

Special Education Superintendent Update

April 2022



***Upcoming parent engagement series presentations
from the following teams.
Watch for more details to be shared.***

Mental Health

Speech & Language

Psychology



On Thursday, March 3, 2022 from 7:00-8:00 pm, a webinar was offered for parents of children in secondary school. The Programming and Assessment Teachers (PATs) along with Chief of IPRC and Chief of Autism, provided parents information about the Individual Education Plan. The session was well attended and positive feedback was provided to the team.

On April 5, our Parent Engagement Series welcomed *Behaviour Matters* to present on Successfully Fostering Social-Emotional Skills in Children. This workshop helped parents identify and support positive coping and behaviour.



Over 100 TCDSB staff are engaging in Autism training offered through the Geneva Center. This training opportunity offers different courses that supports learning about foundational

Autism and Applied Behaviour Analysis in order to continue building our understanding and capacity of Autism.





The Social Work Department, in partnership with colleagues in Special Services, are responding to the growing number of Ukrainian newcomers entering our system. We are working with community partners, the *Angel Foundation for Learning* and the TCDSB community to ensure we are responding in a culturally appropriate manner that recognizes trauma informed best practices.



Upon return from March Break, a communication was sent to school administrators highlighting resources to assist all staff in continuing to support the mental health and wellbeing of all students. Some examples of these resources include:

- *School Mental Health Ontario (SMH-ON)* info sheets that contain helpful tips as staff continue to support students with regards to the crisis in Ukraine;
- *Nurturing Our Catholic Community (NCC)* Prayer Resources, including prayers for Ukraine;
- Calendar resource with daily brief mental health activities for use in the classroom;
- Information about how to identify and support students who are struggling.

School Mental Health Ontario (SMH-ON) is currently inviting applications for students in grades 7-11 to join their provincial student reference group – *Thrive SMH*. This student group amplifies the voices of students and supports equitable school mental health with a focus on reducing stigma and promoting mental health in Ontario schools. More information and application can be found at <https://smho-smso.ca/jointhrivesmh/>

We are working closely with our Student Mental Health Advisory Council to plan our upcoming annual [Stop the Stigma Symposium](#) on April 7th featuring special guest, Asante Haughton. This year we also organized a pre-symposium educator event on March 31st where Asante drew from his professional and lived experiences to speak about creating safe and inclusive spaces for our students.

