



# 2010-2011 Special Education Report

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The HWDSB Special Education Report, copies of the Parents' Guide (*Working Together: A Guide to Special Education and Student Services*) and additional Special Education/Student Services information are available on the HWDSB website at:  
[www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca) -> Program -> Special Education / Student Services

Mr. John Malloy, Director of Education

Signature:



Date: June 2011: SEAC  
September 2011: Board

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## **Model for Special Education**

### Supports and Services

The Board provides a spectrum of special education supports and services for students. This spectrum includes both in-school as well as itinerant support, short-term intervention services, and placements in regular class, special class and at Glenwood Special Day School. The Board endeavours to meet the needs of all students accessing Special Education/Student Services supports in the most enabling environment, in accordance with parental preference. The Board's practice, consistent with the Ministry direction is that, wherever possible, special learning needs are addressed within the home school, is consistent with Ministry direction.

Continuous evaluation and assessment is an integral part of educational programming for all students. Monitoring progress, reviewing program interventions, and making changes in instructional practices that result in increased student achievement are the hallmarks of Special Education/Student Services.

Many professionals, including classroom teachers, itinerant teachers, special education teachers, educational assistants, school administrators, special education consultants, speech-language pathologists, kinesiologist, psychoeducational consultants, social workers, and system special education teams provide services to assist schools to meet the needs of all students, and in particular those with special education needs. In addition, the Board works collaboratively with many community partners in the provision of services for students.

### Strategic Directions

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board has established the following Strategic Directions:

#### **Achievement Matters – *All Students Achieving Their Full Potential***

21<sup>st</sup> Century Fluencies  
Problem Solving in Math  
Learning for All

#### **Engagement Matters – *Building Relationships that Promote Student Learning***

Student Voice  
Student Success  
Parent Engagement  
Community Partnerships  
Staff Engagement

## **Equity Matters – Providing Opportunities for All Students**

Equitable Allocation of Resources

Student Pathways

Create Safe and Equitable Environments

### Special Education/Student Services Shared Beliefs

The Special Education/Student Services Department hold the following shared beliefs:

- ✓ *All students can succeed.*
- ✓ *All classes can and should offer differentiated and engaging forms of instruction.*
- ✓ *The majority of students with special education needs can and should have their needs met in a regular class environment in their home school.*
- ✓ *Successful instructional practices are founded on evidence-based research, tempered by experience.*
- ✓ *Each student has his or her own unique patterns of learning and as such assessment and instruction should be tailored to the student's particular learning and motivational needs.*
- ✓ *Success for all students occurs when teachers know their students, know where their students are and where they need to go in their learning, and know how to get them there.*
- ✓ *Successful plans, programs, and/or services for many students with special needs require a shared responsibility between schools, families, and community agencies/partners.*
- ✓ *Special Education/Student Services supports are focused on closing achievement gaps, raising the achievement bar, and nurturing the well being of students.*
- ✓ *Inclusion and equity is provided through a spectrum of services (regular class, at-risk student intervention, self-contained setting with individualized and consultative integration).*
- ✓ *Special Education/Student Services supports are administered in a manner that respects the student's right to privacy, dignity, and cultural sensitivity.*
- ✓ *Special Education/Student Services supports are based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students, such that students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.*
- ✓ *Fairness is not sameness.*

### Instructional Practices

In HWDSB, instruction that can respond to a group of students and yet can also be tailored to the unique needs of students with particular needs is encouraged, based on the principles of three related instructional approaches:

- ✓ **Universal Design** – using teaching strategies or materials that address the special needs of a specific student or students, but are also of benefit and appropriate for all students;

