



REPORT TO

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION 2015-16 (PART 1)

He gives strength to the weary and increased the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. Isaiah 40:29-30

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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 rooted in the love of Christ. We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge and to lead lives of faith, hope and charity



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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. An accountability framework was established for the annual review of all special education programs and services in order that student achievement and well-being be reported and that programs and services could be continually renewed and improved. The report usually includes an overview of student achievement as it pertains to students with special needs as well as a review of the Accountability Framework Committee work by exceptionality.
2. This report will focus on the summary of achievement of all Special Needs students, rather than on the specifics of the work of each committee for reasons outlined in the Background of the report.

B. PURPOSE

1. This report is an annual standing report on the rolling calendar for the Student Achievement Committee. The 2014-15 report went to the Board of Trustees last on April 23, 2015.
2. This report provides an initial examination of student achievement for 2015 on the EQAO assessments, with a broad strokes overview of achievement of students with special needs and comparisons over the last few years.
3. A more detailed report will be forthcoming in the spring of 2016.

C. BACKGROUND

1. Beginning in 2010, TCDSB began to measure student achievement of special education students on an annual basis through the establishment of an Accountability Framework for Special Education.
2. The purpose of the Accountability Framework is to conduct an annual review of Special Education services and programs through the lens of student achievement. As such, programs and services are reviewed for effectiveness to ensure ongoing continued improvement across the different exceptionalities.
3. The Accountability Framework for Special Education, as applied to each of the Ministry recognized exceptionalities and placements, consists of two distinct parts: a **descriptive overview** of the department's program *and* a

corresponding **measure or goal for improvement**. The goals are an integral part of the TCDSB Board Learning Improvement Plan and along with the program description, they can be found on the TCDSB public website.

4. Traditionally, the work of the Accountability Framework Committee is shared through the context of each exceptionality's goal setting and their analysis of student achievement results.
5. Additionally, an analysis is provided on student achievement by exceptionality, where appropriate.
6. This year there have been a number of impediments to providing this information with the same timeline as in previous years. Due to the recent job action in the summer and fall of 2015, there was a delay in the reporting of EQAO results, causing a delay in the analysis of results specific to students with special needs which is an internal process. This analysis is also used to inform the ongoing work of the AFSE committees.
7. Moreover, the recent realignment of the Special Education Department and the significant changes to management and staffing within the Department, which has meant a need to realign the responsibilities of the Accountability Framework Committees, thus slowing down the existing processes as the system realigns. As such, the AFSE committee work is generally behind previous year's work as a readjustment and realignment of processes is underway.
8. It is expected that the work will be re-established as the department stabilizes and thus a more detailed report of the work of each committee, where applicable, will be forthcoming in the next few months, with a goal of spring, 2016.
9. This report examines the EQAO results for students with Special Education support and their achievement results and trends over the last five years.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. The following section summarizes the EQAO results for Grade 3, Grade 6, Grade 9 and the Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) first time eligible students.

2. In grade 3, results for all students decreased by 1% in Reading, 2% in writing and 2% in Mathematics while students identified with special needs remained at the same level in reading at 39% , while decreasing 1% in writing and 1% in Mathematics. (figure 1) Although the differences in achievement between all students and special needs students within the system continue to demonstrate, significant differences, the results of special needs students continue be relatively level. It is not possible to compare to provincial results due to exceptional circumstances.

Figure 1

Percentage at or above the provincial standard – Levels 3 and 4

Note: Ontario percentages are in parenthesis; n indicates the number of TCDSB students in the specified category

GRADE 3
All Students

	Reading	Writing	Math
2010 – 2011	64% (65%) n = 5693	75% (73%) n = 5693	67% (69%) n = 5857
2011 – 2012	66% (66%) n = 5863	79% (76%) n = 5863	68% (68%) n = 6059
2012 – 2013	67% (68%) n = 5692	79% (77%) n = 5693	67% (67%) n = 5903
2013 – 2014	70% (70%) n = 5848	81% (78%) n = 5848	66% (67%) n = 6051
2014 - 2015	69% (EC) n = 5,803	79% (EC) n = 5,803	64% (EC) n = 6,010

Students with Special Needs

	Reading	Writing	Math
2010 – 2011	28% (30%) n = 881	45% (48%) n = 881	34% (34%) n = 887
2011 – 2012	28% (31%) n = 967	51% (52%) n = 967	34% (34%) n = 972
2012 – 2013	33% (36%) n = 1028	53% (53%) n = 1028	33% (34%) n = 1042
2013 – 2014	39% (40%) n = 1086	57% (57%) n = 1086	33% (33%) n = 1105
2014 - 2015	39% (EC) n = 1,033	56% (EC) n = 1,033	32% (EC) n = 1,046

