

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

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Important Dates

Elementary PD Days:

January 16, 2026
February 13, 2026
June 5, 2026
June 26, 2026

Secondary PD Days:

January 29, 2026
February 13, 2026
June 25, 2026
June 26, 2026

School Year Holidays (as per Ministry):

Winter Break: December 22, 2025 – January 2, 2026
Family Day: February 16, 2026
Mid-Winter Break: March 16-20, 2026
Good Friday: April 3, 2026
Easter Monday: April 6, 2026
Victoria Day: May 18, 2026

Special Education and Inclusion Parent/Legal Guardian Guides

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) provides many Special Education Guides for Parent/Legal Guardian which contain information about the supports, programs and services available for students with disabilities and special education needs in the TDSB.

If, after reading a guide, you require additional information, please reach out to the principal of your child's school/your neighbourhood school. Videos are included within some of the guides.



Fine motor development is not only about hands and fingers but it's also very important to have a strong core to support posture and shoulder stability. If your child is struggling with handwriting, this [quick video](#) from Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services explains the importance of core strength and shares quick strategies that can be used.

From Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy Services

Text-only version



Hello Winter!

The weather is colder but **outdoor play** remains important when supporting children's regulation and learning.

Benefits of outdoor play:

- Fresh air
- Improved vision
- Vitamin D
- Improved attention
- Improved social skills

Winter activities can still be enjoyed safely and comfortably with appropriate clothing.

[Click here to access our outdoor play handout.](#)

Online resources

Here are some websites where you can find guided movement break ideas like dancing, stretching, and yoga. They are user-friendly and loads of fun. Happy movement break!

- [GoNoodle](#)
- [Energizing Brain Breaks](#)
- [Move to Learn](#)
- [Gympanzees](#)

Movement Breaks

[Movement breaks](#) at home are just as important as they are at school. They support your child's regulation, physical health, focus & attention, and mental health. Consider activities that promote movement indoors if you don't have the chance for frequent outdoor play.



Home Activities

Please note: All activities should be completed with adult supervision. It is okay if your child gravitates towards certain activities and avoids others. Although most of these activities are meant to help calm a body down, for some individuals, it might energize their system. This list is not individualized therefore some activities may not be appropriate for your child.

Movement Breaks	Sensory Activities
<p>Exercise circuits can be a fun and easy way to get kids moving with their whole bodies at home. Here are a few ideas to get you started:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jumping jacks • Running/walking on the spot • Bear crawls/Crab walks/crawling • Frog jumps/Star jumps • Wall push-ups • Tug-a-war • Hopscotch with painter's tape • Squats • Touching opposite knee/foot • Run/walk up and down the stairs • Arm swings/shoulder circles • Push a full laundry basket around the house • Ride a bike, trike or ride on toy in the hallway <p>Create a home obstacle course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crawl under or over a row of chairs • Crawl under a string stretched across chairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scented playdough: make playdough and add scents such as cinnamon and vanilla Tip: use scissors and cookies cutters to further develop your child's hand skills • Using a calming scent (i.e. lavender, vanilla, eucalyptus) in a diffuser • Classical music in the background • Use a hot water bottle or a heating pad to provide warm touch to the skin • Looking at landscapes or nature scenes on a screen or in a book • Water play in the sink or bathtub (supervised by adult) • Hand and foot massages with non-scented or gently scented cream • Blowing bubbles or bubble blowing into a straw • Using a vibrating toothbrush • Spray kool-aid water on mirrors/ windows and wipe off • Sensory bins where children can play and/or find small toys or lego using their hands or tongues (e.g. rice, dry pasta,

Winter Wellness

How can we maintain healthy routines at home during the winter? Keep children active and engaged!

Check out [our video](#) for additional and resources.

Resources

Special Education and Inclusion Newsletters

Parents/guardians/caregivers can access all newsletters [here](#). These newsletters are full of resources and strategies for families to use with students at home.

Parent Engagement Sessions – January 2026

Special Education and Inclusion is pleased to offer a number of sessions for parents/guardians/caregivers in January. Please find additional information in [this flyer](#). All parent engagement sessions for the 2025-2026 school year can be found [here](#).

