

Special Education Plan 2016

**Building Tomorrow
Together!**

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SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

MODEL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Greater Essex County District School Board takes great pride in providing a variety of high quality programs and services to meet the needs of our learners with special needs and our students who are deemed at-risk.

The Greater Essex County District School Board is committed to providing learning opportunities which will maximize the social, emotional, physical and intellectual potential of the learner in a safe and nurturing environment. All exceptional pupils shall have available to them, in accordance with the Education Act, and the regulations, special education services, programs and placements to meet their individual needs. Students in special education programs will have access to resources and technologies appropriate to their needs and developmental stages. These programs will provide meaningful learning opportunities for success.

We are committed to fulfilling the Greater Essex County District School Board's 2015 – 2020 Strategic Plan



GREATER ESSEX COUNTY District School Board

VISION:

Building tomorrow together – every learner, every day



Confident Learners
who:

- achieve individual success in the pathway of their choice
- practice and promote positive and healthy behaviours
- act responsibly to self and others through good citizenship

Engaged Communities
that:

- respond to the needs of our learners
- partner to enhance outcomes
- embrace the diversity of our region

Strategic Priorities

Ethical Stewardship
through:

- budget alignment with strategic priorities
- effective, responsible and sustainable use of resources
- safe and welcoming schools and facilities

MISSION:

Excellence in public education –
confident learners, engaged communities, ethical stewardship

Philosophy

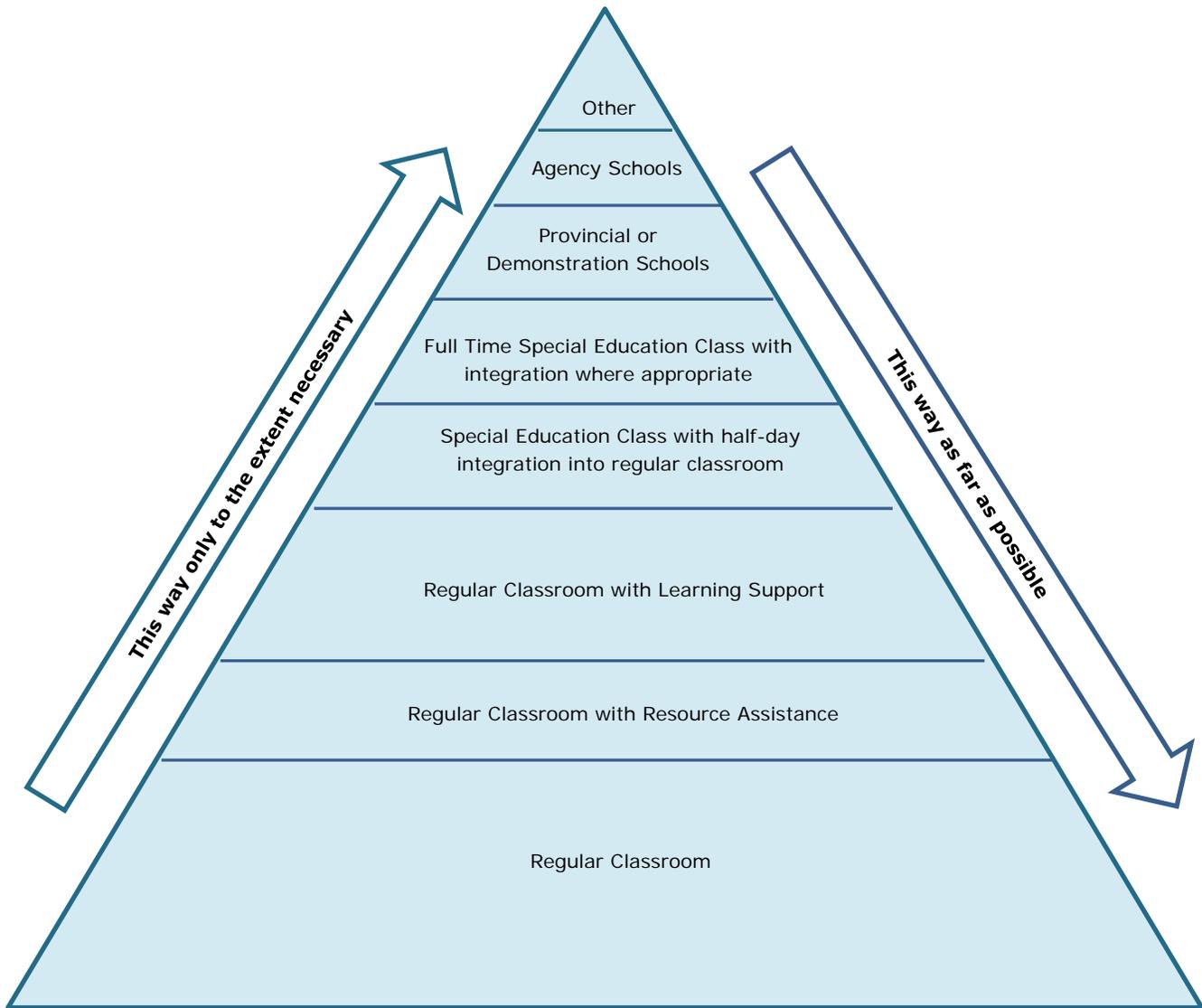
The Greater Essex County District School Board offers a range of special education programs and services to address the needs of students. Most students with special needs will be encouraged to succeed in the regular classroom with appropriate supports, modifications and/or accommodations. **The placement of a student in a regular class setting is the first option, in the range of programs and services provided, that is considered by the IPRC and developed with parents/guardians.** The committee shall, before considering the option of placement in a special education class, consider whether placement in a regular class, with appropriate special education services, would meet the student's needs and is consistent with parental/guardian preferences.

Some students need the support of specialized programs and services which are offered at their **home school**, a neighbourhood school, a section 23 program, an agency, provincial school or other locations. The Cascade Model that follows demonstrates the range of programs and services provided.

This plan is designed to comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act and regulations made under the act, and any other relevant legislation.

Range of Programs and Services
Greater Essex County District School Board
Based on Cascade or Reynolds Model (2007) *

As a general procedure, educators often use what has become known as the Cascade Model as an explanatory principle to place students with exceptional needs in the environment that is least restrictive or most enabling.



NOTE: It is important to recognize that the Cascade Model is a philosophical model not a legislative model.

*Encyclopedia of Special Education (Volume 1): **A reference for the education of Children, Adolescents, and Adults with Disabilities and Other Exceptional Individuals.** Edited by Cecil R. Reynolds & Elaine Fletcher-Janzen, John Wiley & Sons, 2007.

- As noted in the Ministry's IPRC document, our first placement option is at the student's **home school (home school is defined as the school within the boundaries of the district in which the student resides)**.
- We strive to provide services and supports using the **home school** model.
- The goal of the **home school model** is to support struggling students within the school setting using the resources, supports and services available to the school.
- The **home school model** provides supports for students experiencing mild, moderate and severe difficulties in all areas of exceptionality within the community school setting. The classroom teachers in conjunction with the learning support teacher, the school's special education team and educational support staff develop individual education plans designed to enhance the learning outcomes for students identified as needing additional support.
- The school based team members work efficiently and in collaboration when creating solutions that require the allocation of resources, including human resources, to be distributed with great thought and integrity. We recognize and acknowledge that strong partnerships among parents/guardian, education staff, and community agencies are always in the best interests of the learner. This multi-disciplinary approach supports the learner as well as the classroom teacher and educational support staff and is a key component of our success in educating our students and in our program delivery model.
- Depending on the nature and severity of the student's needs, supports outside the regular classroom may be employed. The supports available to the school include the Learning Support Teacher, the school's Special Education Resource Room teacher, educational support staff, as well as itinerant staff such as the Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Teachers of the Blind/Low Vision, Teacher Consultants, Educational Co-ordinators, or staff from our Behaviour Transition, Speech and Language, Psychology, or Social Work/Attendance Departments. Community agencies are also available to consult with the school team to strengthen and extend the existing supports within the school.
- Our staff is to be applauded for their dedication and commitment to their craft. The center of every conversation is the learning of students and how to improve their academic achievement. In the Special Education department, we pay close attention to improving literacy and numeracy skills as well as promoting independence. The leadership of the school principal is critical in terms of fostering the team approach as well as creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students.

IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS

- Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards set up Identification Placement Review Committees. The Greater Essex County DSB has a well-established process which has identified approximately 4200 students or 11% to 13% deemed as exceptional.
- Parents/guardians and students 16 years of age or older shall be full partners with regard to assessment, identification and placement decisions. As full partners parents/guardians and students 16 years of age or older will be made aware of their rights in the entire process including the right to mediation and/or appeal.
- Upon the completion of the initial identification process continued partnership between home and school is strongly encouraged.

- The Individual Education Plan (IEP) is viewed as a valuable and necessary working document that will assist parents/guardians, administrators, teachers, and educational support staff in developing common goals for students.
- The Greater Essex County DSB endorses a model of special education that supports and encourages partnerships between school, family and community.

IPRC Statement of Decision

- The Statement of Decision must state whether the IPRC has identified the student as exceptional and indicate the placement. **The placement does not mean the school location, rather the type of placement, for example, regular classroom, fully self-contained etc.** If deemed exceptional then the categories and definitions of the exceptionality must be stated as they are found in the Section "Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities". (page 18)
- The Statement of Decision must also include a description of the student's strengths and needs. The IPRC decision regarding placement and the reasons for special education class placement will be stated. Stressed in Regulation 181 is the requirement that the IPRC shall place a student in a regular class when such placement meets the student's needs and is in accordance with parental/guardian preferences. **This regular class option must be explored as option #1 at all IPRC meetings.**
- Parents/guardians or students over the age of 18 will sign the IPRC.
- The original is to be placed in the Ontario Student Record (OSR) and copies are distributed to the parent/guardian and to the board's Special Education Department.
- Throughout the IPRC process, we encourage parents/guardians to meet with school personnel to resolve any outstanding issues or misunderstandings. Home and school communication is critical at all stages of the IPRC process.
- When parents/guardians, or students over the age of 18 disagree with the IPRC decision, they have the right to request that a meeting be reconvened within 15 days to reconsider the IPRC decision. Prior to moving to the appeal process, as outlined in Ministry Regulations, mediation of the process is facilitated by the Superintendent of Special Education. Communication is critical at all stages of IPRC.

Process Leading to IPRC	The IPRC Meeting	Following the IPRC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going assessment of the student's strengths and needs by the teacher • Discuss with the classroom teacher next steps and interventions/strategies in the regular class • A possible meeting with the School-based Team (Principal, Learning Support Teacher, Teacher, Parent) to determine possible changes to delivery of the academic program, homework assignments and accommodations (i.e., allow for extra time, quiet working environment, reduce writing requirements, use of a scribe or assistive technology) • Consultation with the Special Education Services to review the student's profile (standardized assessment may be recommended) • If testing results indicate that the student meets the Ministry defined criteria for an exceptionality, an IPRC meeting may be called by the Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parent/guardian along with the school's review team meet to determine exceptionality and placement as defined by the Ministry of Education • If the student warrants a formal identification, his/her strengths and needs are determined from assessment data presented at the meeting • Documentation includes basic information on the student, current school, strengths and need statements, current assessment data and dates, and the student's placement (i.e., grade seven and/or special education class) • The regular class placement is always considered to be the first option • Direction from parent/guardian in terms of the student's placement is always considered and respected by the IPRC Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths and needs statements from the IPRC Statement of Decision are used to create an Individual Education Plan • The student may receive accommodations and/or modifications to the curriculum so that the opportunities for success are provided • On-going assessment of the student is determined by the criteria set out in the Individual Education Plan • Changes are made to the student's IEP as the goals are achieved and new goals are created • The parent/guardian along with the school's review team meet at an annual IPRC meeting to consider updated assessment data, current and future placement options and to review IEP goals • Parent/guardian may waive the right to attend the IPRC Review, however, attendance is encouraged • IPRC reviews will not be waived when student is in grade 7 or 8

Note: Learning Support Teachers, Special Education Services staff and Program Department staff may consult with teachers about in-class accommodations and supports for higher achievement without parent/guardian consent. However it is strongly encouraged that all plans or strategies to support students and enhance achievement or behaviour be shared with parent/guardian. The partnership between home and school is critical in all stages of the identification process.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS PROVIDED BY THE BOARD

The Greater Essex County District School Board believes in providing a range of placements based on the:

- intensity of a student's particular needs;
- the modifications and accommodations required;
- consultation with parent/guardian to determine preferences;
- availability of specialized class placements in any given exceptionality;
- the services required and human resources available.

The discussion of placement in the regular classroom is option #1 with parent/guardian. In order for parents/guardians to make educated decisions about placement issues, they are encouraged to have an open discussion with teachers, visits to classrooms, and opportunities to speak with other parents/guardians.

- We are moving towards greater inclusionary practice opportunities for integration to enhance socialization, exposure to age peers and role models for language development and interaction with the curriculum content regardless of their exceptionality.
- The principal of the school is key in setting the tone for successful integration and inclusion. Providing the consultative and professional support necessary to plan effective integration is the role of our Special Education Services Department. When teachers and parents/guardians embrace the philosophy of integration and appropriate supports can be provided to ensure student needs are met, then we generally have a recipe for student success.
- Placement in a Special Education – Partially Integrated or Fully Self-Contained classroom requires an identification through the IPRC process.

The five options for placement within the GECDSD are:

1. Regular Classroom
 - Student is placed in regular class for entire day.
 - Always considered the first priority by the IPRC committee.
 - Teacher provides accommodations and/or modifications.
2. Regular Classroom with Resource Assistance
 - Student remains in the regular classroom for most or all of the day.
 - Some assistance from itinerant teacher of the deaf/hard of hearing or itinerant teacher of blind/low vision.
3. Regular Classroom with Withdrawal Assistance
 - Student remains in the regular classroom.
 - Some specialized assistance such as our Learning Support Teachers (LST) for a specified amount of time but less than 50% of the day.
 - All elementary and secondary schools have an LST.
4. Special Education – Partially Integrated
 - Students remain in the regular classroom for a portion of the day (elementary).
 - Students receive specialized program for at least 50% of the day, for example, our Special Education Resource Room (SERR) placements in elementary.
 - Most elementary schools have SERR programs.
 - The students in the Ontario Secondary School Diploma program stream at Western and transition rooms at either Westview or Western Secondary schools.
5. Special Education Fully Self-Contained
 - The student remains in a full day self-contained classroom.
 - Giving Attention to Individual NeedS (GAINS) at the elementary level.
 - Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) in the secondary panel.
 - My Achievement Pathway to Success (MAPS) in the secondary panel.
 - Not all schools offer a GAINS or STEPS program.

Elementary System Specialized Placements

Our elementary Giving Attention to Individual NeedS (GAINS) classes are full day self-contained programs for students with profound and complex needs.

Name of School	Number of Classes (as of September 2016)
Anderdon	1
AV Graham	1 ASD 1 GAINs
Begley	1
Campbell	1
Essex	2
Forest Glade	2
Hetherington	1
Kingsville	1
Marlborough	1
McGregor	1
Mill Street	1
Northwood	3
Queen Victoria	1
Southwood	2
Talbot Trail	2
Tecumseh Vista	1
West Gate	1

The Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) program is a short term, fully self-contained system level placement reserved for students with Autism, who despite intervention, require a more extensive level of support.

Secondary System Specialized Placements

Our Secondary Skills To Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) are full day self-contained programs for students with profound and complex needs.

Name of School	Number of Classes (as of September 2016)
Belle River	1
Essex	1
Herman	3
Kingsville	1
Leamington	2
Massey	3
Riverside	2
Sandwich	1

Tecumseh Vista Academy	1
Walkerville	2
Westview Freedom Academy	2

The "Transition Room" staff members support students who exhibit difficulty in transitioning from an elementary to secondary setting. This short term placement is reserved for students who exhibit severe anxiety behaviours. These two programs are located at Westview Freedom Academy and Western. The students' IPRC will indicate special education – partially integrated.

Name of School	Number of Classes (as of September 2016)
Westview Freedom Academy	1
Western	1

Note: Both Westview Freedom Academy and Western Secondary Schools offer MAPS Programs. Students need to have an IPRC and meet the criteria in order to attend Westview Freedom Academy MAPS, Transition room or STEPS programs. Students require an IPRC to attend all programs at Western Secondary School.

