

Roles and Responsibilities

The Ministry of Education has begun to define roles and responsibilities in elementary and secondary education in several key areas:

- legislative and policy framework;
- funding;
- school system management;
- programs and curriculum;

It is important that all involved in special education understand their roles and responsibilities, which are outlined below.

The Ministry of Education:

- defines, through the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services, and prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality;
- ensures that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils;
- establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model. The model consists of the Foundation Grant, the Special Education Grant, and other special purpose grants;
- requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education;
- sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement;
- requires school boards to maintain special education plans, review them annually and submit amendments to the ministry;
- requires schools boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEAC);
- establishes Special Education Tribunals to hear disputes between parents and school boards regarding the identification and placement of exceptional pupils;
- establishes a provincial Advisory Council on Special Education to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to special education programs and services;
- operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

The Toronto Catholic District School Board:

- educates students to their full potential in a school community formed by Catholic beliefs and traditions;
- establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda and our Catholic philosophy;
- monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- establishes policy regarding the delivery of special education programs and services;
- provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for the exceptional pupils of the board;
- works to secure sufficient funds in a timely manner to provide programs and services and reports on the expenditures for special education as required;
- has undertaken an extensive consultation process with the various stakeholders in the development of its plan;
- three implementation teams are presently undertaking a gap analysis and will develop strategies in the area of accountability, delivery of service, communication, staff development and individual education plan compliance;
- reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education;
- provides statistical reports to the ministry as required and as requested;
- has prepared a parent guide (available in English, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Ukrainian, Chinese, Tamil, Tagalog, Polish, Braille, and Large Print) to provide parents with information about special education programs, services and procedures;
- establishes one or more IPRCs to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them;
- establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee and provides an opportunity for SEAC to be heard prior to making decisions which impact on special education;
- takes SEAC's recommendations into account before making a decision which impacts on Special Education.
- provides professional development to staff on special education.

The Special Education Advisory Committee: (SEAC)

- makes recommendations to the board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board;
- opportunities for discussion and dialogue regarding these recommendations will be provided;
- participates in the board's annual review of its special education plan;
- participates in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education within the time constraints provided;
- reviews the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education;
- invites ongoing information/presentation regarding new initiatives within the TCDSB and partnerships;

- advocates for needs of exceptional students including sufficient resources for equipment, transportation and staff to enable the delivery of service;
- shares information with respect to the Associations represented;
- **The school principal:**
 - promotes the education of the whole child within the context of a Catholic community rooted in Gospel values;
 - carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, and through board policies;
 - communicates Ministry of Education and school board expectations to staff;
 - strives to provide that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes;
 - communicates board policies and procedures about special education to staff, students; and parents;
 - ensures that appropriate assessments are requested if necessary and that parental consent is obtained. Utilizes interpreters as required;
 - ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, through an IPRC, is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations and board policies;
 - consults with parents and with school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional pupils;
 - ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements;
 - ensures that parents and students 16 and older are consulted in the development of the IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP;
 - ensures the delivery of the program set out in the IEP.

The teacher:

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda in keeping with the Catholic values espoused by the Toronto Catholic District School Board;
- follows board policies and procedures regarding special education as outlined in our delivery of services model;
- maintains up to date knowledge of special education practices;
- works with special education staff and parents to develop the IEP for an exceptional pupil;
- provides the program for the exceptional pupil, as outlined in the IPRC and the IEP;
- communicates the student's progress to parents;
- works with other school board staff to review and update the student's IEP.

The special education teacher, in addition to the responsibilities listed above under "the teacher":

- holds qualifications, in accordance with Regulation 298, to teach special education;
- monitors the student's progress with reference to the IEP and modifies the program as necessary in conjunction with the regular class teacher and parent;
- assists in providing academic assessments for exceptional pupils.

The parent/guardian, through the Parents Guide to Special Education (Appendix A) and dialogue with school staff:

- becomes familiar with and informed about board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child;
- participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities as outlined in the Toronto Catholic District School Board's delivery model process;
- participates in the development of the IEP;
- works in participation with the school staff working with the student;
- supports the student at home;
- works with the school principal and teachers to foster an enabling learning environment;
- is responsible for the student's attendance at school;
- keeps school staff informed of changes which may impact on learning as the child works towards his/her full potential.

Within the TCDSB our vision of students are students who:

- are formed in the Catholic faith
- pursue academic excellence
- demonstrate relevant knowledge and ability
- display self-esteem and self-respect
- strive to be the best they can be
- demonstrate skills for developing and maintaining personal and family wellness
- apply Christian values to life's opportunities, challenges and choices
- demonstrate global perspective and community responsibility
- a discerning believer formed in the Catholic faith community
- an effective communicator
- a reflective and creative thinker
- a self-directed, responsible, life long learner
- a collaborative contributor
- a caring family member
- a responsible citizen

In addition exceptional students within the TCDSB:

- will become effective communicators within the scope of their potential
- will make a commitment to work consistently in achieving the expectations that have been outlined in their Individual Education Plan especially at the intermediate and secondary level
- will learn to be self advocates and learn to effectively communicate their needs to their teachers so that appropriate accommodations and modifications can be determined and implemented.
- willingness to attend and work hard.
- will demonstrate a willingness to attend class and to work hard.