



Greater Essex County District School Board

Special Education Plan 2026
Building Tomorrow Together

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THE BOARD'S CONSULTATION PROCESS - Section A

Standard 1—The Board's Consultation Process



Standard 1 - The Board's Consultation Process

Purpose of the Standard

To provide details of the board's consultation process to the ministry and to the public.

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) values collaboration with families, community partners and stakeholders and we welcome input into our Special Education Plan. The GECDSB's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) formally reviews the Special Education Plan annually in the spring. SEAC members are able to share information and input from their respective associations/agencies and provide feedback. Administration has reviewed the Special Education Plan, and it is our goal to make the plan easier to navigate by organizing according to the Ministry Standards for School Board's Special Education Plans. Input from SEAC was received and all feedback was reviewed.

There were no majority or minority reports concerning the Board's approved plan in 2025-2026.

New for the 2026-2027 School Year

We continue to focus on raising awareness and understanding of our Special Education Plan.

Consultation Process

- The 2026-2027 Special Education Plan will be uploaded to the board website for September 2026 public consultation. As part of this consultation process, the public will be able to provide feedback through a Microsoft Forms survey. This survey will be anonymous. Results will be shared during the fall with SEAC members.

Updates to the Special Education Plan

- We will update our plan as changes occur to align with the Ministry Standards for School Board's Special Education Plans.

Below, are highlights of several key areas that are included within the GECDSB's 2026-2027 Special Education Plan

Standard 4 - Transition Service Navigator

- Continuing through 2026-2027 Core Education Funding is the Transition Service Navigator position. This initiative is designed to improve educational outcomes for students with special education needs by enhancing transition practices as students enter, move through, and exit the school system. More information about the Service Navigator role and their impact on providing supports for students, families and schools can be found in Standard 4 - Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies, Standard 10-Individual Education Plans and Transition Plans and Standard 12-Special Education Staff.

Standard 10- High School Students with Intellectual Disabilities Integration Program (HSSIDIP)

- The GECDSD is continuing to partner with the Government of Canada to support the HSSIDIP program. The program is an employment-training program through the Government of Canada that is focused on transforming the lives of students who have an intellectual disability or autism. More information about HSSIDIP can be found in Standard 4 - Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies and Standard 10- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Transition Planning.

Standard 12-Student Support Funds

- The Student Support Funds in the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) collective agreement are designated to protect and enhance services and supports for students, particularly those with special education needs. These funds are part of system priorities investments, aimed at ensuring that students receive the necessary resources and assistance to succeed in their educational environment. These allocations are made collaboratively in accordance with the priorities and needs identified by the school boards and ETFO and are intended to ensure that all students have access to the support they need to succeed.
- For the 2025-2026 school year, the student support funds were used to provide Learning Support Teacher (LST) positions to schools, specifically to help support our Tier 3 students. This funding will continue during the 2026-2027 school year, with a continued focus on supporting students who require Tier 3 supports in literacy and/or numeracy.

Standard 13 - Staff Development

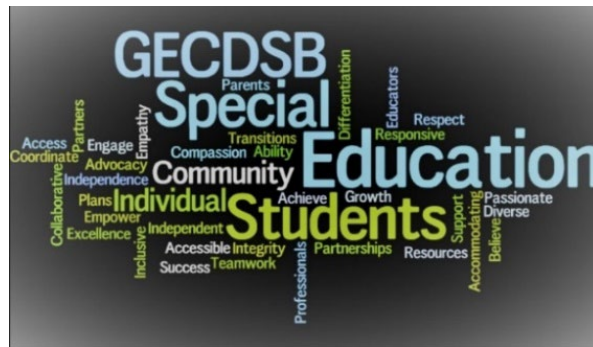
- Professional development for educators is essential as it enhances their ability to implement inclusive teaching strategies, such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), ensuring they can effectively meet the diverse needs of all students while managing classroom challenges. The GECDSD believes that ongoing professional learning and staff development opportunities are key components of a thriving school system. Additional information can be found in Standard 13 - Staff Development, which provide an overview of PD that occurred during the 2025-2026 school year and a highlight of the proposed plans for the 2026-2027 school year.

Standard 13 – Barrier Grants

- During the 2025-2026 school year the GECDSD was awarded funds by the Ministry of Education to support the implementation of eight Breaking Barriers Grants. These Breaking Barriers Grants provided multiple opportunities to support students and engage both students and staff in multiple learning opportunities. More information is shared within Standard 13-Staff Development.

Section C - SEAC Handbook

- During the 2024-2025 school year a sub-committee was established to create a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Handbook. The purpose of the Handbook is to provide a guidebook for members of SEAC, as well as outline varied roles and responsibilities of its members. During the 2025-2026 school year the SEAC Handbook was reviewed with the members of SEAC and based on feedback the attached Handbook was adopted. More information about the SEAC Handbook can be found in Section C - Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).



SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES - Section B

**Standard 2—The Board's General Model
for Special Education**

Standard 2 - The Board's General Model for Special Education

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide the ministry and the public with information on the board's philosophy and service delivery model for the provision of special education programs and services.

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) takes great pride in providing a variety of high-quality programs and services to meet the needs of all of our learners within the GECDSB.

At the GECDSB, we presume the competence of every learner and are committed to creating learning opportunities that build independence and equip students with the skills needed for success in all aspects of life. Through a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment, we support the full development of each student's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual potential. All exceptional pupils shall have available to them, in accordance with the Education Act, 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.

In an effort to reduce the automaticity of identifying younger students through the Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), resulting in young students being placed on an Individual Education Plan (IEP), the GECDSB is committed to not formally identifying students in kindergarten to Grade 2. This direction is in response to the philosophy of destreaming students and changing their trajectory through opportunities to explore multiple pathways.

Formal Identification, through the IPRC process, will only take place beginning in Grade 3, unless a parent/caregiver request is initiated.

It is imperative for students to be engaged in their learning if they are to meet with success in the classroom. Educators need to be responsive to all their students in order to promote this level of engagement. Consideration must be given to student identities, student strengths and interests, as well as students lived realities. Before any referral to the School Based Team (SBT) occurs, intentional dialogue must take place that examines equity, anti-oppression, anti-racism through the following questions:

- Why this student?
- Why now?
- What interventions have been utilized by the teacher(s) to support the student's learning?
- What other interventions should be considered?

These questions keep the focus on the educator and how they can best meet the needs

of the student or students who are struggling learners in their classroom.

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 exceptionalities 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 the placement in a regular class, with appropriate special education services, would meet the student's needs and is consistent with parental/guardian preferences.

Ontario Human Rights Commission OHRC Right to Read and the Focus for the GECDSB

On February 28, 2022, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) released its Right to Read report, highlighting the need for systemic changes in how Ontario schools teach reading, especially for students with reading disabilities. The report emphasizes that teaching children to read is a fundamental responsibility of schools.

In response, the Greater Essex County District School Board has implemented several initiatives that will continue into the 2026-2027 school year:

Tiered Interventions

- *Lexia Core 5* (Tier 2) and *SickKids Empower Reading Program* (Tier 3) are available in all elementary schools.
- *Lexia PowerUp* is used in secondary schools.

Professional Development

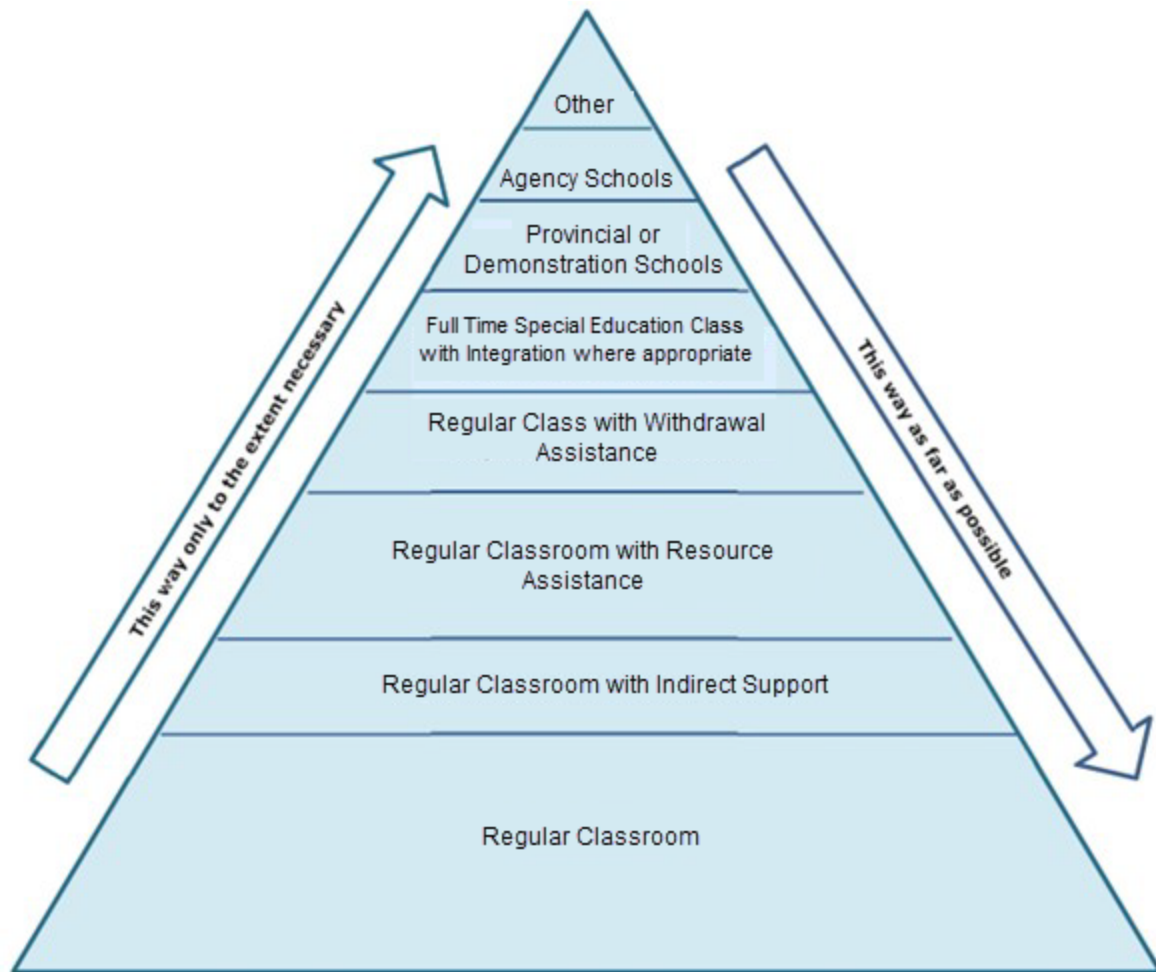
- Over the past two years, the GECDSB has prioritized professional learning to support inclusive education. Through a range of opportunities, the Board has worked to empower all members of the school community to create learning environments where every student feels included and can thrive.

Structured Literacy

- During the 2025-2026 school year, the GECDSB extended its focus on inclusive literacy practices into Junior and Intermediate classrooms. The Junior Literacy Barrier Grant targeted students in Grades 4–8 with ongoing decoding and fluency needs through an in-class coaching model led by two teachers from the Special Education department working in the role as Literacy Coach. This pilot initiative brought together classroom teachers, administrators, and teacher mentors to support structured literacy, affirm student identity, and integrate assistive technology. In 2026–2027, the Board will explore ways to scale and embed this learning across Junior and Intermediate classrooms system-wide.

Range of Programs and Services Greater Essex County District School Board

Based on the 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.

The Board's General Model for Special Education Key Points

- 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 service and supports using the Home School model.
- The goal of the Home School model is to support 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 or 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 collaboratively develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) 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 the strong partnerships among parents/guardians, 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 students as well as in our program delivery model.
- Depending on the nature and severity of the students' needs, supports outside the regular classroom may be employed.

Elementary Schools

- The supports available to elementary schools in addition to instruction by the homeroom teacher may include the Learning Support Teachers (LST), Learning Support Teacher (SSF), and GAINS Teachers.

Secondary Schools

- The supports available to secondary schools in addition to subject specific teachers may include the Learning Support Teacher (LST), STEPS Teacher, MAPS Teacher and Stepping-In Classroom Teacher, (a fully self-contained secondary ASD system level placement for students with complex needs, including autism).

Additional Supports:

Additional supports in both elementary and secondary schools may include:

- Educational Support Staff (ESS), as well as itinerant staff such as the Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Teachers of the Blind/Low Vision, Teacher

Consultant-Special Educational Coordinators, Teacher Consultant- Inclusive Classroom Support Teacher, Teacher Consultant-Special Education Transition Navigator JK-12 , staff from our Behaviour Transition Team, Registered Behaviour Analyst (RBA), Facilitator Inclusion, Behaviour Management System Worker (BMSW), Speech and Language, Psychology, and/or Social Work/Attendance. Community agencies are also available to consult with the school team to strengthen and extend the existing supports within the school.

- Our staff demonstrate strong dedication and commitment to student success. Student learning remains at the center of all decisions, with a continued focus on improving academic achievement and life skills. Within the Special Education Department, priority is placed on strengthening literacy and numeracy skills while fostering student independence. School leaders play a key role in supporting collaboration and cultivating inclusive, welcoming environments where all students feel valued and supported.

The Special Education Plan aligns with the GECDSEB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan, which can be found on the GECDSEB's website.



Standard 3—Roles and Responsibilities



Standard 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

Purpose of the Standard:

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

The following information is taken from the Ontario Ministry of Education website as they have outlined that the Special Education in Ontario

Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Resource Guide, “was published in 2017 and contains terminology and references that may be outdated and may not reflect current ministry policies. It remains available while it is undergoing a review to streamline information and improve usability.

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 exceptionalities. 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)

- Sets out, 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;
- Requires through the *Education Act* that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional students;
- establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model. 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 through the *Education Act* and through regulation that school boards establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs);
- requires school boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs);
- establishes a Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to special education programs and services;
- operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, who are blind or have low vision, who are deafblind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

The District School Board (519-255-3200)

- establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the *Education Act*, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda;
- monitors school compliance with the *Education Act*, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda;
- requires staff to comply with the *Education Act*, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda;
- provides appropriately qualified staff for programs and services for the exceptional students of the board;
- plans and reports on the expenditures for special education;
- develops and maintains a special education plan that is amended from time to time to meet the current needs of the exceptional students of the board;
- reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education;
- provides statistical reports to the ministry as required;
- prepares a parent guide to provide parents with information about special education programs, services, and procedures;
- establishes one or more Identification, Placement, and Review Committees (IPRCs) to identify exceptional students and determine appropriate placements for them;
- establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC);
- provides professional development to staff on special education;
- adheres to all applicable legislation.

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

- makes recommendations to the Board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional 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 documents, including policy/program memoranda, and board policies;
- communicates Ministry of Education and school board expectations to staff;
- ensures that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes;
- communicates board policies and procedures about special education to staff, students, and parents;

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

The Classroom Teacher

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

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;
- assists in providing educational assessments for exceptional pupils.

The Early Childhood Educator

The Early Childhood Educator, in coordination and cooperation with the classroom teacher:

- plans for and provides education to children in Kindergarten;
- observes, monitors, and assesses the development of Kindergarten children;
- maintains a healthy physical, emotional, and social learning environment in the classroom;
- communicates with families;

- performs duties assigned by the principal with respect to the Kindergarten program.

The Parent/Guardian

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

The Student

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

**Standard 4—Early Identification
Procedures and Intervention Strategies**

Standard 4 - Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide details of the board's early identification procedures and intervention strategies to the ministry and to the public.

Preschool Children partnerships between the GECDsB 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 varied needs.

Our Transition Service Navigators play a vital role in supporting transitions throughout a student's elementary and secondary school career. These connections with the Transition Service Navigators have assisted in providing guidance to families to support transitions into school from out of town, out of country and those families not yet connected to community partners prior to kindergarten.

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/caregiver, school and agencies. Early identification procedures and programs are reinforced and strengthened by ongoing dialogue and appropriate responses.

Transition Into Kindergarten

Kindergarten registration occurs in February at the home school. As a part of the registration process, families complete a registration form with the support of school personnel that provides useful information for the planning of educational services. Information about the child's growth and development as well as health related needs, for example allergies, and any community involvement is collected. Embedded in the registration is both a survey asking parents how they are receiving supports and services and a link for parents to request that board special education personnel reach out to them directly.

Based on feedback from our February 2025 *Virtual Welcome to Kindergarten Evening for Parents*, a series of videos were created for the February 2026 Kindergarten Open House, to support transitions to kindergarten for families who wanted to learn more about the supports and services offered within the Greater Essex County District School Board.

Special Education & Student Services Department Videos

The Special Education & Student Services Department has prepared the following comprehensive videos that introduce each service area, describe the supports available

for incoming kindergarten students, and help ensure consistent, accessible communication with parents, guardians, and caregivers.

Each video highlights:

- Who the team is
- The services they offer
- How they support students and families

GECD SB Support Videos

- Blind/Low Vision Supports
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Supports
- Speech and Language Pathologists
- Psychologists
- Social Work
- Special Education Coordinators
- Open Minds Team

Community Partner Videos

- Children First
- School-Based Rehabilitation Services: Occupational Therapists
- John McGivney Children's Centre School-Based Rehabilitation Services: Physiotherapists

The videos can be found on the GECD SB website at the link: [Special Education & Student Services Department Informational Videos - Greater Essex County District School Board](#)

In many cases, early learners who have received community-based supports and services are referred to the school through local community agencies such as Children First, John McGivney Children's Centre, Talk2 Me or regional autism service providers, and the preschool/infant hearing program

- Once school begins in September, the classroom teacher leads the team, to provide continuous and ongoing assessment of the student's growth and development in the cognitive, social-emotional, language, and physical areas.
- School assessments, including early literacy screeners for SK-2 will guide the teacher in implementing Tier One strategies.
- When questions arise about a student's development, the teacher will consult with the Learning Support Teacher (LST).
- School staff communicate progress to parents/guardians, throughout the process.
- The principal may engage other special education staff for assistance such as the Special Education Coordinator, Speech and Language, Psychological Services or Social Work school-based teams. In some

cases, a referral to the School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS) may be in order. Other community partners such as Ontario Autism Program (OAP) Urgent Response Services (URS), Children's Aid Society (CAS), Children First may be engaged if they were not previously.

