter and the Parent/Guardian Questionnaire are the first steps in this process. We are all looking forward to this new journey. The Parent/Guardian Letter and the Parent/Guardian Questionnaire are the first steps in this process.

Additional steps include:

- Parent/Guardian Checklist
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Thank you for your support during this transition process.

For Further Information, Contact: [Name] [Title] [Phone] [Email]

Parent Letter

This letter outlines the high school transition process at the TCDSB.

Elementary to Secondary School Transition Services

Parent/Guardian Questionnaire

Name of child: _____ Elementary School: _____ Secondary School: _____

1. List your child's strengths: _____

2. List your child's interests and hobbies: _____

3. What is your child most excited to learn about in high school? _____

4. How does your child show that he/she is ready? _____

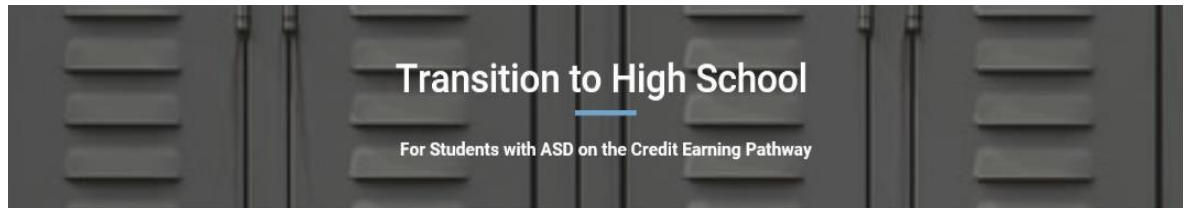
Parent Questionnaire

Please download, fill out and return to your child's elementary principal via email as soon as possible.



Transition to High School for Students with ASD on the Credit Earning Pathway

<https://sites.google.com/tcdsb.ca/transitiontohighschoolasd/home>



Welcome

Hello and welcome to the Transition to High School site. This site is designed to help students with ASD who are transitioning into the credit earning pathway and their parents/guardians. This site has many resources for you to access at any time and will help prepare you for the transition to high school.

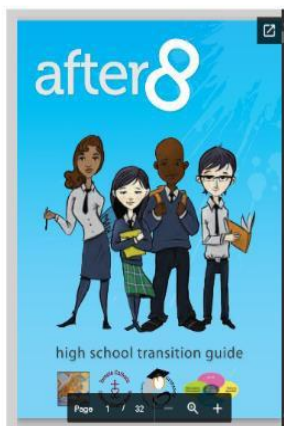
Students

This website has the information you did not even know you needed to know about high school. It covers topics like how to manage your locker, what to do in the cafeteria, who is available to help you, what kind of clubs are available, and more. When you are feeling nervous or anxious about going to your new school come back to this website to help ease those feelings.



Parents

Check out the Parent Resource section to find out how to support your teen's transition to high school. The section includes a questionnaire to send to your teen's high school in the fall and a presentation about the transition. Have a look at the FAQ section for potential questions you might have. It will also give you direction with regards to who to contact about specific concerns you might have.



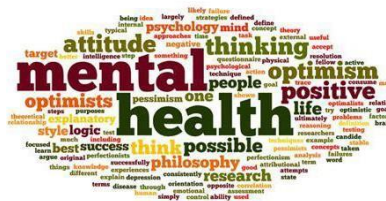
After 8 Student Book

After 8 is the TCDSB High School Transition Guide for all students in the TCDSB. This resource can answer lots of questions you might have about high school and provides additional information to supplement the information you find on this website.

Created by the TCDSB Autism Programs and Services Transition Team, 2020.



Our teams of Social Workers, Psychologists and Mental Health Professionals have collectively intervened and continue to help over 2,100 students and families to date since school closure.



