Kathy Witherow, Associate Director and Brendan Browne, Executive Superintendent

Leadership, Learning, and School Improvement

SEAC Meeting of October 1, 2018

**PIAC Parent Conference**

PIAC’s 12th annual parent conference is taking place on November 17, 2018 from 9am-3:30pm at Earl Haig Secondary School, 100 Princess Avenue, Toronto ON. The theme for this year’s conference is “Ready Set Engage”. There will be workshops intended to support parents from a Special Education perspective to share information and best practices and processes to support parents’ understanding and navigation of Special Education and support services in TDSB. Workshops include “The IEP Process and Resources available within the TDSB” and “The IPRC Process: Exceptionalities and Placement Options”. These workshops will be delivered by TDSB staff.

**Visiting Delegation from Singapore**

We look forward to welcoming a visiting delegation from Singapore on Wednesday October 3rd. They are particularly interested in learning more about support for students with special needs in TDSB and an inclusive approach to meeting the needs of students.

**Gr. 3 Universal Screening – CCAT-7**

This was discussed at the last SEAC meeting and will be taking place throughout the week of October 1st through the 5th. All students in Gr. 3 are participating in this screening. Information is used as part of the screening for Gifted students, and to inform programming for any/all participating students as more data to support an increased understanding of individual student strengths and needs.

**Special Education Plan**

The plan was submitted to the Ministry and is now posted on the board’s website. Please find a link to the plan here: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Leadership-Learning-And-Special-Education/Special-Education/Special-Education-Plan>. The plan is a large document which is meant to provide relevant and accurate information for the public about Special Education in TDSB. Key changes that were made to the document include:

• Updated Special Education Placements to reflect changes to Home School Program

• Updated staffing figures including support staff

• Updated SEAC membership, contact information, input and recommendations to the board

• Updated Staff Development to outline targeted professional learning for 2018 2019

• Updated Accessibility (AODA) to provide information on steps taken to meet AODA requirements

• Included links to Parent Information Brochures

The consultation process for the 2018/19 academic year will be part of our meetings moving forward this year. We look forward to your input, recommendations, and support.

**TDSB Department Structures and Alignment**

We are responsible for Leadership, Learning, and School Improvement throughout TDSB and that encompasses Special Education, Teaching and Learning, and Leadership development throughout the system. This alignment is intended to support coherence building in order to diminish silos of responsibility, and promote increased collaboration and shared responsibility for all students. We recognize that teachers make the greatest impact over student learning. The focus on great teaching, which may have been formally done through the Teaching and learning Department, and appropriate programming and supports for students with special needs, which was formally done through the Special Education Department, are all in the service of the student in the classroom. This system focus on alignment is intended to focus support for all students with particular attention and support for students with special needs. This structural change is meant to indicate the system commitment to providing services that support student needs, and that success for students with special needs is a shared responsibility amongst all TDSB staff.

In terms of concerns and problem solving, the expectation will be that individual concerns and situations are resolved as locally as possible with the principal, teacher, and special education teacher with the support of the Learning Centre Coordinating Principals and Learning Network Superintendent. Issues that cannot be resolved locally can be brought to the Learning Centre Executive Superintendent. Individual issues, situations, and concerns are to be worked through with Learning Centre leadership. Issues that are systemic in nature and have broader implications that affect TDSB more broadly are the responsibility of Leadership, Learning, and School Improvement leadership. The guiding principle is that issues are best resolved closest to where we serve our students to the extent that is possible. In the rare situations where resolution is not possible, the Learning Centre Executives will support, intervene, and work toward resolution with families.

**TDSB Representation at York/Osgoode Special Education Conference**

The 13th Annual “Advanced Issues in Special Education Law” is being hosted at York/Osgoode Hall on Thursday October 11th. The annual symposium brings together leaders in legal issues related to Special Education in Ontario and is attended by educational leaders, parents, and the legal community each year. The TDSB and SEAC is represented on this year’s program by David Lepofsky who will be delivering the Keynote Address at the symposium, and by Brendan Browne who is sitting on the expert educational panel in the afternoon.