Figure 2

Percentage at or above the provincial standard – Levels 3 and 4

Note: Ontario percentages are in parenthesis; n indicates the number of TCDSB students in the specified category

**GRADE 6
All Students**

	Reading	Writing	Math
2010 – 2011	70% (74%) n = 6652	75% (73%) n = 6652	57% (58%) n = 6648
2011 – 2012	71% (75%) n = 6384	76% (74%) n = 6384	58% (58%) n = 6371
2012 – 2013	72% (77%) n = 6519	78% (76%) n = 6519	55% (57%) n = 6521
2013 – 2014	74% (79%) n = 5980	81% (78%) n = 5980	53% (54%) n = 5986
2014 - 2015	78% (EC) n = 6,235	80% (EC) n = 6,235	52% (EC) n = 6,233

Students with Special Needs

	Reading	Writing	Math
2010 – 2011	30% (36%) n = 1240	36% (36%) n = 1240	17% (20%) n = 1241
2011 – 2012	35% (40%) n = 1185	43% (40%) n = 1185	20% (20%) n = 1179
2012 – 2013	35% (44%) n = 1347	46% (43%) n = 1347	15% (21%) n = 1347
2013 – 2014	39% (47%) n = 1158	50% (46%) n = 1158	16% (19%) n = 1160
2014 - 2015	45% (EC) n = 1,230	47% (EC) n = 1,230	15% (EC) n = 1,228

3. In Figure 2, achievement results for grade 6 students demonstrate and increase of 4 % in reading, a decline of 1% in writing and a decline of 1% in Mathematics. For students with Special Needs, an increase of 6% occurred in Reading however both Writing and Mathematics demonstrated a decline of 3% and 1% over last year’s results. In reading, grade 6 students have demonstrated an increase of 15% over the last five years and an increase of 11% in Writing. Mathematics continues to be an area to be developed both by grade 6 students overall (decline of 5%) as well as by students with special needs with a slower decline than the overall population, although experiencing increases and decreases over the years.

Figure 3

Percentage at or above the provincial standard – Levels 3 and 4

Note: Ontario percentages are in parenthesis; n indicates the number of TCDSB students in the specified category

GRADE 9

All Students

	Academic Math	Applied Math
2010 – 2011	83% (83%) n = 4521	38% (42%) n = 2307
2011 – 2012	83% (84%) n = 4816	39% (44%) n = 2361
2012 – 2013	84% (84%) n = 4598	40% (44%) n = 2117
2013 – 2014	83% (85%) n = 4742	44% (47%) n = 2215
2014 - 2015	82% (EC) n = 4610	44% (EC) n = 1979

Students with Special Needs

	Academic Math	Applied Math
2010 – 2011	71% (73%) n = 179	27% (33%) n = 737
2011 – 2012	71% (72%) n = 182	28% (35%) n = 705
2012 – 2013	72% (73%) n = 212	32% (35%) n = 636
2013 – 2014	71% (74%) n = 188	35% (39%) n = 740
2014 - 2015	72% (EC) n = 228	34% (EC) n = 715

- With regards to Grade 9 Mathematics, TCDSB has experienced a decline of 1% from the previous years in Academic math with no change in Applied Math from the previous year, remaining at 44% of students achieving the provincial standard of level 3 and 4. In the special education group, Academic Math has remained relatively steady over the last 5 years while Applied Math has declined by 1% this year. Applied math in the special education group has increased 6% over the last 5 years.

Figure 4

Fully Participating First Time Eligible Students – Percentage of Successful Students

Note: Ontario percentages are in parenthesis

OSSLT

All Students

OSSLT	Number of participating students	Percentage
2010 - 2011	6819	83% (83%)
2011 - 2012	6369	82% (82%)
2012 - 2013	6608	82% (82%)
2013 - 2014	6284	84% (83%)
2014 - 2015	8044	83% (82%)

Students with Special Needs

OSSLT	Number of participating students	Percentage
2010 - 2011	1013	54% (52%)
2011 - 2012	958	53% (52%)
2012 - 2013	896	54% (51%)
2013 - 2014	879	57% (51%)
2014 - 2015	901	56% (54%)