The Mental Health Team has:

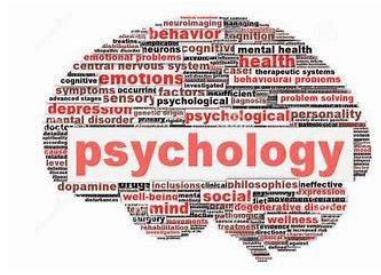
- Delivered two live webinars to staff on **Staff-Well-Being: Fostering our own well-being** in May and June with about 40 participants in each session.
- Other team members have offered other Mental Health webinars locally to the schools they service.
- Distributed a June newsletter for parents focusing on mental wellness and kindness as a transition to summer.
- Distributed Tip Sheets for Educators on Anxiety, Attention problems, Substance Use, Eating problems, Mood problems.
- Distributed Tip Sheets for Parents on Behaviour problems and Substance Use.
- 109 Health and Physical Education teachers from both secondary and elementary panels were in-serviced on Stress Lessons from the Psychology Foundation of Canada. Teachers are planning to implement strategies from this program in their schools in the fall and winter terms 2020-2021. This 5-7 week evidence-based program fosters resiliency in students by helping them develop positive coping strategies.

Mental Health Newsletter – June 2020

<https://www.tcdsb.org/ProgramsServices/SpecialEducation/mhs/newsletters/2020%20June%20Newsletter.pdf>



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Psychology staff have started live presentations for the school community via Zoom. The first three offerings of *TCDSB Psychology Presents* are:

- “Positive Parenting” (JK to Grade 3)
- “Positive Parenting” (Grades 4-8).
- “Transition to Post-Secondary” (students and their families)

Our first parenting series attracted more than 200 participants! Presentations on various topics will continue for the remainder of the school year.

Also, the Psychology Department Twitter account (twitter.com/TCDSB_Psych) is under new management and better than ever. You’ll find information on school psychology, as well as resources and events related to student learning and mental health.



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The Social Work department is currently providing support to 1,700 students via tele counselling.

They are also "visiting" virtual classrooms with teachers to deliver social-emotional programming sessions. We continue to provide crisis support for mental health emergencies and bereavement counseling for those who have lost loved ones during this time. This has involved partnering with community agencies and few in-person wellness checks.

We work closely with The Angel Foundation to facilitate financial support for families with food insecurity and other imminent needs.

The department meets regularly for professional development and supervision.

We remain engaged with School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) and look forward to partnering with our colleagues in planning the return to school protocol for supporting student well-being.



- Weekly speech and language calendars and newsletters were shared with educators and families for each level (primary, junior, intermediate) and resources to support Deaf/Hard of Hearing students were also provided across the system.
- The Speech and Language department hosted a number of *TALK TIP TIME* professional development webinars for teachers and support staff. Sessions were well received and attended, with more sessions planned for June.

Four sessions were offered for teachers highlighting parent-friendly lesson plans to support students with communication needs.

Four sessions were offered by the department's **AAC**cess Team (**AAC** Can Empower **S**tudents to **S**peak) to ME/DD- ISP teachers and support staff to help support students who use technology for communication purposes.





Special Services Staff have been working on the following:

- Intakes for students who are new to our board and who may have individual needs. They are doing intakes via telephone calls with parents. The report they write-up is shared with the school to help the school better prepare for the student's entry to school. The focus is always on welcoming the student and aiming to meet the student's needs for a smooth transition to school.
- Continued support to teachers on Distance Learning as they work collaboratively with our colleagues from the Curriculum Team.
- Resources and ideas that teachers can take advantage of as they plan for students with specific needs in their classrooms. The site is updated regularly.
- Providing professional development in the form of webinars for our staff.
- Collaboration with the Transition Team to help develop resources for students moving from grade 8 Multiple Exceptionalities/Developmental Disability (ME/DD) ISP classrooms to Grade 9 ME/DD ISP classrooms and for students with Autism transitioning to secondary school:

<https://sites.google.com/tcdsb.ca/meddtransitiontohighschool/home>

<https://sites.google.com/tcdsb.ca/transitiontohighschoolasd/home>

- Assisting school administrators and the Chief of IPRC and Assessment as they conduct the IPRC reviews via zoom.
- Involvement in the exchange of information meetings with schools to ensure that the individual students strengths, needs and interests are shared and planned for in the upcoming year.

A great deal of good work is being done by all to ensure that students, teachers and families are supported.



