



Our Faith  
Our Students  
Our Future

# **Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board**

## **Special Education Plan 2023-2024**



**SIMCOE MUSKOKA CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**



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## Vision Statement

*Our Faith. Our Students. Our Future.*

## Mission Statement

*Faithfully, inclusively and equitably, we inspire every student to realize their God-given potential.*

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## **Part A:**

# **Introduction to the Special Education Plan 2023-2024**



## INTRODUCTION

**Inclusion is about relationships and belonging.  
Inclusion is about the attitudes that we have  
and demonstrate through our actions towards each other.  
Inclusion is the responsibility of everyone.  
Inclusion is rooted in the Gospel.**

### Guiding Principles

Each student is a unique gift from God with the right to an education in a caring and sharing Catholic learning environment. Each student is a valued and respected member of his or her school community.

Inclusive education responds to the diverse learning styles of each student where every kind of learning is valued.

An inclusive Catholic school culture nurtures a respectful and collaborative community that plans and problem solves together with students, parents, teachers, staff and those within the extended community.

Each student is capable of learning and achieving to the best of their ability and contributing to and benefiting from meaningful participation in the life of their school.

Educating our children is not only a basic human right, it is also the vehicle for social inclusion and social change.

### How to Achieve Inclusion

Each student is a member of their local school community in an age-appropriate classroom.

It is the responsibility of the Principal to lead in fostering an inclusive school community.

The classroom teacher is the key educator of the student, who together with the other members of the School Team (Principal, Parents/Guardians, DECE, Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), Educational Assistant, Board Support Staff and Community Partners) develops appropriate programs and services for the student.

Differentiated Instruction is the teacher's response to the needs of the learner. It is the foundation of meeting the student's learning needs through employing a variety of approaches.



Through the active partnership and collaboration of classroom teachers, the parents/guardians and school team, meaningful Individual Education Plans (IEP) are developed.

A flexible learning environment meets the changing needs of students. Opportunities are available for all students to receive small group or individualized instruction as needed. This can happen inside or outside of the classroom.

Ongoing professional development of staff is an essential component in providing appropriate programs and services.

The Board provides access to learning opportunities by removing barriers and by providing materials and human resources where possible.

Parents/Guardians are an integral part of the school team. They support the staff through sharing knowledge of their child, attending meetings and reinforcing and extending the educational efforts of the staff.

Successful inclusion is achieved through the respectful, open and on-going communication of all partners.

If you have questions regarding information in this document, please contact the Principal of your child's school or the Assistant to the Superintendent, Special Education (705-722-3555 ext. 274).

## **BOARD'S GENERAL MODEL OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

The Board's philosophy of Special Education is inclusionary for all students within our Catholic School Communities. The Board endeavors to educate students with diverse learning needs in an age-appropriate classroom, designing differentiated learning opportunities to meet student-specific needs.

Within our model of inclusion, pupils designated as exceptional are an integral part of our schools and classrooms. Their educational needs may result in a program that includes accommodations or modifications within an inclusive setting. Their educational needs may further be met through support of Board Staff providing direct or consultative services to assist with the individual learner's needs. The Special Education Staff that are available within our Board are outlined in Part B of this document.

The approach for determining the best educational program we can provide within our schools is through the School Team. This team includes the Principal or Vice-Principal, Special Education Resource Staff, Teacher(s), DECE, appropriate Board Staff and community partners. Parents are



integral to the process and attendance and involvement at these meetings is welcomed and encouraged.

It is the Board's premise and belief that students with diverse learning needs have a contribution to make to our Catholic School Communities and are an integral part of our schools.

Finally, this philosophy is in accordance with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the *Education Act*, *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, and Regulations made under the *Act*.

## CONSULTATION PROCESS

Central to the consultation process of the Board Special Education Plan is the input and advice from our Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). During this school year, we worked with SEAC to review the Plan. Each meeting involved review of one section of the plan.

### **Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) and Individual Education Plan (IEP) Parent Guides**

*A Parent's Guide to the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee* as well as *A Parent's Guide to the Individual Education Plan* is available to parents from the school. Any parent/guardian within the school community may request a copy of these guides from the Principal or Special Education Resource Teacher. [They are also on our board website for review by the public.](#)

As it is our intention to periodically revise both documents to provide an improved resource for parents, an invitation has been extended on the introductory page of each guidebook to allow parents to send comments electronically or by phone to the Board.



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## **Part B:**

# **Board Supports to Student Learning**





## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Ministry of Education defines roles and responsibilities in elementary and secondary education in several key areas:

- Legislative and policy framework
- Funding
- School system management
- Programs and curriculum

It is important that all involved in special education understand their roles and responsibilities, which 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 exceptionalities;
- 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;
- 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 plans, 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 documents, including 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 plan that is amended from time to time to meet the current needs of the exceptional pupils of the board;
- Reviews the plan 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 parents with information about special education programs, services, and procedures;
- Establishes one or more IPRCs to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them;
- Establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC);
- Provides professional development to staff on special education;
- Adhere to all applicable legislation.



***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 plan;
- 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 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 that the program is delivered 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;
- Works with special education staff and parents to develop the IEP for an exceptional pupil;
- Provides the program for the exceptional pupil in the regular class, as outlined in the IEP;
- 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 Designated Early Childhood Educator:***

The Early Childhood Educator, in coordination and cooperation with the classroom teacher:

- Plans for and provides education to children in their Kindergarten classroom;
- Observes, monitors and assesses the development of Kindergarten children;
- Maintains a healthy physical, emotional and social learning environment in the classroom;
- Communicates with families;



- Performs duties assigned by the principal with respect to the Kindergarten program.

***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;
- Is consulted in the development of their son's/daughter's 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.

**EARLY IDENTIFICATION/PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

A major source of information for early identification and intervention is teacher observations of the child's literacy behaviours and the Observation Survey (a set of literacy screening measures), which identifies students who require intervention to succeed in literacy learning.

The heart of ongoing identification and intervention is the School Team Meeting process for all grade levels. The teacher can initiate a School Team Meeting involving the Principal or his/her designate, the parent, special education staff and community resource supports. The purpose of this meeting is to review a student's progress and formulate a plan of action to address a student's individual needs.



At the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board screening for possible learning challenges begins in Kindergarten.

All schools have implemented the guidelines for Early Identification of Year 2 Kindergarten students. Schools have access to a system-wide assessment for Kindergarten students – The Observation Survey. Early Identification and Intervention using this tool consists of a series of tasks designed to identify students' learning strengths and needs. The use of this assessment coordinates with the system literacy focus and The Kindergarten Program.

Tasks for the literacy assessments are:

Observation Survey:

- Concepts About Print
- Letter Identification
- Word Reading
- Hearing and Recording Sounds
- Writing Vocabulary

Additional Measures

- Running Records/PM Benchmarks
- Phonological Awareness Assessment

The purpose of the assessment is to:

- Gather information for instruction
- Identify specific literacy learning achieved by the child
- Enrich the literacy program to meet the identified areas of learning for the child
- Identify students who need sustained support in literacy learning

Principles for assessment and evaluation from Simcoe Muskoka Catholic's Assessment and Evaluation Monographs support early identification initiatives, i.e. assessment and evaluation are ongoing, planned and integral to the curriculum; students are given varied opportunities to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which are being assessed; assessment and evaluation recognize individual characteristics of learners and allow for differences in styles, and rates of learning.



## **Process of Early Screening/Identification**

### **Initial Screening**

- Teachers complete screening tools outlined above in addition to employing targeted teaching strategies while developing a portfolio to track student progress.

### **School Team Meetings**

- Continuously review strategies/progress collaboratively with staff and parents.

### **Intervention Plans**

Our schools continue to employ the “tiered” approach to prevention and intervention as a systematic approach to providing high-quality, evidence-based assessment and instruction and appropriate interventions that respond to students’ individual needs. It is based on frequent monitoring of student progress and the use of assessment data, focusing on learning rate and level, to identify students who are facing challenges in learning and to plan specific assessment and instructional interventions of increasing intensity to address their needs effectively.

- Tier 1 intervention involves high quality core instruction in the general inclusive classroom, using Universal Design for Learning, differentiated instruction, and systematic, evidence-based instruction for all students. Instruction is targeted to address specific learning gaps that have been identified through assessment, including general classroom work, small group work, and/or individualized instruction to address a specific lagging skill.
- Tier 2 intervention involves targeted, higher intensity supplemental instruction in a small group, aligned with core instruction, and delivered in the general classroom or an alternate setting by a classroom teacher, or special education teacher or other trained instructor with classroom teacher involvement.
- Tier 3 is high intensity, data-driven, evidence-based and validated intervention, delivered by a trained special education teacher with a very small group or an individual student in an alternate setting, consistently every day and for a longer period of time each day than in Tier 2



Intervention plans are developed for students as a result of team meetings. This may include increased support within the regular classroom setting (Tier 1 intervention), or more intensive withdrawal support out of the classroom setting (Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention).

- Heggerty Phonemic Awareness in Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2 classes is used as an integral (Tier 1) phonological awareness component of small group interventions.
- Heggerty Bridge the Gap (Tier 2) is a series of phonemic awareness intervention lessons for students in grade 2 and above.
- Schools are provided with decodable texts to support students with beginning reading instruction.
- Schools are using SRA Reading Mastery (Tier 1 and Tier 2) and SRA Corrective Reading (Tier 2 and Tier 3) for students who have received intensive services but require additional direct intervention to support phonemic awareness and phonics deficits.
- Schools have access to Lexia literacy programs (Tier 1 - 3), Core5 and PowerUp, which provide support to build foundational reading skills for students through a personalized, blended learning model.

