



REPORT TO

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

ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION 2015-16 (PART 2)

But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." – Matthew 19:14

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
March 23, 2016, April 13, 2016	May 5, 2016	Click here to enter a date.

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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



G. Poole

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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a follow up to the Accountability Framework for Special Education 2015-16 (Part 1) which focused primarily on special education student achievement on EQAO and OSSLT as compared to the overall population.

This report is Part 2 and will focus on four primary areas as outlined below:

- Reporting on Overall achievement (breakdown by exceptionality where feasible/ appropriate)
- Reporting on Safe Schools information for 2014-15
- Reporting on the ongoing work of the accountability framework committees as listed below:
 - i. Autism
 - ii. Behaviour
 - iii. Blind/Low Vision (BLV)
 - iv. Deaf/ Hard of Hearing (DHH)
 - v. Gifted
 - vi. Language Impairment (LI)
 - vii. Learning Disability (LD)
 - viii. Mild Intellectual Disability (MID)
 - ix. Multiple Exceptionalities/Developmental Delays (ME/DD)
- Update on Special Education Program Implementation

B. PURPOSE

- This report endeavours to provide further specific information on student achievement by identification where appropriate with the understanding that where the sample size is small for certain populations, the group of students who are actually eligible to write the assessment are even smaller. Reporting on such small samples is not helpful due to the high degree of variability due to the varying sample sizes year upon year.

C. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS/METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Part 1 – Overall Achievement of Students receiving Special Education support(s)

2016 A large proportion of students with Special Education supports participate in the Grades 3, 6 and 9 EQAO assessments and the Grade 10 OSSLT. Given the wide range of performance on these assessments and considerable differences in the prevalence of certain exceptionalities, it would not be appropriate or feasible to report on some exceptionalities.

2017 The charts below show EQAO and OSSLT achievement results over 5 years for the following exceptionalities: Autism, Language Impaired (LI), Learning Disability (LD).

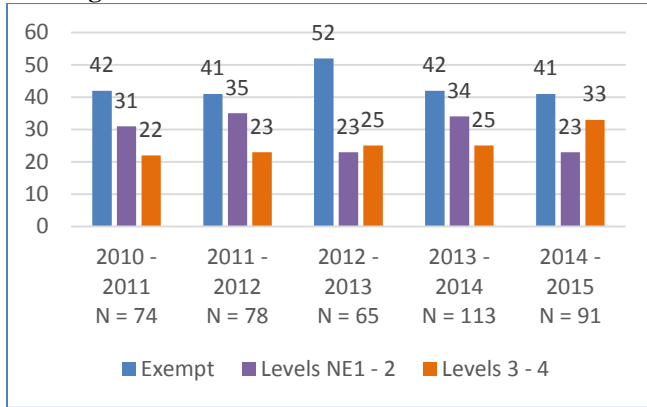
Notes regarding the bar charts:

1. For Autism, the EQAO categories displayed in the bar charts are: Grade 3 and 6 - Exempted, Levels NE1-2, Levels 3-4
Grade 9 - No Data, Below Levels 1-2, Levels 3-4
2. For LI and LD, as the rates of Exemption on EQAO have been under 8% in all assessments in 2014/2015, they were not included in the bar charts. The categories in the charts are:
Grade 3 and 6 - Levels NE1-1, Level 2, Levels 3-4
Grade 9 – Levels Below Level 1-1, Level 2, Levels 3-4
3. For OSSLT, Successful and Not Successful percentages are based on those who are Fully Participating. On the OSSLT, for Autism (not for LI or LD), students who are not working towards on OSSD may be exempted from this requirement.
4. OSSLC indicates the percentage of student who would be fulfilling the Literacy requirement through the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC).
5. Not Reported (N/R) indicates the number of participating students are *fewer than 10* in a group.

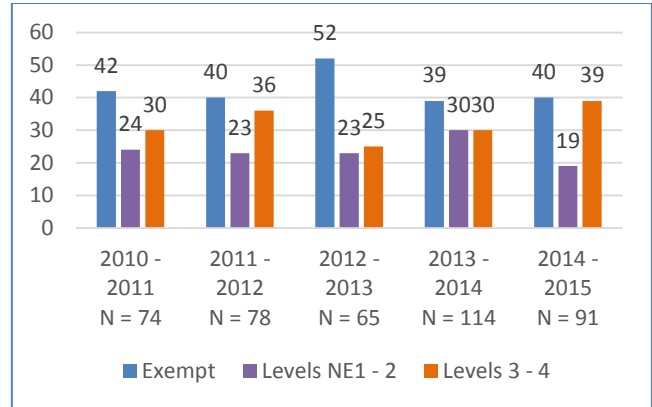
a) Students with Special Needs Identified as **Autism**: EQAO and OSSLT Results Over 5 Years

EQAO Grade 3 – Percentage of Students

Reading

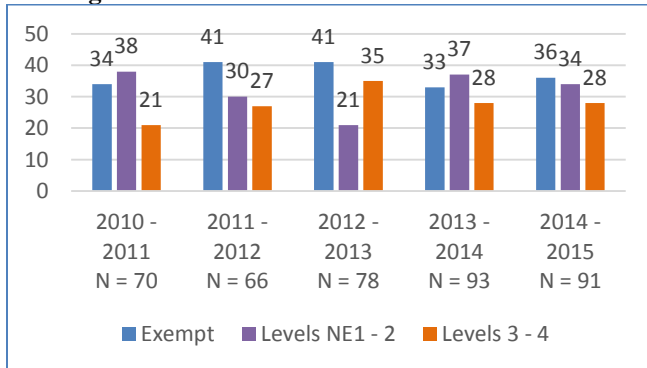


Math

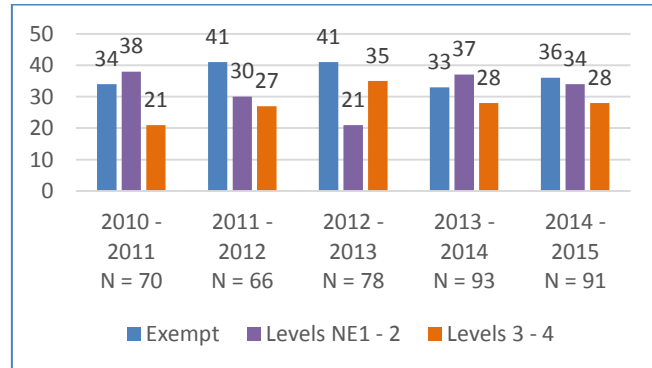


EQAO Grade 6 – Percentage of Students

Reading

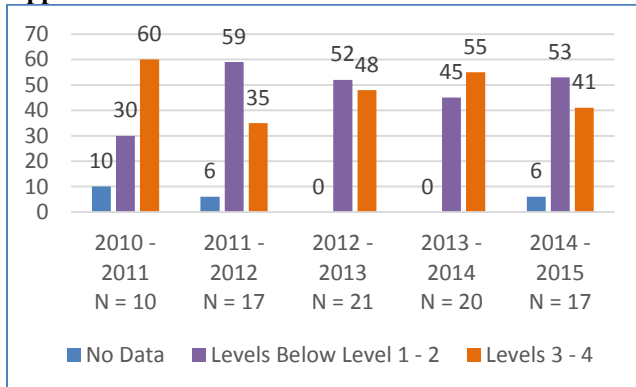


Math

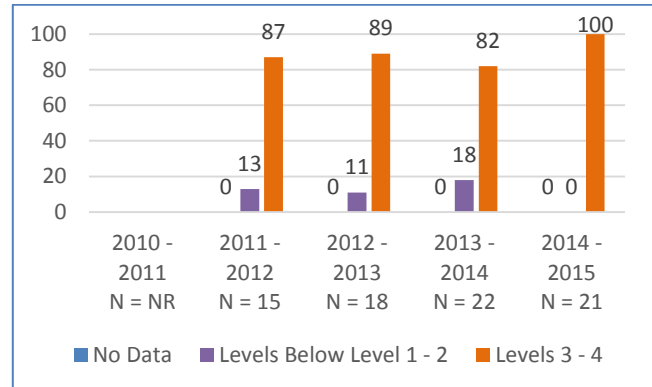


EQAO Grade 9 Math – Percentage of Students

Applied

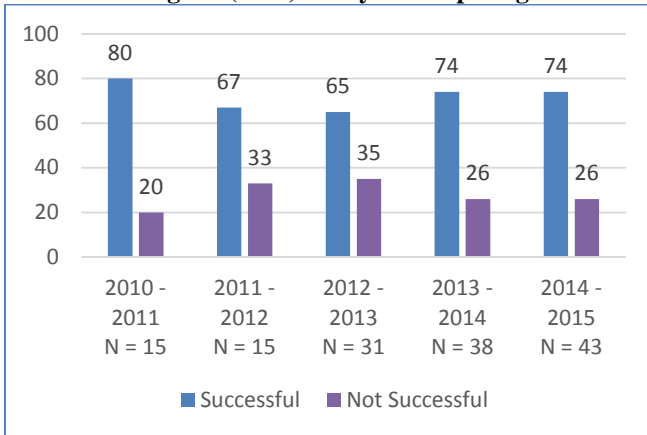


Academic

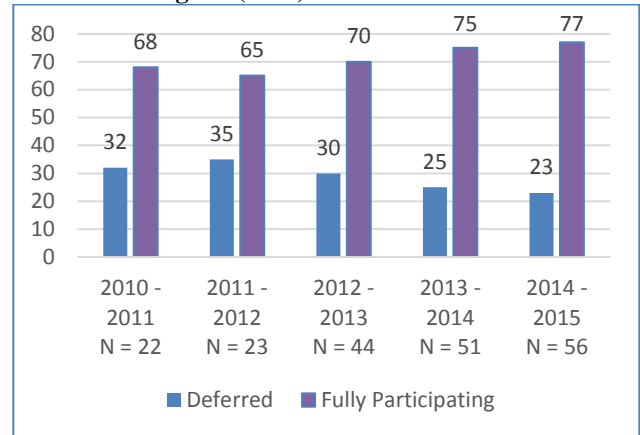


OSSLT – Percentage of Students

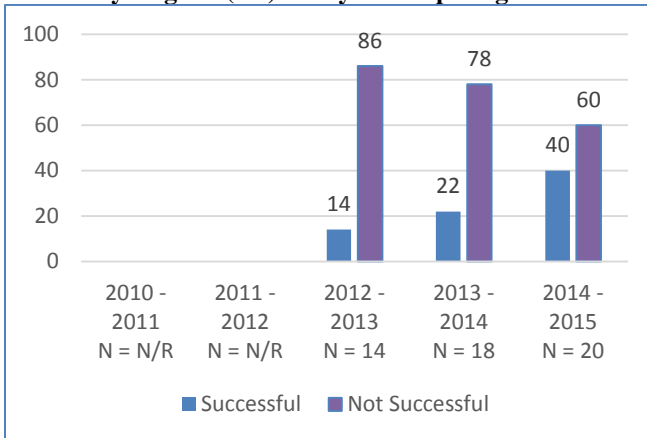
First Time-Eligible (FTE): Fully Participating



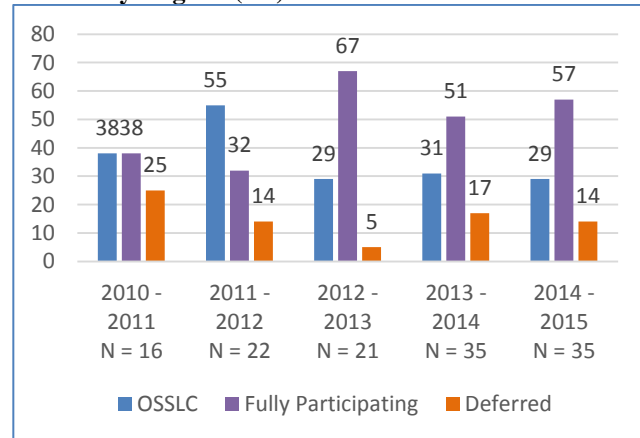
First Time-Eligible (FTE): All Students



Previously Eligible (PE): Fully Participating



Previously Eligible (PE): All Students



FTE Exempted (Number of students)

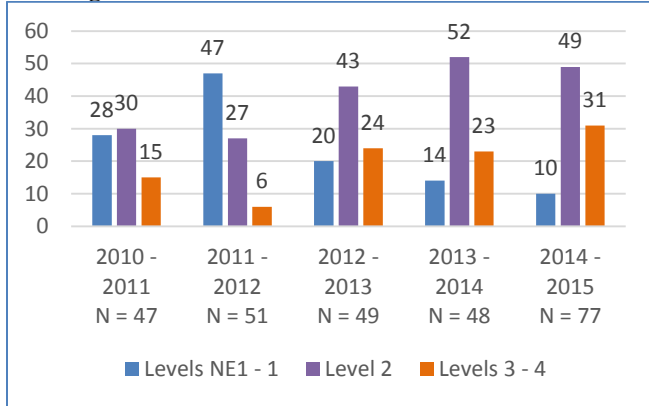
2010 – 2011	2011 – 2012	2012 – 2013	2013 – 2014	2014 – 2015
13	17	14	25	18

Note: For both FTE and PE the Absent rate has been zero for the last 5 years.