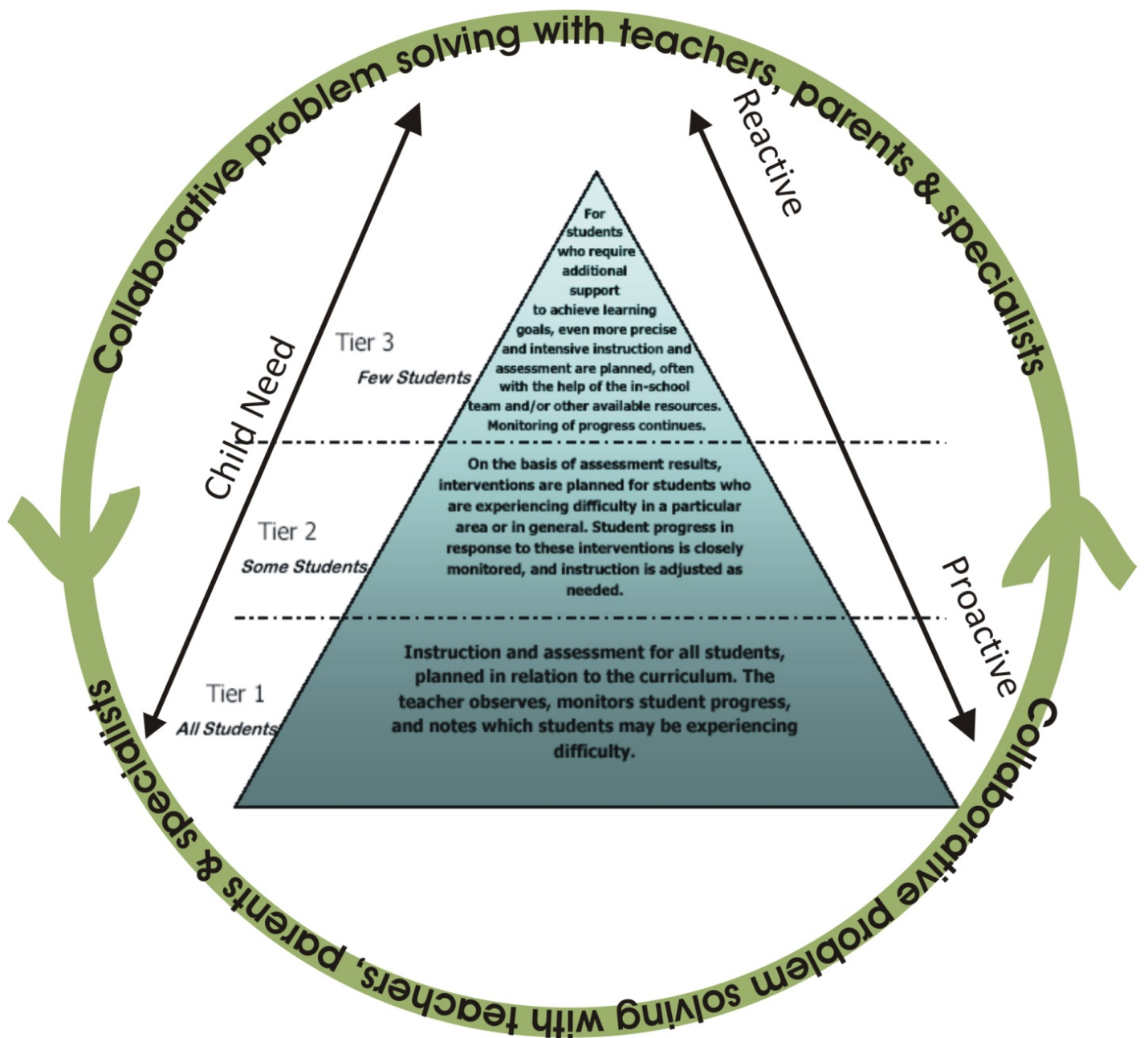
- ✓ Differentiated Instruction – adapting instruction, materials, and assessment methods to suit the differing interests, learning styles and abilities of students; and
- ✓ The Tiered Approach to Prevention and Intervention – employing a systematic approach to assessment, instruction, and appropriate interventions to respond to individual needs.

The tiered approach facilitates the early identification of students experiencing difficulty which can lead to appropriate and timely interventions. It includes three distinct levels of interventions:

- ✓ Tier 1: whole class level instruction employing evidence-based instructional practices;
- ✓ Tier 2: targeted small group or individual intervention; and
- ✓ Tier 3: intensive intervention for individual or small groups.

The tiered approach acknowledges the expertise of in-school personnel in addressing student needs, yet also includes the provision of support from system personnel and community partners. Although it appears sequential in nature, the progression through the tiers is fluid. Students can move about tiers as determined by assessed needs and individual responses to intervention. Each tier varies with respect to its focus, its assessment and evaluation methods, its level of response or intervention, and its avenues for supports.

The following diagram illustrates the HWDSB Special Education/Student Services tiered approach to Prevention and Intervention.



