REPORT TO

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

ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION 2016-2017

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.
Romans 3:19

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
March 20, 2017	April 6, 2017	Click here to enter a date.

Cristina Fernandes, Superintendent of Education – Special Services
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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 uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.
We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.

R. McGuckin
Associate Director of Academic Affairs

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Executive Superintendent of Business Services and Chief Financial Officer

Angela Gauthier
Director of Education

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An accountability framework was established for the annual review of 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. This report is composed of the following sections:

Part A -Overview of student achievement for students with special needs.

Part B - Reporting on Overall achievement by exceptionality where feasible/ appropriate.

Part C - Reporting on Safe Schools information for 2015-16

Part D - Reporting on the ongoing work of the accountability framework committees as listed below:

a. Autism
b. Behaviour
c. Blind/Low Vision (BLV)
d. Deaf/ Hard of Hearing (DHH)
e. Gifted
f. Language Impairment (LI)
g. Learning Disability (LD)
h. Mild Intellectual Disability (MID)
i. Multiple Exceptionalities/Developmental Delays (ME/DD)

Part E - Update on implementation of specific Special Education Programs

B. PURPOSE

1. This report is an annual standing report on the rolling calendar for the Student Achievement Committee. The 2015-16 report (Part One) went to the Board of Trustees last on February 4, 2016 while Part Two went to the Board of Trustees on September 8, 2016.
2. This report provides an overall review of student achievement for 2015-16 on the EQAO assessments where available, with a broad strokes overview of achievement of students with special needs and comparisons over the last few years as well as an outline of the work of the accountability frameworks for different exceptionalities.

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 (AFSE).

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. 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. An analysis is provided on student achievement by exceptionality, where appropriate.

6. Last school year, due to labor disruption in the spring of the 2016, some elementary level EQAO assessments were not used for reporting purposes as students in both grades 3 and 6 did not write the assessment. Only students in secondary schools wrote the EQAO assessments and as a result, the data used in this report is reflective of the partial gathering of data. This analysis is also usually used to inform the ongoing work of the AFSE committees.

7. This report examines the EQAO results for students with Special Education support and their achievement results and trends over the last five years where possible.

8. The Accountability Framework committees set and implement strategies that are exceptionality-specific with the intent of improving student outcomes though the listed goals and strategies.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

This section of the report will provide an analysis of each part of the report as outlined in the Executive Summary.

Part A -An overview of student achievement as it pertains to students with special needs.

EQAO Results for All Students with Special Needs (Excluding Gifted)

NP = "Non-participating" indicates that due to exceptional circumstances, some or all of the school's or board's students did not participate

EC = Due to exceptional circumstances in 2015, provincial data are unavailable to report provincial results.

PRIMARY

Reading Grade 3

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 1,086		2014 - 2015 N = 1,033		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2013 - 2014 N = 21,671		2014 - 2015 N = EC		2015 - 2016 N = 21,412	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	36	3%	32	3%	NP	NP	833	4%	EC	EC	930	4%
Level 3	385	35%	372	36%	NP	NP	7,818	36%	EC	EC	8,183	38%
Level 2	417	38%	428	41%	NP	NP	7,750	36%	EC	EC	7,714	36%
Level 1	105	10%	81	8%	NP	NP	2,102	10%	EC	EC	1,754	8%
NE 1	25	2%	18	2%	NP	NP	669	3%	EC	EC	428	2%
No Data	6	1%	13	1%	NP	NP	203	1%	EC	EC	252	1%
Exempt	112	10%	89	9%	NP	NP	2,296	11%	EC	EC	2,151	10%

Writing Grade 3

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 1,086		2014 - 2015 N = 1,033		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2013 - 2014 N = 21,671		2014 - 2015 N = EC		2015 - 2016 N = 21,430	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	18	2%	13	1%	NP	NP	309	1%	EC	EC	183	1%
Level 3	605	56%	566	55%	NP	NP	12,040	56 %	EC	EC	11,191	52%
Level 2	333	31%	333	32%	NP	NP	6,514	30 %	EC	EC	7,372	34%
Level 1	15	1%	19	2%	NP	NP	377	2%	EC	EC	335	2%
NE 1	5	<1%	5	<1%	NP	NP	112	1%	EC	EC	109	1%
No Data	6	1%	15	1%	NP	NP	204	1%	EC	EC	255	1%
Exempt	104	10%	82	8%	NP	NP	2,115	10 %	EC	EC	1,985	9%

Math Grade 3

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 1,105		2014 - 2015 N = 1,046		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2013 - 2014 N = 21,965		2014 - 2015 N = EC		2015 - 2016 N = 21,824	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	40	4%	27	3%	NP	NP	795	4%	EC	EC	599	3%
Level 3	322	29%	309	30%	NP	NP	6,527	30%	EC	EC	5,726	26%
Level 2	496	45%	475	45%	NP	NP	9,150	42%	EC	EC	8,875	41%
Level 1	130	12%	120	11%	NP	NP	2,746	13%	EC	EC	3,478	16%
NE 1	11	1%	20	2%	NP	NP	316	1%	EC	EC	859	4%
No Data	9	1%	12	1%	NP	NP	227	1%	EC	EC	267	1%
Exempt	97	9%	83	8%	NP	NP	2,204	10%	EC	EC	2,020	9%

JUNIOR

Reading Grade 6

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 1,158		2014 - 2015 N = 1,230		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2013 - 2014 N = 26,432		2014 - 2015 N = EC		2015 - 2016 N = 26,457	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	13	1%	18	1%	NP	NP	738	3%	EC	EC	915	3%
Level 3	433	37%	532	43%	NP	NP	11,703	44 %	EC	EC	12,504	47%
Level 2	509	44%	521	42%	NP	NP	9,588	36 %	EC	EC	9,047	34%
Level 1	114	10%	60	5%	NP	NP	2,150	8%	EC	EC	1,752	7%
NE 1	1	<1%	6	<1%	NP	NP	185	1%	EC	EC	154	1%
No Data	5	<1%	12	1%	NP	NP	207	1%	EC	EC	328	1%
Exempt	83	7%	81	7%	NP	NP	1,861	7%	EC	EC	1,757	7%