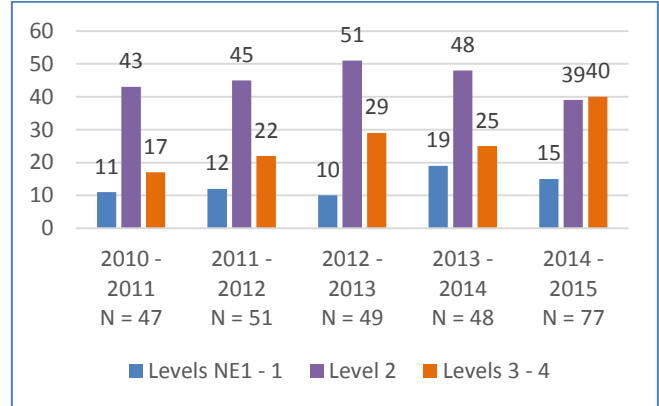
b) Students with Special Needs Identified as **Language Impaired**: EQAO and OSSLT Results Over 5 Years

EQAO Grade 3 – Percentage of Students

Reading

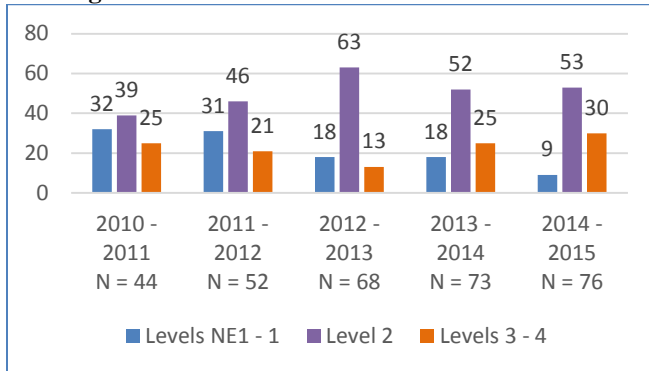


Math

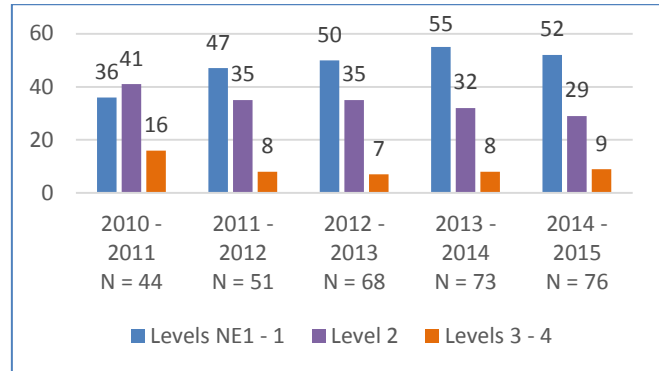


EQAO Grade 6 – Percentage of Students

Reading



Math

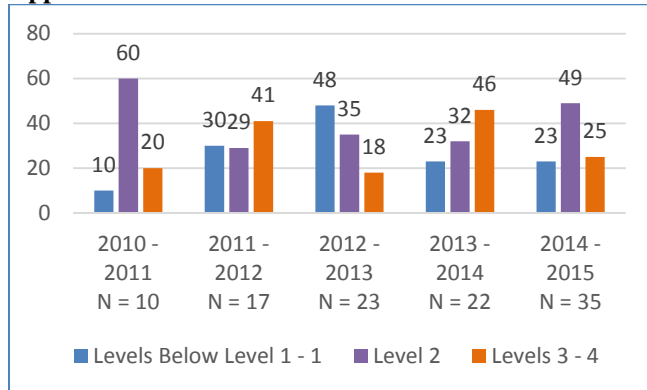


Exempt Rates for the Last 5 Years:

	2010 – 2011	2011 – 2012	2012 – 2013	2013 – 2014	2014 – 2015
Gr. 3 Reading	21%	18%	12%	10%	6%
Gr. 3 Math	23%	22%	10%	8%	3%
Gr. 6 Reading	5%	2%	3%	5%	5%
Gr. 6 Math	7%	8%	4%	5%	7%

EQAO Grade 9 Math – Percentage of Students

Applied

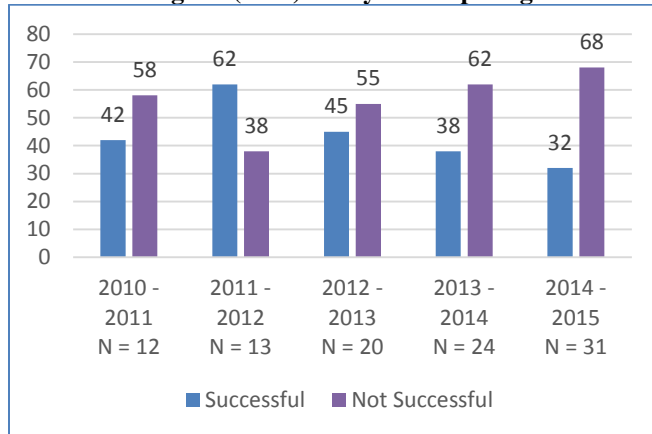


Academic

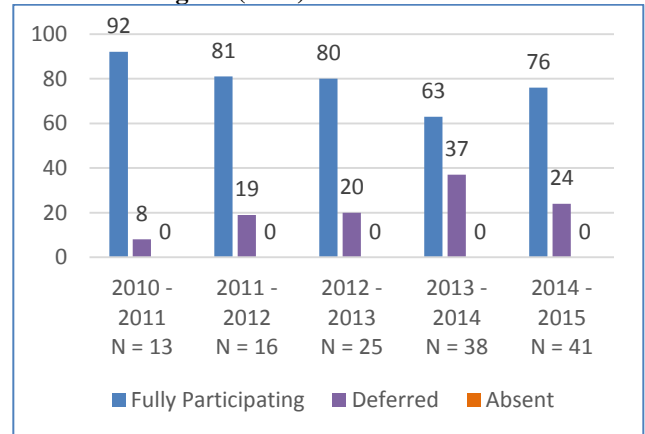
- For the last 5 years the Academic Grade 9 scores have not been reported publicly due to low numbers.

OSSLT – Percentage of Students

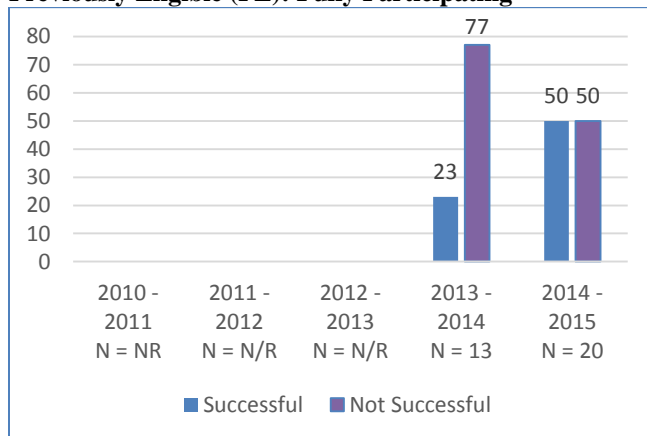
First Time-Eligible (FTE): Fully Participating



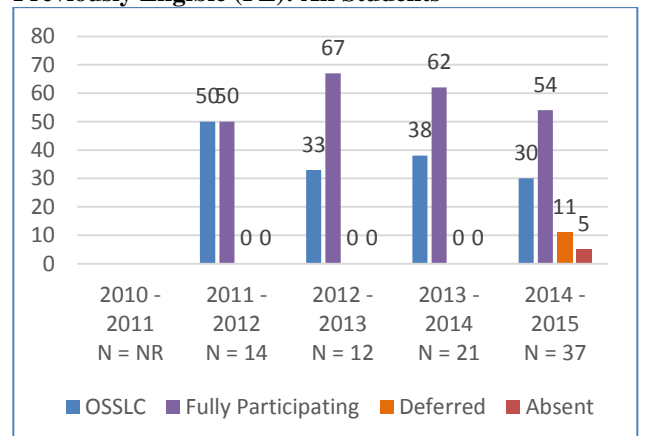
First Time-Eligible (FTE): All Students



Previously Eligible (PE): Fully Participating



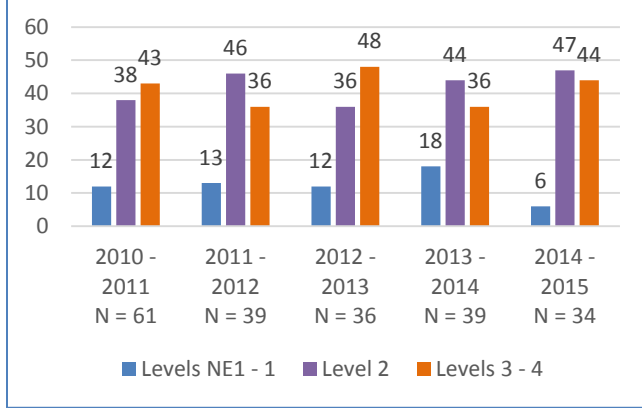
Previously Eligible (PE): All Students



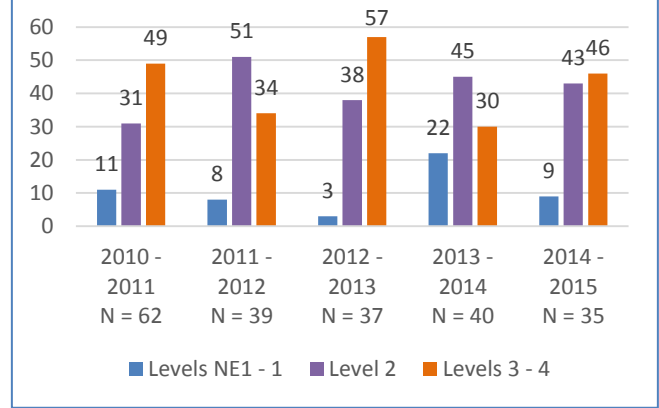
c) Students with Special Needs Identified as **Learning Disability**: EQAO and OSSLT Results Over 5 Years

EQAO Grade 3 – Percentage of Students

Reading

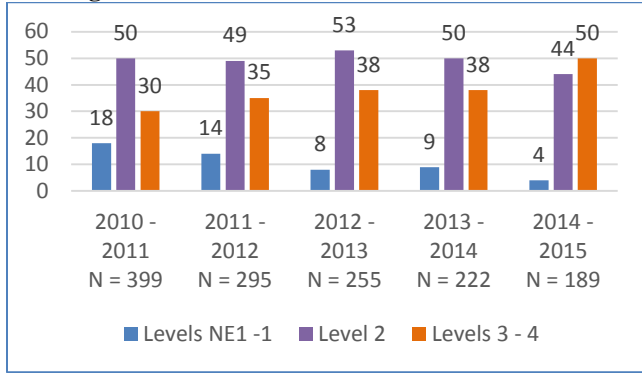


Math

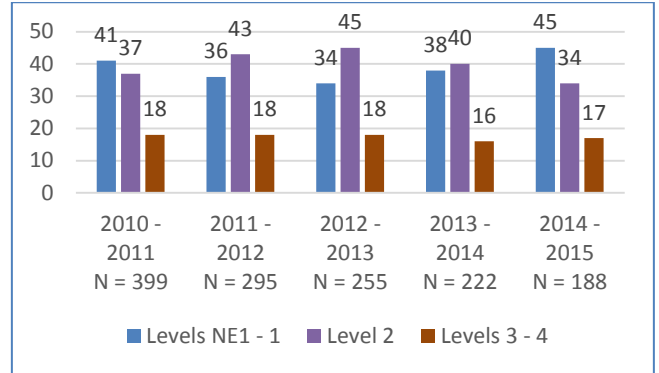


EQAO Grade 6 – Percentage of Students

Reading



Math

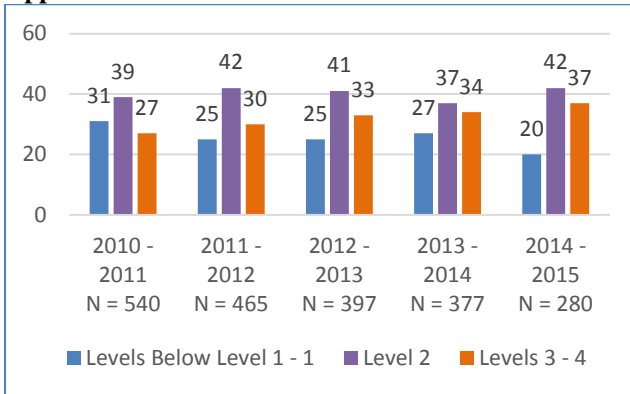


Exempt Rates for the Last 5 Years:

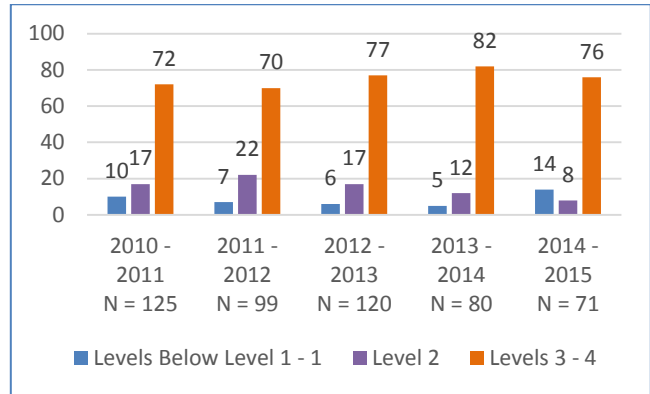
	2010 – 2011	2011 – 2012	2012 – 2013	2013 – 2014	2014 – 2015
Gr. 3 Reading	8%	5%	6%	3%	3%
Gr. 3 Math	10%	8%	3%	2%	3%
Gr.6 Reading	3%	2%	1%	4%	2%
Gr. 6 Math	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%