All secondary schools offer Locally Developed Compulsory Courses (LDCC) for grade 9 and 10 students. These courses offer a pathway for students who are pursuing a secondary school diploma.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

IEP Standards

- Students with IPRC designation will have IEPs.
- In addition there is a category of "IEP - not identified" in some cases. Consultation with the Principal, LST, the Educational Coordinator and parent/guardian is required. Most students with "IEP- not identified" are moving towards further assessment and possible IPRC.
- Students with IEPs are entitled to modifications and/or accommodations that support and enhance success to assist them in reaching their full potential.
- The IEP is a working document that should have flexibility to be adjusted as needed throughout the school year to meet the needs of the student.
- IEPs are revised every reporting period.

IEP Standard & Report Card

- "Promotion at risk" or "Progressing with difficulty" and IEP – Students with an IPRC have IEPs in place. Well established procedures for ongoing and continuous assessment should meet their overall educational goals and hence would not be at risk of failure (repeating a grade). In the majority of cases, report cards for students with an IEP will reflect positive growth and development.
- On provincial report cards, the IEP box will only be indicated if the student has a modified program. The IEP box will not be checked if the student has accommodations only.

Parent/Guardian Involvement and the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Process

Good communication and collaboration with parent/guardian during the initial stages of completing an IEP is very important in order to ensure that everyone is working toward common goals for a student. The following is recommended as a process to implement with respect to parent/guardian involvement and the IEP.

- All assessments, recommendations from medical reports, IPRC strengths and needs statements as well as parent/guardian input is reviewed collaboratively by the school team and parent/guardian or student when appropriate to determine major goal areas for a student's IEP. Parent/guardians may wish to include strategies for support at home.
- The school team prepares a DRAFT IEP and shares the draft with key team members, parent/guardian, and student if appropriate. Input on the DRAFT copy is reviewed by the school team and the FINAL IEP copy is developed by the school team.
- The FINAL copy is shared with key players, teachers, and parents and filed in the OSR. A copy goes home to parent/guardian and a copy is forwarded to the classroom teachers. Ongoing consultation and open communication with teachers and parent/guardian throughout the IEP process will prevent disagreement and difficulties with respect to IEP interpretation and implementation.
- When a parent/guardian does disagree with significant aspects of the IEP, the principal will convene a team meeting with special education staff, parent/guardian and key teachers to review concerns and find solutions.

IEP TEMPLATE

Name: _____ School Year: _____
DOB: _____
OEN: _____ Principal: _____ Grade: _____
School: _____
Exceptionality: _____
IEP Date: _____ IPRC Date: _____ Waiver Date: _____
Reason for Development: _____

Placement Information

Placement Start Date _____ Placement _____

Sources for IEP Creation

IEP Development Team

Staff Member _____ Position _____

Program Information

Program Exemptions and/or Substitutions: _____

Reporting Dates

First Reporting Date _____ Second Reporting Date _____ Third Reporting Date _____

Reporting Format

Assessments

Type of Assessment	Assessment Month	Assessment Year	Summary of Results/Diagnosis

Strengths and Needs

Areas of Strength	Areas of Need
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Subjects, Courses or Alternative Programs to which the IEP applies

Subject/Course	Program Type

Modifications/Alternative

SUBJECT:

Program Type:

Current Level of Achievement (usually from June report card):

Letter grade/Mark	Curriculum grade level	Strands

Strand

Annual Program Goal

Term 1 / Semester 1 (including Progress Reporting period)

Specific Expectation	Instructional Strategy	Assessment Method

IEP Accommodations

Instructional	Environmental	Assessment
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Provincial Assessments

Grade 6 Reading, Writing and Math

Permitted Accommodations

Permitted accommodations are applicable to all subjects during the year. These accommodations may also be listed on the General Accommodations tab.

Setting

An individual or quiet setting (Reading, Writing, Math)

Prompts for students with severe attention problems who are off-task for significant periods of time, solely to draw their attention back to the assessment (Reading, Writing, Math)

Presentation format

Assistive devices and technology (Reading, Writing, Math)

Verbatim reading of instructions and/or questions (Reading, Writing, Math)

Response format

Verbatim scribing of responses (for reading writing and/or math) (Reading, Writing, Math)

Transition

OVERALL GOALS

For the school year 2015-16, it has been determined that no Transition Plans were needed. First Name is familiar with school and classroom routines and the expectations of homeroom and rotary teachers.

Actions

Persons Responsible for Actions

Timeline

Human Resources(teaching/non-teaching)

Resources	Provider	Initiation Date	Frequency/ Intensity	Location

The Principal has the legal requirements to implement and monitor the IEP.

The Plan has been developed according to the Ministry's standards, addresses the student's strengths and needs, and the learning expectations will be reviewed and student progress monitored at least once every reporting period.

Principal's Signature

Date

I was consulted in the development of the Individual Education Plan.

I declined the opportunity to be consulted in the development of the Individual Education Plan.

I have received the Individual Education Plan.

I understand that my child's IEP may be shared with all of his/her teachers and support staff.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Student's Signature

Parent's/Guardian's Name (please print)

SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF

Please refer to GECD SB (www.publicboard.ca) for individual pamphlets on the services the following departments provide to students and their parents/guardians:

- Social Work/Attendance Counselling Services
- Psychological Services
- Speech and Language Services
- Teachers for Deaf and Hard of Hearing – Itinerant
- Teachers for the Visually Impaired – Itinerant
- Special Education Coordinator
- Behaviour Transition Team

Educational Support Staff

We also have educational support staff to support students with complex needs. These students have been identified as needing intensive support due to the complexity of their needs. Educational Support Staff consist of Educational Assistant (EA); Child and Youth Worker (CYW); Developmental Service Worker (DSW) and Support Worker for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SWDHH).

- **Educational Support Staff are not assigned as a “one-on-one” support for the student.**
- Very few students who have IPRCs will require the support from an Educational Support Staff.
- Educational Support Staff work toward the student gaining independence skills and are not intended to be constant supervision for the students as they grow and develop.
- Students who require the assistance of a SWDHH may have one-on-one support

All Educational Support Staff work in partnership with administration, teaching staff, and other educational support staff in an effort to strengthen student learning, growth, and development.

Note: The Projections for September 2016 appear differently as there is now a breakdown of each of the employee groups (Example: Psychological Services Staff includes Psychologist, Psychological Associate and Psychological Consultant).

Staff	<u>Actual for September 2015</u>	<u>Projected for September 2016</u>	<u>Minimal Qualifications of Personnel</u>
Special Education Coordinators	8	8	Bachelor of Education Special Education Part 1
Itinerant Teachers for Deaf/Hard of Hearing	4	4	Bachelor of Education Deaf Part 1
Itinerant Teachers for Blind and Low Vision	5	5	Bachelor of Education The Blind Part 1

Behaviour/Transition Specialist	1	1	Completion of a postsecondary degree or diploma; Postgraduate studies or equivalent field experience in behavioural science (e.g., in autism and behavioural science, psychology);
<u>Professional Student Services Personnel (including supervisors)</u>			
Psychological Services Staff (Including Supervisor)	8.5	9.5 total (see breakdown below)	
Psychologist		6	Ph.D., & registration with the College of Psychologists of Ontario (C.Psych.)
Psychological Associate		.5	M.A. or M.Sc. & registration with the College (C. Psych. Assoc.)
Psychoeducational Consultant		3	M.A., M.Ed., or M. Sc. – supervised by Ph.D.
Speech and Language Services		11.5 Total	
Speech/Language Pathologists	11.5 (including CDAs)	10.0	M.A. or M.Sc. & registration with The College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASPLO)
Communicative Disorder Assistant		1.5	Communicative Disorders Assistant Diploma – supervised by an SLP
Social Work/Attendance Services (including Supervisor)			
Social Work/Attendance Counselling Staff Including Supervisor	11	11.5	Master of Social Work
Re-engagement Attendance Counsellor	3	3	Degree in social work, education, sociology, criminology or a related field from an accredited University.
<u>Educational Support Staff</u>			
Educational Assistants (EA)	224.5	229.5	Ontario Secondary School Diploma
Child and Youth Workers (CYW)	65.5	68.5	CYW Diploma
Developmental Services Workers (DSW)	98	102	DSW Diploma

Support Workers for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SWDHH)	12	11	Interpreter Training Program from recognized institution
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SPECIAL EDUCATION EQUIPMENT

The Board examines all reports from appropriately qualified professionals to determine the type of equipment needed by special needs students. If it is determined that the equipment is essential for the student to benefit from instruction, then the parents/ guardians and school team work through our Special Equipment Amount (SEA) process.