Writing Grade 6

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 1,158		2014 - 2015 N = 1,230		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2013 - 2014 N = 26,428		2014 - 2015 N = EC		2015 - 2016 N = 26,467	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	15	1%	31	3%	NP	NP	610	2%	EC	EC	1,122	4%
Level 3	561	48%	553	45%	NP	NP	11,618	44 %	EC	EC	12,312	47%
Level 2	465	40%	521	42%	NP	NP	11,245	43 %	EC	EC	10,047	38%
Level 1	21	2%	25	2%	NP	NP	710	3%	EC	EC	705	3%
NE 1	8	1%	4	<1%	NP	NP	210	1%	EC	EC	200	1%
No Data	6	1%	15	1%	NP	NP	227	1%	EC	EC	357	1%
Exempt	82	7%	81	7%	NP	NP	1,808	7%	EC	EC	1,724	7%

Math Grade 6

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 1,160		2014 - 2015 N = 1,228		2015 - 2016 N = NP		2013 - 2014 N = 26,445		2014 - 2015 N = EC		2015 - 2016 N = 26,824	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	19	2%	29	2%	NP	NP	820	3%	EC	EC	1,040	4%
Level 3	168	14%	160	13%	NP	NP	4,308	16 %	EC	EC	3,886	15%
Level 2	440	38%	401	33%	NP	NP	9,143	35 %	EC	EC	7,993	30%
Level 1	431	37%	521	42%	NP	NP	9,430	36 %	EC	EC	10,978	41%
NE 1	9	1%	17	1%	NP	NP	431	2%	EC	EC	368	1%
No Data	7	1%	13	1%	NP	NP	258	1%	EC	EC	355	1%
Exempt	86	7%	87	7%	NP	NP	2,055	8%	EC	EC	1,877	7%

SECONDARY

Grade 9 – Academic

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 188		2014 - 2015 N = 228		2015 - 2016 N = 272		2013 - 2014 N = 5,969		2014 - 2015 N = EC		2015 - 2016 N = 7,169	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	9	5%	8	4%	4	1%	373	6%	EC	EC	375	5%
Level 3	125	66%	157	69%	177	65%	4,061	68 %	EC	EC	4,747	66%
Level 2	37	20%	32	14%	58	21%	941	16 %	EC	EC	1,197	17%
Level 1	16	9%	28	12%	29	11%	476	8%	EC	EC	685	10%
Below Level 1	1	1%	1	<1%	1	<1%	44	1%	EC	EC	56	1%
No Data	0	0%	2	1%	3	1%	74	1%	EC	EC	109	2%

Grade 9 – Applied

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 740		2014 - 2015 N = 715		2015 - 2016 N = 845		2013 - 2014 N = 14,241		2014 - 2015 N = EC		2015 - 2016 N = 14,649	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Level 4	51	7%	43	6%	54	6%	975	7%	EC	EC	1,085	7%
Level 3	211	29%	198	28%	245	29%	4,577	32 %	EC	EC	4,276	29%
Level 2	278	38%	288	40%	332	39%	5,216	37 %	EC	EC	5,242	36%
Level 1	134	18%	115	16%	156	18%	2,169	15 %	EC	EC	2,503	17%
Below Level 1	54	7%	53	7%	45	5%	801	6%	EC	EC	1,016	7%
No Data	12	2%	18	3%	13	2%	503	4%	EC	EC	527	4%

OSSLT (First Time Eligible – FTE)

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 1,147		2014 - 2015 N = 1,182		2015 - 2016 N = 1,184		2013 - 2014 N = 25,686		2014 - 2015 N = 25,772		2015 - 2016 N = 25,907	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	499	57%	508	56%	503	56%	11,196	51%	11,702	54%	11,526	53 %
Not Successful	380	43%	393	44%	388	44%	10,718	49%	10,167	46%	10,426	47 %
Fully Participating	879	77%	901	76%	891	75%	21,914	85%	21,869	85%	21,952	85 %
Absent	6	1%	13	1%	7	1%	671	3%	753	3%	749	3%
Deferred	262	23%	268	23%	286	24%	3,101	12%	3,150	12%	3,206	12 %
Exempted	49		32		37		1,341		1,379		1,390	

OSSLT (Previously Eligible – PE)

	TCDSB						Province					
	2013 - 2014 N = 875		2014 - 2015 N = 848		2015 - 2016 N = 976		2013 - 2014 N = 21,563		2014 - 2015 N = 21,881		2015 - 2016 N = 22,033	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	156	34%	170	35%	135	27%	3,258	33%	3,325	35%	3,158	34 %
Not Successful	308	66%	311	65%	372	73%	6,488	67%	6,045	65%	6,009	66 %
Fully Participating	464	53%	481	57%	507	52%	9,746	45%	9,369	43%	9,167	42 %
Absent	46	5%	50	6%	81	8%	1,707	8%	1,846	8%	1,895	9%
Deferred	40	5%	66	8%	67	7%	2,257	10%	2,202	10%	2,238	10 %
Exempted	87		25		8		1,811		1,860		1,660	
OSSLC	325	37%	251	30%	321	33%	7,853	36%	8,464	39%	8,733	40 %

Part B – EQAO Overall Achievement of Students receiving Special Education support(s) by Exceptionality (Autism, LI, LD)

1. 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**.

2. 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:

- For Autism, the EQAO categories displayed in the bar charts are:
  Grade 3 and 6 - Exempted, Levels NE1 to 2, Levels 3 and 4
  Grade 9 - No Data, Below Levels 1 to 2, Levels 3 and 4

- 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 and 1, Level 2, Levels 3 and 4
  Grade 9 – Levels Below Level 1 and 1, Level 2, Levels 3 and 4

- For OSSLT, Successful and Not Successful percentages are based on those who are Fully Participating. Identified exceptional students who are not working towards the OSSD may be exempted from the Literacy requirement. Schools may choose to defer for a student to write the assessment in a later year.

- OSSLC indicates the percentage of student who would be fulfilling the Literacy requirement through the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC).

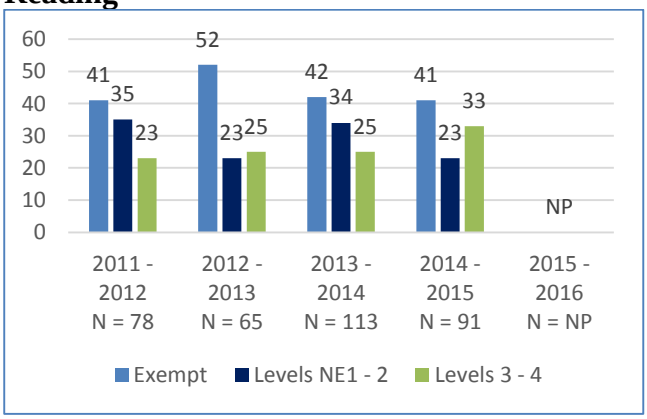
- Not Reported (N/R) indicates the number of participating students are *fewer than 10* in a group.