Speech and Language Services Model

When identified needs around speech or language development arise our Speech-Language Services staff will become involved. Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) are professionals with training at the Masters degree level in communication development and disorders. They provide service in accordance with the standards of professional practice of The College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario and adhere to the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) and associated legislation including the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).

Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies: Scope of SLP Services 2026-2027

SLP Services at the GEDCSB are based on a model of Early Assessment and Intervention for students between JK and Grade 1, utilizing all tiers of intervention. Interventions are aligned to the Kindergarten and Primary curriculum, as well as to supporting IEP development (if applicable).

Early Assessment and Intervention Model Primary Focus: JK-Grade 1

- Provide Supports in classroom for Tier 1, 2, and 3 as prioritized with school administration
- Teacher/Staff Consultation
- Small Group in-class interventions by SLP
- Specific interventions requiring pull out of student(s)
- Formal Assessments JK-Grade 1
- Informal Assessments JK-Grade 1
- Articulation Blocks (JK- Grade 1; up to 8 sessions – maximum 2 blocks for a student)

Ongoing SLP Services: JK-Grade 12

- Formal assessments on a case-by-case basis
- Consultation for communication programs – individual student and classroom
- Meet with LST's and school administration
- Report writing
- GAINS/STEP consultation/collaboration
- System level PD presentations
- School-based PLC's
- Articulation therapy for Grade 2 students (3-6 sessions; if have not previously

- had 2 blocks in JK to Grade 1)
- Other consultations in the elementary and secondary panels

General consideration for SLP Services

- Students in JK to Grade 1 will be eligible to receive individual assessment and small group direct interventions to facilitate language development
- Students in Grade 2 may receive one block of direct contact articulation therapy on a case-by-case basis
- Beyond Grade 1, assessment and consultation may occur based on student needs on a case-by-case basis.
- Students in Grade 2 and above will not receive direct SLP interventions, but SLP consultation will be available, as well as speech and language assessments on a case-by-case basis.

School SLPs will be available for consultative services in the GAINS, and STEPS classrooms for communication needs.

Examples of assessments that our Speech-Language Pathology Services provide for Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention include the Bracken Basic Concept Scale, 3rd edition (BBCS-3R/BBCS:E), the Oral Language Acquisition Inventory, 2nd edition, the Kindergarten Language Screening Test, 2nd edition, the Emerging Literacy Language Assessment (ELLA), the Test of Pragmatic Language, 2nd Edition (TOPL-2), the Expressive Language Test 2 (ELT-2:NU), Goldman-Fristoe Test of Articulation (GFTA-3), Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF-5), and the Clinical Evaluation of Language Foundations Preschool (CELF-P3).

Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies

- Assessment of a student includes discussion with parents/guardians and school staff, observation of the child, review of school records/history, and individual formal (standardized) and informal testing. Intervention services may include individual and small group therapy, classroom-based support, and home practice materials.
- Some general reading interventions, screeners and diagnostics may include Lexia Core5/Power Up, Empower, Acadience, IDAPEL (screeners), Quick Phonics Screener, Heggerty, Fondation phonologique, Pratique Phonemique and/or small group instruction and guided practice.

Behaviour Support Team Service Model

- The Greater Essex County District School Board is committed to providing learning opportunities in a safe and nurturing environment. From time to time, students may present complex challenging behaviours or mental health concerns that require early intervention and/or intensive short-term support from a multi-disciplinary team beyond the school-based team.

- The GECD SB Behaviour Support Team includes a Supervisor of Behaviour Support Services (a Registered Behaviour Analyst), Registered Behaviour Analysts (RBA–Ontario), a Behaviour Management Service Worker (BMSW), Facilitators-Inclusion, Applied Behaviour Analysis Facilitators (ABAF).
- Members of the Behaviour Support Team provide direct and consultative intervention services to the students referred to them for support while working to build capacity with staff across the system around strategies that promote positive behaviour.
- Special Education Coordinators, along with consultation from the school principal, facilitate the referral to the Behaviour Intake Team for additional short-term intensive support. Registered Behaviour Analysts (RBA's) allocated by family of schools typically do the initial consultative assessment to determine which level of team support is a best fit for the current need of the student. Students do not need to be identified as Exceptional to receive services from the Behaviour Support Team.

Transition Service Navigator

In 2025–2026 through Responsive Education Program funding the Transition Service Navigator position was continued. This initiative is designed to improve educational outcomes for students with special education needs by enhancing transition practices as students enter, move through, and exit the school system. The Transition Service Navigator works collaboratively across the Board and with community agencies and employers to support students with special education needs and/or disabilities as they transition to post-secondary pathways. The role also includes sharing best practices, tools, and resources to promote consistency and success in transition planning.

Several impactful initiatives were launched or expanded this year as part of the Service Navigator's work. These include the successful launch of Project SEARCH, an employment-readiness program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and the coordination of the High School Students with Intellectual Disabilities Integration Program (HSSIDIP), which increases access to meaningful employment opportunities for students with developmental disabilities. The Service Navigators also developed the video series outlined on pg. 20 of this section. The video series provides families with critical information early in the registration process.

This year also saw the co-hosting of the Planning for Success Information Session, aimed at helping families understand the range of post-secondary options and supports available to students with developmental disabilities. As well, they participated on the Community of Practice for Coordinated Service Planning and the Transition to Adulthood Planning Committee, both of which strengthen regional collaboration and planning.

Enhancements to the student registration process were made through the addition of a family survey and direct contact links, which allow the Board to better understand and prepare for students' individual needs.

The Community Special Education section was also updated on the Board's website to centralize resources and information for families and community partners.

The Service Navigators have also actively planned, implemented and/or participated in the following transition events and activities:

- Partnered with John McGivney School Authority for their Parent Transition Evening
- Partnered with Windsor Family Network to offer IEP and More Evening.
- At the request of the Superintendent of Special Education or Supervising Principal, Transition Service Navigators played a role with individual schools/families in connecting them to community or provincial services.
- Continued to update the GECDSB website with community supports.
- Offered Professional Development at New Teachers Induction Program for multiple sessions that include UDL, Universal Accommodations, Individual Education Plans, The Tiered Process, and GECDSB support model.
- Presented to the University of Windsor Faculty of Education on UDL and supports for students requiring supports and services .
- Served as the liaison between the University of Windsor and secondary Learning Support teachers and identified students Grade 9-12 for participation in LEAP (Learn, Empower, Advocate, Prepare). **LEAP** is designed to give high school students information related to Student Accessibility Services to assist with making informed decisions about their academic future. This program is not specific to students choosing the University of Windsor. It is for students who are currently on an IEP seeking information about how this will translate at post-secondary institutions (college or university) in Ontario.
- Through direct outreach, contacted all parents of students aged 18-21 in self-contained classrooms (approx. 110) to ensure they were informed of, and connected to, available community supports. This included providing guidance on application processes and services such as Developmental Services Ontario (DSO), Windsor Brokerage for Personal Supports, the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), Community Living, and Regional Support Associates.
- Developed a comprehensive transition checklist to support early and ongoing planning. This resource is shared with families at Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) meetings beginning at age 12 through 21, outlining key steps, timelines, and relevant contacts to facilitate a coordinated and informed transition to adult services.

- Hosted three workshops for STEPS department heads to bring community partners in to discuss their commitment and involvement in the transition to adulthood.
- Developed a partnership with Community Living Essex-Career Compass pre-employment program, to bring the learning into classrooms for students who are showing readiness skills.
- Created a liaison between Community Living Essex and Community Living Windsor and secondary students and their families to develop transition to adulthood connections earlier to ensure families are feeling prepared and supported.
- Worked with City of Windsor public transportation service to bring the Ambassador training program into our secondary schools for students with disabilities.
- Worked with Windsor Regional Employment Network (WREN) - Post-Graduation Employment and Training Supports for Grade 12 Students to make connections with our guidance and STEPS departments to identify students who could benefit from employment supports post-graduation.
- Created a connection with the Regional Assessment and Resource Centre for students in Grades 7 and 8 transitioning into high school to support self-advocacy and understanding their strengths and needs as learners towards goal setting for high school and beyond.
- Additionally, the Transition Service Navigator has played a vital role in supporting new families arriving from out of town or from outside the country. In many cases, these families reached out before having permanent addresses or the ability to register. The Transition Service Navigator provided guidance, answered questions, gathered necessary data, and initial early transition planning to ensure a smooth start for students upon arrival.

The website can be accessed at: [Link to GECDSB Service Navigator.](#)

**Standard 5 - The Identification,
Placement, and Review Committee
(IPRC) Process and Appeals**

Standard 5 - The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide details of the board's IPRC process to the ministry and to the public.

- Regulation 181/98 requires that all school Boards set up Identification Placement Review Committees (IPRCs). The GECDSB has a well-established process which identified approximately 3773 students or 10.8% of the total number of students within the GECDSB, deemed as Exceptional.
- The Greater Essex County District School Board has a total of 5626 students on an IEP. Of those 5626 students, there are 2053 non-identified IEPs, which makes up 35% of that total, while 65% of students have an IEP.
- In the 2025-2026 school year, as of March 31, 2026, a total of 403 initial IPRCS were conducted. There were 923 IPRC reviews held (this number does not include parents who waived their right to hold an IPRC Review meeting) during this same time period.
- There were zero (0) parent/guardian appeals filed last year with our Board.
- 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.
- With parental permission the GECDSB encourages students from Grade 7 up, to participate in the process
- Upon the completion of the initial identification process, continued support and partnership between home and school is strongly encouraged.
- The Individual Education Plan (IEP) will assist parents/guardians, administrators, teachers, and educational support staff in developing common goals for students. The GECDSB 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 Standard 8 section “Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities.”

- The Statement of Decision must also include a description of the students’ 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 the first option at all IPRC meetings.
- Parents/guardians or students over the age of 16 will sign the IPRC.
- The original IPRC statement 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 16 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, the Superintendent of Special Education facilitates the mediation of the process.

The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC)

Process Leading to IPRC

- On-going assessment of the student’s strengths and needs by a 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/Guardian) to determine possible changes to the academic program, homework assignments, and universal accommodations that could be used. These universal accommodations may include allowing for extra time, quiet working environment, reduction in writing requirements, use of a scribe or assistive technology, calculators. All of which do not require an IEP to be accessed.
- Consultation with the Special Education Services to review your child’s profile

(standardized assessment may be recommended.)

The IPRC Meeting

- The IPRC committee meet to determine if exceptionality and placement as defined by the Ministry of Education is warranted. Parents are participating partners and may agree or disagree with the committee decision.
- If the student warrants a formal identification, their strengths and needs are determined from assessment data presented at the meeting.
- IPRC documentation includes basic documentation on the student, current school, strengths and needs, assessment data and dates, and the student's placement (i.e., regular class placement and/or special education class)
- The regular class is always considered the first option
- Direction from parents in terms of the student's placement is always considered and respected by the IPRC committee

Following the IPRC Meeting

- Strengths and needs statements from the IPRC Statement of Decision are used to create an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or update if a pre-existing nonidentified IEP was in place.
- Student receives accommodations and/or modifications to the curriculum so that 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 students' IEP as their 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 any updated assessment data, current and future placement options
- Parents may waive their right to attend the IPRC review; however, attendance is encouraged. Parents additionally have the right to request a meeting date and time that is mutually convenient.
- IPRC reviews will not be waived when the student is in grade 7 or 8 so that transition planning to secondary may begin. The board believes in sharing information early, encouraging parents to attend open houses in Grade 7, tour the specialized programs. Starting in Grade 7 allows parents to come with

informed questions about secondary placements.

Note: Learning Support Teachers (LSTs), 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 the parent/guardian. The partnership between home and school is critical in all stages of the identification process.

**Standard 6—Educational and Other
Assessments**

Standard 6 - Educational and Other Assessments

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide details of the board's assessment policies and procedures to the ministry and to make parents aware of the types of assessment tools used by the school board, the ways in which assessments are obtained by IPRCs, and the ways in which assessments are used.

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

The purpose of the assessment is:

- To answer specific questions or concerns;
- To build an accurate picture of strengths and needs;
- To assist in planning an effective program;
- To help parents/guardians formulate an understanding of the student's learning potential;
- To provide documentation required for identification as an exceptional student.

A range of assessment strategies are used to develop appropriate programs and interventions for students. The intent of any assessment is to assist the student by providing staff with insights into the students' strengths and instructional needs.

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) considers assessment to be an integral part of the instructional process. Classroom teachers and Learning Support Teachers (LSTs) regularly use educational assessments to evaluate student achievement and student progress.

Practitioners from Psychological Services and Speech-Language Pathology Services identify and conduct specialized assessments and review assessment reports from community practitioners to determine learning needs to inform programming. Registered Behaviour Analysts may conduct assessments to determine areas for skill building to enhance school safety and success. A comprehensive assessment system may include family/educator/student report measures, observation, screening, and/or use of standardized assessment tools to develop appropriate programs and interventions for students.

The Process for Parent/Guardian Consent

Informed consent must be obtained for Registered Behaviour Analysts (RBA), Psychological Services and Speech Language Pathology staff to access the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR).

Information to be shared includes, but is not limited to, that which is contained in the OSR. This information is obtained and used only for the improvement of instruction and other education of the student in accordance with the Education Act, (R.S.O. 1990. S.266(2)) and is collected, transmitted, retained, and disposed of confidentially in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (R.S.O. 1990 c. M. 56). Informed consent from the parent(s)/guardian(s) for students under eighteen (18) years of age is obtained for all referrals for assessment by school personnel to Registered Behaviour Analysts, Psychological Services, and Speech-Language Pathology.

Consent for Sharing Information and Protection of Privacy

All information is collected, stored and shared in accordance with the Education Act, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) and other legislation that governs the use of personal information.

A separate consent form, Consent to the Disclosure, Transmittal and/or Examination of Records or Information, must be signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) (or by the student if sixteen (16) years of age or older and who has been withdrawn from parental control) to share information with outside agencies.

Communication of Assessment Information

Upon completion of an assessment, Registered Behaviour Analysts, Speech-Language Pathologists, Psychologists, Psychological Associates, and/or Psychological consultants discuss the results with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and, where appropriate, the student.

A written confidential report is shared with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and is copied for the OSR with parent(s)/guardian(s) consent. A copy of the psychological report is held in the central files. Central files are secure files stored at the GECDSD board office. In alignment with Registered Health Professions Act (PHIPA), only members of the Psychological Services team may access these locked files. Communication of a diagnosis (Psychological Services) is a controlled act in psychological practice under the Registered Health Professions Act (RHPA), 1991. The Act requires that diagnoses (e.g., learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, etc.) be formulated and communicated directly to the parent(s)/guardian(s) by a Psychologist or a Psychological Associate who is licensed to do so.

Speech and Language Assessments

Assessment Tools

Speech Tools (Articulation, Motor Speech, Fluency, Voice)

- Goldman-Fristoe Test of Articulation 3 (GFTA-3);
- Bracken Basic Concept Scale – Third Edition;
- Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language – Second Edition (CASL-2);
- Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals Preschool – Third Edition (CELF-P3);
- Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – Fifth Edition (CELF-5);
- Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals Screening Test – Fifth Edition (CELF-5 Screener)

Early Functional Communication Profile

- Emerging Literacy & Language Assessment Record Form (ELLA);
- Expressive Vocabulary Test – Third Edition (EVT 3);
- Language Processing Test – Elementary (LPT 3);
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Fifth Fourth Edition (PPVT 5);
- Preschool Language Assessment Instrument Profile (PLAI 2);
- Preschool Language Scales Fifth Edition (PLS-5);
- Preschool Language Scales Screening Test Fifth Edition (PLS-4 Screener);
- Test for Auditory Comprehension of Language – Third Edition (TACL 3);

Social Language Tools (Pragmatics, Social Communication)

- Social Language Development Test – Elementary: Normative Update (SLDT-E:NU);
- Social Language Development Test – Adolescent: Normative Update (SLDT-A:NU);
- Test of Pragmatic Language – Second Edition (TOPL 2);

What Do They Measure?

- These tests measure all aspects of speech (articulation, motor speech, stuttering, voice), language (vocabulary, grammar/syntax, linguistic concepts, memory, narrative development), phonological processing, and social language (pragmatics, social communication). Areas measured address both comprehension and expression of oral and written language.

Qualifications of Assessors

- Registered Speech-Language Pathologists (Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)).

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Consent and Feedback

- Informed consent from the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be received prior to the assessment for students under eighteen (18) years of age, or from the student if eighteen (18) years of age or older or sixteen (16) and withdrawn from parental control.
- Results are communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s) by a Speech-Language Pathologist.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) receives a copy of the assessment report.

Information Sharing and Privacy

- If permission is granted, results are shared with the school team.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) is legally able to withhold permission for a Registered Health provider to share a copy of the report with the school. No aspects of the report, including recommendations, are shared with the school.

Professional to disclose information to others.

- A written report is also provided for the OSR with parent(s)/guardian(s) permission. A release of information must be signed by parent(s)/guardian(s) to share information with other agencies.
- All speech and language files and records are maintained following the procedures outlined in the RHPA.

Psychological Services Assessments

Assessment Tools

Measures of Intellectual Functioning

- Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence – 2nd Edition (CTONI-2)
- Differential Ability Scales (DAS);
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales – 5th Edition (SB-5);
- Test of Nonverbal Intelligence- 4th Edition (TONI-4);
- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – 4th Edition (WAIS-IV);
- Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence – 4th Edition (WPPSI-IV);
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – 5th Edition (WISC-V);

Psychological Processes Related to Learning (e.g., Memory, Attention, Phonological/Language, Perceptual-Motor, Visual-Spatial, Executive Functioning)

- Bender Visual-Motor Gestalt Test – 2nd Edition (Bender Gestalt II);
- Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration – 6th Edition (VMI 6);
- Behaviour Rating Inventory of Executive Functioning – 2nd Edition (BRIEF-2);
- Brown Executive Functioning/Attention Scales;
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing – 2nd Edition (CTOPP-2);

- Conners – 4th Edition (Conners 4);
- Delis-Kaplan Executive Functioning System (DKEFS);
- Expressive Vocabulary Test – 3rd Edition (EVT-3);
- NEPSY-II: A Developmental Neuropsychological Assessment – 2nd Edition (NEPSY-II);
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – 5th Edition (PPVT-5);
- Rey Complex Figure Test (Rey)
- Comprehensive Executive Functioning Inventory (CEFI)

Academic Achievement

- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – 4th Edition (WIAT-4);

Adaptive Skills

- Adaptive Behaviour Assessment System – 3rd Edition (ABAS-3);
- Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales – 3rd Edition (VABS-3).

Personality, Behavioural, and Social-Emotional Functioning

- Conners 4
- Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule – 2nd Edition (ADOS-2);
- Autism Spectrum Rating Scales (ASRS);
- Beck Depression Inventory – 2nd Edition (BDI-II);
- Children's Depression Inventory – 2nd Edition (CDI 2);
- Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children – 2nd Edition (MASC-2)
 - Behavior Assessment System for Children 3rd Edition (BASC-3)
 - Beck Youth Inventory-2 (BYI-2)

What Do They Measure?

- Psychological assessment tools are selected to provide information on a student's intellectual functioning, cognitive and processing skills, attitudes or interests, and other behavioural and social-emotional skills that are relevant to the development of academic skills, adaptive and life-functioning skills, and overall adaptation and adjustment.
- In conjunction with other sources of information, assessment information may lead to a psychological diagnosis or recommendation of formal identification. Diagnoses are communicated by members of the College of Psychologists who are legally authorized to do so.

Qualifications of Assessors

- Registered Psychologists and Psychological Associates; Psychometrists supervised by members of the College of Psychologists of Ontario (all under the RHPA)

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Consent and Feedback

- Informed consent from the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be received prior to the assessment for students under eighteen (18) years of age or from the

student themselves if they are eighteen (18) years of age or older or over the age of sixteen (16) and withdrawn from parental control.

- Results are communicated by a Psychological Services staff member to the individual who provided consent for the assessment.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) receives a copy of the assessment report.
- Communication of Diagnosis is a Restricted Act under the RHPA. Diagnoses (e.g., learning disability) must be communicated by a member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario who is legally authorized to do so.

Information Sharing and Privacy

- If permission is granted, results are shared with the school team.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) is legally able to withhold permission for a Registered Health Professional to disclose information to others. No report or information regarding the results of the assessment are provided to the school
- A written report is also provided for the OSR with parent(s)/guardian(s) permission.
- A release of information form must be signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) to share information with other agencies.
- All psychological files and records are maintained following the procedures outlined in the RHPA in a digital Client Management System requiring multiple access requirements.

Criteria for Managing Wait Times – Centralized List

Strategies to Manage Psychological Assessment Wait Times

- When the psychologist or psychological associate completes a consultation with the school, they will determine if a student will be recommended for an assessment.
- Students recommended for assessment will be placed on the centralized assessment waitlist for Psychological Services staff.
- The centralized list is prioritized by the following criteria: complexity of case, duration of concerns, current performance, intervention history, and readiness. Students will be ranked on each criterion into Low, Moderate, and HIGH, with the total score for each student determining their rank on the centralized waitlist. Assessments on the waitlist will be assigned to staff by the Manager of Psychological Services.
- Professional Student Services staff are responsible for completing assessments and managing the waitlist for their assigned assessments from the centralized list. Waitlists and wait times are monitored on an ongoing basis by the Manager of Psychological Services.

Registered Behaviour Analyst (RBA) Assessments

Assessment

- Behaviour Analysts perform a variety of assessments at different levels when aligned to support a school team and a student. These include Functional Behaviour Assessments, Functional Analysis, and may include other questionnaires and surveys to measure baseline skills prior to program implementation.

Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA):

- An FBA is an overarching process of evaluating the environment that surrounds a student to support determining what is behind the presentation of certain behaviours, in order to increase the likelihood of determining possible solutions. The ultimate goal is to use observation, data collection, information gained from caregivers and support team members, and rapport building with the student to support an understanding of the many functions a particular behaviour or set of behaviours may be accessing.
- An FBA is supported through a Bio-Psycho-Social lens, considering the biological, psychological, and social contributors and addressing them through both preventative practices and skill development programs. Consequence programs that focus on positive reinforcement are meant to increase the likelihood that skill development programs are effective. FBAs can be supported by a school team that includes teachers, school staff, service providers, and family, but is ultimately led by a Registered Behaviour Analyst.

Functional Analysis (FA) or Practical Functional Analysis (PFA)

- A Functional Analysis is a more systematic and controlled analysis of a certain behaviour or group of behaviours. It can only be conducted by a Behaviour Analyst or a Psychologist with explicit training in FAs. The environment around an FA is highly controlled through the assessment process to determine whether there are environmental conditions that lead to greater success for a student to optimize safety and learning. The FA process can be challenging to implement in schools due to many factors outside of environmental control, meaning that adapted methods are often considered (such as the Practical Functional Assessment). An FA is considered to have greater risks and requires explicit informed parent consent.

Other Assessment Tools

- Behaviour Analysts utilize a number of qualitative assessment tools, which include but are not limited to reinforcement surveys, motivation assessment scales, interviews, and skill evaluation forms that may be tied to specific skill development programs.

Qualifications of RBAs

- Behaviour Analysts must be Registered in Ontario with the College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analysts. They must have at least a Master's degree, pass an exam, and complete a number of supervised practice hours as

per the College. Many RBAs also hold dual qualifications as a Board-Certified Behaviour Analyst, but this is not mandatory in Ontario at this time.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Consent

- Though the services of a Behaviour Analyst are dually to the school team and the student, informed consent from the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be received prior to the initiation of services for students under eighteen (18) years of age, or from the student themselves if they are eighteen (18) years of age or older or over the age of sixteen (16) and withdrawn from parental control.
- Consultation Notes and Behaviour Intervention Plans that are derived from the assessments above are shared with the school team supporting the student. The parent(s)/guardian(s) receives a copy of the assessment report, and a copy is stored in the OSR (with parent/guardian consent).

Information Sharing and Privacy

- Consultation reports completed by the Behaviour Analyst are shared with the school team, and a copy is provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) as outlined within the consent process.
- A written copy of all formal reports is also provided for the OSR.
- A release of information form must be signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) to share information with other agencies.
- All RBA files and records are maintained following the procedures outlined in the RHPA in a digital Client Management System requiring multiple access requirements (Clevr).

**Standard 7—Specialized Health Support
Services in School Settings**

Standard 7 - Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide details of the board's specialized health support services to the ministry and to the public.

Students with complex health conditions and disabilities may rely on health supports to attend school. Some students may have developmental delays or other conditions that do not affect their ability to attend school but may affect their ability to fully benefit from educational routines.

Ontario Health atHome (OHaH) provides various health services in schools, including nursing support, to enable children to attend school despite medical needs. These services are designed to support students with short or long-term illnesses, disabilities, or complex conditions. Services are available in school for eligible students who require medical and/or rehabilitative assistance to enable them to attend school, participate in school routines and receive instruction.

These supports are provided on a priority-needs basis and children with complex needs requiring assistance in order to safely attend school are the top priority. A care coordinator will assess the students' needs and create a supportive care plan for the individual.

What services are included?

Through the school health support services program in public schools, your care coordinator works with you and your child to develop a care plan to support in-school access to a wide range of professional health services, including:

- Nursing
- Diet and nutrition counseling
- Information and referral services
- Coordination of services

Please note: Therapy services are not offered through Ontario Health atHome. If you are looking for school-based therapy services in public schools, you can find the information through the following webpage: [Link to Provincial Children's Treatment Centres](#)

Is my child eligible?

Any child or youth is eligible to receive care through the school health support services program in public schools if the student:

- Has a valid Ontario health card

- Is registered as a student at a school as defined under the *Education Act*
- Would experience a significant disruption in school attendance, instruction or participation without the support of this program

Referrals for public school programs

A referral from the student's school principal or special education representative is required. Parents may contact either the school or Ontario Health atHome to begin the process. Eligible services will not be initiated until a referral is received from the school and an assessment and care plan have been completed by a care coordinator.



Standard 8—Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

Standard 8: Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

Purpose of the Standard:

To make information on the categories and definitions of exceptionalities available to the public, including parents/guardians and community associations.

The Education Act identifies five categories of exceptionalities: behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical, and multiple. These categories encompass a wide range of conditions that may affect a student's ability to learn, including both diagnosed and undiagnosed medical conditions that result in learning difficulties.

The categories support the identification of students with special education needs; however, students may demonstrate needs in different ways and may be identified in one or more categories. Decisions about special education programs and services are based not on a specific medical diagnosis, but on an individual assessment of each student's strengths and needs.

The Ministry of Education's definitions of the five categories of exceptionalities and their subcategories are provided below, as outlined in the *Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Resource Guide (2017)*.

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: Behaviour

- the need for formal identification is based on long standing 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-V 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
 - selective mutism
 - obsessive-compulsive disorder
 - social phobia
 - post-traumatic stress disorder
 - 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: Communication - Autism

- 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: Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

- 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:
 - a. language delay;
 - b. dysfluency;
 - c. voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.

Criteria for Formal Identification: Language Impairment

- 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: Speech Impairment

- 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 a 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 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 behavior 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: Learning Disability

- 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 their full potential in fundamental academic abilities such as reading, writing, and/or arithmetic. The students’ difficulties may sometimes be masked by the tremendous amount of effort they exert 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 factors, 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: Intellectual Giftedness

- 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 cognitive test; and on the basis of the score obtained (i.e., at 130 or beyond the 98th percentile) the school will consult with the psychological services personnel assigned to each school. Students with a score at 130 or beyond the 98th percentile on the Insight Ability score will be administered the Gifted Rating Scale (GRS). The GRS will be administered to the classroom teacher after a Form 3 Request for Consultation Form is completed by the student's parent. Upon completion of the GRS, staff from the psychological services staff will provide the school and the students' parents with a Consultation Report indicating if the student meets the criteria for identification of gifted. On some occasions, the psychological services staff may recommend an individual cognitive assessment when there is variance between the cognitive assessment results on the Insight testing and the GRS.
- The same criteria may be applied to external psychological assessment reports provided by the parents/guardians.

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;
- a) an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development;
- b) a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

Criteria for Formal Identification: Intellectual - Mild Intellectual Disability

- 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: Intellectual Developmental Disability

- 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: Physical Disability

- 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: Physical – Blind and Low Vision

- 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 teacher's holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

**Standard 9—Special Education
Placements Provided by the Board**

Standard 9 - Special Education Placements Provided by the Board

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide the ministry and the public with details of the range of placements provided by the board, and to inform the public that placement of a student in a regular class is the first option considered by an IPRC.

The GECD SB believes in providing a range of placements based on the:

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

The discussion of placement in the regular classroom is the first option with parents/guardians. In order for parents/guardians to make educated decisions about placement issues, they are encouraged to have an open discussion with teachers, participate in classroom visits when arranged, and take opportunities to speak with other parents/guardians.

- We are moving towards greater inclusionary practice opportunities for integration to enhance socialization, exposure to same 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 students needs are met, then we generally have a recipe for student success.
- Placement in a Special Education program – Partially Integrated or Fully Self-Contained classroom requires an identification through the IPRC process.

A Special Education placement (Regular Class/Indirect Support, Regular Classroom with Resource Assistance, Regular Classroom with Withdrawal Assistance or a Fully Self-Contained classroom) requires an identification through the IPRC process.

- Below, you will note the four placement options for students within the GECD SB.

The four options for placement within the GECD SB are:

Regular Classroom/Indirect Support

- Student is placed in regular class for the entire day.
- Always considered the first priority by the IPRC committee.
- Teacher provides accommodations and/or modifications.
- Consultative support for the teacher by Special Education staff.

Regular Classroom with Resource Assistance

- Student remains in the regular classroom for most or all of the day
- Receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom.
- This means the student receives specific, targeted instruction and support from a teacher such as our Learning Support Teacher (LST) while remaining in the homeroom classroom environment. This placement is often used when a student needs additional, specialized instruction in a specific subject or skill.
- Support for students who require it is provided by the Itinerant Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Itinerant Teachers of the Blind/Low Vision.

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.

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.
- Stepping-In in the secondary panel
- My Achievement Pathway to Success (MAPS) in the secondary panel.

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. The total is 50 GAINS rooms as of September 2026. The number of GAINS classrooms remains the same across the system. For the 2026-2027 school year, some classrooms have been moved to support students within their home school communities. This includes the establishment of the following programs: Belle River PS, Glenwood PS, Prince Edward PS, Roseland PS

Amherstburg	1	John Campbell	1
Anderdon	1	King Edward	2
AV Graham	1	Lasalle PS	1
Beacon Heights	1	Legacy Oak Trail	1
Belle River PS	1	MD Bennie	1
Coronation	2	Marlborough	2
Dougall	1	Northwood	3
David Suzuki	1	Prince Edward	2
Eastview Horizon	3	Princess Elizabeth	1
Erie Migration	1		

Essex PS	2	Queen Elizabeth	2
Ford City	1	Queen Victoria	1
Forest Glade	2	Roseland	1
Frank W. Begley	2	Roseville	1
General Brock	1	Southwood	2
Glenwood	1	Talbot Trail	3
John A. McWilliam	1	West Gate	2
Hetherington	1		

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. These are the STEPS classrooms as of 2026.

Belle River DHS - 2	North Star -2
Belle River Stepping-In-1	Riverside - 3
Erie Migration Secondary – 2	Sandwich Secondary - 2
Essex DHS - 1	Tecumseh Vista Academy Sec. - 2
Herman Secondary - 3	Walkerville - 2
Leamington - 1	Westview Freedom Academy – 4
Massey - 5	Westview Freedom Academy Stepping In-1

- The Stepping-In classroom is a system placement designed for students with complex special needs, including ASD, that requires a highly supported alternative learning environment with intensive services from a multi-disciplinary team where needs and programming cannot be met in a STEPS classroom.

Note: Westview Freedom Academy, Leamington Secondary and North Star Secondary School offer MAPS programs. Students need to have an IPRC and meet the criteria order to attend MAPS programming.

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. A student does not have to be formally identified to attend these programs.

For students requiring alternative programming that cannot be provided in a school setting, information regarding these programs are shared with parents/guardians by our Special Education Coordinators who are responsible for initiating referrals. Referrals may be considered for Education and Community Partnership Programs at Trillium Learning Centre Schools (Wells Campus-Maryvale, Connaught Campus School-Regional Children's Centre and Highland 1-New Beginnings) Provincial and Demonstration Schools, etc.

**Standard 10—Individual Education Plans
(IEPs) and Transition Planning**

Standard 10 - Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Transition Planning

Purpose of the Standard:

To inform the ministry and the public about the ways in which the board is complying with ministry requirements for implementing IEPs.

Individual Education Plans (IEP)

IEP Standards

- Students identified through IPRC will have IEPs.
- In addition, there is a category of “IEP non-identified” in some cases. Consultation with the principal, LST, the Educational Coordinator and parents/guardians is required. Most students with “IEP – non-identified” are moving towards further assessment and possible IPRC.
- All student with SEA equipment must have an IEP whether formally identified or not.
- Students with IEPs are entitled to modifications/accommodations or alternative expectations that support and enhance success to assist them in reaching their full potential. In line with International Dyslexia Association (IDA) and the Right to Read report the GECDSEB believes, schools should modify to lower grade-level expectations only as a last resort and only after making every effort to provide interventions and successfully accommodate the student's learning needs to attain grade-level expectations.
- The IEP is a working document that has flexibility to be adjusted as needed throughout the school year to meet the needs of the student. IEPs are revised every reporting period.

IEP Standards & Report Card

“Promotion at risk” or “Progressing with difficulty” and the IEP

- Students who have been formally identified through the IPRC process 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 and a statement included if the student has a modified or alternative program. The IEP box will not be checked if the student has accommodations only.
- There are instances when a student refuses to complete work or engage in programming that may lead to an I (insufficient information) or an R (remediation require) being given on a report card. Parent communication should be occurring, prior to this happening.

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

Good communication and collaboration with parents/guardians during the initial states of completing an IEP are very important in order to ensure that everyone is working toward common goals for a student. The IEP Consultation form will help to facilitate parental or guardian involvement in shaping the Individualized Education Program (IEP). With this form, parents/guardians can offer insights into the IEP's formation, and they have the option to engage a community partner who aids their child/ward. Furthermore, students aged 16 and above are encouraged to join in the consultation process.

The following is recommended as a process to implement with respect to parent/guardian involvement and the IEP:

- All assessments, recommendations from medical reports (that parents have shared with the school), IPRC strengths and needs statements as well as parent/guardian input is reviewed collaboratively by the school team and parents/guardians or student, where appropriate, to determine annual goal areas for a student's IEP. Parents/guardians may wish to include strategies utilized at home.
- The classroom teacher prepares a draft IEP and shares the draft with key team members, parents/guardians and the student, where appropriate for input. 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 teachers, parents/guardians and, where appropriate the student. The final copy is filed in the OSR. A copy goes home to parents/guardians, and a copy is available to all teachers who teach the student in Clevr. 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 disagrees 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.