EQAO Grade 9 Math – Percentage of Students

Applied

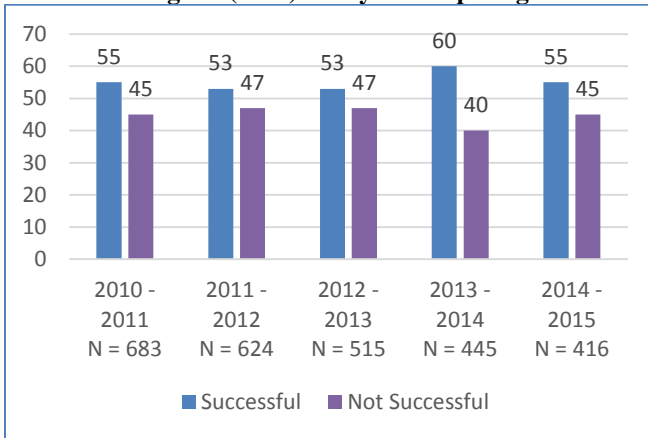


Academic

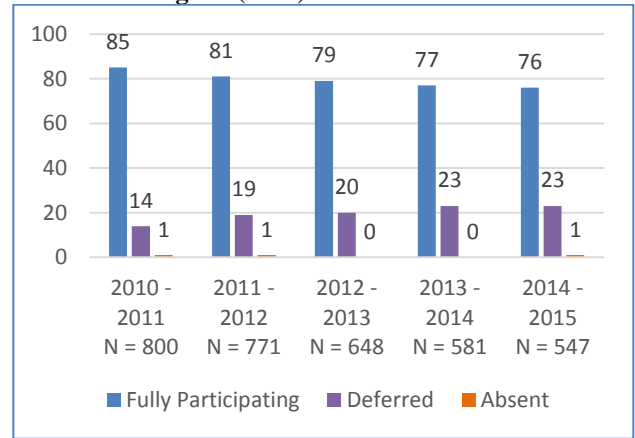


OSSLT – Percentage of Students

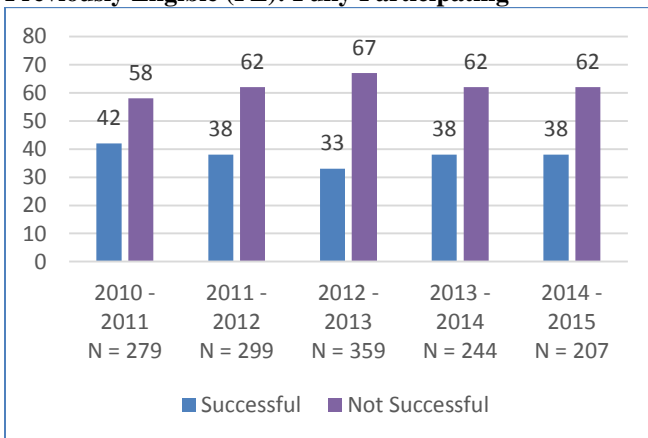
First Time-Eligible (FTE): Fully Participating



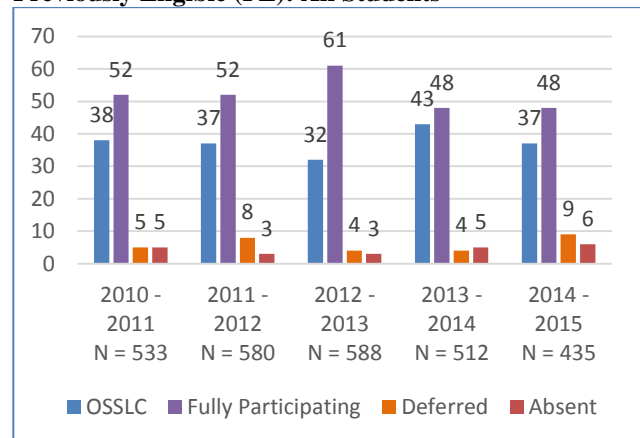
First Time-Eligible (FTE): All Students



Previously Eligible (PE): Fully Participating



Previously Eligible (PE): All Students



(In progress: OSSLC Participation and Pass rates by Exceptionalities for the last 5 years.)

Part 2 - Reporting on Safe Schools Information for 2014-15

1. The Safe Schools Department continues to collect data on suspensions and expulsions in schools on an annual basis.
2. The September 2015 report recommended that safe schools metrics be disaggregated in order to identify student subgroups (e.g. IEP, racialized students, gender, etc.) and data patterns.
3. Overall from 2010/2011 to 2014/2015 there has been a 19% reduction in the number of suspensions issued to IEP students.
4. Below is a compilation extracted from the Safe Schools data shared with the Board on September 10, 2015, Student Achievement And Well Being, Catholic Education And Human Resources Committee:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS [Comparison with 2013-2014 data]

At the Elementary level, the data indicate that more students received suspension as a progressive discipline consequence. Prior to this past year the data represented an overall trend of decline in suspensions over the past five years. Some comparisons with the previous year (2013-2014) indicate:

- *Increase in the number of Suspension Notices issued to males (172) and to females (17)*
1. *Slight increase in the number of Suspension Notices issued for “bullying” (19) with females (15) and males (4)*
 2. *Increase in the number of Instructional Days lost to Suspension for males (143)*
 3. *Decrease in the number of Instructional Days lost to Suspension for females (-7)*
 - ***Increase in the number of males with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who were suspended (27)***
 - ***No change in the number of females with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who were suspended***
1. *Slight increase in the number of males suspended 2 or more times (+35)*
 2. *Slight decrease in the number of females suspended 2 or more times (-13)*

This data would indicate that although males' recidivism is still a concern female recidivism is in decline indicating that intervention strategies have had a positively impact on females.

- *Decrease in the number of males Suspended Pending Possible Expulsion under Section 310 of the Education Act (-5)*
- *No change in the number of females Suspended Pending Possible Expulsion under Section 310 of the Education Act*
- *Slight increase in Board Expulsions (2) for males and no change for females in Board Expulsions*
- *Slight decrease in School Expulsions (-2) for males and slight decrease for females (-1) in School Expulsions*

Overall there has been a decrease in the more serious infractions of Expulsions which would indicate that progressive discipline has been effective in identifying and correcting behaviour before it leads to more serious infractions and consequences.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS [Comparison with 2013-2014 data]

At the Secondary level, the data indicate that fewer students are receiving suspension as a progressive discipline consequence. The data also indicates a significant reduction (-1065) of notices of suspensions issued over the past five years.

Some comparisons with the previous year (2013-2014) indicate:

- *A reduction in the number of Suspension Notices issued for all students (-84)*
- *A reduction in the number of Suspension Notices issued for males (-13)*
- *Slight increase in the number of Suspension Notices issued for females (5)*
- *Reduction in the number of males suspended under Section 306 of the Education Act. (-39).*
- *Increase in the number of females suspended under Section 306 of the Education Act. (49)*

Decrease in the number of Suspension Notices issued for "bullying" (-18) with females(-8) and males (-10)

- *Significant reduction in the number of Instructional Days Lost to Suspension for males (-461).*

- *Slight Increase in the number of Instructional Days Lost to Suspension for females (36)*
- *Significant Decrease in the number of males suspended 2 or more times (-50)*
- *Significant Decrease in the number of females suspended 2 or more times (-44)*

This data would indicate that overall recidivism for both males and females is in decline suggesting that intervention strategies including suspension appear to correct student inappropriate behaviour.

- ***Slight increase in the number of males with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who were suspended (2).***
 - ***Increase in the number of females with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who were suspended (14).***
- Although there is a slight increase in Suspensions for students with IEP's in the past year, when comparing this data to previous year totals, the number of suspensions issued remains less.***

- *Slight decrease in the number of males Suspended Pending Possible Expulsion under Section 310 of the Education Act (-3)*
- *Slight decrease in the number of females Suspended Pending Possible Expulsion under Section 310 of the Education Act (-5)*
- *Slight increase for males in Board Expulsions (2)*
- *Slight decrease for females in Board Expulsions (-2)*
- *Significant decrease in School Expulsions for males (-11)*
- *Slight increase in School Expulsions for females (1)*

Overall there continues to be significant positive changes in regards Suspensions at the secondary level relative to previous years, indicating that positive student behaviour has created safer school environments. This is consistent with our decreasing 5 year trend data. The reduction in both Suspension Notices and Instructional Days lost to Suspension indicate that students are spending more time in school, hence improving opportunities for student achievement and well-being.

The Special Education Department is currently working with other board departments to identify and/or develop a measure that could be used to identify “well-being” in student populations. One of the considerations will be with respect to high needs students who may not have the capacity to complete our current measures such as *My School, My Voice* and the *Safe Schools* survey at grades 6 and 8.

The following perceptual information is offered only as an initial demonstration of some the information collected thus far from existing measures that will serve to inform next steps in this process.

Perceptual Data: Examples

My School My Voice

Percentage of students who <i>agree</i> or <i>strongly agree</i>:	2014-2015		
	All students (n = 5088)	Students with an IEP (n = 1038)	Students with a spec ed id (n = 377)
My school is a happy and welcoming place to learn.	77%	80%	77%
Other students at school make me feel like I belong.	69%	71%	68%
Students’ opinions are encouraged and included in all parts of school life.	66%	70%	68%
All students get along regardless of race, culture, gender, or ability level.	68%	71%	70%

Student Transition

Percentage of students who <i>agree</i> or <i>strongly agree</i>:	2015-2016		
	All students (n = 3039)	Students with an IEP (n = 497)	Students with a spec ed id (n = 173)
Teachers in the school were interested in me as a person (in elementary school).	76%	77%	79%
Teachers in my school are interested in me as a person (in high school).	70%	75%	75%

Percentage of students who feel <i>very safe of safe</i>:	2015-2016		
	All students (n = 3039)	Students with an IEP (n = 497)	Students with a spec ed id (n = 173)

while in elementary school	92%	91%	86%
in high school	92%	90%	88%

Percentage of students felt welcomed in high school:	2015-2016		
	All students (n = 3039)	Students with an IEP (n = 497)	Students with a spec ed id (n = 173)
Before the first day of classes	31%	28%	28%
On the first day	24%	28%	30%
In the first week	28%	28%	23%
In the first month	11%	9%	9%
Still waiting	5%	4%	8%

Part 3 - Accountability Framework Committees

- Accountability Framework Committees have been created to support the ongoing needs of the different exceptionalities as they are recognized by the Ministry of Education. This report provides an update on the work of these committees since 2014-15 until now 2015-16.
- Similar to the differentiation that must take place with students based on their needs, so too does the nature of the work of each committee differ to meet the needs of students with the exceptionality.
- Work with some exceptionalities is labour intensive and requires a substantial amount of time before determining the impact on student learning. As such, some committee projects will run over a two year period, while others may occur over a one year timeline. Thus, the work of each committee is unique as is the exceptionality that it is monitoring.
- Below is a project implementation timeline for the accountability framework committee of each exceptionality:

Exceptionality	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Autism	Complete	Commencing two year goals	
Behaviour	Complete	Commencing two year goals	
Blind/Low Vision (BLV)	Complete	Commencing two year goals	
Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH)		Commencing two year goals	
Gifted	Began	To end in 2016	To set New Goals
Language Impairment	Complete	Commencing three year goals	

(LI)			
Learning Disability (LD)	Completed	Commencing two year goals	
Mild Intellectual Disability (MID)		Begin Baseline monitoring	New Goals to be set.
Multiple Exceptionalities/ Developmental Delays	Completed	Commencing two year goals	

- The next series of pages reports the ongoing work of the Accountability Framework Committees beginning with a status update on the goals set in 2014-15 and a description of 2015-16 and 2016-17 goals and projects. The AFSE Committees will continue to refine their plans for improvement to address the learning of students with Special Needs. To promote continued growth and measurable impact, the following principles will guide the formulation of goals:
 - a) focus on student outcomes
 - b) goals stated in terms of measurable growth (e.g., increase or decrease of a specific indicator)
 - c) an inquiry-based approach (e.g., 'if-then' statement) identifying actions to meet goals.

1. Autism

Goals Set in 2014/15:

Based on the 2013-2014 results, the current achievement gap for students with Autism and all students be reduced to:

1. 40% in Grade 3 Reading
2. 41% in Grade 6 Reading
3. 9% on the OSSLT
4. 32% in Grade 3 Mathematics
5. 33% in Grade 6 Mathematics

(Note: In grade 9, the mathematics achievement results for students identified with Autism exceeds or is consistent with 'all student'.)

Strategies Implemented

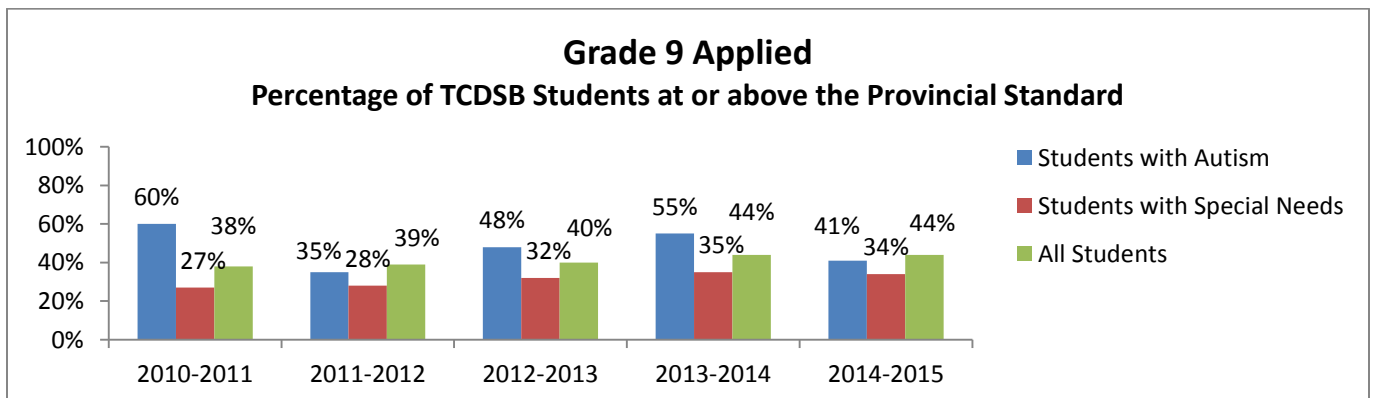
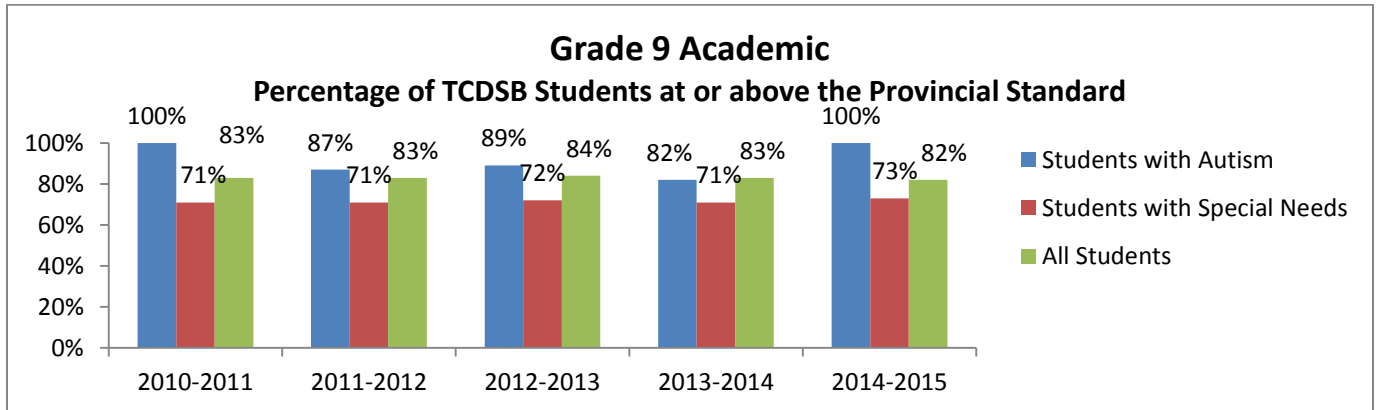
After reviewing EQAO results, it was noted that exemption rates for TCDSB students with Autism are high compared to provincial results for students with Autism – a difference of 6 to 8% in 2013-2014. So the committee developed a flow chart.

1. A list of effective literacy resources for students with Autism has been developed in order to share with staff.

JUMP math was implemented for students with Autism in Intensive Support Programs (ISPs).

Results/Observations/Deliverables:

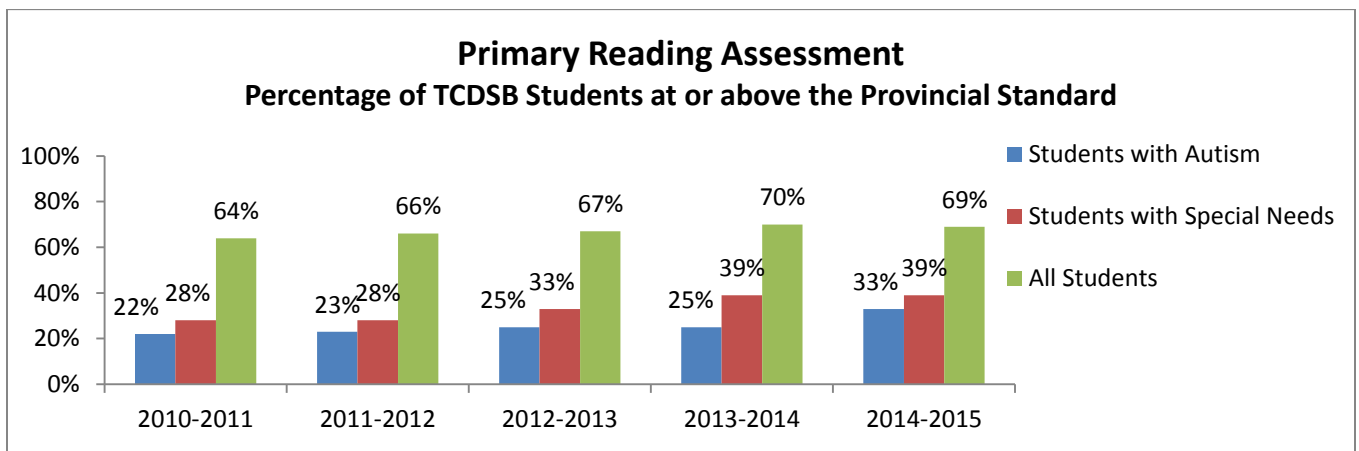
Overall, it appears that students with Autism achieve below their peers on provincial assessments in grades 3 and 6, they perform at levels closer to their peers on the OSSLT and the Grade 9 assessment of Mathematics. (Note that due to exceptional circumstances, there were no provincial results for primary, junior and Grade 9 assessments in 2014-15)



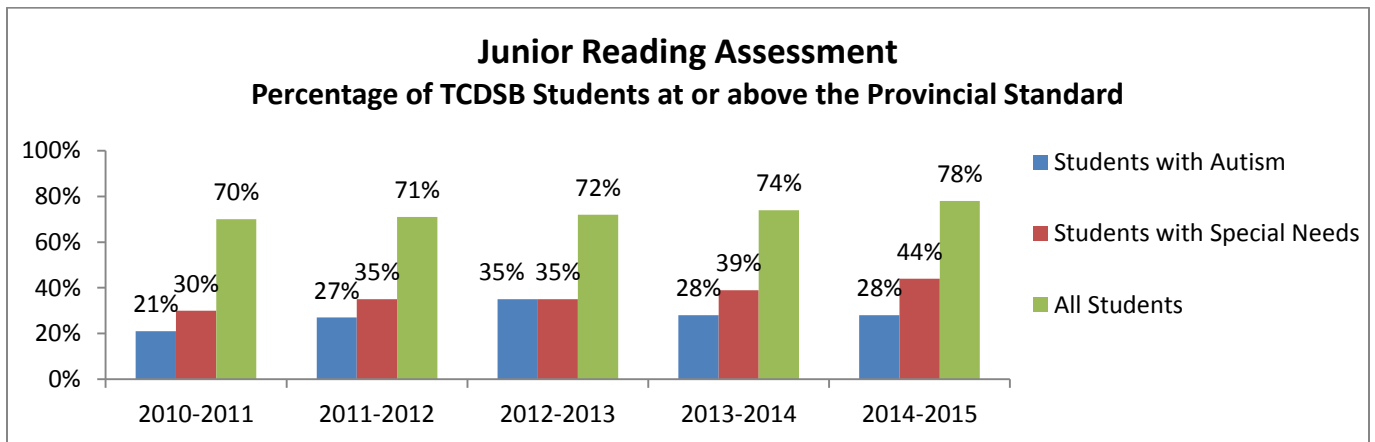
NOTE:

There are no exempted students for the Grade 9 Assessment. All students enrolled in a Grade 9 academic or applied mathematics course must participate in the EQAO Grade 9 mathematics assessments.

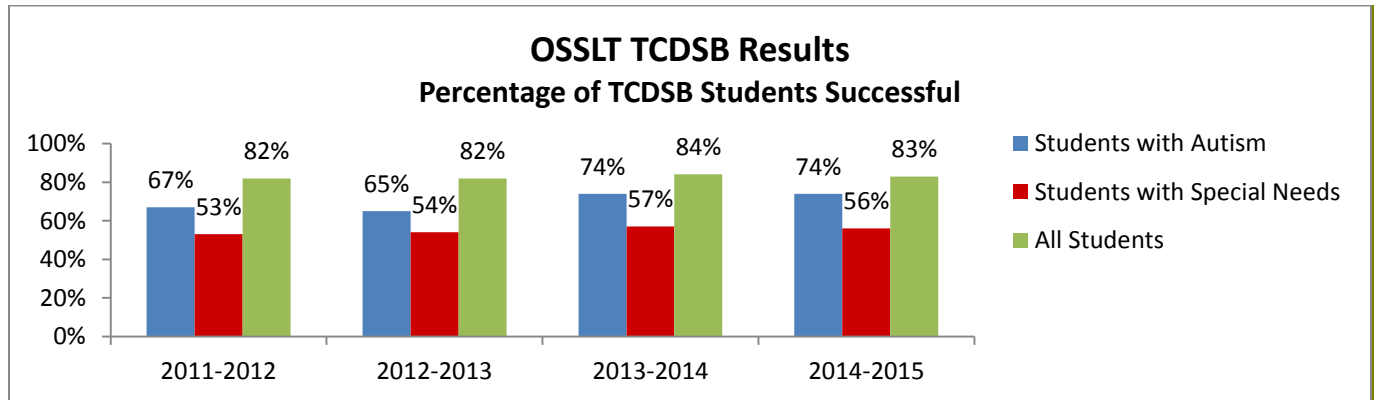
The results from the 2014-15 EQAO assessments indicate that primary reading results for students with Autism showed an 8% improvement from the previous year with 33% achieving at or above the provincial standard. The gap between students with Autism and all students was reduced to 36%.



For the Junior Division, reading results have shown improvement since 2010-11, but in 2013-14, dropped with 28% of students with Autism reaching at or above the provincial standard. These results remain stagnant (at 28%) for 2014-15. The gap between students with Autism and all students remains larger than the 41% target.



On the OSSLT the results for students with Autism showed a 9% improvement from 2012-13 to 2013-14; 2014-15 results remain the same with 74% of students achieving at or above the provincial standard, a gap of 9% when compared to all students. Results should be treated with caution, as numbers were very low in earlier assessments.



Note Results for OSSLT: Exercise caution in interpreting the data for students with Autism, the “n” is small (n = 15 in 2010-11, n = 15 in 2011-12, n = 31 in 2012-13; n=38 in 2013-14; and n=43 in 2014-15).

OSSLT

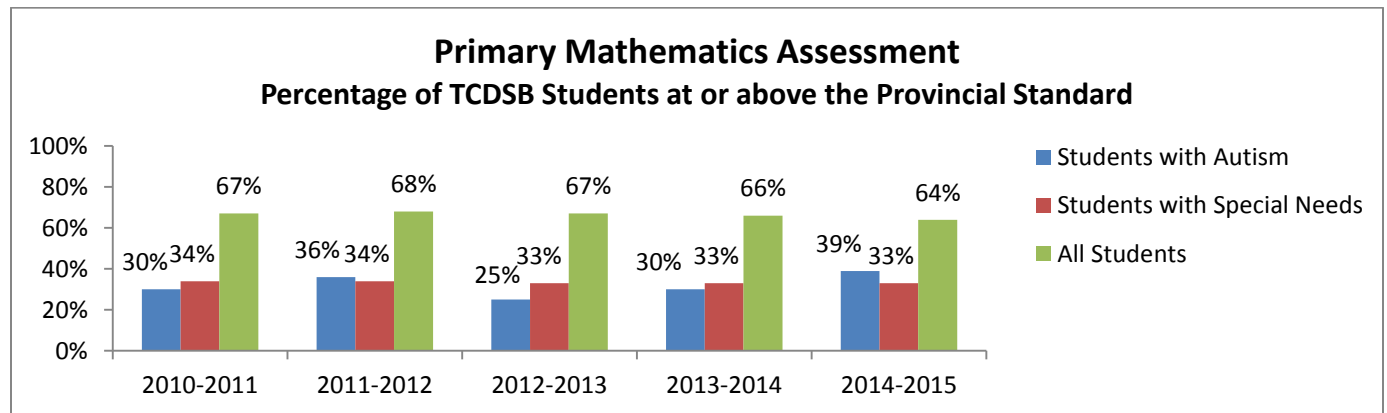
All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)	TCDSB Deferred									
	2010 - 2011 N = 1,215		2011 - 2012 N = 1,217		2012 - 2013 N = 1,139		2013 - 2014 N = 1,147		2014 - 2015 N = 1,182	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	192	16%	252	21%	242	21%	262	23%	268	23%
Exempted	41		34		28		49		32	
Students with Special Needs identified as Autism	TCDSB Deferred									
	2010 - 2011 N = 22		2011 - 2012 N = 23		2011 - 2012 N = 44		2013 - 2014 N = 51		2014 - 2015 N = 56	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	7	32%	8	35%	13	30%	13	25%	13	23%
Exempted	13		17		14		25		18	

NOTE regarding OSSLT:

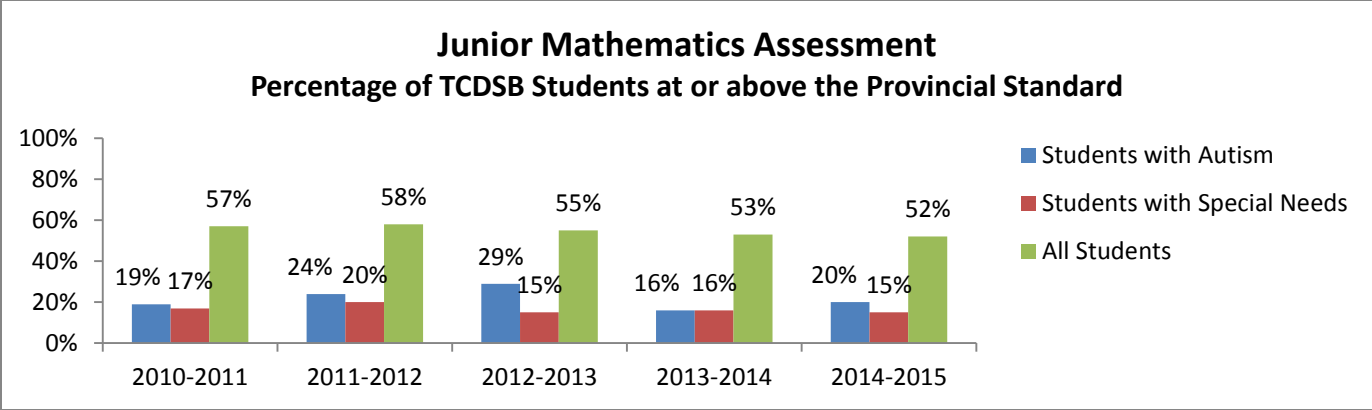
Deferred = Students’ participation in the OSSLT can be deferred under several circumstances, as outlined in EQAO’s Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals and Exemptions. A student is categorized as deferred only if the school indicates a deferral. If a student completed any portion of the OSSLT, he or she is not categorized as deferred.