- NP = "Non-participating" indicates that due to exceptional circumstances, some or all of the school's or board's students did not participate

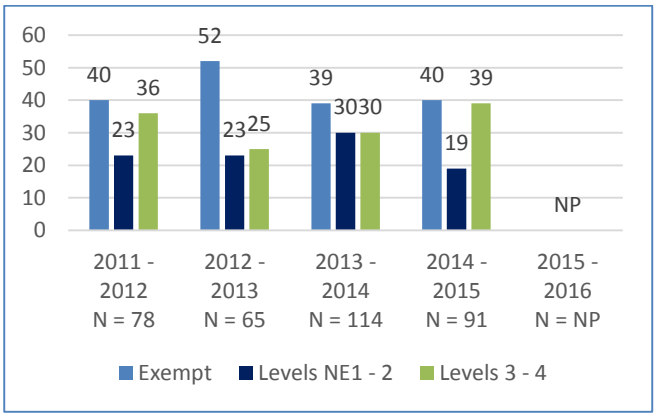
Students with Special Needs Identified as **AUTISM:** EQAO and OSSLT Results Over 5 Years

EQAO Grade 3 – Percentage of Students

Reading

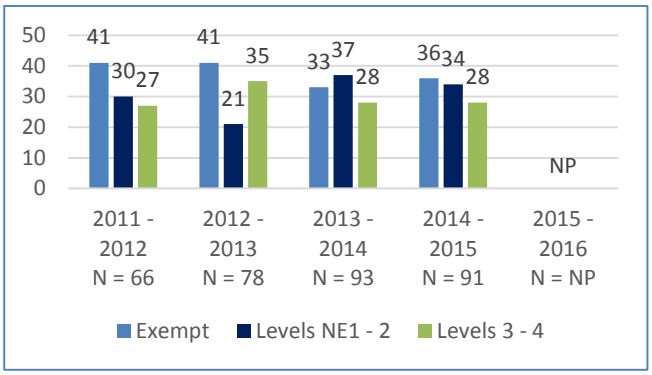


Math

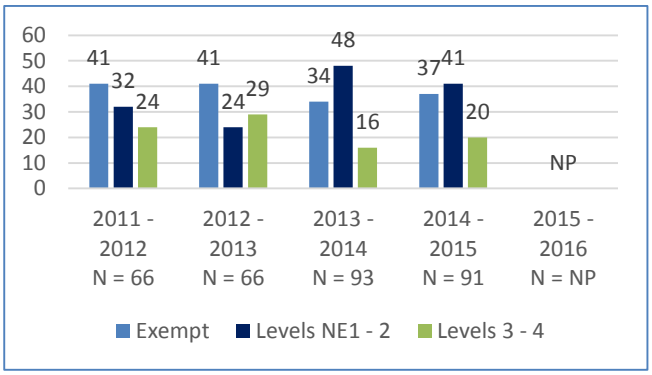


EQAO Grade 6 – Percentage of Students

Reading

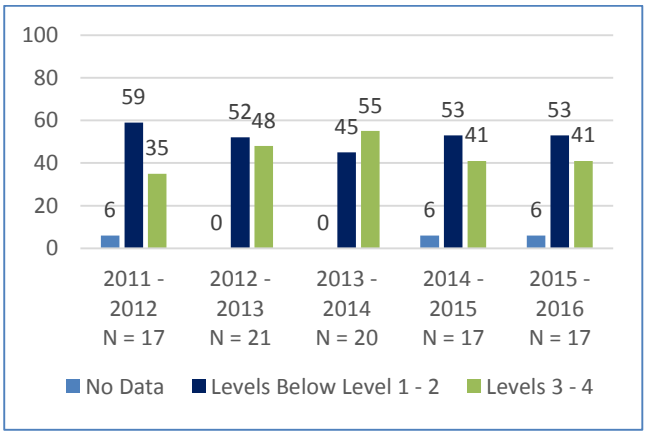


Math

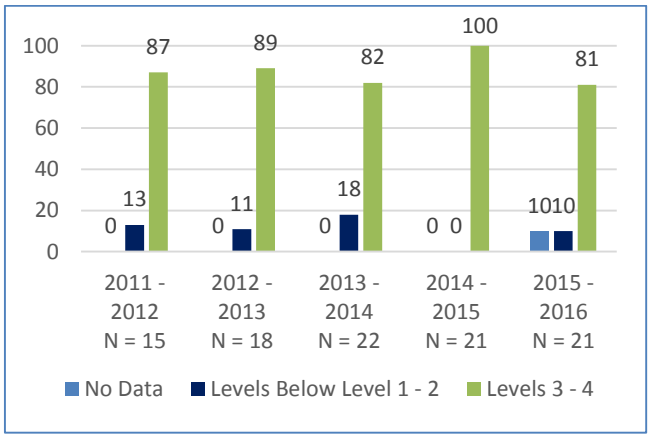


EQAO Grade 9 Math – Percentage of Students

Applied

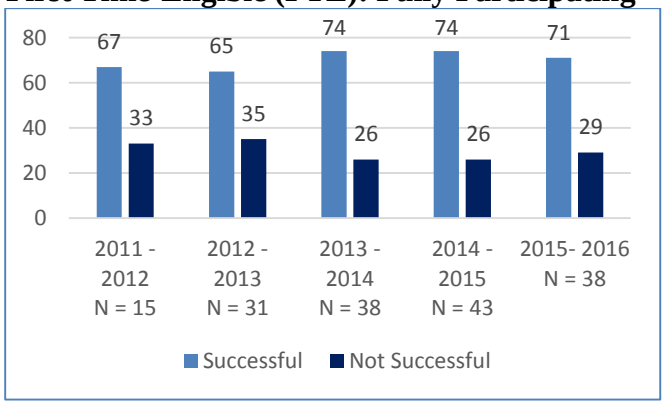


Academic

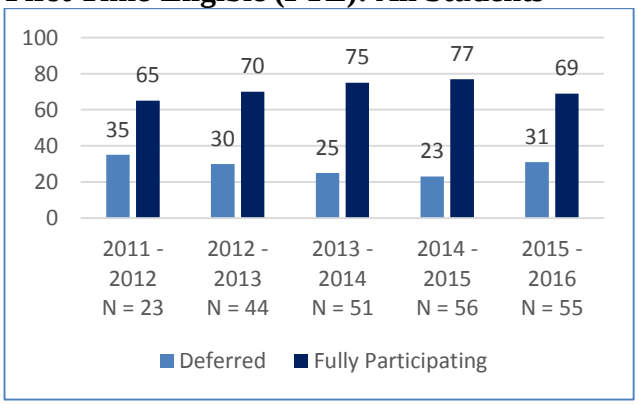


OSSLT – Percentage of Students

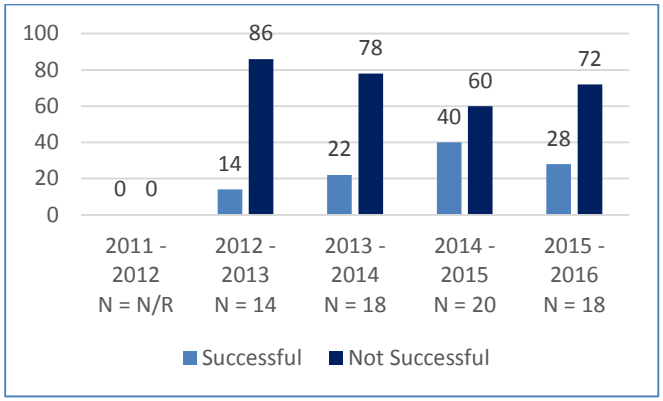
First Time-Eligible (FTE): Fully Participating



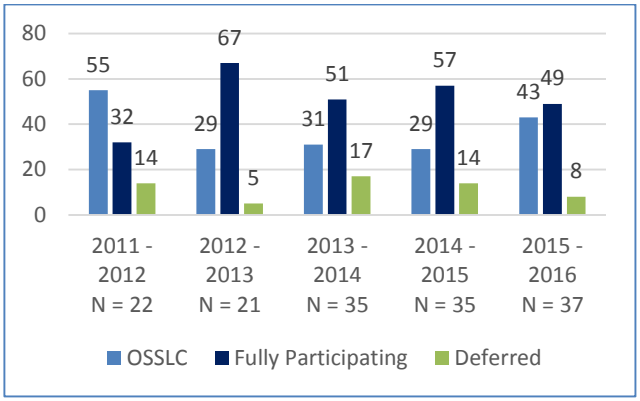
First Time-Eligible (FTE): All Students



Previously Eligible (PE): Fully Participating



Previously Eligible (PE): All Students



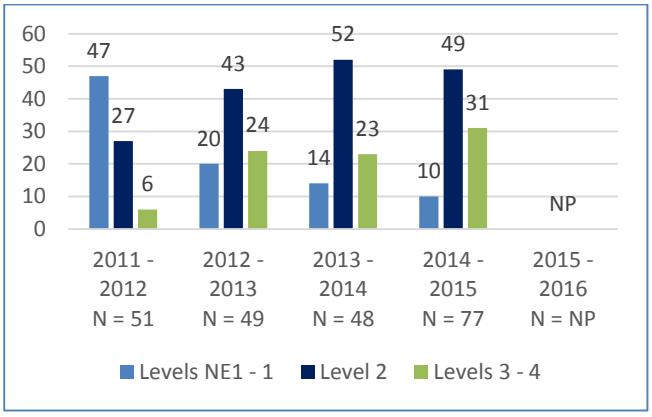
First Time Eligible Exempted (Number of students)

2011 – 2012	2012 – 2013	2013 – 2014	2014 – 2015	2015-2016
17	14	25	18	19

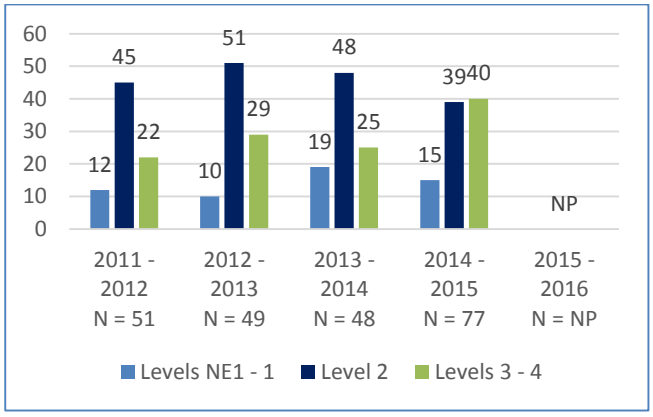
Note: For both FTE and PE the Absent rate has been zero for the last 5 years.
Students with Special Needs Identified as **Language Impaired:** EQAO and OSSLT Results Over 5 Years

EQAO Grade 3 – Percentage of Students

Reading

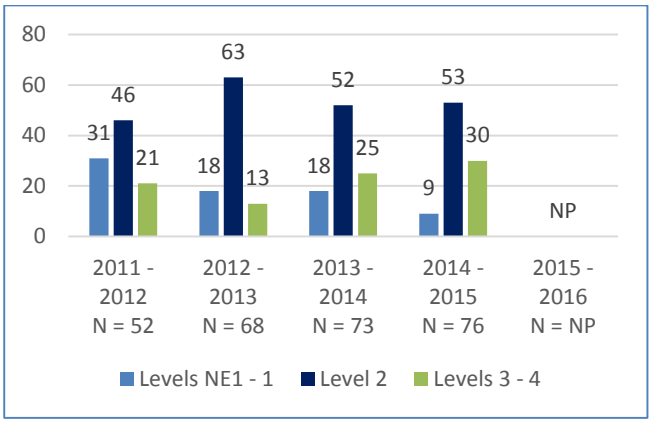


Math

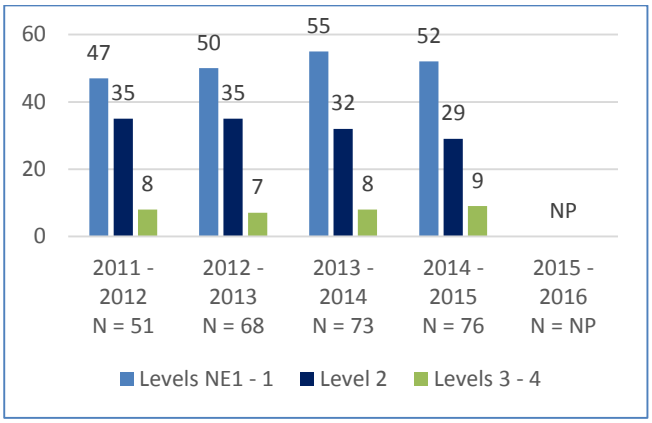


EQAO Grade 6 – Percentage of Students

Reading



Math

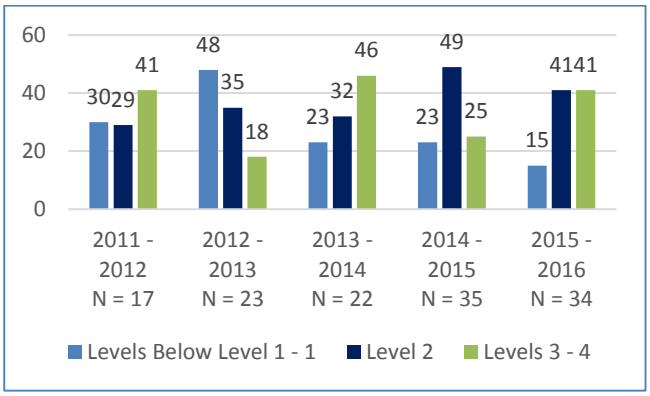


Exempt Rates for the Last 5 Years:

	2011 – 2012	2012 – 2013	2013 – 2014	2014 – 2015	2015 – 2016
Gr. 3 Reading	18%	12%	10%	6%	NP
Gr. 3 Math	22%	10%	8%	3%	NP
Gr. 6 Reading	2%	3%	5%	5%	NP
Gr. 6 Math	8%	4%	5%	7%	NP

EQAO Grade 9 Math – Percentage of Students

Applied

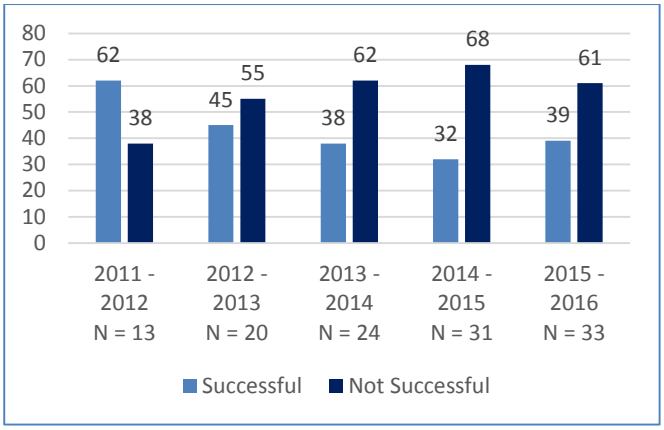


Academic

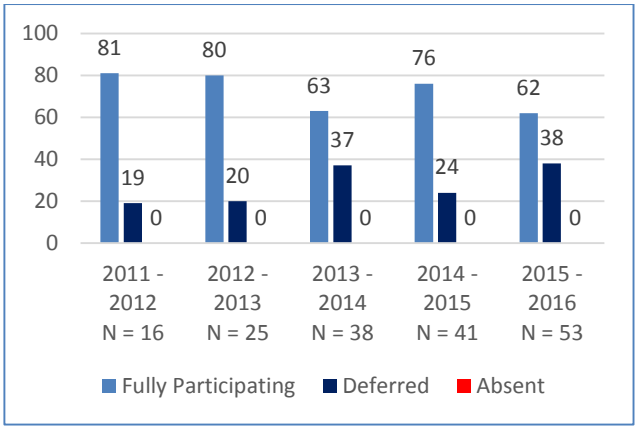
- For the last 5 years the Academic Grade 9 scores have not been reported publicly due to low numbers.

OSSLT – Percentage of Students

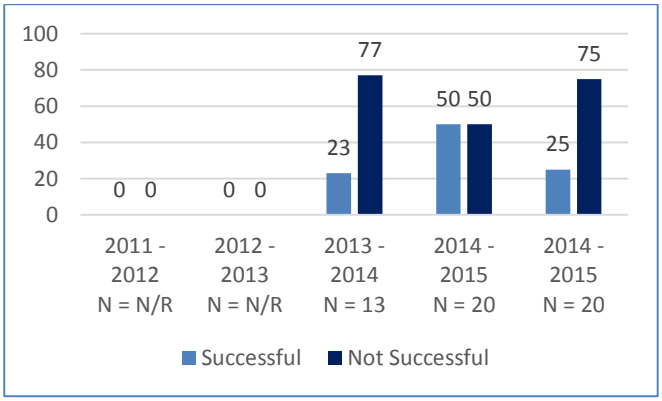
First Time-Eligible (FTE): Fully Participating



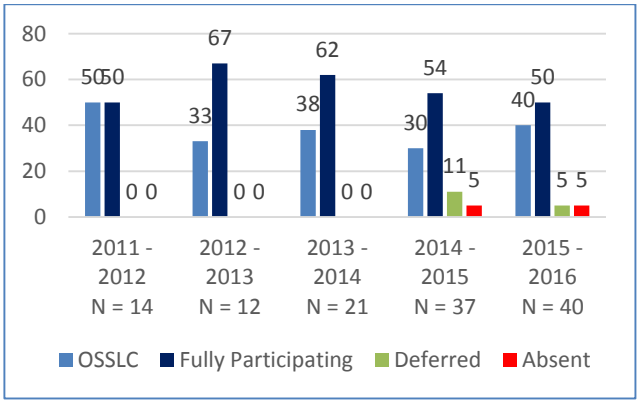
First Time-Eligible (FTE): All Students



Previously Eligible (PE): Fully Participating



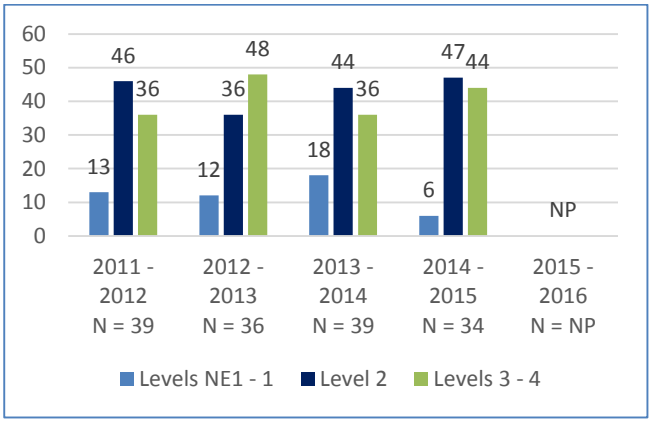
Previously Eligible (PE): All Students



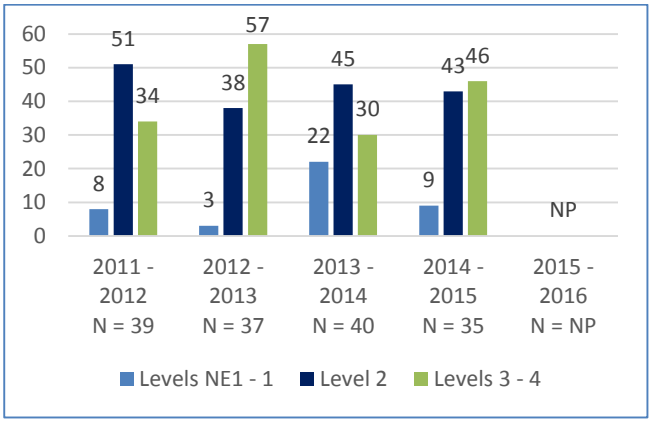
Students with Special Needs Identified as **Learning Disability:** EQAO and OSSLT Results Over 5 Years

EQAO Grade 3 – Percentage of Students

Reading

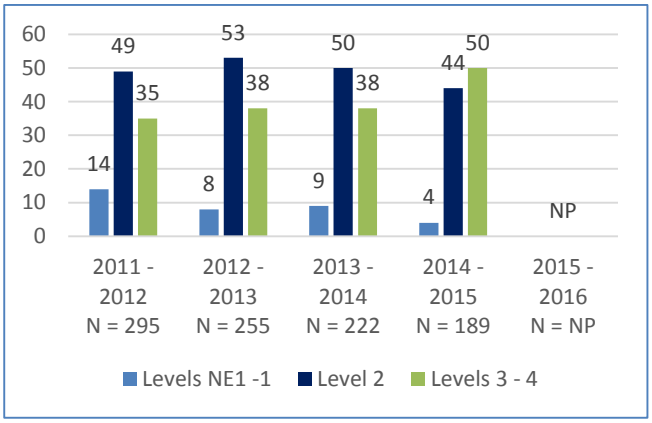


Math

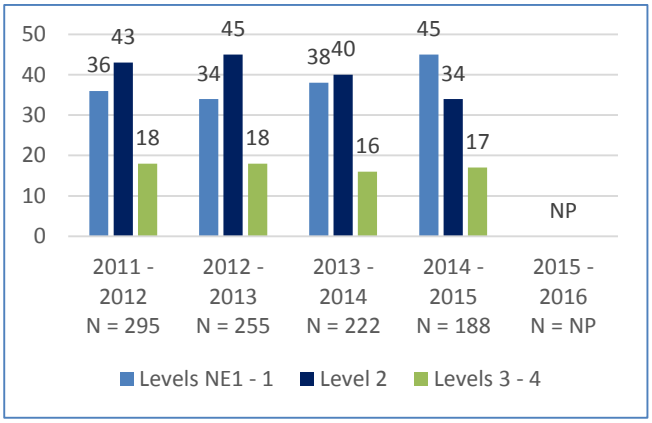


EQAO Grade 6 – Percentage of Students

Reading



Math

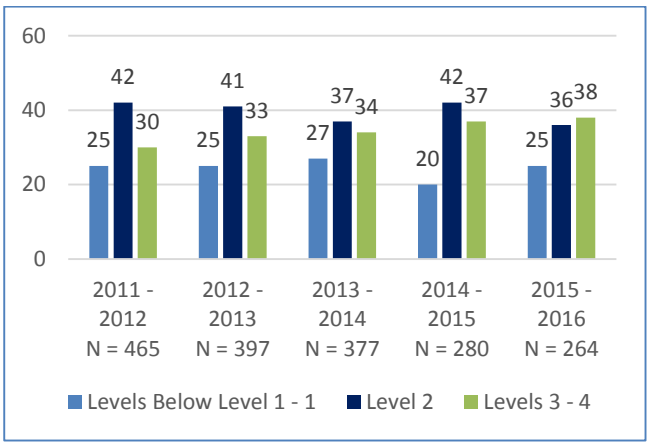


Exempt Rates for the Last 5 Years:

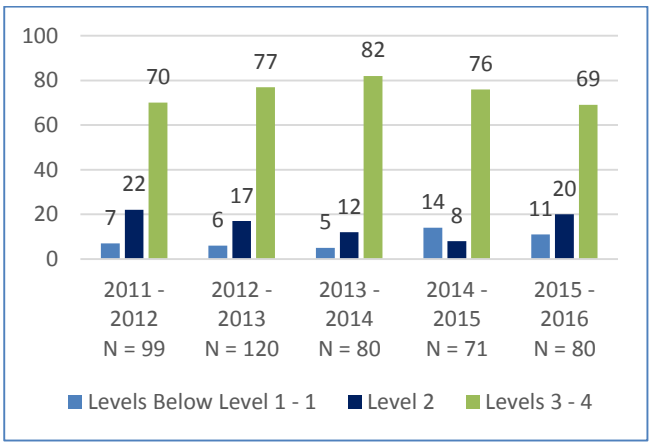
	2011 – 2012	2012 – 2013	2013 – 2014	2014 – 2015	2015 – 2016
Gr. 3 Reading	5%	6%	3%	3%	NP
Gr. 3 Math	8%	3%	2%	3%	NP
Gr. 6 Reading	2%	1%	4%	2%	NP
Gr. 6 Math	3%	4%	4%	3%	NP

EQAO Grade 9 Math – Percentage of Students

Applied

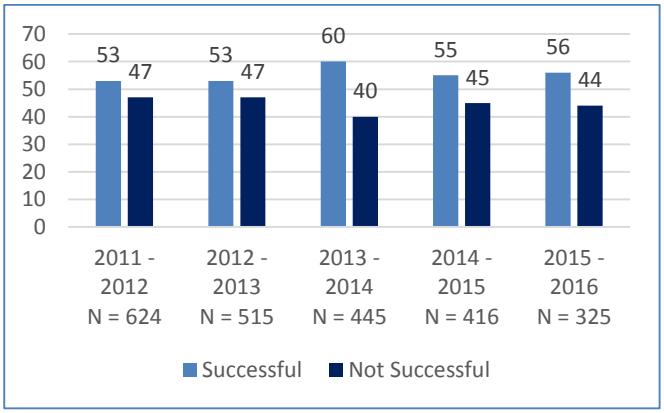


Academic

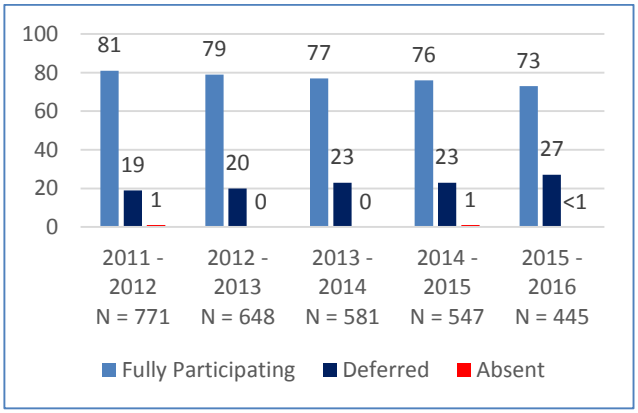


OSSLT – Percentage of Students

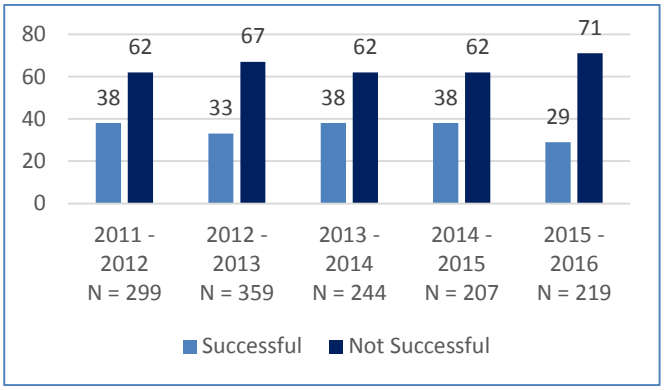
First Time-Eligible (FTE): Fully Participating



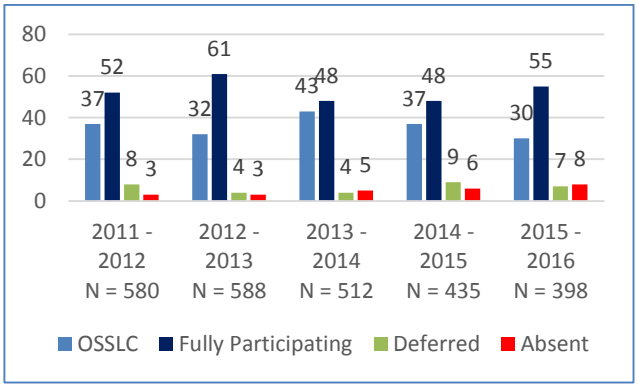
First Time-Eligible (FTE): All Students



Previously Eligible (PE): Fully Participating



Previously Eligible (PE): All Students



Part C: Safe Schools Information for Students with Special Needs

Safe Schools Data since 2013-14 until 2016-2017 (December 14, 2017).

–

School Year	Suspension #306	Instructional Days Lost to Suspension	Suspension Pending Expulsion #310	Violent Incidents	Fresh Start	School Expulsion	Board Expulsion
2013-2014	1527	5406	58	57	45	33	19
2014-2015	1594	5150	49	55	49	32	27
2015-2016	1414	4412	63	53	56	17	15
2016-2017 (Dec.14)	439	1461	22	20	14	7	5

i. There has been a decrease in the number of Students with an IEP receiving Suspensions from school under Section 306 of the Education Act. (-113)

ii. There has been a decrease of instructional days lost to Suspension for students with an IEP. (-994)

iii. There has been an increase in the number of Students with an IEP receiving Suspensions Pending possible Expulsion from school under Section 310 of the Education Act. (5)

iv. There has been a decrease in the number of Students with an IEP receiving Suspensions categorized as Violent Incidents. (-4)

v. There has been an increase in the number of Students with an IEP receiving a Fresh Start under Board policy S.S. 12 Fresh Start. (11)

vi. There has been a decrease in the number of Students with an IEP receiving a School Expulsion under Section 310 of the Education Act. (16)

vii. There has been a decrease in the number of Students with an IEP receiving a Board Expulsion under Section 310 of the Education Act. (4)

viii. Based on these results, it can be surmised that the reduction of EAs and CYWs has not given rise to the number of Safe Schools Progressive Discipline incidents for students with an IEP.

Elementary Schools 2015-2016 [Comparison with 2014-2015 data]

Some comparisons with the previous year (2014-2015) indicate:

- Increase in the number of *males* with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who were suspended (5)
- Increase in the number of *females* with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who were suspended (12)

- Decrease in the number of *males* suspended 2 or more times (19)
- Increase in the number of *females* suspended 2 or more times (29)

This data would indicate that males' recidivism has declined and female recidivism has increased

Secondary Schools 2015-2016 [Comparison with 2014-2015 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 *(-1016)* of notices of suspensions issued over the past five years.

Some comparisons with the previous year *(2014-2015*) indicate:

- Decrease in the number of *male*s with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who were suspended *(21).*
- Decrease in the number of *females* with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who were suspended *(36).*

Overall, the data indicates that there has been a decreasing trend for suspensions issued to students with an IEP which suggests that Mitigating and Other Factors are being considered when issuing Progressive Discipline.

Part D: Reporting on the ongoing work of the accountability framework committees.

1. Each AFSE (Accountability Framework for Special Education) Committee meets several times a year to review set goals and works to implement these goals over the timeline of goal implementation.

2. The following section provides one or two highlights of the work of each committee. Please note that while some committees have existed for a longer period of time, some have just been struck this year and as a result there will be a variability in reporting between different exceptionalities.
3. Due to the labour disruption in June of 2016, EQAO scores of students which would otherwise have written the assessment are not published.
4. The following section of the report attempts to highlight some of the work of the committee and/or some of the findings by exceptionality. For specific details, please refer to the corresponding appendices.

a) Autism (Appendix A)

- Students with Autism in the Academic stream scored at 81% on the Grade 9 assessment as compared with 66 percent of all special needs students and 83% of all students. In the Applied stream, 41 % were successful on the Grade 9 Math assessment, scoring the same as in 2014-15 and as compared to 35% of all Special Education students and 45% of all students.
- No primary and junior assessments are available for the 2015-16 school year.
- Staff is currently implementing a two-year professional learning opportunity to support ABA training for staff working with students with Autism that would see teachers in every school receive specific training on communication and behaviour strategies.

b) Behaviour (Appendix B)

- Students attending behaviour programs are focusing on developing self-advocacy and self-regulation skills as part of a two-year goal.
- Teaching staff and Child and Youth Workers have been trained on the use of Stop Now and Plan (STOP) supported through the Child Development Institute.
- From January 2015 until March 2017, the School Support Resource Team have provided job-embedded support to 42 schools to support staff with early intervention strategies with students ranging from kindergarten to Grade 8. A teacher and CYW work 2.5 days per week with school staff to implement strategies to support students who are demonstrating needs with respect to Behaviour.

c) Blind/Low Vision (BLV) (Appendix C)

- Due to the small number of students in this category that would actually write the EQAO assessments in any particular year, reporting on student achievement would compromise the student's anonymity. We are able to report that there has been consistency with the use of accommodations by students with Blind or Low Vision needs to access the assessment
- Ongoing support and training is provided to teachers working with students in the BLV category in an individualized manner as many of the needs are student specific.

d) Deaf/ Hard of Hearing (D/HH) (Appendix D)

- Due to the small number of students in this category that would actually write the EQAO assessments in any particular year, reporting on student achievement would compromise the student's anonymity.
- In 2015/16 the D/HH AFSE worked to develop goals reflective of the needs experienced by D/HH students. As such a survey was designed to identify the areas of need that would be the focus of a collaborative teacher inquiry with respect to this exceptionality.
- Students will be participating in a survey to help them to reflect on consistent usage of hearing assistant technology to support their learning.

e) Giftedness (Appendix E)

- Gifted students consistently achieve in Levels 3 and 4 on EQAO, thus this is not the most effective measure of student success. Thus, the Gifted AFSE began to look at the Learning Skills of the Provincial Report Card as one way to measure student learning. Thus a two-year goal was developed focusing on increasing achievement in two of the six learning skills; Self-Regulation and Organizational skills.
- Communication with Teachers of the Gifted with respect to this goal, including professional development to support and enrich student opportunities within this exceptionality.

f) Language Impairment (LI) (Appendix F)

- Two-year Goals established for students with Language Impairments have focused on the instruction in decoding and comprehension to reduce the achievement gap in primary literacy. As a result of the labour issues in June 2016, interim achievement results cannot be reported on at this time.
- A multiple strategy approach focusing on communication with teachers of LI students and implementation of FIPPA (Focused Intervention Program for Phonemic Awareness) for primary students and implementation of Empower Reading strategies within LI programs will support the implementation of the LI goals.

g) Learning Disability (LD) (Appendix G)

- Assessment results were only provided for students writing the OSSLT and the Grade 9 EQAO as primary and junior assessments were not written this year due to labour disruptions.
- As reported in part B of this report, 56% of First-time Eligible LD students were successful on the OSSLT compared to 73% of the all students. This score was 1% point above the previous year's score. In the Previously Eligible category, 29 % of LD students were successful.
- On the Grade 9 EQAO Mathematics assessment, 69% of LD students were successful in the Academic strand while 38% successfully achieved levels 3 and 4 in the Applied strand.
- Goals were developed for the Learning Disabilities population that support the regular use of assistive technology. In Mathematics the focus will be on developing both computation and reasoning abilities to reduce achievement gaps. In Reading the focus will be on developing decoding and comprehension skills.
- Professional Development has been approached on multiple levels including newsletters, training to support the implementation of technology, implementation of the Renewed Math Strategy, implementation of Lexia where appropriate and the ongoing work with Empower.

h) Mild Intellectual Disability (MID) (Appendix H)

- EQAO Assessments with respect to the MID exceptionality are nor reported at this time due to the labour disruption in June, 2016. EA
- Students in this grouping are generally of a small number, however given the needs experienced in schools, the department felt a need to address the needs. The AFSE committee for Mild Intellectual Disability was created this year to address the needs of students exhibiting this exceptionality. The work thus far is preliminary as the committee works to create a framework to support MID students reflective of the frameworks for other exceptionalities.
- The committee is in the process of gathering resources and strategies to assist in supporting teachers who support students with this exceptionality.

i) Multiple Exceptionalities and Developmental Delays (ME/DD) (Appendix I)

- This group of students would usually be exempt from writing the EQAO assessments as they would be working on an individualized alternative program that is reflected in the Individual Education Plan. Many students in this category also tend to spend 7 years in secondary schools till age 21.
- After engaging in a teacher led collaborative inquiry focusing on literacy for students in ME-DD program, a Best Practice Guide was developed to support the ongoing work of the ME-DD teachers.
- Professional Development is currently being provided and resources have been purchased to support the literacy needs in this exceptionality that is both reflective of student needs and sensitive to their ages.

Part E: Update on Implementation of specific Special Education Programs

Empower Update for 2015/2016

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 over 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 4 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 2015-16, 430 students participated in the decoding program for Grades 2 to 5 and 72 students in the program for grades 6 to 8. 1 0 1 students participated in Grade 2 to 5 Comprehension. Currently (2016-17), we have 71 active locations/ schools providing Empower, with a total of 95 classes/programs.
Student performance has been measured in all programs through assessments of literacy appropriate to the specific decoding or comprehension intervention.

1. Results for students in 2-5 DS indicate that they made significant gains on:
    - All decoding and word recognition measures provided by SickKids; students answered almost all items on the "KeyWords" emphasized in the Empower and up to 80% of the "Challenge words (which require students to generalize their decoding skills to new words.)
    - The Blending and Segmenting Assessment (TCDSB phonemic awareness measures), with students answering up to 90% of items correctly by June.
    - 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 47% of Grade 2 students reading at grade level).
    - Grade 2 and 3 students made the strongest gains in decoding, compared to Grades 4 and 5. This result suggests that students in Grade 4 through 5 have learned some literacy skills through instruction in their Regular or Special Ed classes, but not as much as they would have had they received instruction in Empower
    - While students made substantial progress in Empower, many continue to have reading test scores below grade level and will need ongoing support.
    - Results from transfer students in Hub schools are similar to those from other Empower students in the same schools. ISP students made gains similar to those of other students.

2. Results for students in 6-8 DS and 2-5 CV indicate that:
    - 6-8 DS: Results from the SickKids, Blending and Segmenting and Running Record tests indicated substantial improvement over the course of the intervention.
    - 2-5 CV: Students improved on the Running Record, especially on the Comprehension component. The oral component of the Quick Comprehension Analysis (QCA) was administered to students in 7 classes

at the beginning and end of Empower, revealing improved comprehension at the end of the program.

- In addition, comprehension teachers completed an exit survey at the end of instruction suggested that students improved substantially on all the comprehension strategies taught in Empower.

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

Lexia Update for 2015/2016

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, and in the fall of 2015-16 schools were invited to apply for their eligible students. 280 centrally available licenses were distributed to students with LD or LI learning profile or identification.

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 December 2015 an inservice presentation was delivered to Assessment and Programming teachers on Lexia Reading by the Lexia Ontario resource consultant. For 2016-17, data collection and teacher surveys are planned to monitor implementation by the Learning Disabilities Program Review Committee. 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.

E. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.