Protocols for Supporting Students with Special Education Needs

Identification, Placement, and Review Committees (IPRCs):

Ministry Guidance to Boards (updated May 2020)

- IPRCs should continue to conduct annual reviews.
- Any initial IPRC decisions that were in progress at the start of the school closure period should also continue.
- Going forward, as set out in Ontario Regulation 181/98, initial IPRCs may be requested by parents and/or initiated by boards following the appropriate processes.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs):

Ministry Guidance (updated May 2020):

- For some students, online learning is challenging, and work should be provided in alternate formats and/or with guidance on how the work should be staged and delivered to the student, to help parents and students prioritize and make connections in their learning.
- educators and education workers should continue to connect individually with families to listen, ask about the student's needs and strengths and work together to respond as circumstances shift.
- Flexibility and a differentiated approach are key.

TCDSB Protocol:

The Term/Semester 2 IEP should already be completed, although it may have required updating for the Distance Learning Environment.

Report Cards:

TCDSB Protocol:

Please refer to the TCDSB protocol for Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting.

Mental Health Supports:

Ministry Guidance:

- Having school-based mental health staff providing remote supports to students, including the use of virtual telehealth practices by regulated mental health professionals.
- Providing ongoing consultation to support promotion of positive mental health, coping strategies when learning at home, maintaining healthy routines and general wellness for students and families.



- Using platforms that are fully accessible to persons with disabilities to engage.
- SMH-ON continues to prepare a number of resources for parents/families, students, and educators to consider during school closures. These resources can be found on the SMH-ON website at <https://smho-smso.ca/>.
- Specific supports designed for school-based mental health professionals are being shared through a private community of practice.
- To support access to virtual care for students working with school board-employed regulated health professionals, the ministry has partnered with Ontario Health (OTN) to provide school boards with a free trial of OTN's video conferencing platform to support video visits with students, until October 31, 2020.
- The platform is used by hospitals and other regulated health professionals in the province. Ontario Health advises that its platform complies with the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*.
- Ontario Health will provide online learning and support to registered users, who will be onboarded in groups.
- School Mental Health Ontario will provide learning to school board employed regulated mental health professionals to support the use of virtual care for student mental health.

Empower™ Programs/Procedures:

During Distance Learning and 2020-2021 School Year Only

- Empower™ programs are research-based programs with specific operational compliance parameters established within the TCDSB/Hospital For Sick Children (HSC) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Existing Empower™ programs will resume upon return to regular school operations and **continue for the duration of 2020-2021 school year**
- Wrap-around to the 2020-2021 school year will allow for the completion of all remaining lessons as well as the consolidation of learning of lessons taught prior to the Covid-19 closure.

Procedure:

- Communication letter will be sent to parent/guardian
- Exit meeting will take place when program is complete

Rationale:

- Limitations on program admissions/demissions remain consistent with TCDSB Distance Learning procedures for Special Services specialty and Intensive Support programs (ISPs).
- Students will be able to resume the program and learn/consolidate all Empower strategies



New Empower programs must start at the beginning of the school year and require the duration of the school year to be completed.

New Programs/Programs New to Schools:

- Due to programming/staffing decisions made within the regular staffing timelines (prior to the Covid-19 closure), some schools had been selected to receive a new program or a program new to their location.
- New programs/programs new to schools are required to begin at Lesson One due to new teacher assignments
- All new Empower™ teachers need to begin teaching at Lesson One and progress through all Empower™ program lessons in order to be considered a trained Empower™ teacher (as per HSC guidelines)

Applications

Internal

- Internal applications will proceed for programs beginning at Lesson One upon return to regular school operations
- SBSLT/Case Conference will occur prior to start of program (deadline: mid-September 2020)
- Criteria as established in the TCDSB Empower Handbook

External

- No external applications will be received
- No HUB Transfer students will be admitted for 2020-2021 school year

Schools with Changes to Empower Allocations in 2020-2021:

- Program ends
- Principal will send a letter for communication to parent/guardian
- Parent/guardian waiver obtained for release from program
- Meeting occurs if requested by parent/guardian

Transfer students returning to Home School

- Home-school principal will ensure that students are monitored through the SBSLT process



2020 Summer School and Summer Learning Opportunities: Special Education and Mental Health - Other Funding

The Ministry of Education is investing \$22 million, funded through the Priorities and Partnership Fund (PPF), to provide supports to students with special education needs and mental health concerns over the summer. This will allow schools boards to offer voluntary summer employment to supporting staffing in the summer months.