Note: During the 2026-2027 school year, there will be system wide training on Individual Education Plan (IEPs) for both elementary and secondary panels. The goal of this training is to ensure quality and consistency in IEPs and provide education to school staff.

Transition Planning at GECDSB

Throughout their education, all students face a variety of transitions, including the transition from home or from an Early Years program to school, from one grade or level of schooling to another, from one school to another, elementary to secondary and from secondary school to an appropriate post-secondary pathway.

In addition to these larger milestones, transition planning can also include micro transitions that occur throughout the school day and may present challenges for some students. Examples of micro transitions include moving between activities or classrooms, transitioning from recess or lunch back to instruction, changing teachers or learning environments, boarding and exiting transportation, or shifting between independent work and group activities. Documenting these daily transitions in the IEP can help identify the supports, strategies, and accommodations needed to promote independence and reduce anxiety or behavioural challenges. Effective transition planning recognizes that both significant life transitions and routine daily transitions can have a substantial impact on a student's success and should be addressed proactively when appropriate.

Positive transition planning and implementation requires a team, including the student, parents/guardians and school staff. Outside organizations can be particularly important when assisting students leaving school on a post-secondary pathway to post-secondary education, employment, apprenticeship, or community living. All of our transition processes have one important thing in common and that is to reduce the level of anxiety students and families may experience.

Students with special education in the GECDSEB may be involved in one of the four various transition processes:

Entry to School

- Most students enter school in their JK or SK year
- A child could be coming from home, childcare with or without community partnerships including Talk2Me, JMCC, JMCCSA, Children First, Entry to School Program
- Parents working with community partners sign consent with both the community partner and the appropriate school
- Community partners share information including student name, need, and school attending with the Supervisor of Psychological and Speech Services. In turn the Supervisor shares this information with the appropriate Special Education Coordinator
- The Special Education Coordinator will reach out to family, daycare, community partners as appropriate to gather information, plan an observation and schedule a transition to school information meeting
- Transition meetings will be planned with parent/guardian, and community partners at the receiving school to learn about the student and make an entry plan
- The transition meeting includes parents/guardians, their advocates, when invited by parents/guardians, and community partners as deemed appropriate;
- The student's profile would be developed, including strengths and areas of need, which would be the starting point of developing the IEP if applicable

- Parents receive a copy of the Transition Plan at the conclusion of the meeting; parents will be asked to sign a copy for placement in the OSR.
- All classroom teachers who teach the student will have access to the plan in Clevr.

Transition within School

School to School Transition

- Many students change schools, whether because of program considerations or relocation of the family. Regardless of the reason, the transition can be made more smoothly with advance planning;
- When a transition is occurring, parents/guardians need to register their child at their new community school. Upon receiving the registration, the receiving school principal shall initiate the appropriate transition process;
- In accordance with *The Ontario Student Record Guideline (2000)*, pertinent information about the student should be shared with the receiving school prior to the student's arrival so that appropriate supports are put in place;
- If a student has a behaviour/safety plan a formal transition meeting between schools will be held. Formal transition meetings will also be held for students entering or changing self-contained placements. School Principals may initiate transition meetings for other reasons at their discretion. Formal transition notes will be taken, parents/guardians will receive a copy.
- In planning programming, the receiving school should use assessments from the originating school;
- The new school will access a copy of the student's IEP, including the transition plan in clevr, a copy will also be included in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR).
- It is best practise for the receiving school to be in receipt of the OSR prior to the transition meeting occurring.

Transition from Elementary to Secondary School

- Included in all IEPs for all students;
- Transition information meetings are held for all grade 8 students with Student Success Teachers, Grade 8 Teachers and Learning Support Teachers from both the elementary and secondary schools.
- To support students with special education needs transitioning from elementary to secondary, educators need to provide these students with information regarding types of secondary school programming and the requirements to complete the programs;
- IPRCs occur with the secondary school in attendance to gather information about the student and answer any parental questions. At this meeting information is shared about secondary supports, and pathways, and specialized programs offered by the GECDsB
- Our expectation at GECDsB is that board staff help students understand their learning profiles/needs so that they can further develop their self-advocacy

skills.

- The Grade 7 and Grade 8 students are invited to attend their IPRC meeting with parental approval.

Transitions from School to Work, Post-Secondary Education, and Community Living

- The transition from secondary school to post-secondary destinations – whether further education or training, work, or independent living can be intimidating to many students. This transition can be particularly challenging for some students with special education needs. The probability of success is greatly increased when schools work with the student, parents/guardians, employers, community agencies, and providers of further education coordinated plans for exceptional students;
- In addition, to support a student with special education needs in making the transition to work, further education, and/or community living, this process could include making provisions to help the student connect with post-secondary institutions, community agencies, and/or the workplace, as appropriate.
- The GECD SB cohosts Planning for Success Information evening for parents/guardians each year with the Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board, Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence and Windsor Brokerage.

Teacher Consultant-Transition Service Navigator

- This role involves removing barriers for students with disabilities by promoting and supporting accessible, inclusive, and equitable education practices.
- Fostering inclusive and evidence informed transition practices, supports and programs with strong connections to external partners and services.
- Facilitating intentional spaces for students with disabilities to identify their needs including identity affirming self-advocacy skills, self-determination to inform their transition pathway.

High School Students with Intellectual Disabilities Integration Program (HSSIDIP)

- The GECD SB is partnering to support the HSSIDIP program. The program is an employment-training program through the Government of Canada that is focused on transforming the lives of students who have an intellectual disability or autism.

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 (ASD), the application of ABA strategies are appropriate for a variety of students across multiple environments. These methods are often incorporated into the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Applied Behaviour Analysis is utilized across classrooms to enhance motivation to learn through environmental arrangements that cue and reinforce skills and positive behaviours. ABA highlights the use of data to inform progress and to monitor goal achievement over time, as well as trends in behaviour that may help inform the direction of skill development in the future.

ABA methods are consistently used by classroom staff 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 classroom to maintaining the same performance in a regular classroom.)

For individuals struggling with more specific or persistent behaviour challenges, practices rooted in ABA focus on meeting student needs, and teaching replacement skills that support them to be more successful. Data on what happens before behaviour, and what happens after, can help educators develop an understanding of what may be influencing behaviour and how to better meet student needs.

Further individualized behaviour assessment and support can be provided through a Registered Behaviour Analyst from the Behaviour Support Services Team. Special Education Coordinators can support these referrals as needed.

In terms of supporting our educators in implementing ABA methods and strategies, ongoing in-servicing has occurred with the Behaviour Support Services team across a variety of opportunities over the past several years, including:

- Consultation to educators and classroom teams by Registered Behaviour Analysts, BMS Workers, and Facilitators within the Behaviour Support Services team.
- Professional Development opportunities for educators and administrators, including ABA topics such as, Reinforcement, Promoting Positive Classroom Behaviour, Function-Based Intervention, Classroom-Based Strategies to Promote Self-Regulation, Structured Learning Supports, Explicit Teaching of Skills, and Practical Functional Assessment.
- On-site Behavioural Skills Training for staff through the lens of meeting student needs in order to determine the best way to teach replacement skills.
- On-site training in completing Functional Behaviour Assessments (FBA) and the use of Universal Protocols in order to determine the function(s) of a student's behaviour and maintain safety, televisibility and rapport while implementing skill development programs;
- On-site training with educators in order to support the incorporation of ABA methods and strategies into the IEP;
- Staff resources on Edsby that are easily accessible to all staff for information, resources, strategies, documents, downloads, etc.;

- Ongoing collaboration with community partners such as Thames Valley Children's Centre (TVCC), John McGivney Children's Centre (JMCC), Therapeutic Learning Centre, Spark Pediatric, Virtual Behaviour Services, and Regional Children's Centre (RCC);
- Developing individualized data collection materials based on need(s);
- Classroom observations and Teacher Consultant – Inclusive Classroom Support Teacher consultations in order to assist teams with supporting Structured Learning Environments on the whole classroom level;
- Environmental scans and Behavioural Management Systems supports (including individual staff BMS consultations and wider BMS training refreshers) to assist classroom teams with implementing best practices across multiple domains;
- Mandatory completion of the Introduction to Autism or ABA learning modules through the Sonderly learning platform (formerly the Geneva Centre for Autism) for all Educational Support Staff; including the opportunity of Registered Behaviour Technician training through the Ministry Funded Training program
- Registered Behaviour Analyst Implementation of Practical Functional Assessment and Skill Based Intervention with staff training to support their understanding of explicit teaching of skills for targeted students, through the lens of supporting any student to become happy, relaxed and engaged while at school, whatever that may look like, to fuel their learning ability. From there, skills are developed in a systematic order, including expressing wants/needs, tolerance to denials and cooperation with instructions.
- Behaviour team staff training on supporting students with excessive behaviour and interfering stereotypes using advanced applications of ABA including Interview Informed Contingency Analyses.
- Behaviour team staff training on the use of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and the related AIM Curriculum as an approach to supporting internal verbal behaviour and related externalizing behaviour
- Implementation of classroom-wide behaviour technologies to promote self-regulation skill development, through both in-class training and consultation, as well as a Self-Regulation based pilot project throughout kindergarten classrooms
- Classroom management and Behaviour Management Systems training opportunities for all Kindergarten teaching staff.



**Standard 11—Provincial Demonstration
Schools in Ontario**

Standard 11: Provincial Demonstration School in Ontario

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide the public with information about the Provincial and Demonstration Schools that are operated for students who are deaf, blind, or deafblind, or who have severe learning disabilities, which may include attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

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

More information about Provincial Schools can be found at:

[Link for Provincial Demonstration Schools website](#)

The Provincial School for students who are 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 students who are 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 inter-provincial, cooperative basis
- programs tailored to the needs of the individual student and are designed to help these students learn to live independently in a non-sheltered environment;
- programming delivered by specially trained teachers;
- the Ontario curriculum developed for all students in the province;
- 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 support through home visits for parents/guardians and families of children who are preschool deaf-blind.

The Provincial Schools for the Deaf:

The Robarts School for the Deaf

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

Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf

255 Ontario Street, 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 their 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;
- operate 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 parents/guardians 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 agencies; and
- an extensive home-visiting program delivered to parents/guardians 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 Amethyst School 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 severe learning disabilities in association with an attention deficit hyperactivity disorder;
- self-advocacy training, social skills, individualized instruction and counseling;
- resources to school boards; and teacher training.

Student Lodging

Provincial schools provide a student lodging program for students that live too far from the school to attend as a day student. Decision about whether a student qualifies for a placement in the student lodging program will be made during the school admission process.

For the 2025–2026 school year, we have the following number of GECDsB students in each program:

- W. Ross Macdonald School for the Deaf-Blind – 1
- The Robarts School for the Deaf – 0
- Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf – 1
- Amethyst School for Learning Disabilities – 0



Standard 12—Special Education Staff



Standard 12: Special Education Staff

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide specific details on board staff to the ministry and to the public.

Special Education Staff

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

- Psychological Services
- Speech and Language Services
- Teachers for Deaf and Hard of Hearing – Itinerant
- Teachers for the Blind/Low Vision – Itinerant
- Special Education Coordinator
- Behaviour Support Services

Education Support Staff (ESS)

We also have educational support staff to support students. These students have been identified as needing intensive support due to the complexity of their needs. Education Support Staff consist of Student Support Worker (SSW), Child and Youth Worker (CYW), and Support Worker for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SWDHH). For the 2026-2027 school year we will be looking to update the role of SWDHH, to meet student's varied learning profiles. An update will be provided once consultation has been completed.

- ESS are not assigned as a “one-on-one” support for a student.
- Very few students who have IPRCs will require support from ESS.
- ESS have the goal of developing independence in the students that they work with 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 ESS work in partnership with administration, teaching staff and other educational support staff in an effort to strengthen student learning, growth, development and independence.

Staff	Actual For 2025-2026	Projected for September 2026	Minimum Qualifications of Personnel
Teacher Consultant–Special Education Coordinators	8	8	Bachelor of Education Special Education Part 1
Itinerant Teachers for Deaf/Hard of Hearing	4	4	Bachelor of Education Teaching Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing AQ
Itinerant Teachers for Blind/Low Vision	6	6	Bachelor of Education Teaching Students who are Blind/Low Vision Part 1
Behaviour Management Systems Worker	1	1	Completion of a post-secondary degree or diploma; post-graduate studies or equivalent field experience in behavioural science (e.g. in autism and behavioural science, psychology)
Teacher Consultant–Transition Service Navigator	1	1	Specialist in Special Education; Master or Doctoral Degree in Special Education would be an asset
Facilitator – Inclusion	2	2	Ontario Secondary School Diploma + post-secondary degree or diploma in a related field

Teacher Consultant- Inclusive Classroom Teacher	0	1	Specialist in Special Education
Facilitator – Applied Behaviour Analysis	5	5	Ontario Secondary School Diploma + post-secondary degree or diploma in a related field

Professional Student Services Personnel	Actual For 2025-2026	Projected For September 2026	Minimum Qualifications of Personnel
Psychologist	4	4	Ph.D., & registration with the College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analyst of Ontario (C.Psych)
Psychological Associate	1	1	MSc. & registration with the College (C.Psych.Assoc.)
Psychoeducational Consultant	2	2	M.A., M.Ed., or M. Sc. – supervised by Ph.D.
Registered Behaviour Analyst (RBA-Ont)	5	5	M.A., M.Ed., or M. Sc. And registration with the College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analyst of Ontario
Speech/Language Pathologists	7	7	M.Sc. & registration with the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologist of Ontario (CASLPO)

Educational Support Staff	Actual for 2025-2026	Projected for September 2026	Minimum Qualifications of Personnel
Student Support Workers Including SSW-C and AA	545.5	528.5	Ontario Secondary School Diploma
Child and Youth Worker (CYW)	79	81	CYW Diploma
Support Workers for Deaf and Hard of Hearing	17	15	Level 2 - Interpreter Training Program from a recognized institution. American Sign Language proficiency rating of 3. Level 1 – related community college diploma and/or courses and/or lived experience. American Sign Language proficiency rating of 2. Please see the note above regarding the consultation currently occurring.

Professional Student Services Personnel	Actual For 2025-2026	Projected For September 2026	Minimum Qualifications of Personnel
Supervisor of Psychology Services and Speech and Language Services	1	1	Ph.D., & registration with the College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analyst of Ontario (C.Psych)
Supervisor of Behaviour Services	1	1	Master's degree & registration with the College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analyst of Ontario (C.Psych)

Supervising Principal of Special Education Programs and Services	1	1	Principal Qualifications Program, Part 1 & Part 2, Special Education Qualifications
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Standard 13—Staff Development



Standard 13: Staff Development

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide details of the board's professional development plans for special education staff to the ministry and to the public.

An Overview of PD within the GECDSB

The priorities of the Special Education Department are determined through feedback and consultation with stakeholders and needs identified in the system, including Ministry and Board goals.

This year the GECDSB engaged in a variety of professional development sessions for staff extending the learning around creating and sustaining inclusive classroom environments that are focused on the belief that every learner has the capacity to succeed. In addition to the work on UDL, a focus on presuming competence for all learners in an environment that meets their varied needs, was the foundation of the professional learning sessions that were held.

Below, is an overview of the learning that was offered to the GECDSB during the **2025-2026** school year.

Date	Audience	Summary
October 2025	All Staff- Elementary and Secondary	This professional development session, led by Katie Novak and Mirko Chardin, centered on creating equitable and inclusive learning environments through Universal Design for Learning (UDL). It emphasized the belief that every student has the capacity to succeed and that diversity should be viewed as an asset rather than a barrier. Participants were encouraged to reflect on implicit biases and examine issues of power and privilege that impact student experiences. The session highlighted UDL as a transformative framework that proactively designs instruction to meet the needs of all learners, ensuring access, engagement, and success for every student. Focused on all educators, it called for a shift toward equity by design, where inclusion drives innovation and student potential is fully realized.
February 2026	All Staff- Elementary and Secondary	The session for all staff was in partnership with Holland Bloorview and the Rick Hansen foundation. The focus was on moving from ableism to allyship in school communities where we hold high expectations and presume competence for all of our learners. Learning from others lived experiences was also a key component of the learning.

Throughout the 2025–2026 academic year a variety of targeted professional learning sessions were offered to support staff in their roles, foster collaboration, and enhance inclusive practices across school settings. These sessions were designed to be interactive, practical, and aligned with the evolving needs of students and school teams.