Exempted = Students can be exempted from the OSSLT only if they are not working toward an OSSD. A student is categorized as exempted only if the school indicates that the student is exempted. If a student completed any portion of the OSSLT, he or she is not categorized as exempted (p. 24 of the Public Report)

The Exempted are not included in the overall count (or percentages) for OSSLT.



The results from the 2014-15 EQAO assessments indicate that primary mathematics results for students with Autism showed a 9% improvement from the previous year achieving with 39% at or above the provincial standard. The gap between students with Autism and all students was reduced to 25%.



The results from the 2014-15 EQAO assessments indicate that junior mathematics results for students with Autism showed a 4% improvement from the previous year with 20% achieving at or above the provincial standard. The gap between students with Autism and all students was reduced to 32%.

Exemption rates for TCDSB students with Autism are high compared to all TCDSB students with special needs and provincial results for students with Autism (from previous years). In grade 3, the exemption rate in reading dropped 11% from 2012-13 (the rate is now at 41% in 2014-15). Likewise, exemption rates in Grade 3 math have dropped (from 52% in 2012-13 to 40% in 2014-15). In grade 6 the exemption rates in reading also dropped from 41% in 2012-13 to 36% in 2013-14. Similarly, exemption rates in Grade 6 math have dropped (from 41% in 2012-13 to 37% in 2014-15).

Grade 3 Reading

All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)	TCDSB Exempted									
	2010 - 2011 N = 881		2011 - 2012 N = 967		2012 - 2013 N = 1,028		2013 - 2014 N = 1,086		2014 - 2015 N = 1,033	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	109	12%	113	12%	113	11%	112	10%	89	9%

Students with Special Needs identified as Autism	TCDSB Exempted									
	2010 - 2011 N = 74		2011 - 2012 N = 78		2012 - 2013 N = 65		2013 - 2014 N = 113		2014 - 2015 N = 91	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	31	42%	32	41%	34	52%	47	42%	37	41%

Grade 3 Math

All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)	TCDSB Exempted									
	2010 - 2011 N = 887		2011 - 2012 N = 972		2012 - 2013 N = 1,042		2013 - 2014 N = 1,105		2014 - 2015 N = 1,046	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	104	12%	110	11%	104	10%	97	9%	83	8%

Students with Special Needs identified as Autism	TCDSB Exempted									
	2010 - 2011 N = 74		2011 - 2012 N = 78		2012 - 2013 N = 65		2013 - 2014 N = 114		2014 - 2015 N = 91	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	31	42%	31	40%	34	52%	44	39%	36	40%

NOTE:

Exempt = Students who were formally exempted from participation in one or more components of the assessment. (p. 38 of the Public Report)

Grade 6 Reading

All Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted)	TCDSB Exempted									
	2010 - 2011 N = 1,240		2011 - 2012 N = 1,185		2012 - 2013 N = 1,347		2013 - 2014 N = 1,158		2014 - 2015 N = 1,230	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	72	6%	85	7%	84	6%	83	7%	81	7%

Students with Special Needs identified as Autism	TCDSB Exempted									
	2010 - 2011 N = 70		2011 - 2012 N = 66		2012 - 2013 N = 78		2013 - 2014 N = 93		2014 - 2015 N = 91	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	24	34%	27	41%	32	41%	31	33%	33	36%

NOTE:

Exempt = Students who were formally exempted from participation in one or more components of the assessment. (p. 38 of the Public Report)

Next Steps:

1. In response to the high exemption rates, the committee has developed information for administrators for students with Autism regarding preparation for EQAO assessments and guidelines for exemptions. This information will be shared with board staff working with students with Autism and their parents. Information will also be included in the guidelines for staff regarding ‘assessment literacy’ to address concerns such as anxiety for students with Autism.
2. A list of effective literacy resources for students with Autism has been developed and will be shared with board staff. These resources will be made available for staff in each region of the board.
 - JUMP math has been made available for students with Autism in Intensive Support Programs (ISPs). Access to other numeracy resources for students with Autism will also be investigated (e.g., Prodigy)
 - Information on assistive technology usage for students with Autism during provincial assessments will be explored. This is an important consideration for this group of students.
 - Programs for students with Autism will continue to be supported in response to identified need, using evidence informed practices.

Goals for 2015/16 and 2016/17

- Reduce the exemption rates for students with Autism.
- Based on current EQAO results increase achievement for Autism in the assessments listed below:
 1. In Grade 3 Reading
 2. in Grade 6 Reading
 3. in the OSSLT
 4. in Grade 3 Mathematics
 5. in Grade 6 Mathematics

Strategies to be Implemented:

1. Communicate with staff the recently developed guidelines for Supporting Students with Autism to participate in EQAO and share the goals about reducing the current achievement gap.
2. Share with staff a list of effective literacy resources for students with Autism that has been developed. These resources are available to board staff.
3. Conduct a needs assessment to determine if JUMP math is available to all students with Autism in Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) and investigate other numeracy resources.
4. Present the service delivery model of the Autism Team to administrators and communicate how students with Autism can be supported.
5. Create a list of alternative IEP goals that align with the areas of deficit as reflected in the DSM-V and share with staff.
6. Update the resource document, 'Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, A Resource Guide' and devise a plan to in-service staff.

2. Behaviour

2014 - 2015 Goals:

For students identified with Behaviour who participate on provincial assessments, the current achievement gap be reduced by 8 percent between students identified with Behaviour and all students, as measured through primary, junior and intermediate assessments.

Strategies Implemented:

1. Investigated and selected a standardize program to assist in the development of social skills, self-esteem, self-advocacy and self-regulation skills
2. Taught specific compensatory strategies for attention and organizational deficits
3. Used JUMP Math
4. Used Lexia Reading Programme
5. Used Empower programme where available

6. Used Assistive technology (i.e. Smart Board, Premier, Co-wirter, Draft Builder, Kurzweil and Dragon Naturally Speaking).

Results/Observations:

Results indicated that grade 3 students with behavioural needs are improving on all three EQAO measures. Numbers for grade 6 EQAO are too low for comment.

Next Steps to Consider:

Results show that the current focus on yearly changes in EQAO and other measures may not be the best option for accountability purposes due to a very small sample size of students identified with behavioural needs. Longer term goals for improvement that account for annual fluctuation and focus more on the instructional practices are recommended.

2015 – 2016 & 2016 - 2017 Goal:

Focus on social/emotional prerequisite skills for learning Reading, Writing and Mathematics through the development of social skills, self-esteem, self-advocacy and self-regulations skills.

Implementation Strategies for 2015 – 2016 & 2016 – 2017 Goal:

7. Deliver Stop Now And Plan (SNAP) which is an evidence based behavioural model that provides a framework for teaching children struggling with behaviour issues effective emotional regulation, self-control and problem-solving skills in each Behavioural ISP.
8. Provide designated in-services to both Behaviour ISP Teachers and Child & Youth Workers which focus on training, monitoring and evaluation of the Stop Now And Plan (SNAP) program.
9. Involve the Child Development Institute in the monitoring of the Stop Now And Plan (SNAP) program by observing Behaviour ISP Classrooms and providing feedback to Behaviour ISP staff.
10. Devise individual measurable goals, develop specific strategies, evaluate progress on a weekly basis and revise or create new goals together with each student registered in a Behaviour ISP.
11. Provide support through the School Based Support Learning Team to assist in the development, tracking and revision of those individual measurable goals.
12. Articulate the progress of the individual measurable goals to parents/guardians of students in the Behaviour ISP on an at least weekly basis.

13. Continue to foster a Professional Learning Network through on-going e-mail communications amongst Behaviour ISP Teachers, CYWS and the Behaviour ISP Assessment and Program Teacher.
14. Continue support for the Behaviour ISP programs with the ISP Assessment and Program Teacher.
15. Develop a list of recommended classroom resources to support the development of social skills, self-esteem, self-advocacy and self-regulations skills.
16. Provide professional development regarding classroom management, self-regulation, building positive rapport and increasing collaborative activities during unstructured times such as recess.
17. Provide parenting workshops that promote positive parenting through better understanding of challenging behaviours.
18. In January 2016, The Student Support Resource Team (SSRT) became available to support elementary school staff who are working with children having difficulty regulating their behaviour and emotions. Each team consists of an experienced teacher and a CYW who work together with school staff to build their knowledge and capacity in improving challenging behaviours that interfere with optimal learning. Although requests focus on a particular child, the Student Resource Team can participate in a number of strategies including coaching, assisting in the development of behaviour support plans, providing small group or classroom based programs and even helping to initiate school wide interventions. A priority of the Student Support Resource Team is to assist school staff in continuing to provide an educational program for students in the regular classroom. Requests will be prioritized based on:
 1. the suitability of the student's presenting challenges,
 2. involvement of parents in planning and therapeutic interventions if applicable,
 3. classroom composition,
 4. evidence of previous strategies and school readiness to participate in capacity building strategies.
19. During the period of January – June 2016, the Student Support Resource Team will be involved with 24 schools throughout the TCDSB for 2.5 days/week up to an eight week period.

3. Blind/Low Vision (BLV)

Goal for 2015-16:

- To reduce any achievement gap between students identified with a BLV Exceptionality and all students, as measured through EQAO/OSSLT in 2016.
- EQAO/OSSLT 2016 Participating Eligible BLV Students to meet or exceed the provincial standard.
- Fully support Assistive Technology use by students with BLV needs for EQAO/OSSLT

Strategies Implemented:

- Use of Assistive Technology (equipment and student training)
- Capacity building professional development to regular classroom teachers (Elementary & Secondary) about Blind Low Vision Disabilities (instructional accommodations)
- support professional learning of Growing Success and Blind Low Vision students
- Capacity building professional development to Special Education teachers (Elementary & Secondary) regarding Blind Low Vision Disabilities (instructional accommodations) –
- Inclusion of teachers of Blind Low Vision students in curriculum related in-services
- Support Differentiated Instruction with more specific strategies appropriate for Blind Low Vision learners

Blind Low Vision Trends and Academic Achievement (for students who are in an EQAO or OSSLT year):

- a) All students who are visually impaired (blind or low vision who receive support through the TDSB Vision Program) who are cognitively able to write EQAO and OSSLT are writing EQAO and OSSLT. Students who are visually impaired are not exempt from writing EQAO/OSSLT *because* of the visual impairment. They may be exempt from writing EQAO/OSSLT for some “other” learning need (e.g., MID, DD, ELL).
- b) All students who are visually impaired (blind or low vision) need extra time to complete EQAO/OSSLT.

- c) The majority of students with visual impairment will use the large print version of EQAO/OSSLT.
- d) Past data reflects that students with visual impairment will use their “typical” accommodation options to write EQAO/OSSLT. Results have been consistent for the past 3 years with respect to types of accommodations needed (e.g.: Extra time and large print are the most frequently requested accommodations).

4. Deaf/ Hard of Hearing (DHH)

2014/2015 Goals:

1. Transition all D/HH students in elementary Oral Intensive Support Placement (ISP) classrooms to 100 percent personal Hearing Assistance Technology (HAT).
2. Transition all D/HH students in elementary Oral D/HH ISP classroom settings to 100 percent usage of Hearing Assistance Technology by June 2015, including the use of classroom sound field systems.
3. Target all grade 8 students in Oral D/HH ISP settings for 100 percent usage of personal Hearing Assistance Technology.
4. Target Hearing Assistance Technology usage by the grade 8 cohort in their transition to secondary: the goal is 50 percent usage in grade 9.

Deliverables/learning/observations

- Through role modelling, education and prompting, the use of Hearing Assistance Technology increased for ISP students, in the regular classroom.
- The Early Years classes have a high acoustic ratio (i.e., noise to floor ratio of ~80dBA. Thus, instead of using the typical JK/SK integration for ISP students we used reverse integration to address the poorer signal to noise ratios in the larger classes.
- In Grades 1-7 at Cosmas and Damian 100 percent of the students used Hearing Assistance Technologies (17 students in total).
- In Preschool, JK and SK 75 percent of the students at The Divine Infant used Hearing Assistance Technologies (6 out of 8 students).

