Section D:

Roles and Responsibilities

We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your comments on the Special Education Plan. All feedback must be received by February 28, 2027.

Purpose of the Standard

To provide the public with information on roles and responsibilities in the area of special education

This section of the Special Education Plan outlines the shared roles and responsibilities of system leaders, school-based staff, families, and partners in the planning, delivery, and monitoring of special education programs and services across the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). These roles are grounded in Ministry of Education legislation and policy, including the Special Education in Ontario Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Resource Guide, and are guided by the TDSB's commitment to a human rights and anti-ableist approach to inclusive education.

The Ministry of Education

- Sets out, through the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services;
- Prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality;
- Requires through the Education Act that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional students;
- Establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model;
- Requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education through the budget process;
- Sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement;
- Requires through regulation that school boards maintain special education plans, review them annually, and submit amendments to the ministry;
- Requires through the Education Act and through regulation that school boards establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs);
- Establishes a Minister's 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 or hard of hearing, who are blind or have low vision, who are deafblind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

The School Board

- Establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda;
- Monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda;
- Requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda;
- Provides appropriately qualified staff for programs and services for the exceptional students of the board;
- Plans 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 students of the board;
- Reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education;
- Provides statistical reports to the ministry as required;
- Prepares a parent guide to provide parents with information about special education programs, services, and procedures;
- Establishes one or more Identification, Placement, and Review Committees (IPRCs) to identify exceptional students and determine appropriate placements for them;
- Establishes a SEAC;
- Provides professional development to staff on special education;
- Adheres to all applicable legislation.

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC):

- Makes recommendations to the board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional students 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.

For information on the roles and responsibilities of the TDSB's SEAC, see Section E: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

The School Principal:

- Carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda, and 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 students, through an IPRC, is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and board policies;
- Consults with school board staff to determine the most appropriate programs for exceptional students;
- Ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan;
- 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 and that, if necessary, parental consent is obtained for these assessments.

The Teacher:

- Carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda;
- Follows board policies and procedures regarding special education;
- Works with the special education teacher to acquire and maintain up-to-date knowledge of special education practices;

- Works with special education staff and parents to develop the IEP for an exceptional student;
- Where appropriate, works with other school board staff to review and update the student's IEP;
- Provides the program for the exceptional student in the regular class, as outlined in the IEP;
- Communicates the student's progress to parents.

The Special Education Teacher:

(Resource Teachers, Methods and Resource Teachers, Secondary Assistant/Curriculum Leaders, Teachers in Full-time Special Education Classes - ISPs)

The special education teacher, in addition to the responsibilities listed above under “The teacher”:

- Holds qualifications, in accordance with the regulations under the Education Act, to teach special education;
- Monitors the student's progress with references to the IEP and modifies the program as necessary;
- Assists in providing educational assessments for exceptional students.

The Early Childhood Educator:

The early childhood educator, in coordination and cooperation with the classroom teacher:

- Plans for and provides education to students in Kindergarten;
- Observes, monitors, and assesses the development of Kindergarten students;
- 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:

- Is 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;
- Participates in the development of the IEP;
- Is acquainted with the school staff working with the student;
- Supports the student at home;
- Works with the school principal and educators 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 documents, including policy/program memoranda;
- Complies with board policies and procedures;
- Participates in IPRC, parent-teacher conferences, and other activities, as appropriate.

Executive Superintendent, Special Education Programs and Equitable Outcomes

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the system in fostering equity and inclusion with human rights and anti-ableist practice in the implementation of the Special Education Plan
- Providing leadership to, and working collaboratively with, Special Education and Inclusion Centrally Assigned Principals and staff to build capacity of school staff and maintain consistency across the system
- Actively supporting SEAC members in carrying out their role as a statutory committee that advises the Board on matters related to special education
- Building system capacity by working collaboratively with providers of professional learning across TDSB Departments to ensure the consistent use of professional learning strategies throughout the system
- Providing central coordination of special projects/initiatives (e.g., research projects)

Senior Manager, Special Education and Inclusion

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the Executive Superintendent in implementing their responsibilities.

Centrally Assigned Principals:

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the system with special education programs and services that are consistent, equitable, and aligned with human rights and anti-ableist practice, supporting inclusion across schools and learning environments.
- Lead system learning and standards that strengthen school and central staff capacity to deliver high-quality programming for students with disabilities and diverse learning needs, aligned with the Special Education Plan and MYSP priorities.
- Monitor implementation of the Special Education Plan, strengthen standards of practice, and address systemic gaps that affect student access and outcomes.
- Work with Superintendents, SEAC, families, and community partners to resolve complex issues and strengthen shared responsibility for students with disabilities.
- Act as key connectors across schools, families, SEAC, and community partners, supporting shared understanding of special education processes and fostering collaborative responsibility for student success and wellbeing.

Coordinators:

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Lead the coordination of special education services and programs, ensuring consistent, equity able, human rights-based and anti-ableist approaches to inclusion across schools.
- Strengthen school and central staff capacity through coaching, guidance, and professional learning that supports effective programming for students with disabilities and diverse learning needs.
- Translate system direction into clear processes and tools that help schools navigate referrals, programming decisions, and transitions.
- Support strong collaboration among schools, families, and system partners, helping to navigate processes, align supports, and promote shared responsibility for student success and wellbeing.
- Lead cross-team collaboration to resolve complex student and school needs, ensuring services are aligned and responsive.

Consultants:

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Provide specialized expertise to support inclusive, equitable, and human rights-based programming for students with disabilities and diverse learning needs across classrooms and schools.
- Build educator capacity through coaching, modelling, and collaborative problem-solving that improves the quality of instruction, assessment, and IEP development.
- Support educators with evidence-informed strategies that improve access to curriculum, assessment, and meaningful IEP development.
- Help translate system direction and legislative requirements into everyday school practice, supporting consistent, accountable implementation of the Special Education Plan.
- Coach and model inclusive practice (UDL, DI, tiered supports) so teachers can better support students with disabilities in everyday classroom contexts.

Registered Behaviour Analysts:

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Support schools with assessment, planning, and intervention that promotes student dignity, autonomy, and meaningful participation in learning.
- Coach educators and support staff to use evidence-informed, least-intrusive strategies, strengthening consistency in how students are supported across settings.
- Ensure behaviour support plans are rights-based, anti-ableist, and aligned with IEPs, safety plans, and broader student wellbeing goals.

K-12 Special Education Transition Navigators:

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Support students and families through key transitions (entry to school, grade changes, school moves, and post-secondary pathways) so access to programs and services is timely, equitable, and coordinated.
- Help families understand processes, options, and rights, strengthening their confidence to make informed decisions about programming, services, and supports.

- Connect schools with central teams and community partners to ensure wraparound planning that promotes continuity, wellbeing, and successful outcomes for students with disabilities.

Itinerant Teachers:

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Provide expert, student-centred support to ensure learners with disabilities and diverse needs can access curriculum, instruction, and school life in meaningful ways.
- Strengthen educator practice through modelling, coaching, and collaborative problem-solving that enhances inclusive instruction and effective use of accommodations and strategies.
- Work directly with students and educators to support access to learning, through accommodations, tools, and approaches to communication, mobility, and participation in school life.
- Support coordinated, responsive programming by working alongside classroom teams, families, and system partners to align supports and promote shared responsibility for student success and wellbeing.
- Collaborate with families, school teams, and central staff to ensure supports are aligned and responsive to changing student needs.

Special Education Support Staff:

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Provide hands-on support that helps students participate meaningfully in classroom learning, routines, and school activities with dignity and respect.
- Assist students with personal care, mobility, communication, and self-regulation, creating environments where students feel safe, valued, and ready to learn.
- Work alongside educators, families, and system staff to ensure supports are consistent, responsive, and aligned with each student's strengths, needs, and goals.

Professional Support Services (PSS)

(Psychological Services, Speech-Language Pathology Services, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, and related regulated professionals)

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

Professional Support Services Managers

- Provide system leadership to ensure professional services are delivered in a coordinated, equitable, and timely manner across the Board.
- Oversee service models, standards of professional practice, and caseload alignment to support consistent access to services for schools and students.
- Strengthen cross-disciplinary collaboration so psychological, speech-language, and OT/PT services work in an integrated way to support inclusive education and system priorities.

Professional Support Services Staff

Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Work collaboratively with schools and central teams to provide specialized, evidence-informed support that strengthens access, participation, and learning for students with disabilities and diverse learning needs.
- Contribute through assessment, consultation, and capacity-building to support inclusive programming, IEP development, and coordinated transitions, grounded in an equitable, human rights and anti-ableist approach to special education.
- Support consistent, high-quality practice across schools by sharing professional expertise that strengthens instructional planning and student access.

Further details on the role of special education and professional support services staff are outlined in Section F: Educational and Other Assessments and Section J: Special Education Placements Provided by the Board.