Summary of Professional Development Sessions for Special Education Teams

Date	Audience	Summary of Professional Development
September 2025	Special Education Department	This session focused on strengthening team collaboration, support, and relationship-building within the GECDSB. Through guided reflection questions, participants explored their individual and collective identities, clarified their team roles, and examined common perceptions and misconceptions. The discussion also encouraged teams to articulate shared goals, identify areas for growth, and express hopes for the year ahead. Overall, the session fostered deeper understanding, alignment, and a stronger sense of purpose across teams.
September 2025	Elementary LSTs	This session focused on enhancing literacy and numeracy practices by using assessment data to guide next steps in literacy instruction. Participants learned how to analyze screening and diagnostic data, identify student needs, and align targeted instructional strategies and interventions. Emphasis was placed on practical tools for planning and progress monitoring to support responsive teaching. In the afternoon, the focus shifted to mathematics, where educators used the curriculum continuum and board-provided resources—such as JUMP Math, the MathUP Numeracy

		Screener, and the LST Math Kit—to determine appropriate supports and enhance numeracy instruction.
September 2025	Elementary LSTs	LST's engaged in learning in collaboration with the LDAWE, focused on learning more about the enhanced SEA training that classrooms engaged in during the 2025-2026 school year.
September 2025	Elementary GAINS teachers	This two-day professional learning session was designed to provide educators who are new to GAINS with a comprehensive understanding of resources and strategies to strengthen their ability to support student learning and success.
September 2025	Elementary LSTs	This learning session included carousels that were selected based on personal learning goals and needs. Carousel options included: Psychological assessments, Math: A deeper dive into Newcomer Reception Centre & JUMP, Literacy: Acadience Progress Monitoring and 'Next STEPS in Literacy Instruction.
January/February 2026	SSW, CYW, SWDHH - Elementary and Secondary	SSW, CYW and SWDHH staff engaged in learning together about various factors that make up a student profile and impact their learning, based on the video, Growing Up Invisible. The Developmental Costs of Child Neglect. School teams extended their learning by reviewing current program supports for students and examining student behaviour and safety plans.
February 2026	Secondary ESS-SSW, CYW, SWDHH	Staff engaged in learning based on a panel conversation from Holland Bloorview, which focused on youth sharing their lived experience with

		disability, from their perspectives. They focused on how educators can inspire possibility and support positive futures by truly listening, recognizing strengths, creating opportunities, offering choices, supporting goals and helping build independence skills.
April 2026	STEPS, MAPS, LSTs Secondary Special Education Teachers	Subject-Specific PD Day focused on varied learning experiences for staff to support students in Special Education programs. Staff were engaged in learning experiences with a number of our community learning partners.
April/May 2026	ECEs	Members of our Program Department Teacher Consultant team lead us in a look at small-group instruction in early years classrooms, with a focus on play-based approaches that respond to student learning needs. Our keynote speaker Susan Hopkins from the MEHRIT Centre will provide a virtual session on recognizing dysregulation in and implementing self-regulation to our early years classrooms. She focused on sharing helpful tips and tricks on achieving and maintaining staff well-being. This learning was planned in collaboration with our OSSTF-ESS partners using funds provided by the Ministry of Education.
June 2026	Elementary ESS staff- SSW, CYW, SWDHH	This session focused on using ABA-based assessment tools to develop meaningful, individualized goals that support positive behavior and student success. Educators explored frameworks such as the VB-MAPP, AFLS, Preschool Life Skills, and Essential for Living to better understand the “why” behind goal setting. Emphasis was placed

		on moving beyond traditional academic targets toward functional skills that enhance independence, social participation, and quality of life. Through practical examples, participants learned how to design goals that promote autonomy and long-term success across school, home, and community environments.
June 2026	Elementary ESS Team-SSWs, CYWs, SWDHHs	A learning session with Louis Busch is planned to support staff who work with Indigenous students and families in the dual role of helper and educator. The session focuses on wellness, self-awareness, relational support skills, cultural connectedness, and Indigenous perspectives on development and neurodiversity. A focus on reflecting on how educators show up in complex educational settings, strengthen practical skills for building trust with students and families, and consider how culture, identity, belonging, neurodiversity, and systemic barriers shape student engagement and success.

Breaking Barrier Grant Professional Learning Overview for 2025-2026

Grant Title		Summary of the Initiative
Barrier Grant: Empowering Transitions	Elementary LST's from Family of Schools (FOS) and NorthStar FOS team	The overarching goals of the barrier grant were to build student self-confidence, reduce anxiety related to the transition to secondary school, and strengthen essential self-advocacy skills that will support students well beyond elementary school. Learning partners RARC led the learning in collaboration with our Barrier Grant leads.
Barrier Grant-A.I.M.	Child and Youth Workers (CYW) from Barrier Grant Pilot schools	The AIM program is a behaviour analytic self-regulation curriculum that supports students who have difficulty in the classroom setting due to social, emotional and behavioural challenges. These challenges interfere with their academic success, as well as the success of their peers. The training focused on supporting the CYW's who were implementing the program within their schools as a part of the Barrier Grant project.
Adapted Literacy Kits	GAINS and STEPS teachers	This learning session focused on strengthening instructional practices in adapted literacy through evidence-based strategies and hands-on application. Educators engaged in modelled lessons, guided practice with adapted literacy resources, and explored ways to integrate language and communication supports in collaboration with Speech-Language Pathologists, members of the Itinerant Teams and Special Education Coordinators. The learning emphasized collaborative planning, including the development of lesson plans and IEP goals tailored to classroom contexts. Overall, the session aimed to build educator capacity to effectively support students with complex learning needs using consistent, responsive, and practical literacy approaches

Ableism	All staff	A year-long PD series to address ableism and enhance staff capacity to support students with disabilities. Builds on UDL principles to foster inclusive teaching strategies. These sessions are highlighted in the above chart that outlines the PD for all elementary and secondary staff
Level Up! Know Your Brain-Own Your Game	School Based teams and families/guardians	Level Up! was a full-day, high-energy transition experience designed to empower students as they prepare for high school. Through interactive sessions, team-building activities (including bocce ball), and a dynamic keynote experience featuring a professional magician, students: • Explored how their brains work • Discovered practical strategies that support their learning • Built confidence in self-advocacy • Reframed their differences as powerful assets Learning sessions were differentiated for students and school staff, parents/guardians and school administrators.
Math Supports – Junior/Intermediate	Pilot Schools	This grant PD focused on building inclusive math instruction by aligning Tier 1 practices with Tier 3 supports. Focuses on connecting IEP goals to curriculum and reducing limiting modifications. Staff engaged in school-based PLC learning sessions to extend and enhance their learning.
Universal Design for Learning – Science of Reading	Pilot Schools	This grant was focused on an in-class coaching initiative at 4 Pilot schools. This pilot was focused on Grades 4–8 to embed structured literacy and inclusive practices. Coaching and support on the use of assistive tech training and aligning with Right to Read recommendations, was the foundation for this learning.
Artificial Intelligence (AI) for All	LST's, STEPS teachers and Level Up Participants	In partnership with Todd Cunningham, we introduced a Pilot project to support the integration of inclusive AI tools in classrooms. Supports for personalized instruction, progress monitoring, and

		equitable learning aligned with UDL principles, were a focus for ongoing learning. LST's and Special Education staff, as well as participants at Level Up! participated in learning sessions with members of Todd Cunningham's team.
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Special Education Additional Qualification Subsidies

Ministry of Education funding was allocated to the GECDsB once again this year to subsidize teachers in both the elementary and secondary panels, to complete a wide range of Special Education Additional Qualification courses. These included courses such as Special Education Part 1, Special Education Part 2 and Special Education Specialist. In addition, several teachers engaged in specified learning about Teaching Students Who are Blind and Low Vision. Approximately 25 teachers across the elementary and secondary panel have signed up for additional qualifications in the area of Special Education.

Thumbnail Sketches

During the 2025-2026 school year, staff within the Special Education Department dedicated time to update and revise the Special Education Thumbnail Sketches. These Thumbnail Sketches are designed to provide a concise overview of the Special Education services and programs offered within the GECDsB.

- The Thumbnail Sketches serve as a valuable guide for our educator teams, offering key information about programming, available resources, and the guiding philosophies behind our GAINS, and STEPS programs.
- Additionally, the Thumbnail Sketch for our Learning Support Teachers (LSTs) was revised to support LST's in their roles in both elementary and secondary schools
- These updates aim to enhance consistency, support informed instructional planning, and strengthen collaboration across our schools.

Looking Forward-2026-2027

During the 2026-2027 school year, we will continue to engage staff in learning about Ministry Special Education priorities including exploring inclusive teaching strategies, differentiating instruction, strategies such as UDL, as well as exploring the importance of accessibility, inclusion, and full participation of students with varied abilities in school settings.



Standard 14—Equipment

Standard 14: Equipment

Purpose of the Standard

To inform the ministry, board staff members and other professionals, and parents about the provision of individualized equipment for some students with special needs.

Special Education Equipment

The new Ministry Document: Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) 2024-2025 Directives states:

Starting in the 2024-25 school year, the Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) is for the purchase of specialized equipment for students with special education needs. Following a review and informed by feedback from education sector partners from across the province, **the Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) is replacing the Special Equipment Amount.**

This modernized approach to funding specialized equipment aims to meet the changing needs of students better, reduce administrative burden, and increase flexibility in how school boards utilize this funding to meet local needs.

As a result of the Ministry of Education directive around Special Education Equipment Allocation (SEA) processes for school boards, The Board has created a SEA Review Committee. The focus of this committee is reviewing the current SEA process for the GECDsB. Additionally, the Board is engaging in collaborative discussions with our co-terminus Board partner, with the goal of aligning SEA procedures and sharing claims-based resources to improve efficiency.

According to the 2025-2026 SEA Directives:

The ministry is committed to supporting all students, so they have the skills to succeed in school and in life. Within this context, SEA provides funding to boards to assist with the costs of equipment essential to support students with special education needs. This funding can be complemented by other sources of funding, such as the Special Education Fund (SEF) and other Core Ed Funding allocations. SEA is to provide students with special education needs with equipment and technology that are directly required and essential for attending school, accessing the Ontario curriculum, supporting or augmenting a board determined alternative program and/or course, and supporting seamless transitions. As such, SEA equipment purchases must be made for students with documented special education needs (i.e., current Individual Education Plan (IEP) and other supporting documentation as outlined in the requirements and documentation sections below). Students must be receiving special education programs and services and the use of SEA-funded equipment must be outlined and described in the student's IEP.

The Board examines all reports from qualified professionals (see Specialized

Equipment Allocation Directives (SEA) 2025-2026 Directives) to determine the type of equipment needed by special needs students. In accordance with PPM 149 (Sept. 25, 2009), any reports submitted by professionals outside of the Board or the John McGivney Children's Centre must be reviewed by an equivalent Board professional to assess the suitability of the recommendations for educational purposes. Recommendations from private assessments conducted by professionals not affiliated with the education system—and who lack access to the school environment, curriculum, Individual Education Plan (IEP), and support systems—must undergo internal review processes.

If it is determined that the equipment is essential for the student to benefit to access curriculum, then the parents/guardians and school team, work through our Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) process.

School Year		
2025-2026 Formula Component (previously Per Pupil Amount)*	All boards receive funding based on a formula consisting of: a) A Base Amount: a flat rate of \$200,000 for all boards, and b) A Per Pupil Amount: providing \$51.10 per student based on the board's average daily enrolment (ADE).	The formula component is calculated as follows: \$200,000 per board + (\$51.10 x ADE)
2025-2026 Claims- Based Component**	Boards can apply for funding for the purchase of any single item (any equipment type technology related or not) costing \$5,000 or over before taxes for use by an individual student with special education needs and outlined and described in the student's accommodations in their IEP.	The ministry will only consider claims submitted by boards that meet the eligibility and documentation requirements set out in these directives

*SEA Formula Component can be used for any equipment type under \$5,000, technology related or not, training, maintenance, and repairs related to that equipment, for students with special education needs.

**SEA Claims-Based Component is for any type of single item (any equipment type technology related or not) costing \$5,000 or over before taxes for use by one specific student with special education needs.

SEA Equipment Training

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) provides training for SEA laptops through the Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex (LDAWE). Training will be provided by LDAWE on the following items:

- Develop skills on the proper use and general maintenance of computer hardware.
- Develop skills and techniques associated with file organization.
- Software recommended as outlined in the SEA claim package.

Initial Student Training

All training will take place in the student's home school. Training will be based on the software and hardware ordered for the student. GECDSB Special Education

Department will approve all software-training plans.

Overview of Current Training Model

The current model for Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) training at the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) involves providing students with the necessary tools and resources to support their learning needs. SEA training focuses on ensuring that students can effectively use assistive technology and specialized equipment to enhance their educational experience. This includes individual training on the use of devices, software, and other tools that help students with special education needs to access the curriculum and participate fully in classroom activities.

In collaboration with the Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex, we have enhanced AT training by ensuring both students and staff receive consistent knowledge and support. A new training model launched in September 2025. This model combined our current individualized student training with classroom-based sessions involving students and teachers in technology-equipment classrooms with internet access. This enhanced approach empowers students and educators alike with the skills needed to effectively integrate and use assistive technology (AT) tools in their learning environments. Aligning training for all participants can strengthen continuity in the classroom, reinforce student learning, and promote more effective application of skills.

It focuses on:

- Using built-in accessibility tools in Windows OS and Microsoft 365 (e.g., Narrator, Dictate, Immersive Reader).
- Applying Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles.
- Converting and organizing digital content using OCR, Office Lens, OneDrive, and OneNote.
- Creating accessible content with tools like Equatio for creating accessible math and science content and conducting accessible research with Microsoft Edge.

The training is interactive, featuring live demonstrations, reflection activities, and hands-on opportunities where students and teacher will actively perform tasks using assistive technology. The goal is to build confidence and practical skills while fostering inclusive learning environments where all students can effectively use technology when and where they need it.

A checklist will be completed for student training to verify which skills and software programs have been addressed. LDAWE shall provide a recommendation as to whether Supplementary Student Training is required. A copy of the checklist will be provided to GECDSB.

If supplementary training is required, the LDAWE AT Coordinator will notify the Learning Support Teacher or Principal's designate that supplementary training will be scheduled approximately six school months from when initial training is completed.

Please Note:

This message is related to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's (OHRC) *Right to Read inquiry report* and our Greater Essex County District School Board's mission to provide an equitable, inclusive, responsive and comprehensive literacy program, based on the science of reading, that utilizes assessments and instructional practices to ensure every student has the fundamental right to learn to read.

[Link to OHRC Right to Read Inquiry Report](#)

Based on the *Right to Read inquiry report* and the board's mission, we are committed to ensuring allocation, access, training, and use of assistive technology aligns with research and are in the best interest of achieving the Right to Read for all students. According to information provided by the International Dyslexia Association of Ontario, Assistive technologies include devices and applications that help people with dyslexia with various tasks including:

- reading
- spelling
- writing
- organization of ideas
- note-taking
- time management

Assistive technologies can be very helpful for students to access or produce larger volumes of reading/writing material as required in older grades or post-secondary schools.

However, it is important that assistive technologies do not replace effective Structured Literacy instruction in reading, spelling, and writing. Structured Literacy instruction can help all struggling readers learn to read accurately and fluently.

From International Dyslexia Association: [Link to IDAO Ontario](#)

The report indicates that typical students are learning how to read and write until the end of grade 3. Students with reading disabilities may take more time to acquire these skills. Providing assistive technology without reading interventions is damaging, because students lose the opportunity to learn to read. It is also damaging in a more insidious way: it can mask the student's reading difficulties. (Section 11- Accommodations – Executive Summary, Right to Read).

As a result, the recommendation allows schools to make consideration for assistive technology as an appropriate accommodation after the primary grades. The primary purpose of accommodations is not to teach students to read, but to provide supports to enable them to meaningfully engage with curriculum material and take part in classroom activities. Accommodations are not a substitute for reading interventions. They can never replace active involvement in the classroom or interventions aimed at teaching and addressing reading and writing skills. Schools must provide accommodations

alongside evidence-based curriculum and intervention strategies.

Taken from the Ontario Human Rights Commission: [Link to OHRC Inquiry into Reading Disabilities Backgrounder](#)



Standard 15—Accessibility of School Buildings

Standard 15: Accessibility of School Buildings

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide the ministry with further details of the board's multi-year plan, which was previously submitted to the ministry, for improving accessibility for students with physical and sensory disabilities, and to provide the public with this information.

Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) – Plan for 2022-2026

The GECD SB remains committed to the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity. Our actions will demonstrate our belief in the strength diversity brings to our communities. Training for GECD SB staff will continue to be conducted regarding Accessibility Awareness as new employees are hired. This training is conducted in a 5-year cycle and was completed in November 2024.

The annual ODA plan and previous plans can be accessed through the Board website at the following address: <https://www.publicboard.ca/en/family-and-community-support/accessibility.aspx>

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECD SB) is committed to the improvement of access to school premises, facilities and services to our students that are free of barriers and biases. It is for this reason we have the following policy and regulation in place:

- Certified Service Animal for Students P-AD-31
- Certified Service Animal for Students R-AD-31

If you are the parent/guardian of a student who needs the accommodation of a certified service animal (CSA), please contact the Principal of your community school and they will guide you through the application process. The Policy and Regulation for Certified Service Animal for Students is currently under review.



Standard 16—Transportation

Standard 16 - Transportation for Students with Special Education Funds

Purpose of the Standard:

To provide details of the board's transportation policies to the ministry and to the public.

Transportation is a key component of equitable access to education. While specialized bussing supports many students with complex needs, it is also important that we:

- Promote the development of independent living and travel skills where appropriate
- Provide opportunities for students to access a range of transportation options, including larger school buses

Who Provides Transportation to Students of the Greater Essex County District School Board?

Student transportation is provided through the Windsor-Essex Student Transportation Services (WESTS), which is a separate legal entity, services four school boards which include the GECD SB, Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board, 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.
- The Special Educational Coordinator, in consultation with the transition team, parents/guardians and community agencies complete 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 will be made by the Special Education Department.

Important Information from WESTS Transportation Policies and Procedures

- The Education Act R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E2 c.190 permits a Board to provide student transportation but does not obligate it to do so. Transportation is a privilege extended to qualifying day school registered students by a Board and may be revoked as a result of student conduct.