Strategies used:

- D/HH Itinerant and ISP teacher support focused on student compliance regarding the usage of Hearing Assistance Technology in order to successfully access the curriculum.
- Professional development opportunities were held for Assessment and Programming Teachers, Secondary Department Heads, and other special education personnel.

Long Term Goals Developed for 3 years (2015/2016 to 2017/2018)**2015/2016 Goals:**

- *If* teachers of D/HH students engage in collaborative inquiry to deepen their capacity to understand the learning needs of D/HH students who require Hearing Assistance Technology (HAT), *then* teacher support of HAT use will increase. Progress will be measured by perceptual data (e.g., surveys, interviews) and behavioural data (e.g., classroom observations).
- *If* D/HH students engage in collaborative inquiry to reflect upon their own learning profile, *then* consistent use of Hearing Assistive Technology will increase. Progress will be measured by perceptual data (e.g., surveys, interviews) and behavioural data (e.g., classroom observations).

Strategies to be implemented 2015/2016:

- D/HH teachers to participate in collaborative inquiry to explore and examine usage of Hearing Assistance Technology.
- D/HH students to participate in collaborative inquiry to explore and examine usage of Hearing Assistance Technology.
- D/HH staff to track the number of D/HH students who are receiving D/HH supports, who use Hearing Assistance Technology over the next three years (2015 to 2018).
- Accountability Framework for Special Education (AFSE) goals to be communicated to teachers of D/HH students through email communications, newsletters, and Professional Development.

2016/2017 Goals:

- *If we increase student compliance regarding the usage of hearing assistance technology (HAT), then we can create a learning environment that will support student achievement and well-being. Progress will be measured by perceptual data (e.g., surveys, interviews), behavioural data (e.g., work samples, classroom observations), and Individual Education Plan goals.*
- *If we support D/HH student transitions (elementary ISP to elementary regular class placements; elementary grade 8 ISP to secondary ISP class placement; and elementary grade 8 ISP to secondary regular class placement) with a focus on compliance with the usage of Hearing Assistance Technology, then we can better maximize the engagement and well-being of D/HH students leading to increased student achievement. Progress will be measured by perceptual data (e.g., surveys, interviews), behavioural data (e.g., work samples, classroom observations), and Individual Education Plan goals.*

Strategies to be implemented 2016/2017:

- Track students in D/HH ISP classes for consistency regarding compliance with the usage of Hearing Assistance Technology in order to successfully access curriculum. Continuation of 2015/2016 strategy.
- Track use of personal Hearing Assistance Technology for students who transition from an elementary grade 8 ISP to a secondary ISP placement; for students who transition from elementary grade 8 ISP to secondary regular class placements; and elementary grade 8 ISP to secondary regular class placement.
- Continue to provide appropriate professional development for parents, teachers who work with D/HH students in regular and ISP classes, and other Board staff.
- Use 21st Century fluencies and technologies including Hearing Assistance Technology (e.g., patch cord) to connect Regular Classroom D/HH students and Intensive Support Program Class D/HH students to facilitate peer learning experiences and support collaborative access to curriculum and consistent use of Hearing Assistance Technology.
- Provide engagement in D/HH student face-to face social networking through the Girls' Talk and Boys' Club enrichment experiences for communication, the annual D/HH family picnic, Mayfest and May is Speech and Hearing Month display at the CEC. Encourage parent involvement through all D/HH

events including D/HH Parent, social networking and through on-line newsletters.

- Accountability Framework for Special Education (AFSE) goals to be communicated to teachers of D/HH students through email communications, newsletters, and Professional Development.

2017/2018 Goals

Goals to be determined; review of 2016/2017 data and needs will inform goal development for 2017/2018.

Strategies to be implemented 2017/2018:

- D/HH staff to continue to track students in D/HH ISP classes for consistency regarding compliance with the usage of Hearing Assistive Technology. Continuation of strategy from 2015/2016 and 2016/2017.
- Other strategies to be determined following review of 2016/2017 data and needs.

5. Gifted

2014-2015 Goal

To increase the percentage of students identified with Giftedness whose Self-Regulation and Organizational skills are rated as “excellent” on their Provincial Report Card. Measurement is focused on the 2013-14 Grade 6 cohort, and using their Grade 5 Term 2 Provincial Report Card, June 2013 as baseline. The goal is an increase by 5 percent and to maintain the improvement for this cohort through Grade 8 to ensure successful transition into secondary school (therefore this is a 3-year goal).

Deliverables/learnings/observations

Rationale: While almost all students identified with Giftedness achieve Levels 3 and 4 in the Reading, Writing and Mathematics on the EQAO assessments, tracking of the assessment of the learning skills of the Grade 8 cohort (2015-16) when they were in Grade 7, 6, and 5 indicated an overall decline in the percentage of students who achieved “excellent” on the Term 2 Learning Skills section of the Provincial Report Card.

- Improvement of Learning Skills of Organization and Self-Regulation skills will assist students to set and achieve learning goals both inside

and outside school, manage their own learning and acquire the habits and skills necessary for the transition from Elementary to Secondary and into Post-Secondary settings. (The long term impact and the importance of these skills for future life success has been well documented in the professional literature.)

- The skills of Organization and Self-Regulation may be focused upon by all teachers involved with the students, regardless of their placement (i.e. regular class, one day a week Gifted Withdrawal Program, full time Gifted Congregated Program).
- Improvement in learning skills would also encourage and support students in achieving Levels 3 and 4 on EQAO assessments.

Data used: For the 2013/2014 Grade 6 cohort, the Progress Report and Terms 1 and 2 Provincial Report Card Learning Skills data for Organization and Self-Regulation will be monitored in relation to the goal across the years **2013-2014, 2014-15 and 2015-16.**

2014-15 data:

“Organization”: compared to the baseline of 63% of students getting “excellent” rating (Grade 5, Term 2 report card), there is a very slight change to 62% on the Grade 7, Term 2 report card of the same cohort.

“Self-Regulation”: compared to the baseline of 66% getting “excellent” rating (Grade 5, Term 2 report card), there is a slight change to 63% on the Grade 7, Term 2 report card of the same cohort.

Strategies used:

1. Communicating and sharing information and strategies regarding this goal at meetings with Gifted Withdrawal and Congregated Program Teachers.
 2. Through a newsletter and through contact with the Gifted Withdrawal and Congregated Program Teachers, focusing on facilitating collaboration/communication between regular classroom teachers, Special Education Teachers (SET) and Withdrawal and Congregated Special Education Teachers of the Gifted Programs regarding students’ strengths, needs, learning skills and accommodations recorded in the Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- *Gifted Program October, 2014 Newsletter to TCDSB staff: Roles and Responsibilities of the Home School and Gifted Program and information pertaining to the IEP, Strategies for Organization.*

3. Providing information to students, staff and parents pertaining to transitions through:
 - *Strategies for dealing with periods of transition on TCDSB Public Portal (for parents)*
 - *Presentation for teachers and parents of the Gifted Program on the growth mindset of intelligence and developmental transitions between classroom placements, among grade divisions and among Elementary and Secondary panels - May, 2015*
4. Monitoring of longitudinal development and maintenance of Learning Skills of students with Giftedness for another cohort of students.

2015-2016 Goal

To continue to increase the percentage of students identified with Giftedness whose Self-Regulation and Organizational skills are rated as “excellent” on their Provincial Report Card. Measurement is focused on the 2013-14 Grade 6 cohort, and using the Grade 5 Term 2 Provincial Report Card, June 2013 as baseline. In this final stage of implementation of the goal, continue to focus on increasing and maintaining the improvement for this cohort through Grade 8 to ensure successful transition into secondary school.

Progress will be monitored by continuing to collect report card data on this (and the 2016-17 Grade 6 cohort) on Organization and Self-Regulation skills.

Strategies implemented this year:

- Communicating and sharing information and strategies regarding this goal at meetings with Gifted Withdrawal and Congregated Program Teachers.
- Building capacity for Gifted Withdrawal and Congregated Program Teachers, through professional development activities (April PA Day).
- APT (Gifted Programs) supporting teachers in focusing on self-regulation and organization when visiting classes.
- Through a newsletter and through contact with the Gifted Withdrawal and Congregated Program Teachers, focusing on facilitating collaboration/communication between regular classroom teachers, Special Education Teachers (SET) and Withdrawal and Congregated Special Education Teachers of the Gifted Programs regarding students’ strengths, needs, learning skills and accommodations recorded in the Individual Education Plan (IEP).

See: Gifted Program October, 2014 Newsletter to TCDSB staff: Roles and Responsibilities of the Home School and Gifted Program and information pertaining to the IEP, Strategies for Organization. (Newsletter was distributed board wide again in October 2015.)

- Providing information to students, staff and parents pertaining to transitions through:
 - *Gifted Program October, 2015 Newsletter Focus: Transition to Secondary, Dealing with Change (for staff)*
 - *Strategies for dealing with periods of transition on TCDSB Public Portal (for parents)*
 - *Presentation to parents at the CEC (ABC conference) in May 2016*
 - *Resources for parents at the TCDSB Special Services Fair on April 30, 2016.*
- Exploring opportunities for student-lead coaching activities and peer-support in facilitating the development of self-regulation and organization skills.
- Monitoring of longitudinal development and maintenance of Learning Skills of students with Giftedness (report card and perceptual data).

Goals

To continue to increase the percentage of students identified with Giftedness whose Self-Regulation and Organizational skills are rated as “excellent” on their Provincial Report Card. Measurement is focused on the 2016-17 Grade 6 cohort, and using their Grade 5 Term 2 Provincial Report Card, June 2016 as baseline. The goal is to increase and to maintain the improvement for this cohort through Grade 8 to ensure successful transition into secondary school (therefore this is a 3-year goal).

Strategies planned:

- Sharing of information and strategies with TCDSB staff on the importance of and the strategies to develop self-regulation skills through:
 - Gifted Program October, 2016 Newsletter Focus: Self-Regulation information and strategies*
 - Discussion at 2016 meetings for the Program Review Committee- Giftedness*
- Communicating and sharing information and strategies regarding this goal at meetings with Gifted Withdrawal and Congregating Program Teachers.

- Building capacity for all teachers (regular classroom, Special Education, Gifted Withdrawal and Congregated Program Teachers, through communications and professional development activities.
- APT (Gifted Programs) supporting teachers in focusing on self-regulation and organization when visiting classes.
- Monitoring of longitudinal development and maintenance of Learning Skills of students with Giftedness, and comparing the development and maintenance of Learning Skills of students with Giftedness for the 2013-16 and 2016-19 cohort of students.

6. Language Impairment (LI)

Goals set in 2014/2015

That the achievement gap between students identified with Language Impairment (LI) and all students be maintained or reduced by 5 percent:

1. from a 47 percent gap (in 2013-14) to a 42 percent gap (for 2014-15) in Grade 3 Reading
2. from a 49 percent gap (in 2013-14) to a 44 percent gap (for 2014-15) in Grade 6 Reading
3. from a 46 percent gap (in 2013-14) to a 41 percent gap (for 2014-15) on the OSSLT

Strategies Implemented:

- Parent workshops on literacy were delivered by Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) staff to families of Early Years students. Pre- and post- workshop survey data indicated that a third of parents reported increased confidence regarding their knowledge and understanding of their child's communication and literacy needs.
- Facilitation of early intervention processes (i.e., SLP consultation to Early Years classroom and promotion of the board-wide Early Identification Strategy). The number of referrals to the SLP department from Early Years teachers for consultation increased significantly from 2013/2014.
- Seven interactive workshops for Early Years educator teams (teacher and Designated Early Childhood Educator) were provided across all superintendent areas. Positive feedback from teachers was received regarding resources and strategies shared.

- Implementation of the Empower Reading intervention in 15 Language Impairment-Intensive Support Program (LI-ISP) classes was supported. Data collection regarding Empower implementation continues to be monitored through the TCDSB Empower Committee.
- Resource materials were developed for students entering and exiting Kindergarten Language Programs (KLP) and LI-ISP classes to support successful transitions. Members of School Based Support Learning Teams (SBSLT) reported increased use of resource during team meetings and IPRCs.
- The new resource FIPPA, Focused Intervention Program for Phonemic Awareness, was piloted by SLPs in select schools. Preliminary pre- and post-intervention data indicates students made gains in decoding skills.
- An afterschool Professional Learning Network was established for LI-ISP teachers to facilitate mentorship, capacity building and professional learning. Positive feedback was received from teachers who participated.
- A list of recommended classroom resources to support literacy development was shared with LI-ISP teachers. A small number of teachers reported use of the resource document.
- Two Professional Learning Series were offered to Special Education Teachers working with students with LI and LI-ISP teachers to support IEP goal setting, classroom programming and use of interactive white board resources (e.g., SMART Board). Majority of teachers reported on workshop exit surveys that they found the workshops useful for their work with students with LI.
- Written resources to support literacy (self-reflective booklet for secondary students with LI that provides a forum for collaborative discussion, reflection and learning and a fact sheet (Language Difficulties: Classroom Strategies for Secondary Schools) were provided to Secondary Department Heads. A small number of schools reported consistent use of the resources

Results/Observations/Deliverables

Grade 3 Literacy

- Grade 3 results for LI students have improved from 6%-15% (Level 3 and 4) to 31% in the past years (a gain of 8% from two years ago).
- In Grade 3, the proportion of both Level 2 (63% to 49%) and Level 1 LI students (18% to 6%) has decreased over the past 2 years.