School Year	# of Students	Total Application Cost	Board Cost
2014-2015 SEA Per Pupil*	258	\$414,857.97	Nil
2014-2015 Claims Based**	47	\$143,436.17	\$37,600

*SEA Per Pupil Amount for purchases of all computers, software, computing related devices and required supporting furniture identified for use by students with special education needs, as well as all training and technician costs for all SEA equipment.

**SEA Claims-Based funding for other non-computer based equipment to be utilized by students with special education needs including sensory support, hearing support, vision support (including vision support equipment that has a computer interface and is required by a student with the primary function of the equipment is to address the vision support needs of the student), personal care support and physical assists support equipment which will cover the cost of an individual student's equipment needs in excess of \$800 in the year of purchase. Boards are responsible for the first \$800 in cost for any student per year.

The following is an example of some of the equipment the Board purchases to support students who are exceptional and who are eligible for the Ministry Special Equipment Amount.

- Braille Printers
- Height Adjustable Change Tables
- CCTVs (Closed captioned television)
- Soundfield Systems
- Lightbox
- Ceiling Lifts, Portable Lifts
- Computer Systems
- Versa Frames
- Printers
- Grab Bars
- Scanners
- Toilet Seats
- Computer Tables/Wheelchair Tables
- Toileting slings
- Computer Software
- Commodes
- Personal FM Units

TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Student transportation is provided through the Windsor-Essex Student Transportation Services (WESTS), which is a Consortium comprising the school boards for the Greater Essex County DSB; Windsor Essex Catholic DSB, Conseil Scolaire Viamonde, and Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence.

- The Consortium is governed by the Board of Directors comprised of representatives of the four member Boards. The Board of Directors sets transportation policies for the Consortium that are applied to each member Board on a fair and equitable basis.
- Students identified by the IPRC process are considered for special transportation arrangements at the initial IPRC meeting. The Educational Coordinator in consultation with the IPRC team, parent/guardian and community agencies completes information about specific student transportation needs. This information is forwarded to the Board for processing. The Board will consult with the Transportation Consortium to determine the best possible mode of transportation for a child. The final decision regarding transportation method will be made by the Special Education Department.
- Depending on the identified needs of the child the following transportation options are considered:
 - school bus
 - wheelchair accessible school bus
 - taxi cab
 - parent paid transportation
- Students attending care and treatment facilities, or correctional facilities often require transportation for integration into community schools, as well as daily transportation to their specific programs. These needs are communicated to our Transportation Consortium by the principal of the agency schools.
- Decisions regarding the transportation of students presenting “high risk” behaviours are generally discussed at the initial IPRC meeting. Often further consultation with the Special Education Department and the Transportation Consortium occurs due to the high costs associated with this type of transportation request. Students presenting unsafe travel behaviour may need to be transported separately. Decisions about special accommodations for students with safety needs are made in partnership with parent/guardian the Transportation Consortium, the Superintendent of Education/Special Education Services, and team members in the student’s program.
- All students requiring special transportation must have an AODA form completed, which identifies any equipment requirements or accommodations required for transportation.

TRANSITION PLANNING

Transitions

Positive transition planning and implementation requires a team including the student, parent/guardian and school or organizations who will be assisting (especially after the student leaves school.) We have many different types of transitions for our students with special needs.

All of our transition processes have one important thing in common and that is to reduce the level of anxiety families and students usually experience upon entry/exit to school.

The IEP documents the strategies to assist the student with in-school transitions such as moving from class to class, appropriate hallway behaviour and independence with being prepared for classes (notebooks, text, writing materials, gym equipment, etc.)

Students with special needs entering the GECDSD for the first time may be involved in one of two various transition processes.

1. To Early Years

- Once the family registers the student with special education needs, a transition team is assembled by the Principal.
- The makeup of the team can include the following individuals;
 - Principal or designate, LST, Special Education Coordinator, educators receiving the student, other board personnel such as Speech & Language, Psychology Services, Social Work and other board staff.
 - Community partners can be called upon to attend transition meetings. Community partners might include representation from Children's First, Thames Valley Children's Centre - Windsor, Summit Centre For Preschool Children With Autism, Children's Aid, Canadian Hearing Society or CNIB, if appropriate.
 - Parents/guardians may also bring along their own advocates or individuals who support their children in their homes, such as respite workers.
- During these transition meetings, a profile of the student's strengths and needs are identified and this information is often used as the starting point in developing the IEP.
- Parents/guardians are a wealth of information during transition meetings in terms of identifying language and communication skills as well as social and behavioural strengths and needs. The transition meeting also assists with identifying needs in other areas such as staffing and transportation.

IEP Transition Planning - Elementary to Secondary

- Included in the IEP for students 14 years of age and older and for students who have ASD.
- It is encouraged that students enter into transition planning with their family and a network of support when appropriate but should be no later than grade 7.

- The organizations which will be providing support after the student leaves school may include health and community service agencies, further education institutions, employers and others.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend GECDSDB community partners' workshops to inform students and their families on the social, educational, and financial options within our community. In some cases, information was available on training opportunities, for example maintenance of employment training. Community supports are aligned to our secondary schools.

IEP Transition Planning – Secondary to Community/Post Secondary

- It is encouraged that students enter into transition planning with their family and a network of support when appropriate.
- The organizations which will be providing support after the student leaves school may include health and community service agencies, further education institutions, employers and others.
- Parent/guardians are encouraged to attend GECDSDB community partners' workshops to inform students and their families on the social, educational, and financial options within our community. In some cases, information was available on training opportunities, for example maintenance of employment training.

Connections Program

- With this initiative the process begins with a referral sent to our Behaviour/Transition Specialist from Thames Valley Children's Centre (Autism Service Provider located in Windsor).
- The Principal and/or Educational Coordinator work in partnership with the Behaviour/Transition Specialist and ASD Consultant to set up an initial Connections meeting.
- The school team, families and community partners work together to ensure a smooth transition takes place for the child who is leaving Intensive Behavioural Intervention and entering school.
 - Team meetings (which includes the parent/guardian and principal) will take place on a monthly basis (6 months prior to entry and 6 months after the student begins school).
 - The IEP is developed and reviewed and is usually based on the Individual Service Plan (ISP).
 - Opportunities are provided to receiving educators to complete a half-day observation on their student at the respective I.B.I. location
 - Resources and strategies are reviewed with educators
 - Meetings have pre-arranged agendas and meeting minutes are taken and kept on file at the school.
- Minutes of the school meetings are recorded and distributed to the members of the school-based team including the parent/guardian and ASD Consultant. 'Goals for the Month' are identified at each meeting.
- The Team can be re-convened should a need arise.

APPLIED BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS (ABA)

As per the Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 140, Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) incorporates methods and strategies based scientific research, to build repertoires of skills and/or behaviours of students. Although PPM 140 was developed for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, the application of ABA strategies are appropriate for a variety of students across multiple environments.

ABA can be used to support students in a variety of ways. ABA methods are consistently used to:

- develop positive behaviours (e.g., improve the ability to stay on task, improve social interaction);
- teach new skills (e.g., comprehensive skills, including language skills, social skills, motor skills, academic skills);
- apply or generalize a new skill or behaviour from one situation to another (e.g., from completing assignments in a special education class to maintaining the same performance in a regular class).

These methods are often incorporated into the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

In terms of supporting our educators in implementing ABA methods and strategies, in-servicing has occurred throughout a variety of opportunities over the past several years. These include:

- Participation in our Demonstration Sites (elementary and secondary) to assist with capacity building in evidence-based strategies for students with special needs. These include: Early Years, SERR, ABA, GAINS, MAPS and STEPS;
- Professional Development opportunities for educators and administration, including ABA topics such as Task Analysis, Reinforcement, Modelling & Shaping and Functional Behaviour Assessments;
- On-site training in completing Functional Behaviour Assessments in order to determine the function of a student's behaviour;
- On-site training with educators in order to support the use of ABA methods and strategies into the IEP;
- Variety of resources available through our lending library including resources on ABA, social skills and data collection, visual timers, Structured Learning Environment, games and activities and reinforcement kits;
- Public conference easily accessible to all staff for information, resources, strategies, documents, downloads, etc.;
- Consultations to educators and classroom teams by Board personnel and/or community partners such as Thames Valley Children's Centre (TVCC) and John McGivney Children's Centre (JMCC);
- Developing individualized data collection materials based on need(s);
- Classroom observations in order to assist teams with setting up structured learning environments based on student needs;
- Environmental scans (Look-For) to support classroom teams with implementing best practices across multiple domains;
- Functional Behaviour Assessments (staff completed training this past Fall through the Ministry's partnership with Geneva Centre for Autism);

- Online Introduction to Autism or ABA learning modules through Geneva Centre for Autism.

The Behaviour/Transition Specialist is committed to supporting our system with the implementation of ABA methods and strategies to help ensure student success.

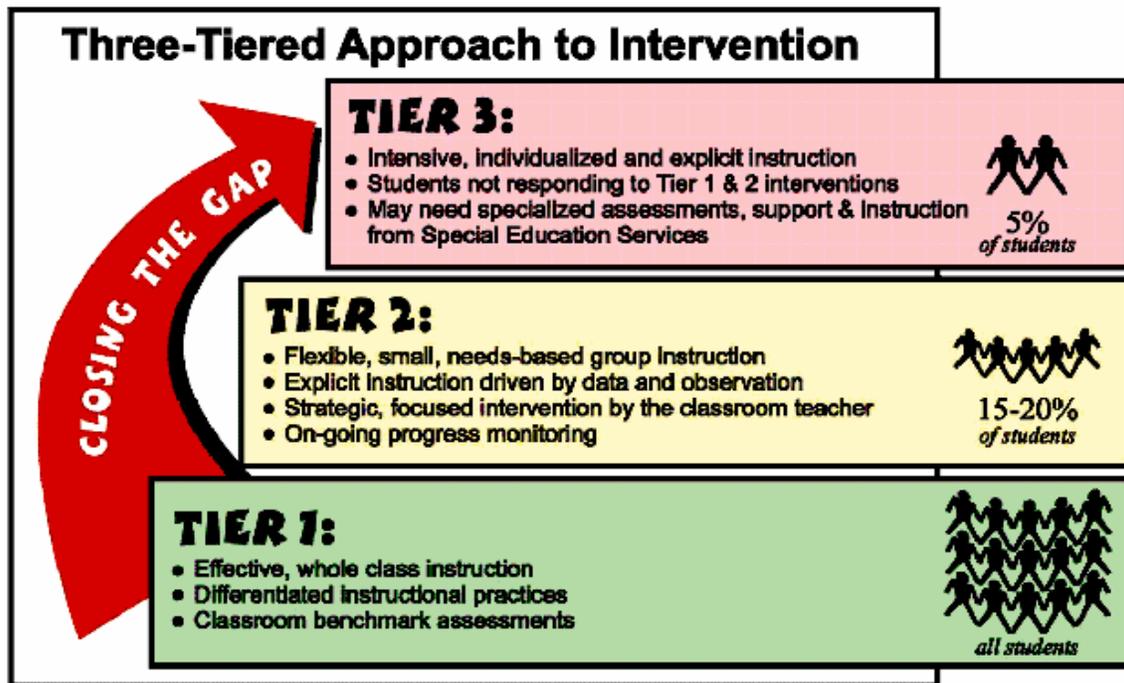
PROVINCIAL INFORMATION

PROVINCIAL EDUCATION PRIORITIES

The Greater Essex County District School Board is also committed to the Ontario Ministry of Education’s four education priorities. The Board’s goals will be updated in the fall of 2016.

Ministry Goals	Board Goals
<p>Achieving Excellence: Children and students of all ages will achieve high levels of academic performance, acquire valuable skills and demonstrate good citizenship. Educators will be supported in learning continuously and will be recognized as among the best in the world.</p>	<p>Strategic Goal #1: Student Achievement Realize success for all students through continuous improvement and alignment from JK to graduation.</p>
<p>Ensuring Equity: All children and students will be inspired to reach their full potential, with access to rich learning experiences that begin at birth and continue into adulthood.</p>	<p>Strategic Goal #3: A Culture of Caring Nurture the Essential Qualities of Equity, Wellness and Responsibility for All.</p> <p>Strategic Goal #5: Good Stewardship Support student achievement by maintaining effective, efficient and transparent practices and the equitable allocation of resources.</p>
<p>Promoting Well-Being: All children and students will develop enhanced mental and physical health, a positive sense of self and belonging, and the skills to make positive choices.</p>	<p>Strategic Goal #2: A Culture of Learning Foster a climate for collaborative, interactive and safe learning for students, staff, parents/guardians and the community.</p>
<p>Enhancing Public Confidence: Ontarians will continue to have confidence in a publicly funded education system that helps develop new generations of confident, capable and caring citizens.</p>	<p>Strategic Goal#4: Collaborative Partnerships Encourage partnerships that enhance learning, civic responsibility and a sense of community.</p>

Tiered Instruction (from Ontario Ministry of Education, (2013) Education for All document, page 60)



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following information is taken directly from Ontario Ministry of Education (2001). *Special Education: A Guide for Educators*, pp. A7 to A10.

Implementing the policies and regulations related to special education is a collaborative process requiring input and cooperation from many levels. It is important for parent/guardian, community and educators to understand their roles and responsibilities in order to provide high quality programs and services for our students with special needs. Below is a summary of the roles and responsibilities of key players in the delivery of special education provincially and locally:

The Ministry of Education (London District Office 1-800-265-4221)

- defines, through the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school Boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services, and prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality;
- ensures that school Boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils;
- establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model. The model consists of the Foundation Grant, the Special Education Grant, and other special purpose grants;

- requires school Boards to report on their expenditures for special education;
- sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement;
- requires school Boards to maintain special education plans, review them annually, and submit amendments to the ministry;
- requires school Boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs);
- establishes Special Education Tribunals to hear disputes between parents/guardians and school Boards regarding the identification and placement of exceptional pupils;
- establishes a provincial Ministry Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) 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, blind, or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

The District School Board

- establishes school Board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for the exceptional pupils of the Board;
- obtains the appropriate funding 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 pupils of the Board;
- reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education;
- provides statistical reports to the ministry as required and as requested;
- prepares a parent guide to provide parents/guardians with information about special education programs, services and procedures;
- establishes one or more IPRCs to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them;
- establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee;
- provides professional development to staff on special education.

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 pupils 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; and
- provides information to parents/guardians, as requested.

The school principal

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, and through 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 parent/guardian;
- ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, through an IPRC, is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and Board policies;
- consults with parents/guardians and with school Board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional pupils;
- ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements;
- ensures that parents/guardians are consulted in the development of their child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP;
- ensures the delivery of the program as set out in the IEP; and
- ensures that appropriate assessments are requested if necessary and that parent/guardian consent is obtained.

The teacher

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- follows Board policies and procedures regarding special education;
- maintains up-to-date knowledge of special education practices;
- where appropriate, works with special education staff and parents/guardians to develop the IEP for an exceptional pupil;
- provides the program for the exceptional pupil in the regular class, as outlined in the IEP;
- communicates the student's progress to parents/guardians; and
- works with other school Board staff to review and update the student's IEP.

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

- holds qualifications, in accordance with Regulation 298, to teach special education;
- monitors the student's progress with reference to the IEP and modifies the program as necessary; and
- assists in providing educational assessments for exceptional pupils.

The parent/guardian

- becomes familiar with and informed about Board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child;
- participates in the IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities;
- participates in the development of the IEP;
- becomes acquainted with the school staff working with the student;
- supports the student at home;
- works with the school principal and teachers to solve problems; and is responsible for the student's attendance at school.

The student

- complies with the requirements as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- complies with Board policies and procedures;
- participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other activities, as appropriate.

CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF EXCEPTIONALITIES

The following information is taken from Ontario Ministry of Education (2001) Special Education: A Guide for Educators, pp. A18 – A20

Behaviour

A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

- a) an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships;
- b) excessive fears or anxieties;
- c) a tendency to compulsive reaction;
- d) an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof.

Criteria for Formal Identification

- ⇒ the need for formal identification is based on longstanding difficulties
- ⇒ children who might benefit from formal identification have severe behavioural and social-emotional difficulties that are not effectively managed with typical classroom strategies that teachers would regularly employ. In addition, behavioural concerns are of significant duration and the previous efforts of school-based personnel assisted by psychological services have met with limited or non-enduring success.
- ⇒ typically these children would meet DSM-IV diagnostic criteria as diagnosed by a qualified psychologist or medical practitioner for one or more of the following:
 - Oppositional-Defiant Disorder
 - Conduct Disorder
 - Mood Disorders - e.g. depression
 - Anxiety Disorder
 - a) selective mutism
 - b) obsessive-compulsive disorder
 - c) social phobia
 - d) post traumatic stress disorder
 - e) general anxiety disorder
- ⇒ assessment measures used to reach a diagnosis would typically include the use of psychometric instruments, rating scales, observation, and interviews with parents/guardians and teachers.

Communication - Autism

A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

- a) disturbances in:
 - rate of educational development;
 - ability to relate to the environment;
 - mobility;
 - perception, speech and language;
- b) lack of the representational symbolic behaviour that precedes language.

Criteria for Formal Identification

- ⇒ diagnosed with one of the pervasive developmental disorders/autism spectrum disorder by a qualified psychologist or medical practitioner.

Communication - Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.

Criteria for Formal Identification

- ⇒ a permanent hearing loss, as documented by a current audiogram by a registered audiologist, that has a significant impact on the student's learning.

Communication - Language Impairment

A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical or sensory factors, and which may:

- a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and
- b) include one or more of the following:
 - language delay;
 - dysfluency;
 - voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based

Criteria for Formal Identification

a language impairment to the extent that in the opinion of a qualified speech and language pathologist significant modification to program is required.

Communication - Speech Impairment

A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm, and stress.

Criteria for Formal Identification

- ⇒ an impairment or disorder in articulation, voice or fluency that significantly interferes with communication, social interaction and academic progress to the extent that, in the opinion of a qualified speech/language pathologist, augmentative/alternative communication device is required.

Examples:

- a) a student with apraxia (motor planning) who is so unintelligible that picture communication symbols are necessary to supplement oral communication

- b) a student whose stuttering is so severe during oral presentations in the classroom that written communication becomes more effective
- c) a student with a cleft palate whose speech is so unintelligible due to hyper nasality that a Digivox is programmed with routine classroom request.

Communication - Learning Disability

The Ministry of Education defines *learning disability* as one of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that:

- affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are *at least* in the average range;
- results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support;
- results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills;
- may typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; memory and attention; processing speed; perceptual-motor processing; visual-spatial processing; executive functions (e.g., self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making);
- may be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities;
- is *not* the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction.

Criteria for Formal Identification

This is a learning disorder that affects one or more ways that a student takes in, stores, or uses information. This is a “life-long” condition, but can be addressed by identifying the individual’s strengths and potential compensatory strategies.

Individuals receiving an identification of Communication: Learning Disability often have at least average levels of abilities in some key areas, such as language abilities and/or nonverbal/perceptual skills, as assessed on accepted measures of learning and intelligence (e.g., Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – fifth edition [WISC-5]). In all cases, the student is not performing at his/her full potential in fundamental academic abilities, such as reading, writing, and/or arithmetic. The student’s difficulties may sometimes be masked by the tremendous amount of effort he/she exerts to successfully perform these basic tasks. The presence of a learning disability may also be reflected in more “nonacademic” areas, such as executive functioning (e.g., planning, organizing, self-regulation, or monitoring activities) and/or social interactions. A Learning Disability may

sometimes occur in the presence of other disorders (diagnosed or undiagnosed) or with another area of exceptionality.

An identification of Communication: Learning Disability can only be made in the absence of other factors and/or circumstances that may adversely impact upon academic achievement (e.g., generalized intellectual delays, visual and/or auditory deficits, socio-economic factors, cultural differences, ESL/ELL factor, lack of motivation, or gaps in learning).

Intellectual - Giftedness

An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.

Criteria for Formal Identification

- In many cases, children who may meet the Ministry's criteria for giftedness are viewed (considered) by their parent/guardian and/or classroom teacher as more advanced than their peers before any formal type of assessment occurs.
- Within the GECDSB, a two-step process is used to aid in identifying giftedness; all Grade Two students (with parental/guardian consent) participate in the Insight group cognitive test; and on the basis of the score obtained (i.e., at or beyond the 98th percentile) and consultation with the psychological services personnel, a recommendation to undergo individualized intellectual assessment is made. Children who meet this criterion are then administered the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (4th or 5th edition). An overall score at or beyond the 98th percentile is required in order for a recommendation of giftedness to occur. In some cases, a student may demonstrate superior intellectual abilities, but also display a learning disorder. The identification of giftedness may occur at any grade level.
- The same criteria may be applied to external psychological assessment reports provided by the parent/guardian.

Intellectual - Mild Intellectual Disability

A learning disorder characterized by:

- a) an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service;
- b) an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development;
- c) a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

Criteria for Formal Identification

- a mild to borderline cognitive impairment which results in well below academic achievement in all areas and the need for considerable curriculum modifications and/or alternate specialized programming and;
- mild to significant adaptive behaviour deficits

Intellectual - Developmental Disability

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

- a) an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development;
- b) an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development;
- c) a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support

Criteria for Formal Identification

- borderline to profound cognitive impairment which results in well below academic achievement in all areas and the need for considerable curriculum modifications and/or alternate specialized programming
- and mild to significant adaptive behaviour deficits
- a moderate to severe level of general intellectual disability with delays in adaptive functioning, which indicates a need for a program that is focused on the student's social adjustment and independent living, in addition to the acquisition, where possible of academic skills
- a full scale I.Q. of 69 and below with comparable delay in adaptive functioning

Physical - Physical Disability

A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or developmental level.

Criteria for Formal Identification

- an ongoing physical or medical disability or condition as identified by a medical practitioner which results in a need for extensive modifications to the classroom environment and/or program

Physical - Blind and Low Vision

A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.

Criteria for Formal Identification

- results of an ophthalmologist or optometrist assessment indicates acuity with correction within the range of 20/70 which requires modifications to print material or braille instructions.

Multiple - Multiple Exceptionalities

A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities, that is of such nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

PROVINCIAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS

Admittance to a Provincial School is determined by the Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296.

Provincial School Contacts

Provincial Schools Branch
Ministry of Education
255 Ontario Street South
Milton, Ontario L9T 2M5
Tel: (905) 878-2851
Fax: (905) 878-5405

The Provincial School for blind/visually impaired or deaf-blind:

W. Ross Macdonald School: School for the Blind and Deaf-Blind

350 Brand Avenue
Brantford, Ontario N3T 3J9
Tel: (519) 759-0730
Fax: (519) 759-4741

The W. Ross Macdonald School is located in Brantford and provides education for students who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. The school provides:

- a provincial resource center for the visually impaired and deaf-blind;
- support to local school Boards through consultation and the provision of special learning materials, such as Braille materials, audiotapes, and large print textbooks;
- professional services and guidance to ministries of education on an interprovincial, cooperative basis
- Programs are tailored to the needs of the individual student and are designed to help these students learn to live independently in a non-sheltered environment;
- are delivered by specially trained teachers;
- follow the Ontario curriculum developed for all students in the province;
- offer a full range of courses at the secondary level;
- offer courses in special subject areas such as music, broad-based technology, family studies, physical education, and mobility training;
- are individualized, to offer a comprehensive life skills program; and
- provide through home visiting for parents and families of preschool deaf-blind children to assist in preparing these children for future education.

The Provincial Schools for the Deaf:

The Robarts School for the Deaf

1515 Cheapside St.
London, Ontario
N5V 3N9
519-453-4400
Fax: (519) 453-4193

Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf

255 Ontario Street South
Milton, Ontario
L9T 2M5
Tel: (905) 878-2851
Fax: (905) 878-1354

These schools provide elementary and secondary school programs for students who are deaf from preschool level to high school graduation. The curriculum follows the Ontario curriculum and parallels courses and programs provided in school Boards. Each student has special needs met as set out in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP). Schools for the deaf:

- provide rich and supportive bilingual/bicultural educational environments which facilitate students' language acquisition, learning, and social development through American Sign Language (ASL) and English;
- operates primarily as day schools; and,
- provide residential facilities five days per week for those students who do not live within reasonable commuting distance from the school.

Each school has a Resource Services Department which provides:

- consultation and educational advice to parent/guardian of students who are deaf and hard of hearing deaf and hard-of-hearing;
- information brochures;
- a wide variety of workshops for parents/guardians, school Boards, and other agencies; and,
- an extensive home-visiting program delivered to parent/guardian of students who are deaf and hard-of-hearing preschool children by teachers trained in preschool and deaf education.

Demonstration School for students with learning disabilities:

Amethyst School

1090 Highbury Avenue
London, Ontario N5Y 4V9
Tel: (519) 453-4400
Fax: (519) 453-2160

The provincial school Amethyst School is located in London, Ontario and provides a targeted instructional plan for students who have severe learning disabilities. They provide:

- Educational programs for students in a residential setting;
- A specialized program that incorporates the severe learning disabilities in association with an attention deficit hyperactivity disorder;
- Self-advocacy training, social skills, individualized instruction and counseling;
- Resources to school boards in Ontario; and,
- Teacher training.

OTHER RELATED INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR COMMUNITY

EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Preschool Children

Partnerships between the Greater Essex County DSB and community agencies have been strengthened over the years and certainly serve as a strong preliminary step in identifying children "at risk" or children with special needs.

- At the preschool level numerous agencies may be involved, assessments and reports may be available and parents/guardians may have begun partnering with other professionals to ensure the needs of their children will be met. Preschool identification assessment and programming is a collaborative effort between parent/guardian, school and agencies. Early identification procedures and programs are reinforced and strengthened by ongoing dialogue and appropriate responses.
- Early Years registration occurs in February at the **home school**. The school personnel complete a registration form with the parent/guardian that provides useful information for the planning of educational services. Information about the child's growth and development as well as health related issues, for example allergies, and any community involvement are collected.
- In many cases, early learners with special needs are referred to the school through local community agencies such as Children First, John McGivney Children's Centre, the Regional Children's Centre, or community daycares.
- Once school begins in September, the classroom teacher leads the team, if applicable, to provide continuous and ongoing assessment of the student's growth and development in the cognitive, social-emotional, language, and physical areas to parents/guardians. School assessments will guide the teacher in implementing tier one strategies. When concerns arise about a student's development, then the teacher will consult with the Learning Support Teacher. The principal may engage other special education staff for assistance, such as from the special education coordinator, speech and language, psychology or social work school based teams. In some cases, a referral to the CCAC School Based Programs may be in order.

EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

Beyond teacher observations, classroom evaluation or student performance and reporting, it is sometimes necessary to employ assessment tools to further delineate student strengths and weaknesses. All assessment data is viewed in conjunction with reports from teachers and parent/guardian in order to get a complete profile of the learner.

The types of assessment tools used by the Greater Essex County DSB vary from informal checklists and surveys to standardized normed complex measures.

The Process for Parent/Guardian Consent

- Informed parent/guardian consent is required when testing is being considered to determine the strengths and needs of the student.
- A parent/guardian consent form has been developed by the Greater Essex County DSB Special Education Services Department in order to ensure that parent/guardian clearly understand the forms being completed.
- Informed consent is a process, not a form.
- A consent form merely provides evidence that consent was given on the date the form was signed.
- Verbal or written consent can be revoked.

Process to Share Assessment Information and Protect Privacy

- It is expected that all reports or results be shared with parent/guardian in a timely fashion following the completion of testing or assessment.
- Special education staff are required to share a written report with parent/guardian at least 15 days before an IPRC meeting is held.
- A written copy of the report will be given to parents/guardian at the time of feedback.

- A copy of the assessment report is kept in the Ontario Student Record file at the school.
- Teachers, parents/guardians, school administration and supervisory officers have access to the assessment reports. The professional special education staff will access the reports in a student's Ontario School Record file only with the written permission of the student's parent/guardian.
- When a report in the OSR has been read by teachers, school administrators or members of the professional special education staff, they will record on the front of each assessment report that they have read the contents. It is extremely important that the reports be kept confidential.
- The Release of Information form has clear and concise instructions explaining to parent/guardian and administrators what information is being asked for, to whom the information will be disclosed, where the information will be kept, and the time limits for the document.
- A constant concern is the importance of protecting all completed test protocols which are kept in a locked area.

Educational/psychological/speech & language assessments:

- Schools follow the consultative process in seeking out additional assessment information and clarification of student needs.
- Educational assessments utilize a tiered approach. Classroom teachers can utilize a number of measures to inform their instructional practices.
- If additional assessment information is required, it can lead to the administration of other measures of achievement.
- Following the receipt of a Request for Consultation, psychology and/or speech language services may conduct an assessment based upon the nature of the presenting concerns.
- The various measures selected by the clinician are largely dependent upon the referral concerns at the time.

These procedures are part of a continuous assessment and program planning process which should be initiated when a child is first enrolled in school no later than the beginning of a program of studies immediately following kindergarten and should continue throughout a child's school life.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES

As noted in the Mission Statement, the GECDSB in partnership with the community provide learning opportunities which support, challenge and inspire all students to achieve their full potential and enable them to participate meaningfully in their communities.

- The GECDSB is committed to developing partnerships within the community in order to plan for and provide special education programs and services for students who are entering the system from other agencies and programs, or moving from the system to other agencies and programs.
- Building strong partnerships within our community on behalf of students and parents/guardians is viewed as an important goal in special education.

- As the number of children experiencing difficulties in the school and community continue to rise it is crucial to consider innovative ways to meet the needs of students.
- The following list of partnerships with community agencies and programs reflects those used most frequently by the board: Association for Community Living, Autism Ontario, Big Sisters/Big Brothers, Canadian Hearing Society, Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Parent Association, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Essex Preschool Speech and Language Services, Family Respite Services, Help Link, Home and School Associations, Easter Seals Ontario – Windsor, Essex-Windsor Chapter of Integration Action for Inclusion, Learning Disabilities Association Windsor-Essex, Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, John McGivney Children’s Centre, Maryvale, New Beginnings, Parents for Children’s Mental Health, United Way, Views, Voice, Windsor Essex Children’s Aid Society, Windsor Essex County Health Unit, and Windsor Regional Children’s Centre.
- The Student Support Leadership Initiative (SSLI) was funded by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Children and Youth and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and is now concluded. Community personnel from the health, child/youth mental health and education sectors met to provide direction for the SSLI executive partners. The WERKIDSMENTALHEALTH.on.ca continues to be a point to access mental health information of the programs and services within our community.

Agency Schools

We partner with New Beginnings, Maryvale and Windsor Regional Children’s Centre to provide teachers within these correctional or mental health treatment centres. Students are able to engage in treatment and keep up with their studies. Currently we have 14 teachers at Maryvale, 11 teachers at Hotel Dieu Grace Healthcare - Regional Children’s Centre, and 3 teachers at New Beginnings.

SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) provides a simplified service access point for parents/guardians. Their responsibilities include determining eligibility for, and buying on behalf of consumers, the highest quality, visiting professional services provided at home and in schools. The objectives of the CCAC program are:

- to provide children with medical and rehabilitation needs the opportunity to attend school;
- to maximize student opportunity to participate in school outings and instruction;
- to empower students to achieve independence in the school setting; and,
- to enable children and families to acquire the requisite skills if this is their wish.

Services available are contracted through various community agencies and paid through the Windsor-Essex Community Care Access Centre. Services provided by CCAC in school settings include:

- nursing
- physiotherapy
- occupational therapy
- speech and language pathology
- nutritional services
- case management

Who is eligible for the School Health Support Services Program (SHSSP)?

- the student must have a valid Ontario Health Card Number;
- a student must be enrolled as a pupil at a school or excused from attendance at school because they are receiving satisfactory instruction at home;
- any student with an assessed need for nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy and dietetic services;
- the provision of treatment after school hours would not be clinically advantageous to the student’s success in school;
- the student requires service during critical developmental stages and it is unlikely that other community resources will be able to provide the services he/she requires; and,
- the student would not be able to participate in school routines and instructions if SHSS were not provided in the school setting.

How do I refer a student to the Windsor-Essex Community Care Access Centre School Health Support Services Program?

The Referral Process

- Where the student has been identified prior to school entry as having a need for nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, or dietetic services a referral to the School Health Support Services Program may be made directly by a physician, or a community therapist with consent of the parent/guardian. A referral for speech therapy must be supported by a Speech-Language Pathologist assessment.
- Where a student is identified by parents/guardians, school personnel and/or community agencies as requiring a referral to the SHSSP after school entry, the school principal must initiate a referral to the School Health Support Services Program. Parents/guardians can initiate referrals to CCAC as well. A school board SLP can initiate the SLP referral

Specialized Health Support Service	Agency or position of person who performs service	Eligibility criteria for students to receive service	Position of person who determines eligibility to receive service and level of support	Criteria for determining when service is no longer required	Procedures for resolving disputes about eligibility and level of support
Administration of Prescribed Medication and Injections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student as authorized - parent/guardian as authorized - aide or other personnel employed by Board - Health Professional hired by CCAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - student must have OHIP - student must be enrolled at a school - attending physician has prescribed medication or injection 	CCAC care coordinator is responsible for ongoing assessment of student’s eligibility for treatment in consultation with attending physician	CCAC care coordinator determines time frame for treatment and planned date of discharge based on review of the student’s progress and consultation	Parent/guardian reviews assessments and consults with CCAC care coordinator

		- student's routine would be seriously disrupted by leaving school to receive treatment		with attending physician	
Occupational Therapy (OT)	- qualified OT administers	Assessment from qualified registered OT to determine that intensive clinical treatment is needed	CCAC Care Coordinator determines eligibility for SHSS service. OT determines level of support in consultation with parent/guardian, CC and school personnel	OT determines when goals are met and no further intervention is required and consults with the CC	Parent/guardian reviews assessments with OT initially, and possibly CC if any further issues arise
Physiotherapy (PT)	- qualified PT administers	Assessment from qualified registered PT to determine that intensive clinical treatment is needed	CCAC Care Coordinator in consultation with PT and parent/guardian CCAC Care Coordinator determines eligibility for SHSS service. PT determines level of support in consultation with parent/guardian, CC and school personnel	PT determines when goals are met and no further intervention is required and consults with the CC	Parent/guardian reviews assessments and consults with PT initially and possibly CM if any further issues arise
Nutrition	CCAC contracts with dietitian employed by Ministry of Health	Assessment by qualified practitioner	CCAC care coordinator in consultation with physician and	CCAC care coordinator determines time frame for treatment and planned	Parent/guardian reviews assessments and consults with CCAC care coordinator

			parent/parent guardian	date of discharge based on review of student's progress and consultation with attending physician	
Speech and Language Therapy Speech Correction and Remediation	CCAC has qualified Speech-Language Pathology Service Providers	Speech-Language Pathology assessment by registered qualified Speech-Language Pathologist determines eligibility: Severe articulation, Fluency, Voice and Non-Verbal Communication Support		SLP determines when goals are met and no further intervention is required and consults with the CC	SLP consults with parent/guardian and possibly CC if any further issues arise
Nursing Catheterization , suctioning, manual expression of bladder or stoma, tube feeding	Health professionals provided by CCAC	Assessment and prescription of service by qualified medical practitioner and/or attending physician	CCAC Care Coordinator in consultation with parent/guardian and physician	CCAC Care Coordinator determines time frame for treatment and planned date of discharge based on review of ongoing assessment of student's progress and consultation with qualified medical practitioner	CCAC Care Coordinator and qualified medical practitioner meet with parent/guardian
Lifting/Positioning and Assistance with mobility, toileting	CCAC services from qualified PT and/or OT	Assessment by qualified PT/OT is considered by CCAC CCAC Care Coordinator	CCAC Care Coordinator in consultation with qualified PT/OT	CCAC Care Coordinator determines time frame and planned date for discharge based on assessment and	CCAC Care Coordinator reviews assessments/concerns with parents/guardians and service providers Service providers review

				consultation with parents/guardians and PT	assessments/concerns with parents/guardians and CC's if required
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Protocol

The GECSDB has developed comprehensive yearly protocols when community agency personnel want to provide services to our students. These community agencies are not ones which are mandated, such as health. Interested community agencies are directed to the Board Website for further information on application and approval processes: www.publicboard.ca – Board – Board Administration – Policies and Regulations – External Agency Partnership (non-mandated).

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The three priorities of the special education department are currently:

- Individual Education Plans: Elementary and Secondary;
- Implementation of PPM #8 Identification of and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities;
- Early Intervention.

Our professional development reflect these priorities.

The GECSDB continues to strongly endorse professional development through day or after school workshops and conferences. The Ministry documents, *Education for All (2005)* and *Learning for All 2013* continue to provide a strong philosophical basis of our professional development.

List of Professional Development Completed in 2015/16:

Reaching Every Learner – 3 Part Series
Training Grade Two Insight Test (teachers new to grade two)
IEP/CLEVR Software Training
Behaviour Management Support Training
IEP Audit/Training

Zones of Regulation
ASD for Secondary Teachers (specific to the students in their classrooms)
LDCC Workshop for Secondary Teachers
ESS – Anxiety and Students
ESS - Considering Sexuality for Children with Special Needs
ESS – All About Me for Early Years
Functional Behaviour Analysis Training

ACCESSIBILITY (AODA)

The Board of Trustees for the GECDSB passed the Policy and Regulation for the AODA - Customer Service Standard at the Public Board Meeting on November 18, 2009. These were developed with support of the OESC and included consultation with our Board's principal groups, SEAC and Ad Hoc Trustee Committee.

The GECDSB remains committed to the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity. Our conduct will demonstrate our belief in the strength diversity brings to our communities. Training for Greater Essex County District School Board staff will continue to be conducted in the fall of 2016 regarding Accessibility Awareness as new employees are hired.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)

SEAC is a School Board committee established under Regulation 464/97.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Special Education Advisory Committee is responsible for making recommendations to the Greater Essex County DSB on matters related to programming for all students who are exceptional. This includes such matters as recommendations related to establishing:

- i) the philosophy and goals for special education delivery;
- ii) reviewing the policies and procedures of the Board as they pertain to special education
- iii) funding of special education programs and services through the Board's annual budget process;
- iv) reviewing the financial statements for the Board, prepared under Section 231 of the Act, as they relate to special education; and
- v) amending the special education plan/report as it is reviewed annually as required by Regulation 306.

Meeting times, places, format and open to public

The Special Education Advisory Committee meets 10 times a year. Please refer to the GECDSB Board website. Meetings are usually held at the Board Office, but may be held elsewhere as the committee may decide. SEAC members elect a chairperson and meetings follow a prepared agenda with open discussion periods provided for members to raise relevant subjects.

GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 2014 - 2018

AUTISM ONTARIO (Windsor Essex) Mary MacLauchlan
BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF WINDSOR ESSEX Mary-Ann Fuduric
CANADIAN HEARING SOCIETY Meghan Johnson
COMMUNITY LIVING WINDSOR ESSEX COUNTY Susan Smith
HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS (Windsor Council) JoAnn Percy
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY – FNMI Beth-Kiniwdewewin-Kwe-Cook
LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION (Windsor/Essex County) Lucie Lombardo
PARENTS FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH Karen Wilson
TRUSTEE Connie Buckler
TRUSTEE Kim McKinley
WINDSOR ESSEX COUNTY DOWN SYNDROME PARENT ASSOCIATION Monica Gilles

GECDSB Board of Trustees

- Connie Buckler - Chair of the Board
- Ron LeClair - Vice-Chair of the Board
- Alan Halberstadt
- Julia Burgess
- Tom Kilpatrick
- Ron Le Clair
- Cheryl Lovell
- Kim McKinley
- Jessica Sartori
- Dave Taves

<https://publicboard.ca/Board/Trustees/meet-our-trustees/Pages/default.aspx>

Senior Administration

Erin Kelly	Director of Education
Todd Awender	Superintendent of Education/ Accommodations
Cathy Lynd	Superintendent of Business
Paul Antaya	Superintendent of Human Resources
Clara Howitt	Superintendent of Education/Program and Professional Learning
John Howitt	Superintendent of Education/Elementary Staffing and Information Technology
Dan Fister	Superintendent of Education/Student Success and Alternative Education
Vicki Houston	Superintendent of Education/Secondary Staffing
Sharon Pyke	Superintendent of Health/Operations, Safe Schools and Equity & Inclusion
Lynn McLaughlin	Superintendent of Education/Special Education Services

Acronyms

AODA	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CCAC	Community Care Access Centre
CYW	Child and Youth Worker
DSW	Developmental Service Worker
EA	Educational Assistant
GAINS	<u>G</u> iving <u>A</u> ttention to <u>I</u> ndividual <u>N</u> eeds
GECD SB	Greater Essex County District School Board
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IPRC	Identification, Placement and Review Committee
LDCC	Locally Developed Compulsory Credits
LST	Learning Support Teacher
MACSE	Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education
MAPS	My Achievement Pathway to Success
OSR	Ontario Student Record
OT	Occupational Therapy
PT	Physical Therapy
SEA	Special Equipment Amount
SERR	Special Education Resource Room
SHSSP	School Health Support Services Program
SEAC	Special Education Advisory Committee

SLP	Speech/Language Pathologist
SSLI	Student Support Leadership Initiative
STEPS	<u>S</u> kills to <u>E</u> nhance <u>P</u> ersonal <u>S</u> uccess
SWDHH	Support Worker for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing