

## Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of October 18, 2021

### Leadership Report

#### **Leadership, Learning and School Improvement**

Andrew Gold, Associate Director Leadership, Learning and School Improvement  
Angela Nardi-Addesa, System Superintendent of Special Education & Inclusion

#### **Welcome:**

Jenny Clement (BSW, MA, MSW) has accepted a position within the TDSB AODA Accessibility Department as an Accessibility Consultant. She's currently working as an Inclusion Research Strategist and Accessibility Consultant with Centennial College. We are excited at the opportunities and insight Jenny will contribute to the TDSB Community.

#### **Good News in the TDSB**

##### TDSB student wins prestigious award in North American braille competition

Congratulations to Janna Cheung, 10, a student who attends Agnes McPhail PS and won second place in the Junior Varsity Category at the 2021 Braille Challenge Finals! This competition is put on by the Braille Institute, which takes place across North America. This year's competition took place virtually between June 28 to July 11.

"The Braille Challenge is the only academic competition of its kind in the world for students who are blind or visually impaired. It motivates students grades 1-12 to hone and practice their braille literacy skills and the winner made it to the top out of more than 1,200 competitors," said Jack Follman with the Braille Institute. The Braille Institute is a non-profit offering free programs to people with vision loss since 1919.

<https://torontosun.com/news/local-news/scarborough-girl-wins-prestigious-award-in-north-american-braille-competition>

##### Cindy Burley Award

The Cindy Burley Award is presented annually to a staff member or a team of staff (including special education teachers, regular education teachers, support staff) who have promoted and implemented exemplary integration of students with developmental disabilities with their typical peers in a community school.

The 2020-21 Cindy Burley award went to Northlea EMS for their exemplary inclusionary practices.

Congratulations staff and students of Northlea EMS!

##### Gerald L Phillips Award

In recognition of the contribution of Gerald L. Phillips, former Chair of the Metropolitan Toronto School Board, the Gerald L. Phillips Achievement Award was established to acknowledge the achievement of a senior student in Special Education within the Developmental Disabilities program.



The G.L. Phillips Achievement Award is presented annually to a senior student during his/her final year in Special Education within the programs for students with developmental disabilities and an outstanding senior student in each congregated site.

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2020-2021 Gerald L Phillips Award Winners and Runner Ups.

| Winner           | 1st Runner Up   | School               |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Kaelah Fanning   | Samirah Bhamjee | Maplewood HS         |
| Jasmeen Gidhay   |                 | Franke Oke SS        |
| Ali Adam         |                 | Central Etobicoke HS |
| Prisha Mistry    |                 | Sir William Osler    |
| Hye Won Choi     |                 | Drewry SS            |
| Muhammet Kuliyev |                 | York Humber HS       |

**Parents and Caregivers as Partners Conference 2021 October 16 and 17, 2021 [REGISTER NOW!](#)**

TDSB is committed to parent, caregiver, and community engagement as an essential element in our shared efforts to improve outcomes for children throughout their lives. Our role is to help build capacity by successfully engaging parents and caregivers, strengthening home-school partnerships, and aligning our collective efforts.

The Parents and Caregivers as Partners Conference 2021 provides an opportunity to highlight innovation and high-impact strategies for partnering, collaborating, and nurturing parents and caregivers’ partnerships and alliances. Join us for a virtual conference and learn strategies to support your child, connect with other parents and hear from our inspirational keynote speaker. The Special Education and Inclusion team will have a virtual booth and Cafe hours. Our team will also be providing a series of workshops:

- Supporting Children with Complex Needs in Virtual Learning and In School Learning
- Who is Your Village? Building a Future for Your Child with Special Needs
- Successful Online Learning for Children on the Autism Spectrum
- The Changing Landscape of Autism Services – 2021 Updates
- Special Education Practices that Support Inclusion and Combat the Over-Representation of Racialized Students in Special Education
- It Takes a Village: Ensuring success for your Black Child with special needs
- Unpacking the IEP - Individual Education Plan
- Supporting Transitions for Students with Autism at School and in the Community



## **School Re-Organization and Professional Learning -Simultaneous Learning**

Throughout September, principals received information from families pertaining to student moves from virtual to in-person learning and vice versa. Moves have been considered in phases: students moving from virtual to in-person learning; students asking for a Human Rights accommodation to virtual learning; addressing families who did not receive the selection form or phone call; online registrations requesting virtual learning prior to September 10, 2021, and families who indicated prior to the Selection Form closing that they had pressed the incorrect button.

TDSB just completed the School Reorganization as of October 12th. All future moves will occur in February 2022. However, due to the intentional model followed by ISP simultaneous learning, students in ISPs are not impacted by this process and can continue to be supported with moves throughout the year.

Special Education Consultants and Centrally Assigned Principals are offering on-going professional learning to support schools with ISP simultaneous learning. Our goal is to be proactive and responsive to schools in meeting the needs of our students.

- Ongoing Professional learning in how to support students simultaneously
- Daily office hours for principals/staff should they have questions specific to ISP simultaneous learning
- Simultaneous technology kits for staff were provided
- Instructional strategies and resources are being provided specifically for ISP simultaneous learning
- All teachers in ISP classes have AQ qualifications in Special Education and have expertise in how to accommodate and modify for students with special education needs; should they require further support, they are to reach out to the Special Education and Inclusion Consultant for assistance.

## **Ministry SIP and CYW Student and School Support**

Ontario Public School Boards are eligible for Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding to offset some of the cost of support staff to ensure the health and/or safety of students who have extraordinarily high needs. School boards apply for SIP funding on behalf of students who require more than two full-time equivalent board-paid staff providing intensive support for the health and/or safety of the applicant student, other students and/or staff.

For students with high special education needs who require Tier 3 level of support that do not meet the criteria for the Ministry SIP, Special Education will work with schools on a case by case basis. The formerly known title of TDSB CYW SIP or TDSB ISSA SIP has been updated to CYW Student and School Support. The purpose of updating the name is to clarify and make distinct which staff is a SIP and which staff is a TDSB CYW Student and School Support staff.

## **Psychological Assessments-Summer 2021**

Shameen Sandhu, Manager of Professional Support Services will be accompanied by a TDSB Psychologist to address the work that was supported over the summer to address psychological assessments.



Below is the data they will unpack at the SEAC meeting.

| Type    | LC1 | LC2 | LC3 | LC4 | TOTAL |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Regular | 16  | 9   | 11  | 12  | 48    |
| Gifted  | 52  | 76  | 106 | 0   | 234   |

**Two-Pronged Approach:**

**1) Clear the backlog:**

- Confirm with schools if the student is still enrolled, parent is supportive, if assessment is still needed, progress of student, etc.
- Update CRM and close old RM paper files
- “All hands on deck” to complete the oldest assessments in the system

**2) Develop a strategy/ongoing process to help maintain manageable level of referrals, while being in line with MYSP and Spec Ed Plan**

- New procedures/guidelines to support referral process
- Discussing expectations that are informed though equity (e.g., smaller school with low LOI score with no special education classes may get less time than a larger school with higher LOI score and several spec ed classes)
- Continue with consultation (pre-assessment) and intervention (post-assessment) support
- Continue with other school-based Tiers 1 and 2 interventions

**IPRCs**

This year, IPRCs began in late August. The chart below indicates the IPRCs that have been completed from August 2021 to October 14, 2021 by exceptionality. There are 259 IPRC meetings planned over the next month. As with every year, the Special Education team will be providing training for Administrators with running an IPRC.



| Exceptionality | Total Completed |
|----------------|-----------------|
| ASD            | 35              |
| DD             | 12              |
| LD             | 24              |
| MID            | 12              |
| PD             | 1               |
| BLV            | 2               |
| Gifted         | 154             |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>240</b>      |

### **Project SEARCH**

The Ministry of Education has asked TDSB alongside the Halton Board, to co-lead the Developmental Disabilities Pilot – Student Transitions referred to as Project SEARCH. Wendy Terro and Denise De Paola, both Centrally Assigned Principals, presented to several boards the components and requirements of Project SEARCH and shared next steps to explore initiating Project SEARCH in other school boards.

### **Math/Numeracy and Employment Pathways**

The TDSB seeks to “increase employment opportunities and outcomes for all students with Low Incidence Exceptionalities (Intellectual Disabilities, Physical Disability, Low Vision, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Health/Medical)” and has committed to robust integration between all programs currently providing workplace transition programming for such students as well as potential employers.

To this end, TDSB supported a writing team to create a curriculum using a backward design from industry [employability skills](#) lens. The document supports an integrated, multimodal set of math and numeracy diagnostic, teaching, assessment, and evaluation materials for TDSB students who have intellectual (MID) and/or developmental (DD) disabilities.

The collection of materials as well as the suggested topics, activities, and educator roles are intended to support educators’ work in interpreting, organizing, and shaping curriculum expectations and experiential learning opportunities for students.

The curriculum document is in line with the [TDSB’s Equity Policy](#) as encompassing “the total learning environment, including the physical environment, learning materials, pedagogical practices, accessibility, assessment instruments, School Climate and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.” To that end, suggestions for anchor charts, related resources, collaborative practices between educators, assistive technologies, and assessment, and evaluation practices and resources have been included.



A sincere appreciation is extended to the writing team who was intentionally composed of TDSB staff members working with students in a variety of roles: as educational assistants, job coaches, occupational therapists, and teachers working across experiential education, special education, and math/numeracy. Although people in these roles work closely together throughout the year, there are few opportunities for them to work together to develop a curriculum, strategies, and resources to support transitions for students with disabilities from school and into employment.

### **Universal Screening - Online**

The Grade 3 Universal screening process is online going forward in partnership with Nelson Education. Staff Training is scheduled for the week of October 18 and 25. Schools will administer the screening November 1 -19, 2021.

Reports are accessed online through a dedicated access for each school.