The Grade 3 Reading goal was achieved. The grade 3 results for students with LI suggest that a strong focus on early identification and intervention for students with LI has been positive in reducing the achievement gap.

Grade 6 Literacy

- A. Grade 6 results for LI students have remained steady (21% to 25%) from 2010-11 to 2013-14. This year, they improved by 5% to 30%.
- B. Among Grade 6 students the proportion of LI students with Level 2 scores increased (43% to 53%) while the percentage of level 1 students decreased (20% to 9%).

In reading at the Junior division a slight improvement was noted in the percentage of students with LI who achieved Level 3 and 4 on the EQAO Junior Reading assessment (increase of 5%). Fewer LI students were at Level 1 than in previous years (decrease from 20% to 9%).

OSSLT

- Over the past 4 years, the percentage of LI students passing the OSSLT has declined steadily from 62% to 32%.

The number of LI students is too small for reliable conclusions. The performance of even one student impacts the results considerably. Lower scores may reflect a particular student's instructional needs.

Next Steps to Consider

- Review of data results suggest that the current focus on traditional quantitative data (e.g., yearly changes in EQAO) may not be the best indicator of achievement for students with LI for accountability purposes due to the small sample size.
- Behavioural and perceptual data, collected through work samples, surveys, interviews and classroom observations, are recommended as strategies to monitor goal progress.
- Longer terms goals for improvement that focus more on instructional practices are recommended.

Goals for 2015/2016 and 2016/17

2015/2016

- 1) If LI-ISP teachers engage in a collaborative study, then they will deepen their capacity to understand the learning needs of students with LI and refine instruction to improve student learning and achievement. Progress will be

measured by perceptual data (e.g., surveys, interviews) and behavioural data (e.g., work samples, classroom observations).

- 2) If reading instruction for primary students with LI is directly focused on decoding and comprehension, then we can continue to reduce the achievement gap in primary literacy. Progress will be monitored over two years (2015/16 and 2016/17) by data collection regarding Empower Reading implementation and student achievement, evidence-based interventions such as SKIPPA (Senior Kindergarten Intervention Program for Phonemic Awareness) and FIPPA (Focused Intervention Program for Phonemic Awareness), and analysing CAT4 and EQAO data.

2016-2017

- 1) If reading instruction for primary students with LI is directly focused on decoding and comprehension, then we can continue to reduce the achievement gap in primary literacy. Continuation of 2015/2016 goal. Progress will be monitored by data collection regarding Empower Reading implementation and student achievement, evidence-based interventions such as SKIPPA (Senior Kindergarten Intervention Program for Phonemic Awareness) and FIPPA (Focused Intervention Program for Phonemic Awareness), analysing student achievement on the Oral Language strand of literacy on the final report card and analysing CAT4 and EQAO data.
- 2) If we support teachers through professional development to deepen their understanding of the learning needs of Junior students with LI then they can refine instruction to improve student learning and achievement in numeracy and literacy. Progress will be measured by perceptual data (e.g., surveys, interviews) and behavioural data (e.g., work samples, classroom observations).
- 3) If we support secondary students with LI to reflect upon their own learning profile and increase self-advocacy, then we can increase student achievement and well-being. Progress will be monitored by behavioural data, collected through work samples, student work logs and classroom observations, perceptual data, collected through surveys and interviews, and analysing EQAO data.

Strategies to be implemented:

2015/2016 Strategies

- LI-ISP teachers to participate in collaborative study to examine and develop indicators of functional oral language skills.

- Provide information and professional development material to parents and teachers, relevant for addressing oral language and literacy skills for students with LI.
- Continue the systematic and strategic implementation of 2 components of Empower Reading intervention, i.e. Comprehension in grades 2-5, and Decoding in grades 2-5.
- Continue to implement a strategic roll-out of FIPPA (Focused Intervention Program for Phonemic Awareness), targeting students who may not qualify for other reading interventions.
- Promote retention of LI Identification (where appropriate) for junior/intermediate students to ensure their needs are flagged in high school.
- Communicate yearly Accountability Framework for Special Education (AFSE) goals to teachers of LI students through email communications, newsletters, and Professional Development.

2016/2017 Strategies

- Administer functional speaking and listening measure in Fall and Spring 2016/2017 to LI- ISP teachers and classroom teachers of those students. Survey results will inform goal setting for 2017/2018.
- Provide targeted professional development to Early Years teams, LI-ISP teachers and special education teachers around resource, Oral Language at Your Fingertips, to facilitate better understanding of the learning needs of elementary students with LI.
- Provide in-services to Secondary Special Education staff who work with students with LI on the resource, Understanding My Language Impairment: A Video for Students, so that staff and identified students benefit from the use of the self-advocacy video.
- Enhance capacity of SLP department staff to deliver and track evidence based intervention supports for high school students with LI.
- Review the current and historical composition of LI- Intensive Support Programs. Conduct a study in collaboration with the research department to explore the development of entrance and exit measures of curriculum based achievement levels to better address the strengths and needs of students in the LI-ISP classes.
- Encourage consistent use of assistive technology for all students with LI as part of regular classroom instruction.
- Communicate yearly Accountability Framework for Special Education (AFSE) goals to teachers of LI students through email communications, newsletters, and Professional Development.

- Other strategies to be determined following review of 2015/2016 data and needs.

7. Learning Disability (LD)

Goals set in 2014-15

1. **In mathematics** at the Junior level: decrease the percentage of students with LD in the lowest achievement category (Level 1 on EQAO in Grade 6, and Stanines 1,2,3 on CAT4 in Grade 5) by June 2015.
2. **In reading** at the Junior level: increase the percentage of students with LD who reach Level 3 and 4 on the EQAO assessments by June 2015.
3. Increase the percentage of Grade 10 **credit accumulation** for students with LD compared to June 2014.

Strategies implemented

In mathematics:

- Based on last year's results and in order to support students with the most severe LDs, *JUMP Math* was introduced in LD Intensive Support Programs. Intensive Support Program teachers received inservices regarding implementation. Data collection has been ongoing. Early data indicate that teachers generally found that students were making progress.

In reading:

- In order to support LD students with reading problems, 3 versions of the *Empower Reading intervention* were delivered in 80 schools (including 13 LD Intensive Support Programs). Data collection regarding Empower Reading implementation continues to be ongoing. Data indicate that most students continue to make progress in reading even 3 to 4 years post-intervention (i.e. EQAO, CAT4, Individual Education Plan, and Report card data show decreased exemption rate, increased rate of performing at provincial standard and at expected achievement levels, decreased need for IEP).
- Lexia Reading, a web-based reading intervention was also made available to students with LD in schools including some LD ISP classes and withdrawal settings.

General strategies:

- Focus on supporting the development of Learning Skills in students with LD. Facilitate the understanding of the role and development of executive functioning skills by providing professional development to classroom teachers, Special Education and Intensive Support Program teachers.
- *Psychology Newsletter on Learning Skills and executive functioning skills sent out to all schools and posted on website in February 2015.*
- *Psychology Symposium on Learning Skills and executive functioning skills delivered to parents and staff at the CEC in February 2015.*
- *Self-Advocacy Program (York Region DSB) for students with LD was introduced to Intensive Support Program teachers and Psychology Staff in the fall of 2014.*
- **Results/Observations/Deliverables**

Results:

In mathematics on the EQAO assessments at the Junior level, although the percent of students with LD reaching provincial standards increased slightly: from 16 to 17 % (with a trend remaining relatively stable for the past 3 years), the percent of students with LD in Level 1 increased from 36% to 43% (thus decreasing the percent of students in Level 2). This is consistent with a decreasing trend for all TCDSB students on this measure in the past 3 years. (CAT4 results are in the process of being compiled for students with LD.)

On the Grade 9 EQAO, 76% of students with LD in the Academic and 37% in the Applied stream reached provincial standards, compared to 82% and 44% of all Grade 9 students, respectively.

In reading at the Junior division the percent of students with LD who achieved Level 3 and 4 on the EQAO Junior Reading assessment increased from 38% to 50%, which is a 12% increase.

Grade 10 credit accumulation: At the end of 2014-15 school year, 75% of Grade 10 students with LD had 16/16 or more credits (compared to 85% of all Grade 10 students). This represents an increase from 70% in 2014.

Observations:

It was noted that only 7% of students with special education needs used **assistive technology** for completing the OSSLT (2014). Based on the high

prevalence of reading problems in individuals with LD (80%), relying on assistive technology for reading should be much higher to facilitate success, not only on OSSLT, but generally in academic achievement and in future post-secondary endeavours. Potential causes for low use of assistive technology were investigated with the purpose to address barriers and increase use. Through the 3 surveys conducted by the research department in 2014-15 several barriers were identified: including inadequate access to computers that are available at school, unreliable and/or slow computers; difficulty using assistive technology software. As a result, we are investigating other possible solutions that are easier to use and are more inclusive.

- **Next Steps to consider**

Investigating possible solutions for increasing the use of assistive technology for students with LD through a collaborative inquiry with an elementary and a secondary school participating.

Progress in reading and mathematics will be monitored by collecting data regarding Empower Reading implementation and student achievement, and analysing CAT4 and EQAO data as well as collecting data from Intensive Support Programs classes using JUMP math.

- **Goal(s) for 2015-16 and 2016-17**

- I. If there is focus on supporting the regular use of technology with ALL students and students with LD, then the regular use of assistive technology for students with LD will increase. (This is a longer term goal: 2015-16, 2016-17)
- II. **In mathematics:** If math instruction for students with LD is directly focused on computation as well as reasoning, then we can reduce the achievement gap in math. (This is a longer term goal: 2015-16, 2016-17)
- III. **In reading:** If reading instruction for students with LD is directly focused on decoding and comprehension, we can continue to reduce the achievement gap. (This is a longer term goal: 2015-16, 2016-17)

- **Strategies that will be implemented**

Assistive Technology

- Participating in a collaborative inquiry that is focusing on the use of technology for all students consistently as part of regular classroom instruction. One elementary and one secondary school are participating in this initiative in order to explore enablers and barriers before expanding to

- more schools. Teachers from both schools have participated in a PD focused on the classroom application of Google Apps for Education (GAPE), and will be coming together to provide feedback.
- Communicate the goal to and continue to build capacity for LD Intensive Support Program teachers to implement technology and assistive technology in their classrooms.

Mathematics:

- Continue the implementation and monitoring of JUMP Math in LD ISPs. Regularly provide information and professional development material to teachers, relevant for teaching math to students with severe LD.

Reading:

- Continue to implement Empower Reading intervention, including the systematic and strategic implementation of all 3 components of Empower Reading intervention, i.e. Comprehension (in grades 2-5), and Decoding in grades (2-5 and 6 -8).
- Continue to implement a strategic roll-out of Lexia Reading (a web-based literacy intervention), targeting students with LD who require continued support to improve their reading.

General strategies:

- Continue to provide professional development (centrally and locally) for classroom teachers and school staffs; use professional development opportunities to communicate the above goals; to facilitate a better understanding of the academic and social-emotional/mental health implications of LD, and strategies to foster success (i.e. PD presentations to teachers, EAs/CYW's on the February 12th PA day).
- Continue to focus on supporting the development of Learning Skills in students with LD. Facilitate the understanding of the role and development of executive functioning skills by providing professional development to classroom teachers SETs and ISP teachers.
 - Facilitate accessing free webinars on LD@school.ca and other professional resources; disseminate information on Integra and other PD opportunities in the community; post and share internal and external resources on the TCDSB staff and public portals, offer local presentations to school by psychology staff, etc.

- Continue to focus on developing self-regulation and self-advocacy skills in students with LD by using the Self-Advocacy Program (York Region DSB).
- Explore possibilities to offer learning opportunities (central and local) to students on LD to facilitate understanding, acceptance, and inclusion on part of peers, and self-understanding, self-advocacy and self-regulation for students with LD (e.g. via Student leadership events/activities).
- Continue to provide information on central and local in-services and resources to parents on LD and on their role in fostering academic success, self-advocacy, resilience, and positive mental health.
 - a) *Presentation to parents at the TCDSB Special Services Fair on April 30, 2016.*
 - b) *Psychology Newsletter on teaching self-regulation and pro-social behaviour sent out to all schools and posted on website in February 2016.*
 - c) *Psychology Symposium on teaching self-regulation and pro-social behaviour offered to parents and staff at the CEC in February 2016.*
- Review the current and historical composition of LD ISP classes: with the help of the research department conduct a study to assist in better understanding and addressing the strengths and needs of the LD Intensive Support Program.

8) Mild Intellectual Disability (MID)

Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities was created in the 2014-15 school year. Through changes to staffing, they have not specifically been included as part of an Accountability Framework committee in 2015-16. Their achievement for 2014-15 has however been tracked and is reported here to create a baseline of achievement that will be used to inform future work in this area.

1. 43% of students in Grades 1-6 were at level 3 or 4 in the area of *Language Arts: Reading* on the **Elementary Provincial Report Card**
2. 43% of students in Grade 7 were at level 3 or 4 in the area of *Language Arts: Reading* on the **Elementary Provincial Report Card**
3. 44% of students in Grade 8 were at level 3 or 4 in the area of *Language Arts: Reading* on the **Elementary Provincial Report Card**

4. 56% of students in Grades 1-6 were at level 3 or 4 in the area of *Mathematics: Number Sense and Numeration* on the **Elementary Provincial Report Card**
5. 38% of students in Grade 7 were at level 3 or 4 in the area of *Mathematics: Number Sense and Numeration* on the **Elementary Provincial Report Card**
6. 50% of students in Grade 8 were at level 3 or 4 in the area of *Mathematics: Number Sense and Numeration* on the **Elementary Provincial Report Card**

Goals for 2015-16

1. To create an accountability framework committee to track student achievement of the MID population.
2. The capabilities of this group varies and future work will investigate alternative measures of achievement to track student success.