### **Formal Screening/Assessment, Follow-up**

- The school-based team may consider using the Kauffman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA-3) to inform academic programming.
- The Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT-8) is a group-administered test administered by the SERT to students referred for gifted screening in grade four.
- Additional professional assessment of student needs may occur in any grade (e.g. Speech Language or Psychological assessments).

### **Formal Identification**

Some children will show such divergence in their physical, intellectual, communicative, social or emotional development that exceptional learning needs may be indicated. Formal identification of these students may occur following successive School Team Meetings, review of assessments at the school level and assessments from outside sources. Additional Resources: Staff such as Speech-Language, Psychologist, Psychological Associate, ABA staff, School Counsellor, Special Education Consultant or staff from The Children's Treatment Network or One Kid's Place, may become involved in providing support. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) may be developed for a child if required. More information on the Identification, Placement and Review process is outlined later in this document.





## **EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS**

### **EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

Academic or Educational Assessment is central to the overall assessment process and to the delivery of remedial or modified programming to students with learning needs and/or exceptionalities. Academic assessment involves curriculum-based, authentic and standardized assessment procedures. For some students, psychological and/or speech-language assessments may also be requested.

The Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) gathers information using as many techniques and sources as the school team deems necessary to understand the students' strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, interests and educational difficulties. A standardized test may be one part of an educational assessment, however, a thorough assessment would also usually include, among other things, discussion with the classroom teacher regarding the student's level of functioning in core areas (curriculum-based assessment), classroom observation (performance-based and authentic assessment), a detailed review of the OSR as well as pertinent developmental and medical information.

#### **Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA-3)**

The Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, 3rd edition (KTEA-3) is used at the school level when a standardized measure of achievement is indicated in order to assess a child's academic skills in detail. Annual training in the administration of the KTEA-3 is provided by the Special Education Consultants and Psychology staff and enables new SERTs to develop the required expertise in the administration and interpretation of this instrument and also builds capacity within the system. The KTEA-3 provides helpful information regarding student learning to inform programming and further assessment by specialist services.

### **SPEECH LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT**

#### **Service Delivery Model**

The SMCDSD Speech and Language Services department is comprised of Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Speech-Language Assistants (SLAs) who work together to provide assessment, consultation, professional development and direct support services for students experiencing language and speech disorders. The Speech and Language staff complement for 2023-2024 includes 4.0 FTE Speech-Language Pathologists and 5 FTE Speech-Language Assistants. The primary focus of the SMCDSD speech and language services is early intervention. The majority of students referred for speech and language services are referred and assessed before grade 3. All speech and language services require parent/guardian consent for involvement.



The role of the SLP is to manage speech and language caseloads at the schools. This includes: consultation, assessment, ongoing reviews, participation at school team meetings, establishing individualized student programs, supervision of the SLAs, and provision of professional development for school board staff. Speech-Language Pathologists are registered members of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO).

The role of the SLA is to provide direct support to children who require individual or small group assistance as their speech and language needs cannot be met adequately through classroom consultation alone. Direct support by SLAs is offered on a block system, consisting of fall, winter and spring (10 week) blocks. The SLAs provide direct support to individual students and small groups of students for up to 10 thirty-minute sessions in each block. Each child's progress is reviewed by the SLP upon completion of the direct support block and a report is provided recommending either: continuation of direct support, break from direct support, indirect service through classroom consultation, referral to a community-based service if appropriate (such as Home and Community-based Care Support Services, School-based Rehabilitative Services or Childrens Treatment Networks for students requiring the specialty services of augmentative communication or feeding and swallowing) or discharge from service. Direct service is provided for students in the Kindergarten and Primary divisions.

Referrals for SMCDSB speech and language services come from several sources, including referrals from preschool services, from Home and Community-based Care Support Services, School-based Rehabilitative Services, SLPs, family physicians and parents but most are initiated by school teams. The school team consults with the school SLP to determine priorities for speech and language assessments as well as consultation requests to guide the development of appropriate IEP goals for students. Speech and Language services staff have also been active in supporting the profession by providing both College and University practicum placements.

### **Assessment**

Speech-Language Pathologists hold a Master's degree and have specialized training in the selection, administration and interpretation of standardized tests for the purpose of assessment. Standardized assessment measures allow the clinician to compare the performance of the student with other children of the same age and make recommendations for identification within the educational system. Functional assessment measures are also used to complete a speech and language profile of the child, to obtain speech and language samples and to evaluate the child's performance in the educational setting.



## Assessment Measures utilized by Speech-Language Pathologists

<b><i>SPEECH</i></b>	<b><i>LANGUAGE</i></b>
The Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation- 3rd Edition (GFTA-3)	<b>Receptive Vocabulary:</b> Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-5)
Structured Photographic Articulation Test (SPAT-D-3)	<b>Expressive Vocabulary:</b> Expressive Vocabulary Test (EVT-3) Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test Revised (EOWPVT-R)
Verbal Motor Production Assessment for Children (VMPAC)	<b>Receptive and Expressive Vocabulary</b> The Word Test-Elementary The Word Test-Adolescent
	<b>Basic Language (language structures, grammar and syntax)</b> Boehm Test of Basic Concepts, Third Edition (Boehm-3) Preschool Language Scale – 5 (PLS-5) Early Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA) Test of Auditory Comprehension of Language 3 (TACL-3) Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-4 (CELF-5) & Preschool (CELF-P3) Test of Language Development (TOLD-P, I:3) Preschool and Elementary Editions Preschool Language Assessment Instrument-2 (PLAI-2) Language Processing Test –3 (LPT-3) Renfrew Action Picture Test Structured Photographic Expressive Language Test –3 The Language Processing Test Test of Integrated Language and Literacy Oral and Written Language Scales-2
	<b>Higher Level Language-Metalinguistic Language</b> The Test of Language Competence: Levels 1 and 2 Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals 5 (CELF-5): Meta-Linguistic Test
	<b>Spelling</b> Test of Written Spelling -5 (TWS-5)
	<b>Story Retelling</b> Renfrew Bus Story Test Test of Narrative Language-2 Edmonton Narratives Norms Instrument (ENNI)
	<b>Phonological Awareness</b> The Phonological Awareness Test-2 Normative Update (PAT-2:NU) Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP-2) Emerging Literacy and Language Assessment (ELLA) Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Ability (ITPA)
	<b>Pragmatic Language</b> Test Of Pragmatic Language Test of Problem Solving, Third Edition Normative Update (TOPS-3E:NU) CELF-5 and CELF-P3



## **Definitions of categories:**

### **Assessment:**

Speech and language assessments include both formal and functional assessments of students who are referred for the first time or are re-referred after being discharged from service. An assessment generally includes administration of functional and standardized tests, consultation with teachers and parents (including a review of the Ontario Student Record (OSR), obtaining developmental and pertinent medical information), behavioural observations, preparation of an assessment report, recommendations for essential educational equipment through the SEA (Special Equipment Amount), interpretation of the test results/findings and discussion of the recommendations with the school team and/or parent/guardian.

### **Consultation:**

SLPs offer consultation to school staff regarding students who present with speech and language concerns. Consultations may include classroom observation, completion of consultation notes and suggestions and follow-up meetings with teachers and/or parents. Consultations regarding student needs may also occur at school team meetings.

### **Direct Support:**

Direct support to students is provided by the SLAs who work under the supervision of the SLP. Direct support is individualized for each student based on specific speech and language goals. This may include consultation with the teacher and parents regarding goals throughout the direct service block. Children may be seen individually or in small groups whenever possible to maximize service delivery. Direct support to students is provided in a service block - typically once/week for 8 to 10 weeks.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

### **Service Delivery Model**

Psychological assessments typically involve a combination of formal assessment measures, direct observation of the student and consultation with teachers, parents and the student directly. Developmental, educational, medical, cultural, school and family information is incorporated. Psychological assessments are intended to respond to the referral question, with typical concerns including learning challenges as well as social-emotional and behavioural functioning. A psychological assessment may include measures to assess intellectual/cognitive abilities (e.g., verbal abilities, visual-spatial skills, fluid reasoning, processing speed); memory; academic functioning (reading, writing, math and oral language); visual-motor integration; social-emotional functioning (such as: anxiety, mood, somatic complaints, emotional regulation); behaviour concerns; attention; executive functions and adaptive functioning (day-to-day living skills).



Psychological assessment services can only be provided by qualified and registered professionals or under the supervision of a registered member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario. The *Registered Health Professions Act* (RHPA), formally recognizes Psychologists as one of the Health Care Providing Professionals who may lawfully diagnose in the Province of Ontario. In Ontario, the College of Psychologists of Ontario is responsible for certifying appropriately trained individuals as Psychologists and Psychological Associates.

One of the “controlled acts” assigned to those who are members of the College of Psychologists is that of communicating a psychological diagnosis. At the SMCD SB, psychological diagnoses are communicated to parents by registered psychologists, in a face-to-face meeting (in person or virtual) or by direct telephone contact, if an in person meeting is not an option.

The staff complement in Psychology in 2023-24 includes: 1 Mental Health Lead, 1 Senior Psychologist and 2 Psychologists/Psychological Associates and a Psychometrist to support completion of psychological assessments, including gifted assessments. The Board also works with community-based professionals who provide Psychological Assessment services on contract..

The psychology department also provides supervised practicum and intern opportunities from time to time to both Master’s and Ph.D. level students.

Two additional psychology department staff are dedicated to ASD services (BCBA-trained).

### **Referrals for Psychological Assessment**

In order to begin to address a student’s learning needs in a proactive manner, schools usually follow a five-step process when concerns are identified regarding a student’s academic progress or social-emotional/behavioural functioning. This process involves an initial action plan developed at the school team level to address the child’s learning needs. This will include a curriculum-based assessment by the classroom teacher in addition to a review of the student’s daily academic performance in consultation with the parents. An action plan is developed, revised as needed and monitored in terms of its effect on the student’s academic performance.

If learning concerns persist, the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) may conduct a standardized Educational Assessment (KTEA-3) in order to identify additional learning needs and strategies. If ongoing concerns continue, the Special Education Consultant serving that school will consult to support programme planning. The Special Education Consultant may confer with the Psychologist or Psychological Associate assigned to the school to determine the next step, which may involve a referral for a formal psychological assessment by SMCD SB psychology staff.



Typically, referrals for psychological assessment are part of a process whereby a student's learning concerns have been identified, strategies attempted and ongoing monitoring of progress and challenges noted at the school level. It is important that school-based programming efforts occur initially and in an ongoing way to ensure that interventions occur while a student is waiting for a psychological assessment (if indicated). This allows for an evaluation of the strategies and interventions being used, and is valuable information. Psychological assessments provide information about the student's strengths and learning needs as well as social, emotional and/or behavioural functioning to further inform the student's educational program.

Psychology Department staff provide a range of services including assessments, individual counselling for students, consultation with school teams regarding student learning and social emotional/behavioural functioning (including assessment and interventions to address concerns about threats of violence towards others), professional development for staff, consultation to the development of safety plans; documentation reviews (of incoming professional reports to support diagnostic understanding); crisis response as needed as well as support for educational programming. The provision of psychological services is responsive to the priorities identified by the Principal and school team for each school. There is no official waiting list generated at the Board level for psychological assessments at this time. Rather, the five-step protocol allows for an ongoing and interactive process of school-based intervention that includes implementation of learning strategies at the school level and opportunities for consultation with the Special Education Consultant and Psychology staff as needed. A formalized psychological assessment exists as part of this continuum of service to address a child's learning, behavioural or social/emotional needs.

### **Assessment Measures utilized by Psychology Staff (as needed)**

Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist

Adaptive Behaviour Assessment System, 3rd Edition (ABAS-3)

Autism Diagnostic Interview - Revised (ADI-R)

Autism Diagnosis Observation Schedule, 2nd Edition (ADOS-2)

Asperger Syndrome Diagnostic Scale (ASDS)

Autism Spectrum Rating Scales (ASRS)

Beck Youth Inventories

Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration, 6th Edition

Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual Perception, 6th Edition

Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Motor Coordination, 6th Edition

Behaviour Assessment System for Children, Parent, Teacher & Self-Report (BASC-3)

Behaviour and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS)

Behaviour Evaluation Scale (BES)

Behaviour Rating Inventory of Executive Functioning (BRIEF)

Children's Memory Scale (CMS)

Children's PTSD Inventory



Children's Depression Inventory, 2nd Edition (CDI-2)  
Cognitive Assessment System  
Comprehensive Test of Phonological Awareness, 2nd Edition (CTOPP-2)  
Comprehensive Executive Function Inventory (CEFI)  
Conners Rating Scales, 3rd Edition (Conners-3)  
Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventories  
Expressive Vocabulary Test, 3rd Edition (EVT-3)  
Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement - BRIEF  
Multi-dimensional Anxiety Scale for Children, 2nd Edition (MASC-2)  
Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT-8): used for gifted screening, group-administered  
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, 5th Edition (PPVT-5)  
Personality Assessment Inventory-Adolescents (PAI)  
Piers-Harris 3: Children's Self-Concept Scale  
Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale  
Test of Nonverbal Intelligence (TONI)  
Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, 5th Edition (WISC-V)  
Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, 4th Edition (WAIS-4)  
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, 3rd Edition (WIAT-III)  
Wechsler Nonverbal Scale of Ability (WNV)  
Wechsler Preschool & Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI-III)  
Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery - Cognitive and Achievement (WJ-IV)  
Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning, 3rd edition (WRAML-3)  
Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales: Classroom Edition

## **SCHOOL COUNSELLOR SERVICES**

School Counsellor services are provided in all of the elementary schools (6 staff) and secondary schools (3 staff). The focus of the role is student-centered and encourages a student's social, emotional and academic growth. School Counsellors work collaboratively with students, school staff and caregivers to help students maximize their learning, behavioural and social-emotional potential.

School Counsellors provide a range of services in schools including consultation with school teams; consultation with parents/guardians; individual and small group counselling for students, facilitation of classroom programs; consultation to the development of safety plans; referrals to and liaison with external providers and agencies; crisis response as needed as well as professional development for staff.

The Psychology and School Counsellor staff incorporate a range of evidence-based and evidence-informed approaches. The goal is to support students to develop social-emotional learning skills, self-regulation, self-awareness, responsible decision making, empathy development





and effective social relationships. Ongoing professional development for Psychology and School Counsellor staff continued throughout the year on a range of topics related to student mental health. Because of the ongoing pandemic, increased student mental health concerns have been evident, including elevated anxiety, issues with mood, eating disorders, disengagement from school, social isolation, loneliness as well as grief and loss.

## **Mental Health Promotion**

SMCDSB was one of the first school boards in the province to have a Mental Health Lead position as part of the Ministry of Education's Mental Health strategy that was initiated in 2011/2012. The role of the Mental Health Lead is to support mental health promotion and prevention initiatives, build relationships with community partners, and lead the development and implementation of the annual student mental health action plan. The Mental Health Lead is part of the larger Psychological Services Team and reports directly to the Superintendent of Student Services.

In 2022/2023 we piloted a single position for a School Counsellor - Mental Health Promotion. The staff person in this role facilitated psychoeducational groups focused on building coping skills to manage stress and anxiety with small groups of students at elementary and secondary schools across our school board. This position also supported mental health promotion initiatives at individual schools by staffing a mental health booth full of information and resources for students and families during school events such as open houses. Beginning in the 2023/2024 school year, this position has become permanent, allowing us to continue this mental health promotion and prevention work throughout our system.

In addition to providing direct support to students and school staff, Psychological services staff provide professional development and learning opportunities for staff, parents/caregivers, and students on topics related to mental health, resiliency and coping skills. We also have strong partnerships with various community mental health agencies who also provide support to students throughout our school board.

During the pandemic a number of web resources on mental health were organized and made available to parents/caregivers, educators and students. These resources continue to be maintained and enhanced and include an internal staff website, a student website, and social media accounts. The OnPoint Parenting Podcast has been rebranded and is now called [Beyond the Bell](#). Monthly episodes with an accompanying article are produced and shared with SMCDSB families covering a wide range of topics that provide parents and caregivers with an inside look into aspects of the school system related to student well-being and school life. To date, we have over 30 episodes with 400-1900 unique downloads per episode. Our student focused mental health website and social media account (Instagram) was created specifically with age-appropriate tools, resources, and information. Weekly content is created by student leaders and staff and





shared on our @SMCDSB\_MHWP account reaching over 900 followers including parents, students, staff, and community agencies. This account focuses on student mental health promotion and is managed by the Mental Health Lead, Psychological Services staff, and student leaders.

We continue to prioritize student voice in various mental health initiatives. During the 2022/2023 school year, we facilitated the second iteration of the Secondary Student Voice Research Group. This group focused their work on exploring the information gap on mental health awareness in secondary students and advocated for ways to address this gap. We also facilitated 9 Elementary Student Leadership & Well-Being Symposiums held in person at each secondary school using a community of schools model. This was a collaboration between student success, Elementary Guidance Teachers, Secondary teams, and The Mental Health Lead. During these symposium dates student leaders built on their existing knowledge of mental health and engaged in collaborative discussions on ways to improve student connection and belonging at school. Results and outcomes of both the Secondary and Elementary projects will be shared with system leaders during the 2023/2024 school year to inform school improvement plans and our Board mental health action plan. As we go forward into the 2023/2024 school year we are aiming to maintain our elementary and secondary student voice initiatives while adding specific opportunities equity deserving groups including students with complex special education needs and racialized/marginalized students.

## **PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION PROTECTION ACT**

All Regulated Health Professionals at Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board are committed to collecting, using and disclosing personal health information in a responsible manner, in accordance with a provincial law called the *Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA).

### **Who are Regulated Health Professionals?**

Regulated Health Professionals at SMCDSB include members of the College of Psychologists of Ontario, the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario, the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers and the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario. All of these staff are considered custodians of Personal Health Information.

### **What is Personal Health Information?**

Identifying information that is gathered through observation, conversation, examination, assessment, treatment, etc., which pertains to an individual's physical or mental health, or health care history. This includes information such as telephone number, address, date of birth, health and education history, cognitive and language skills, behaviour and emotional functioning.



### **Why is information being collected and how will it be used?**

Information is collected to assist in planning for the student's educational program. The information is collected and used by regulated health professionals to provide consultation and assessment support to inform student programming to best meet the needs of the student.

### **Who can consent to the collection, use or disclosure of Personal Health Information?**

A capable individual (regardless of age) who understands the information relevant to deciding whether to consent, and can appreciate the consequences of the decision to consent. Normally, the parent/legal guardian of a student under the age of 16 consents on behalf of the student. Written consent from parents, or a student over 16 years of age, is required to access both Psychological and/or Speech/Language services.

- Written consent must be obtained prior to any formal assessment being conducted (Psychological, Speech/Language Assessment), and prior to any consultation where the student's identity is made known. Consent for consultation or assessment also allows the above noted professionals to access the Ontario School Record (OSR). Assessments completed by Board staff are stored within the OSR. The parent consent forms for Psychological and Speech/Language services outline the practices of SMCDSB Health Information Custodians Regarding the Use, Collection and Disclosure of Personal Health Information. Confidential Psychological and Speech/Language file information is retained in a confidential and secure electronic record as well as paper assessment files retained by the Psychology department.

### **Who will the information be shared with?**

The information collected may be shared with other SMCDSB staff working directly with the student or have responsibility for the student (e.g. school administration, special education and guidance staff). The information will also be made available upon request to the parent/guardian of the student and, when appropriate, the student. The information *will not* be shared with anyone

else (e.g. physician, community agency) without written consent by the parent/guardian or student, if appropriate.

### **There are some exceptions to this, as follows:**

- When the person collecting the information has reason to suspect that the student about whom s/he is collecting information is in need of protection – this must be reported to Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions;
- Where there is evidence the student may be at risk of seriously harming themselves or others;
- Where it is learned that a member of a regulated health profession may have engaged in sexual abuse of the student;
- Where it is learned that abuse of an elder may have occurred;
- When records are ordered to be produced as required by law.



### Who will have access to the information?

The information kept in a student's Ontario School Record at the school may contain a copy of reports produced by Special Services staff, and is accessible to the person about whom the report is written, the parent/guardian of that student, and the school staff who are involved in the education of the pupil. Sometimes office staff create or access files for our use. They understand confidentiality issues and adhere to our privacy practices.

On rare occasions, Psychology, Social Work, Psychotherapy and Speech Language Pathology files may be subject to a review process to ensure that they adhere to standards set out by their respective regulatory Colleges.

If Personal Health Information has been lost, stolen, or if there is a privacy breach, established guidelines are in place to respond in collaboration with the SMCDSB Privacy Officer.

### Where will the information be kept and for how long?

Personal Health Information is kept under locked, secure conditions in the Academic Services Building of the SMCDSB. The information will be kept for a minimum of 10 years from the date of last contact with the student, or until the student turns 28 years of age, whichever occurs later. At that time, the documentation may be destroyed.

## TELEPRACTICE (VIRTUAL) SERVICE DELIVERY

Student Services staff provide virtual support when students, parents, caregivers and others involved with supporting students are not available to meet in person, or it is more convenient for everyone involved to meet virtually. Staff have received specific training with respect to virtual service delivery including issues related to consent, safety practices, virtual platform specifics and engagement strategies. Virtual services include individual counselling for students, consultation with school teams and parents, speech/language assessments as well as direct speech- language support for individual students. Virtual services are provided on a secure platform that is PHIPA compliant to ensure confidentiality.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF (2023-2024)

### Elementary Schools:

Elementary Student Population (K-8)

16,345 FTE

SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF	FTE's	STAFF QUALIFICATIONS
<i>Teachers of Exceptional Students</i>		
Teachers for resource-withdrawal programs	0	



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Teachers for self-contained classes	0	
<b>Other Special Education teachers</b>		
Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTS)	69.52	Special Education Part 1
Itinerant teachers for Hearing Impaired	1.5	Specialist in oral and aural communication
Itinerant vision Teacher	0.5	Specialist in Blind/Low Vision
Coordinators	0.5	Special Education, Specialist
Consultants (Including 0.5 Hearing)	4.5	Special Education, Specialist
Assistant to the Superintendent of Programme & Services (Special Education)	0.5	Special Education, Specialist
<b>Educational Assistants</b>		
Educational Assistants	301.5	Community College Diploma or University Degree in related field
<b>Other Professional Resource Staff</b>		
Psychologists	4.0 (Includes Senior Psychologist, Mental Health Lead)	Members of the College of Psychologists of Ontario (Masters or Doctoral level degree)
Psychological Associates	1.0	Members of the College of Psychologists of Ontario (Masters Degree)
Psychiatrists	0	
Psychometrist	1.0	Masters in Psychology; supervised by regulated Psychology staff
Speech Language Pathologists Speech Language Pathologist – Augmentative Communication	3.7	Masters in Speech-Language Pathology Required (CASLPO)
Speech Language Assistants	5.0	Community College Diploma and/or University Degree plus post-grad diploma in a Communicative Disorders Assistant program.
Audiologists	0	Contract Out
Occupational Therapists	0	
Physiotherapists	0	
Social Workers	0	



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School Counselors	7.2	University Degree (may be registered with College of Psychotherapists of Ontario or Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers). This includes a .2 FTE contract position to provide mental health promotion services.
<b><i>Paraprofessional Resource Staff</i></b>		
Orientation and Mobility Personnel	0	Post B.A. Certificate "Instructor for Blind and Visually Impaired – Orientation and Mobility Program". This position is contracted out.
<b>Oral Interpreters (for deaf students)</b>	0	
<b>Sign Interpreters (for deaf students)</b>	0	
<b>Transcribers (for blind students)</b>	0	
<b>Interveners (for deaf-blind students)</b>	1	Qualified Intervener
<b>Auditory-verbal therapists</b>	0	
<b>Behaviour Analyst</b>	2	May have BCBA Certification, Masters
<b>Assistive Technology Trainers</b>	2.0	College degree with experience in assistive technology
<b>Manager of Educational Assistant Services</b>	0.5	University degree in related field
<b>Total</b>	405.92	

#### Secondary Schools:

Secondary Student Population (9-12)

6,805 FTE

SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF	FTE's	STAFF QUALIFICATIONS
<b><i>Teachers of Exceptional Students</i></b>		
Teachers for resource-withdrawal programs	0	
<b>Teachers for self-contained classes</b>	0	
<b><i>Other Special Education teachers</i></b>		
Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTS)	23.83	Special Education Part 1



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Itinerant vision teachers	0.5	Specialist in Blind/Low Vision
Teacher Diagnosticians	0	
Coordinators	0.5	Special Education, Specialist
Consultants/ Hearing Impaired	0.5	The Deaf, Specialist
Consultant	1.0	Special Education, Specialist
Assistant to the Superintendent of Programme & Services (Special Education)	0.5	Special Education, Specialist
<b>Educational Assistants in Special Education</b>		
Educational Assistants	73	Community College Diploma or University Degree in related field
<b>Other Professional Resource Staff</b>		
Psychologists	2.0	Member of College of Psychologists of Ontario (Masters or Doctoral level degree)
Psychiatrists	0	
Speech-Language Pathologists	.5	Master's Degree in Speech-Language Pathology, Member CASLPO
Audiologists	0	
Secondary Mental Health Workers	0	3 provided by Community Mental Health agencies
Occupational Therapists	0	
Physiotherapists	0	
<b>School Counsellors</b>	3.8 This includes a .8 FTE contract position to provide mental health promotion services.	University Degree (may be registered with College of Psychotherapists of Ontario or Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers).
<b>Paraprofessional Resource Staff</b>		



Orientation and Mobility Personnel	0	Post B.A. Certificate “Instructor for Blind and Visually Impaired – Orientation and Mobility Program”. This position is contracted out.
<b>Oral Interpreters (for deaf students)</b>	0	
<b>Sign Interpreters (for deaf students)</b>	0	
<b>Transcribers (for blind students)</b>	0	
<b>Interveners (for deaf blind students)</b>	1	Qualified Intervener
<b>Auditory-verbal therapists</b>	0	
<b>Assistive Technology Trainer</b>	1	College degree with experience in assistive technology
<b>Manager of Educational Assistant Services</b>	.5	University degree in related field
<b>Behaviour Analyst</b>	1	May have BCBA Certification, Masters
<b>Subtotal</b>	109.63	

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The focus of staff development continues to be multi-faceted. Staff are required to be kept up-to-date on current Ministry policy, legislation, program and assessment strategies that will support exceptional students within our schools. Several themes run through in-servicing including faith and inclusion with a focus on the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectation of A Collaborative Contributor or one who finds meaning, dignity and vocation in work which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good. Transition planning, IEP development, differentiation, Continuum of Student Support (tiered) interventions and technology continue to be a focus of in-servicing this year.

Consultation for the staff development plan included input from Principals, Special Education Resource Teachers, Special Education Consultants, the Academic Services Team, Coordinators and Board Psychology staff. The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) has received regular updates on staff development.

## Implementation of the Standards for the Individual Education Plan (IEP)

As a result of the Ministry’s collaborative review of Individual Education Plans and the subsequent feedback in regards to our IEP’s, we are now using a web-based IEP tool. Effective practices in IEP development are an ongoing focus with school-based teams. We have developed comprehensive IEP Guides for our staff and provide additional PD through drop-ins and newsletter highlights.



In-servicing continues with special education resource teachers (SERTs), educational assistants (EA's) and classroom teachers on effective use of the variety of software programmes to enhance student success in the classroom. We are committed to building capacity with all staff to ensure that equipment is used as effectively as possible. The training also has a classroom focus to facilitate understanding that certain software can be used for all students within an inclusive environment.

The new teacher in-service program (NTIP) has continued to highlight the area of special education. As in past years, the school team approach to supporting exceptional students will be discussed with our new teachers, both full time and occasional.

For the 2023-24 year the early literacy staff in schools will continue to focus on supporting the implementation of tiered reading interventions within the schools. This will be supported by Program and Services and Special Education and Services.

Classroom teachers continue to use PM Benchmark Reading Assessment and CASI (Comprehension, Attitude, Strategies and Interest) to assess students to develop their class profiles and provide on-going literacy support. Teachers who are new to using these tools will receive in-servicing. New screening tools for K-2 are to be implemented this school year.

Special Education Resource Teachers meet on a regular basis in large and small groups at centralized meetings to discuss assessment, programming strategies and a variety of topics related to special education and literacy/numeracy, focusing on success for all. Assistive technology training will be provided addressing the specific needs identified.

School-based teams have received site-specific Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) training in support of individual student programming. This training was delivered by consultants, counsellors, psychology staff, the Manager of Educational Assistants and our ABA staff. This year, we also have online ABA training opportunities for consultants and teaching staff who have already received some ABA training as well as introductory training for teachers who are new to ABA.

Principals and Vice-Principals continue to enhance their understanding of their role in supporting staff in the area of special education through focused conversations and direct in-servicing. Each Principal plenary meeting will have a component of learning with special education being infused into the learning goal.

Changes to requirements with respect to Transition Planning (in effect since September of 2014) have been communicated and reviewed with Principals, Vice-Principals and SERTs. A document has been produced to support development of Transition Plans as part of the *IEP: Educator*





*Support Guide for Transition Planning.* All Teachers and Administrators have received this document. A focus group developed three Parent Guides to Transition Planning for each of the major transitions; into school, into secondary school and from secondary school. These Parent Guides have been distributed to schools for parents to reference as students move through these transition periods. Also in effect, is the Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) Protocol. This protocol is in place to help improve the transition process for students who may have a developmental disability. With assistance from a SEAC sub-committee, our Board has developed a template for use during Integrated Transition Planning. The SERTs will continue to receive in-servicing with respect to this protocol.

Programme and Special Education Consultants, in addition to their involvement as presenters in the system and community of schools professional development, have focused their attention on the provision of direct service to schools. Examples of key services include the following:

- School team meetings involving programming and transition planning
- In-services to classroom teachers, SERTs and EAs on the topics of differentiated instruction, literacy, numeracy, technology and best practices
- Assistance in development of IEPs
- Differentiating instruction and universal design
- Assistance with assessment tools and assessment interpretation
- Capacity building at the school level in understanding and applying ABA principles

### **PD Plans - Teaching Staff 2023-24**

A variety of drop-in virtual training sessions occurred during the previous school year, the plan is to continue with these drop-in sessions as well as the traditional face-to-face PD opportunities outlined below:

Face-to-face sessions:

- Just-in-Time training for Beginning SERTs
- BMS Training for SERTs
- Elementary SERT Community of Schools (COS) Meetings
- Secondary SERT/SNRT COS Meetings
- Programming for Students with Hearing Needs
- Programming for Students with Vision Needs
- KTEA-3 Training for SERTs
- ABA Basics- 3 tiers of training
- Reading Mastery and Corrective Reading Training for SERTs
- Supporting student mental health and mentally healthy classrooms
- Collaboratively with the elementary program team develop and provide PD focussed on early math intervention and strategies for differentiated programming

Virtual Drop-in Sessions:

- Alternative Goals and the IEP



- Accessibility- making electronic documents accessible to all
- Lexia Core5 and PowerUp Training
- Speech Language Training Session for Hearbuilder App (New) and Heggerty Resources
- Transition to School - Kindergarten session to support best practices
- Gifted Screening
- NTIP - Special Education for New Teachers
- IEP Training-writing (IEP Basics)
- IPRC Basics - Support with IPRC letters and statement of decision in PSSP
- ONSIS training - Review of reporting requirements regarding ONSIS data collection
- Safety and Behaviour Support Plan in PSSP - technical support for new process
- CTN (Children's Treatment Network) SBRS (School Based Rehabilitation Service) Referral Process Training
- Transition Planning (supporting the transition to school and the transition from elementary to secondary)
- Creating visuals to support student learning (Boardmaker)
- Student Profile in PSSP - technical support session
- Psychology supported session on Identification difference between MID (mild intellectual disability) and Developmental Disability in the mild range
- EQAO session to support the new format and students with accommodations
- AFLS Training for Secondary Special Needs Resource Teachers
- CIRCLE's program training for Secondary Special Needs Resource Teachers
- Supporting student mental health

**In-services - EA Staff — Sessions were in-person, virtual, or blended**

- Anti-human Trafficking
- Anti-discrimination and Inclusion PD (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in SMCDSB; Allyship with Dr Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux)
- Health & Safety Accident Incident Reporting/Online Violence Reporting
- Just-in-Time training for Educational Assistants (based on individual school needs)
- BMS new practitioner certification/re-certification
- ABA Training (e.g., basic principles, skill development, improving problem behaviour)
- Assistive Technology Training (e.g., eye-gaze software; Read&Write; Boardmaker)
- Student-specific health care PD (via community health partners)
- Professional Practices: The Ethics of Touch
- Introduction to Chromebooks
- Self-directed Behaviour Case Study
- Augmentative/Alternative Communication Myths and Facts
- Supporting Students to Learn Personal Space and Boundaries
- Board Services Meet & Greet



## INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)

An IEP is:

- A written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on a thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs;
- A record of particular accommodations needed to help the student achieve his or her learning expectations given the student's identified learning strengths and needs;
- A working document that identifies learning expectations that are modified from the expectations for the age-appropriate grade level in a particular subject or course, as outlined in the Ministry of Education's curriculum policy documents;
- A working document that identifies alternative expectations, if required, in program areas not represented in the Ontario curriculum;
- A record of the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purpose of reporting student achievement of modified and/or alternative expectations;
- An accountability tool for the student, the student's parents, and everyone who has responsibilities under the plan for helping the student meet the stated goals and learning expectations as the student progresses through the Ontario curriculum.

### Dispute Resolution

If a disagreement between parents and Board staff regarding significant aspects of the IEP occurs, resolution of these issues will take place through a School Team meeting. The process of resolution will include the school IEP Team and the Coordinator of Special Education. If resolution is not reached through this process, a School Team meeting with the Assistant to the Superintendent of Special Education will be scheduled. If the dispute regarding the IEP is not resolved through these stages, a meeting may be set up with the school IEP Team, the parent and the Superintendent of Special Education.

### Parent's Guide to the IEP

Following the implementation of the new IEP Standards, the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board has developed *A Parent's Guide to the Individual Education Plan* to assist parents in the understanding of an IEP and the process for developing a student's IEP. The Parent's Guide was created as a companion document to *A Parent's Guide to the Identification, Placement and Review Committee*. In the development of the *Parent's Guide*, parents, teachers, principals, superintendents and SEAC were part of the consultation process. The *Parent's Guide* has been revised in 2021 and will be made available to parents through their children's schools. [These guides are also posted on our Board website.](#)



## Specialized Equipment Amount (SEA) for Students

In order to meet a student's individual needs within a school setting, personalized equipment may be required. Examples of this equipment may include: Braille devices, communication devices, software, FM Systems, computer hardware and mobility devices.

When determining if a student requires individualized equipment, the framework we use is outlined in the Resource Guide for Special Equipment Amount (SEA). Specifically, the criterion for personalized equipment that is outlined in this document is utilized to assess whether or not the request is warranted.

In accordance with the SEA protocol each claim must be documented by an assessment on file from an appropriately qualified professional. The appropriately qualified professional will vary depending upon the nature of the student's disability and the purpose and function of the equipment. Regardless of who performed the assessment, it should indicate:

- that this particular device is essential in order for the student to benefit from instruction; and/or
- the disability that this device will help to ameliorate;
- the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

This framework is followed whether the cost of the equipment is under \$800.00 and covered by Board funds or if it is in excess of this amount and requires additional funds from the Ministry of Education.

The budget allocation for equipment is estimated based on previous equipment claim costs that have been incurred by the Board in the last three years.

NEW 2018-19. Schools may apply for assistive technology support for students if the device is considered essential after the school team has implemented a range of interventions and a KTEA has been completed. All information gathered must support the need for a dedicated device to access curriculum.



## ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

### Implications for Student Requirements

Every few years a Facilities Review is completed for each school and Board Office building. Principals submit a list of requirements for their school and the Plant Department also forwards their list of maintenance projects. Included in this renewal are Special Education Projects required by schools. This list is submitted as part of the annual Facilities Renewal Program which is prioritized by the Facilities Services Department and then reviewed by the Superintendent of Schools and presented to the Board. Individuals may obtain a copy of the complete plan for the Board by contacting the Controller of Facilities Services at 705-722-3555. Accessibility projects are also noted in the [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#).

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

### Policy Number LE -19

### *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*

#### Customer Service

The Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board will provide an environment in all of its facilities that builds independence, dignity and respect for our students, parents/guardians, the public and our staff. Furthermore, we are committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity of access to our services in the same location and in a similar way as these services are available with accommodations to all we serve.

### Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (To view the complete plan, please visit [www.smcdsb.on.ca](http://www.smcdsb.on.ca))

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is developed in accordance with the Integration Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, 2005. It incorporates the intentions of the Board to meet its obligations under the *Ontarians with*

*Disabilities Act (ODA)*, 2001. The Plan describes the measures that the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board (SMCDSB) will implement to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who work, learn and participate in the SMCDSB community and environment including students, staff, parents and guardians, volunteers and visitors to the Board and its schools. The plan will be guided by the Board's Accessibility Standards Policy Statement Number LE 19.



## Objectives

This Plan:

- Describes the process by which the SMCDSB will identify, remove and prevent barriers;
- Reviews recent efforts of the SMCDSB to remove and prevent barriers;
- Describes the measures the SMCDSB plans to take to identify, remove and prevent barriers;
- Makes a commitment to provide an annual status report on the Board's implementation of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan;
- Makes a commitment to review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan annually;
- Describes how the SMCDSB will make this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan available to the public.

## SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

Special Transportation is provided to a student who requires transportation arrangements other than the regular school bus either on a short term or permanent basis.

Those students who may qualify for special transportation are:

- Students who attend Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP) classes and are unable to take the regular school bus either due to safety concerns or the lack of an existing school bus route to the school providing the program;
- Students attending Provincial and Demonstration Schools;
- Exceptional students who are unable to access the regular school bus and require accommodations.

The School Board may require documentation from a medical professional stating that a student requires consideration for specialized transportation as an accommodation.

### Process for deciding what type of Transportation a Special Needs Student requires:

The school will identify when a student requires special transportation. Following this, the principal will forward to the Assistant to the Superintendent – Special Education “REQUEST FOR SPECIAL NEEDS TRANSPORTATION” TF002 form. Information included in this

request includes the type of vehicle required, whether the student can ride with others and the length of time the special transportation is required. If the request is approved, the SCSTC will create a route and inform the school.



## Safety Criteria for Selection of Transportation Providers

The Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC) provides transportation services within Simcoe County for the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board (SMCDSB) and its coterminous board. The role of the SCSTC includes contracting bus and vehicle operators on behalf of the SMCDSB.

All school vehicle drivers require the following:

- each driver shall have and maintain in good standing at all times a valid Class “B” or “E” Driver’s license as required by the *Public Vehicles Act* (Ontario) and the *Highway Traffic Act* (Ontario);
- each Driver will take driver training that complies with the terms set out in the applicable provincial *Acts* as well as training in accordance with First Aid training, Driver Training Standards & Safety Programs and Responsibilities of The Bus Driver as outlined in their contracts with the SCSTC;
- each Driver will submit a Criminal Background Check with Vulnerable Persons Search, at a minimum of every three (3) years;
- each Driver is required to fulfill their obligations under the *Highway Traffic Act* (Ontario) and all Regulations thereunder in the event of an accident or emergency, in addition, the Driver shall be trained in and comply with Emergency and Accident Procedures set out by the SCSTC;
- each Driver is required to be aware of their access to sensitive and confidential information and their employer shall further cause the Drivers to acknowledge and certify in writing that this information must be treated as strictly confidential and cannot be used, reproduced or copied for anything other than the original intended purpose.

To obtain a Class “B” or “E” License you must:

- be at least 21 years old
- hold a valid Ontario license other than G1, G2, M, M1 or M2
- pass a vision test
- submit a valid medical report
- successfully complete a government-approved School Bus Driver Improvement Course (SBDIC)
- pass a criminal record check
- have fewer than 6 demerit points on your driving record
- pass a knowledge test about operating school buses and trucks (Class B only)
- pass a road test using a vehicle that meets requirements for a Class “B” or “E”

Additionally, Drivers of commercial vehicles will be subject to zero tolerance laws based on the presence of alcohol and/or drugs.



## Provincial Schools

Transportation arrangements for students attending provincial schools is arranged through the Provincial School the student is attending in cooperation with the local school board.

## Education and Community Partnership Programs (ECPP)

Students attending the ECPP classes are transported by car or minivan to the school providing the program, if they are unable to take the regular school bus.

## Individual Student Transportation Plan (ISTP)

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) includes the requirement for an Individual School Transportation Plan to support all students with a disability.

The *AODA* specifies these individual school transportation plans must be developed in consultation with parents or guardians of students with disabilities. They must identify the roles and responsibilities of the student, parents or guardians, school staff, bus operator and the SCSTC. Complete details for Ontario Regulation 191/11 can be found at:

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2011/elaws\\_src\\_regs\\_r11191\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2011/elaws_src_regs_r11191_e.htm)

The *AODA* identifies that the Individual School Transportation Plan is a separate document from a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is also prepared by a board and required by the Ministry of Education.





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## **Part C:**

# **Identification of Exceptional Students**



## THE IDENTIFICATION PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS AS PER REGULATION 181/98

The Board follows the process as determined by Regulation 181/98. For more on the IPRC process, please refer to *A Parent's Guide to the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee*.

### 1. Informing Parents of the IPRC process

- The Principal of the child's school may, with written notice to the parents, refer the child to an IPRC when the Principal and the child's teacher or school special education team believe that the child may benefit from a special education program.
- Within 10 days of giving the parents notice, the Principal will provide the parents with a copy of the *Parent Handbook for Special Education* to familiarize the parents with the IPRC process.
- The IPRC process and the *Parent Handbook for Special Education* are also discussed with the parents at the School Team Meeting prior to the IPRC.
- The latest edition of the revised *Parent Guide for IPRC* is posted on our Board website.
- Parents may initiate an IPRC meeting by making a request in writing to the Principal.

### 2. Parental Involvement

The parents, along with community resource supports, are entitled to be present at, and participate in, all committee discussions about their child. Parental attendance and participation is encouraged and welcomed.

### 3. Gathering Information

The IPRC will review all available information regarding the child. Information considered in making an identification and placement decision may include:

- an educational assessment,
- a health and/or psychological assessment of the child conducted by a qualified practitioner,
- an interview with the child,
- any information that the parents submit for consideration about their child,
- observations and/or anecdotal records by the teacher,
- curriculum based assessments.



#### 4. Identification

- The areas of exceptionalities are defined by the Ministry of Education and Training and are outlined as such on the IPRC form:
  - **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**  
Multiple Exceptionalities

#### 5. Recommending Placement (range of placements)

During discussions with SEAC, there has always been a strong focus supporting inclusion of all students. This input is consistent with the placements provided by the Board and the Board's model of special education.

The first option for placement is in the regular classroom. Within this placement option, a range of services and support can be provided to students. The spectrum of placements includes the following:

1. regular class placement with indirect support
2. regular class placement with direct support
3. regular class placement with withdrawal support from a qualified SERT
4. Other (Education and Community Partnership Program), Provincial School

Strategies and accommodations that can support students in the regular class are outlined in the Individual Education Plan. In addition to support from the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), or Educational Assistant, the following Services Staff may provide further assistance, both consultative and direct service:

- Resource Teacher of the Deaf
- Vision Resource Teacher
- Orientation and Mobility Instructor
- Behaviour Analyst



- School Counsellor
- Speech Language Pathologist
- Speech Language Assistant
- Special Education Consultant
- Psychologist/Psychological Associate

## **6. Annual Review and Request for Reviews**

- A review IPRC meeting will be held within the school year, unless the Principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from the parent dispensing with the annual review (parents may sign a waiver).
- The parent may request a review IPRC meeting any time after the child has been in a special education placement for three months.
- The review IPRC considers the same type of information that was originally considered.
- The IPRC conducting the review will consider the progress the child has made in relation to the IEP
- The IPRC will review the placement and identification decisions and decide whether they should be continued or whether a different decision should then be made.

## **7. Meeting with parents prior to rendering the decision to the board**

- The parents, along with community support groups, are encouraged and welcomed to be present at, and participate in, all committee discussions about their child as well as to be present when the committee's identification and placement decision is made.
- Discussion with the parents regarding the identification and placement of their child also occurs at the school team meeting in which the referral to the IPRC is made.

## **8. Communicating the decision to the board**

- If the IPRC has identified a child as an exceptional pupil and the parents have agreed with the IPRC identification and placement decision, the IPRC Chairperson will promptly provide the parents with a signed copy of the written statement of decision. A copy will also be filed in the child's OSR. The IPRC's written statement of decision is forwarded to the Director of Education at the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board within 30 days of the IPRC meeting date.

## **9. Process for resolving disputes**

- If the parents do not agree with either the identification or placement decision made by the IPRC they may:
  - within 15 days of receipt of the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss their concerns; or
  - within 30 days of the receipt of the decision, file a notice of appeal with the Director of Education of the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board.



- If they do not agree with the decision after the second meeting, they may file a notice of appeal within 15 days of their receipt of the decision.
- If they do not consent to the IPRC decision and do not appeal it, the board will instruct the Principal to implement the IPRC decision.

### **Appeal Process as per Regulation 181/98**

#### **Mediation options and process**

The Board will establish a Special Education Appeal Board to hear the parental appeal. The Appeal Board will be composed of three persons (one of whom is to be selected by the parent) 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 days after he or she has been selected (unless parents and 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.
- The parents are entitled to be present at, and to participate in, all discussions.
- The Appeal Board must make its recommendation within three days of the meeting ending.

It may:

- agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented, or disagree with IPRC and make a recommendation to the board about the child's identification, placement, or both.
- The Appeal Board will report its recommendations in writing, to the parent and to the school board, providing the reasons for its recommendations.
- Within 30 days of receiving the Appeal Board's written statement, the school board will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations.
- The parents may accept the decision of the school board, or may appeal to a Special Education Tribunal. They 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.



## Communication

### 1. Communication about special education programs and services available

There are several ways in which the special education programs and services are communicated to parents. These may be communicated through:

- Preschool information meetings
- Transition meetings and interviews
- School-based Kindergarten information nights
- School-based Curriculum nights
- School Team Meetings
- Special Education Resource Teachers
- Special Education Consultants
- Classroom Teachers, Principals, Vice-Principals
- School Community Councils
- Board Website
- Ministry Website

### 2. Parent Guides

- The Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board *Parent Handbook for Special Education* IEP and IPRC *Guides* will be distributed to parents prior to an initial IPRC or if a child has an Individual Education Plan. They are also posted on the Board website.
- Three Transition Support Guides will be posted on the Board website and are distributed during all transition meetings and community events.

### Statistical Information Regarding Identification, Placement & Review Committees in Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board 2022-23 (as of June 30, 2023)

- |                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| 1. Total IPRC's | 2738 |
| 2. Appeals      | 0    |

### SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS PROVIDED BY THE BOARD

In discussions with SEAC, there has always been a strong focus supporting inclusion of all students. As an inclusive Board, the range of placements offered is limited to those that provide students with as many opportunities as possible to learn with their peers in the regular classroom. There are no self-contained classroom placements. Discussions with SEAC have included ways in which services and support for exceptional students can be implemented through a model of inclusion whereby students are supported in their neighbourhood school with support both direct or consultative being provided in the classroom and/or the Resource



Room. This input is consistent with the placements provided by the Board and the Board's General Model of Special Education.

In accordance with the board's inclusive philosophy, the first option for placement is in the regular class while providing the support students need to be successful. Within this placement

option, a range of services and support will be provided to students. The most appropriate placement is based on the strengths and learning needs of the individual and is determined through the IPRC process. As a student's needs change, the IPRC is the process where the decision to change the student's placement is made. The range of placements offered by the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board is available to students of all exceptionalities.

The spectrum of placements (with descriptions) includes the following:

- regular class placement with accommodations and/or modifications
- The student would spend the day in the regular classroom. They would receive accommodations or modifications as specified in their Individual Education Plan to allow them to be successful. The Special Education Teacher would serve in a consulting role.
- regular class placement with in-class support from the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)
- The student would spend the day in the regular classroom and would at times have the assistance of a SERT who would come into the classroom and may work with one or more students.
- regular class placement with withdrawal support
- The student would spend most of the day in the regular classroom and would at times leave the room to receive assistance from a SERT.

Strategies and accommodations that can support students in the regular class are outlined in the Individual Education Plan. In addition to support the SERT, the following Board Services Staff may provide assistance, both consultation and direct service:

- Resource Teacher of the Deaf
- Vision Resource Teacher
- Orientation and Mobility Specialist
- Intervener
- School Counsellor
- Speech Language Pathologist
- Speech Language Assistant
- Special Education Consultant
- ABA Support Staff
- Psychologist/Psychological Associate



In addition to this, the following placement options may be utilized for students with a Behavioural exceptionality if the previous placements have not met a student's individual needs:

- ECPP classroom
- Modified school day pending placement in a treatment centre
- Home Instruction pending placement in a treatment centre
- Home Instruction
- Provincial School

School Boards partner with treatment providers in the operation of ECPP classrooms. As ECPP classrooms are not classrooms of the school board, decisions to admit a student into such a classroom are the sole discretion of the treatment provider. The Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board has partnered with Kinark Child and Family Services to operate two classrooms within Simcoe County. The Simcoe County District School Board also has partnerships to operate several ECPP classrooms. There is a standing agreement allowing students from both school boards access to the full range of ECPP programs in Simcoe County. The criteria for admission to a ECPP classroom vary depending upon the nature of the classroom. The classrooms operated in partnership with Kinark Child and Family Services require that the student have mental health treatment needs and that the nature of the particular classroom is conducive to treating the student's specific needs.

Finally, on rare occasions, students who have significant medical needs and are considered to be medically fragile may require a modified school day or home instruction. When considering this placement, medical information and recommendations are reviewed along with the recommendation of the parent. In these rare situations, it is our hope that eventually the student may be in full-time attendance at school, but the physical well-being of the student takes precedence in all situations.

## **CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF EXCEPTIONALITIES**

At the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meeting, the members of the committee will use the five categories and definitions as specified by the Ministry of Education to:

- Determine whether a child is exceptional;
- Identify the area(s) of a student's exceptionality;
- Decide on an appropriate placement for a student, within the range of placements offered by the Board;
- Review the identification and placement at least once in each school year.





## 1. Behaviour

A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

- An inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships;
- Excessive fears or anxieties;
- A tendency to compulsive reaction;
- An inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof.

## 2. Communication

### Autism

A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

- a) Disturbances in:
  - Rate of educational development;
  - Ability to relate to the environment;
  - Mobility;
  - Perception, speech, and language.
- b) Lack of the representational symbolic behaviour that precedes language.

### Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.

### Language Impairment

A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors which may:

- a) Involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and
- b) Include one or more of the following:
  - Language delay;
  - Dysfluency;
  - Voice & articulation development, which may/may not be organically or functionally based.



### **Speech Impairment**

A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm and stress.

### **Learning Disability**

The Ministry of Education defines learning disability as one of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that:

- affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or nonverbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are at least in the average range;
- results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support;
- results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills;
- may typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; memory and attention; processing speed; perceptual-motor processing; visual-spatial processing; executive functions (e.g., self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision-making);
- may be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities;
- is not the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction.

## **3. Intellectual**

### **Giftedness**

An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.



### **Mild Intellectual Disability**

A learning disorder characterized by:

- An ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service;
- An inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development;
- A potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

### **Developmental Disability**

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

- a) An inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development;
- b) An inability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development;
- c) A limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

## **4. Physical**

### **Physical Disability**

A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or developmental level.

### **Blind and Low Vision**

A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.

## **5. Multiple**

### **Multiple Exceptionalities**

A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities, that is of such nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments or disabilities.



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## **Part D:**

# **Other Supports to Student Learning**



## COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES

When children with exceptional needs are entering school, the transition process is key to ensuring success in their new environment. The specific process for this is carried out in partnership with The Simcoe County Early Intervention System. The *Steps to School for Children with Special Needs* is distributed to parents to assist with the transition planning. In addition to this, our parent guide “Supporting Families as they Transition to Elementary School” is provided. Throughout this process, the Board works in partnership with the parents and preschool providers to receive information that will assist in ensuring a smooth transition. Assessments that have been completed in the preschool program are accepted by the Board and have important information that is of assistance when developing the Individual Education Plan.

The information that is acquired following intensive early intervention programs for children with Autism can be informative when looking at specific strategies to be considered. Assessments that have been completed through this program are valuable to assisting with educational programming for the child while in school. Intensive ABA providers, with parental consent, are welcome to attend the school team meetings and assist the staff with information relating to meeting a child’s needs.

Along with this, in Simcoe County, a process has been established to outline the transition to school from the preschool speech and language services. This process is outlined in detail in *The Simcoe County Children’s Speech and Language Service System, Transition to School Agreement*.

With the support of our SEAC transition subcommittee, three companion brochures were developed to support transitions into elementary school, into secondary school and from secondary school. There will also be electronic versions posted on our website. These are meant to be invitational documents to help start conversations between families, schools and community partners to support effective transition planning. Throughout the transition process, the Principal, in partnership with the parents and IEP development team are responsible for the transition process.

Exceptional students who enter schools within the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board from other school boards also require careful planning for their transition to a new school to be positive. In these situations, a School Team Meeting(s) takes place prior to registration and entry into the new school. With appropriate parental consent, discussions at these meetings may include a review of previous IEP’s and assessments in order to plan the student’s day and put appropriate resources in place. When a student who is exceptional in another board enters the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board, in order for the designation as an exceptional student to continue, an IPRC meeting must occur. Documentation (e.g. previous assessments from other boards, private professionals with appropriate qualifications) will be accepted for consideration by the IPRC in making its decision.



For students who will be enrolling in the board from preschool programs for the deaf, the E.C. Drury School for the Deaf is asked to contact the Assistant to the Superintendent - Special Education at the start of each school year, to advise us of students who will be enrolling in the upcoming school year. This will allow for time to both visit the student and ensure that there is a Transition Planning Meeting prior to September of the year in which the child begins school. This will also allow time for the Assistant to the Superintendent - Special Education to invite the appropriate resource teacher to be an active participant in the transition planning process.

Finally, when students are transitioned from care, treatment and correctional programs, careful planning is essential. In some instances, students return to their home school from ECPP classes on a gradual basis. Planning through the School Team process is key to ensuring a smooth transition. On occasion a student is demitted from a care and treatment program rather than transitioned back to school. In such instances, the Board continues to dialogue with our partners at the Ministry of Children and Community and Social Services in order to collaboratively develop a plan that provides for the needs of the student.

### **SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL FOR AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION**

Currently, when a child requires augmentative communication support (ACS), a referral is made to The Children's Treatment Network (CTN, Simcoe) or One Kid's Place (OKP, Muskoka). CTN or OKP will provide support both at home and at school depending on the range of needs.

The Augmentative Speech Pathologist will consult with the Special Education Resource Teacher providing ideas on the development of curriculum materials. The school continues to be responsible for making these materials and implementing them in the school environment.

If the student's needs for ACS are more significant, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital may be involved in servicing the student. The Speech-Language Pathologist who is directly involved in overseeing the ACS would attend School Team meetings.

There may be a need for the parent to meet with the school team to address home communication needs within the context of the link to the school environment. In these situations, the Speech Language Pathologist from the board, CTN or Holland Bloorview would arrange this in conjunction with the Principal/school personnel.

If the student's communication needs change by becoming primarily verbal, service will be transferred from CTN to the appropriate school board personnel.



## SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

Within the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board, Local Health Integration Networks - (LHIN's) and Children's Treatment Centres provide specialized health support services for students. The LHINs are funded by the Ministry of Health (MOH) while the CTC's are funded by the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services (MCCS). The two CTC's serving the SMCDSB are Children's Treatment Network (CTN) and One Kid's Place (OKP).

The services provided through the MOH and MCCS are outlined in the attached chart. This chart clarifies the mandates and responsibility of health and education.

PPM 81 is currently under review.

## SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES – A SUMMARY

Specialized Health Support Service	Agency or position of person who performs the service (e.g. LHIN, board staff, parent, student)	Eligibility criteria for students to receive the service	Position of person who determines eligibility to receive the service and the level of support	Criteria for determining when the service is no longer required	Procedures for resolving disputes about eligibility and level of support (if available)
Nursing	MOH	MOH Mandate	Case Manager MOH	Case Manager- MOH	School Team Meeting
Occupational Therapy	MCCS (Closing the Gap)	MCCS Mandate	Case Manager MCCS	Case Manager MCCS OT	School Team Meeting
Physiotherapy	MCCS- (Closing the Gap)	MCCS Mandate	Case Manager MCCS	Case Manager MCCS PT	School Team Meeting
Nutrition	MOH	MOH Policy	Case Manager MOH	MOH	School Team Meeting
Speech and Language Therapy	MCCS/Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, CTN, or	MCCS Policy/CTN/OKP/Board SLP/SLA Service	Case Manager MOH, CTN, OKP or Board SLP	MOH, CTN, OKP or School Board Mandate	School Team Meeting



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	Board Staff	Delivery Model			
<b>Speech correction and remediation</b>	Board SLP	Board SLP/SLA Service Delivery Model	SLP/SLA	School Team Meeting	School Team Meeting
<b>Administration of prescribed medications</b>	Oral - Board Staff Glucagon-Board Staff Other - MOH	Board Policy or MOH Mandate	Principal or MOH Case Manager	Students Physician	School Team Meeting
<b>Catheterization (sterile)</b>	MOH	MOH Mandate	Case Manager MOH	Student Independent with procedure	School Team Meeting
<b>Suctioning</b>	LHIN-deep suction Board-shallow suction (hygiene only)	PPM-81 or MOH Mandate	Case Manager MOH	Physician	School Team Meeting
<b>Lifting and positioning</b>	Board Staff/MCCS	MCCS Mandate	Case Manager MCCS	OT/PT MCCS	School Team Meeting
<b>Assistance with mobility</b>	Board Staff/MCCS	PPM-81 and MCCS Mandate	Case Manager MCCS	OT/PT MCCS	School Team Meeting
<b>Feeding</b>	G-tube feeding – MOH	PPM-81 and MOH Mandate	Case Manager MOH	Dietician	School Team Meeting
<b>Toileting</b>	Board Staff	Student Need			School Team Meeting
<b>Glucose Monitoring</b>	MOH/Parent/Pupil	MOH Mandate	Case Manager MOH	MOH Policy	School Team Meeting

## PROVINCIAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO

### Provincial Schools and Provincial Demonstration Schools

- are operated by the Ministry of Education;
- provide education for students who are deaf or blind, or who have severe learning disabilities;
- provide an alternative education option;
- serve as regional resource centers for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;
- provide preschool home visiting services for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;
- develop and provide learning materials and media for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;





- provide school board teachers with resource services;
- play a valuable role in teacher training.

### **W. Ross Macdonald School - School for the Blind and Deaf-Blind**

W. Ross Macdonald School is located in Brantford and provides education for students who are blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind. The school provides:

- a provincial resource centre for the visually impaired and deaf-blind;
- support to local school boards through consultation and the provision of special learning materials, such as Braille materials, audio supports, and large-print textbooks;
- professional services and guidance to ministries of education on an inter-provincial, co-operative basis.

Programs are tailored to the needs of the individual student and:

- are designed to help these students learn to live independently in a non-sheltered environment;
- are delivered by specially trained teachers;
- follow the Ontario curriculum developed for all students in the province;
- offer a full range of courses at the secondary level;
- offer courses in special subject areas such as music, broad-based technology, family studies, physical education and mobility training;
- are individualized to offer a comprehensive “life skills” program;
- provide, through home visits for parents and families of preschool deaf-blind children, assistance in preparing these children for future education.

### **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)

Admittance to a Provincial School is determined by the Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296.

These schools provide elementary and secondary school programs for deaf students from preschool level to high school graduation. The curriculum follows the Ontario Curriculum and



parallels courses and programs provided by school boards. Each student has his or her special needs met as set out in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Schools for the deaf:

- provide rich and supportive bilingual/bicultural educational environments which facilitate students' language acquisition, learning and social development through American Sign Language (ASL) and English;
- operate primarily as day schools;
- provide residential facilities five days per week for those students who do not live within a reasonable commuting distance from the school.

Each school has a Resource Services Department, which provides the following services:

- consultation and educational advice to parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and school board personnel;
- information brochures;
- a wide variety of workshops for parents, school boards, and other agencies;
- an extensive home-visiting program delivered to parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing preschool children by teachers trained in preschool and deaf education.

Transportation for students attending Provincial Schools is arranged through the receiving institution.

**Number of students from the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board attending the following Provincial Schools:**

**The Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf**

Milton, Ontario

1 student

**Trillium School**

Milton, Ontario

1 student

**Sagonaska**

Belleville, Ontario

0 students

**W. Ross Macdonald School**

Brantford, Ontario

2 students



- Transportation for W. Ross MacDonald School is shared with the Trillium Lakelands District School.

### **Provincial School Contacts**

Teachers may obtain additional information from the Resource Services departments of the Provincial Schools and the groups listed below.

#### ***Provincial Schools Branch, Ministry of Education***

Provincial Schools Branch  
255 Ontario Street South  
Milton, Ontario L9T 2M5  
Tel.: (905) 878-2851 Fax : (905) 878-5405

#### **Schools for the Deaf**

The Ernest C. Drury School  
for the Deaf  
255 Ontario Street South  
Milton, Ontario  
L9T 2M5  
Tel.: (905) 878-2851  
Fax: (905) 878-1354

The Robarts School for the Deaf  
1515 Cheapside St  
London, Ontario  
N5V 3N9  
Tel.: (519) 453-4400  
Fax: (519) 453-7943

The Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf  
350 Dundas Street West  
Belleville, Ontario  
K8P 1B2  
Tel.: (613) 967-2823  
Fax: (613) 967-2857

#### **Schools for the Learning Disabled**

Amethyst School

#### **School for the Blind and Deaf-Blind**

W. Ross Macdonald School  
350 Brant Avenue  
Brantford, Ontario  
N3T 3J9  
Tel.: (519) 759-0730  
Fax: (519) 759-4741

#### **School for the Deaf, Blind, and Deaf-B**

Centre Jules-Léger  
281 rue Lanark  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1Z 6R8  
Tel.: (613) 761-9300  
Fax: (613) 761-9301

Sagonaska School



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1515 Cheapside St  
London, Ontario  
N5V 3N9  
Tel: (519)453-4408  
Fax: (519) 453-2160

350 Dundas Street West  
Belleville, Ontario  
K8P 1B2  
Tel: (613)967-2830  
Fax: (613) 967-2482

Centre Jules-Leger  
218 rue Lanark  
Ottawa, Ontario K1Z 6R8  
Tel: (613)-761-9300  
Fax: (613) 761-9301  
TTY: (613) 761-9302 and 761-9304

Trillium School  
255 Ontario Street South  
Milton, Ontario  
L9T 3X9  
Tel: (905) 878-8428  
Fax (905) 878-7540

The Demonstration Schools for students with learning disabilities were established to:

- provide special residential education programs for students between the ages of 5 and 21 years;
- enhance the development of each student's academic and social skills;
- develop the abilities of the students enrolled to a level that will enable them to return to programs operated by a local school board within two years.

An in-service teacher education program is provided at each Demonstration School. This program is designed to share methodologies and materials with teachers of Ontario school boards. Information about the programs offered should be obtained from the schools themselves.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

In accordance with Regulation 464/97, the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) continues to be an integral part in the establishment and development of special education programs and services for all exceptional pupils in the system. The committee is mandated to make recommendations to the Board on any issues affecting the programs and services for all exceptional pupils.

Through active involvement on the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), members educate their specific local associations pertaining to the proceedings of SEAC and the ongoing developments and procedures with respect to special education programs and services. Discussions at SEAC meetings are key in reviewing the direction and model for service delivery



of educational services for exceptional students. This year discussions focussed on inclusion, students with learning disabilities, accessibility concerns, attendance management, the special needs strategy, budget, role of SERT, Board Improvement Planning, ABA training, as well as special education in secondary schools. These discussions are extremely valuable when reviewing issues related to the education of exceptional students within the Board.

### **Meeting Times, Places, Format**

SEAC meets every month. Meetings commence at 5:30 p.m. at 46 Alliance Blvd in the Boardroom and are open to the public. For specific meeting dates, please contact the Superintendent of Special Education at 705-722-3555.

The SEAC meetings are conducted in a formal manner, face-to-face and attended by appointed members from local associations and by Board resource staff. Minutes are taken by the Recording Administrative Assistant and distributed to each member, the Board of Trustees and to the general public, upon request. Minutes of all SEAC meetings, including recommendations are approved at regular Board meetings.

### **Nomination Process**

The term of the Board of Trustees comes to a close in conjunction with municipal elections. The Special Education Advisory Committee eligibility coincides with the municipal elections as well. At this time, a letter and appropriate nomination form are forwarded to local associations to inquire about each association's intention regarding SEAC representation for the next four years.

Criteria for a candidate's nomination includes:

- a representative from an association that operates locally within the jurisdiction of the board;
- nominated by the local association and appointed by the board;
- individual must be a Canadian Citizen;
- of full age of eighteen years;
- a Roman Catholic;
- a resident within the area of jurisdiction of the Board;
- a Catholic school supporter.

Each association is encouraged to nominate a qualified representative, as well as an alternate representative. Provided the nominee meets all of the qualifications criteria, a recommendation is made to the Board of Trustees to approve each nominee's appointment to the committee. The same process is followed in the event a vacancy occurs during the four-year term.



Our Faith  
Our Students  
Our Future

### **Members' Contact Information**

At the beginning of each calendar year, a Special Education Advisory Committee membership list is published and distributed to each member.