This funding will be allocated for:

- regulated mental health professionals to provide direct supports to students on existing caseloads and to respond to crisis situations (\$8 million)
- staffing resources to support students with special education needs in both expanded and new summer program offerings including special education resource teachers and educational assistants (\$6.4 million), and
- in-person transition back to school programs and/or supports in the two weeks prior to the start of the 2020-21 school year for students with special education needs and mental health concerns (\$7.6 million).

School boards have the flexibility to design programs within their funding allocation to address student need based on local priorities.

The following costs are eligible expenditures:

- ✓ Educational staff (teachers, educational assistants)
- ✓ Professional/paraprofessional staff (e.g. mental health professionals, Speech-Language Pathologists, psychologists, child and youth worker, etc.)
- ✓ Program Materials/classroom supplies
- ✓ Administrative/Supervisory Costs

Transfer payment agreements (TPAs) will be provided to all school boards. Additional program details will be provided with the agreements.

TCDSB Ministry Allocated Funds and Considerations:

Summer Mental Health Professionals	\$219, 101.00
Summer Staffing Supports: Special Education	\$193, 738.00
Summer Transition Programs: Special Education and Mental Health	\$201, 224.00

The TCDSB Special Services Department is currently working on proposals for Summer Distance Learning as well as scenarios that could include face-to-face learning (pending any change to the current ministerial school-closure order).

Post-Pandemic Pending List as of June 10, 2020

	Title/Description
Reports of Officials for Information by the Board/Other Committees	<p><u>From April 22, 2020 SEAC Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduation Statistics for Students with Special Education Needs <p><u>From March 25, 2020 SEAC Meeting - cancelled</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math (STEAM) and Students with an Individualized Education plan Safe Schools Committee Mental Health Committee
Consideration of Motions for which previous notice has been given	<p><u>From November 20, 2019 SEAC Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of Motion from Sandra Mastronardi regarding Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) and Accessibility Consideration of Motion from Melanie Battaglia regarding Third Party Protocol
Notice of Motion	<p><u>From February 19, 2020 SEAC Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of Motion from Trustee Angela Kennedy on Operational Procedures and Protocol for appealing student exclusions as clearly outlined in the Education Act
Unfinished Business from Previous Meetings	<p><u>From February 19, 2020 SEAC Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of Motion from Tyler Munro regarding Individual Education Plan Completion Rate – Report Request
Items deferred from Previous Meetings	<p><u>From April 22, 2020 SEAC Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Policy on Age-Appropriate Placement-Curriculum and Program Supports (originally from February 11, 2020 Governance and Policy Committee Meeting) <p><u>From January 22, 2020 SEAC meeting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Education Superintendent Update Parent Reaching Out (PRO) Regional Grant 2019-2020 - \$5,000; Communication from Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board; Set SEAC Goals for this year (from the Draft Annual Calendar); Special Plan Review (from the Draft Annual Calendar); Review of Policy: Special Education Programs and Services (S.P.01); Inquiry from Sandra Mastronardi regarding Student Trustee Report; and SEAC Email Requirements and Internal Member Contact Information Autism Ontario 2020 Pre-Budget Consultation Submission Pending List as at February 19, 2020 <p><u>From November 20, 2019 SEAC Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inquiry from Tyler Munro regarding Special Education Fair Inquiry from Tyler Munro regarding Email Blasts;
List of Communications	<p><u>From March 25, 2020 SEAC Meeting - cancelled</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Essex County District School Board Letter to Minister of Education, February 20, 2020
Annual Calendar/Pending List	<p><u>From March 25, 2020 SEAC Meeting - cancelled</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEAC Annual Calendar Pending List as of February 19, 2020 Pending List as at March 25, 2020