9) Multiple Exceptionalities/Developmental Delays (ME/DD)

Goals Set in 2014/15:

Developmental Disability Program Goals:

- By June 2015, 70% of the functional literacy expectations as outlined on the IEP and as reported on the alternative report card will be met for elementary students with a DD identification.
- By June 2015, 70% of the functional numeracy expectations as outlined on the IEP and as reported on the alternative report card will be met for elementary students with a DD identification.

Multiple Exceptionalities Programs Goals:

- By June 2015, 70% of the functional literacy expectations as outlined on the IEP and as reported on the alternative report card will be met for elementary students with a ME identification.
- By June 2015, 70% of the functional numeracy expectations as outlined on the IEP and as reported on the alternative report card will be met for elementary students with a ME identification.

Strategies Implemented

- The program goals and data were shared with a focus group of teachers who were invited to participate in a collaborative inquiry for 2015/16. The focus group was held to collect information on their understanding of functional literacy and the strategies used, in particular with the programming of students with a DD or ME identification, and to work towards a common understanding of functional literacy.
- A draft ‘Best Practice Guide’ for DD-ME intensive support programs to support evidence informed practices has been developed. We are investigating recommended resources to add to the guide to make it more comprehensive.
- A number of sets of literacy materials, MeVille to WeVille, were ordered for elementary DD-ME intensive support programs. This will be piloted in select DD-ME intensive support programs in order to get feedback.

Results/Observations/Deliverables:

Developmental Disability (DD) Programs:

1. Alternate achievement measures were analysed for students identified with a Developmental Disability as EQAO results were not an appropriate measure for this group of students.
2. Based on the June 2015 Alternative Report Card, for elementary students identified with a Developmental Disability, 62% of the overall number of functional literacy skill expectations were met, as outlined in students’ IEP. This represents a 4% increase from the findings from June 2014.
3. For 2014/2015 a numeracy goal was identified and was analysed based on the functional numeracy skill expectations on the June 2015 Alternative Report Card. Results for functional numeracy skill expectation indicate that 61% of these expectations were being met by DD students. This represents a 1% increase when compared to results from June 2014.

Number of students with DD across grades who had at least one functional literacy and/or numeracy skill expectation reported on the alternative report card.

Developmental Disability (DD)	Grade										Total
	JK	SK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

2012-2013	2	6	7	4	4	9	8	6	13	7	66
2013-2014	0	3	6	11	5	5	9	4	6	9	58
2014-2015	1	0	3	7	10	9	5	13	15	11	74

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Percent of functional literacy skills met by students with DD	54%	69%	58%	62%
Percent of functional numeracy skills met by students with DD	N/A	N/A	60%	61%

Multiple Exceptionalities Programs

- i. Alternate achievement measures were analysed for students identified with a Multiple Exceptionality as EQAO results were not an appropriate measure for this group of students.
- ii. Based on the June 2015 Alternative Report Card, for elementary students identified with Multiple Exceptionalities, 58% of the overall number of functional literacy skill expectations were met, as outlined in students' IEP. This represents a 7% increase when compared to results from June 2014.
- iii. For 2014/2015 a numeracy goal was identified and was analysed based on the functional numeracy skill expectations on the June 2015 Alternative Report Card. Results for functional numeracy skill expectation indicate that 57% of these expectations were being met by ME students. This represents a 5% increase when compared to results from June 2014.

Number of students with ME across grades who had at least one functional literacy and/or numeracy skill expectation reported on the alternative report card

Multiple Exceptionality (ME)	Grade										Total
	J K	S K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
2012-2013	1	3	6	10	8	7	4	6	7	10	62
2013-2014	1	3	10	5	6	9	5	5	3	7	54
2014-2015	2	3	5	9	8	8	9	10	5	3	62

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Percent of functional literacy skills met by students with ME	64%	64%	51%	58%
Percent of functional numeracy skills met by students with ME	N/A	N/A	52%	57%

Next Steps (DD/ME):

- Plans are underway to communicate with staff and parents about the DD and ME Program Review process. Information is available on the board website. In addition, there has been discussion about developing a newsletter communicating DD and ME initiatives for staff and parents.
- Enhance achievement in functional literacy and functional numeracy for students identified with Developmental Disabilities (DD) and Multiple Exceptionalities (ME). The following activities have been recommended by the committee:
 - That the alternative report card be reviewed. It has been recommended that the alternative report card include an achievement scale that indicates the level of independence for students on an alternative curriculum.
 - A collaborative inquiry with staff in DD-ME intensive support programs is currently underway to investigate issues related to effective literacy programming. Based on the outcomes of the collaborative inquiry, this will inform future goals.
- A draft ‘Best Practice Guide’ for DD-ME intensive support programs to support evidence informed practices has been developed. It will be reviewed to determine how to communicate this to the system.
- Resources at the secondary level are also being investigated with a focus on the ‘Pathway to Community Participation’.

- Identification criteria for DD and ME is being updated to reflect new DSM 5 diagnostic criteria. Placement guidelines are also being reviewed.

Goals for 2015/16

A collaborative inquiry with, staff in DD-ME intensive support programs, focusing on effective literacy programming is the main focus of the committee. The inquiry will be completed in May and based on the outcomes will inform our future goals in both elementary and secondary. Going forward we will be looking at growth goals i.e. an increase of percentage of students meeting the determined goal(s).

Strategies to be Implemented

- We will analyse data for secondary students to help determine an appropriate goal focusing on the pathway to community participation.
- The ‘Best Practice Guide’ for DD-ME intensive support programs to support evidence informed practices has been developed. It will first be shared with teachers and administration who DD-ME intensive support programs in order to provide feedback.
- Along with the ‘Best Practice Guide’ being communicated, once the goals have been determined these will be shared with teachers and administration who have DD-ME intensive support programs.
- There will be further discussion about the alternative report card to determine if it should be changed to include an achievement scale that indicates the level of independence for students on an alternative curriculum.
- We will investigate an afterschool Professional Learning Network for DD-ME intensive support program teachers to facilitate mentorship, professional learning and capacity building.
- We will discuss the need for a survey to get feedback on which types of assistive technology are being used with students in DD-ME intensive support programs.

Part 4 - Update on Special Education Program Implementation

1. Empower Update for 2014/2015

Empower Reading™ is an evidence-based reading intervention which has been developed by the Learning Disabilities Research Program at the Hospital for Sick Children, and is based on 25 years of research in Canada and the United States. The

TCDSB continues to offer an intervention intended for students in Grades 2-5 who have demonstrated significant difficulties in decoding and spelling. In the past 3 years, it has also offered both a decoding program for students in Grades 6 to 8 and another intervention focused on Comprehension and Vocabulary. In 2014-15, 435 students participated in the decoding program for Grades 2 to 5 and 65 students in the newer program for grades 6 to 8. 76 students participated in Grade 2 to 5 Comprehension.

Student performance has been measured in all programs through assessments of literacy appropriate to the specific decoding or comprehension intervention.

Students in the Grade 2 to 5 decoding program made significant gains on:

1. Decoding and word recognition measures provided by SickKids and measures of phonemic awareness developed at the TCDSB; students answered over 90% of items on the “key words” emphasized in Grade 2 to 5 Empower and up to 78% of the “challenge words (which require students to generalize their decoding skills to new words).
2. The Running Record (TCDSB measure): on average these students were well below grade level at the beginning of the program; improvement was observed by June. (For example, there was an increase from 1% to 38% of Grade 2 students reading at grade level).

There is evidence suggesting that students who complete at least 90 of the 110 Empower lessons make higher gains than students who do not.

Similar results were found from the SickKids, Blending and Segmenting and TCDSB Running Record tests which indicated substantial improvement over the course of the intervention. In the Comprehension intervention, students improved on the Running Record, especially on the Comprehension component. In addition, teacher interviews administered at the end of instruction suggested that students improved substantially on all the comprehension strategies taught in Empower. Assessment results for all 3 programs were corroborated in teacher interviews. In addition, many interviewees reported parental support and effective collaboration with regular and integration teachers.

In the longer term (3 to 4 years post-intervention), student performance on Canadian Achievement Test (CAT) and EQAO was analyzed:

1. Students who take CAT tests after completing Empower have better results than those who take it beforehand. For example, 80% students who took Empower in Grade 3 had low scores (stanines 1 to 3) on the Grade 2 CAT test; on the Grade 5, only 44% did so.
2. In Grades 4 and 5, students who were enrolled in Empower do so after participating in the Grade 3 EQAO but before the Grade 6 EQAO. For these students, the proportion of Level 1 scores decreased (31% to 12%) on the Grade 6 test, relative to Grade 3.
3. While most students improve on the Board and provincial measures, there is a proportion of students who will need further Special Education interventions; Empower teachers suggest that these students are often identified as LI, sometimes as LD. Most students need reinforcement after Empower.

Kindergarten Language Program (KLP) Update for 2014/2015

Success/Implementation Stage

The Kindergarten Language Program (KLP) is an early intervention program (Tier 2) for Senior Kindergarten students at-risk for oral language delays and related early literacy needs. The program has been in operation since 1995/1996. The KLP is co-instructed by a teacher and a speech-language pathologist and delivered in eight schools across the Board. 256 students participated in the KLP in 2014/2015.

1. The 2014-2015 data for KLP students showed considerable growth in the domains assessed on pre- and -post program testing.
2. The number of students who scored within the normal range on overall oral language measures increased 29% at the time of demission from the KLP.
3. The number of KLP students who scored within the normal range on vocabulary measures at the time of demission from the KLP increased 53%.
4. The majority of students returned to the regular classroom following participation in the KLP while 16% were recommended for consideration of an LI-ISP placement for grade one.
5. The percentage of KLP students who returned to the regular class has remained consistent since last year (82% in 2013/2014 and 84% in 2014/15).

6. JUMP Math Update for 2014/2015

JUMP Math is a numeracy program developed by Dr. John Mighton in an attempt to improve math instruction and learning for all students, including those with special needs. JUMP Math uses structured instruction that draws student attention to mathematical reasoning. As stated on the JUMP Math Canada website, the program is “dedicated to enhancing the potential in children by encouraging an understanding and a love of math in students and educators.”

With tremendous support of the Superintendent of Special Services and Education Council, in January 2014, JUMP was offered to the LD Intensive Support Program (ISP) classes for implementation and research tracking, soon to be followed by implementation in ISPs for other exceptionalities. The first professional development session of JUMP was completed in March of 2014. The current ISP JUMP Math Steering Committee was officially given the mandate to oversee the implementation of JUMP in the ISP classes, holding its first meeting in April of 2014.

In the 2104-15 school year, ISP teachers who used JUMP math were interviewed at the midpoint of the school year. They reported that:

1. Teachers generally noticed substantial improvement in student math performance, especially in number sense and numeration. They also observed that students are more motivated and comfortable with mathematics. Parents also provided good feedback and appreciated being able to understand and follow their students mathematical lessons without complicated verbiage.
2. While teachers thought that students made considerable process in numeration, some also thought it was an area in which students could use more support – especially in applying their work. Some teachers also thought that students need help with the more abstract mathematical concepts.
3. Teachers track student progress most often through unit tests and quizzes, observations and anecdotes and student notebooks. The methods varied by grade.
4. A similar survey will be administered in the spring of 2016 and results will be reported next fall.

In 2015-2016, research is underway to consider methods which can be used to assess and track student progress in JUMP Math. These methods may include:

1. Checklists to record student mastery of Ontario curriculum expectations throughout the school year. A draft checklist will be given to JUMP teachers in the spring to record student progress and for feedback on its value as an assessment tool.
2. Mathematical components of the Woodcock-Johnson, a standardized test well regarded for its norms will be adapted for use with Special students in ISP classes. A pilot last year provided preliminary evidence that LI students in grades 1 to 4 improve in some aspects of math, but have difficulty with important concepts such as proportions (including simple division). The use of assistive technology and manipulatives that Special students use in class will also be investigated.

3. Lexia Update for 2014/2015

Lexia Reading, is a reading intervention which aims to advance foundational reading development for students, pre-K to Grade 4, and accelerate reading development for at-risk students in Grades 4-12. This web-based individualized reading intervention provides explicit, systematic, structured practice on the essential reading skills of phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Students practice and learn these skills by interacting with the online program, as well as by receiving teacher-led Lexia lessons and paper-based practice activities. Students can access Lexia Reading from school, home, public library, etc. TCDSB implements Lexia as a Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention to facilitate the development of reading skills for students. Schools are eligible for accessing up to 10 centrally purchased licenses.

Implementation review and program evaluation are being carried out by the Central Lexia Committee (under the umbrella of LD Program Review Committee), to monitor usage and maximize efficiency. In June 2014, surveys were collected from teachers using Lexia Reading with their identified students. Informal interviews of teachers and students were also conducted. Findings were shared with the Learning Disabilities Program Review Committee. While the sample of teacher responding to the survey was limited (n=9), their responses were positive and encouraging. Teachers found the program easy to use, engaging for students, and effective to develop their reading. Some teachers reported technical difficulties using Lexia Reading.

The Lexia Reading software also delivers norm-referenced performance data and analysis for each individual student, through the software application. Teachers use the data to track achievement and tailor instruction.

D. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.