5. Figure 4 demonstrates a 1% decrease on the percentage of students successfully passing the OSSLT on their first time, although this continues to be a percentage point over the provincial results. In regards to special needs students, the percentage of students passing the first writing of the OSSLT continues to be above the provincial achievement even though last year this group declined by 1%.
6. Although there continues to be disparity between achievement of students with special needs and all students, students receiving special education supports overall continue to remain relatively steady or demonstrated increases over time.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. EQAO results continue to be one of the main comparison data used year over year and although it may not provide an extensive profile of student achievement, it continues to serve as a benchmark, allowing an annual comparison of achievement.
2. For some exceptionalities, such as Blind/Low Vision, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Developmental Disability, Giftedness, Mild Intellectual Disability and Multiple Exceptionalities, and Behaviour EQAO results may not be the best measure of student achievement either due to the nature of the exceptionality or the limited student sample that can produce erroneous conclusions. The Spring report will endeavour to use measures that are conducive to these exceptionalities.
3. Moreover, a more comprehensive approach will review the goals and/or programs as outlined in the 2014-15 AFSE report and listed below:
 - a. *There is an understanding that the use of EQAO goals to foster student achievement and well-being is not useful for students with Blind/Low Vision, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Developmental Disability, Giftedness, Mild Intellectual Disability and Multiple Exceptionalities. Further, the aggregate EQAO information for Behaviour comprises so few students that if EQAO is used it must be used with caution in making system decisions as the results in most cases reflect specific individual circumstances.*
 - b. *JUMP Math is being introduced and supported in all Intensive Support Programs across the exceptionalities.*
 - c. *Lexia literacy support is being provided as required across the system as a Tier Two and a Tier Three intervention.*
 - d. *The support demands created by Full Day Learning present a range of significant challenges including physical, medical, behavioural and curricular needs. Staff will address this need through the revision of the Kindergarten Intervention Needs Development (KIND) Intensive Support Program shifting to a focus on capacity building at the school level.*

- e. *Intensive Support Program Teams for Behaviour to support students with social/emotional needs are being investigated through action research as one alternative to the Intensive Support Program Behaviour Classroom.*
- f. *Exemption rates for students with Autism are declining however still too high. Staff are addressing this successfully through newly developed guidelines for staff working with parents and students.*
- g. *The focus of instructional improvement related to the achievement and well-being of students identified with Giftedness will be delivered and measured in relation to students' organization and self-regulation learning skills as most all of them meet or exceed the Provincial standards in literacy and numeracy.*
- h. *In the targeted areas of reading, mathematics and credit accumulation our results were mixed for students with a Learning Disability. We did not meet our elementary mathematics target and in fact did worse. However, the trend is positive for students in Grade Nine. In reading our results were flat in the primary and junior assessments and did not meet our annualized goal of 3 percent improvement however with respect to the secondary assessment (OSSLT) we exceeded our goal through a 7 percent increase of students achieving at or above the Provincial standard. EQAO and CAT4 results from students who participated in Empower Reading indicate significant reading gains across all measures. We did not increase the percentage of students with LD who earned 16 credits by the end of Grade 10 however the percentage of students who earned 14 credits was 86 percent compared to 90 percent for all students. Given the mixed results we will continue with our Empower Reading programs and strategies, focus on Learning Skills for all students with LD and introduce a new strategy for elementary mathematics achievement through the use of JUMP Math resources and support.*
- i. *We did meet our gap closing goals in the Primary Division Provincial assessments for students with Language Impairment however we did not meet our goals in the Junior Division. The reasons are unclear and so we plan to continue our goals to close the gap between students with LI and all students. To help us do that we will continue our work with Early Learning, provide professional development opportunities for our ISP Teachers to be able to deliver more strategies which support social and*

language development and pilot a new evidence-based resource: Focussed Intervention Program for Phonemic Awareness (FIPPA).

- j. The aggregate achievement and well-being goals developed for elementary students with Mild Intellectual Disability will now be expressed and measured through the percentage of students who achieve at Levels 3 and 4 in Language Arts and Number Sense and Numeration expectations as described in the Individual Education Plan and reported on the Provincial Report Card. Professional development for staff is being provided in developing the Individual Education Plan with these achievement goals in mind.*
- k. The aggregate achievement and well-being goals developed for students with Multiple Exceptionalities and/or Developmental Disability are expressed and measured through the number of successful functional literacy and numeracy expectations met in the Individual Education Plan. These measures focus teachers to set and meet semester based achievement targets. Professional development for staff is being provided on an ongoing basis.*
- l. Improvements in the achievement and well-being of our Blind / Low Vision students will be linked to providing all eligible students with appropriate, individual accommodations for all Provincial assessments.*
- m. Improvements in the achievement and well-being of our Deaf and Hard of Hearing students will be linked to targets related to the use of hearing assistance technologies which permit students to access the curriculum fully.*

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.