More information about the WESTS Transportation Policies and Procedures can be found at <https://buskids.ca/wests-policies/>

Modes of Transportation

- Depending on the identified needs of the child, the following transportation options are considered:
 - Regular school bus (community or home stop)
 - Wheelchair accessible school bus
 - Taxicab
 - Parent provided transportation

Considerations:

- Transportation is not an intervention strategy
- Student transportation is not provided as a behaviour support or attendance support mechanism
- Decisions are needs-based that are documented by medical doctors or occupational therapists
- All transportation decisions must be grounded in documented student needs and safety considerations, not convenience
- Equity and inclusion remain priorities
- Where appropriate, students should be supported in accessing inclusive transportation environments that mirror those of their peers

Ministry Transportation Guidelines

It is important to note that transportation parameters are based on Ministry-established eligibility criteria, which typically include distance thresholds such as:

Elementary students: Transportation may be provided for those living beyond approximately *1.6 km* from their home school

Secondary students-within the county: Transportation may be provided for those living beyond approximately *3.2 km* from their home school

Additionally:

- Transportation is provided to ensure accessibility to education, particularly for students whose needs cannot be met within walking distance or through typical means

WESTS Transportation Eligibility for GECDsB Students

WESTS will provide transportation to eligible students who are attending their Board Designated School and whose Primary Home or Alternate Address is in excess of the following distances from their Designated School, as per the above Calculation of Distance:

- 1.0 kms for JK/SK students

- 1.6 kms for Grade 1 to 8 students
- 3.2 kms for Secondary students as per the eligibility determination on the www.buskids.ca website.

Transportation Processes

- 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 Trillium Learning Centre.
- Decisions regarding the transportation of students presenting “high risk” behaviours are discussed at the 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.
- Decisions about special accommodations for students with safety needs are made in partnership with parents/guardians, the Transportation Consortium, the Superintendent of Special Education, and team members in the student’s program.
- All students requiring special transportation must have the Special Education Transportation Application and the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act) form completed, the AODA form identifies any equipment requirements or accommodations required for transportation completed. This equipment may include seatbelts, buckle guard, and vests when accompanying documentation is provided.

Consideration by Student Transportation Services during the selection of transportation providers for all exceptional students includes criteria related to safety, including, but not limited to:

- Drivers must have first aid training;
- Wheelchairs must be secured while being transported; and
- Criminal record checks must be completed for drivers and bus monitors.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC) - Section C

**School Board Committee under
Regulation 464/97**

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

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

Procedures for Selection

Selection process for members, including application and nomination forms for SEAC can be found at the following links:

Process for Filling SEAC Vacancies

[SEAC Vacancy Process Link](#)

Application and Nomination forms

[SEAC Application and Nomination Forms Link](#)

Special Education Advisory Committee Handbook

During the 2024-2025 school year a sub-committee was established to create a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Handbook. The purpose of the Handbook is to provide a guidebook for members of SEAC, as well as outline varied roles and responsibilities of its members. During the 2025-2026 school year the SEAC Handbook was reviewed with the members of SEAC and based on feedback the attached Handbook was adopted and is included in the Appendices.

The SEAC handbook is also found on the GECD SB website [here](#)

Roles and Responsibilities

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

1. the philosophy and goals for special education delivery;
2. reviewing the policies and procedures of the Board as they pertain to special education;
3. funding of special education programs and services through the Board's annual budget process;
4. reviewing the financial statements for the Board, prepared under Section 231 of the Act, as they relate to special education; and
5. amending the special education plan as it is reviewed annually as required by Regulation 306.

SEAC Meetings

The Special Education Advisory Committee meets 10 times a year. Meetings will be posted on the board website. Meetings begin at 1 pm and are open to the public.

Meetings are held at the Board Office but may be held elsewhere at the committee's discretion. The date of all meetings is published on the SEAC website at: [SEAC Meeting Dates](#).

SEAC Membership

SEAC members elect a chairperson annually in January and meetings follow a prepared agenda.

The committee currently consists of 6 representatives from local Windsor-Essex associations and 2 trustees. Alternate representatives attend meetings regularly and participate in discussions, but do not vote unless substituting for an official representative. Some SEAC members are parents/legal guardians of GECDsB students with special education needs and disabilities. The complete SEAC membership can be found on the GECDsB SEAC website [here](#).

SEAC Contact Information

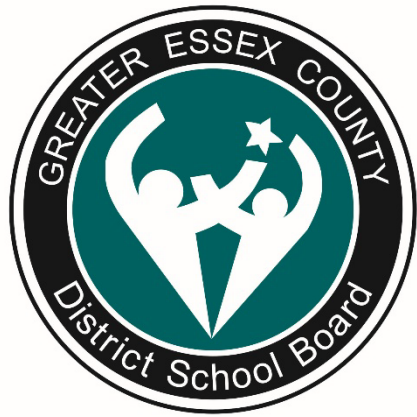
All information pertaining to SEAC can be accessed through the links below.

SEAC Website: [GECDsB SEAC Homepage](#)

SEAC Liaison: Melissa Beaton

Email: melissa.beaton@publicboard.ca

Mailing Address: Greater Essex County District School Board, 451 Park Street West, Windsor Ontario, N9A 5V4



Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Handbook

**Greater Essex County District
School Board**

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MANDATE

Under Ontario's Education Act, every exceptional pupil is entitled to special education programs and services, which meet their needs. In the Greater Essex County District School Board, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) plays a vital role in ensuring that exceptional pupils receive appropriate educational services. (***Education Act Section 8. (3) Section 57. (1)***)

SEAC Members have an obligation once appointed to provide advice which is in the best interests of the Greater Essex County District School Board and its provision of special education services to all exceptional students. In order to meet this obligation, SEAC Members must become knowledgeable about the education-related needs of each exceptionality and consider how the GECDSB may support and accommodate all such needs.

Powers of the Committee

A Special Education Advisory Committee of a board may make recommendations to the board in respect of any matter affecting the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board.

The SEAC's responsibilities are:

- to participate in the board's annual review of its special education plan;
- to participate in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education;
- to review the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education;
- and provides information to parents/guardians, as requested.

SEAC MEMBERSHIP

In accordance with Reg. 464/97, the GECDSB can appoint a maximum of 12 representatives from locally run associations or organizations within the Board's boundaries in addition to two Trustees. These 14 members will be voting members.

In accordance with O. Reg. 464/97, where there are more than 12 local associations within the jurisdiction of the Board, the Board shall select the 12 local associations that shall be represented.

"Local association" means an association or organization of parents that operates locally within the area of jurisdiction of a Board and that is affiliated with an association or organization that is not an association or organization of professional educators but that is incorporated and operates throughout Ontario to further the interests and well-being of one or more groups of exceptional children or adults.

The Special Education Advisory Committee that shall consist of:

- one representative from each of the local associations that operates locally within the area of jurisdiction of the Board, as nominated by the local association and appointed by the Board, who must be;
 - a resident within the area of jurisdiction of the board;
 - qualified to vote for members of the school board (A designated public school (English) elector);
 - and not employed by the board in which the member resides;
- one or two persons to represent the interests of First Nations, Métis and Inuit pupils. One representative must be recommended by the GECDSEB Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC).
- one alternate for each association representative appointed and nominated by the local association and appointed by the Board as noted above;
- two trustees, as appointed by the Board;
- one alternate trustee, as appointed by the Board from among its own members;
- in addition to the criteria above, the board may appoint one or more additional members who are not representative of a local association and are not members of the board or of a committee of the board.

Note: The Greater Essex County District School Board, in addition, includes on its SEAC representatives from the elementary and secondary school principal panels. The GECDSEB also includes the Supervising Principal of Special Education and the Supervisor of Psychological and Speech Language Services.

Committee Selection

The Selection Committee (The Director of Education and the Superintendent of Education/Special Education Programs and Services) will review the applications to **determine the eligibility of the associations:**

- Local association represents children or adults who are exceptional
- Local association operates within the GECDSEB jurisdiction
- Association that “represents the interests of First Nations, Metis and Inuit.” (Reg. 464/97, 2 (1)(e))
- Local association is not a duplicate association represented on the current complement of SEAC members
- If there are associations that represent the same exceptionality, one association will be chosen by random selection and the other association will be set aside for reconsideration.

Term of Office

The persons appointed to the SEAC will hold office for the same timelines as the members of the Board of Trustees (four years).

Vacancies

Prior to the beginning of the new four-year term, the GECDSD will strive to fill all 12 seats by:

- Inviting the current associations to reapply for membership, and
- Inviting the broader community via Board website and other media venues to apply for membership.

If the full roster of 12 associations is not filled, then the GECDSD will advertise every fall via website and free media venues. If an association applies for membership within the four-year term and there is a vacancy, the Selection Committee will determine if the local association represents an exceptionality that is not represented on the current complement of SEAC members. If a seat becomes vacant during the term, then the GECDSD will advertise via website and free media venues at that time, then will continue to advertise as noted above.

From Ontario Regulation 464/97, Section 8(1), If a seat or position on a special education advisory committee becomes vacant, the board that appointed the person whose seat or position has become vacant shall appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term of the person whose seat or position has become vacant.

Disqualifications

A member or alternate of the SEAC loses their seat if they:

- are convicted of an indictable offence;
- are absent from three consecutive regular meetings without authorization by resolution entered in the Minutes, or in the case of an alternate from three consecutive regular meetings for which the alternate received a notice to attend; and/or
- cease to hold the qualifications to be appointed to the committee.

Notification of Disqualification

When a SEAC member or alternate is subject to disqualification under Regulation 464/97, the following notification process shall be followed to ensure transparency, fairness, and continuity of representation:

1. Initial Review

The SEAC Chair and the Superintendent of Special Education shall review the circumstances leading to the potential disqualification. This includes verifying attendance records, eligibility status, or any other relevant criteria.

2. Written Notification to Member

The member shall be notified in writing, by the SEAC Chair, of the concern and the potential disqualification. The member will have a chance to respond within a reasonable timeframe (e.g., 10 business days).

3. Notification to the Local Association

If the member represents a local association, the association shall also be notified in writing. The association may:

- Provide input regarding the member's status.
- Nominate a replacement if the seat is vacated.

4. Final Determination and Resolution

After considering any responses, the SEAC Chair shall present the matter to the committee for resolution. If disqualification is confirmed, the seat shall be declared vacant.

5. Filling the Vacancy

The Board shall initiate the process to fill the vacancy in accordance with Regulation 464/97. The local association may re-nominate a representative or the Board may seek new applications if necessary.

6. Documentation and Transparency

All correspondence and decisions related to the disqualification shall be documented and retained. A summary may be included in SEAC meeting minutes, respecting privacy and confidentiality.

FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

At the December meeting elections will be conducted for the Chair and Vice-Chair. The chair and vice-chair positions are rotated annually between a community member and a Trustee.

Duties of the Chair

The duties of the Chair shall include:

- presiding over SEAC meetings;
- ensuring the development of meeting agendas which reflect the priorities and responsibilities of the committee;
- communicating with the Board, as authorized by resolution of the committee; and
- such other duties as may be assigned by the committee.

During debate of a motion, the Chair shall remain impartial, and shall ensure that:

- no Member or Alternate shall speak unless recognized by the Chair; and
- a vote shall not be called until all Members who want to speak to the motion have had a fair opportunity to do so.

Duties of the Vice Chair

The duties of the Vice Chair shall include:

- presiding over SEAC meetings in the absence of the Chair; and
- assisting the Chair with duties as required.

The Chair and Vice Chair shall be voting members of SEAC.

Voting

Each appointed member of the SEAC is entitled to one vote. Alternate members may not vote if the appointed member is present at the meeting. The chair may vote with the other members of the committee. A tie vote means the motion is defeated.

Meetings

SEAC shall meet at least 10 times in each school year. SEAC generally meets the second Wednesday of every month as approved by the committee. It is common practice to schedule ten regular meetings per year from September to June.

Dates and times of SEAC meetings are publicized on the board's website.

Meeting agendas shall be developed by the Chair, Vice Chair, and the Superintendent for Special Education – Programs and Services, considering any requests from SEAC Members.

Agendas may include items for training, discussion, information, decision, and follow-up from previous meetings.

In accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and the Personal Health Information Protection Act, SEAC is prohibited from discussing the personal information or circumstances of any student or staff person.

Meetings shall be open to the public, except where Section 207 of the Education Act allows that the committee to be closed to the public. The Committee will meet in Private Session, closed to the public when the subject under consideration involves:

- the security of the property of the Board;
- the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the Board of Trustees, or a member of a Statutory or Advisory Committee, a current or prospective employee, a student, parent or guardian of the student;
- the acquisition or disposal of a school site;
- decisions in respect of negotiations with employees of the GECDSEB;
- an ongoing investigation under the Ombudsman Act respecting the GECDSEB;
- litigation affecting the Board; or
- as necessary to comply with the Youth Criminal Justice Act of the Municipal Freedom of Information Act, including solicitor and client privilege.

Ontario Regulation 464/97 does include provisions related to electronic meetings for Special Education Advisory Committees (SEAC). Specifically, Section 10(1) states: The board shall make available to its special education advisory committee the personnel and facilities that the board considers necessary for the proper functioning of the committee, including the personnel and facilities that the board considers necessary to permit the use of electronic means for the holding of meetings of the committee in

accordance with the regulation.

If a member of SEAC cannot attend a meeting then their first step is to notify the alternate, if the alternate is also unable to attend then the member can propose to participate in the meeting by electronic means. The member shall submit a request to the administrative assistant of the Superintendent of Special Education, at least 3 hours in advance, where possible, of a meeting.

Quorum

A majority of the members of the SEAC is a quorum, and a vote of a majority of the members present at a meeting is necessary to bind the committee. Every member present at the meeting, or their alternate, when attending in the member's place, is entitled to one vote.

Role of Board Personnel

The board will make available to its SEAC the personnel and facilities that the board considers necessary for the proper functioning of the committee:

- provide administrative support to SEAC, including distributing notices of meetings, agendas and supporting materials, minutes, and other communications to SEAC Members, and Alternates as appropriate;

The board shall provide to new members and alternate members, within a reasonable time after appointment, information and orientation respecting:

- the role of the committee and the board in relation to special education;
- Ministry and board policies relating to special education;
- a schedule of meetings of the standing committees of the board.

Ensure SEAC Members have timely and sufficient access to information to make informed advice and recommendations to the Board.

THE ROLE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The members of a SEAC represent all students with exceptionalities, and it is important that members respond to the needs of all exceptional students within the Board. Thus, individual members need to increase their awareness and understanding of the various exceptionalities. On an annual basis, SEAC members participate in reviewing their personal goals for sitting on the committee as well as reviewing the goals of the SEAC committee.

Providing Advice

SEAC may communicate its advice to the Board by the following means:

➤ Special Education Plan

The Board shall ensure SEAC has the opportunity to participate in the Board's annual review of the Special Education Plan.

➤ Board Budget and Financial Statements

The Board shall further ensure that SEAC is provided with the opportunity to participate in the Board's annual budget process, as it relates to special

education, and to review the Board's financial statements, as those statements relate to special education.

➤ **SEAC Minutes**

The Board shall receive the approved minutes of SEAC meetings for information. SEAC Trustee Members or Alternates may, if so directed by SEAC or the Board, provide background information regarding discussion at SEAC meetings.

➤ **SEAC Recommendations**

SEAC has the right to make recommendations to the Board regarding the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services. Any such recommendation must be approved by resolution of the committee.

Approval of a resolution requires a vote in the affirmative by a majority of the Members present.

SEAC shall consider a motion to resolve approval of a recommendation to the Board in accordance with this Procedure and the Board's Governance By-Law provisions relating to rules of procedure, as may be amended from time to time.

The Chair shall ensure that any SEAC recommendation approved by resolution of the committee is forwarded to the Board. SEAC may at its discretion approve that a report providing the background and rationale accompany the recommendation.

Any Trustee may move that the Board approve a resolution to adopt a SEAC recommendation.

Before making a decision on a recommendation from SEAC, the Board shall provide SEAC an opportunity to be heard by the Board, and any committee of the Board to which the recommendation is referred.

The Board shall provide the SEAC Chair with written acknowledgement of receipt and consideration of any SEAC recommendation, and the Board's disposition of the recommendation, if any, copying the relevant section of the minutes from the Board meeting at which the matter was considered.

Delegations

As per Board Governance By-Laws, Section 6.3.4 - Delegation presentations will not be received: (a) at Board Meetings (except by the Special Education Advisory Committee, as prescribed in Regulation 464/97, 11(2)).

Minority Reports

A report, including recommendations, which has not been approved by a resolution of the committee may nevertheless be submitted to the Board, provided that it is designated as a "Minority Report".

A Member intending to submit a Minority Report to the Board must provide a copy of the report to the SEAC Chair on or before the date the report is submitted to the Board.

The Board shall provide the author(s) of the Minority Report with written acknowledgement of receipt, and shall append the Minority Report to the Special Education Plan.

Public Communications

As an advisory committee, SEAC may communicate its recommendations to the Board in any of the means described above. Neither the SEAC Chair nor any SEAC Member or Alternate may communicate publicly on behalf of SEAC, GECDSB or the Board of Trustees.

Expectations of the Committee

The guiding principle of SEAC is rooted in collaboration, positivity, trust, and mutual respect. It is essential for SEAC members to work together to support the Board in providing programs for all exceptionalities.

Each member is expected to:

- Respect the role of SEAC as an advisory committee and respond to the needs of all exceptional pupils within the Board.
- Respect the right to privacy of individual exceptional pupils by avoiding discussion of individual cases.
- Acquire and maintain a working knowledge of the special education programs and services provided by the Board.
- Represent and inform the committee about the exceptionality they represent.

To this end, members should:

- ensure that they are expressing the concerns of the association and not their own concerns;
- keep informed and identify needs by speaking with individuals within the local association who take the parent/guardian calls about issues of concern to parents/guardians and by seeking out information and input in relation to issues or concerns pertaining to special education;
- encourage their association members to attend SEAC meetings;
- report to the members of the local association or chapter at general meetings and/or disseminate relevant information, such as discussing activities at SEAC meetings, and positive outcomes that result;
- provide the association with a formal report on relevant SEAC proceedings to be included in the local association's annual report and to be shared with the SEAC;
- be prepared for all SEAC meetings, suggest items to be placed on SEAC agenda, participate in discussions, suggest education topics, and present motions and;
- set individual annual goals and objectives as well as those for the local association and for the SEAC.

Non-Compliance with Committee Expectations

SEAC members are expected to uphold the principles of collaboration, respect, and informed advocacy as outlined in the committee's expectations. When a member fails to meet these expectations, the following process is recommended:

1. Informal Resolution

- The SEAC Chair, in consultation with the Superintendent of Special Education, will initiate a conversation with the member to clarify expectations and address concerns.
- The goal is to resolve the issue through dialogue, support, and guidance, recognizing that some breaches may be due to misunderstanding or oversight.

2. Written Concern

- If informal resolution is unsuccessful or the concern is significant (e.g., repeated breaches, public misrepresentation of SEAC), the Chair may issue a written notice outlining:
 - The specific expectation not met.
 - The impact on the committee's functioning.
 - A request for corrective action or clarification.

3. Notification to the Association

- If the member represents a local association, the association will be notified of the concern and may be asked to:
 - Provide input or context.
 - Support the member in addressing the issue.
 - Consider nominating a replacement if the issue persists.

4. Review and Recommendation

- The SEAC Chair and Superintendent may bring the matter to the full committee for discussion.
- If the committee determines that the member is unable or unwilling to meet expectations, a recommendation for disqualification may be made to the Board.

5. Board Action

- The Board will review the recommendation and determine whether to declare the seat vacant.
- The vacancy will be filled in accordance with Ontario Regulation 464/97.

6. Documentation

- All steps taken, including communications and decisions, will be documented and retained for transparency and accountability.

Appendices

Appendix A: Sample Agenda

Appendix B: Association Report

Appendix C: Frequently Asked Questions

**GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (Appendix A)
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Agenda

(Date)

(Location – 451 Park St. W, Windsor, ON. N9A 6K1)

1:00 PM

1. Call to Order

2. Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on land and surrounded by water, originally inhabited by Indigenous Peoples who have travelled this area since time immemorial. This territory is within the lands honoured by the Wampum Treaties; agreements between the Anishinaabe (Ah-nish-e-naa-bay), Haudenosaunee (Hoe-den-oh-show-nee), Leni (Len-eh) Lenape (Le-naw-pay) and allied Nations to peacefully share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Specifically, we would like to acknowledge the presence of the Huron/Wendat (Wen-dat) Peoples and the Three Fires Confederacy Ojibwe (Oh-jib-way), Odawa (Oh-dah-wah), Potawatomi (Paw-taw-watt-ohme). We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture while remaining committed to moving forward respectfully with all First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

3. Attendance

4. Approval of Agenda Action

That SEAC Approve the agenda of the SEAC meeting of...

Action

5. Declaration of conflict of interest

6. Approval of Minutes Action

Action

That SEAC approve the minutes of the SEAC meeting of...

7. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

8. Special Education Reports

Information

9. Items for Future Agendas

10. Association Reports

Information

11. Distribution

12. Adjournment

NEXT MEETING, (Date)

Board Meeting Minutes available on GECDSD website.

Vicki Houston, Director of Education

Chris Mills, Administrative Liaison

Ministry SEAC website

**ASSOCIATION REPORT
(Appendix B)**

NAME OF ASSOCIATION:

REPRESENTATIVE:

DATE OF MEETING:

UPCOMING MEETINGS, ACTIVITIES OR CONFERENCES:

NEW INITIATIVES:

OTHER INFORMATION:

Actions for SEAC Members (Appendix B)

Prepare in Advance: Review the meeting agenda and any supporting documents. Understand the topics to be discussed and formulate questions or comments.

Stay Informed: Keep up-to-date with the GECDsB Special Education Plan and relevant policies. Be aware of current issues and developments in special education.

Engage in Discussions: Actively participate in discussions and share insights. Listen to and respect other members' perspectives and build on their points.

Ask Questions: Seek clarification on any unclear points. Ask questions that help the committee explore issues in depth.

Provide Recommendations: Suggest actionable recommendations based on the discussion.

Ensure recommendations are clear, concise, and feasible.

Represent Your Association: Communicate the concerns and needs of the association you represent. Ensure that you are expressing the association's views, not personal opinions.

Collaborate with Other Members: Work together with other SEAC members to achieve common goals. Support and respect each other's contributions.

Follow Meeting Protocols: Adhere to Roberts Rules of Order and GECDsB by-laws. Respect the procedural rulings of the chair.

Focus on the Agenda: Stick to the agenda items and avoid off-topic discussions. Ensure that all agenda items are addressed within the meeting time.

Set Goals: Set individual and association goals for your participation in SEAC. Review and adjust these goals annually.

Communicate Effectively: Clearly articulate your points during discussions. Avoid personal comments and focus on the issues at hand.

Frequently Asked Questions (Appendix C)

Q: What is the mandate of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)?

A: SEAC ensures that exceptional pupils receive appropriate educational services as mandated by Ontario's Education Act. It advises the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) on the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services.

Q: Who can be a member of SEAC?

A: SEAC can have up to 12 representatives from local associations, two trustees, and additional members representing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit pupils. Members must be Canadian citizens, at least 18 years old, residents within the board's jurisdiction, public school electors, and not employed by the board.

Q: What are the responsibilities of SEAC members?

A: SEAC members make recommendations to the board, participate in the annual review of the special education plan, engage in the budget process related to special education, review financial statements, and provide information to parents/guardians.

Q: How are SEAC members selected?

A: The Director of Education and the Superintendent of Education/Special Education Programs and Services review applications to determine eligibility based on criteria such as representation of exceptional pupils and operation within GECDSB jurisdiction.

Q: What happens if a SEAC member misses meetings?

A: If a member misses three consecutive meetings without authorization, they may lose their seat. If an association is without representation for six months, it may lose its membership and need to reapply.

Q: How does SEAC make decisions?

A: SEAC follows Roberts Rules of Order and GECDSB by-laws. Decisions are made through motions, and a majority vote is required for approval. If the vote is tied, the motion fails.

Q: How does SEAC communicate its recommendations to the GECDSB?

A: SEAC can communicate its advice through the Special Education Plan, participation in the budget process, review of financial statements, and approved minutes of SEAC meetings. Trustee members, in consultation with the Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), will provide an update at each board meeting, either orally or in writing, regarding the committee's activities. Recommendations must be approved

by resolution and forwarded to the board.

Q: What is the role of SEAC alternates?

A: Alternates can become voting representatives if the SEAC member is unable to attend meetings. They need to stay informed on issues and attend meetings whenever possible.

Q: How can SEAC members get more detailed information?

A: Members can refer to online resources such as the [Ontario Ministry of Education](#) website, the [PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook](#), and the [SEAC section on the GECDsb website](#).

Q: What is the term of office for SEAC members?

A: SEAC members hold office for the same term as the Board of Trustees, which is four years.

Q: How are vacancies on SEAC filled?

A: If a seat becomes vacant, the GECDsb will advertise the vacancy via its website and other media venues. The Selection Committee will determine if the local association applying represents an exceptionality not currently represented on SEAC.

Q: What are the duties of the SEAC Chair and Vice-Chair?

A: The Chair presides over meetings, develops meeting agendas, communicates with the Board, and ensures fair debate. The Vice-Chair assists the Chair and presides over meetings in the Chair's absence.

Q: How often does SEAC meet?

A: SEAC meets at least 10 times each school year, typically on the second Wednesday of every month from September to June. Meeting dates and times are publicized on the board's website.

Q: Can SEAC meetings be closed to the public?

A: Yes, SEAC meetings can be closed to the public if the subject matter includes issues such as the security of board property, personal or financial information, acquisition or disposal of school sites, employee negotiations, or litigation affecting the board.

Q: What is the quorum for SEAC meetings?

A: A majority of the SEAC members constitutes a quorum. A vote of the majority of members present at a meeting is necessary to bind the committee.

Q: How does SEAC ensure the privacy of students and staff?

A: SEAC is prohibited from discussing the personal information or circumstances of any student or staff person in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Personal Health Information Protection Act.

Q: What is the role of SEAC in the Board's budget process?

A: SEAC participates in the Board's annual budget process as it relates to special education and reviews the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education.

Q: How can parents/guardians get involved with SEAC?

A: Parents/guardians can attend SEAC meetings, provide feedback, and communicate with SEAC members. They can also apply for membership if they are part of a local association representing exceptional pupils.



COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES - Section D

**GECDSB Coordination with Ministries
and Agencies**



Coordination of Services with Other Ministries or Agencies

The GECD SB 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 Greater Essex County District School Board (GECD SB) is committed to fostering the well-being and success of every student by partnering with a diverse range of community organizations. These partnerships provide tailored services and supports that address the unique needs of children and youth at different stages of their development.
- Building strong partnerships within our community on behalf of students and parents/guardians is viewed as an important goal for all of the students within the GECD SB.
- Whether your child is preparing to start school, navigating the early years, or transitioning through adolescence into adulthood, our community partners offer programs and resources designed to promote growth, learning, and resilience. From developmental services to mental health supports, respite care, and autism programs, the website link helps you explore available options based on your child's age and specific needs.
- The Teacher Consultant-Transition Service Navigators for the GECD SB have developed a webpage that supports information sharing about our community partnerships and supports available for students throughout the varied ages and stages. You can find this information at:
<https://www.publicboard.ca/en/programs-and-learning/service-navigator-supports-in-the-community.aspx>
- If you are looking for additional supports for your child, we encourage you to speak with your child's principal. Together with the school's Special Education Coordinator, they can determine how to best meet your child's needs, including connecting with the services of the community agencies

Mental Health and Well-Being Supports

- The Board website also contains a Mental Health and Well-Being page for students, parents and staff. This page provides a point of access for mental health information.
- It can be accessed at:
<https://www.publicboard.ca/en/family-and-community-support/mental-health-and-wellbeing.aspx>

Education and Community Partnership Program

We partner with Trillium Learning Centre-Highland Campus 1 (New Beginnings), Wells Campus School (Maryvale) and Connaught Campus School (Regional Children's

Centre) to provide teachers within these mental health/correctional treatment centers. Students are able to engage in treatment and continue with their studies. Currently we have 14 teachers at Wells Campus School, 11 teachers at Connaught Campus, and 4 teachers at New Beginnings.

External Agency Partnership Protocol

The GECDsB 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).

Education and Community Partnership Program

GECDsB students entering or leaving an Education and Community Partnership Program require a transition meeting between the program and the home/receiving school. A Special Education Coordinator must attend these meeting to ensure relevant information is shared with the receiving school. The Special Education Coordinator is invited to attend by the agency.

Assessments from Other Boards, Ministries or Agencies

The school, in conjunction with the appropriate personnel (such as Psychological Services, Speech Language Pathology and Social Work) will review assessments accompanying students entering the GECDsB system from other boards, Ministries, or agencies. Where identification as an exceptional pupil is being considered, the Ontario Student Record (OSR) contents and assessments will be reviewed by the IPRC committee appropriate school board personnel to determine whether or not the student meets the criteria for identification and may consult with appropriate personnel.

Information Sharing

For students entering the GECDsB, relevant information is shared between other school boards, Ministries, community agencies and the parent/guardians. In order for this to occur, consent for consultation forms are to be obtained and signed by the parent/guardian or by the student, if the student is of the age of consent. The Special Education Coordinator for that school will assist by acting as a liaison between the various community partners and the school.

School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS)

John McGivney Children's Centre (JMCC) provides rehabilitation services including:

- Occupational Therapy (OT)

- Physiotherapy (PT)
- Speech Language Pathology (SLP)

JMCC's responsibilities include determining eligibility for and providing quality rehabilitation services in community schools.

The objectives of the SBRs are:

- to provide children with rehabilitation needs the opportunity to attend school;
- to empower students to participate to their full potential in the school routines and outings;
- to empower students to achieve independence in the school setting.

Who is Eligible for the School Based Rehabilitation Services?

- a student must be enrolled as a pupil at a community school;
- any student with an assessed need for occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy;
- the student would not be able to participate in school routines and instructions if SBRs were not provided in the school setting.

School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRs) Referral Process

- Where the student has been identified prior to school entry as having a need for physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech services, a referral to the School Based Rehabilitation Service may be made directly by a community therapist or family doctor with consent of the parent/guardian. A referral for speech therapy must be supported by a Speech-Language Pathologist assessment.
- Once a student is attending school, concerns identified by parents/guardians, school personnel and/or community agencies as requiring a referral to the SBRs should be directed first to the teacher and principal. Occupational therapy and physiotherapy concerns will be brought to the attention of the Occupational Therapist assigned to the school to determine needs. A school board Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP) will initiate the SLP referral for those needs meeting the criteria of the SBRs.

Administration as prescribed medication and injections.

- Student as authorized parent/guardian as authorized aide or other personnel employed by Board Health Professional hired by HCCSS.
- Eligible students must have a valid OHIP card, must be enrolled in a school, attending physician has prescribed medication or injection.
- HCCSS Care Coordinator is responsible for ongoing assessment of student's eligibility for treatment in consultation with the attending physician.
- HCCSS Care Coordinator determines time frame for treatment and planned date of discharge based on review of the student's progress and consultation with attending physician.
- Parent or Guardian reviews assessment and consults HCCSS Care Coordinator to verify procedure and resolve any disputes about eligibility and level of support.

Administration as prescribed oral medication.

- Student as authorized parent/guardian as authorized aide or other personnel employed by Board.
- Eligible students must have a valid OHIP card, must be enrolled in a school.
- HCCSS Care Coordinator is responsible for ongoing assessment of student's eligibility for treatment in consultation with the attending physician.
- HCCSS Care Coordinator determines time frame for treatment and planned date of discharge based on review of the student's progress and consultation with attending physician.
- Parent or Guardian reviews assessment with Principal to verify procedure and resolve any disputes about eligibility and level of support.

Occupational Therapy (OT).

- John McGivney Children's Centre (JMCC) OT provides service.
- Qualified and registered OT to determine student needs and eligibility.
- OT determines level of support in consultation with the parent or guardian, and the school personnel.
- OT determines when goals are met, and no further intervention is required.
- Parent or Guardian reviews assessments with OT, and JMCC manager if further issues arise.

Physical Therapy (PT).

- John McGivney Children's Centre (JMCC) PT provides service.
- Qualified and registered PT to determine needs.
- PT determines level of support in consultation with the parent or guardian, and the school personnel.
- PT determines when goals are met, and no further intervention is required.
- Parent or Guardian reviews assessments with PT, and JMCC manager if further issues arise.

Nutrition

- HCCSS contracts with dietitian employed by Ministry of Health to provide service.
- Assessment of student by a qualified practitioner determines eligibility.
- HCCSS Care Coordinator in consultation with physician and parent/guardian determines eligibility and level of support.
- HCCSS Care coordinator determines time frame for treatment and planned date of discharge based on review of student's progress and consultation with attending physician.

Speech and Language Pathology (SLP) and Speech correction and remediation.

- JMCC has qualified Speech Language Pathology Providers (SLP) to provide service.
- Speech Language Pathology Assessment by registered SLP determines eligibility: Severe Articulation, fluency, voice and non-verbal

- SLP determines when goals are met, and no further intervention is required.
- SLP consults with parent or guardian and possibly JMCC manager if any further issues arise.

Catheterization, manual expression of bladder or stoma, tube feeding, postural drainage/deep suctioning.

- Health professionals provided by HCCSS provides service.
- Assessment and prescription of service by qualified medical practitioner or attending physician.
- HCCSS Care Coordinator in consultation with the attending physician and parent or guardian determines ongoing eligibility.
- HCCSS Care Coordinator determines time frame for treatment and planned date of discharge based on review of the student's progress and consultation with attending physician.
- HCCSS Care Coordinator and qualified medical practitioner meet with parent/guardian

Lifting/Positioning and Assistance with mobility and toileting.

- John McGivney Children's Centre (JMCC) Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy (PT/OT) provides the service.
- Assessment by qualified PT/OT to determine student eligibility and level of support.
- PT/OT determines level of support in consultation with the parent or guardian, and the school personnel.
- PT/OT determines when goals are met, and no further intervention is required.
- Parent or Guardian reviews assessments with PT/OT, and JMCC manager if further issues arise.



SUBMISSION AND AVAILABILITY OF THE PLAN - Section E

2026-2027 Special Education Plan Checklist

The 2026-2027 GECD SB Special Education Plan checklist will be submitted to the Ministry of Education by July 31, 2026.

Below, is a copy of the where the document is posted on the GECD SB website, for reference.

Document:	Format:	Please indicate the URL of the document on your website
Special Education Plan	Board Website Electronic file Paper Copy	https://www.publicboard.ca/en/programs-and-learning/special-education-plan.aspx
Parent Guide to Special Education	Board Website Electronic file	https://www.publicboard.ca/en/programs-and-learning/resources/Documents/Special-Education-Resource-Documents/Parent-Guide-to-the-IEP.pdf
Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals (PPM 149)	Board Website Electronic file	https://www.publicboard.ca/en/about-gecdsb/Policies-and-Regulations/Regulations/External-Agency-Partnerships-R-AD-35.pdf

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Individual Education Plan (IEP) Template

Appendix 2 – Parent Guide to the Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Appendix 3 – Individual Education Plan (IEP) Consultation Form

Appendix 4 – Parent Guide to the Identification and Placement Review Committee (IPRC)

Appendix 5 - Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) Plan for 2026-2027

Appendix 6 - Glossary

Appendix 1: The IEP Template

Student Name

School Year:

OEN:

DOB:

Grade:

School:

Principal:

IEP Date:

IPRC Date:

Waiver Date:

Reason for Development:

Exceptionality:

IEP Date:

IPRC Date:

Waiver Date:

Reason for Development:

Placement Information

Placement Start Date

Placement

Sources for IEP Creation

IEP Development Team

Position

Staff Member

Program Information

Program Exemptions and/or Substitutions:

Reporting Dates

First Reporting Date
Date

Second Reporting Date

Third Reporting

Reporting Format

Assessments

<u>Type of Assessment</u>	<u>Assessment Month</u>	<u>Assessment Year</u>	<u>Summary of Results/Diagnosis</u>

Strengths and Needs

Areas of Strength	Areas of Need

Subjects, Courses or Alternative Programs to which the IEP applies

Subject/Course	Program Type

Modifications/Alternative

IEP Accommodations

Instructional	Environmental	Assessment

Transition
Overall Goals

Actions	Persons Responsible for Actions	Timeline

Communication

Date	Description of Consultation	Parent/Student Feedback/Outcome of Consultation	Contact With	Contact By

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

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)

Appendix 2—Parent Guide to the IEP

Parent Guide to the Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Developing the IEP

How can I contribute to planning goals for my child? Beginning with your child's strengths and needs is an important first step.

You can help by:

- Including your child in the discussions
- Telling the teacher what you hope your child will accomplish this year
- Likes, dislikes and interests (extra-curricular activities)
- Talents and abilities
- Family relationships and dynamics (extended family relationships and pets)
- Peer relationships and dynamics
- Family routines and schedules

What should I do if I have questions or concerns About the IEP?

Your direct link to your child's programming needs is the classroom teacher and/or Special Education teacher. The Learning Support Teacher (LST) is also a valuable resource. If your concerns are not met, then it may be necessary for the principal and/or the Special Education Coordinator to get involved. It is important to keep the focus on your child's best interests and keep the lines of communication open.

Carrying out the IEP at Home - Making Learning a Priority

Parents as partners can provide an invaluable perspective on their child's personality, development, and learning style. Open communication and cooperation between home and school will also ensure that the two have similar expectations with respect to the student's special education program and services.

Tips for Parents

- Ask your child on a regular basis to share with you the events and activities of the school day.
- Speak with your child about their learning strengths and needs.
- Read to your child daily and for older students, encourage them to read daily
- Ensure that your child attends classes on a regular basis and is punctual and well prepared for the school day.
- Provide a quiet, well-equipped location in your home for your child to complete homework.

How do I work as an effective IEP partner?

Students are most successful when all team members work together towards achievable goals.

As a parent:

- Keep the focus on your child at all times
- Tell the teacher the hopes you have for your child's learning
- Bring ideas and information
- Ask questions
- Value everyone's input

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Parent Guide to the Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Assessment & Review

Development and review of the IEP is a team approach. It is an accountability tool for you and your child and everyone who has responsibilities under the plan. It is designed to help your child meet the stated goals and expectations as he/she progresses through the Ontario Curriculum.

Your child's report card should be a direct reflection of the goals stated in the IEP. IEP's are formally updated twice a year, however it is considered a working document that may be revised as needed.

- Talk to your child's teacher about the goals that have been set;
- Communicate regularly with your child's teacher regarding progress;
- Recommend changes in goals, strategies, and/ or resources or support where you see a need;
- Be actively involved in discussions at school when your child is changing grades, schools or moving into the workplace.

This information is also available on the ministry website Edu.gov.on.ca For more information about our special education programs and services as well as our Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Please visit our website: PublicBoard.ca

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Appendix 3—Individual Education Plan (IEP) Consultation Form

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) CONSULTATION FORM

Completion of this consultation form will assist teachers to create a profile of [student] as a learner and to develop a program that addresses needs by capitalizing on strengths and lived experience. Please complete the sections that are applicable.

Student's First Name: [student's first name]

Student's Last Name: [student's last name]

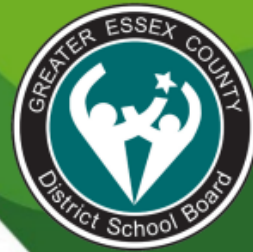
Area	From the Parent/Guardian/Student Input
AREAS OF STRENGTH What is [student] good at doing, things they do on their own?	
AREAS OF NEED In what areas does [student] need help?	
AREAS OF INTEREST What are the [students'] talents, interests and hobbies?	
STUDENT PREFERENCES What kind of positive reinforcement/rewards have you found that work for the [student]?	
LEARNING GOALS What are the most important things you want [student] to learn this year?	
FUTURE GOALS What are the future goals for the [student]? What do you see [student] doing as a young adult?	
LITERACY Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing What is [student] good at? What does [student] have difficulty with?	
MATH Concepts, Computation, Problem Solving What is [student] good at? What does [student] have difficulty with?	
FACILITATING TRANSITIONS THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY What strategies will best support [student] as they transitions from activity to activity and location to location throughout the school	

day?	
TRANSITION PLANNING What actions need to be considered now in planning for [student]'s transition to the next grade and/or school? What actions need to be considered now in planning for [student]'s post-secondary destination(s)?	
SOCIAL INTERACTION How does [student] relate to other students in one-to-one, small group and large group situations?	
DISABILITY/MEDICAL CONDITION Please provide us with any resources or additional information about [student]'s disability/medical condition.	
SPECIAL EQUIPMENT/ASSISTIVE and/or ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY What special equipment will [student] use at school, e.g., walker, stander, voice aids, laptop?	
INDEPENDENCE/LIFE SKILLS In what areas would you like to see [student] demonstrate more independence and/or life skills?	
SAFETY/SELF-REGULATION Are there any issues related to safety and/or self-regulation, which are unique to [student] that we should be aware of? What are the best strategies to support [student's] safety?	
KEY INFORMATION Is there any additional information that you would like to share?	
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION What agencies are [student] involved with? Please include contact information.	

Appendix 3—Parent Guide to the IPRC

Parent Guide to IPRC

(Identification, Placement, and Review Committee)



Our 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 can succeed in the regular classroom with appropriate supports, modifications and 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 shared with parents, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 181/98

Some students need alternative support to achieve success. Within available placement options, some students need the support of specialized programs and services which are offered within various GECDSD locations or provincial demonstration schools.

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. Exceptional pupils will have access to resources and technologies appropriate to their developmental stages. These resources will provide meaningful learning opportunities for success.

Parents/guardians and pupils 16 years of age or older shall be full partners with regard to assessment, identification and placement decisions. As full partners, parents/guardians 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 document that will assist parents and teachers in developing common goals for exceptional students.

Who is an exceptional pupil?	The Ministry of Education defines an exceptional pupil as: <i>"A pupil whose behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he/she is considered to need placement in a special education program by a Special Education Identification, Placement and Review Committee."</i>
What are Special Education Programs and Services?	Special Education Program is an educational program that is based on assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil. Special Education Services are facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing, a special education program (Ministry of Education Definition)
How are Special Education Programs Delivered?	The type of special education program depends on the intensity of the educational needs of the pupil. The options include: • Indirect Support - regular class with consultative support • Resource Assistance - regular class with resource support individually or in a small group, focused on a specific subject or skill within the regular class • Withdrawal Assistance - regular class with withdrawal support in a resource room for less than 50% of the day • Full time Special Education - Special Education class full time • Provincial School - Provincial demonstration school (i.e. Robarts School in London)

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What does an IPRC do?	An IPRC: • May determine your child to be exceptional. • Shall determine the placement of your child if they are exceptional. • Shall review the placement of your child at least annually. • Shall set the date on which the Board will be notified of its decision. • Shall provide you with a written statement of the Committee's determinations about your child, or to the pupil if they are an adult, and to the principal.
What is the composition of an IPRC?	Each IPRC: • Has a minimum of three members, one of whom shall be a principal/vice-principal or a supervisory officer/designate employed by the Board. • Has other persons appointed by the Board who can assist the Committee. *Please note that other staff members may attend as well. You may also invite others to the IPRC meeting to support you.
What is an IEP?	An Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed for your child in consultation with you. The IEP outlines the special education programs and services that will be received and specific educational expectations. The IEP must be completed 30 school days after date of placement in the program. You will be consulted and will receive a copy of your child's IEP.
Who determines that your child is exceptional?	Principal of your school requests a committee appointed by the Board, called the Special Education Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), to determine whether or not your child is exceptional.
What information is presented to the IPRC?	Principal presents the following information: • Report Cards • Educational Assessment • Psychological Report • Social Work Report (if required) • Speech-Language Pathology Report (if required) • Other reports that you feel should be considered by the IPRC.
What do you do if you disagree or have concerns about the determination?	Within 15 days, write the Principal of your school of your concerns and the Committee will schedule a second meeting within seven (7) days or at a mutually agreeable time. If you still disagree with the identification, and/or placement of your child, within 15 days of the second meeting with the Committee, you may make an appeal by writing to: The Secretary of the Board Greater Essex County District School Board 451 Park Street West, Windsor, Ontario N9A 6K1.
Can you as a parent request that your child be referred to the IPRC?	Yes. You should write your request to the Principal who must then refer your child to the IPRC. You should also send a copy of the letter to the appropriate Superintendent of Schools.



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How will you be involved?	You will be invited to an interview with the IPRC or you may waive your right to be interviewed. Since the Committee will be making decisions about your child, you are strongly urged to participate because you have the right to present additional information and to invite other persons to assist you in the process (friend, relative, member of a local association). The Committee will provide you with a copy of its determinations and ask for your written agreement or disagreement.
What happens when you make an appeal?	Within 30 days of the receipt of your notice of appeal by the Secretary, the Board shall establish a Special Education Appeal Board and the Chairperson of the Special Education Appeal Board will contact you regarding further procedures.
Is your written consent required to have your child placed?	Yes. However, your child may be placed or have a change in placement without your written consent if: (a) You have not appealed the Committee's decision within 15 days of the meeting with the Committee, or (b) You have not taken any action within 30 days of the date of the written statement prepared by the Committee. Then, the Board may, upon request of the Superintendent of Schools, direct the appropriate principal to place your child as determined by the IPRC and to notify you of the action that has been taken.
When will your child's placement be reviewed?	Every exceptional pupil's placement shall be reviewed at least once a year. In addition, after placement has been in effect for at least three months, you may request in writing to the Principal, that a review be conducted.
Will I be notified about changes in Special Education Placements?	Yes. Before any changes are made, you will be invited to an IPRC for a discussion of the proposed changes. You will be requested to give written consent to a change in placement before that change is made.

This Parent Guide has been prepared as an outline only. Further questions should be directed to your child's principal. A more detailed description of the IPRC process is available from your school. For further information please refer to:

(a) The Education Act (b) Ontario Regulation 181/98, Special Education Identification, Placement and Review Committee & Appeals



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Appendix 5 – ODA 2026-2027 Plan

Greater Essex County District School Board

Administrative Building: 451 Park Street West, P.O. Box 210, Windsor, Ontario N9A 6K1,

Telephone (519) 255-3200

GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ODA) FOR THE YEAR SEPTEMBER 2026 TO AUGUST 2027

The Ontarians With Disabilities Act 2001 requires that all public organizations such as municipalities, school boards, hospitals, universities, and colleges to prepare a plan that identifies measures the organization has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities and consult with persons with disabilities and others in preparing the plan.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) empowers Regulation 191/11 “Integrated Accessibility Standards” that provides direction for the following areas:

1. Information and Communication Standards
2. Employment Standards
3. Transportation Standards
4. Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment)
5. Customer Service Standards

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) must publish this plan by September 30th of each year in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Every year the Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee must update the plan for the next year.

The ODA Committee would like to provide an on-going opportunity for all staff, parents and community partners of the Greater Essex County District School Board to communicate accessibility concerns to the School Board.

To share your suggestion and input, please use the following link:

ODACCommittee@publicboard.ca

Plan In Accordance with Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) for the year September 2026 to August 2027

1. List of Barriers, Objectives, and Responsibilities

Barrier: Updating Building Construction Standards as deemed necessary or when built into funded projects

Objective: To ensure that older buildings where feasible are updated with accessible materials

Means to Prevent or Remove: As items are requested for repair or replacement, new and more accessible items are installed (e.g. door handles)

Performance Criteria: Buildings will be updated as required or students will be accommodated at the closest site that is accessible

Resources: Facility Services

Time Line: 2026/27 School Year projects chosen on an “as needed basis: with students as the priority

Responsibility: Facility Services, Special Education Department, Information Technology Services, School Principal

Barrier: Accessible Washrooms

Objective: To provide access and functionality to washrooms

Means to Prevent/Remove: Provide appropriate lifts, sinks, toilets and door operators

Performance Criteria: Meets the needs as necessary

Resources: Appropriate materials required to modify the washrooms

Time Line: 2026/27 School Year projects chosen on an “as needed basis” with students as the priority

Responsibility: Facility Services, Special Education Department, School Principal

Barrier: Accommodations for the Visually Impaired as deemed appropriate

Objective: Submit request to the Superintendent of Special Education for students and to the HR Wellness Officer for staff

Means to Prevent/Remove: Provide appropriate accommodations

Performance Criteria: Meets the needs as necessary

Resources: As deemed appropriate

Time Line: 2026/27 School Year projects chosen on an “as needed basis” with students and staff as the priority

Responsibility: Facility Services, Special Education Department, Information Technology Services, School Principal, Human Resources Department (for staff)

Barrier: Automatic Doors – graduated implementation

Objective: To provide access to schools for people with disabilities

Means to Prevent/Remove: Install automatic doors, openers and frames as needs are identified

Performance Criteria: People with disabilities will have access to schools

Resources: Door openers, ramps, rails and curb-cuts

Time Line: 2026/27 School Year projects chosen on an “as needed basis” with students as the priority

Responsibility: Facility Services, Special Education Department, School Principal

The ODA Committee has reviewed the ODA Plan for the 2026/27 school year.

In addition to this year's plan, the Committee will be focusing on the following items as the GECDSDB strives to identify, address, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

- The ODA Committee will continue to collect information from the various stakeholders in order to identify, remove and prevent barriers.
- The ODA Accessibility link on the GECDSDB website will be updated yearly to indicate the progress being made by the School Board.
- The ODA Committee will provide a link on the GECDSDB website inviting suggestions and input for barrier identification and reduction.

If you wish to provide suggestions and input to the ODA Committee, please click on the given link to send us your message via email. These messages will be presented to the ODA Committee for consideration. For this link, please see page 1 of this report.

2. Renovations completed at elementary and secondary schools during the 2025/2026 school year:

Forest Glade PS: Replacement of all interior and exterior doors to create a barrier-free path of travel.

Massey SS: Additional barrier-free parking.

Westview Freedom Academy: Installation of a new auto operator to create a barrier-free entrance.

3. Renovations planned at elementary and secondary schools for completion during the 2026/2027 school year:

Belle River DHS: New elevator, new barrier-free washroom. Replacement/modification of 50 interior doors to create a barrier-free path of travel. Sidewalk path at front of building to enhance barrier-free path of travel.

Belle River PS: New barrier-free washroom, washroom upgrades which include barrier-free upgrades. Replacement of 31 interior doors and 1 exterior door to create a barrier-free path of travel.

Centennial Central PS: Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

Dougall: Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

East Mersea PS: Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

Ford City PS: New barrier-free washroom, washroom upgrades which will include barrier-free upgrades. Replacement of 28 interior doors and 5 exterior doors to create a barrier-free path of travel.

General Brock PS: Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

Gore Hill PS: New barrier-free washroom, washroom upgrades which will include barrier-free upgrades. Replacement of 40 interior doors and 5 exterior doors to create a barrier-free path of travel.

Gosfield North PS: Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

Harrow PS: New barrier-free washroom, washroom upgrades which will include barrier-free upgrades. Replacement of 57 interior doors and 8 exterior doors to create a barrier-free path of travel.

Hugh Beaton: Parking lot upgrades which include additional barrier-free parking.

King Edward PS: Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

Mount Carmel PS: Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

Northwood PS: Upgrade of barrier-free washroom, washroom upgrades which will include barrier-free upgrades. Replacement of 39 interior doors and 2 exterior doors to create a barrier-free path of travel.

PASS (formerly Alicia Mason): Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

Queen Elizabeth PS: Washroom upgrades which will include barrier-free upgrades. Replacement of 52 interior doors and 6 exterior doors to create a barrier-free path of travel. Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

Roseville PS: Upgrade of fire alarm system annunciators to include strobes.

Southwood PS: New barrier-free washroom, washroom upgrades which will include barrier-free upgrades. Replacement of 24 interior doors and 1 exterior door to create a barrier-free path of travel.

Westview Freedom Academy: New ramp to enhance exterior barrier-free path of travel.

Information & Communication:

During the 2021-2022 school year, Communications Team & ITS team migrated board and school websites to a new platform to meet AODA requirements. The AODA scanning tool is used on new sites to ensure compliance with materials included on board and school websites.

Employment Standards:

During the 2022-23 school year, the Board undertook an Employment Systems Review to create a more diverse workforce by evaluating formal and informal policies and

practices related to the recruitment, hiring and selection processes. A plan to adopt recommendations is currently being implemented.

Appendix 6 – Glossary

Acronyms

AODA: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorder
CYW: Child and Youth Worker
DSW: Developmental Service Worker
EA: Educational Assistant
GAINS: Giving Attention to Individual Needs
GECDSE: Greater Essex County District School Board
HCCSS: Home and Community Care Support Services
IEP: Individual Education Plan
IPRC: Identification, Placement Review Committee
LIHN: Local Health Integration Network
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
RISE: Reaching Individual Success and Excellence
SHSSP: School Health Support Services Program
SEA: Special Education Amount
SEAC: Special Education Advisory Committee
SIP: Special Incidence Portion
SLP: Speech-Language Pathologist
SSLI: Student Support Leadership Initiative
SSW: Student Support Worker
STEPS: Steps to Enhance Personal Success
SWDHH: Support Worker for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing