



Section U:

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Glossary of Terms

Ableism – a set of stereotypes and practices that devalue and discriminate against people with disabilities. It assumes that the bodies and minds of non-disabled people are the “default,” placing value on them based on society’s perceptions of what’s considered “normal” (Talila Lewis).

Accommodations – teaching strategies, supports, and/or services required to help a student access the curriculum and to demonstrate learning. The Ontario curriculum expectations for the grade are not altered for a student receiving accommodations only.

Alternative Expectations – expectations not derived from an Ontario curriculum document or that are modified so extensively that the Ontario curriculum expectations no longer form the basis of the **student’s** educational program. Examples of alternative programs or courses include social skills, speech remediation, and personal care programs.

Articulation – refers to the production of speech sounds.

Barrier Free – a building/structure that is physically accessible, including access to all areas and equipment within the building/structure.

Basic Living Skills (aka adaptive living skills, daily living skills, functional life skills) – the skills that people require to meet their basic needs at a given age level (e.g., self-feeding, self-dressing, and toileting skills). As the social environment and expectations become more complicated, basic living skills encompass such things as the ability to use public transportation, shop, and ask for directions.

Composite Score – on a test of intellectual ability, the aggregate score produced from various sub-test scores.

Cultural Safety – based on Irihapeti Ramsden’s ideas, an approach that combines knowledge and respect for Indigenous cultures with self-reflection, empathy, and the requirement to be aware of and to challenge unequal power relations between individuals and within families, communities, and societies. It is particularly important in health care, education, social work, and the justice system. It is important to create a learning environment that is respectful and that makes students feel safe and comfortable not only physically, socially, and emotionally but also in terms of their cultural heritage. A culturally safe learning environment is one in which students feel



comfortable about expressing their ideas, opinions, and needs and about responding authentically to topics that may be culturally sensitive. Teachers should be aware that some students may experience emotional reactions when learning about issues that have affected their own lives, their family, and/or their community, such as the legacy of the residential school system. Before addressing such topics in the classroom, teachers need to consider how to prepare and debrief students, and they need to ensure that resources are available to support students both inside and outside the classroom ([refer to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies 2019](#)).

Disability – a term that covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and others not (e.g., physical, mental, and learning disabilities; hearing or vision disabilities; epilepsy; environmental sensitivities). A disability may be present from birth, may be caused by an accident, or may develop over time. The term disability is interpreted in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code (refer to [The Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)).

Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP) – educational programs in a variety of settings to address student needs that have not been met in the traditional school model.

Educational Assistant (EA) – if assigned, someone who assists teacher(s) to provide support for students with special education needs in special education classes and/or regular classes.

Equity – ensures Equality of opportunities and outcomes for all by responding fair and proportionality to the needs of individuals. Equity is not the same as equal treatment because it recognizes a social-cultural Power Imbalance that unfairly Privilege some while oppressing other and therefore focuses on redressing Disparity – meeting individual needs to ensure fair access, outcomes and participation that results in Equality, acknowledging historical and present Systemic Discrimination against identified groups and removing Barriers, eliminating Discrimination and remedying the impact of past Discrimination and current Oppression. Equity practices ensure fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people, with consideration of individual and group diversities and Intersectionality of multiple social identities, access to Privileges and impacts of oppression. Equity honours and accommodates the specific needs of individuals/groups (refer to [TDSB Equity Policy 037](#)).

Exceptional Student – defined by the Education Act as “a pupil whose behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical, or multiple exceptionalities are such that they are considered to need placement in a Special Education Program.” Students are identified according to the categories and definitions provided by the Ministry of Education.

Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) – a committee composed of at least three persons appointed by the Board, one of whom must be a principal or



supervisory officer of the Board, that decides whether or not a student should be identified as exceptional, that identifies the areas of a student's exceptionality according to the ministry's categories and definitions of exceptionalities, that decides an appropriate placement for the student, and that reviews the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

Inclusion – an attitude toward the need and right to “belong” to one's community. An inclusive classroom is a place where all students experience a sense of belonging and social citizenship (e.g., membership, inclusion, shared power, and value) (Parekh, 2014). An inclusive classroom modifies the environment to fit the student, not the student to fit the environment. In addition, an inclusive classroom rejects deficit thinking and is a space where all identities and cultures (including disability culture) are celebrated. An inclusive classroom prioritizes the right to participation and focuses on setting a positive climate where social engagement and friendships can be promoted ([Underwood, 2013](#)).

Inclusive Education – education that is rooted in anti-oppressive practice, ensuring equity in content, pedagogy, access and climate based on the principles of acceptance, inclusion and learning designed to meet the individual needs of all learners to achieve fair and successful outcomes. Students see themselves reflected in the curriculum, school staff teams, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

Individual Education Plan (IEP) – a plan developed (in consultation with parent(s), and the student, where the student is 16 years of age or older) for each student who has been identified as exceptional by the IPRC process. It is a working document that describes the strengths and needs of an individual exceptional student, the special education program, and services established to meet that student's needs, and how the program and services will be delivered. It also describes the student's progress. An IEP may be developed for a student who has not been formally identified as exceptional by an IPRC, but who requires a special education program or services to attend school, achieve curriculum expectations or demonstrate learning.

Informed Consent – with the exception of special education teachers, the involvement of professionals requires informed consent from a parent(s)/guardian(s) or student who is of age in order to initiate an individual assessment. In all instances, parent(s)/guardian(s), or students who are of age, are contacted to obtain their informed consent to ensure they understand the reasons for the assessment, the nature of the assessment, the risks and benefits of the assessment, and possible outcomes of the assessment. Issues of where and how the record will be stored and the limits to confidentiality are also outlined.

Intersectionality – the overlapping, in the context of an individual or group, of two or



more prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code, or other factors, which may result in additional, compounded biases or barriers to equity for that individual or group.

IPRC Annual Review Meeting – a meeting held every school year unless the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from the parent(s)/guardian(s), waiving the Annual Review.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may request an IPRC Review meeting any time after a student has been in a special education program for three months.

Modifications – changes made in the grade level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs. These changes may involve developing expectations that reflect knowledge and skills required in the curriculum for a different grade level, and/or increasing or decreasing the number of regular grade-level curriculum expectations, and/or increasing or decreasing the complexity of the regular grade-level curriculum expectations. For each secondary school course with modified expectations, it is important to indicate clearly in the IEP the extent to which the expectations have been modified. Depending on the extent of the modification, the principal will determine whether achievement of the modified expectations constitutes successful completion of the course and will decide whether the student is eligible to receive a credit for the course. The principal's decision must be communicated to the parents/guardians/caregivers and the student.

Oppression – prolonged, systemic, abuse of power or control by one group of people (the dominant group) at the expense of others (the oppressed) and maintains a cultural imbalance of power which socially supports mistreatment and exploitation of all groups of 'less powerful' individuals. This results in unjust advantages, status and benefits for one group over the other **and** is maintained by social beliefs, economic and institutional structures and subtle and overt cultural practices. Because oppression is institutionalized in our society, target group members often face barriers and limitations in many aspects of social participation (e.g., school, health care, social services, employment, parenting, housing, etc.). Oppression actively provides unearned privileges and protections to some members of our community, allowing them to ignore the presence of discrimination and or barriers to fair and equal access and opportunity such as classism, racism, ableism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.

Percentile – expressed in a number between 0 and 100, that tells what percentage of individuals in a group receives a score between certain points. A percentile of 78 says that the person scored higher than 78% of the group. This should not be confused with the percentage score on a test.

RSE- Non-Credit Courses – In Ontario, a Secondary Resource Program (RSE - Non-Credit) refers to a special education placement or program designed for students who



require significant support, often involving modified learning expectations that differ from the standard Ontario Curriculum. RSE non-credit programs focus on functional, individualized learning aimed at transition planning for adulthood, rather than academic credit accumulation.

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) – an advisory committee established in accordance with Regulation 464/97 of the Education Act. SEAC makes recommendations to the Board concerning any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services. The TDSB and SEAC work together to protect the rights of students with special needs.

Special Education Per-Pupil Amount (SEPPA) – funding that is determined according to a formula based on each board's total enrollment of secondary and elementary students, including those students with special needs.

Special Education Program – an educational program for an exceptional student that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meet the needs of the exceptional student.

Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) – funding **provided** to school boards to assist with the costs of equipment essential to support students with special education needs.

Trauma-Informed Practices – trauma can be defined as the emotional, psychological, and physiological response from heightened stress and accompanies experiences of threat, violence, and life-changing events.

Trauma-informed practices in the context of schools aims to change the mainstream paradigm “from one that asks what *is wrong with you* to one that considers *what happened to you*. Trauma-informed institutions can recognize the presence of trauma symptoms and promote healing environments through trauma-informed practices predicated upon safety, trust, collaboration, choice and empowerment, as well as building strengths and skills” (refer to [Trauma Informed Schools](#)).

TTY – (a teletypewriter communication device used by people who are deaf, hard- of-hearing, or have severe speech impairment).

Special Education Acronyms

Acronym	Description
ACL	Assistant Curriculum Leader (Secondary Panel only)
AODA	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
AQ	Additional Qualification Course
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
BEH	Behaviour
CAP	Centrally Assigned Principal
CAS	Children's Aid Society
CL	Curriculum Leader
CPI	Non-Violent Crisis Prevention Intervention Training
CRRP	Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy
CYC	Child and Youth Counsellor
CYW	Child and Youth Worker
DD	Developmental Disability
DI	Differentiated Instruction
EA	Educational Assistant
Ele	Elementary
FOI	Freedom of Information
HCCSS	Home and Community Care Support Services
IEP	Individual Education Plan



Acronym	Description
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
IPRC	Identification, Placement, and Review Committee
ISP	Intensive Support Program (full time special education class)
IST	In-School Team
LD	Learning Disability
MART	Methods and Resource Teacher (Elementary Panel only)
MID	Mild Intellectual Disability
OHaH	Ontario Health at Home
OSR	Ontario Student Record
OT/PT	Occupational Therapy / Physiotherapy
PD/PL	Professional Development / Professional Learning
PD	Physical Disability
PHIPA	Personal Health Information Protection Act
PI	Partially Integrated Delivery Model
POR	Position of Responsibility
PSS	Professional Support Services
Psych	Psychology
RA	Resource Assistance
RBA	Registered Behaviour Analyst
RES	Resource Program
SEA	Specialized Equipment Allocation



Acronym	Description
SEAC	Special Education Advisory Committee
SEPPA	Special Education Per Pupil Amount
SEPRC	Special Education Program Recommendation Committee
SIP	Special Incidence Portion
SLP	Speech-Language Pathologist