Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting (SEAC)

March 17, 2025

Leadership Report

Louise Sirisko, Associate Director, Learning Innovation and Equitable Outcomes
Nandy Palmer, Executive Superintendent, Special Education Programs and Equitable Outcomes

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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge we reside on the lands of the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Wendat. We also recognise the enduring presence of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, as well as the importance of establishing and maintaining Cultural Safety through learning from Indigenous Peoples and Perspectives.

Agenda

1. 7:00 – 7:10 pm Call to Order
   - Land Acknowledgement
   - Review/Approval of Agenda
   - Declarations of Possible Conflicts of Interest
   - Approval of minutes (February)
   - Chair Report
2. 7:10 – 7:30 pm
   - Budget Update (Craig Snider)
3. 7:50 – 8:00 pm

- Support Staff Allocation (Nandy Palmer)

4. 8:00 – 8:30 pm

- Exclusion Follow-up (Jim Spyropoulos)

5. 8:30 – 8:40 pm

- Special Education Plan Update (Nandy Palmer)

6. 8:40 – 8:50

- Leadership Report (Nandy Palmer)

7. 8:50 – 9:00

- Trustee/Association Report
- Adjournment

Welcome, System Superintendent Dr. Debbie Donsky!

We would like to welcome Dr. Debbie Donsky to the position of System Superintendent, Special Education and Inclusion. Dr. Donsky is a dedicated leader with over 30 years of experience in special education, inclusion, equity and curriculum development.

Dr. Donsky has served in various roles, including Special Education teacher, principal, and system leader at the district and provincial levels. As a Family of Schools Superintendent in the TDSB, she has focused on collaborative relationships with families, community partners and advocacy groups.

Her work emphasizes supporting educators through professional learning and implementing strategies that create equitable, inclusive, and forward-thinking learning environments for all students.

New Guides for Parents
Special Education Support Video Series

The TDSB's Special Education and Inclusion Department is excited to share their Guides for Parents/Guardians/Caregivers video series.

These videos provide an overview of our Guides to Special Education, designed to help families understand the programs, services, and supports available to students.

From learning about Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to navigating the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process, these resources are here to support you every step of the way.

We also encourage you to explore the full guides on the Special Education and Inclusion Website, where you will find additional Special Education resources for families.

March Learning Sessions for Staff and Families

Learning and engagement sessions continue to be made available for both staff and families, providing valuable opportunities to explore inclusive and anti-ableist practices and implement concrete strategies in the classroom and at home.

These sessions are designed to support student achievement and well-being. Please click this link to access the sessions being offered.

Life After High School Toolkit

The TDSB Beyond High School Toolkit includes specialized resources for families supporting children with Physical Disabilities (PD) and Developmental Disabilities (DD) as they transition beyond high school. It provides guidance on post-secondary education, employment opportunities, community programs, financial planning, and supported living options.

The toolkit helps families navigate essential services, access funding supports, and explore individualized pathways to ensure a smooth and meaningful transition into adulthood. Please see the link to the Word version.

Special Education and Inclusion Summer School

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is once again offering summer school programs from July 2nd to 25th for students who are currently enrolled in ***Developmental Disability, Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Physical Disabilities Intensive Support Programs (ISPs)***.

These half-day programs will be held in-person at various locations throughout the TDSB. Students will be supported to develop their independence through programming in the areas of functional literacy and numeracy skills, activities of daily living, communication, and social skills through a creative curriculum that can include technology, physical fitness, art, music and drama.

Visit our summer school website to find out more information.

ASD After School Skills Development Program
Spring 2025 Session

The **Spring session** of the ASD After School Leisure Program, available both in-person and virtually, will run every Tuesday from March 25, 2025 to June 10, 2025 from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. The program is available to students in Grades 4-10 who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

This program provides an opportunity for students to develop, build and enhance their social communication skills through either weekly in-person or weekly virtual sessions.

School administrators were asked to forward this information letter which includes the link for registration to the parents of Grades 4 – 10 students with ASD in their schools. The registration period will remain open until Friday, March 7, 2025.

March is Easter Seals Month

Easter Seals Ontario dedicates March to raising awareness and support for children and youth with physical disabilities through Easter Seals Month (MIESM). This year, we are shining a light on the stories, perspectives, and contributions of individuals with physical disabilities.

