



AGENDA – SEAC MEETING

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 13, 2023 – 5:30 PM

Limestone Education Centre

220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, ON

Virtual Meeting Link: <https://bit.ly/SEPT13SEACMTG>

Acknowledgement of Territory: “The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their enduring presence on this land, as well as the presence of Métis, Inuit and other First Nations from across Turtle Island. We honour their cultures and celebrate their commitment to this land.”

- 1. WELCOME**
- 2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
- 3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - 4.1 SEAC Minutes – June 14, 2023** (Pages 3-8)
- 5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

6. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES UPDATE

6.1 Administrative Report: Special Education Review, Principal Blackburn, and Vice Principal Dillard (Pages 9-50)

6.2 Presentation: Special Education Review Update, Principal Blackburn, and Vice Principal Dillard

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Dufferin District School Board - Letter to Minister of Education regarding the recruitment and retention of staff serving in the capacity of Educational Resource Worker (Educational Assistants). (Pages 51-52)

8. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

8.1 Autism Ontario SEAC Nomination Letter (Pages 53)

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report - Superintendent Scot Gillam (Pages 54-55)

9.2 SEAC Meeting Topics

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

11. ADJOURNMENT



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 14, 2023

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Members:
T. Lloyd K. McGregor	Present: S. Henderson-Todd, Lennox and Addington Resources for Children H. Simson, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston A. Martin, Member-at-Large (Queen's University) Regrets: Z. Rogers, Community Living Kingston L. Clouthier, Easter Seals Ontario
	Staff:
	Present: M. Blackburn, Principal of Educational Services J. Lalonde, Special Education Program Coordinator S. Gillam, Superintendent, Learning for All N. Dillard, Vice-Principal of Educational Services C. Snider, Special Education Program Coordinator T. Vail, Special Education Program Coordinator A. Ward, Special Education Program Coordinator Regrets: L. Conboy, Mental Health Lead W. Fisher, Educational Services and Safe Schools Coordinator
Guests:	Recorder:
Director of Education Krishna Burra	J. Senior, Administrative Assistant

1. WELCOME

Chair McGregor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chair McGregor read the Acknowledgement of Territory:

“The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their enduring presence on this land, as well as the presence of Métis, Inuit, and other First Nations from across Turtle Island. We honour their cultures and celebrate their commitment to this land.”

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY: Trustee of Lloyd that the agenda be approved. Carried.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None at this time.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 SEAC Minutes May 31, 2023

MOVED BY: Trustee Lloyd that the May 31, 2023, SEAC Minutes be approved. Carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Superintendent Scot Gillam shared that the two vacant Member-at-Large positions have been selected and will be confirmed at the upcoming board meeting on June 21, 2023. The new members will attend our September 13, 2023, SEAC Meeting.

6. LIMESTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN

6.1 Presentation: LDSB Strategic Planning Process 2023-2028 – Director Krishna Burra shared an in-depth presentation on the LDSB Strategic Planning Process for 2023-2028.

Chair McGregor called on SEAC Members for questions.

7. EDUCATION SERVICES UPDATE

7.1 Presentation: Building Our Vision for the Future, Enhancing Special Education Services in Our District, June 2023 Monitoring Document – Principal Michael Blackburn and Vice Principal Nicola Dillard presented a report illustrating the indicators of success in key areas of focus under the four Big Ideas of the Special Education Services Monitoring Document.

1. **Reallocation of Resources:** Restructuring supports, services, teams, and programs to meet the changing needs of students and schools and to equitably distribute resources.
 - **Key area of focus:** Enhancing – Provide timely, responsive, and ongoing support to school teams in alignment with tiers of support.
 - **Indicators of Success:**
 - Tri-Team referral form – ongoing team collaboration and data collection.
 - Intensive Support Schools – Transition to Kindergarten (T2K), Intensive Support Schools (ISS).
 - Tiers of Support – Consultation, Intervention, Follow-up, and Team Support.
 - Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA) role – exploration and expansion.
 - School Profiles.
 - Intervention Assistant role reallocation across all District teams.
2. **Professional Learning:** Provide ongoing and relevant professional learning to a variety of staff in order to build capacity to meet the needs of diverse learners in an inclusive learning environment.
 - **Key area of focus:** Continuing – Enhance online resources and professional learning via Minds Online.
 - **Indicators of Success:**
 - Educational Assistant (EA) professional learning.
 - Ongoing development – team and role resources.
 - Ensuring access and user experience.
 - Sharepoint UDL – linked to multiple program areas.
 - Addressing Human Rights incidents – Special Education resource.
 - In development – Kindergarten transition and programming support.
3. **Strengthening Partnerships and Leveraging Supports:** Strengthen and enhance partnerships with families and community partners to leverage supports and maximize student learning and well-being.
 - **Key area of focus:** Continuing – Develop supportive resources for students and parents (Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)).

- **Indicators of Success:**
 - Kid-Friendly Exceptionalities.
 - Parent information - modifications.
 - K-12 Accessibility Standards – IEP and IPRC.
 - Family friendly guide to IPRCs and IEPs.
 - Student guide to IEPs – in development – student input.
- 4. **Learning for All:** Support the implementation of differentiated, precise and research-based instructional strategies to support the learning and well-being of all students.
 - **Key area of focus:** Continuing – Support the development and implementation of precise and personalized plans for students (IEP, Student Safety Plan (SSP), and Medical Plans).
 - **Indicators of Success:**
 - Team and school-based support for SSP development, review, and revision.
 - Modification flow chart and guidance.
 - Plans of Care – Minds Online.
 - Student Centered Personal Care Guidelines.
 - Return to school guidelines – community partner input.
 - Checklist for administrators for reading/reviewing IEPs.
 - Ongoing collaboration with Community Partners – Medical Safety planning.

Chair McGregor called upon SEAC Members for questions regarding the June 2023 Monitoring Document.

7.2 Special Education Review – Principal Michael Blackburn and Vice Principal Nicola Dillard shared the exchange summary and feedback received from the Special Education Review.

Chair McGregor called upon SEAC Members for questions regarding the Special Education Review Exchange Summary and feedback.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

9. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

None at this time.

10. OTHER BUSINESS – Administrative Report: Superintendent’s Report

A. Ministry Updates:

None at this time.

B. Educational Services Update:

Summer Mental Health and Special Education Supports

As previously reported, Limestone District School Board (LDSB) received Priority and Partnership Funding (PPF) to support Mental Health and Special Education initiatives throughout the summer. Supports will be provided to both summer school, the elementary literacy camps and to support transitions back to school for students with special education needs. A Student Support Counselor/Adolescent Care worker and Learning Program Support teacher will be provided to summer school for 6 weeks. In addition, 8 Educational Assistants will be provided to the elementary literacy programs for the duration of the camps. Finally, Educational Assistant time will be provided to support transition meetings for students with special education needs in late August, early September. The PPF funding will also be used to support Professional Learning and Training. The following courses will be offered to staff over the summer: Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) Training, Y Training, Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) Training, Community Resilience Initiative (CRI) Training, and Mental Health LIT. In addition to these initiatives, we are also supporting the creation of a pathway of care that will see the potential to have 1-2 days of psychiatry support per week between July 10 – September 30, 2023, provided by Burr 4 Child & Adolescent Psychiatrists.

Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Update

We were able to process more claims than in any prior year to provide students with the physical, sensory, and computer equipment they require to be successful at school. That includes processing approximately 200 equipment recommendations for physical, hearing, vision, personal care, physical assist, or sensory products. Additionally, we provided or refreshed 280 technology devices to students.

Math/Spec Ed Project

Through Ministry PPF funding our team, in collaboration with the Curriculum Department, was able to provide professional learning and resources to all district program staff and elementary School to Community (SCS) teachers. The professional learning focused on foundational skills in early numeracy development, diagnostic assessment, program planning, and available resources. Teachers were also given math manipulatives and games to take back to their classes!

Dual Diagnosis Program

In September 2023 we will be piloting a new program at Polson Park Public School which will provide supports and services to students with complex needs and dual diagnosis of Intellectual Disability and Autism. Nine students were referred to the program through our SCS team and program planning is well underway.

Program Description:

This specialized program will provide students with individualized support in the key areas of communication, self-regulation, and life skills. In addition, students will benefit from an integrated approach to curriculum instruction with opportunities for purposeful and appropriate inclusion in mainstream classroom settings based on student interests, skills, and goals. The classroom will support a community of diverse learners who require an alternative approach to learning that is tailored to their unique abilities and gifts.

Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP) Ministry Monitoring

On May 24, 2023, the Ministry of Education visited our ECP: Nexus Program at Truedell Public School for a monitoring visit. The purpose of the monitoring visit is to ensure the implementation of Ministry Policy as set out in the *Guidelines for Approval and Provision of Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP)* and the monitoring report. We received our final report which indicated effective implementation of Ministry Guidelines as well as exemplary collaboration, communication, and partnership.

Chair McGregor called on SEAC Members for questions.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY: Trustee Lloyd that the meeting adjourn. Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 pm.



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT: SPECIAL EDUCATION REVIEW

September 13, 2023

Purpose

To provide SEAC and the Board of Trustees with an update regarding the Special Education Review, including initial findings and recommendations.

Background

In the spring of 2023 Educational Services facilitated a Special Education Review to gather input and feedback from various stakeholders related to special education supports and services within the Limestone District School Board. This review was intended to build on the information gathered in June 2016 through a similar review process which informed department goals, priorities, and decisions. Utilizing the ThoughtExchange platform various stakeholders including students, caregivers/families, staff, and community partners were asked the following question:

What key supports and services are important for students with special education needs to experience success at school and reach their full potential?

Two sets of data were gathered during the review. Initially, students with special education needs and their families were surveyed in order to elevate and prioritize the voices of those directly impacted by our support and services. A total of 2,934 participants responded to the question, sharing 3,569 unique thoughts, and providing over 66,000 ratings. Following this, additional information was gathered from staff, students, families, and community partners with 474 participants responding to the question, sharing 510 unique thoughts, and providing over 10,000 ratings.

In addition to the ThoughtExchange tool, Educational Services staff met with a variety of focus groups to further explore this question and provide an opportunity to reflect on some of the initial data gathered. Staff met with students with special education needs, parents/caregivers of students with special education needs, the staff network for persons with disabilities, Student Support Teachers (SST), Learning Program Support (LPS) Teachers, Educational Services staff, and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

Data from the ThoughtExchange and focus groups was then analyzed by a team at Educational Services to identify key themes and ideas that had emerged.

Current Status

Through the special education review the following key themes emerged as important to the greatest percentage of respondents and these themes/ideas represented the largest number of responses which resonated with participants:

Staff Support/Human Resources
Inclusive and Supportive Culture
Individualized Supports and Accommodations
Programs and Programming

Further analysis revealed some common ideas/thoughts shared within each theme including:

Staff Support/Human Resources: Individual Help, Staff Knowledge/Understanding, Support from Staff, Educational Assistant (EA) Help

Inclusive and Supportive Culture: Community and Classroom Culture, School/Home Connection

Individualized Supports and Accommodations: Extra Time, Quiet/Alternative Spaces, Regulation Tools and Strategies, Technology

Programs and Programming: My Individual Education Plan (IEP), Specialized Programs, Small Group/Peer Support

The Educational Services team continues to reflect on the data gathered and examine how our current goals and priorities align with feedback from our school communities. Areas for exploration, growth and improvement will be identified and embedded in our 2023-24 monitoring plan.

Recommendations

That Educational Services staff continue to examine and reflect on the findings of the 2023 Special Education Review and that this data be used to inform future planning, goals, and decisions.

That additional data be gathered to deepen our understanding of the key services and supports that are needed for student success (focus groups, department data, Board Census data, external research partnerships)

That this report be received by SEAC and the Board of Trustees for information.

Attachment:

Special Education Review Summary Reports (March 2023 and April 2023)

Exchange Summary

Michael Blackburn, Limestone District School Board
March 5, 2023

What key supports and services are important for students with special education needs to experience success at school and reach their full potential?



PARTICIPATION

Breakdown of Participation



2,934

Participants



3,569

Thoughts



66,631

Ratings



PARTICIPATION

Breakdown of Participation




What grade are you or is your child currently in?



2855

Responses

%		Answer <i>(Multi-select)</i>
16%	(477)	K - 3
57%	(1650)	4-8
27%	(784)	9-12+

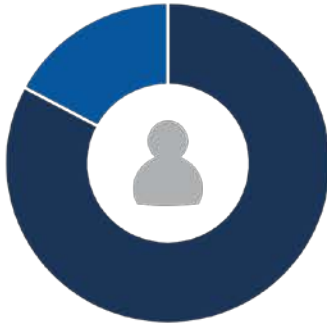


PARTICIPATION

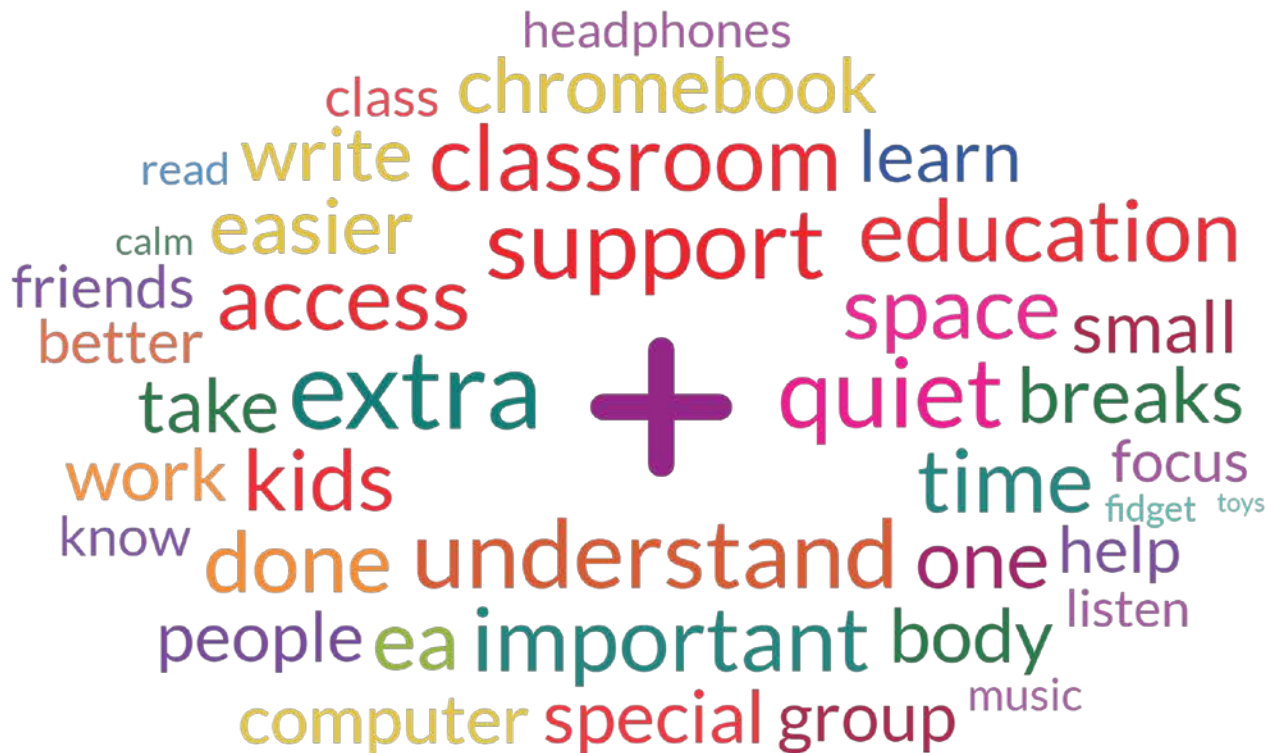
Breakdown of Participation



Are you a student or a parent/guardian?



%		Answer
83%	(2357)	■ Student
17%	(486)	■ Parent/Guardian





THOUGHTS

Key Thoughts



more one on one time to help kids out

4.5 ★★★★★ (25 👤)

Ranked #1 of 3569

quiet spaces Sometimes in a regular class setting it can be imposisble to write, a quiet space solves this issue

4.5 ★★★★★ (17 👤)

Ranked #2 of 3569

Assessments in the early grades to discover any exceptionalities. Sooner Learning difficulties are identified the sooner students can get support

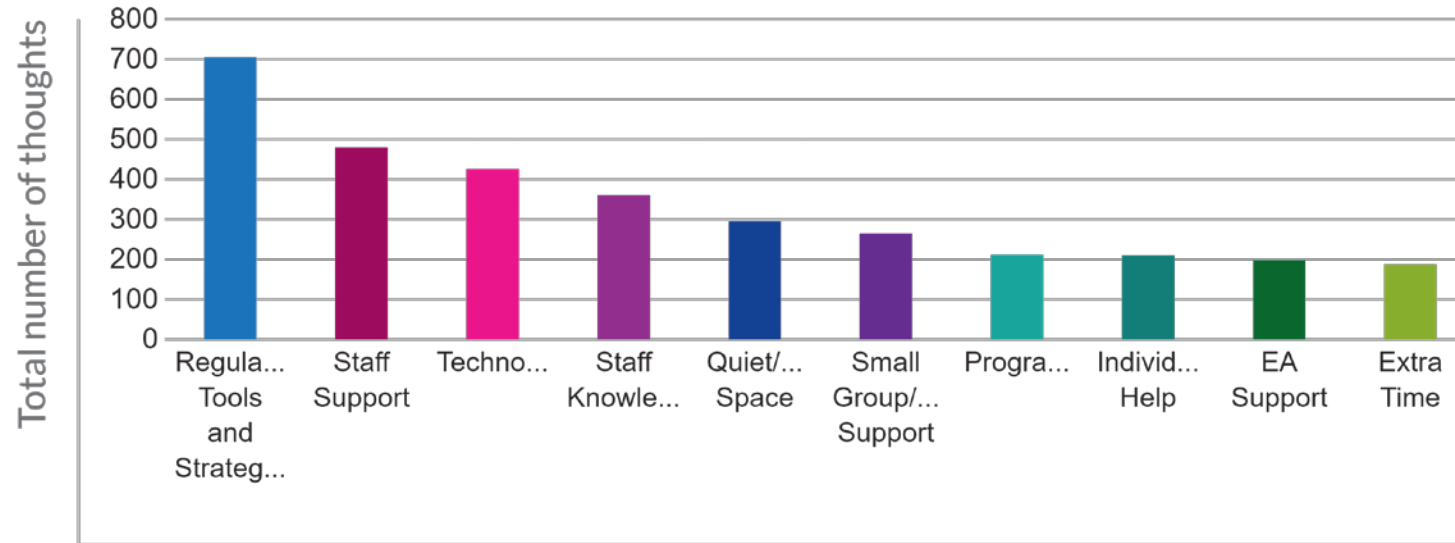
4.4 ★★★★★ (25 👤)

Ranked #3 of 3569



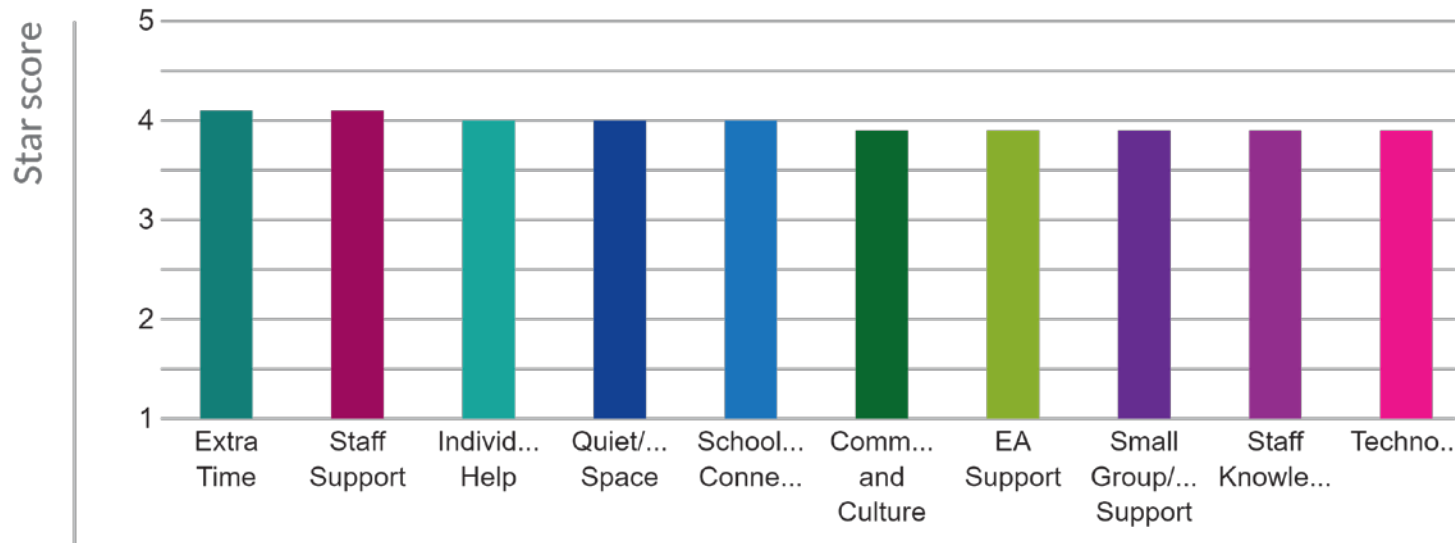
APRIL 2023

Top Themes by total thoughts





APRIL 2023 Top Themes by star score





THOUGHTS Extra Time



extra time I say extra time because special edication need that time to comprehend or complete that task.

4.4  (19 )

Extra time and one on one help if needed Sometimes I need extra time on an assignment or test , quiet place to work, nor hot or cold classroom because I get uncomfortable in really warm temps

4.3  (24 )

More time on assignments , more on on one help, prompts and reminders of what their working on , more understanding from the teachers Teachers need to spend the extra time and realize each student is different and some have challenges that they need help with

4.3  (24 )



THOUGHTS Staff Support



EA support, adult help

4.4 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

More SST and EA support Classroom teachers cannot address all needs at all times.

4.4 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

The school needs to be proactive in supporting students with difficulties. Start the semester with skills sessions for students with IEPs and check in through out the semester to support them.

4.4 ★★★★★ (23 👤)



THOUGHTS

Individual Help



more one on one time to help kids out

4.5 ★★★★★ (25 👤)

One on one, different learning strategies Both my children are visual hands on learners, they both really struggle with theory and need the one on one instruction

4.4 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

Advocating and setting realistic goals for each individual with special needs is the only way to become successful. There needs are all different Special needs kids are so different they're not all text book & require different supports. We fail them when we don't support individual needs

4.4 ★★★★★ (23 👤)



THOUGHTS

Quiet/Alternative Space



quiet spaces Sometimes in a regular class setting it can be imposisble to write, a quiet space solves this issue

4.5  (17 )

Quiet time When our class is loud it's really hard to focus

4.4  (24 )

a quiet workspace It helps me focus on the work

4.4  (20 )



THOUGHTS

School/Home Connection



Frequent communication with parents and guardians.

4.3 ★★★★★ (22 👤)

Administration needs to listen to parents and advocate with the ministry for more support services Not just settle and accept that we get what we get. All students have the ability, and the ministry needs to see that, not just the disability!

4.2 ★★★★★ (18 👤)

Listen to parents, as they know their child best The school needs to recognize that all students are different and have different needs. Some students need to be dismissed from certain subjects.

4.0 ★★★★★ (23 👤)



THOUGHTS

Communication and Culture



Nice Teachers so everyone is treated respectfully

4.3 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

Nice and kind Staff. It makes me feel happy and comfortable.

4.3 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

Frequent communication with parents and guardians.

4.3 ★★★★★ (22 👤)



THOUGHTS EA Support



1:1 EA support

4.3 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

I would definitely say having an EA in the classroom is a great place to start. I understand that sometimes that isn't always possible. It can help a child with so many things that they might need help with.

4.3 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

STAFFING/PEOPLE! We need bodies within the school to help children who require it.



4.3 ★★★★★ (24 👤)







THOUGHTS

Small Group/Peer Support



Smaller classes Smaller classes keeps on their teacher/ student focus easier on lessons on hand less distractions 4.4  (23 )

I was a part of a spelling group with an EA. I felt it was helpful because there were less students and the learning helped me. I think it is important to help students do well at school 4.3  (18 )

SST support that allows children with learning disabilities a chance to work one on one or in small groups in order to address their specific learning It is so easy for the quiet child with an LD to simply get missed in busy classrooms. They need a chance to learn with targeted intervention. 4.3  (18 )



THOUGHTS

Staff Knowledge



All teachers should be familiar with their students' IEPs When there's a change in teachers, this is especially important. Teacher changes can be really hard on kids, and teachers should know IEPs in advance.

4.4 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

ask the teacher for help so you know what to do

4.4 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

More people trained in children's specific needs. If we want to be inclusive we need more people and more people with specific skill set and expertise.

4.4 ★★★★★ (23 👤)



THOUGHTS Technology



Small group, one on one support, technology I learn better

accommodations access to technology

EA techers, tech because some people need more help then others

4.3 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

4.3 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

4.3 ★★★★★ (23 👤)



WRAP UP Next Steps



Thanks for participating

We'll be carefully considering what we learned and sharing our actions back with you.

Exchange Summary

Michael Blackburn, Limestone District School Board
April 24, 2023

What key supports and services are important for students with special education needs to experience success at school and reach their full potential?



PARTICIPATION

Breakdown of Participation



474

Participants



510

Thoughts



10,536

Ratings

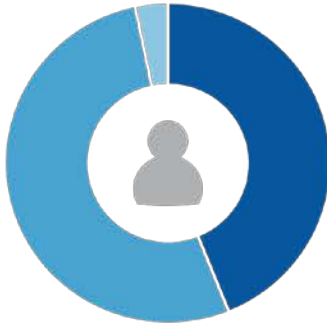


PARTICIPATION

Breakdown of Participation



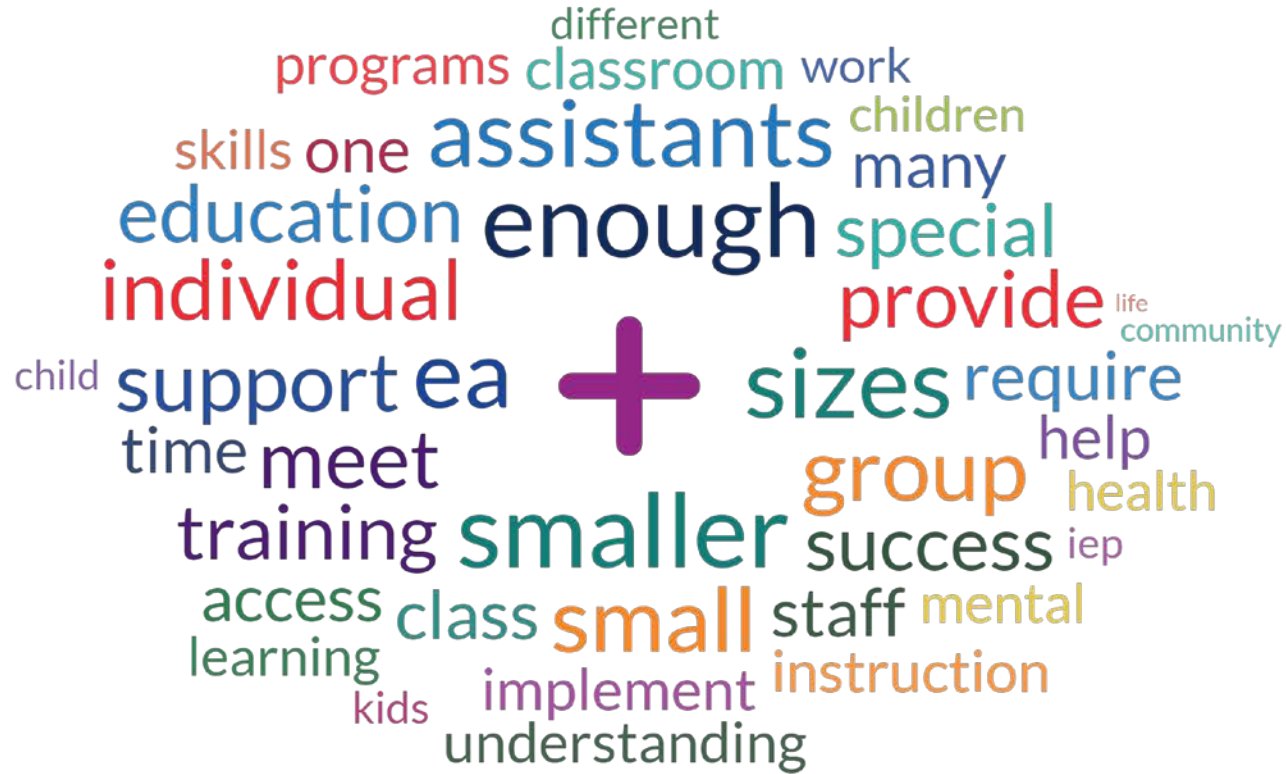
Please identify your primary role/responsibility in completing this survey.



%		Answer
0%	(1)	■ Student
44%	(195)	■ Parent/Guardian
53%	(237)	■ Staff
3%	(15)	■ Community Partner



WORDCLOUD
Top Rated





THOUGHTS

Key Thoughts



smaller class sizes teachers can't reach all students

4.6 ★★★★★ (27 👤)

Ranked #1 of 510

Timely access to Tier 3 interventions Students who are in the margins and require intensive supports should have quick access to those supports.

4.5 ★★★★★ (28 👤)

Ranked #2 of 510

EA's

4.5 ★★★★★ (27 👤)

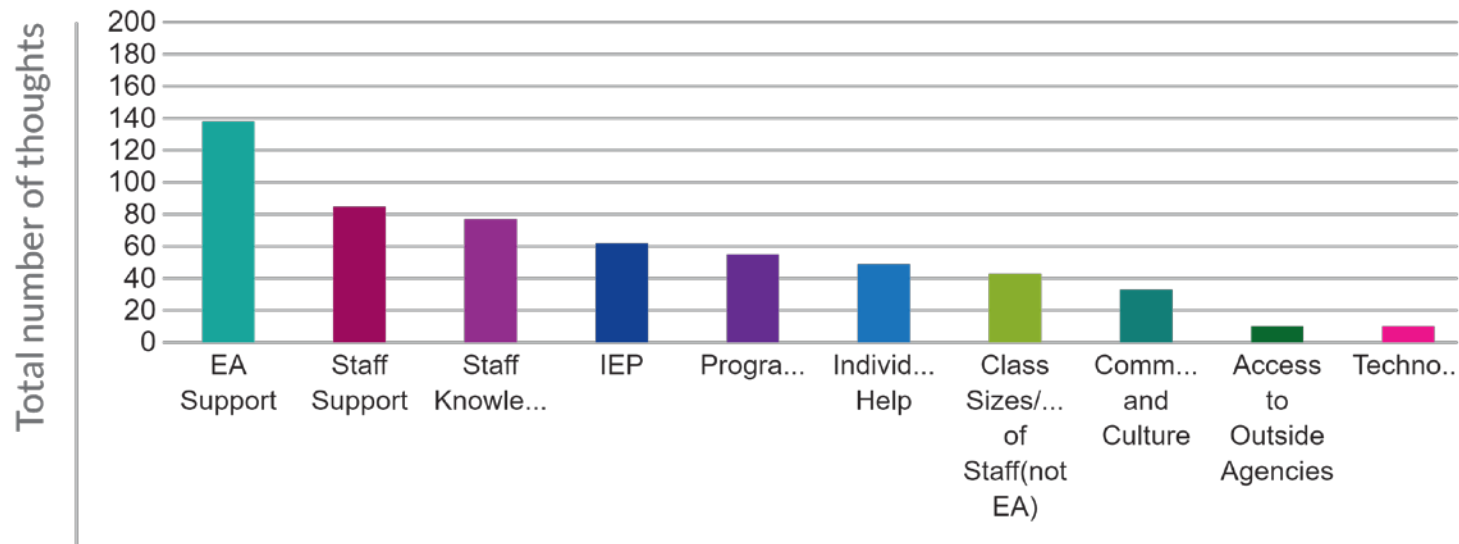
Ranked #3 of 510

translated by Google



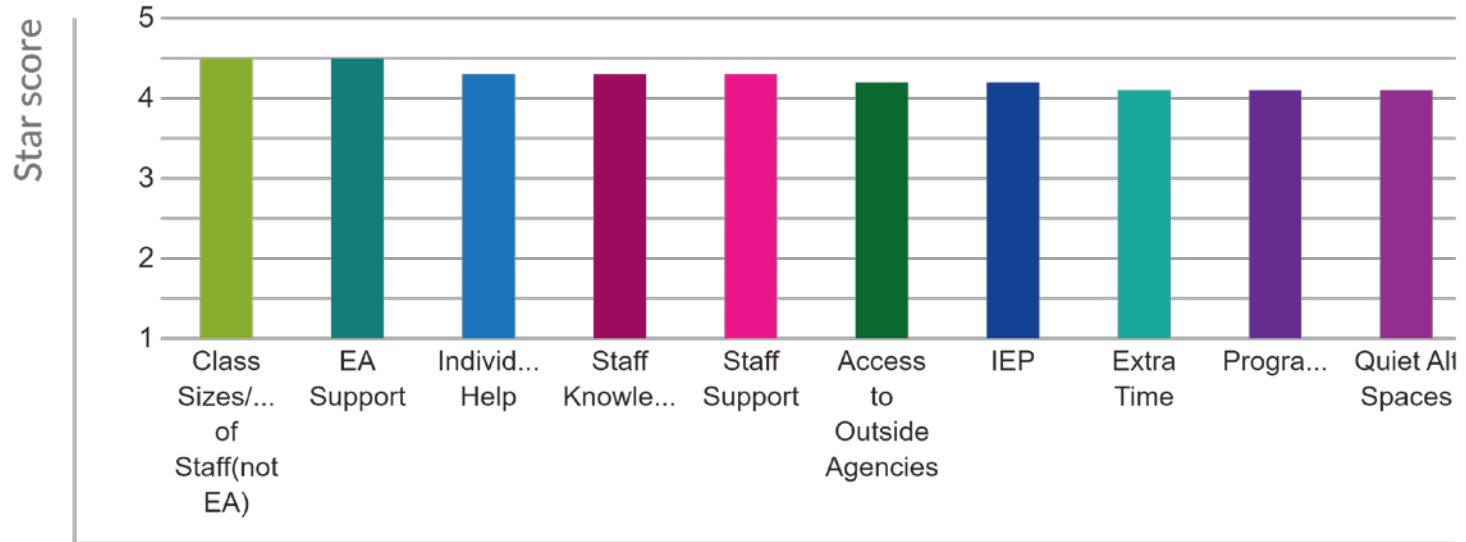
MAY 2023

Top Themes by total thoughts





MAY 2023 Top Themes by star score





THOUGHTS

Class Sizes/Amount of Staff(not EA)



smaller class sizes teachers can't reach all students

4.6 ★★★★★ (27 👤)

smaller class sizes greater support from educational assistants

4.5 ★★★★★ (27 👤)

staff We have a serious lack of staff available to support students and this is the biggest impact on children with special needs.

4.5 ★★★★★ (27 👤)



THOUGHTS EA Support



EA's

translated by Google

Qualified EAs Students have particular needs and someone needs to have a deep understanding to offer supports and strategies

smaller class sizes greater support from educational assistants

4.5 ★★★★★ (27 👤)

4.5 ★★★★★ (27 👤)

4.5 ★★★★★ (27 👤)



THOUGHTS

Individual Help



One on one or small group teaching It is difficult for students with special education needs to keep up in a large classroom with no individual help.

4.4 ★★★★★ (27 👤)

Direct EA support Students with learning needs need to have ready access to a person they can get one on one or small group support from

4.4 ★★★★★ (26 👤)

A key support for students with special education needs to reach their full potential is having access to one-on-one EA support. Schools can provide as much technology as possible, but human interaction with a safe and caring adult is what really makes a difference for students.

4.4 ★★★★★ (25 👤)



THOUGHTS

Staff Knowledge



Qualified EAs Students have particular needs and someone needs to have a deep understanding to offer supports and strategies

4.5  (27 )

Hiring support staff who have formal training, experience, and expertise in specific areas, especially when supporting students with complex needs.

4.5  (26 )

Knowledgeable and trained staff members So that the needs of each student can be met

4.5  (26 )



THOUGHTS Staff Support



Timely access to Tier 3 interventions Students who are in the margins and require intensive supports should have quick access to those supports.

4.5 ★★★★★ (28 👤)

Additional in-class support By far the most impactful to student learning. So many students need assistance in so many areas: a single classroom teacher cannot meet needs.

4.5 ★★★★★ (26 👤)

More SST/ EA support is needed to support our students. Our SST support is spread thin and Tier 2/3 intervention cannot be provided to all students who need it. Our EA's also support multiple students.

4.5 ★★★★★ (26 👤)



THOUGHTS

Access to Outside Agencies



Students need more consistent and more available support staff (EA, Speech, OT, physio, SST, small groups, 1-to-1) to work with during the whole year. Students need specialized support outside of the regular classroom more often so they can get specialized and explicit help individually. 4.4 ★★★★★ (25 👤)

Proper supports, speech when necessary, OT, Aba, 1:1, etc.. Because parents shouldn't have to fight for support for their child. 4.4 ★★★★★ (22 👤)

Coordinated Services and Supports A team approach to student support is essential 4.3 ★★★★★ (25 👤)



THOUGHTS IEP



More psychological assessments and supports from specialists Too many students falling further behind 4.4 ★★★★★ (27 👤)

We need clinical consultants. The ones we have are overloaded and they are not getting to assess enough of our students. We have a triple split class with many students who need psycho-educational assessments. They are falling through the cracks. 4.4 ★★★★★ (24 👤)

It's misleading to caregivers to put "Shared EA support" in an IEP when some students will NEVER receive that support throughout the school year. Transparency, honesty and trust should be assured between home and school. Caregivers should know what the term "shared" really means. 4.3 ★★★★★ (26 👤)



THOUGHTS

Extra Time



Extra time Many students need additional time to comprehend, process or complete tasks 4.1 ★★★★★ (26 👤)



THOUGHTS

Program/Programming



More availability for Autism Classrooms and more inclusion in regards to these specialized programs Students with Autism should be able to attend Autism programs even with little language skills to benefit them with more support

4.3  (27 )

We need more programs - Autism, IDD, Behaviour, LD. We also need MID programs Qualified staff and small class sizes with several EA's to teach these students the skills they need to cope in inclusive environments.

4.3  (24 )

More PD opportunities (with release time) for Teachers and EAs to learn about UDL, executive functioning and trauma sensitive approaches

4.2  (27 )



THOUGHTS

Quiet Alt Spaces



Quiet spaces sometimes it is hard to focus

4.2 ★★★★★ (28 👤)

Sensory safe spaces! Neurodivergent brains mean that their internal systems get disrupted often. Reducing/seeking stimulation is necessary for brains to retain info.

4.0 ★★★★★ (27 👤)

quiet space / alternative setting allows for breaks, times to refresh and reset

3.8 ★★★★★ (27 👤)



DIFFERENCES

One Classroom | Access [126 | 15]



Side A

More specialized programs for students with mental health needs or behavioural issues It should not be accessible to have classrooms trashed because students are not supported adequately.

★ 4.7 ★ 1.7

Inclusion where it is appropriate but also exclusion and quiet spaces for children who need that Every child needs different learning environments and don't always fit into a traditional classroom

▲ 1.7 ▲ 1.7

Side A/B Common (high)

More support staff in the schools - EAs, more SST time, more access to Ed. Services personnel Students and teachers are too much on their own figuring out how to make things work without the support they need.

★ 4.8 ★ 4.3

staff We have a serious lack of staff available to support students and this is the biggest impact on children with special needs.

★ 4.8 ★ 4.7

Side B

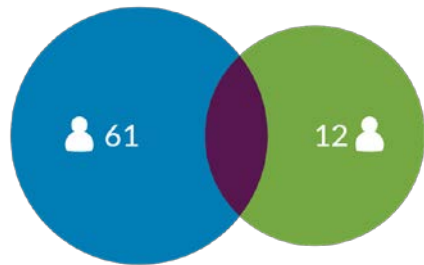
Access to community services (e.g. KidsInclusive, Maltby).

★ 1.5 ★ 4.8



DIFFERENCES

Time To Support [61 | 12]



Side A

EAs for academic needs. Increased Psycho-Ed assessments performed by the school board. Designated Special Education teachers that do not travel. Direct support is needed for optimal student success.

★ 4.7 ★ 2.3

An SST at each site for each division.

This would help give enough time to kids, enough time to support staff, and enough time to support families.

★ 4.6 ★ 1.8

Side A/B Common (high)

Educational Assistants Students with a range of special education needs require support from EAs. EAs shouldn't have a whole list of kids under their name who they don't see

★ 4.8 ★ 4.8

One on one with EA, we can't manage 3 or more students at a time and expect success with each. They have individual needs. Special needs may not reach their full potential if we can't spend the time required and give them our full attention.

▲ 4.4 ▲ 5.0

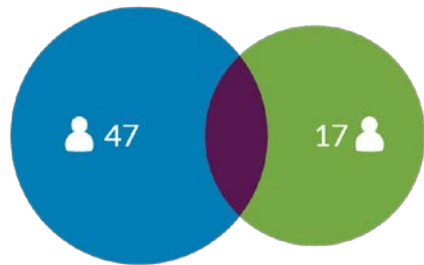
Side B

This group of participants rated Side A thoughts low. Review the common interest section to see thoughts that both groups rated high.



DIFFERENCES

Support Staff [47 | 17]



Side A

They need teachers who modify work for them. They need an appropriate ratio of staff to needs. They need an ED services that gets it done. Far too many teachers are relying on support staff to modify work. Stuffs need appropriate support so that class can run smoothly

★ 4.3 ★ 2.2

No more casual exclusions of students with special education needs. If students need to be sent home, it needs oversight and protections (i.e. suspension or expulsion) vs. admin pressure on under/unsupported

Side A/B Common (high)

EA Supports Implementing individualized programming can not be done without them.

★ 4.6 ★ 4.5

Each child should have the support that they need so they can get am education just like all the other children do. They have the right to learn just as much as anyone else.

★ 4.7 ★ 4.2

Side B

This group of participants rated Side A thoughts low. Review the common interest section to see thoughts that both groups rated high.



WRAP UP Next Steps



Thanks for participating

We'll be carefully considering what we learned and sharing our actions back with you.

July 11, 2023

Hon. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
15th Floor, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Lecce,

We write this letter on behalf of the members of the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), regarding the recruitment and retention of staff serving in the capacity of Educational Resource Worker (Educational Assistants). All Boards within Ontario employ some version of this job classification which supports our most vulnerable students with complex and diverse learning needs.

The function of staffing Educational Resource Workers has seen a steady decline in qualified candidates to work within our board. Over the past ten years, the post-secondary institutions offering programs of qualification for Educational Assistants have produced fewer graduates and as a result, a shortfall is felt, not only at our school board but throughout Ontario. Unfortunately, as the numbers of candidates for Educational Resource Workers decrease, the number of students requiring their invaluable support has increased. There simply aren't enough Educational Resource Workers to match the demands of our diverse learners.

Educational Resource Workers provide an invaluable resource to our students. They facilitate teaching and accommodating the needs of our diverse learners within an integrated and inclusive classroom. They help in the building of necessary life skills, assist with developing self-regulation and independence within the planning for independence classrooms. Teachers may teach the lessons; however, it's the indispensable hands-on teaching by our Educational Resource Workers who truly make a positive impact to our diverse learners. Some of our most vulnerable students even require personal care throughout the day, whether it's to eat, drink or use the washroom. All the while, the educational resource workers are tirelessly helping our diverse learners with special needs to be safe in all they do.

To add to their many duties, Educational Resource Workers also facilitate our diverse learners with their specialized equipment and technology to access their learning environment, whether it's in a classroom or gymnasium. Our Educational Resource Workers are right there helping our diverse learners manage their hearing aids, specialized technology, laptops, chrome books, iPads, sophisticated augmentative communication devices, eye gaze devices and switches. The school board itinerate teachers travel from school to school to help their diverse learners; physiotherapists,

occupational therapists, speech language pathologists, child youth workers, visit our diverse learners at school throughout the year also. As much as the teacher is informed of these specialized professional visits, it's the Educational Resource Worker who carries on with the prescribed recommendations for their diverse learners, ensuring their needs are met.

It's clear to see how critically important our Educational Resource Workers are to our diverse learners. Although the classroom teacher is ultimately responsible for all their students, it is the Educational Resource Workers' comprehensive duties and responsibilities that make or break a student's day. When there is a lack of Educational Resource Workers, our diverse learners are the ones who do not get their complete educational needs met.

Minister Lecce, Are the diverse learners' needs as important as those of the average student? Today, where equity, accessibility and inclusion are paramount, where are the Educational Resource Workers our diverse learners need? The shortfall of Educational Resource Workers in Ontario is a major problem in our education system.

Without intervention by the Government of Ontario to engage in a concerted effort to support post-secondary institutions in attracting more candidates to these programs, the supply and demand problem will continue to compound. There is precedent for this type of intervention as the province recently committed to spending up to \$200 million to train up to 16,200 additional Personal Support Workers through publicly assisted colleges, private career colleges and district school boards in the 2021-2022 school year.

We would ask that the Ministry of Education collaborate with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, to develop a strategy in collaboration with post-secondary institutions to support the recruitment, retention, and training of Educational Resource Workers in the province of Ontario.

We thank you, in advance, for your serious consideration of our request, and we look forward to your proactive response to this educational crisis.

Sincerely,



Bruno Iannicca,
SEAC Chair, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District
School Board (DPCDSB)
Trustee Mississauga Ward 6 and 11

Dely Farrace,
SEAC Vice Chair, DPCDSB
SEAC Association Representative for
Brampton Caledon Community Living

cc: DPCDSB Trustees

MPPs of Dufferin-Peel

Chairs of Special Education Advisory Committees

August 11th, 2023



Scot Gillam

Superintendent of Learning for All and Indigenous Education
Limestone District School Board
Email: gillams@limestone.on.ca

Dear Superintendent Gillam,

On behalf of Autism Ontario, I am pleased to nominate **Haley Clark** as our **Representative** on the **Limestone District School Board's** Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for the 2022-2026 term.

Haley Clark meets the eligibility criteria under the Ontario Education Act as she is:

- At least 18 years old
- A Canadian citizen
- A resident of the school board or authority jurisdiction
- An elector or tax payer for the school board
- Not an employee of the Board

Contact Information:

Haley Clark

Tel: 519-852-3523

Email: hclark1287@outlook.com

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any additional information or if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Tanya Jewell
Subject Matter Expert – Education
1-800-472-7789 ext. 393
tanya.jewell@autismontario.com

cc: Jill Senior, Administrative Assistant, seniorj@limestone.on.ca
Haley Clark, Nominee, hclark1287@outlook.com

SEAC Meeting - September 13, 2023
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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT: SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

09/13/2023

A. Ministry Updates:

The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023 (Bill 98)

The new Provincial Priorities on Student Achievement regulation prescribes three priorities to be adopted by all school boards into their multi-year plans:

- Achievement of Learning Outcomes in Core Academic Skills
- Preparation of Students for Future Success
- Student Engagement & Well-Being

Policy and Program Memorandum 151 (PPM 151)

The amended PA Day regulation requires school boards to publicly provide more detail on PA Day topics, hosting entities, learning and delivery methods, content, presenter(s), and resources. This information must be posted at least fourteen days in advance of the day in a prominent location on the board's public website or that of the participating school(s) and included in communication to parents. PPM 151 also confirms previous communication to school boards regarding the topics school boards must address during the three mandatory PA Days, provides additional considerations, and resources for school board planning, and reflects the new regulatory requirements.

Policy and Program Memorandum 168 (PPM 168)

PPM 168 contains direction regarding protected time for reading instruction and early reading screening. Students in Year 2 of Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 will be screened for early reading. Protected time in Grades 1 to 3 for foundation reading instruction are discussed, aligned with Foundations of Languages described in Strand B of the new *Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Language, 2023*. Reading screening will be implemented using ministry-approved, evidence-based early reading screening tools, in accordance with PPM 168.

Policy and Program Memorandum 169 (PPM 169)

PPM 169 outlines requirements for school boards in the consistent delivery of mental health learning and services and provides information/guidelines on new initiatives to support the mental health literacy of educators, school staff, students, and their families.

PPM 169 will be effective on January 1, 2024. School boards will be required to annually report on the implementation of requirements using a template provided by the Ministry. An annual reporting template will be sent to school boards prior to the start of the 2023-24 school year. The reporting template will be due to the Ministry on June 30th of each school year. The Mental Health Literacy Modules for Grades 7 and 8 students are being developed by School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) with experts such as Sick Kids Hospital. The modules will be released to the sector for the 2023-24 school year and will be mandatory beginning in January 2024.

Policy and Program Memorandum 124 (PPM 124)

PPM 124 deals mainly with the Ontario Secondary School Diploma requirement of community involvement activities. Guidance is provided to ensure the needs of students with disabilities and/or special education needs are being met during the initial assigning of eligible activities and the provision of accommodations as applicable. PPM 124 also allows students in Grade 8 to accumulate community involvement hours in the summer before they enter Grade 9.

B. Educational Services Update:

SEAC Presentation Schedule

SEAC members are asked to submit a list of potential presentations for the 2023-2024 school year. Topics will be discussed with Educational Services administration and teams, and a schedule will be provided at an upcoming SEAC meeting.

Short Term Educational Assistant (STEA) support 2023/24

Historically, schools have requested Short Term Educational Assistant support for students who register over the summer and have significant medical or safety needs. STEA has also been historically provided for students who experience significant issues over the course of the summer. STEAs are provided in 6-week intervals so that schools can try and integrate the various needs into their current support model. Occasionally these integrations take longer and STEA positions are renewed in full, or partially. Mike Blackburn and the team at Educational Services do a great job in supporting students and schools with these invaluable supports. To date, we have an additional 39 STEAs supporting students and schools in LDSB.

Prepared by: Scot Gillam, Superintendent of Education, Learning for All