Transitions Support Site

The [TDSB Transition Support Site for Families](#) is a new resource for families and educators, providing tools, information, and support to help navigate key transitions in a student's educational journey from Kindergarten to Post-21. It offers practical resources and guidance to support educators and families in planning for key transitions, such as moving to a new grade, changing schools, or preparing for life after secondary education.

Services for 21-Year Old Students

- Students with special education needs are eligible to attend school as adolescents until June **of the calendar year** in which they turn 21 years of age.
- For example, if a student turns 21 at any point in 2026, they will transition from TDSB educational services to community, workplace, or post-secondary education after June 2026.
- Schools work with families to ensure that a proper transition plan is in place and that parents/guardians are aware of the graduation date.

For more information about transition timelines and planning, check out the following resources:

- [Life After High School Toolkit](#)
- [Transition Resource Guide for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Designing Solutions for Transitions Guide](#)

Resources

Your Child's Individual Education Plan (IEP):

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) is the written plan that guides the special education program and services for students requiring support within the Toronto District School Board (TDSB).

The Importance of Parent Consultation

The TDSB is committed to strong partnerships with families. Your knowledge of your child's strengths, needs, interests, and progress is invaluable.

- **Mandatory Involvement:** The Ministry of Education's regulations and policy guide [Special education in Ontario Kindergarten to Grade 12 – Policy and resource guide | ontario.ca](#) states clearly that **parents/legal guardians must be consulted** in both the **development and the review** of your child's IEP.
- **Essential Insight:** We rely on your unique perspective to ensure the plan's goals, expectations, and transition supports are meaningful, relevant, and aligned with your child's success both at school and in the community.

The IEP is a "Living" Document

Your child's learning journey is constantly evolving, and the IEP is designed to evolve with them.

- **Regular Updates:** The IEP is a **working document** that requires **ongoing review, evaluation, and adjustment**. It is **updated regularly**—at a minimum, at the start of each reporting period—to ensure the learning expectations and strategies remain current, effective, and appropriate based on your child's progress and changing needs.
- **Shared Information:** Any significant changes to the program, supports, or goals are documented and shared with you, maintaining full transparency and ensuring you are always aware of how we are supporting your child's achievement within the TDSB.

We encourage you to stay actively engaged with your school team to ensure your child's Individual Education Plan is always reflecting their best path to success!

(Ontario Ministry of Education, Curriculum & Resources)

Resources

From [Speech Language Pathology \(SLP\) Services](#)

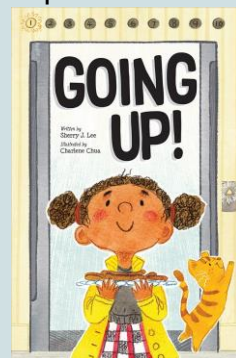
Going Up - Into a New Year of Stories ✨

This January, we are excited to soar to new heights with our featured story *Going Up!* by Sherry J. Lee. In this delightful picture book, each elevator ride brings new surprises as a young girl and her cat explore each floor—celebrating curiosity, connection, and discovery along the way. Through our lesson plan, you can support your child to build connections to the story, practice descriptive language, and enjoy storytelling about familiar, fun settings.

At home, try asking your child: “What floor would you press and why?” or you could ride an elevator anywhere, where would you go?”

We hope this story opens doors to imagination, conversation, and joyful connection at home.

Please view our [lesson here](#).



From [Psychological Services](#)

Executive Functioning: What It Is & How to Support it at Home

Executive functioning refers to a set of mental skills that help children manage their thoughts, actions, and emotions to achieve goals. These skills include things like working memory, flexible thinking, impulse control, organization, and self-monitoring. When children struggle with executive functioning, they may have difficulty following directions, managing time, initiating tasks, or staying focused.

Supporting Executive Function at Home:

- **Chunk Instructions:** Break tasks into simple steps and provide visual cues when possible.
- **Model Routines:** Routines help children know what to expect and reduce cognitive load.
- **Use Visual Schedules:** Timers, checklists, and calendars can with organization.
- **Provide Thinking Time:** Give children time to process before expecting a response or action.
- **Teach Strategies Explicitly:** Show children how to plan and reflect on their learning.
- **Offer Flexibility & Patience:** Recognize that executive skills can develop and vary widely.

Resources

Blind and Low Vision Services World Braille Day: January 4, 2026

The TDSB supports several students who exclusively rely on braille for accessing their curricular materials. In honour of World Braille Day on January 4, 2026, we aim to raise awareness about the significance of this alternative format.

World Braille Day serves as an important reminder of the essential role of Braille literacy and how braille fosters accessibility and independence for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Despite advancements in alternative formats such as audiobooks, screen readers, and text-to-speech technologies, braille remains the sole medium through which blind students can learn to read. As we celebrate World Braille Day, we acknowledge the ongoing significance of braille in providing a unique and irreplaceable avenue for educational and personal growth for those with visual impairments.

For more information, please visit [World Braille Day | United Nations](#).

White Cane Week: February 1, 2026

White Cane Week is celebrated in Canada during the first full week of February each year. This week it will begin on February 1, 2026.

White Cane Week is an opportunity to raise awareness and deepen understanding of the lived experiences of individuals with a visual impairment. It raises awareness to the unique challenges that impact Canadians who are blind, Deafblind, or who have a visual impairment.

The white cane is a powerful symbol, signalling to others that the user has a visual impairment, while also representing independence. The white cane enables individuals who are blind, Deafblind, or who have a visual impairment to navigate their environments safely and confidently.

The TDSB supports students who use white canes for safe travel with specialized instruction from Orientation & Mobility Specialists. Through direct instruction, students develop the skills needed to move safely through their school and community environments with increasing confidence and autonomy.

To celebrate White Cane Week, check out this [reading list](#) developed by the Toronto Public Library in collaboration with CELA titled *Reading Beyond Vision*.

January includes International Day of Acceptance (January 20)

This day reminds us that inclusion is about more than awareness. Acceptance means valuing differences, removing barriers, and ensuring every student feels they belong. In our school communities, we celebrate the many ways students learn and communicate and we continue to build classrooms where access, dignity, and respect are at the centre of learning for all.

Resources

Project SEARCH Toronto



Project | SEARCH®
Toronto

at University Health Network &
Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital
In collaboration with Community Living Toronto &
Toronto District School Board

Contact: projectsearchtoronto@tdsb.on.ca

Program overview:

Project SEARCH is a unique training program for students with disabilities who want to transition from school to work (rather than pursuing post-secondary education).

Participants:

- Train at the host business University Health Network (UHN) downtown campus (222 St. Patrick St. and other locations on University Avenue (between College St. and Dundas St. West).
- Rotate through 3 different co-op experiences (9-10 weeks each) with the support of job coaches and mentors.
- Learn employability skills and plan their careers with guidance from a TDSB teacher and Community Living Toronto job & skills trainers.
- Gain more than 700 hours of hands-on work experience geared to in-demand roles in the local labour market.

Students begin required TTC training near the end of August. Classes and work experiences begin mid-September (for 10 months). The typical day is 8:30am - 3:00pm.

Eligibility:

- Want to train in roles such as environmental services, food services, materials management, linens, patient support, clerical support. These roles are important in healthcare but also many other industries.
- Want to work at the end of the Project SEARCH Toronto training program - at least 20 hours/week.
- Be a minimum of 18 years of age at the start of the program and agree that the Project SEARCH training will be the last year of high school (student will then search for work).
- Be enrolled (or eligible to enrol) at a TDSB school for training year.
- Have a primary diagnosis of developmental disability or intellectual disability.
- Be willing to learn to take public transit to the Project SEARCH program and future workplaces (school bus transportation is not provided).
- Be able to take direction and instructions from Project SEARCH Toronto coaches/supervisors and adjust behaviour in response.
- Be able to work independently and manage own health and safety at work.
- Maintain appropriate behaviour, social skills and grooming/hygiene in the workplace.
- Be able to communicate effectively (listen to others, communicate own ideas, perform workplace reading, writing and numeracy tasks).
- Prepared to participate in job search activities (intern and family/support circle) to find employment.

Application timelines & next steps:

Please attend a virtual information session to learn about the program.

- [January 13, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.](#) OR [February 4, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.](#)
- [Application](#)

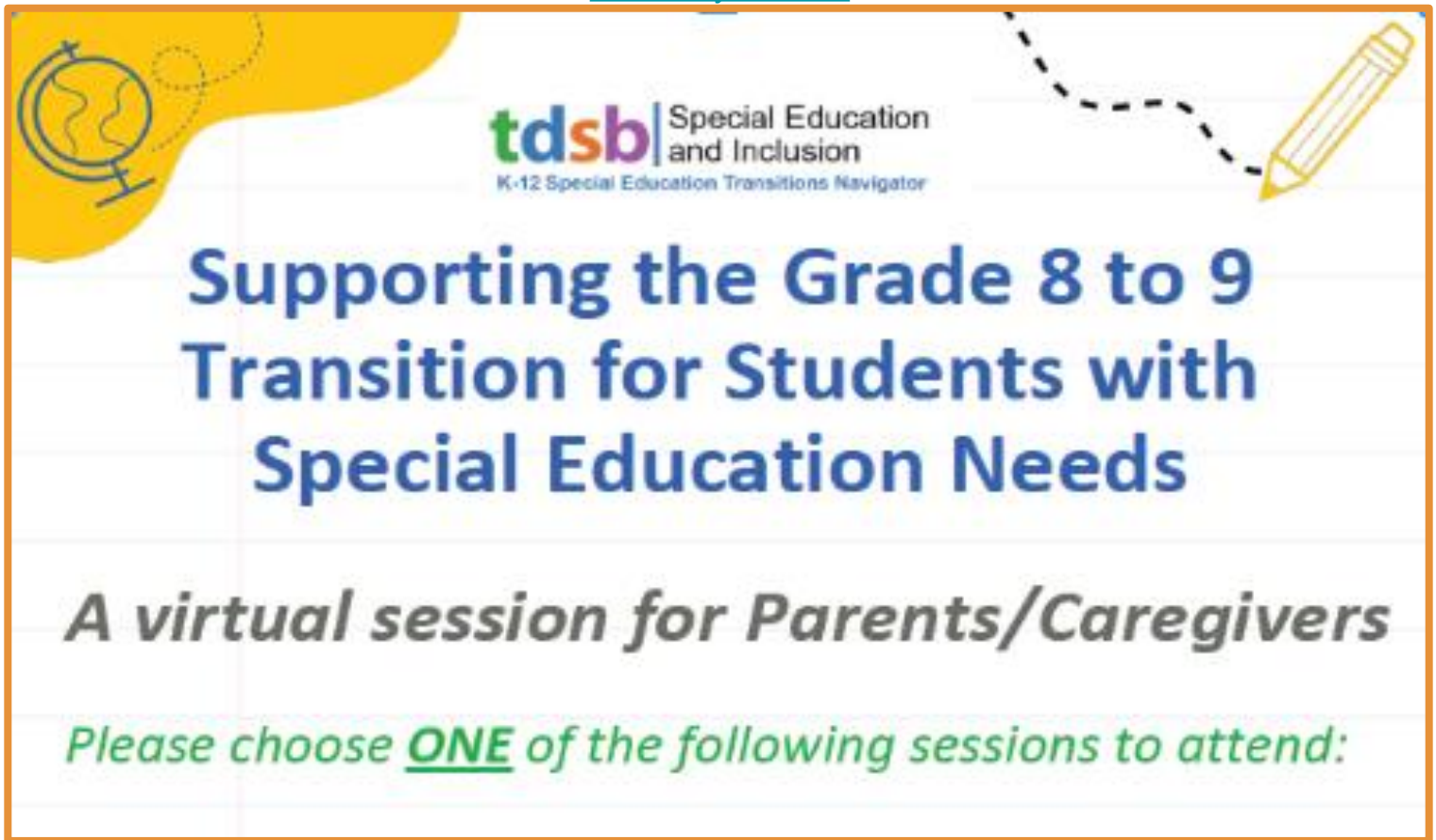
Application deadline for 2026/27 program: February 27, 2026 at 5:00pm



Scan Me

Resources

[Text Only Version](#)



Supporting the Grade 8 to 9 Transition for Students with Special Education Needs

A virtual session for Parents/Caregivers

Please choose **ONE** of the following sessions to attend:

SESSION 1:

December 11th, 2025

11:30am - 12:30pm

Register [HERE](#) or click the QR code.



SESSION 2:

January 15th, 2026

6:30pm - 7:30pm

Register [HERE](#) or click the QR code.



Resources

Post Secondary Transitions for Students with Disabilities – York University

Academic Accommodations and University – Virtual Workshop

This workshop is for high school students and parents (or other support persons) who have questions or concerns about the transition to university for students with disabilities.

You will learn about:

- Documentation required to access academic accommodations;
- The supports and accommodations available through Student Accessibility Services at York; and
- Transition planning.

This workshop will take place from **7:00pm to 8:00pm** on the dates listed below. To participate, click on the links below:

[Tuesday, March 10, 2026](#)

[Tuesday, May 12, 2026](#)

Strengthening Transitions to Post-Secondary for Autistic Students and their Families – In Person and Virtual

These informational sessions are designed for Grade 10, 11, and 12 students who are autistic and plan to attend post-secondary, as well as their families. High school educators and support staff are also invited to participate.

Why Attend?

- Understanding the realities of transitioning to post-secondary education for students and families.
- Accessing academic and non-academic support services.
- Developing strategies for academic success.
- Learning from current York University students about life on campus.
- Building independence and fostering confidence.

In-person Session:

Date: Thursday, February 19, 2026

Time: 9:00am to 1:00pm

Location: York University, Keele Campus

Registration: [Strengthening Transitions Registration Form \(In-person Session\)](#)

Please note: The last day to register in this session is **Friday, February 13.**

Virtual (Zoom) Session:

Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Time: 7:00pm to 8:00pm

Registration: [Strengthening Transitions Registration Form \(Virtual Session\)](#)

Please Note: The last day to register in this session is **Tuesday, March 3.**

If you have questions about any of the above programs, please contact projecta@yorku.ca.

Resources



**Supporting Parents and Caregivers in Navigating Services for their
Child, Youth, or Young Adult with
Developmental Disabilities and/or Complex Disabilities**

**TDSB Virtual Information Session Dates 2025/26
Hosted by TDSB Social Workers**

November 17 (AM) & 24 (PM)

Introducing Key Community Agencies

Connect with Key Developmental Disabilities and/or Complex
Disabilities Community Agencies

December 8 (AM) & 15 (PM)

Autism Supports in the Community

Join Us As We Invite Community Agencies To Talk About
Autism Supports in the Community.

January 19 (AM) & 26 (PM)

Funding & Camp Resources

Join Us as We Gain Information About Accessing Funding Resources
and Registering for Camps.

February 9 (AM) & 23 (PM)

Planning for Adulthood: Part 1

Learn About Community Supports for Life After High School
including Financial Supports

March 9 (AM) & 30 (PM)

Planning for Adulthood: Part 2

Learn About Community Supports for Life After High School including
Community Day Programs, Employment Programs, and Post-Secondary Options.

April 13 (AM) & 20 (PM)

Future Planning

Learn How to Set Meaningful Goals for Your Child and Explore Key Resources That
Support Growth, Independence, Financial Security, and Community Inclusion.



Microsoft Teams

Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 266 605 358 806 6
Passcode: Yn7aj358

TIMES:
Morning Session: 9:30 am - 12 Noon
Evening Session (A Repeat):
5:30 pm - 8 pm



virtualfairinfo@tdsb.on.ca