Easter Seals™ Ontario

Helping Kids with Physical Disabilities Succeed

By coming together, we can give more children, youth, and young adults with physical disabilities the opportunity to live their best lives. Join this March to help create a more inclusive, accessible, and equitable society for children and youth with physical disabilities at **MarchIsEasterSealsMonth.org.**

World Hearing Day

March 3rd is World Hearing Day. The World Health Organization hosts this day each year to promote awareness of hearing related challenges and the importance of hearing health care. The theme for 2025 is

Changing mindsets: Empower yourself!

WHO.INT FACT SHEET

To learn more about the positive impact of identification and management of ear and hearing issues, please visit **World Hearing Day**

Neurodiversity Celebration Week - March 17-23

Neurodiversity Celebration Week is a global initiative that aims to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about neurological differences.

This week provides schools, universities, organizations, and others with the opportunity to recognize the skills and talents of neurodivergent individuals, while fostering inclusive and equitable cultures that celebrate differences and empower everyone.

For more information, please visit the neurodiversity week website.

World Down Syndrome Day

We encourage students to wear mismatched socks, or draw pictures of mismatched socks to stir up conversation and remind people that things that are different are wonderful!

Rock Your Socks!!!

Let's Celebrate, in recognition of World Down Syndrome Day

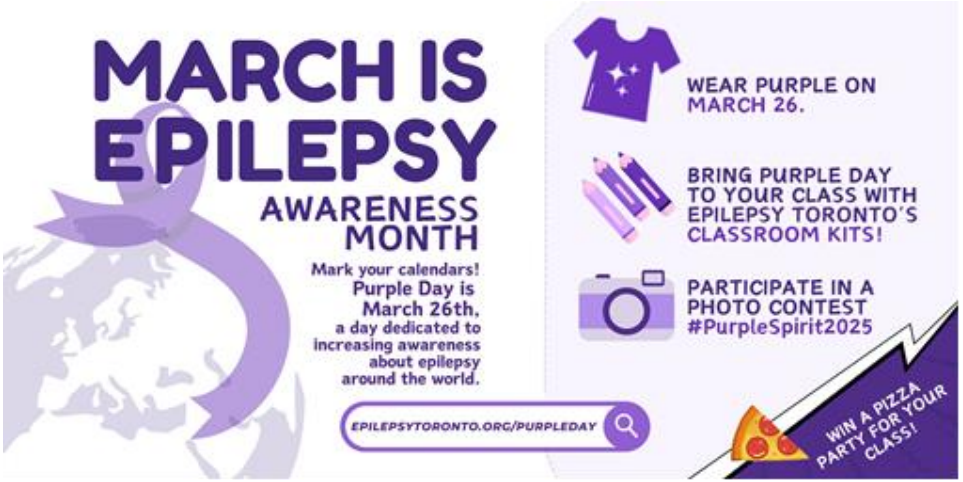
WDSD is marked each year on **March 21**. The 21st day of the 3rd month signifies the triplication of the 21st chromosome which causes Down Syndrome.

TDSB staff and students are encouraged to 'Rock Your Socks' to raise awareness and create a single global voice advocating for the rights, inclusion and well-being of people with Down syndrome.

Down-syndrome-fact-sheet (dsat.ca)

Epilepsy Awareness Month

Purple Day - MARCH 26, 2025



March is all about spreading awareness and education to help end the stigma and misconceptions surrounding epilepsy.

What better way to celebrate than by bringing **Purple Day** to your classroom: **Epilepsy Education to your Classroom**

Epilepsy Toronto has made it easy by developing sample lesson plans, including educational videos and learning activities for **Purple Day on March 26th** as well as morning announcements, posters and more to use leading up to the day.

IPRC Data - February 2025

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February IPRCs	
Learning Centre 1	166
Learning Centre 2	109
Central	4
IPRCs Completed	279
IPRC Cumulative since August 2024	
IPRC Cumulative since August 2024	1016

Psychological Services
Assessment Statistics - February 2025

tdsb Psychological Services

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Psychological Services
Assessment Statistics
February 2025

Month-By-Month	Total
Completed	491
Referrals	167

Cumulative (since September 2024)	
Completed	1675
In Progress	1104
Removed	302
Waiting*	1328
Total Referrals**	4409

**78.4% of total waitlist are comprehensive/DK assessments, and 21.6% are gifted assessments*

*** 73.5% of total referrals are for comprehensive/DK assessments, and 26.5% are gifted assessments*

Toronto District School Board