



Special Education Superintendent Update

May 2017

May is Speech, Language and Hearing Awareness Month!

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- The department hosted a parent workshop at Sts Cosmas and Damian, "*Looking Ahead... Summer & Survival*" on April 28th. Families received summer learning resources including some Make & Take activities.
- The Annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Family picnic will be held at Our Lady of Mount Carmel on May 26, 2017 from 10 am to 2 pm. All are welcome!

Speech and Language

- In celebration of Speech, Language and Hearing Awareness month, the SLP department shared resources with schools that included two short videos, '*Speech. Language. What's the Difference?*' and '*Lights, Camera, Play*', a video demonstrating how to use drama to facilitate oral language development.

Gifted Programs:

- Over 300 students from the TCDSB Gifted Withdrawal Program participated in North America's largest K-12 science competition, Toshiba/NSTA's **Exploravision**. This competition encourages students to propose a futuristic idea for new technology that currently exists. Working in teams, simulating real scientific research, students outline criteria that include trial and error processing as well as creating a mock website showcasing their concepts. Collaboration, problem solving, and critical thinking skills are the back bone of this competition.
- In this year's competition, 17 TCDSB teams were awarded with Honourable Mention Awards. Check www.exploravision.org for more details about this competition. Congratulations to all our students and teachers who participated.

Learning Disabilities

- LD ISP teachers participated in a professional development session about the importance of incorporating the teaching of social- emotional competencies into the curriculum for students in the LD ISP. More professional development will follow next year. Collaboration with psychology and social work staff is being planned.



Autism

- The Autism Department ran a 3 day course in April for Elementary Special Education Teachers.
- Also the ME/DD Committee ran a 2 day workshop focusing on Literacy and understanding/addressing challenging behaviour.

Mental Health

- April 4-5, 2017 - 2 day ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Training) re-certification of psychology and social work staff.
- April 6, 2017 - Full day PD with new Vice Principals and Principals " Issues in Succession". The topic was the Resilient School leader.
- April 25, 2017 - Parent Evening with 7 area 1 elementary schools Discussing Child and Youth Mental health and How Parents can support this. <https://www.tcdsb.org/ProgramsServices/SpecialEducation/mhs/News/Documents/Mental%20Health%20presentation%20for%20Parents.%20April%2025th.pdf>.
- May 1-5, 2017 TCDSB celebrated Children's mental health week. a 5 day resource package for both elementary and secondary were provided to schools in advance. <https://www.tcdsb.org/ProgramsServices/SpecialEducation/mhs/News/mhw/Pages/Childrens-Mental-Health-Awareness-Week.aspx> Schools k -12 hosted many week long mental health activities both during the school day and during the evening for parents.

Educational Leader of the Year Award

On May 3rd, Cristina Fernandes, Superintendent of Special Services, was awarded the Educational Leader of the Year Award by the Toronto Chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children. She receives well-deserved accolades for her hard work and dedication to our most vulnerable students!

Congratulations Cristina!



SPECIAL SERVICES