DDSB
Ignite Learning

Inclusive Student Services

Special Education Plan

2023–2024

Inclusive STUDENT SERVICES

Table of Contents

Section A - Introduction

Standard 1: The Board's Consultation Process 2

Section B - Special Education Programs and Services

Standard 2: The Board's General Model for Special Education 4
Standard 3: Roles and Responsibilities 12
Standard 4: Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies 19
Standard 5: The Identification, Placement and Review Committee Process And Appeals 24
Standard 6: Educational and Other Assessments 27
Standard 7: Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings 31
Standard 8: Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities 34
Standard 9: Special Educations Placements Provided by the Board 36
Standard 10: Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Transition Planning 47
Standard 11: Provincial Demonstration Schools in Ontario 49
Standard 12: Special Education Staff 53
Standard 13: Professional (Staff) Development 56
Standard 14: Equipment 60
Standard 15: Accessibility of School Buildings 63
Standard 16: Transportation 65

Section C – Special Education Advisory Committee

The Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) 67

Section D – Coordination of Services with Other Ministries

Coordination of Services with other Ministries or Agencies 75

Section E – Submission and Availability of Plan 79

Additional Information (Appendices List)

Appendix A – DDSB Mental Health and Well-Being Action Plan 82
Appendix B – Program Flier: AFFIRM 82
Appendix C – Revised Parent / Guardian Guide to Special Education 82
Appendix D – DDSB Transition Guide 82
Appendix E – The DDSB Report Card/IEP Connection Guide 82
Appendix F – The Glossary of Terms 82
Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies 82

INCLUSIVE STUDENT SERVICES PLAN • 2023 – 2024

THE BOARD'S CONSULTATION PROCESS

SECTION A – Standard 1

Standard 1: The Board's Consultation Process

The purpose of the standard is to provide details of the consultation process to the Ministry and to the public.

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) values collaboration with students, families, and community and education partners. We welcome input into our Inclusive Student Services - Special Education Plan at any time through:

- The Inclusive Student Services Department by emailing InclusiveEducationFeedback@ddsb.ca or by calling 905-666-6371 to connect with a member of the team.
- Local school team(s).
- The DDSB's website General.Inquiry@ddsb.ca or 905-666-5500.
- The DDSB's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

SEAC formally reviews the Special Education Plan annually, and throughout the year as the need arises. SEAC members share information and input from their respective associations/agencies and provide feedback. Input from SEAC was received and all feedback was reviewed and included in the report where the suggestions aligned with the Ministry of Education *Standards for School Board's Special Education Plans*.

SEAC is also conducting a parent/caregiver survey (June 2023) and will use the survey results to inform SEAC's activities and actions in 2023-2024, including:

- Supporting family engagement (for example, developing a potential resource for families).
- Providing input and suggestions to the DDSB on potential areas for improvement.

Inclusive Student Services in the DDSB

Inclusive Student Services provides support for students, families and school teams on inclusion, accommodation and specialized special education and mental health supports.

Information about Inclusive Student Services in the DDSB can be found online: Inclusive Student Services

INCLUSIVE STUDENT SERVICES PLAN • 2023 – 2024

THE BOARD'S GENERAL MODEL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

SECTION B – Standard 2

Standard 2: The Board's General Model for Special Education

The purpose of the standard is to provide information on the Board's guiding principles, philosophy and service delivery model for the provision of Special Education programs and services.

DDSB Commitments to Indigenous and Human Rights

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) recognizes Indigenous rights are distinct. In the exercise of those rights, Indigenous staff and students shall not be subjected to actions with the aim or effect of depriving these distinct rights.

The DDSB is committed to providing learning and working environments that centre human rights and equity and are safe, welcoming, respectful, equitable, inclusive, accessible and free from all forms of discrimination, oppression and harm.

Upholding DDSB Commitments

The DDSB has a legal responsibility to provide education to students and to provide safe learning and working environments for all students and staff. The DDSB is committed to upholding students' rights to:

- Meaningfully access educational services without discrimination and to be treated with dignity and respect
- Equitable educational experiences, opportunities, and outcomes
- Inclusive and accessible services, programs and environments

The DDSB recognizes that protecting and upholding Indigenous rights and human rights (including centering dignity and meeting the duty to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code) are necessary to support:

- Students' sense of safety, inclusion, well-being, engagement and belonging
- A culture of care where students are respected, valued and are successful and thrive

The research shows that these are the preconditions for successful learning and set the foundation for positive school climates and well-being for all students.

The DDSB strives to meet its responsibilities through:

- Legislative compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Education Act and related legislation and regulations
- Ministry of Education strategies, directives and policy and program memoranda
- DDSB policies and procedures
- Proactive/preventative, inclusive and responsive strategies, initiatives, structures, services, supports and actions

Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy and Procedures

The DDSB's Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy and Procedures (the "Human Rights Policy and Procedures") provide direction, principles, guidance, expectations to uphold human rights. They also outline our individual and shared roles and duty bearer responsibilities to:

- Promote and protect human rights (including centering dignity, upholding the rights of the child and acting in the best interests of the child in ways that are not discriminatory and that prevent harm) and provide DDSB community with information about their rights and responsibilities.
- Identify, prevent and address human rights barriers and discriminatory structures in learning and/or working environments, teaching and learning, services, and operational, corporate and employment related policies, procedures, practices, plans, initiatives and decision making.
- Respond to and address human rights barriers, issues and accommodation requests under the Human Rights Code and the policy for DDSB community members.
- Learn about this policy and related procedures to apply human rights, anti-discrimination and anti-racism principles in our jobs/roles, decision-making and interactions with DDSB community members.
- Correct and address human rights issues, incidents and complaints.

The policy and procedures also outline transparent processes and individual and system actions and accountabilities to uphold the DDSB's commitments.

An Inclusive School System

As a district we acknowledge that systemic ableism and other forms of discrimination are deeply embedded within the education system and structures. This discriminates against, disadvantages and causes harm to students with neurodivergent traits, different abilities and disabilities and other intersecting identities (for example, based on ancestry, race, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, creed/religion, socioeconomic status, etc.). It also contributes to and perpetuates disparities and disproportionate educational access, opportunities, experiences and outcomes.

Our shared commitments and responsibilities to uphold Indigenous and human rights and to centre dignity and respect are essential principles of an inclusive public school system and are necessary to address systemic ableism.

We are working to uncover, name, challenge, disrupt and proactively prevent discriminatory biases, barriers, practices and structures that impede achievement and well-being for all students. Our ongoing work includes actively addressing:

- Ableism and intersectional discrimination.
- Stigma and negative attitudes, stereotypes and assumptions based on neurodiversity, different abilities and disabilities (including and not limited to assumptions about functional limitations, low expectations, learning disabilities, differences in behaviours, social interactions, cognitive processing and

communication, etc.), and how this affects individual and organizational decision-making affecting students.
- Unique accessibility and other barriers (for example, attitudinal, physical, architectural, information/communications or technological barriers) for students with special education strengths and needs.

An inclusive model of special education is one that actively:

- Promotes well-being through identity-affirming approaches and practices.
- Supports all students so they are inspired to succeed.
- Increases awareness and understanding of the social model (versus medical and functional models) of disability and neurodiversity.
- Identifies, prevents and addresses discriminatory barriers that may affect students' ability to learn and to fully participate in and contribute to society.

As a district, we recognize all students' talents, gifts, abilities and accomplishments. We honour and affirm the unique, intersectional identities and rich lived experiences that each student and their family bring to our classrooms, schools and communities.

The DDSB applies human rights, anti-discrimination, inclusive design, Universal Design for Learning and accessibility principles, approaches and actions in all aspects of its services and learning environments. In classrooms, the DDSB also uses culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy and differentiated instruction, assessment and evaluation to support students in their learning.

Where barriers exist, the DDSB is committed to meeting its legal duty to accommodate to the point of undue hardship so that students can meaningfully access educational services without discrimination.

All students, including students with different abilities, special education strengths and needs and intersecting identities, are at the centre of all planning.

The DDSB's Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy and related procedures provide further direction and guidance and set out roles, responsibilities, accountabilities, proactive preventative actions and transparent processes to support these commitments.

Right to Read

Learning to read is a human right. When children know how to read fluently, they gain access to more opportunities to experience success. This success is not limited to academic achievement, but also their ability to thrive in our modern world. We will continue to move our work in a way that upholds our duty bearer responsibilities, honour the rights of students and maintain student dignity.

It is critical that we explicitly teach language and literacy skills, including foundational word-reading skills, in a way that results in an anti-oppressive experience for all students but especially Indigenous students, Black students, and students who experience word-reading difficulties. By advocating for a structured literacy and anti-oppressive approach to teaching

code user skills we will be actively working to eliminate the barriers so that all students have access to effective reading instruction, specifically students from historically underserved and Code-protected groups. More specifically, culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogical approaches must undergird the teaching of foundational reading skills.

As a district, it is important that we tie together the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Right to Read report and the Guide to Effective Early Reading Instruction with DDSB Indigenous Education and Human Rights policies and procedures to support equitable access to literacy for all.

When educators understand the science behind reading and writing, they can effectively administer assessments and develop instructional routines. These key elements can be embedded as part of a literacy program that builds on student's lived realities, prior knowledge, knowledge of language structures, and verbal reasoning skills. A rich literacy program supports all students.

With the goal of strong reading comprehension at the forefront, a reader must have well developed skills in both Oral Language Comprehension and Word Read Fluency. This is true of all students, regardless of their language of instruction. Oral language proficiency, developed by ongoing opportunities for listening and speaking experience embedded within anti-oppressive pedagogical approach, lays the foundation for learning to read.

As a district, our work in response to the recommendations of the Right to Read inquiry are supported by integrated teams, teachers and speech language pathologists, working together to reinforce effective practices as well as make programming shifts cued by the recommendation within the report including those focused on learners with special education strengths and needs.

With a continued focus on anti-oppressive practices and centering student identity, instructional shifts, supported by professional learning for the 2023-2024 school year are:

- Elimination of explicit teaching and assessment focused on three cueing systems (meaning, structure and visual)
- Implementation of explicit, systematic and cumulative instruction focused on phonological awareness, phonics, word study in response to science of how the brain learns to read and write
- Use of decodable texts in primary grades (and select students in higher grades as needed) instead of levelled texts for the purpose of teaching students to decode
- Shifts in selection of assessment tools and strategies to better align with structured literacy components (e.g., the Inclusive Student Services Assessment of Phonological Awareness Skills)
- Remove traditional "sight word" approaches and shift to strategies that build automaticity by decoding all words

Including implementation of the anticipated revised Language Arts curriculum, teams will continue to engage in reflective practice together in the provision of reading programs across all schools.

Special Education Programs

The DDSB is committed to fostering success and independence for each student by providing a range of pathways, programs, opportunities and services that are responsive to individual identities (including intersecting identities), strengths and needs. Students with special education strengths and needs are supported in inclusive environments that enable them to develop to their potential.

The DDSB Inclusive Student Services - Special Education Plan has been designed to comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Education Act, and Regulations made under the Act. The DDSB's approach to special education and its special education delivery model are aligned with the Board's Strategic Plan.

Our ongoing commitment is to provide the structures and supports each student needs to nurture their growth and development in programs which respect dignity, maximize participation, and foster integration and independence as defined for each student based on their identity, strengths and needs. We work with parent(s)/guardian(s) and board staff to determine the placement that best addresses barriers and meets the student's individual needs, whether that is in a regular classroom, or for some students, in a special education class.

In March 2018, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) released Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities: Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities:

The principles of accommodation which involve respect for dignity, individualization, integration and full participation are expressed in the Guidelines. As set out in the Education Act and Regulations, the Commission specifies that each student's needs are unique and must be considered individually and with confidentiality. The Commission recommends first considering placement in the regular classroom before considering placement in a special education class. It is the Commission's position that the duty to accommodate requires a necessity "to address barriers in education that would otherwise prevent students with disabilities from having equal opportunities, access and benefits" (Ontario Human Rights Commission: Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities).

The DDSB's approach is informed by and aligns with the OHRC's policy. The majority of students with special education strengths and needs are supported through placement in a regular classroom. For most students, a classroom teacher, with the support of the school's Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) and District staff, is able to provide individualized programming that supports students' success. A regular classroom is always an option that parent(s)/guardian(s) may consider. A regular classroom provides opportunity for the student to be with peers, while receiving personalized programming that is outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan. The regular class is considered the most inclusive of placements.

We place a strong emphasis on the inclusion of our students with special education strengths and needs, upholding human rights and the rights of the child, and providing meaningful, individualized integration opportunities for students accessing special education programs. It is our privilege to be part of the success for all students as we support their "Many Paths to Success".

Well-Being and Mental Health Supports

2022-2025 Mental Health and Well-Being Action Plan

Embedded in the DDSB Mental Health and Well-Being Action Plan (Appendix A) is our collective commitment to support the everyday mental health and well-being of students and staff, to provide for our students and staff inclusive, identity affirming, and culturally relevant supports, and to strive to connect all students and staff to, from, and through access to those supports.

Examples include the development of a District-wide staff community of practice with a focus on sharing best practices and creating new knowledge to advance our work, the provision of Tier One mental health promotion specifically tailored for support-staff professional development, as well as focused social and emotional learning skills for classroom implementation.

Mental Health Supports Across the Tiers

Thinking in tiers is common in education and is useful when thinking about the continuum of supports available to support student mental health and well-being.

- Tier 1 is the mental health promotion work done by staff to create the everyday conditions that foster mentally healthy classrooms and schools;
- Tier 2 focuses on prevention and early intervention for those students who may need additional support; and
- Tier 3 focuses on more intensive assessment and intervention services.

Many DDSB teams support everyday conditions for well-being (Tier 1) through to services when individual students need a greater level of support (Tier 2 and 3).

Child and Youth Support Workers who focus on Tier One strategies and the implementation of social emotional learning, targeting positive mental health promotion and early identification. Speech Language Pathologist in addition to individual student programming supports, help educators shape inclusive classrooms as communication is a key foundation for connection and belonging.

Social Work and Psychological Services Staff provide individual and group-based identify-affirming mental health interventions, school-level consultation, and crisis/traumatic event responses that centre student, caregiver, and community needs.

Teams continue to evolve our service models in support of identity-affirming practices and responsive to where students express support needs. As example, during the 2022-2023 school year, Psychological Services and Social Work staff introduced Project AFFIRM (Flier, Appendix B). Project AFFIRM offers eight sessions of evidence based coping skills training for

2SLGBTQIA+ and questioning students in grades 9-12 (ages 13-18). The group is facilitated by members of the Social Work and Psychological Services teams.

This evidenced based group is designed to:

- Decrease unhelpful thoughts
- Improve well-being
- Gain skills
- Understand stress
- Feel better about self and life
- Foster hope

Based on student feedback, teams also refined BEME, Black Excellence Made Evident, into a symposium based format. The Black Excellence Made Evident group is designed to amplify the voices and experiences of Black students. The two-day symposium brings Black identifying youth together in a safe space to:

- Affirm and validate Black student's identities (including intersecting identities)
- Discuss strategies to confront marginalization and Anti-Black Racism
- Promote positive leadership amongst our Black students
- Provide mentorship opportunities and build connection to community

Both of these important programs continue into the 2023-2024 school year.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SECTION B – Standard 3

Standard 3: Roles and Responsibilities

The purpose of the standard is to provide the public with information on roles and responsibilities in the area of Special Education. All are required to comply with and uphold the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Human Rights Code.

The DDSB has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for all students and staff, ensure Indigenous rights and human rights (including centering dignity and the duty to accommodate) are at the centre of the work and it is the legal responsibility of the DDSB to provide education to students.

Roles and Responsibilities Outlined by the Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education defines roles and responsibilities in elementary and secondary education in several key areas: legislative and policy framework; school system management; funding; programs and curriculum. The roles and responsibilities within special education are outlined below:

The Ministry of Education:

- defines, through the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services, and prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality
- ensures that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils
- establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model. The model consists of the Foundation Grant, the Special Education Grant, and other special purpose grants
- requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education
- sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement
- requires school boards to maintain special education reports, review them annually, and submit amendments to the Ministry
- requires school boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs)
- establishes Special Education Tribunals to hear disputes between parents and school boards regarding the identification and placement of exceptional pupils
- establishes a provincial Advisory Council on Special Education to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to special education programs and services
- operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities

The district school board or school authority:

- establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for the exceptional pupils of the board

- obtains the appropriate funding and reports on the expenditures for special education
- develops and maintains a special education report that is amended from time to time to meet the current needs of the exceptional pupils of the board
- reviews the report annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education
- provides statistical reports to the Ministry as required and as requested
- prepares a parent guide to provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with information about special education programs, services and procedures
- establishes one or more Individual Placement and Review Committee to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them
- establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee
- provides professional development to staff on special education

The Special Education Advisory Committee:

- makes recommendations to the board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board
- participates in the board's annual review of its special education report
- participates in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education
- reviews the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education
- provides information to parents, as requested

The school principal:

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, and through board policies
- communicates Ministry of Education and school board expectations to staff
- ensures that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes
- communicates board policies and procedures about special education to staff, students, and parents
- ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, through an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations and board policies
- consults with parents and with school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional pupils
- ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements
- ensures that parents are consulted in the development of their child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP
- ensures the delivery of the program as set out in the IEP
- ensures that appropriate assessments are requested if necessary and that parental consent is obtained

The teacher:

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- follows board policies and procedures regarding special education

- maintains up-to-date knowledge of special education practices
- where appropriate, works with special education staff and parents to develop the IEP for an exceptional pupil
- communicates the student's progress to parents
- works with other school board staff to review and update the student's IEP

The special education teacher, in addition to the responsibilities listed above under "the teacher":

- holds qualifications, in accordance with Regulation 298, to teach special education
- monitors the student's progress with reference to the IEP, and modifies the program as necessary
- assists in providing educational assessments for exceptional pupils

The parent/guardian:

- becomes familiar with and informed about board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child
- participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities
- participates in the development of the IEP
- becomes acquainted with the school staff working with the student
- supports the student at home
- works with the school principal and teachers to solve problems
- is responsible for the student's attendance at school

The student:

- complies with the requirements as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda
- complies with board policies and procedures
- participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other activities, as appropriate

In addition, the DDSB's Indigenous Education Policy, Human Rights Policy and related procedures (including the Human Rights Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities Framework) outline additional roles and responsibilities for all DDSB community members to contribute to safe, welcoming, respectful, inclusive, equitable and accessible learning and working environments that are free from all forms of discrimination, oppression and harm.

Our commitments, through every role in Inclusive Student Services (Special Education), have a foundation in optimizing the potential and achievement of every student. A brief summary, including leadership roles, is found here:

Table 1 - Summary of Inclusive Student Services Roles and Responsibilities

CHILD AND YOUTH SUPPORT WORKERS	Child and Youth Support Workers, a role formalized for the 2022-2023 school year, work directly with school staff to implement Tier One Mental Health classroom and small group strategies, educational programming and support professional learning and skills development in the areas of social-emotional learning. The student centred, classroom based role of the team, emphasizes an asset based approach to building student and staff strengths which can include social emotional skills, related to life skills, and can also include behaviour skills training, fostering acquisition of new skills and support for building relationships.
CLASSROOM SUPPORT STAFF	Classroom support staff professionals foster inclusion and support student well-being and learning as part of school teams. Roles include: • **ASL Interpreters** facilitate and/or provide access to communication for students who are Deaf/hard of hearing. • **Developmental Support Workers** provide wrap around support to students with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities. • **Intervenors** facilitate or provide access to communication for students who are Deaf-Blind. • **Language Acquisition Support Worker** supports students in the early learning of ASL as a primary language.
MANAGER OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES	Working with Senior Managers and Clinical Leads, the Manager of Psychological Services co-leads and provides initiatives and ongoing training for staff, while centering commitments to disrupting barriers, structures and practices that impede the achievement and well-being of students and staff. The Manager of Psychological Services also carries out all of the functions and responsibilities of a Clinical Supervisor (consultation, assessment, direct services, capacity building, crisis response and clinical supervision), and ensures that these are delivered in a professionally responsible manner that promotes student well-being and meets the standards and guidelines of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.
MENTAL HEALTH LEAD	The Mental Health Lead works with system and school leaders to coordinate, develop and implement the Well-Being and Mental Health Action Plan, through a tiered model, in support of students and staff. The Mental Health Lead coordinates and leads board wide initiatives to promote well-being, mental health, reduce stigma and lead focus on increasing knowledge about mental health and well-being.
PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES STAFF	The Senior Manager Clinical Lead-Psychologist provides leadership to the Psychological Services team in the provision of service and programming that centres commitments to disrupting barriers, structures and practices that impede the achievement and well-being of students and staff. Staff provide five essential functions to support students in the DDSB: assessment, consultation, direct service, capacity building and crisis response, in partnership with colleagues from the Social Work team. Staff who are clinical supervisors of Psychological Services also provide clinical supervision, in accordance with the Standards and codes of ethics of the College of Psychologists of Ontario as one of their role functions. Staff work directly to support the academic achievement and well-being of students within the DDSB, and work within a collaborative framework with staff, parent(s)/guardian(s) and students.

SENIOR MANAGER CLINICAL LEAD PSYCHOLOGIST	The Senior Manager Clinical Lead-Psychologist is responsible for overseeing the professional services provided by Psychological Services staff. Within this scope, the Senior Manager Clinical Lead-Psychologist ensures that staff maintain professional standards and deliver current, evidence-based practices in assessment, consultation and direct services that centre commitments to disrupting barriers, structures and practices that impede the achievement and well-being of students and staff. The Senior Manager Clinical Lead-Psychologist also works with other Clinical Leads and Senior Administration to facilitate the integration of professional support services. As well, the Clinical Lead is responsible for coordinating capacity building professional development delivered by Psychological Service staff. Consultation to system and community-based programs and initiatives is provided when needed.
SENIOR MANAGER CLINICAL LEAD SOCIAL WORK AND ATTENDANCE SERVICES	The Senior Manager Clinical Lead-Social Work is responsible for leading and overseeing the quality of Social Work and Attendance services carried out for referred students, and for the provision of direct services to students and parent(s)/guardian(s), as well as consultative support to school personnel and parents in order to address barriers that may impede success at school.
SENIOR MANAGER CLINICAL LEAD SPEECH LANGUAGE AND HEARING SERVICES	The Senior Manager Clinical Lead-Speech, Language and Hearing is responsible for the quality of speech, language and hearing services carried out for referred students and the provision of direct services to students, consultative support, and capacity building supports to school personnel and parent(s)/guardian(s) to assist students to function within the school system (through prevention, early intervention and enhancement) and make satisfactory academic progress.
SENIOR SOCIAL WORKER	Reporting to the Senior Manager, Clinical Lead- Social Work, the Senior Social Worker, in addition to the duties of a Social Worker/Attendance Counsellor, is responsible for the onboarding of new staff, peer consultations and peer support, providing leadership and support for various team and practice level initiatives as well as supporting District projects. In collaboration with the Senior Manager, Clinical Lead, the Senior Social Worker participates in the maintenance and/or development of community partnerships and initiatives. This role is a three-year term-based leadership opportunity for a member of the Social Work team. 2023-2024 is the second year, of three, for the inaugural term of this role.
SOCIAL WORKERS/ATTENDANCE COUNSELLORS	Under the supervision of the Senior Manager Clinical Lead-Social Worker, the Social Work/Attendance team provides both consultative and direct support to students and parent(s)/guardian(s). In the role of Social Worker, the team is responsible for providing social work assessment, brief counselling for students and their parents, advocacy, coordination of services and facilitating referrals to community agencies. They provide consultation and make recommendations to school staff, parent(s)/guardian(s) and department colleagues. The team also provides support in the role of the Attendance Counsellor.

SPECIAL EDUCATION FACILITATOR	Special Education Facilitators are centrally assigned teachers, guided through the leadership of the System Leads –and the Superintendent of Inclusive Student Services. Special Education Facilitators may have portfolio responsibilities to support a Family of Schools or Innovative (Assistive) Technology. Facilitators support school staff in meeting the needs of students with special education strengths and needs, provide guidance and professional collaboration. Facilitators also liaise with schools and parent(s)/guardian(s), assisting all stakeholders in shaping programming and considerations of most appropriate program and placement for individual students.
SPECIALIST TEACHERS FOR HEARING AND VISION	Hearing and Vision Itinerant teachers are centrally assigned and provide both consultative and direct service for students with hearing and vision accommodation needs and exceptionalities. These specialist teachers work collaboratively with school staff to meet the needs of students, provide programming and specialized equipment resources.
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS (SLPs)	Under the supervision of the Senior Manager Clinical Lead-Speech, Language and Hearing, the SLPs provide both consultative and directly support oral language of students and Augmentative/Alternative Communication supports for non-verbal students. They have responsibility for providing assessment and programming for students and recommendations to school staff.
SYSTEM LEAD – INCLUSIVE STUDENT SERVICES	The role of the System Leads – Inclusive Student Services, as centrally assigned Principals, support students, directly reporting to the Superintendent of Inclusive Student Services, by providing leadership of special education programs, supports and department staff. System Leads work collaboratively with other System Leads, departments, Facilitators, Speech-Language, Centrally Assigned Teachers, Social Work, Psychological Services and school-based special education staff to ensure coordination of services for students with special education strengths and needs. This includes supporting IEP development, providing in-service opportunities and provision of resources to staff in developing differentiated programming including the infusion of technology for students with special education strengths and needs.
THE SUPERINTENDENT INCLUSIVE STUDENT SERVICES (SPECIAL EDUCATION)	The Superintendent of Inclusive Student Services leads coordination of all special education, mental health and day treatment partnership programs and services, including the development and implementation of curriculum and new programs. In addition, ensuring that policies and procedures are developed and followed in accordance with The Education Act, the regulations and Durham District School Board priorities.
TRANSITION AND WORK EDUCATION COORDINATORS	Transition and Work Education Coordinators support students with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities, and their parent(s)/guardian(s), in preparing for post-secondary pathways (work, school & community). Coordinated planning includes building staff knowledge in support of integrated transition planning and building relationships with service-based community partners. Transition and Work Education Coordinators support work education experiences for students building work readiness skills within their secondary learning programs.

INCLUSIVE STUDENT SERVICES PLAN • 2023 – 2024

EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

SECTION B – Standard 4

Standard 4: Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies

The purpose of the standard is to provide details of the board's early identification procedures and intervention strategies to the ministry and to the public.

Guiding Principles

The Durham District School Board has procedures to identify each child's level of development, learning abilities and educational programming needs. As per Ministry PPM 11, programs are in place to ensure that educational programs are designed to accommodate these needs and to facilitate each child's growth and development. The procedures that are in place are a part of a continuous assessment and program planning process which is initiated when a child is first enrolled in school, or no later than the beginning of a program of studies immediately following Kindergarten and continuing throughout a child's school life.

The DDSB pursues a tiered approach to support. This is a systematic approach to providing high-quality, evidence-based assessment and instruction and appropriate supports that respond to students' individual needs. It is based on frequent monitoring of student progress and the use of assessment data, focusing on learning levels and input from students and their parent(s)/guardian(s), to recognize when students are experiencing learning challenges and to plan for increasing the learning supports that may be needed to address individual student needs while always building from their strengths and where they are. This tiered approach can be used to address academic, communication and behavioural needs. The nature, intensity, and duration of supports may be decided by teachers individually or in collaboration with a school team, always on the basis of evidence derived from monitoring student achievement. (Learning for All Kindergarten - Grade 12)

The Durham District School Board recognizes the importance of the first contact parent(s)/guardian(s) have with the school system. It is the goal of each school to provide a welcoming orientation for all students and their families entering school for the first time, including those who may have special education strengths and needs.

The Right to Read Inquiry Report includes recommendation for yearly evidence-based screening of all students in Kindergarten Year One to Grade Two in word-reading accuracy and fluency. Information from the Ministry of Education and our continued learning as a district will inform our planning for implementation of this commitment and impact our early intervention and assessment planning from what is currently reflected in this plan.

Early Identification Process

Once a child who might need additional support has been registered, the school and parent(s)/guardian(s) work with the Inclusive Student Services resource staff to understand potential barriers, the child's strengths, abilities and needs and discuss and plan for supports, programs and services that will help the child experience the most successful school entry. An Inclusive Student Services Supplemental Registration Package may be completed to share relevant information that will help with identifying program options.

Strong partnerships exist with agencies serving pre-school children. Discussions may be held before a child begins school to help understand the needs of the student.
For a student with additional support needs, the process typically involves:

- Considering any other identity based or intersectional needs
- a contact with pre-school providers
- information sharing with parental/guardian consent
- resource staff visits to the pre-school
- meetings with parent(s)/guardian(s) and any involved, advocates/consultative staff/stakeholders involved with the child
- formation of an entry plan including consideration for accessibility, required equipment, class match and other supports
- visits for students and parent(s)/guardian(s) to the new site
- in-service workshops as required for the staff who provide services, supports and programs for the student

The board supports early recognition and a tiered approach to those supports by providing in-service opportunities and resources currently used in classrooms such as the following for classroom teachers, special education staff and school administration such as:

- Levelled Literacy Interventions (LLI)
- Leaps and Bounds
- Benchmark Assessment System (BAS)
- Professional Resources and Instruction for Math Educations PRIME
- Gap closing strategies
- Structured teaching strategies (based on ABA principles)

We recognize the important shifts to practices that outcomes of the Ontario Human Rights Commission 'Right to Read' report, and actioning the recommendations, will bring. Our teams, working in collaboration, are committed to this important work.

It is possible that some children may be referred to an IPRC for identification, but meaningful inclusion in early years classrooms provides access to stimulating peer interaction opportunities, inquiry-based learning and a language-rich environment.

> Kindergarten educators are the key educators of children with special education strengths and needs. They have a responsibility to help all children learn, and they work collaboratively with special education teachers, where appropriate, to achieve this goal. They commit to assisting every child to prepare for living with the highest degree of independence possible. (p.97 *The Kindergarten Program*)

Please refer to the Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education, Appendix C for details regarding policies/procedures for informing parent(s)/guardian(s) that their child may require an IPRC.

The Educator's Role in Early Identification

The educator makes professional observations of the student in various settings, co-ordinates the information that is available from those who are involved and works collaboratively to determine appropriate services, programs and supports. The educator will discuss additional supports that might be needed with administration, the SERT and the Inclusive Student Services Team (where appropriate). An intervention plan might be put in place, as outlined in the Supporting Many Paths to Success document (see following page).

The Parent / Guardian Role in Early Identification

The parent/guardian shares observations based on interactions in the home and outside the school setting. The parent provides any assessments about their child that adds to the overall understanding of their child's strengths, abilities, interests and needs.

Supporting Many Paths

The following Supporting Many Paths document provides an overview to families and school teams on the process of accommodation including consideration of Individual, Placement, Review Committee process.

Please note that the document is currently in consultation for revision. Changes are anticipated to include:

- Foundation in relationship building and collaboration (students, families, school team)
- Recognition that for some students, an IPRC will be part of entry and program planning; based on input from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
- Change from PowerTPM to PowerSchool Student Information Systems

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Supporting Many Paths to Success

Inclusive STUDENT SERVICES

STEP 1 Teacher Assesses Strengths and Needs of Student

NOTE: Steps 1 - 4 **MUST** precede the *Consent for Service*

1. Recognizes a learning gap, unique pattern of strength/need or significant concern;
2. Communicates with parent(s)/guardian(s), principal, and Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT);
3. Accommodates program to meet student needs;
4. Evaluates the effectiveness of accommodations/ interventions;
5. Student Profile is started on Power TPM.

If accommodations/interventions meet the student's needs

- continue with selected strategies;
- monitor progress interventions meetings, in-school team meetings.

If accommodations/interventions do not yet meet the student's needs

- meet with parents and SERT;
- discuss observations, data collected, patterns/trends;
- continue classroom assessment and begin intervention checklist;
- develop plan involving accommodations and develop a home-support plan;
- implement new strategies/interventions and evaluate;
- continue classroom assessment and intervention;
- add to Student Profile in Power TPM.

MOVE ON TO STEP 2

STEP 2 The Special Education Resource Teacher

1. Will observe the student and collect data pertaining to strengths and needs;
2. Will create a plan of action based on the observation results and set a date to evaluate progress;
3. May provide and coordinate more direct support to the teacher and student through a variety of approaches;
4. Share plan of action with parent(s)/guardian(s).

If accommodations/interventions meet the student's needs

- continue with current accommodations and strategies and interventions;
- document all accommodations/interventions and evaluate;
- maintain on-going assessment and evaluation;
- update Student Profile and continue to gather documentation.

If accommodations/interventions do not yet meet the student's needs

- SERT activates Special Education Team using Student Profile and informs parent(s)/guardians(s).

MOVE ON TO STEP 3

STEP 3 In-School Team

1. Teacher and SERT present classroom observations and/or assessment results to in-school team and outline current accommodations;
2. Team brainstorms strategies/suggestions including community partners/services;
3. Team collaboratively updates the action plan;
4. Update parent(s)/guardian(s) - SERT and teacher discuss program accommodations and interventions with parent(s)/guardian(s).

If accommodations/interventions meet the student's needs

- ensure ongoing communication with parent(s)/guardian(s);
- document success of the recommendations within the action plan.

If accommodations/interventions do not yet meet the student's needs

- assess implemented accommodations/interventions;
- develop further revisions/changes to the action plan;
- set a timeline to monitor and review accommodations/interventions and schedule next meeting.

MOVE ON TO STEP 4

STEP 4 Pre-Referral Consultation

1. Pre-Referral consultation occurs with the Family of Schools Special Education Team to determine appropriate services;
2. Academic Assessment may be considered at this time for further information of student needs;
3. No identifying information is shared at this point.

NOTE: Steps 1 - 4 **MUST** precede the *Consent for Service*

If accommodations/interventions meet the student's needs

- record accommodations for further reference;
- continue with on-going assessment, accommodations, intervention and evaluation;
- continue to involve school resource personnel as needed.

If accommodations/interventions do not yet meet the student's needs

- obtain parental consent for school-based assessment by SERT;
- discuss with parents possible special education support services;
- obtain signed consent for services on Power TPM;
- give parent(s)/guardians(s) a copy of the "Protecting Personal Health Information" pamphlet.

MOVE ON TO STEP 5

STEP 5 Consent for Service Submitted

1. SERT verifies that appropriate forms and documentation are completed and sent to Special Education Support staff;
2. Informed Consent
   - Special Education support staff provide communication to parent(s)/guardian(s) to secure informed consent;
   - Special Education support staff ensure that the parent(s)/ guardian(s) are aware of the nature of services to be provided, appropriate timelines and confidentiality.
3. Support from Special Education Services
   - Special Education support staff may visit classroom, observe and provide further assessment, program accommodation, strategies and materials as required;
   - SERT continues to update teacher and administration;
   - Special Education support staff involvement may be consultative and/or involve direct student support.
4. Determine if IPRC is warranted at this time.

If accommodations/interventions meet the student's needs

- document changes to program;
- report card reflects progress;
- on-going assessment and evaluation;
- continue information sharing with parent(s)/guardian(s) and school/ Special Education staff.

If accommodations/interventions do not yet meet the student's needs

- set up a Case Conference with team and parent(s)/guardian(s).

MOVE ON TO STEP 6

STEP 6 Case Conference

1. Special Education Parent Guide provided to parent(s)/ guardian(s);
2. Parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher, SERT, Administrator attend a meeting to discuss concerns/next steps.

If additional programming/interventions meet student's needs

- no IPRC at this time; continue to monitor.

If following the case conference and all parties are in agreement

- hold an initial meeting - Identification, Placement, Review Committee (IPRC);
- on-going monitoring and development of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) by school staff, in conjunction with parent(s)/guardian(s), community and relevant support staff.

Acknowledge: Ministry of Education

THE IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS AND APPEALS

SECTION B – Standard 5

Standard 5: The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) Process and Appeals

The purpose of the Standard is to provide details of the board's IPRC process to the Ministry and to the public.

Recent updates made to the DDSB Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education IPRC included a shift in language from 'case conference' to 'care conference' and amplified emphasis on the importance of ongoing parent/guardian voice in program and pathway planning. It is important to note that consultation and collaboration on pathway and placement considerations is essential to precede an IPRC meeting being convened. The DDSB Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education can be found in Appendix C.

The DDSB is transitioning between software products used for the purposes of special education related processes and programs. The reflection and learning within the transition process, related to our commitments to human rights and equity, continues to be significant as the team examines each form in relation to our duty bearer responsibilities. An example of a shift in practice for the 2023-2024 school year is the addition of 'interests', alongside strengths and needs as part of the IPRC process. This is important as the nuances of a student's current interests, supports opportunities for connection and in the creation of personalized learning resources. A second example is a change made to our specialized transportation request form and a change from "nonverbal" indicator to "form of communication: Verbal, Augmented Alternative Communication (A.A.C.) (Technology, Sign, Picture Exchange Communication System (P.E.C.S.), Multi-Modal or other". This change better aligns with our commitment to an asset focus, addressing ableism (change from norm comparative language) and will provide information to drivers about a student's communication language.
Regulation 181/98 requires that each board establishes one or more Committee(s) for the identification, placement and review of exceptional students.

The following procedures are based on Regulation 181/98 and outline the process school principals are to follow. In the Durham District School Board, IPRCs are led by school teams and may include district staff. The Committee may meet in-person or secure virtual platform (currently using MS Teams); based on parent/guardian preference.

Referrals: A principal refers the student to an IPRC either upon written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s); or upon written request of parent(s)/guardians(s).

In the Durham District School Board in the 2022-2023 school year, a total of 4,210 referrals (new or reopened) were made in addition to consents for services with continuity from previous year. There were 12,761 reviews and 2 appeals were filed with the district as of May 2, 2023.

Table 2 - At the IPRC Meeting

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">At the IPRC Meeting</th></tr>
<tr><th>Principal/Designate</th><th>Referring Teacher(s)</th><th>Special Education Resource Teacher</th><th>Inclusive Student Services</th><th>Parent(s)/ Legal Guardian(s)</th></tr>
<tr><td>•Chairs the meeting; Explains the role of the Committee;
•Invites each person in attendance with knowledge of the student to present information.
•Considers information relevant to the student's needs and strengths</td><td>•Presents all relevant information that supports identification (or not)</td><td>•Presents all relevant information that supports identification (or not)</td><td>•May be invited to attend and review any recent assessments and;
•Acts as a resource to assist in the interpretation of reports from other agencies.</td><td>•Shares any available reports with Committee;
•Provides any further information
•Asks questions.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">At the IPRC Meeting, the Committee May:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">• To recommend identification or decide that an identification is not required;
• To recommend placement;
• To defer decision if the Committee requires more information.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">After the IPRC Meeting</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Principal/Designate
•Provides one copy of the Statement of Decision to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student who is 16 years or older;
•Places one copy of the Statement of Decision in the Ontario Student Record (OSR);
•Within 30 days of IPRC, provides one copy of IEP to the parents(s)/guardian(s) and the student who is 16 years or older;
•Places one copy of the IEP in the OSR

For Parents/Guardians:
If you disagree with the IPRC decision, you are able, within 15 calendar days of receiving the decision, request in writing an additional meeting to re-evaluate the decision of the IPRC.
If after the second meeting to re-evaluate the IPRC decision you still disagree, you may indicate an appeal of the decision. Notification is made in writing to the Superintendent of Education – Inclusive Student Services and must be made within 15 calendar days. Further information is available within the DDSB Parent/Guardian Guide to IPRC.</td></tr>
</table>

EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

SECTION B – Standard 6

Standard 6: Educational and Other Assessments

The purpose of the standard is to provide details of the board's assessment policies and procedures and to make parent(s)/guardian(s) aware of the types of assessment tools used by district teams, the ways in which assessments support programming for students, duty bearer responsibilities and the process by which assessment results may be used to inform Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) decisions.

The DDSB recognizes potential biases and barriers in assessment tools. In keeping with our commitments to Indigenous rights, human rights and equity, the DDSB considers students' identities, strengths and needs when conducting assessments and when making related programming recommendations, plans and decisions.

The purpose of assessment is to better learn how children and youth learn. The information gathered is used to inform educational programing for students and is completed in collaboration with parent(s)/guardian(s) and where appropriate include student voice.

The process of assessment is dynamic and ongoing to:

- helps to identify strengths, abilities and potential educational, learning program needs
- answer specific questions or concerns
- assist in planning an effective program
- determine specific student needs
- help parent(s)/guardian(s) formulate further understanding of the child's learning potential
- help support programming to maximize participation, learning, and well-being.

The development of an Educational Profile is a result of the ongoing gathering of information that allows for a continuum of intervention.

Parent/Guardian Consent

Informed and written consent from parent(s)/guardian(s) for students under 18 years of age is obtained for all referrals for formal assessments and clinical services and access to the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR). Information to be reviewed or shared may include, but is not limited to, that which is contained in the OSR. This information is obtained and used only for the improvement of instruction and other education of the student in accordance with the Education Act, (R.S.O. 1990. S.266(2)) and is collected, transmitted, retained and disposed of confidentially in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (R.S.O. 1990 c. M. 56).

Consent for Sharing Information and Protection of Privacy

All information is collected, stored, and shared in accordance with the Education Act, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) and other legislation that governs the use of personal information. A separate consent form, Consent to the Disclosure, Transmittal and/or Examination of Records or Information, must be signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) or capable student to share information with outside agencies and/or service providers.

The following are some commonly used assessment tools employed by DDSB staff to assist in understanding how students learn and engage with school:

Table 3 - Commonly Used Assessment Tools

Student Programming Need	Assessment Facilitated by	Assessment Tools (these are commonly used assessment tools, but not an exhaustive list)	Average Wait Time for Assessment
Gaps in learning **Ongoing misconceptions in learning** **Learning and understanding**	Classroom Teacher	Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) Early Numeracy Observation Tool Leaps and Bounds Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI) Nelson Math Pre-Assessment Ontario Writing	Assessment is on-going within the classroom
Learning needs, not remediated through in-class interventions, that require deeper understanding **Behavioural concerns that may impact learning**	Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)	Key Math Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA) Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA)	3 to 6 months Efforts to conduct FBA in a timely manner, prioritizing safety concerns
Social, behavioural, cognitive, or mental health concerns that impact upon the student's learning or school functioning and have not been responsive to school-based interventions.	Psychologists, Psychological Associates, Psychometrists	Tools chosen by staff are suited to the assessment focus and may vary accordingly. Direct observations supplement the use of formal assessment tools.	Efforts to conduct formal assessments in a timely manner. Balance of need for assessment with priorities for other service functions, in collaboration with school staff and parent/guardians.
Concerns regarding communication (expressive or receptive) that are not responsive to universal classroom intervention **Learning gaps, in the area of language**	Speech and Language Pathologist	Informal observations and assessments Collaborative/integrated service assessments Wide range of formal assessments relative to the presenting concern	Complete priority assessments within the school year.
Student experiences that impact student learning, school engagement, and functioning at school: emotional challenges, crisis, family or relationship challenge, mental health concerns.	Social Worker	Assessment based on information from student, and/or the parent(s)/guardian(s) Classroom observation Information from school supports and education staff Review of school records with consent, contact with community agencies Use of some mental health and well- being tools	Student usually seen within a week from time of referral for initial consultation

Review of Classroom Literacy Assessments

Classroom literacy assessments will be explored through the 2023-2024 school year. See section 'Right to Read' within Standard 2 of this Plan.

Communication of Assessment Information

Upon completion of an assessment, SERTs, Speech-Language Pathologists, Audiologists, Psychologists, Psychological Associates, and/or Psychometrists, discuss the results with the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s). A written confidential report is prepared for parent(s)/guardian(s) which, subject to client consent for release of information, a copy of may be placed in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR). A copy of the report is held in the central files.

For Psychological Services, the communication of a diagnosis is a controlled act under the Registered Health Professions Act (RHPA), 1991. The Act requires that diagnoses (e.g., learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, etc.) be formulated and communicated directly by a Licensed Psychological practitioner (i.e., Psychologist, Psychological Associate).

SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

SECTION B – Standard 7

Standard 7: Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings

The purpose of the standard is to provide details of the board's specialized health support services to the Ministry and to the public.

The provision of health support services to students in the school settings is governed by the Ministry Education Policy/Program Memorandum 81. This policy document outlines the shared responsibility for the provision of health support services amongst the Ministries of Education, Health, Long-Term Care and Children, Community and Social Services. At the time of publishing the DDSB Special Education Plan for 2023-2024, the Ministry of Education had gathered consultation on proposed revision to PPM81 but no further communication had been received. If changes are made at the provincial level impacting Specialized Heath Support Services in School Settings, the Inclusive Student Services team, in consultation with district senior leadership team, will revise to reflect any changes to service responsibilities or access.

The expectations of the Ministry of Education are that all school boards develop and maintain policies to support students who have asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, or are at risk for anaphylaxis are set in PPM 161 – Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions in Schools. These are medical conditions referred to as prevalent medical conditions and have the potential to result in a medical incident or emergency.

The Durham DSB has the following related procedures:

- Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions in Schools: Anaphylaxis
- Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions in Schools: Asthma
- Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions in Schools: Diabetes
- Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions in School: Epilepsy.

All four procedures for students with prevalent medical conditions require that schools create a Plan of Care in conjunction with parent(s)/guardian(s), the student, and the appropriate medical practitioner to support each presenting student.

Administration of prescribed medication to students during the school day is addressed under the board's Policy and Procedure regarding Administration of Prescriptive Oral Medication. Inquiries can be made through the Principal/Vice-Principal.

Eligibility Criteria for School Health Support Services

The eligibility criteria for the provision of School Health Support Services is as follows:

1. The person must be enrolled as a pupil at a school or be receiving satisfactory instruction at home in accordance with clause 21(2) (a) of the *Education Act*.
2. The person must require the services
   (i) in order to be able to attend school, participate in school routines and receive instruction,
   (ii) in order to be able to receive satisfactory instruction at home in accordance with clause 21(2) (a) of the *Education Act*.
3. The person must be an insured person under the *Health Insurance Act*.
4. The school or home in which the service is to be provided must have the physical features

necessary to enable the service to be provided.

5. The risk that a service provider who provides the service to the person who requires it, will suffer
   (i) must not be significant, or
   (ii) if it is significant, the service provider must be able to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk so that it is no longer significant

In Durham Region, School Based Rehabilitation Services are provided through GrandviewKids, the local Childrens' Treatment Centre.

School Health Support Services and the board are as follows:
Table 4 - School Health Support Services

Specialized Health Support Service	Agency or position of person who performs the service in school setting	Eligibility criteria for students to receive the service	Procedures for resolving disputes about eligibility and level of support
Nursing	Ministry of Health: local	Referral from Health	Ministry of Health: local
Occupational therapy	Ministry of Health: GrandviewKids	Referral and Assessment	GrandviewKids
Physiotherapy	Ministry of Health: GrandviewKids	Referral and Assessment	GrandviewKids
Speech therapy	Ministry of Health: GrandviewKids - School- Based Rehab Services	Referral by school or other agency for speech disorders	GrandviewKids School-Based Rehab Services, board SLP and Clinical Lead SLP as needed
Catheterization (clean and intermittent)	Ministry of Education/board	Direction from a doctor	Principal and/or System Lead – Inclusive Student
Catheterization (sterile and intermittent)	Ministry of Health: local	Ministry of Health: local	Ministry of Health: local
Suctioning: Shallow (oral or nasal suction surface)	Ministry of Education/ School Staff- EA	Direction from doctor	Principal and/or System Lead – Inclusive Student Services
Suctioning: Deep	Ministry of Health: local	Ministry of Health: local	Ministry of Health: local
Lifting, positioning, feeding and toileting	Ministry of Education/ School Staff- EA	Direction from doctor, therapist	Principal and/or System Lead – Inclusive Student Services
G tube feeding	Ministry of Health: local	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health: local

Please note: Chart includes information available up to May 2023.
Updates will be made and posted online as changes to Health Services are made in Ontario.

CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF EXCEPTIONS

SECTION B – Standard 8

Standard 8: Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

The purpose of the standard is to make information on the Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities available to the public, including parent(s)/guardian(s) and community associations.

The Education Act identifies five categories of exceptionalities for exceptional students:

- **Behaviour**
- **Communication** (Autism, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Language Impairment, Speech Impairment, Learning Disability)
- **Intellectual** (Giftedness, Mild Intellectual Disability, Developmental Disability)
- **Physical** (Physical Disability, Blind and Low Vision)
- **Multiple**

Further information about the five categories of exceptionalities, and their subcategories (listed above in parenthesis), can be found in the Ministry of Education resource:

Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Resource Guide (2017)

As a district, we are committed to addressing ableism, shifting practices to an asset-based approach to inclusion and challenging medical models which focus on diagnosis and/or deficit. As a district, we acknowledge and commit to the work that must be done to make these shifts.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS PROVIDED BY THE BOARD

SECTION B – Standard 9

Standard 9: Special Education Placements

The purpose of the standard is to make information about Special Education Placement in the Durham District School Board available to the public, including parent(s)/guardian(s) and community associations.

The DDSB is committed to all students and to providing services and learning environments that are safe, welcoming, respectful, inclusive, equitable and accessible, and free from discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code. In partnership with parent(s)/guardian(s), the DDSB considers the student's identity and individual learning strengths and needs. The DDSB provides a range of differentiated placements, programs, interventions and individualized accommodation to maximize participation, integration and independence, enable meaningful access to education, and support student success.

Students' needs can be met through a variety of programs, placements and class types within the DDSB. We strive to help every student meet their full potential, while fostering the highest level of independence possible. We work with parent(s)/guardian(s) and board staff to determine the placement that best meets the student's needs, whether that is in a regular classroom, or for some students, in a special education class. We place a strong emphasis on the inclusion of students with special education strengths and needs.

The majority of students with special education strengths and needs, access learning through a regular classroom placement. For most students, a classroom teacher, with the support of the school's Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) and board staff, is able to provide individualized programming to support student success. A regular classroom is always an option that parent(s)/guardian(s) may consider. A regular classroom allows the student to be with their peers, while receiving personalized programming that is outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The regular class is considered the most inclusive of placements.

Our ongoing commitment is to provide the structures and supports each student needs to foster their growth and development in programs which foster integration and independence as defined for each student based on their strengths and needs. We continue to learn and grow to uphold our commitments to Indigenous rights, human rights, equity and inclusion.

The IPRC Placement Decision

Before the IPRC considers placement of the student in a special education class, Regulation 181/98 requires the committee consider placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services. If, after considering all of the information presented, the IPRC is satisfied that placement in a regular class would meet the student's needs and is consistent with parent or guardian preferences, the committee will decide in favour of placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services.

Placement Options

Regular Class with Indirect Support

The student is placed in a regular class for the entire day, and the teacher receives specialized consultative services.

Regular Class with Resource Assistance

The student is placed in the regular class for most or all of the day and receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a qualified special education teacher.

Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance

The student is placed in the regular class and receives instruction outside of the classroom for less than 50 percent of the school day, from a qualified special education teacher.

A Special Education Class with Partial Integration

The student is placed by IPRC in a special education class, where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31, for at least 50 percent of the school day, but is integrated with a regular class for at least one instructional period daily.

A Special Education Class Full Time

The student is placed by IPRC in a special education class, where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31, for the entire school day.

The type of supported referenced within the IPRC placement categories is specific to a teacher with special education, additional course, qualifications. The placement type does not refer to the provision or type of classroom support staff, for example support from an educational assistant, that may be part of a student's program.

Specific to special education class placements, teacher and educational assistant support that is the foundation for the program can be found within the individual program brochures found within this plan and through the DDSB website.

Regular Classroom Placements

There are many strategies available within the Durham District School Board to support the inclusion of students with special education strengths and needs in regular grade placements.

The majority of students with special education strengths and needs, access programming in a regular classroom. For most students, a classroom teacher, with support of the school's Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) and board staff, is able to provide individualized programming to support student success in a classroom environment with their peers. The board's practice is that, whenever possible, special learning needs are supported within the home school and within a regular class placement. The regular class placement is considered the most inclusive of placements.

Principals are responsible for creating an inclusive school climate supportive of exceptional students that honours and values their diverse, unique and intersecting identities. Developing a climate of dignity, respect, understanding and acceptance throughout the school, providing support and training for teachers and educational assistants and creating a culture of collaboration are essential components of successful inclusion.

Included here are examples of the ways in which a student can be integrated into the regular classroom with the support of the school community.

Collaboration Strategies:

1. Create a school-wide culture of collaboration and inclusion:
    - uphold UNDRIP, the Human Rights Code and commitments and duty-bearer responsibilities as defined in the DDSB Indigenous Education and Human Rights Policies and procedures
    - develop a vision for enhancing inclusion and addressing ableism
    - model inclusive practices and clarify expectations for the staff
    - provide support
    - create/maintain positive attitudes and optimism regarding change and developing practices to address ableism, prevent barriers and accommodate the individual needs of all learners.
2. Develop programs that affirm and value neurodiversity, differing abilities and diverse, intersecting identities that each student brings. Programs will focus on a student's strengths using them to address areas of growth and engage students through areas of interest.
3. Encourage school-based responsibility:
    - school establishes a team responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring a successful inclusion plan.

4. Encourage collaboration between the special education team and regular mainstream grade teachers.
5. Encourage a variety of instructional strategies that focus on Universal Design of Learning (UDL) and accessibility principles and provide in-service for teachers to develop and learn strategies.
6. Access appropriate members of the Inclusive Student Services team to support student's programming needs. Note: Parent/guardian and/or student consent required
7. Provide time for planning sharing promising practices, success, challenges and debriefing to support ongoing learning.

Special Education Class Placements

Some students require a higher level of support, more intensive intervention and specialized services to support student success. For those students, parent(s)/guardian(s) may be offered an opportunity to explore the option of a Special Education Class placement for their child. In the DDSB we provide seven special education class types that have clearly defined outcomes for student success and are designed to meet the needs of students with specific learning profiles.

Program types include:

- Developmental Program
- Practical Learning Program
- School Support Program
- Transition to Work Program
- Structured Learning Class
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Class
- Gifted Class

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is kept informed on a regular basis by the System Lead, Principals and Superintendent of Inclusive Student Services about the range of available placements for students with special education strengths and needs. The input from SEAC is important in reviewing program types based on student needs and improving strategies for inclusion.

Consultation occurs during monthly SEAC meetings, Board meetings and Administrative Council liaison.

The following pages provide information about the Special Education Classes for the 2023-2024 school year inclusive of our information about Special Education in the DDSB.

More detailed information on each special education class type can be found online:
Special Education Placement Programs

DDSB
Ignite Learning

Inclusive
STUDENT SERVICES
GROVE · PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES · SOCIAL WORK AND ATTENDANCE
SPECIAL EDUCATION · SPEECH LANGUAGE AND HEARING · VISION

SPECIAL EDUCATION
in the Durham District School Board

MANY PATHS TO
Success

Spring 2023

How do we serve our students?

Students' needs can be met through a variety of programs, placements and class types within the DDSB. We strive to help every student meet their full potential, while fostering the highest level of independence possible for each student. We work with parents/guardians and board staff to determine the placement that best meets the student's needs, whether that is in a regular classroom, or for some students, in a special education class.

We place a strong emphasis on the inclusion of our students with special needs, providing meaningful, individualized integration opportunities for students accessing special education programs.

Our Mission

The Durham District School Board is committed to fostering success and independence for each student by providing a range of pathways, programs, opportunities and services. Students with special education strengths and needs are supported in inclusive environments that enable them to develop to their own full potential.

For more information, please contact the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) at your school.

Regular Class Placement

PLACEMENT DESCRIPTION

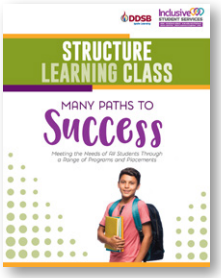
The regular class is considered the most inclusive of placements. The majority of students with special education needs access programming in a regular classroom. For most students, a classroom teacher, with support of the school's Special Education Resource Teacher and board staff, is able to provide individualized programming that allows the student to meet with success in a classroom environment with their peers

The Board endeavours to meet the needs of all students in the most enabling environment. The Board's practice, consistent with the Ministry direction is that, wherever possible, special learning needs are addressed within the home school and regular class placement.

Special Education Class Placements

Some students require a higher level of support, more intensive intervention and specialized services in order to meet with success. For those students, parents and guardians may be offered an opportunity to explore a Special Education Class placement for their child. In the DDSB we provide seven class types that meet the needs of students with a specific learning profile and that have clearly defined outcomes of student success.

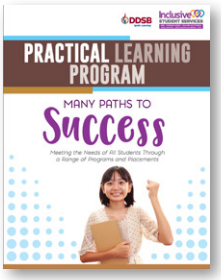
For more information on individual programs search **DDSB Inclusive Student Services**, or click on the photo beside each of the program descriptions.



STRUCTURED LEARNING CLASS
Special Education Class with Partial Integration

The Structured Learning Class (SLC) provides intensive support for students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who are working on Ontario or Alternative curriculum expectations. Teaching strategies based on Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), ie. Structured Teaching TEACCH©, data collection, positive reinforcement and generalization, are utilized to develop skills in a variety of domains including but not limited to: communication, self-regulation, and social skills.

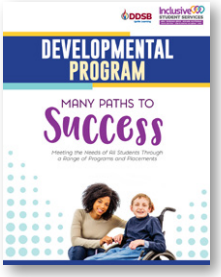
Maximum of six students.



PRACTICAL LEARNING PROGRAM
Special Education Class with Partial Integration or Special Education Full-time

The Practical Learning Program provides intensive support while teaching and reinforcing essential skills that foster independence in activities of daily living. This program is suited for students who may have intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities, and/or autism.

Maximum of ten students.



DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM
Full-time Special Education Program

The Developmental Program provides an intensive support program for students who have significant physical, intellectual or developmental disabilities. Students accessing the Developmental Program may also be medically fragile and/or require significant sensory support. The program also includes integrated community supports embedded within programming.

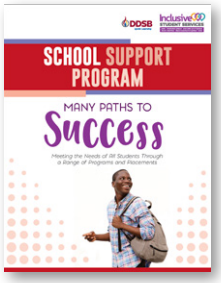
Maximum of six students.

DEAF/HARD OF HEARING PROGRAM
Special Education Class with Partial Integration

The Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program provides intensive support for students whose primary concern is speech and language related to their hearing loss. The program provides instruction in Ontario Curriculum as well as receptive and expressive language, auditory management and self-advocacy. Total communication is the focus for the program. Necessary spoken and visual supports are provided to develop receptive and expressive language and access curriculum.

Class maximum of twelve students.

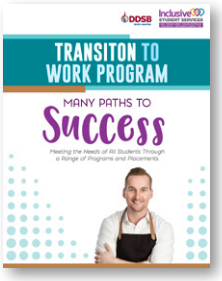
SCHOOL SUPPORT PROGRAM
Special Education Class with Partial Integration



The School Support Program provides an opportunity for an intensive support placement for the development of core curriculum and executive functioning (learning skills) for students within/ near their community school. The goal of the program is to foster independence and integration.

Elementary: Maximum of ten students
Secondary: Maximum of twelve students

TRANSITION TO WORK PROGRAM
Self Contained Special Education Program



The Transition to Work Program is designed to bridge between school and successful adult living by providing experiences in various work environments. The goal of the program is to develop employability skills and foster independence to support students with special needs to become productive workers with a goal of leading to meaningful employment. Through this program placement, students with special education needs can learn, practice, and refine productivity skills and social skills that are essential to participating in meaningful employment, learning more about themselves and the world of work.

Maximum of twelve students.

GIFTED PROGRAM

The Gifted Program provides differentiated support for learners who are intellectually gifted. As a self-contained classroom program at the elementary level, the program provides students to learn with and from other students with similar or higher intellectual aptitude. Based on the Ontario Curriculum, the program paces in breadth and depth of the learners with a focus on creative and complex ways of thinking.

Elementary: Maximum of 25 students
Secondary: Access through individual course selection

The Durham DDSB core priorities are all reflected in Inclusive programming which promotes student growth and achievement. Student independence is fostered through a gradual release of responsibility model. This framework provides the and support needed to set a student on a path to their own level of independence. Independence allows for a growth of a student's voice which includes knowing who they are, what they want or need and making positive choices that affect their life.

A MODEL FOR SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

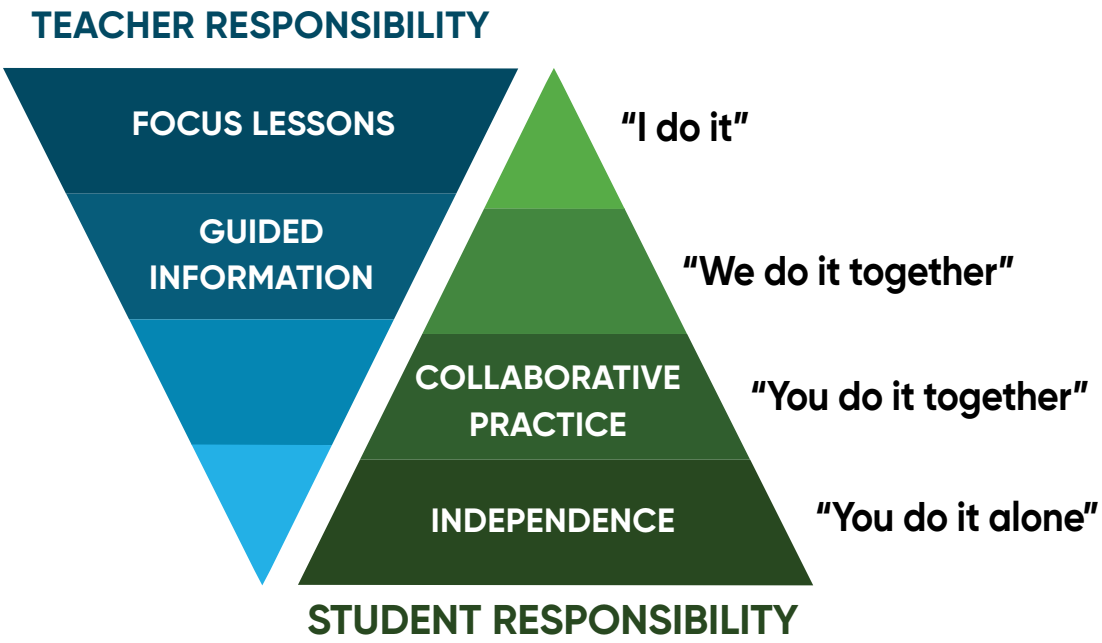


Image from the resource "Fostering Student Independence – An Educator's Guide" co-created by the Durham District School Board and partner boards.

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INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs) AND TRANSITION PLANNING

SECTION B – Standard 10

Standard 10: Individual Education Plans and Transition Planning

The purpose of the standard is to inform the Ministry and the public about the ways in which the board is complying with the Ministry requirement for the implementation of Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Implementing the Ministry of Education's Standards for IEPs

As per Regulation 181/98, all students in the DDSB who are identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) have an IEP.

An IEP is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by an individual student to support equitable access to programming. An IEP is based on the student's strengths and needs as identified through appropriate assessments. The IEP identifies accommodations and/or modified expectations from the Ontario Curriculum and/or alternative expectations that comprise a student's program. An IEP also includes special education services needed to assist the student in achieving their learning goals. The IEP is a working document; revisions or updates are part of a cycle of continuous assessment and monitoring. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are consulted in the development of the IEP and are informed of any changes to the plan throughout the school year.

The implementation of the IEP is led and monitored by the principal in each school and appropriate Inclusive Student Services team members (district staff) who have access to IEPs to ensure consistency and accountability.

In addition, an IEP may be developed for a student who has not been formally identified as exceptional, but who requires a special education program and/or services. In these cases, an IEP is required when the student regularly requires accommodations for instructional or assessment purposes and requires the use of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) equipment but is not identified through IPRC. It is important to note that accommodations for students are part of inclusive programming and an IEP is not required to implement.

As per PPM 156, a transition plan is provided for each student who is identified. The Transition Plan template is built into the IEP software to ensure it is completed each year for each student. Teams within the DDSB work collaboratively with the student (as appropriate), parent(s)/guardian(s), professional service staff involved with the student and relevant community agencies to develop and implement transition plans. The DDSB Transition Guide (Appendix D) provides school teams with guidance on transition planning. Additional resources have also been shared with Special Education Resource Teachers (SERT)s that are available from our SEAC partner organizations including Easter Seals and Autism Ontario.

Resolution of Disputes Related to the IEP

The collaborative process is key to successful programming for students; therefore, every effort is made to resolve differences through the joint efforts of parent(s)/guardian(s) and school staff. Differences of opinion around the content of the IEP are mediated at the school level. The Special Education Resource Teachers (SERT) and Special Education Instructional Facilitators are available to assist with this process should it be necessary. In the event of unresolved concerns, parent(s)/guardian(s) and school staff work with the System Lead and/or the Superintendent of Inclusive Student Services to address concerns.

Results of the Ministry of Education's IEP Review

No Ministry review was conducted in the 2022-2023 school year.

INCLUSIVE STUDENT SERVICES PLAN • 2023 – 2024

PROVINCIAL DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO

SECTION B – Standard 11

Standard 11: Provincial Demonstration Schools in Ontario

The purpose of this standard is to provide the public with information about the Provincial and Demonstration Schools that are operated for students who are deaf, blind, or deafblind, or who have severe learning disabilities, which may include attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Provincial Schools and Demonstration Schools

Provincial Schools and Provincial Demonstration Schools are operated by the Ministry of Education and are accessed through an application process that is initiated collaboratively between parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student's school. Provincial and Demonstration Schools provide alternative education placement and educational supports for students who are deaf, blind, deafblind or who have severe learning disabilities. Admittance to a Provincial School is determined by the Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296.

Provincial Schools provide residential and day programs. Transportation to Provincial Schools for students is provided by school boards. Busing is provided and shared with the Durham Catholic District School Board. When necessary, an attendant will be provided, and this cost will also be shared between the Durham Catholic District School Board and Durham District School Board.

All students require an Identification Placement and Review (IPRC) meeting conducted at the child's local school board. Programs at provincial schools are tailored to the needs of the individual students and:

- are delivered by specially trained teachers
- follow the Ontario curriculum and alternative expectations as outlined in the Individual Education Plans (IEP)
- offer a full range of programs at both elementary and secondary level.

Additionally, Provincial Schools provide resource and outreach services. These programs include consultation, workshops, on-line learning and early intervention programs. A referral process is in place for deaf, blind or deafblind students to be seen by resource consultants.

Provincial Schools for The Blind and Deaf

W. Ross Macdonald School (English) is located in Brantford and Centre Jules-Léger (French) in Ottawa provide an alternative placement for blind, low vision and deafblind students. Programs at Provincial Schools are designed to help blind or low vision or deafblind students to develop independent learning, living skills and self-sufficiency.

W. Ross Macdonald also provides:

- a provincial resource centre for blind, low vision and deafblind students
- support to local school boards through consultation and the provision of special learning materials (eg. Braille materials, audiotapes, and larger print materials)
- direct support to pre-school deafblind children and their families.

Provincial Schools for the Deaf

The following Provincial Schools offer services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students:

Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf in Belleville (serving eastern Ontario), Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf in Milton (serving central and northern Ontario), Robarts School for the Deaf in London (serving western Ontario), Centre Jules-Léger in Ottawa (serving francophone students and families throughout Ontario). These schools provide alternative placement for deaf students from kindergarten through secondary. Programs provide opportunities to acquire and develop language, literacy, numeracy, and inquiry skills in American Sign Language (ASL) and English or French and:

- provide rich and supportive bilingual/bicultural education environments which facilitate learning and social development through American Sign Language (ASL) and English or French
- develop appreciation of various cultures including ASL culture.

Demonstration Schools for Students with Learning Disabilities

The Provincial Demonstration Schools provide programs for about 120 students with severe learning disabilities. There are four demonstration schools in Ontario. The language of instruction at the Amethyst (London), Sagonaska (Belleville) and Trillium (Milton) is English; at Centre Jules-Léger, instruction is in French. The length of stay at the Provincial Demonstration Schools is one year in a highly specialized and resourced special program. Since Provincial Demonstration Schools are to act as a resource to school boards rather than to function as a separate education system, every effort is made to help the student return to the school in their local community as soon as possible. Transition planning with the community school board is key to this process.

Statistics on the number of Durham District School Board students who are currently attending Provincial and Demonstration Schools:

Table 5 - Statistics on DDSB Students Currently Attending Provincial and Demonstration Schools

Sagonaska	4 *At time of publishing, 2023/2024 program offer were in process and may, at outcome of decisions, change the number of students confirmed for September.
Trillium	2
Sir James Whitney	3
W. Ross MacDonald	8 – 6 blind low vision, 2 deafblind
Centre Jules-Léger	0

Provincial Demonstration Schools

Table 6 - List of Provincial Demonstration Schools and Contact Information

Amethyst School (Western and Northwestern areas of the province.)	1090 Highbury Ave., London, Ontario N5Y 4V9	Phone #: (519)453-4408 Fax #: (519)453-7943
Sagonaska School (Eastern and Northeastern areas of the province.)	350 Dundas St. W. Belleville, Ontario K8P 1B2	Phone #: (613)967-2830 Fax #: (613)967-2482
Trillium School (Central and Mid-northern areas of the province.)	347 Ontario St. S. Milton, Ontario L9T	Phone #: (905)878-8428 Fax #: (905)878-7540
Centre Jules-Léger (Central Jules-Léger provides French language programs and services for French- speaking students with severe learning disabilities across	281 Avenue Lanark Ottawa, Ontario K1V 6A6	Phone #: (613)761-9300 Fax #: (613)761-9301 ATS #: (613)761-9302

Provincial Schools

Table 7 - List of Provincial Schools and Contact Information

The Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf (Serves central and northern Ontario.)	255 Ontario St. S. Milton, Ontario L9T	Phone #: (905)878-2851 Fax #: (905)878-1354
The Robarts School for the Deaf (Serves western Ontario.)	1090 Highbury Ave., London, Ontario N5Y 4V9	Phone #: (519)453-4400 Fax #: (519)453-7943
The Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf (Serves eastern Ontario.)	350 Dundas St. W. Belleville, Ontario K8P 1B2	Phone #: (613)967-2823 Fax #: (613)967-2857
W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind (serves all of Ontario)	350 Brant Avenue Brantford,	Phone #: (519)759-0730 Toll Free: 1-866-618-9092

SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF

Standard 12 – Special Education Staff

Standard 12: Special Education Staff

The purpose of the standard is to provide specific details on board staff to the Ministry and to the public.

Table 8 Special Education Staff

Special Education Role	22/23	23/24	Staff Qualifications/Required
Teachers of Exceptional Students			
Special Education Resource Teachers	198.04	198.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Special Education Class Teachers	281.65	280.2	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Classroom Support Staff			
Developmental Service Worker	2.0 (Pilot)	0.0	College Requirement/DSW/PSW or Equivalent
Educational Assistants – EAI	863.35	863.35	Secondary School Diploma
Educational Assistants – EAII	26.0	26.0	College Certificate/CYW or Equivalent
Language Acquisition Support Worker	1.0	1.0	Lived experience within the Deaf community, Fluency in ASL/SLIC Level 4
Inclusive Student Services Department			
Mental Health Leader	1.0	1.0	Masters of Social Work
Senior Manager and Clinical Lead Psychological Services	1.0	1.0	Doctorate of Psychology
Manager of Psychological Services	0.0	1.0	Doctorate of Psychology
Senior Manager and Clinical Lead Social Work and Attendance Services	1.0	1.0	Masters of Social Work
Senior Manager and Clinical Lead Speech Language and Hearing Services	1.0	1.0	Masters of Speech Language
System Leads – Inclusive Student Services	2.0	2.0	Special Education Specialist, PQP2
Inclusive Technology Trainers (SEA)	2.5	2.5	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Interpreters	8.0	8.0	Completion of Accredited Interpreter Training

Intervenors	10.0	10.0	Completion of Accredited Intervenor Training
Itinerant Teachers – Hearing Resource	7.0	7.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Itinerant Teachers – Vision Resource	5.0	5.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Instructional Facilitators - Seconded Teachers	14.5	14.5	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Psychological Associates	5.4	5.4	Masters of Psychology, Licensed with CPO
Psychologists/Clinical Supervisors	4.0	4.0	Doctorate of Psychology, Licensed with CPO
Psychometrists (incl. BCBAs)	22.8	23.8	Masters of Psychology
Senior Social Worker	1.0	1.0	Masters of Social Work
Social Worker/Attendance Counsellors	25.0	26.0	Masters of Social Work
Speech Language Pathologists	25.0	27.0	Masters of Speech Language Pathology
Child and Youth Support Workers	7.0	7.0	College Certificate/CYW or Equivalent
Work Education & Transition Coordinators	2.0	2.0	Completion of related post-secondary program
Superintendent of Inclusive and Equitable Education – Inclusive Student Services, ECPP, Mental Health & Well-Being	1.0	1.0	Masters of Education, SOQP
ECPP Staffing			
ECPP Classroom Teachers	51.0	50.0	B.Ed, Inclusive Education or Special Education AQ preferred.
ECPP Administrators	2.0	2.0	PQP2
Resource Staff - Contract			
Audiologist	1.0	1.0	Masters Degree - Audiology
Orientation and Mobility Personnel	1.0	1.0	Degree & Certificate in Orientation and Mobility

Note: FTE for the 2023-2024 reflects staffing planning within the draft DDSB Budget for the school year; may be updated (and date of change noted) once budget passed and confirmed for the 2023-2024 school year by the Board of Trustees.

*Includes additional funding such as Student Support Funding supported positions

PROFESSIONAL (STAFF) DEVELOPMENT

SECTION B – Standard 13

Standard 13: Professional (Staff) Development

The purpose of the standard is to provide details of the board's professional development plans to the Ministry and to the public.

Foundations for Professional Learning at the DDSB

Meaningful interdepartmental and interdisciplinary collaboration that centres Indigenous rights, human rights, and equity in our planning and facilitating of professional learning are critical foundations to upholding our responsibilities to our students and community.

To address ableism, we need to uncover, name, challenge and disrupt biases, barriers, structures and practices that impede the achievement and well-being of our learners, especially those who are discriminated against and disadvantaged in and by our systems and structures. It is through an examination of our practices that we will ensure that we better serve all our learners and support our staff.

All professional learning will reinforce and support our individual and shared organizational duty bearer roles and responsibilities under the Human Rights Policy and procedures to:

- promote and protect human rights (including upholding the rights of the child and acting in the best interest of the child in ways that are not discriminatory and that prevent harm)
- identify, prevent and address human rights barriers and harm in schools/classrooms, curriculum, learning/training, operational and employment policies, procedures, processes, practices, workplaces, etc.
- respond to and address barriers and issues that rights holders experience, including accommodating human rights related needs
- learn about human rights principles and how they apply in day-to-day jobs
- address human rights issues and complaints and correct discrimination.

To support this work, professional learning will integrate and apply the principles and requirements of:

- the Indigenous Education Policy and procedures
- the Human Rights Policy, procedures, and accountability framework
- the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy, procedures, and related guidelines (e.g., Accommodating Creed in Schools, Supporting Trans Students in our Schools)
- Inclusive Design, Universal Design for Learning, accessibility and differentiated instruction, assessment and evaluation
- Positive School Climates
- Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy
- Compendium of Action for Black Student Success.

Inclusive design and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are key foundations for learning. Professional learning takes place in a number of formats and with multiple entry points for staff. These include working alongside educators within classrooms through an applied practice coaching model, large group delivery of professional learning, and ongoing networked learning of professionals using the Critically Conscious Practitioner Inquiry (CPPI) model.

In addition, professional learning will also consider Student Census, School Climate and Workforce Census data to better understand and address barriers, disparities, and disproportionate experiences, opportunities and outcomes for students and staff.

The DDSB Inclusive Student Services Professional Learning Plan

Our commitment to students, families, and staff about belonging, having input, and feeling respected within our system has required us to 're-form' our practices. As a system, we will continue to rely upon our critical consciousness to hold steadfast in our commitment to dismantle racist, ableist and other discriminatory practices and to consider the unique forms of ableism and discrimination, including intersectional discrimination, that students with special education strengths and needs experience.

A system-wide commitment to collaboration across teams will ensure that professional learning opportunities are:

- Developed and facilitated to centre our district commitments including the importance of human rights, anti-discrimination, anti-oppression, anti-ableism, intersectionality and equitable practices
- Build critical consciousness to support intentional focus on addressing barriers and discriminatory practices impacting student well-being and achievement.

With a focus on learning at all levels of the organization, the overall goal of the Inclusive Student Services professional learning plan is to support classroom educators, school leaders (Administrators and Special Education Resource Teachers), support staff, and Inclusive Student Services staff to provide them with the information, materials, and skills necessary to implement and support differentiated programming for students with special education strengths and needs. Student learning is the core of all programs within the DDSB. It is important that, as our students grow, so do the professionals supporting their programs and services.

The Inclusive Student Services leadership team is committed to supporting professional learning for all of our team members. Department staff have access to professional learning opportunities provided both within the DDSB and external to the board.

SEAC plays a role in providing input to the Inclusive Student Services' professional learning plan to ensure responsiveness to community and accountability to our commitments.

Professional learning, is essential in the delivery of clinical services and special education programs within an educational setting. To meet the needs of our students now and into the future, focus includes:

- Exploring the components of structured literacy to support classroom practices
- Centering student and family voice, to honour and affirm identity with a focus on relationship building
- Deepening our understanding of commitments such as United Nations Declarations of Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, and the DDSB's Indigenous Education Policy, Human Rights Policy and related procedures
- Enhancing awareness and understanding of ableism, neurodiversity, intersectionality, stigma, negative attitudes, stereotypes and assumptions related to various disabilities and the social model (versus medical and functional models) of disability, and how they operate in DDSB learning environments
- Deepening our understanding of Universal Design for Learning in order to ensure supports for students are culturally relevant and responsive.

EQUIPMENT

SECTION B – Standard 14

Standard 14: Equipment

The purpose of this standard is to inform the Ministry, board staff members and other professionals, and parents/caregivers about the provision of individualized equipment for some students with special education strengths and needs.

The Durham District School Board is committed to ensuring that students with special education strengths and needs have the personalized equipment necessary to access their educational programs. Student equipment needs are identified through the Inclusive Student Services school team or our School Based Rehabilitation Services partner GrandviewKids. Recommendations are received from board professional personnel and community professional practitioners. Professional assessments can come from:

- Psychologist
- Psychological Associate
- Optometrist/Ophthalmologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Speech-Language Pathologist
- Specialist teachers of the blind, deaf or Deafblind
- Audiologist

There are two types of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claims:

- SEA Per Pupil Amount (computer hardware, software and related equipment)
- SEA Claims-based Amounts (i.e., lifts, Braille, furniture, sensory equipment, etc.).

A SEA application is completed by the school for our School-based Rehabilitation Services clinicians and board clinical staff submit applications on behalf of the student. All SEA applications are uploaded into our central database with accompanying support documentation to be reviewed by the board's System Lead of Inclusive Student Services identified as the SEA Authorizer, for approval and processing. Trials for computer technology are conducted to illustrate a significant discrepancy between performance with and without such equipment. Sometimes, other equipment may be trialed by a clinician to determine if it meets student needs in advance of filing a SEA application.

The Ministry of Education allocates to school boards SEA revenue generated from the SEA per Pupil Amount and SEA Claims-based Amounts for expenses exceeding $800. The board is responsible for SEA approved equipment costs equal to and less than $800.

The DDSB outlines for staff the SEA Claim processes. Included in the documentation are:

- the process for submitting claims;
- the roles and responsibilities of individuals submitting claims;
- meeting the claim requirement;
- processing the order;
- care and safety of the equipment and
- ensuring equipment maintenance.

ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

SECTION B – Standard 15

Standard 15: Accessibility

The purpose of the standard is to provide details on the Ignite Accessibility, Multi-Year Accessibility Plan previously submitted to the Ministry.

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) commits to protect, uphold and promote human rights and to prevent discrimination and discriminatory barriers in all DDSB learning and working environments. Protecting, upholding and promoting human rights are necessary to meet the mandate of the DDSB and to create and foster a culture of care where students and employees can thrive and have a sense of safety, well-being, engagement and belonging. The DDSB is committed to the principles and practices of accessibility and inclusion to foster full community participation and integration and address ableism.

As a district, we are proud of partnerships with the Abilities Centre and participated in the Leading Equitable and Accessible Delivery (LEAD) Project. During the 2021-2022 school year, team members from across district departments and schools participated in an in-depth consultation sessions with the Abilities Centre. The LEAD report for Durham District School Board set the foundation for the DDSB Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2022-2026) that informs our next steps for growing inclusion and accessibility. The Action Plan goes beyond school buildings and includes recommendations to enhance accessibility in key areas across the organization.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, in addition to above, was developed in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standard, Ontario Regulation 191/11 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The DDSB participated in the LEAD in December 2021. This facilitated self-assessment process supported the creation of our Accessibility Plan. The plan outlines the intentions of the Board to meet its obligations under the AODA and aligns with the Ontario Human Rights Code ("The Code"). The DDSB undertakes to continually improve accessibility and to provide equitable access for all in accordance with the AODA.

The DDSB is committed to meeting its procedural and substantive duty to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code to the point of undue hardship to support students' right to meaningfully access education without discrimination. This includes collaboratively exploring accommodation options and providing appropriate individualized accommodations that respect dignity and maximize integration and participation.

Existing schools are renovated to improve accessibility during all renovation projects and as required to meet student needs for access. In the event that an existing facility cannot accommodate the needs of student(s), the DDSB is committed to providing alternate accommodations to meet student needs. New construction incorporates AODA requirements, principles of universal design and meets government accessibility standards. DDSB includes a number of features to promote accessibility such as: interior signage includes Braille, elevator access to upper levels, contrasting colour nosing strip at every stair tread, level entry at all entrances/exits, power door operators at front door and on universal washrooms, barrier free washrooms, barrier free drinking fountains and strobe fire alarm lights.

Inclusive Student Services works closely with other departments to meet the needs of individual students through implementations of accommodations and goals outlined in Individual Education Plans. Planning is also underway on learning and professional development to enhance awareness and understanding of ableism and accessibility barriers.

TRANSPORTATION

SECTION B – Standard 16

Standard 16: Transportation

The purpose of this standard is to provide details of the board's transportation policies to the Ministry and to the public.

Durham Student Transportation Services (DSTS) is fully supportive of an integrated student transportation system for all students. As with all students, walking to school is the first option where it is safe and practical to do so. Students with special education strengths and needs may be transported on traditional buses and specialized transportation will be utilized in situations where, due to the nature of the exceptionality, accommodation needs or safety concerns that cannot be mitigated, appropriate alternative accessible transportation is required because the features of the vehicle are more suitable to the student's needs.

Transportation, where in place for students, is an extension of their day at school. Aligned with our commitment to foster independence for students, programming to increase independence within busing may be part of a student's learning program.

The DDSB document Bus Behaviour and Discipline Guide includes reference specific to supporting students with accommodation requirements.

Durham Student Transportation Services may make specialized transportation arrangements for students who have been approved by the Durham District School Board as:

- Having a documented approved physical, mental or emotional exceptionality that prevents them from safely getting to and from their designated school.
- Placement in a specialized program or contained classroom may qualify the student.

Students accessing programming through Education, Community Partnership Programs (ECPP/Grove School) may be entitled to transportation. Parent(s)/guardian(s) can connect with agency staff who will speak to Grove School administration.

Students attending Provincial Schools will be set up on transportation that is coordinated centrally in conjunction with the Ministry of Education. The Provincial school will be able to provide further details for students that are staying in residence.

The following safety procedures are in place:

- All school bus drivers must be provided First Aid Training and are trained as well on the proper use of an Epipen.
- School buses are equipped with a two-way radio and contact with the Operator's main dispatcher is maintained at all times during scheduled runs. School Principals or a designate complete bus safety documentation to ensure school bus drivers and Durham Student Transportation Services are aware of students that require any special care or strategies for a safe school bus ride.

SEAC
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SECTION C

The Board's Special Education Advisory Committee

The purpose of this standard is to provide details of the operation of the board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) to the Ministry and to give members of the public information to which they are entitled.

In accordance with Education Act Regulation 464/97, every district school board shall establish a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

The DDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is committed to working in partnership with the staff and resources of the board to assure quality educational services for all students.

Meetings are held monthly from September to June SEAC meetings are available to the public through livestreaming currently accessed through the DDSB YouTube channel.

Meeting dates are published on the DDSB electronic calendar and promoted using DDSB social media accounts. Meetings usually occur on the third Thursday of the month.

The roles and responsibilities of SEAC are as follows:

- make recommendations to the board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of Special Education programs and services for exceptional students within the board
- participate in the board's annual review of its Special Education Plan
- participate in the development of the board's annual budget for Special Education
- review the financial statements of the board as they relate to Special Education

Information about SEAC is made available to families and the community in a number of ways. These include, but are not limited to: publication and annual update to the SEAC pamphlet, inclusion of SEAC in the Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education, SEAC webpage on the DDSB website and through social media updates (Twitter). Information includes members' names, affiliation and how to make contact.

The DDSB SEAC Handbook, provides further details about SEAC and guidelines for how the Committee works together.

The DDSB SEAC Brochure is included in this section for information regarding:

- names and affiliations of members
- meeting times, place, format
- nomination process
- members' contact information
- SEAC meeting overview

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is using a parent/caregiver survey (May/June 2023) focused on communication and opportunities for actioned input into individualized programing for their child(ren), seeking information on strengths and opportunities for improvement. The intention for use of data is to inform SEAC 2023-2024 actions supporting family engagement (e.g., potential resource development for families) and consultation to the district on areas important for improvement.

SEAC
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

What is SEAC?

Under Ontario's Education Act, every student is entitled to a program which meets their needs. In Durham, our Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) helps the Board protect the rights of students with special learning needs. SEAC provides information, advice and assistance to parents/guardians whose children may require additional support.

SEAC advises and makes recommendations to the Board concerning the establishment and development of special education programs and services.

Who Are Exceptional Students?

Exceptional Students are those whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that the student needs a specialized placement or support as identified by the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (I.P.R.C.)

The mission of the Durham District School Board's Special Education program is to provide a range of programs, placements and services for students with special needs in a supportive environment which enables them to develop to their full potential. Our on-going commitment is to provide the structures and support each student needs to foster their growth and development in programs which promote integration and independence as defined for each student based on their strengths and needs.

Inclusive STUDENT SERVICES

DDSB Ignite Learning

What happens at a SEAC Meeting?

SEAC meetings are a forum for SEAC members to provide advice and discussion of Board programs and support services for exceptional pupils.

Meetings follow a formal format including:

- Review of Minutes
- Presentations
- Current issues and initiatives in Special Education
- Committee Reports by members
- Board Reports: a) Trustees b) Staff
- Correspondence and questions

You are welcome to attend!

The Durham District School Board invites all parents/guardians and interested members of the public to attend Special Education Advisory Committee meetings.

The Committee meets at:

DDSB Education Centre
400 Taunton Road East, Whitby
6:30 p.m. (usually every 3rd Thursday of the month)

The committee is composed of member representatives from:

- Association for Bright Children (ABC)
- Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter
- Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support
- Durham District School Board (Trustees)
- Durham Down Syndrome Association
- Early Years Child Care Consortium Representative
- Easter Seals Ontario
- Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region
- VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

Association for Bright Children (ABC)

This association helps parents advocate for their bright and gifted children. In co-operation with the Durham District School Board, ABC's Durham Chapter provides information and support to member and non-member parents.

Contact:
Eva Kyriakides (SEAC Chair)
bill.eva.k@rogers.com
abcontario.ca

Autism Ontario-Durham Chapter

Autism Ontario is dedicated to increasing public awareness about autism and the day-to-day issues faced by individuals with autism, their families, and the professionals with whom they interact. The association and its chapters share common goals of providing information and education, supporting research, and advocating for programs and services for the autism community.

Contact:
sensaRAneb Burrell
anactiveparent@hotmail.com
Autismontario.com

Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support

Established in 2020, the Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support supports Black caregivers of children and adults with disability, providing families with a safe place to network, build connections, problem-solve, share resources and to become less isolated. We believe that "it takes a village" to meet the needs of our families and our focus is to educate them on their rights and responsibilities, to enlighten them about the services available to them and to empower them to be strong advocates for their loved ones.

Contact:
Jenn McLaughlin
SawubonaACS.org
416-276-8291

Durham Down Syndrome Association

This is an organization of parents, professionals and others striving to improve the quality of life for those with Down Syndrome. While seeking to broaden public awareness, this association serves as a support to new families and as a resource to parents/guardians for information regarding facilities and programs available for persons with Down Syndrome.

Contact:
Tara Culley
SEAC@ddsa.ca
ddsa.ca

Early Years Child Care Consortium Representative

The DDSB Early Years Consortium brings together a group of early years and child services committed to the delivery of high quality programs that provide consistency and continuity for children as they transition between community and school, core day and extended day programs. The Early Years consortium exists to promote the healthy development, security and safety for all children and families through neighbourhood collaboration and service integration.

Contact:
Vera Mercier - Executive Director,
SKD Bilingual Child Care
vera@skdgarderie.ca
EarlyYears@ddsb.ca

Easter Seals Ontario

Easter Seals Ontario provides programs and services to children and youth with physical disabilities across Ontario to help them achieve greater independence, accessibility and integration.

Contact:
Hanah Nguyen
seac.easterseals@gmail.com
easterseals.org

Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region

The Learning Disabilities Association Durham Region's mission is to advocate, support and educate the Durham community about learning disabilities and to enable persons with learning disabilities to reach their full potential.

To achieve this we provide:

- Monthly Speaker Series for all
- Resource Facilitation for all
- Advocacy Support for members
- Public Awareness Activities

Contact:
Rowin Jarvis
rowin@ldadr.on.ca
ldadr.on.ca

VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children is committed to:

- Advocating on behalf of deaf and hard of hearing children and their families.
- Supporting deaf and hard of hearing children and their families through providing access to information, education, mentoring, and self-advocacy skills training.
- Educating the general public that deaf and hard of hearing children can learn to listen and speak.

Contact:
Kathy Kedey
mskedey@hotmail.com
voicefordeafkids.com

Members at Large:

Morgann Cameron
morganncameron@hotmail.com

Elizabeth Daniel:
jason_liz@sympatico.ca

Durham District School Board:
905-666-5500
Toll Free: 1-800-265-2968
ddsb.ca

Kelly Miller, Trustee: 905-706-3817

Deb Oldfield, Trustee: 905-391-0764

If you would like more information on the Special Education Advisory Committee or Special Education Services in Durham, please call your local school.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES

SECTION D

Coordination of Services with Other Ministries: Education and Community Partnership Programs (ECPP)

The purpose of the standard is to provide the Ministry and the public with details of the board's strategies to ensure smooth transitions for students with special education strengths and needs who are entering or leaving a school.

The responsibility for ensuring successful admission or transfer of students from one program to another is collaboratively shared by all staff involved with the student at school and board levels with input from parent(s)/guardian(s).

Education and Community Partnership Programs

Education and Community Partnership Programs are an integrated part of Ontario's education system. Education and Community Partnership Programs (ECPP) provide critical support to meet the needs of children and youth who cannot attend school due to their primary need for care, treatment and/or rehabilitation services and facilitate transitions to future educational success.

ECPPs are voluntary collaborative partnerships between Ontario district school boards and government-approved facilities such as children's mental health agencies, hospitals or youth detention centres. District school boards provide the educational component ("Education Program") while facilities provide the care and/or treatment or rehabilitation ("ECPP Services"). Children and youth in these programs may have:

- one or more exceptionality and represent the highest needs with the exceptionality
- physical or mental health needs requiring them to be hospitalized
- be in conflict with the law or at risk of being in conflict with the law
- possible or diagnosed mental health or psychiatric needs
- severe emotional and behavioural needs and/or
- addictions

Resource: Ministry of Education - Guidelines for Approval and Provision of an Education and Community Partnership Program (ECPP)

Education and Community Partnership Programs in the Durham District School Board (DDSB)

Under the school title of Grove School, the DDSB has been a committed lead educational partner for Education Community Partnership Programs (formerly Care, Treatment, Custody and Corrections, programs).

Grove School provides a school name and structure for DDSB teachers to provide education programs from Kindergarten to Grade 12 for clients of government approved Education and Community Partnership Programs within Durham Region. Grove School programs are based on a collaborative model with community agencies and facilities. Grove has many voluntary collaborative partnerships with children's mental health agencies, hospitals or youth detention centres, which incorporate all aspects of agency and community support, establish clear educational and behavioural goals, and maintain effective classroom time providing treatment or rehabilitation and academic support. Classes are located across Durham Region either on site at a DDSB school or in a separate, segregated location. All ECPP classes enable students to

attend school with the support and treatment offered by an agency or facility.
ECPPs are only for children and youth who cannot attend schools because of their primary need for care, treatment and/or rehabilitation services.

Grove school currently, in collaboration with thirteen agency partners, supports fifty individual classroom programs within twenty-seven sites across the Durham Region. Grove School is among the largest education commitments to the ECPP model provincially.

To receive admission into an ECPP Program, the student is first referred to an agency by:

1. a parent/guardian
2. the courts
3. child welfare
4. a medical professional
5. the school
6. DDSB Professional Support Services

The student must be accepted and become a full-time resident or client of the facility's residential and/or Day Treatment program. Once the referral has been accepted by the agency or facility, their staff complete a Grove School registration form. The client/student is placed on the Grove School register and admitted to the classroom.

A student who is registered in a school hosting an ECPP Program may access the agency or facility classroom on a 'reverse' basis. The host school Principal must make the referral and the agency must approve the placement based upon suitability factors. Accessing the ECPP Program in this manner does not require a change in student registration and the student remains on the host school's register.

DDSB community partnership agreements include requirements for the partner organization to uphold the Human Rights Code, in alignment with the principals of the DDSB Human Rights Code and Responsibilities of all staff as duty bearers.

Supporting Transitions from Education and Community Partnership Programs

Effective planning is especially important for children and youth transitioning out of Education Programs. Effective transition planning support improves the continuity of education and programs and services for children and youth. Gradual integration and reintegration, where appropriate, is an element of the transition planning (e.g. phased integration back to the community day school). Transition plans should be developed by multidisciplinary teams to support a seamless transition out of the ECPP.

The appropriate assessment should occur upon exit from the Education Program to confirm or inform the transition plan for the child or youth. The teacher or designate at the next school setting should have access to information about the child or youth's education and accommodation needs (where applicable) and, as appropriate, attend a multi-disciplinary transition planning meeting.

Complete student records, including achievement of elementary curriculum expectations, secondary credits earned and documentation regarding work completed toward secondary credits, will be inserted into the OSR for the child or youth upon exiting an Education Program. The transition plan should be stored in the OSR folder.

The child or youth is supported by the Education Program staff during the transition period into the appropriate school or post-secondary setting through informal liaison, if possible and appropriate. Until this transition period is completed, the child or youth should remain on the register of the Education Program. If circumstances change and the child or youth should be impacted negatively by the move into program during the transition period, the child or youth may return to the Education Program**.** The Ministry of Education will not concurrently fund the same student on two registers.

The agency or facility initiates the child or youth's exit from an ECP program. Generally, there are three ways a student ceases to be in an Education Program:

1. A negotiable and planned move when the student is deemed ready to move on to a community school setting
2. A non-negotiable, unplanned move (e.g. court ordered)
3. An unplanned move (e.g. the student or parent/guardian unilaterally decides to leave the agency or facility treatment program).

SUBMISSION and AVAILABILITY of PLAN

SECTION E

2023-24 Special Education Plan Checklist Please submit to your regional office by July 31, 2023

Table 9 Ministry Provided Checklist

District School Board/School Authority: **DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**		
Compliance with *Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans (2000)* reproduced in full in *Special Education in Ontario Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Resource Guide (2017)*	**Report on the provision of Special Education Programs and Services**	**Amendments to the 2023-24 Special Education Plan**
Special Education Programs and Services		
Model for Special Education	X	X
Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) Process	x	X
Special Education Placements Provided by the Board	X	
Individual Education Plans (IEP)	X	
Special Education Staff	X	X
Specialized Equipment	X	
Transportation for Students with Special education strengths	X	X
Transition Planning	X	
Roles and Responsibilities	X	X
Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities	X	
Provincial and Demonstration Schools in Ontario	X	X
The Board's Consultation Process	X	X
The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)	X	X
Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies	X	X
Educational and Other Assessments	X	X
Coordination of Services with Other Ministries or Agencies	X	X
Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings	X	X
Staff Development	X	
Accessibility (AODA)	X	X
Parent Guide to Special Education	X	X
Where programs and services have not been provided as outlined in the 2022-23 Special Education Plan, please provide a description of the variance:		

Additional Information:	
Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals (PPM 149) posted on school board website.	x
Special education is included in our ongoing self-improvement with respect to the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement.	x

Document:	Format:	Please indicate the URL of the document on your website (if applicable)
Special Education Plan	x Board Website x Electronic file x Paper Copy	Inclusive Student Services-Special Education Plan
Parent Guide to Special Education	x Board Website x Electronic file	Guide to Special Education IPRC-Process
Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals (PPM 149)	x Board Website x Electronic file	Partnership Agreements

Name of the Director of Education

Camille Williams-Taylor

Signature of the Director of Education

Date

June 20, 2023

Additional Information – Appendices List

Appendix A – DDSB Mental Health and Well-Being Action Plan 83
Appendix B – Program Flier: AFFIRM 84
Appendix C – Revised Parent / Guardian Guide to Special Education 85
Appendix D – DDSB Transition Guide 101
Appendix E – The DDSB Report Card/IEP Connection Guide 122
Appendix F – Glossary of Terms 127

Additional Information Available Online Through the DDSB Website

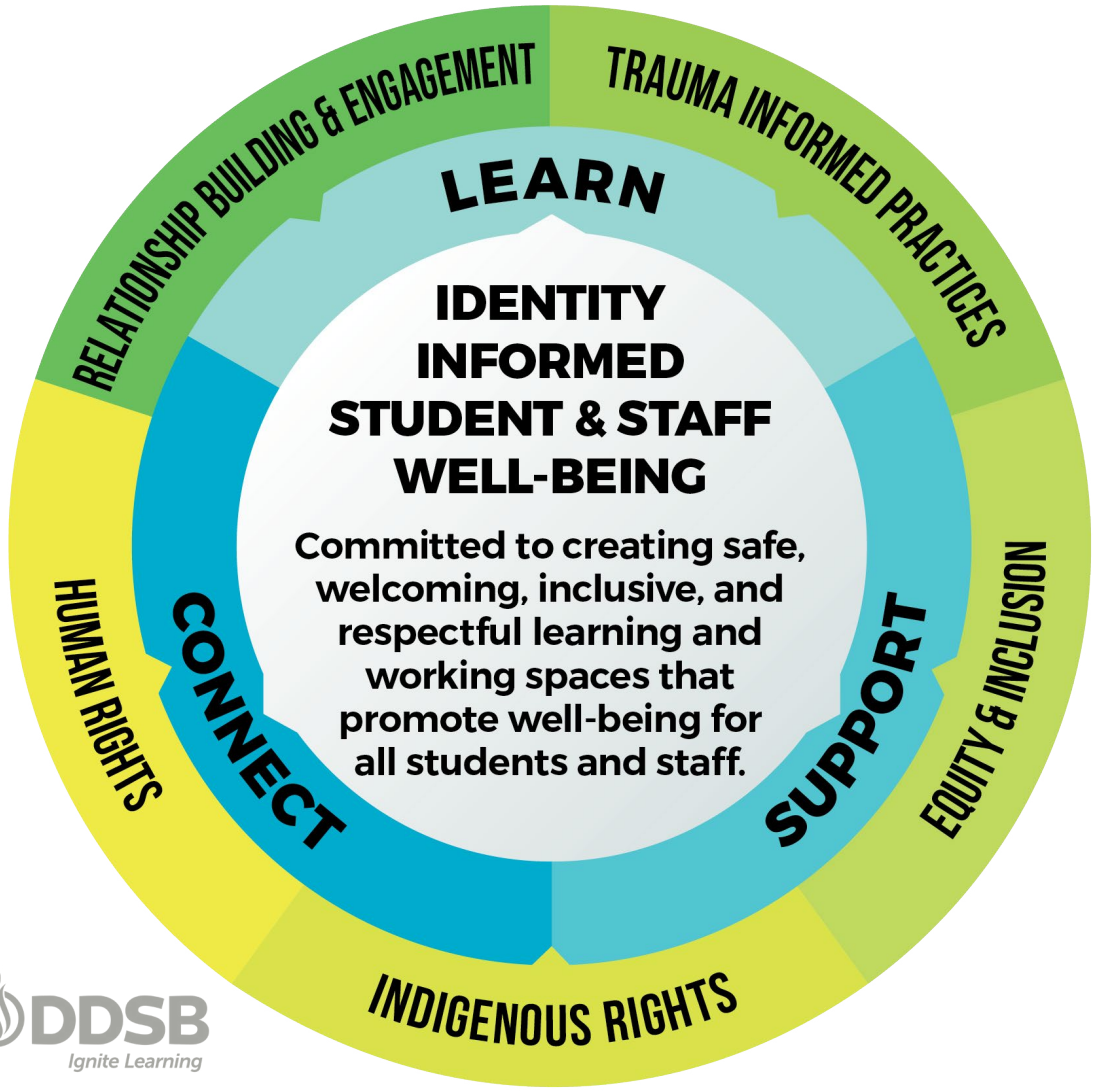
Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies, refer to link below:

Protocol for Collaboration Agreement with External Agencies

Appendix A

Learn Support Connect

We believe it is important to **learn** how we can support the everyday mental health and well-being of students and staff. We commit to provide for our students and staff inclusive, identity affirming, and culturally relevant **supports** as needed. We strive to **connect** all students and staff to, from, and through the pathways for those supports.



LEARN TO UNDERSTAND

1. Mental health literacy
2. Everyday conditions that support mental health and well-being

SUPPORT TO STRENGTHEN

1. Focused staff skills building for student support
2. Mental health supports and services

CONNECT TO PATHWAYS

1. Strong pathways to, from and through mental health supports

WELL-BEING EVERYONE EVERY DAY

Mental Health and Well-Being Action Plan 2022-2025

DDSB Ignite Learning

OCTOBER 2022

AFFIRM

DO YOU IDENTIFY AS 2SLGBTQIA+?
ARE YOU BETWEEN 13 AND 18 YEARS OLD AND IN GRADE 9-12?

Facilitated by members of DDSB Social Work and Psychological Services Teams, Project AFFIRM offers 8 sessions of evidence-based coping skills training for 2SLGBTQIA+ and questioning youth across Ontario.

WHAT DO YOU GET?

- Evidence based coping skills training
- An opportunity to meet other 2SLGBTQIA+ youth

WHO CAN JOIN?

Anyone **13-18** and in grade 9-12 who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, two-spirit, trans, non-binary, queer and/or questioning their sexual orientation or gender.

OFFERING 8 SESSIONS BEGINNING THE WEEK OF

APRIL 4, 2023

For more information and to register please visit
forms.ddsb.ca/ISS-Support-Groups/AFFIRM

AFFIRM GOALS

Why participate?

- **DECREASE UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS**
- **IMPROVE WELL-BEING**
- **GAIN SKILLS**
- **UNDERSTAND STRESS**
- **FEEL BETTER ABOUT SELVES AND LIVES**
- **FOSTER HOPE!**

Inclusive STUDENT SERVICES

DDSB Ignite Learning

Appendix C

DDSB
Ignite Learning

Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education IPRC

Inclusive
STUDENT SERVICES

Last Updated February 2023

The Purpose of this Guide

Thank you for the opportunity to partner with you in program and pathway planning for your child. Families and caregivers are central to the planning for students, and are valued partners.

Most essential is the ongoing partnership with parents/guardians. Your voice is important. Please reach out to our team for support. We are here in service of students and families.

This guide has been created to provide you with information about the process we follow in the Durham District School Board for consideration and decision making regarding identification as an exceptional student and program placement.

It is important that parents/guardians understand each of the steps in this process as we strongly believe that your voice is key when decisions are made about your child's program.

If parents/guardians have questions after reading this guide, we encourage you to contact your child's school for additional assistance.

Key contacts at your school:

- Classroom Teacher
- Special Education Resource Teacher
- Principal/Vice-Principal
- Inclusive Student Services team

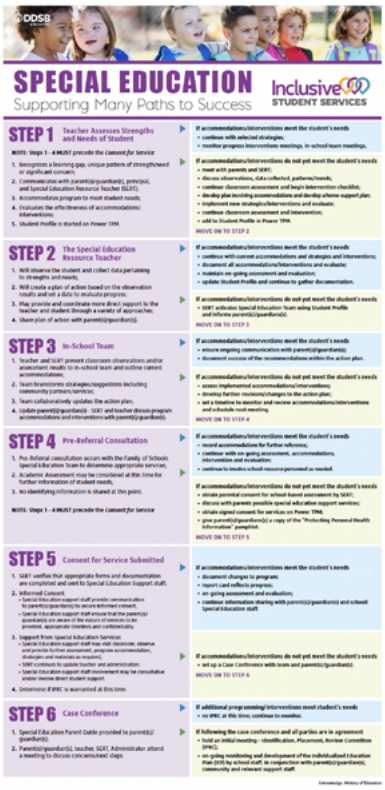
SERVING OUR STUDENTS

The DDSB recognizes Indigenous rights are distinct. In the exercise of those rights, Indigenous staff and students shall not be subjected to actions with the aim or effect of depriving these distinct rights.

The DDSB is committed to learning, and working environments that centre human rights and equity and are safe, welcoming, respectful, equitable, accessible, inclusive and free from discrimination.

In partnership with parents/guardians, the DDSB considers the student's individual learning strengths and needs.

The DDSB provides a range of differentiated placements, programs, supports and individualized accommodation to maximize engagement, participation, integration and independence, enable meaningful access to education, and support student success.



Supporting Many Paths to Success can be found online within the Special Education Plan.

Supporting Many Paths to Success

On-going assessment of your child's strengths and needs is an important part of supporting your child. The *Supporting Many Paths to Success* resource outlines the steps that school teams will take to assess, accommodate, provide specialized supports, and monitor the progress of your child as we learn more about these strengths and needs to best support them. Classroom teachers provide important information to both family and school team staff to determine next steps. Assessment as, of, and for learning comes in a variety of forms. All information can provide important support for next steps.

Should initial accommodations or supports not sufficiently meet your child's needs, the Special Education Resource Teacher will be activated for more comprehensive supports. In partnership with families, additional assessment and information will be gathered through observation, daily tasks, formal assessment tools, and conversations to further the understanding of the strengths and needs of your child. This information will guide additional accommodations and individualized planning.

A referral to additional Inclusive Student Services team members may be activated, with parent/guardian informed consent, to provide support, strategies, additional assessment, and recommendations for your child. A care conference may be arranged to bring together school, family and community supports to share any assessment data or new information and to discuss next steps.

In some situations where a student's needs are complex and/or medical information outlines the need, the steps towards IPRC may be moved along more quickly to meet your child's needs, including supporting programming modification or support through alternative curriculum.

What is an IPRC?

An Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) is a committee of the Durham District School Board which undertakes a formal process that is mandated under Regulation 181 of the Education Act for students who require additional supports to be successful in meeting curriculum expectations.

An IPRC is composed of at least three DDSB staff members, one of whom must be a Principal/Vice-Principal or a System Lead of the Board.

Parents/guardians are key players in any decisions that are made regarding your child; you are highly encouraged to attend and participate in the meeting as your input is valued.

The IPRC Committee

The team will strive to ensure that you are an integral part of the planning process. Your input is valuable within the decision making process.

During the IPRC meeting, the committee will:

- decide whether or not your child should be identified as an exceptional student as per Ministry of Education criteria;
- identify the areas of your child's exceptionality according to the categories and definitions of exceptionality provided by the Ministry of Education;
- after considering the options available, the committee will also decide an appropriate placement for your child based on individual needs and strengths;
- review the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

Accommodation is an ongoing process involving adjusting services, programs and practices to remove barriers and better respond to or address individual Human Rights Code related needs. Program planning may include assessment by school board or community based, clinicians and the results are shared at school team meetings (or care conferences) with the parent/guardians. If appropriate, then an IPRC may be requested.

An IPRC Committee has three main goals:

1. to identify each student who needs special education supports and services;
2. decision on program placement (regular class or specific special education program type) that will meet learner's needs; and
3. annually, to formally review how a program is meeting student needs and leveraging their strengths.

Exceptional Pupil and the Program According to the Education Act

An exceptional pupil is "a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that they are considered to need placement in a special education program..." Students are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education and Training.

A special education program is an educational program that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation; and includes a plan called an Individual Education Plan (IEP) containing specific objectives and an outline of special education services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/speced.html

Before the IPRC

If a program is not yet meeting a student's needs, school staff will communicate concerns, in-class assessments, planning and strategies to parents/guardians on a regular basis. The teacher may request support from the school team comprised of the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) and school administrator(s) for programming ideas.

If a program continues to not yet meet the student's need, the school team will host a Case/Care Conference which is an informal, problem-solving team meeting where all those who have been working to support your child meet with parents/guardians (and your child as appropriate), to determine further in school supports and strategies, the need for outside supports, and whether the student would benefit from a formal identification. A summary of all information will be presented which may include:

- information you choose to share as parent/guardian
- assessment results conducted by school staff
- assessments completed by other professionals that you have provided informed consent to be involved with your child
- strengths and needs of the student; decided in collaboration with you and based on assessment data
- potential programming options

If identification is being considered, the team can describe what placement options are available to meet your child's needs. Most of our students with special education strengths and needs are in regular class placements with indirect support. For some, a more intensive, smaller staff to student ratio program is recommended. A list of these programs can be found at DDSB Inclusive Student Services

Options may also include provincial or demonstration schools run by the Ministry of Education and Training.

Most of our students with special education strengths and needs are in regular class placements.

Requesting an IPRC

You, as a parent/guardian, have the right to request an IPRC. The request must be written and sent to your child's school principal. The principal shall organize the IPRC and inform you in writing of the process and timelines.

The school team may request an IPRC based on their assessment(s) of your child's progress. The principal will inform you in writing.

Within 15 calendar days of receiving your request, the principal must provide you with a copy of the Parent/Guardian Guide.

At least 10 days before the IPRC will be held, the principal or chair will provide you with a written notice of when the IPRC shall meet (location, date and time). If the date is not convenient you may request an alternate date or time and the principal or chair will try and accommodate your request.

If you do not want to or are unable to attend then the principal will forward to you a copy of the IPRC form. Your voice is important even if you are unabe to attend. Please offer any information for consideration to your school team in advance of the IPRC. The IPRC form will include a written statement of the decision of identification and the recommendations of placement after considering the options available.

The Parent/Guardian Importance

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are an essential part of the IPRC and an equal participant in the discussion that will lead to making a decision for your child. We encourage you to become as involved and informed as possible. As a result, we highly encourage you to attend the IPRC if able. If you need language interpretation services or supports or other accommodation to participate in the meeting, please ask your child's principal to arrange for what you need. Services are also available for parents with vision or hearing impairments, and arrangements will be made to accommodate other accessibility concerns that you may have.

If your child is 16 years or older they may attend the IPRC meeting. Children under age 16 may attend with parent/guardian permission. Given the sensitive nature of some of the information presented, you may want to talk in advance with your child and your school principal about how they might be involved in the meeting.

Prior to the IPRC, your input regarding strengths and needs will be sought.

Parents/guardians should be offered an opportunity to review the student's strengths and needs as well as updates, including any current assessment data prior to the meeting.

During the IPRC

Students and Parents/Guardians in the IPRC

Parents/guardians and students 16 years of age or older are invited to attend the IPRC and are important contributors to the discussion. Staff who have come to know and work with your child will attend an IPRC. An interpreter to assist the parents/guardians (where appropriate) can be arranged by the by the referring school principal.

An advocate, if invited by the parents/guardians may also be in attendance to provide support or speak on behalf of students and families. We request that the school team be notified in advance so that meeting room arrangements and any accommodations can be made for participants.

IPRC Committee

There will be three designated staff from the Durham District School Board. These will include at least one Superintendent and/or Principal/Vice-Principal. It may include the System Lead for Inclusive Student Services, or other System Leads from the central office. Others might include:

- Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), or Head of Special Education from the school
- The classroom teacher and/or other teachers from the school
- Facilitators from the area or central team
- Professional support staff – speech and language pathologists, or psychological services
- specialized resource teachers for hearing or vision

Ministry of Education Categories of Exceptionalities

- Behaviour
- Communication
- Intellectual
- Physical
- Multiple

What happens at the IPRC Meeting?

The Chair begins the meeting by welcoming all attendees and initiating introductions. The purpose and goals of the IPRC meeting are reviewed and participants, including the parents/guardians, are invited to provide information to assist the committee in understanding the student's progress, strengths and needs.

A regular classroom placement (mainstream placement) should be considered as the first and most inclusive option. Before recommending a placement in a special education class (small class placement) the IPRC must decide whether this placement will meet your child's needs.

At the IPRC, the chairperson will ask that a summary of strengths and needs be presented to the committee. Parents/guardians will have been offered an opportunity to review this information prior to the meeting.

The IPRC will review all available information about your child. The members will:

- consider an educational assessment of your child;
- consider, subject to the provisions of the Health Care Consent Act, 1996, a health or psychological assessment of your child conducted by a qualified practitioner, if they feel that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
- interview your child, with your consent if your child is less than 16 years of age, if they feel if would be useful to do so; and
- consider any information that you share about your child or that your child shares (if they are 16 years of age of older).

Parents/guardians will be invited to ask questions and to join in the discussion.

The committee may discuss any proposal that has been made about a special education program or special education services for your child. Committee members will discuss any such proposal at your request or at the request of your child, (if the child is 16 years of age or older).

Parents/guardians will be invited to ask questions and to join in the discussion.

A placement decision will usually be made immediately. In addition, an identification and placement decision will be formalized. The chairperson will explain it carefully.

What decisions can be made by the IPRC?

Parents/guardians will be given a written record of the recommendations of the committee.

The committee:

- Describes and provides a statement of the student's strengths and needs
- Determines whether your child is "exceptional", and if so, designates the area of exceptionality as defined by the Ministry of Education and DDSB criteria. A student may be identified with more than one exceptionality
- Determines placement options based on your child's needs and strengths (where the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional)
- Determines the appropriate level of support for the student, based on the placement: and one of five placement options defined by the Ministry of Education
- States the reason for the recommendation if the committee has decided that the student placement is a Special Education Class
- Discusses and makes additional written recommendations of specific programs or services deemed by the committee to be important for understanding and meeting the needs of the student
- The IPRC may also consider referring the student to a provincial committee for consideration of eligibility for admission to one of the Provincial Schools for blind, deaf or deaf-blind students, or to one of the Provincial Demonstration Schools for students with severe learning disabilities

Five Placement Options as Defined by the Ministry of Education

1. **A regular class with indirect support** where the student is placed in a regular class for the entire day, and the teacher receives specialized consultative services.
2. **A regular class with resource assistance** where the student is placed in a regular class for most or all of the day and receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a qualified special education teacher.
3. **A regular class with withdrawal assistance** where the student is placed in a regular class and receives instruction outside the classroom, for less than 50 per cent of the school day, from a qualified special education teacher.
4. **A special education class with partial integration** where the student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class in which the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31, for at least 50 per cent of the school day, but is integrated with a regular class for at least one instructional period daily.
5. **A full-time special education class** where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31, for the entire school day.

If You Agree with the IPRC Decision

If you agree, then you will be asked to indicate by signing the IPRC form that you agree with the designation of the exceptionality and the placement. You may take the form home to consider or you may sign the form at the conclusion of the IPRC. You have a maximum of 30 working days to finalize with parent/guardian signature.

The appropriate staff will then notify the school that you agree with the decision and that an IEP will be developed within 30 school days of formal placement within the recommended program.

If you disagree with either the identification or the placement, you have 2 options available to you:

If You Disagree with the IPRC Decision

1. Within 15 calendar days of receiving the decision, request in writing an additional meeting to re-evaluate the decision of the IPRC. The principal must hold the meeting as soon as possible. Any new or additioanl information related to the previous decisions can be shared at this time. Following the meeting, the Chair of the IPRC must advise the parent/guardian of any changes to the decision of the IPRC.

If after the second meeting to re-evaluate the IPRC decision you still disagree, then you have 15 calendar days to appeal the decision in writing.

2. Within 30 calendar days of receiving the ***initial*** IPRC decision, the parent/guardian may appeal the decision in writing *(outlined later in this guide)*.

If you do not agree with the IPRC decision but you do not appeal it, the board will instruct the principal to implement the IPRC decision.

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision reached at the Annual Review of Placement, the parent/guardian may appeal in the same way as described for the original IPRC.

You may appeal the IPRC decision in writing.

Address your appeal to:

Superintendent of Inclusive Student Services, Durham District School Board, 400 Taunton Road East, Whitby, ON, L1R 2K6

Following the IPRC

What is an Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

The Ministry of Education requires that every student who has been identified by an IPRC as exceptional must have an individual education plan (IEP). The IEP is developed by the school with opportunity for consultation with parents/guardians, the school team and may include input from the central board staff.

An IEP will be developed for the student, inclusive of an opportunity for your input and your child's, and will include:

- A statement of the student's strengths and needs;
- Specific education expectations;
- An outline of the special education program and services that will be provided;
- A statement about the methods by which your child's progress will be reviewed; and
- A transition plan to assist with changes to a student's experience at school as part of their school life (such as the transition between grades or schools).

The IEP may also include:

- A safety plan for students whose behaviour poses a risk of injury to themselves and/or others;
- Medical plan for students who may experience an emergency as the result of a medical condition as outlined by a physician to describe the necessary interventions required (e.g., seizures, choking, etc.);
- Emergency plan for students who require specialized assistance in the event of a school emergency (e.g., fire drill, lockdown, etc.).

The IEP must be completed within 30 school days after your child has been formally placed in the program by an IPRC, and the principal must ensure that you receive a copy of it. Every student in the fall will receive an updated IEP within 30 working days of the start of school. Your input into this initial draft is important. The IEP is a working document that will be updated for every reporting period, or as student needs and program strategies change. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to continue to provide feedback as part of the ongoing development and implementation of the IEP.

Annual IPRC Review

Your child's special education needs must be reviewed at least once a year at an annual review of placement. You will be notified of this in writing.

What happens in the IPRC appeal process?

The appeal process involves the following steps:

- The board will establish a special education appeal board to hear your appeal. The appeal board will be composed of three persons, one of whom is selected by you, the parent/guardian, who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal.
- The chair of the appeal board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 calendar days after the chair has been selected (unless parent/guardian and the board both provide written consent to a later date).
- The appeal board will receive the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview any persons who may be able to contribute information about the matter under appeal.
- You the parent/guardian, and your child, if they are 16 years old or over, are entitled to be present at, and to participate in, all discussions.
- The appeal board must make its recommendation within 3 days of the meeting's conclusion. It may:
  - *agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented; or*
  - *disagree with the IPRC and make a recommendation to the board about your child's identification, placement, or both.*
- The appeal board will report its recommendations in writing to you and to the school board, providing the reasons for its recommendations.
- Within 30 calendar days of receiving the appeal board's written statement, the school board will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations (boards are not required to follow the appeal board recommendation and may choose to go to the Special Education Tribunal).
- You may accept the decision of the school board, or you may appeal to a Special Education Tribunal. You may request a hearing by writing to the secretary of the Special Education Tribunal. Information about making an application to the tribunal will be included with the appeal board's decision.

The appeal board will receive the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview any persons who may be able to contribute information about the matter under appeal.

Provincial and Demonstration Schools

The Ministry of Education and Training operates provincial and demonstration schools throughout Ontario for students who are deaf, blind, deaf-blind and severely learning-disabled, as well as those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Residential programs are offered at the schools Monday to Friday for students who live too far from school to travel daily.

Demonstration schools for English-speaking students with ADHD and severe learning-disabilities:

Sagonaska School
350 Dundas Street West
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2
T: (613) 967-2830

Amethyst School
1515 Cheapside Street
London, ON N5V 3N9
T: (519) 453-4400

Trillium School
347 Ontario Street South
Milton, ON L9T 3X9
T: (905) 878-8428

Schools for the deaf:

Ernest C. Drury School
255 Ontario Street South
Milton, ON LT9 2M5
T: (905) 878-7195
TTY: (905) 878-7195

Robarts School
1515 Cheapside Street
London, ON N5V 3N9
Telephone and TTY:
(519) 453-4400

Sir James Whitney School
350 Dundas Street West
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2
Telephone and TTY:
(613) 967-2823

Schools for the deaf/blind:

W. Ross MacDonald School
350 Brant Avenue
Brantford, ON N3T 3J9
T: (519) 759-0730

Where can parents/guardians obtain additional information?

Additional information can be obtained from:

School Based Team Members

- Special Education Resource Teacher
- School Administrators

Inclusive Student Services Team Members

- **Instructional Facilitator/ Inclusive Student Services**
  The Durham District School Board
  (905) 666-5500 or 1-800-265-3968
  or TTY: (905) 666-6943
- **System Lead–Inclusive Student Services**
  The Durham District School Board
  (905) 666-6354 or 1-800-265-3968
  or TTY: (905) 666-6943

Special Education Advisory Committee

- **Members of The Special Education Advisory Committee** *(see right)*
  c/o The Superintendent of Equitable and Inclusive Education/Inclusive Student Services
  The Durham District School Board
  (905) 666-6371 or 1-800-265-3968
  Ext. 6371 & TTY (905) 666-6943
- **Local associations that further the interests of exceptional persons**

Special Education Advisory Committee

School boards are required to establish a Special Education Advisory Committee which includes representatives from local parent associations and trustees.

These representatives serve as advocates for children and parents, and the associations have useful parent resources.

SEAC Brochure

Association for Bright Children (ABC) abcontario.ca

Autism Ontario - Durham Region Chapter autismontario.com/region/central-east

Durham Down Syndrome Association ddsa.ca

Easter Seals Ontario easterseals.org

Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region ldadr.on.ca

Sawubona Circle of Support sawubonaacs.org

VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children voicefordeafkids.com

Members At Large

Morgan Cameron morgancameron@hotmail.com

Elizabeth Daniel Jason_liz@sympatico.ca

DDSB Trustees

Kelly Miller kelly.miller@ddsb.ca

Deb Oldfield oldfield@ddsb.ca

Inclusive STUDENT SERVICES

Helpful Information for Parents/Guardians

Principal:

NAME | PHONE

Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT):

NAME | PHONE

Family of Schools or Central Team Members:

NAME | PHONE

NAME | PHONE

NAME | PHONE

NAME | PHONE

Dates to Remember:

DDSB
Ignite Learning

Appendix D

WELL-BEING EVERYONE EVERY DAY

Inclusive STUDENT SERVICES

GROVE · PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES · SOCIAL WORK AND ATTENDANCE
SPECIAL EDUCATION · SPEECH LANGUAGE AND HEARING · VISION

DDSB
Ignite Learning

Transition Planning for Students with Special Education Strengths and Needs

Flexible approaches, consultation with families/caregivers to consider students' individual identities, needs and circumstances that impact transitions, need to be considered in focusing scope and implementing transition strategies and supports for individual students. Collaboration and ongoing communication are essential to exploring options and determining workable strategies.

Our shared commitment is to keep students at the centre of special education programming and service planning including transition supports. Collaboration with families and caregivers is foundational to decision making to individualize the planning for each student.

This resource tool has been designed to support schools with transition planning. Focus is on the macro transitions that students may be moving through whether that be, for example, entry to school, program changes or secondary to adult pathways.

Examples of Key Transitions for Students:

- Entry to School
- School to School
- Class to Class
- Grade to Grade
- Changes in School Support
- School to/from Community Program
- Elementary to Secondary
- Secondary to Post-Secondary
- School to Community Service
- School to Work
- Program Placement Change

Why Transition Planning is Important

A transition is defined as a process of change that requires attention and flexibility and may create vulnerability and worry. From our youngest students to our most senior staff, we are challenged as we navigate this particular transition together, and collaboration is essential.

Transitions include layers of planning including well-being and mental health considerations, leveraging strengths, bolstering strategies and supports in areas of anticipated challenge.

Supporting Transitions for Students

Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs
(Ministry PPM 156)

This memorandum sets out the requirements for district school boards with respect to transition planning for students with special education needs, from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Key points in PPM 156:

- Transitions occur both within the micro (within the day) and at significant key times such as entry to school, grades, programs, schools as well as elementary to secondary, secondary to post-secondary and through annual reviews which change student program placement.
- Principals are responsible for ensuring that transition plans are developed, implemented and maintained.
- Transition plans must be developed for all students who have an IEP, whether they are formally identified or not; Transition Plans are a part of the IEP itself.
- Transition plans must be developed in consultation with the parent(s)/caregiver(s), student (as appropriate), post-secondary institutions (where appropriate), and relevant community agencies or partners (as necessary).
- Transition plans will identify specific goals, support needs, actions to achieve the goals, roles, responsibilities and timelines.
- Ontario Regulation 181/98 states that for exceptional students who are age 14 years or over and who are not identified solely as gifted, the student's IEP must include a transition plan for transition from school to work, further education, and/or community living.
- For children and youth accessing support through Education Community Partnership Programs (ECPPs) provide programming which centres on treatment needs with educational wrap around. District staff and partner agency staff will work together in creating transition plans when entering in and moving from programs. In the Durham District School Board (DDSB), ECPPs are supported through Grove School. Transition Planning to/from Grove School Programs is specifically noted later in this document.

Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) – PPM140

Memorandum PPM 140 provides a framework for school boards to incorporate the use of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into board practices, and instructional programming, for our students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Key points in PPM 140:

- Ensures the implementation of effective, evidence-based educational practices, to meet the individual needs of students with ASD.
- Intended to strengthen the collaborative relationships between students, families, schools and community partners.
- Requirements include:
    1. School boards must offer students with ASD special education programs and services, including, where appropriate, special education programs using ABA methods.
    2. School boards must plan for the transition between various activities and settings involving students with ASD.
- Incorporating the principles of ABA into transition planning for our students with ASD will help to ensure a thorough assessment of student needs (via data collection and analysis), proactive planning measures, skill building for the student, reinforcement contingencies, fidelity of programming across staff supporting our students, monitoring of programming, and generalization of program to new settings/people, in order to facilitate a thoughtful transition process.

Although this particular memorandum highlights the effectiveness of implementing the principles of ABA within our practices for students with ASD, it should be noted the generalization of these strategies to students throughout the board (identified or non-identified students), has also been embedded throughout our educational practices.

Educator Support Guide to Transition Planning:

The Educator Support Guide for Transition Planning, a Ministry of Education – Learning for All K-12 initiative, is a transition brochure developed by the Barrie Region Boards to assist educators in writing and implementing meaningful transition plans for students from Kindergarten to Graduation who have an IEP. Please refer to brochure on page 6.

A Note About Integrated Transition Planning for Students with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities

The Ministries of Children and Youth Services, Community and Social Services, and the Ministry of Education have created the memorandum entitled, “Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disabilities” (D.O.D January 28, 2013). The goal of this memorandum is to provide

school boards with protocols that would lead to the development of a single integrated transition plan for every young student with a developmental disability.

As highlighted within this document, integrated transition planning for youth with developmental disabilities includes collaboration between the student and their families, service providers, and school boards. The common goal of this collaborative team is to ensure for a smooth transition to work, further education, participation in life activities, and/or community living, based on the individual student, their strengths/needs, and their own personal transition goals. Our Transition Coordinator team can be activated to provide support to students and families.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The pandemic continues to have a major impact on all students and their respective families, especially students who were vulnerable and/or at risk prior to the pandemic, i.e., students with special needs associated with specific medical and/or psychological conditions, including educational limitations, as well as those with individual/family mental health needs. The impact of this pandemic may have resulted in an elevated stress response in one or more individuals in the family. The mental health of students will be influenced by both pre-pandemic stressors as well as the stressful period of dealing with the variety of issues/hardships associated with the pandemic.

Working in collaboration with parents/caregivers, school teams and community partners, it is necessary to identify students with a heightened level of anxiety and/or possible signs of traumatic response. These students and their families may need support from the school and other systems (medical, mental health, etc.) to cope adequately during any transition period. Many of these students already may have been flagged for attention based on their prior academic histories and developmental trajectories. However, additional students may require supports on numerous levels. Support may be required on a short-term basis or for a prolonged period, depending on factors associated with the individual student, their family, community, and supports available to them.

Working in collaboration with school teams and Inclusive Student Services, it may be helpful to operationally define the level of support for student needs to be responsive to the tiered level of support required. Examples of tiered responses to student needs are noted on the next page. This framework can help school teams differentiate between individual student setting events and risk factors. It also allows school teams to continue to be attuned to the key features of our students who are struggling.

The capacity of students to cope adequately with the transition back to school is influenced by individual and family-based factors as affected by the pandemic and other experiences and their associated changes in routines, economic status, access to supports and personal vulnerabilities. It will also be influenced by factors associated with the staff and the organization of the school that intends to welcome the student back to school. The student's ability to adjust during the transition period needs to be viewed within a larger context, including the system of the school and the community, and the extent to which all these systems have been negatively impacted by the pandemic and other stressors over a prolonged period of time.

Transition Team PLANNING OPTIONS

GOAL 1 **To identify strategies required to support the transition for students with an IEP.**	**Transitions Entry to School**	**Possible Actions -** Consider development of IEP and Safety Plan • Arrange visit to current setting (day-care, home, etc) • Arrange visit to classroom/school • Prepare visuals to assist with the transition: school photo book or video, map of the school • Classroom/school scan of learning materials, resources and space
	Transitions School to School	**Possible Actions -** Arrange receiving school/class visits • Arrange transfer of OSR with updated IEP, and transition plan • All About Me/ IPP plans transferred to new school • Contact representatives from outside agencies who are to be involved with student (e.g. CCAC) • Communicate with receiving school staff and parents/guardians regarding transition issues and/or supports (i.e. School information, transportation, timetable, equipment)
	Transitions Class to Class	**Possible Actions -** Create a daily schedule to prepare moving from class to class • Prompt (visual, verbal) 5 minutes prior to the end of class • Create a checklist to gather materials required for each class • Provide a transitional object (e.g. fidget toy, familiar object) as a source of comfort • Provide opportunity to practice route from class to class • Provide opportunity to practice routine for entering each class and parents/guardians regarding transition issues and/or supports (i.e. School information, transportation, timetable, equipment)
GOAL 2 **To develop a transition plan in collaboration with a student's transition team.**	**Transitions Class to Class**	**Possible Actions -** Identify strategies that are successful and share them with new staff • Have receiving staff observe student and meet the student to review programming needs • Arrange a visit for the student prior to school starting
	Transitions Changes in School Support	**Possible Actions -** Introduce student to new staff in the classroom • Provide social script • Work through routines as indicated in individual schedule (visual, electronic) • Conduct specific training for new staff (e.g. lifting, toileting, augmentative communication devices, assistive technology) • Facilitate any job mentoring/shadowing experiences for school staff • Inform parents of change in personnel
	Transitions Elementary to Secondary	**Possible Actions -** Identify and document strategies that are successful and share with new staff • Gather information about the receiving school's environment while considering the student's programming needs • Have receiving team observe student and programming in elementary school • Organize student visit to receiving environment
	Transitions Secondary to Post Secondary	**Possible Actions -** Ensure that student is an active participant with knowledge of their learning needs • Update assessment information as appropriate • Assess student's ability to self-advocate and provide opportunities to practice skills if needed • Ongoing guidance and special education support re: goal setting and career planning, scholarship availability for students with IEP, and the college/university/trade application process • Investigate available financial supports (e.g. Bursaries, scholarships, OSAP etc.) • Guidance and Special Education staff to provide information about all university and college transition programs
GOAL 3 **To implement strategies and determine next steps.**	**Transitions School to Community**	**Possible Actions -** Explore student interests, skills, abilities, needs and appropriate self-advocacy skills • Review OSR and determine if appropriate documentation of disability is in place to ensure student/family meets criteria for appropriate community supports • Connect parent/guardian with local associations (e.g. Community Living, DSO. etc) • Invite the agency Case Manager to transition meeting • Identify transition community partners from outside the school that would help the family and student
	Transitions School to Work	**Possible Actions -** Complete Individual Pathway Plan (IPP) • Complete job readiness skills (application form, apply for Social Insurance Card, resume) • Practice responses to job interview questions • Provide opportunities for simulated employment skills (e.g. apply to jobs online) • Pursue summer/part-time employment **in area of strength and interest • Participate in workplace experiences • Explore possible career choices**

COMMON ACTIONS

- Establish transition team to support the planning. It will include parents/guardians, school staff, the student (where appropriate) and can also include school board staff, health care workers, community workers and others who support the student
- Arrange special transportation as required
- Arrange transfer of equipment
- Provide new staff with a contact list and/or appropriate resources
- Arrange for peer supports and student awareness activities
- Gather information regarding student's strengths and interests using OSR
- Incorporate self advocacy into the student's IEP
- Ensure that the student's voice in the All About Me Portfolio/Individual Pathway Plan (IPP) is incorporated into the transition planning process
- Educate student and staff about the student's strengths and needs and the use of accommodations, assistive technology and learning strategies that are applicable for his/her learning
- Determine resources/professional training opportunities that may be required for staff
- Organize materials to support student in transition (social scripts, visuals, photos, equipment transfer)
- The transition plan must be stored in the OSR
- Inform parents/guardians of any significant changes that will impact the transition plan
- A transition plan is required for all students with an IEP, however, there may be times where the transition plan may indicate that no action is required at this time

Examples of Mental Health and Well-Being Tiered Systems of Support:

Tier 1 Supports: Irrespective of age or grade level, students may require support for return to school because of the increased level of change and stress experienced over the COVID period, with possible associated hardships facing their families. For example: a Grade One student who is leaving home after five months of not being at school in person and is experiencing some separation anxiety and/or worries about the parent's health; a Grade Nine student who experiences a heightened level of anxiety of facing a new school and new friends, in the context of parents losing their jobs due to COVID-19. These students will need a supportive team of staff at the school who are working collaboratively with them (and parents/caregivers) to help them adjust to being back at school. Psychological Services and/or Social Work may not be required at this stage of the student's transition back to school.

Tier 2 Supports: Students may require support for the return to school because of the increased stress level experienced over the COVID period with associated hardships facing the whole family, combined with pre-existent concerns about their functioning. For example: a student who is formally identified and supported with an IEP before the pandemic because of a history of academic and behavioural difficulties; upon return, worries are exacerbated regarding failing grades and other stress points, e.g., family transitions. This student may need Psychological Services and/or Social Work at the DDSB and possibly services in the community.

Tier 3/Tier 4 Supports: Students may require support for the return to school because of the increased stress level experienced over the COVID period with associated hardships facing the whole family, but who have historically displayed a range of mental health symptoms and corresponding behaviours. They may have had ongoing family-based stressors which have led to the involvement of professional assistance (legal, medical, mental health) and/or community-based support. This student needs coordinated services from Psychological Services and Social Work support at the DDSB, and community and/or medical support, possibly even crisis intervention.

Every DDSB school has a mental health team with staff from Psychological Services and Social Work. This video was created to provide students with information about connecting with their school's mental health team.

Transition Planning Key Considerations

- Determining all parties to be involved in the transition planning (e.g., student, family/caregivers, community partners, school staff, Inclusive Student Services team member(s)).
- Identifying team leads at sending school and receiving school (use checklist in SERT OneNote binder for guidance).

- Ensuring student involvement in the transition process, when appropriate.
- SEA equipment transfers.
- A limited video tour may be used to introduce students to a program space or school setting. School teams are advised to follow Positive School Climate guidelines when creating and sharing school-based videos. For example, recording only specific areas of the school and ensuring consideration for privacy/confidentiality of students.
  - Descriptive video needed for students who are Blind/Low Vision.
  - Closed Captioning for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.
- Introduction videos of staff:
  - Audio strategies for students who are Blind/Low Vision.
  - Closed Captioning for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements.
- Determining the most appropriate transition plan for individual students (e.g., starting with half days and increasing to full days, based on ongoing assessment of transition plan).
- Priming our students ahead of time for the transition that will occur, explore possible mental health concerns.
- For students with very specific, structured programming, ensuring that staff at the receiving school are trained to implement to the same programming, and behavioural responses, for purposes of consistency, and safety.
- Ensuring the physical space accommodates student needs (e.g., wheelchair accessible for students with mobility difficulties; creating a space in the classroom for students with self-regulation needs, etc.).

Specific to Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions Requiring Accommodation

- Plans of care utilizing the advisement of public health and the family/student's medical team must be developed.
- Consider routines around disinfecting classroom, equipment, etc.
- Consideration of additional PPE that may be required for staff and students, based on public health recommendations.
- Consider policy around partnerships with community partners such as Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and/or Nursing support who may be supporting at school (e.g., with Developmental Programs).

School Teams may Consider Strategies such as:

Transition (e)Binders

Transition (e)binders are a comprehensive tool outlining all the relevant, and specific information about the student, and their programming at school. The sending school/teacher often creates an (e)binder for the receiving school/teacher, as a resource to prepare for the student transitioning between the two environments, ensuring continuity and consistency of programming and routines. Different platforms in which these can be created include a OneNote binder, google docs and shared via google drive, etc.

Suggested considerations to include in a transition (e)binder are (if applicable for the student):

- Introduction to the student (e.g., current information).
- Parent/Caregiver Survey (Strategies for Teaching based on Autism (STAR) has a great resource).
- Daily living skills (e.g., eating, road safety/awareness, personal hygiene).
- Reinforcement Preferences (e.g., reinforcing items) and thorough description of reinforcement systems (e.g., "Student utilizes a token economy system. They work for 5 marbles and can cash in for...").
- Challenging behaviour (e.g., operational definition, antecedents/triggers, consequences, etc.).
- Behaviour Escalation Continuum (and reference to Behaviour Safety Plan, if applicable).
- Identified replacement behaviours/skill building opportunities.
- Required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff supporting students.
- Required Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) for both technology and other equipment.
- Visual Schedule – including photos when possible and examples.
- Work System – including photos when possible and examples.
- Routine for transitions (e.g., "Provide a verbal countdown when transitioning between activities in the classroom...").
- Additional spaces the student may access (e.g., teacher table, calming corner, etc.).
- Programming (e.g., academic levels, reference to IEP, if applicable).
- Self-Regulation and/or Social Skill Curriculum tools.
- Daily School Entry & Exit Routine.
- Copies of any data collection which the school may use.
- Occupational Therapy (OT)/Physiotherapy (PT) recommendations.

Tip: When possible, it is also suggested that school teams include photographs or samples of what these structures look like (e.g., a picture of the students work station, token board, etc.) specific to the individual student.

Transition Books/Videos for Students

Transition books are a key transition tool for students who have a variety of transition needs (e.g. ASD, anxiety, mobility considerations, etc.). Transition books for students should be a key communication piece. Their use cannot be stressed enough as a key transition tool at any time, to reduce anxiety and allow students to know what to expect in their new setting, whether that be within the same school building or if they are changing schools.

What to include in a transition book for students:

- Images of the outside of the school building, including yard/playground.
- Tactile maps for students who are visually impaired.
- Their entry door.
- Office.
- Library.
- Gym.
- Calming spaces.
- Location of washrooms the student is likely to use most frequently.
- Non-structured spaces (e.g. alternate spaces at recess).
- Relevant staff members (admin, SERTs, teachers, EAs, custodian, office staff).
- Classroom (may include door of classroom, student's hook/locker area, layout of the room, individual work spaces, etc.).

Considerations for format of transition books for students:

- Digital Book (Google Slides).
- Video: Closed Captioning for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing and/or Descriptive Video for students who are blind/visually impaired.
- Hard Copy book(s) can be sent to students (following public health guidelines).
- Braille and audio versions needed for students who are blind/visually impaired.
- Transportation Planning (for example “Taking the Bus” social story).
- Images of the outside of the school building, including yard/playground.
- Tactile maps for students who are visually impaired.

Planning for Specific Transitions - Entry to School

First time school registration from home - students with accommodation needs

School Transition to Kindergarten (Great Beginnings) websites, videos, personal contacts from classroom educators to students (emails, phone calls, postcards); Linking to teams such as Speech Language or Social Work when appropriate (as they usually attend Great Beginnings events). Ensure all activities are inclusive and accessbile to all students and families.

- Educator awareness of students with special and specific needs (e.g. vision, hearing, communication, physical, emotional, medical diagnoses).
- How much information can be gathered ahead of time, Inclusive Student Services (ISS) team members can help reach out to families before and get as much of an understanding as possible, kids likes, strengths, skills (help make environment more welcoming).
- Virtual greetings from Administrators, Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs), Inclusive Student Services (ISS) team. Social media can be leveraged in many ways.
- Parent/caregiver survey re: questions/concerns.
- Students who are blind/visually impaired require a school yard and entry door visit with no other students prior to beginning, for orientation and safety purposes.
- Discussion with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Daily Living Specialist, DDSB Orientation & Mobility Specialist and family (practicing skills) prior to entry regarding summer/home and community skills training.

- Set up loaner sound field system in class for students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and leave unplugged, train teaching staff on use.
- Connect with Inclusive Student Services (ISS) teams to support the steps for anxious, overwhelmed students/families.

Considerations for Students with Special Education Strengths and Needs Transitioning from Community Supports

Transition from Campbell Children's School – GrandviewKids

- Educator awareness of student's specific needs, including specialized equipment.
- Conversations with staff from Campbell Children's School and families regarding student-specific needs and learning style (e.g. medical, Speech Language Pathologists (SLP)/Occupational Therapists (OTs)/ Physiotherapists (PTs), Vision and Hearing assessment and reports).
- Conversation with families regarding their concerns and goals for their child at school.
- Consideration of student specific needs (e.g. communication, physical, hearing etc.) during the Welcome Message. Including the supports needed by these students in the message.
- Ensure Campbell's Children's School families are aware of Great Beginnings virtual events/resources at their receiving school.
- Discuss transportation needs for individual students who may have mobility needs.
- Ensure communication between SLPs/OTs/PTs/Vision Resource Team (VRT)/Hearing Resource Team (HRT) for students with those supports through Campbell's Children's School.
- Ensure a list of SEA equipment is included/discussed. OT/PT can submit SEA recommendations as part of pre-registration to support urgent heatlh and safety needs.
- Kindergarten communication of learning and IEPs have been shared with receiving schools.

Transition from Infant and Child Development Program – Durham Health Department

- Conversations with Infant and Child Development staff who are currently supporting these children and families regarding student-specific needs and learning style, include ISS teams for mental health support.
- Conversation with families regarding their concerns and goals for their child at school.

- Educator awareness of student's specific needs, including possible equipment.
- Conversations with staff and families regarding student-specific needs and learning style (e.g. medical, SLP/ OT/PT, Vision and Hearing assessment and reports). SEA recommandations can be submitted as part of pre-registration for urgent health and safety needs.
- Consideration of student specific needs (e.g. communication, physical, hearing etc.) during the Welcome Message. Including the supports needed by these students in the message.
- Ensure families are aware of Transition to Kindergarten virtual events/resources at their receiving school.
- Discuss transportation needs for individual students who may have mobility needs.
- Ensure communication between SLPs/OTs/PTs/VRT/HRT for students with those supports.

Transition from Infant Hearing Program (IHP)

- Conversations with IHP staff who are currently supporting these children and families regarding student-specific needs and learning style.
- Conversation with families regarding their concerns and goals for their child at school.
- Educator awareness of student's specific needs and hearing equipment.
- School training on interpreter use (where applicable) and FM equipment.

Entry to School

First Time School Registration from home - Students with Accommodation Needs

Without community access to school buildings:

- Conversations with previous educators regarding student's needs and learning style, Inclusive Student Services (ISS) supports involved with student.
- Personal connection with family and student (e.g. phone call, email, letter/postcard to student).
- Transition and introduction video about new school, teacher, classroom, administrative staff, etc:
  - Descriptive video needed for students who are Blind/Low Vision.
  - Closed captioning needed for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.
- For students who have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and/or other social communication challenges - ensure language is clear, specific, concise, simple sentences and not too fast; video presentations use clear visuals to show the relevant parts of the new class, routine, work spaces, etc.
- Community route to and from school trained by the Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

- Students who are blind/visually impaired require a school yard and entry door visit with no other students prior to beginning, for orientation and safety purposes.
- Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) equipment moved to new classroom and left unplugged, teacher trained on use.
- Inclusive Student Services (ISS) teams to support students/families mental health and well-being.

To/From Provincial Demonstration Schools

- Many of the initial transition steps for students who are a candidate for provincial demonstration schools are completed before March Break.
- As this point, the second transition meeting for students returning to the DDSB has been postponed or cancelled.
- School teams can reach out directly to the provincial school teacher to obtain transitional information (i.e. current instructional levels).
- Interviews for admission and transition from Provincial Demonstration Schools (e.g. Sagonaska, Trillium and Amethyst) will be or have been held virtually.
- Students and families should know in the first couple of weeks in June whether they are offered a placement at the provincial school for the next school year.
- Once placement is offered, transition planning next steps are determined between the family and the demonstration school.
- If a student is returning from a provincial school, follow transition procedures for students who are transitioning within the DDSB. Subsequent virtual transition meetings may occur between the sending provincial school and the receiving DDSB school.
- A school visit should be considered for students returning to a new DDSB school from a provincial demonstration school.

Between School Boards

- A school visit should be planned for any student moving schools as an opportunity to build connections and address worries.
- Transition and introduction video/resources developed and shared about new school, teacher, classroom, administrative staff, etc.
- Students who have ASD and other social communication challenges – ensure language is clear, specific, concise, simple sentences and not too fast; video presentations use clear visuals to show the relevant parts of the new class, routine, work spaces.
- ISS team available to make early connections, explore mental health concerns, provide information if new to the area.

Class to Class/Grade to Grade

- Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) –FM equipment moved to new classroom and left unplugged, teacher trained on use.
- Students who are blind/visually impaired require a school yard and entry door visit with no other students prior to beginning, for orientation and safety purposes.
- SEA equipment moved to new classroom, if still appropriate for use.
- Transition and introduction video/resources about new school, teacher, classroom, administrative staff, etc., developed and shared.
- Students who have ASD and other social communication challenges – ensure language is clear, specific, concise, simple sentences and not too fast; video presentations use clear visuals to show the relevant parts of the new class, routine, work spaces, etc.
- Use of transition e-binder for in-school transitions as well – ensure communication of strengths and needs and programming recommendations between sending and receiving teacher takes place.
- Inclusive Student Services (ISS) teams able to reach out ahead of time to make connections, explore any mental health concerns.
- Consider hosting a visit to the new classroom with the new teacher if schools are open before September.

Elementary to Secondary – Grade Eight to Grade Nine Transitions

Without community access to school buildings:

- Priming our students ahead of time with video/other information about how secondary experience is different than elementary (e.g., routines, schedules, work completion, exams).
- Encourage student/family/caregiver to drive/walk around the school, explore school website.
- Multiple opportunities for grade 8 visits/tours transition activities to secondary schools.
- Students who have ASD and other social communication challenges - ensure language is clear, specific, concise, simple sentences and not too fast; video presentations use clear visuals to show the relevant parts of the new class, routine, work spaces, etc.
- Students who are blind/visually impaired require a school yard and entry door visit with no other students prior to beginning, for orientation and safety purposes.
- Buddy student with an older student to share their high school experience and respond to questions appropriate for peer response.

- Community route to and from school trained by the Orientation and Mobility Specialist.
- Meet/greet with key staff including Guidance and Administration.
- SEA equipment moved to new school and set up, if still appropriate for use.
- Students who are DHH - FM equipment moved to Academic Resource (AR)/Learning Hub or semester classrooms and left unplugged, teachers trained on use.
- Consult with Social Work and Psychological Services to support/manage stress and anxiety in students and families, provide information regarding getting back to routines, expectations.
- Considerations about what Grade 9 day will look like, ensure student/family/caregivers have a key contact with as questions arise.

Program Placement Changes

From Regular Class Placement to Special Education Placement

Conversations (transition meetings) with previous educators student and family regarding student's strenghts, needs, learning style, and any ISS supports involved with student.

- Personal connection with family/caregivers and student (e.g. phone call, email, letter/postcard to student).
- Transition and introduction video/resources created about new school, teacher, classroom, administrative staff, etc.
  - Descriptive video needed for students who are Blind/Low Vision.
  - Closed captioning needed for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.
- Students who have ASD and other social communication challenges - ensure language is clear, specific, concise, simple sentences and not too fast; video presentations use clear visuals to show the relevant parts of the new class, routine, work spaces, etc.
- Community route to and from school trained by the Orientation and Mobility Specialist.
- Students who are blind/visually impaired require a school/entry door/classroom visit with no other students in the room prior to beginning, for orientation and safety purposes.

From Special Education Placement to Regular Classroom Placement

- Conversations with previous educators student and family regarding student's strengths, needs, learning style, and any ISS supports involved with student.
- Personal connection with family/caregivers and student (e.g. phone call, email, letter/postcard to student) is strongly recommended.

- Transition and introduction video/resources created and shared about new school, teacher, classroom, administrative staff, etc.
  - Descriptive video needed for students who are Blind/Low Vision.
  - Closed captioning needed for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.
- Students who have ASD and other social communication challenges - ensure language is clear, specific, simple sentences and not too fast; video presentations use visuals to show the relevant parts of the new class, routine, work spaces, etc.
- Community route to and from school trained by the Orientation and Mobility Specialist.
- Students who are blind/visually impaired require a school/entry door/classroom visit with no other students in the room prior to beginning, for orientation and safety purposes.

To/From Community Program - Including Grove School (Education Community Partnership Programs - ECPP)

- Ensure consents have been attained for the communication of information between community agencies and DDSB staff.
- Consent for intake should be completed for students coming from a community program to allow ISS staff to support the transition.
- Ensure all relevant team members are informed and involved in the transition planning (e.g. Grove teacher, community agency staff, psychological services staff, etc.)
- Conversations with previous educators student and family regarding student's strengths, needs, learning style, and any ISS supports involved with student.
- Personal connection with family and student (e.g. phone call, email, letter/postcard to student).
- Transition and introduction video/resources created and shared about new school, teacher, classroom, administrative staff, etc.,
  - Descriptive video needed for students who are Blind/Low Vision
  - Closed captioning needed for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.
- Students who have ASD and other social communication challenges - ensure language is clear, specific, concise, simple sentences and not too fast; video presentations use clear visuals to show the relevant parts of the new class, routine, work spaces, etc.
- Students who are blind/visually impaired require a school yard/entry door/classroom visit with no other students prior to beginning, for orientation and safety purposes.
- Community route to and from school trained by the Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

Secondary to Post-Secondary

- Students who are blind/visually impaired require a campus/entry door/classroom visit with no other students prior to beginning, for orientation and safety purposes.
- Community route to and from school trained by the Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

School to Community

For students transitioning to community based programs, school teams are encouraged to communicate with student, family and community program team on a regular basis regarding transition supports and strategies well before the transition period occurs. The Transition Coordinator team can provide support.

School to Work-In Preparation for Potential On-Site Work Education Next Year

- Students who are blind/visually impaired require a worksite yard and entry door visit with limited people around prior to beginning, for orientation and safety purposes.
- Community route to and from worksite trained by the Orientation and Mobility Specialist.
- Students who are accessing work education experiences typically take public transit to/from the work site; public transportation will need to be reviewed and rehearsed with support prior to independently taking public transportation. (transit training)

Additional Resources for Educators

The following links are provided to support educators. This list in not exhaustive in considerations but is meant to highlight the tremendous resources available to support considerations and planning.

1. **Supporting Transition Planning**
   - Supporting Transition Planning for Students with Autism

2. **Supporting Transitions to Adulthood for Individuals with Autism – Autism Ontario**

   autismontario.com/programs-services/under-18/family-supports/transition-adulthood

3. **Transitions to Post Secondary Pathways for Students with Autism – EDUGAINS**

   edugains.ca/resourcesSpecEd/SchoolLeader/ASD/TransitiontoPostsecondaryPathwaysforStudentswithASD_TranslatingResearchintoPractice.pdf

   - Supporting Transition Planning for Students with Developmental Disabilities

4. **Canadian Hearing Society – Transitions**

   chs.ca/transition-planning

5. **VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children –Educator Resources**

   voicefordeafkids.com/

   - Supporting Transition Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities

6. **Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Needs (Ministry PPM 156)**

   http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesSpecEd/PLF/IEP/PPM156_PPTwithNotes.pdf

7. **Educator Support Guide for Transition Planning**

   cse.google.com/cse?cx=008635593979376682327%3Afklszsccxei&q=educator%20support%20guide&oq=educator%20support%20guide&gs_l=partner-generic.3...8097.13833.0.14223.0.0.0.0.0.0.0.0..0.0.csems%2Cnrl%3D10...0....1.34.partner-generic..0.0.0

Video Resources

8. **LD@school webinar, Transition Planning and Pathways for Students Transitioning to Post-Secondary**
   ldatschool.ca/transition-planning/

9. **LDAO Transition Planning Resource Guide for Students with Learning Disabilities**
   access.resources.ldao.ca/main/documents/TransitionPlanningResourceGuide4.pdf

10. **Resource Guide for Students with Disabilities: Transition to Post-Secondary Education**
    transitionresourceguide.ca/

11. **Post-Secondary Transition Planning for Students with LDs written by Cindy Perras**
    ldatschool.ca/post-secondary-transition-planning/

12. **Transition Planning and Pathways for Students Transitioning to Post-Secondary: The Importance of Planning with the End in Mind presented by Ryan Machete**
    ldatschool.ca/transition-planning/

13. **How Grade 8 students at Sagonaska Demonstration School created self-advocacy pamphlets to support their transition to Grade 9**
    ldatschool.ca/our-self-advocacy-pamphlet-journey/

14. **Creating Pathways to Success which supports career/transition planning from K - Grade 12**
    edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/cps/CreatingPathwaysSuccess.pdf

15. **Student with LDs Success Story**
    ldatschool.ca/success-story-danya/

- Supporting Transition Planning for Students with Physical Disabilities

16. **Easter Seals Ontario - Transitions**
services.easterseals.org/family-information-resources/transition-planning/

17. **Connect with your Mental Health Team**
ddsb.ca/en/family-and-community-support/resources/Videos/Connect-with-your-Mental-Health-Team-video.mp4?wmode=transparent#DDSBWellBeing

THE REPORT CARD - IEP CONNECTION

A guide to making the link between the Report Card and the Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

DDSB is committed to human rights and equity and to providing learning environments that are welcoming, safe, respectful, inclusive, equitable, accessible and free from discrimination.

Understanding the IEP-Report Card Connection:

When term progress is reported for your child, both the IEP and report card contain valuable information.

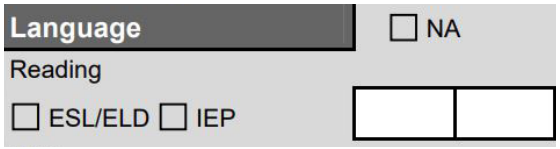
The IEP outlines:

- Accommodations in place.
- Strategies being used to support achievement for your child.
- Ways in which your child's expectations will be assessed.
- May include modifications with annual goals and specific expectations per term for your child.

The Provincial Report Card shares the evaluation of your child's progress based on their IEP. Some students may also have an Alternative Report Card which provides evaluation based on the alternative expectations from the IEP.

Understanding Accommodations:

Accommodations are strategies and tools that support the student's success.



The curriculum itself is not being changed or modified and so the IEP box on the Provincial Report Card is **not checked.**

Accommodations involve:

- Environment.
- Instruction methods that address learning styles and needs.
- Assessment methods to best assist the student in understanding the curriculum and sharing their learning.

Environmental Accommodation Examples:

- Alternative work space.
- Quiet setting.
- Reducing of audio/visual stimuli.

Assessment Accommodation Examples:

- Reduction in number of tasks.
- Extended time limits.
- More frequent breaks.
- Oral responses.
- Inclusive technology-eg. Computer device to record ideas and answers.

Instructional Accommodation Examples:

- Graphic organizers.
- Non-verbal signals.
- Reinforcement incentives.
- Concrete/hands-on materials.

Understanding Modifications:

On your child's Provincial Report Card, the IEP box **will be** checked if modifications are provided. Ontario curriculum can be modified for some students when needed.

Language	☐ NA			
Reading				
☐ ESL/ELD ☒ IEP				

This modification can be:

- Same grade level but a reduced number of expectations;
  - Focus is on building fundamental skills and knowledge at the same grade level.
- At a different grade level;
  - Focus is on fundamental skills from a previous grade level for knowledge building at the student's ability level.
- Students may have modifications in one or more subjects.

You will see:

- IEP box will be checked.
- Statement: *"This (letter grade/percentage mark) is based on achievement of expectations in the IEP that vary from the Grade X expectations (and/or) are an (increase/decrease) in the (number and/or complexity) of curriculum expectations."*
- Provided for every subject that has been modified.

Alternative Report Cards:

Some students have IEP goals and expectations that are not based on Ontario Curriculum. This could include specific goals to support:

- Communication skills and use of communication tools.
- Specialized skills related to hearing or vision needs.
- Fine or gross motor skills.
- Alternative curriculum from other resources outside of the Ontario curriculum.

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There are many paths to success. We strive to help every student meet their full potential, while fostering the highest level of independence, inclusion, integration and participation possible for each student within all course options.

Understanding Accommodations & Modifications at the Secondary level:

When a student enters high school, the accommodations vs modifications may have a greater impact on a student's pathway.

The Ministry of Education sets out curriculum expectations which must be met in order for a credit to be granted. If a student receives modifications in a course (e.g. decrease in number or complexity of expectations), the student may receive full (1.0) or partial (0.5) credit value.

Some students may also access non-credit or 'K courses' which are based on alternative curriculum that focuses on life skills and independence.

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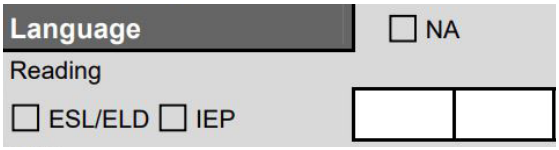

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#WeAreDDSB stronger together

Inclusive STUDENT SERVICES
GROVE · PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES · SOCIAL WORK AND ATTENDANCE
SPECIAL EDUCATION · SPEECH LANGUAGE AND HEARING · VISION

DDSB Ignite Learning

Special Education Glossary

AAC - Augmentative and Alternative Communication

ABA - Applied Behaviour Analysis

Advocacy - A collaborative process involving input and contributions from parent/guardians, students, school staff, and professional services that identifies appropriate instructional strategies and interventions to optimize the student's ability to achieve to their full potential.

ART - Autism Resource Team

ASD - Autism Spectrum Disorder

ASIST - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

AT - Advanced Technology

BMS - Behaviour Management System

BSP - Behaviour Safety Plan

Differentiated Instruction - allows teachers to address specific skills and difficulties and adapt instruction to suit differing characteristics

EA - Educational Assistant

ECE - Early Childhood Educator

FM System - Frequency Modulation System

IBI - Intensive Behaviour Intervention

IEP - Individual Education Plan

IPRC - Identification, Placement and Review Committee

PHIPA – Personal Health Information Protection Act

PowerTPM - Special Education data base for tracking Special Education processes and completing forms

PPM 140 - Policy Program Memorandum, #140

SEA - Special Equipment Amount

SERT - Special Education Resource Teacher

SIP - Special Incidence Portion

SMHO - School Mental Health Ontario

START - Short Term Assistance Response Team

The Tiered Approach - is a systematic approach to providing high-quality, evidence-based assessment and instruction and appropriate interventions that respond to students' individual needs.

Tier 1 - Assessment and instruction are planned in relation to the curriculum for *all* students, applying principals of Universal Design and Differentiated Instruction. The teacher observes, monitors student progress, and notes which students may be experiencing difficulty.

Tier 2 - On the basis of assessment results, differentiated instruction and interventions are planned for students who are facing learning, behavioural or social challenges. Student progress in response to these interventions is closely monitored, and instruction is adjusted as needed.

Tier 3 - For students who require intensive support to achieve learning goals, even more precise and individualized assessment and instruction are planned, often with the help of the in-school team, the Family of Schools Special Education Team and/or other resources. Monitoring of the student's response to these interventions continues.

Universal Design - provides educators with broad principles for planning instruction and designing learning environments for a diverse group of students