## The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC)

### Informal Approaches To Solving Problems

Many informal processes can be put in place as soon as concerns/needs are identified. These can include a variety of different strategies based on information gathered regarding a child's specific needs, interests, and learning style. When parents/guardians identify that their child has special education needs or is experiencing difficulty learning, the first step is to talk with the classroom teacher. The teacher, in collaboration with the support services available at the school, will endeavour to help the student reach his/her full potential.

For children who have needs that require additional support, a team is often formed to develop a plan. The School Resource Team can vary depending on the identified needs, but is made up of persons with various types of expertise. This team works collaboratively to determine the best program and teaching strategies for the student.

The team *may* include:

- ✓ School staff (principal, vice-principal, learning resource teacher (the Special Education teacher assigned to your school), classroom teacher(s), educational assistant(s));
- ✓ System staff (speech-language pathologist, psychoeducational consultant, special education consultant, social worker, special assignment teacher);
- ✓ Community partners (Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) manager, community agency representative).

The team works with parents/guardians to support the student through collaboration, consultation, and the sharing of information in order to identify appropriate interventions and strategies. The active involvement of parents/guardians is encouraged as it enhances the effectiveness of the team. Parents/guardians provide insights and observations which may help in assessing a student's skills and identifying his or her interests.

The team may decide to proceed to an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), to determine if the student meets criteria to be identified as exceptional.

An **exceptional pupil** is defined as a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program.

A **special education program**, in respect of an exceptional pupil, is defined as an educational program that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meets the needs of the exceptional pupil. A special education program can be provided in a variety of settings, including a regular class or a self-contained special education class.

**Special education services** are defined as facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

### The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC)

Regulation 181/98 of the Education Act requires all school boards to set up Identification, Placement and Review committees. The purpose of the committee is to determine if a student should be identified as an exceptional pupil and states the exceptionality and the appropriate special education placement that will best meet the student's needs.

The Committee is composed of at least three people. One member will be either a supervisory officer or principal who acts as chairperson. Two or more members could include another principal, a vice-principal, a learning resource teacher (LRT), a classroom teacher, or a special education consultant. The Committee will decide:

- ✓ Whether or not the student should be identified as exceptional;
- ✓ Identify the areas of the student's exceptionality; and
- ✓ Decide an appropriate placement for the student.

After the initial meeting, the identification and placement are reviewed by an IPRC at least once per school year.

#### IPRC Process

The IPRC process, as per Regulation 181/98, is as follows:

##### 1. Informing Parents of the IPRC Process

No later than 30 days prior to the date of IPRC meeting, the student's home school is notified of the date, time and location of the meeting.

At least 10 days in advance of the meeting, through the school, the parents/guardians of the student will receive written notification of the meeting. If the notification of meeting is sent by mail, it must be mailed at least 17 days prior to the meeting date. If the parents/guardians are not able to attend a scheduled meeting, they should contact the school principal to discuss the possibility of an alternate date or time.

In addition to the notification of an initial IPRC meeting, the parents/guardians of the student are to receive the HWDSB parents' guide (*Working Together: A Guide to Special Education and Student Services*) in the appropriate format. The handbook is available on the HWDSB website ([www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca)) in Arabic, Chinese, English, Spanish and Urdu.

##### 2. Parent /Guardian Involvement

The school will provide the parents/guardians with a copy of any information that will be considered by the IPRC. The parents/guardians will be invited to attend and participate in all committee discussions and decisions, and have the right to request the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting.

### 3. Gathering Information

Upon making the decision to proceed to an IPRC meeting, the school begins gathering information for the IPRC to consider in making its decision. Information gathered may include:

- ✓ The student's educational background;
- ✓ The Individual Education Plan (if one has been previously developed);
- ✓ Any previous system meeting or IPRC documentation;
- ✓ Parent information form;
- ✓ Medical or outside agency reports, as appropriate;
- ✓ Standardized test/reports;
- ✓ Curriculum-based assessment, diagnostic tests and checklists;
- ✓ Report cards;
- ✓ Work samples; and
- ✓ Statement of strengths and needs.

### 4. Identification

The IPRC will issue a written Statement of Decision which will state:

- ✓ Whether the committee has determined that the student should be identified as exceptional; and
- ✓ The specific exceptionality/exceptionalities as per Ministry definitions and Board-approved criteria.

### 5. Statement of Strengths and Needs

The Statement of Strengths and Needs should:

- ✓ Include individualized statements addressing academic, social/emotional and/or physical needs;
- ✓ Be completed in draft form by the referring school with parent/guardian and/or student input;
- ✓ Be included in draft form in the IPRC package;
- ✓ Be reviewed in its draft form at the IPRC meeting; and
- ✓ Be revised at the IPRC meeting, if necessary.

### 6. Recommending Placement

The IPRC shall, before considering the option of placement in a special education class, consider whether placement in a regular class, with appropriate special education services, will meet the student's needs and is consistent with the parent's/guardian's preferences. If, after considering all of the information, the IPRC is satisfied that placement in a regular class would meet the student's needs and is consistent with the parent's/guardian's preferences, the IPRC will decide in favour of placement in a regular class (Reg. 181/98 s.17).

If, after considering all of the information, the IPRC is satisfied that placement in a special education class would meet the student's needs and is consistent with the parent's/guardian's preferences, the IPRC will decide in favour of this placement

The decision of the committee, and the reasons(s) for the decision, will be written on the *Statement of Decision* form, issued by the committee.

### 7. Annual Review Meetings

A Review IPRC meeting is to be held at least once in each school year unless the parent/guardian of the student gives a written notice dispensing with the annual review to the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided. A Review IPRC considers the same information as an Initial IPRC.

The committee will review:

- ✓ The progress the student has made in relation to the Individual Education Plan (IEP), with written permission of a parent;
- ✓ The placement and identification and decide whether they should be continued or whether changes should be made.

### 8. Requests for Reviews

A review IPRC meeting may occur if a parent requests, in writing, for a review or if the principal of the school gives written notice to the parents regarding a review. Such requests may be made at any time after a placement has been in effect for three months, but may not be made more often than once in every three month period. (Reg. 181/98 s.21(2)).

### 9. Communicating the IPRC Decision

As soon as possible after the IPRC meeting, the chair shall send a copy of the *Statement of Decision* to:

- ✓ The parent/guardian;
- ✓ The student, if he/she is 16 years of age or older; and
- ✓ The principal of the school that made the referral, for inclusion in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR).

### 10. A Guide to Special Education and Student Services

The parents' guide, *Working Together: A Guide to Special Education and Student Services*, is a document that schools provide to parents/guardians before an IPRC meeting, or at any time, in order to provide parents/guardians with information regarding HWDSB services, and information about the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process. The document is available on-line ([www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca) -> Program -> Special Education/Student Services) in Arabic, Chinese, English, Spanish, and Urdu.

### 11. Process for Resolving Disputes

Throughout the entire IPRC process, schools work with parents/guardians to resolve any disputes. The principal is responsible to ensure that parents/guardians understand their rights, that they have a copy of the parents' guide *Working Together: A Guide to Special Education and Student Services*, and that any concerns are addressed in an atmosphere of cooperation and respect. A special education consultant, the Principal of Special Education, the school's Supervisory Officer and the Superintendent with responsibility for Special Education are available to assist both schools and parents/guardians with the process for resolving disputes. The Ministry document, *Shared Solutions*, may also help all parties to resolve issues that arise.

(<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/shared.pdf>)

### 12. Pre-Appeal Process

If the parents/guardians agree with the IPRC's determination, they will be asked to indicate, by signing their name(s) that they are in agreement. If the parents/guardians do not agree with the decision, they have 15 days following receipt of the decision to give written notification to the Secretary of the Board.

The following steps will be offered to parents/guardians in the event that they wish to consider an appeal of the IPRC decision regarding exceptionality and/or placement:

- ✓ The Chair of the IPRC will offer to re-convene the members of the committee so that the parents/guardians can share their concerns. If this meeting is requested, it will occur prior to the dates for the formal appeal process as outlined in Regulation 181/98.
- ✓ If the parents/guardians are satisfied with the results of this meeting, the process leading to an appeal will end at this point.
- ✓ If parents/guardians are not satisfied with the results of the meeting, or do not wish to have this meeting, the Board will offer the parents/guardians an opportunity to discuss their concerns with an impartial mediator who has no previous knowledge of the case and who has a background in special education. The Chair of the IPRC will coordinate this meeting. The Board will pay the expenses of the mediator.
- ✓ If the parents/guardians wish to have this meeting, it will occur prior to the dates for the formal appeal process as outlined in Regulation 181/98.
- ✓ If parents/guardians are satisfied with the results of the meeting with the mediator, this mediation process is complete.
- ✓ If parents/guardians are not satisfied with the results of the meeting with the mediator, or do not wish to have this meeting, the appeal process as described in Regulation 181/98 will begin.

### 13. Appeal Process – Regulation 181/98

If the parent/guardian does not agree with the IPRC decision, a written notice of appeal may be filed with the Secretary of the Board within 30 days of the original decision or within 15 days of receiving the decision of a review meeting. This notice of appeal must indicate the decision with which the parent/guardian disagrees and must include a statement explaining why they disagree.

The appeal process involves the following steps:

- ✓ The Board will arrange for a special education appeal board to be established to hear the appeal.
- ✓ The appeal board will be composed of three people: one member selected by the Board; one member selected by the parents/guardians of the student; and a chair, who is selected jointly by the first two members. If those two members cannot agree, the appropriate district manager of the Ministry will select a chair.
- ✓ The first two selections shall be made within 15 days of the Board receiving notice of appeal. The Chair shall be selected within 15 days of the first two members being chosen.
- ✓ Members of the appeal board may not have any prior knowledge of the matter under appeal.
- ✓ The Chair of the appeal board will arrange for a meeting, which will be conducted in an informal manner, to take place at a convenient time and place within 30 days of his/her selection unless written consent is received from both the parents/guardians and the Board agreeing to a later date.

- ✓ The Chair may invite to the meeting anyone who can contribute information with respect to the matters under appeal.
- ✓ The appeal board shall make its recommendation(s) in writing within 3 days of completing the meeting, stating whether it agrees or disagrees with the original IPRC decision, make recommendations about the pupil's identification and/or placement and give reasons for its decision and recommendations.
- ✓ The board shall provide written notice within 30 days indicating what action it will take after considering the appeal board's decision and recommendations.
- ✓ Parents/guardians may accept the appeal board's decision, or, if they do not accept the appeal board's decision, they may file a written request for a Special Education Tribunal.

IPRC Roles and Responsibilities

1. Before the IPRC Meeting

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Role / Responsibility</u>
IPRC Chair	Review IPRC referral package for completeness. Ensure that committee members have received or had access to relevant documentation.
IPRC Committee members	Be familiar with referral package information and other relevant documentation. Review and understand IPRC procedures and requirements as well as pertinent legislation (Regulation 181/98).
Special Education / Student Services Personnel	Review internal and external assessment reports that address student's needs and/or that provide diagnoses. Assist schools with the preparation of required documentation for IPRC referral package. Consult with school in regard to student's profile, as it pertains to specific identification criteria.
Home School Personnel	Determine responsibilities of school personnel (principal, vice-principal, LRT, classroom teacher, etc.) Discuss and problem-solve issues for student with input from parents/guardians, Special Education/Student Services personnel, school staff, and involved outside agencies. Allow sufficient time to implement and review recommendations and/or interventions. Collaboratively discuss appropriateness of IPRC referral with all stakeholders, including review of pertinent assessments. Dialogue with parents/guardians and student regarding rationale, process and possible outcomes of IPRC referral and meeting, including discussion of parent/guardian rights. Ensure that parents/guardians receive and understand the parents' guide <i>Working Together: A Guide to Special Education and Student Services</i> , as well as their copy of IPRC referral package. Prepare and submit IPRC referral package in accordance with established timelines and Board procedures. Invite parents/guardians (and student 16 years of age or older) to the

	meeting, within required timelines. Invite support staff and any other personnel required for IPRC presentation.
Parents/Guardians	Provide information and required documentation to the home school. Review the IPRC information in the parents' guide, <i>Working Together: A Guide to Special Education and Student Services</i> prior to the meeting and direct any questions to the home school.

2. During the IPRC Meeting

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Role / Responsibility</b>
IPRC Chair	Set welcoming and invitational tone for entire IPRC. Clarify understanding of IPRC meeting. Set and enforce timelines/order for presentation. Invite other committee members to ask questions of school, parents/guardians and support staff. Review Identification Criteria and special class Admission/Demission Criteria, as appropriate. Facilitate a decision making process among committee members that occurs in the presence of all attendees. Seek consensus; if consensus not attained, then majority rules. Ensure that appropriate paperwork is completed and understood by parents/guardians. Ensure that requirements of Regulation 181/98 have been followed.
IPRC Committee members	Assist in facilitation of IPRC process at direction of Chair. Ask questions of any attendee in order to clarify information presented and/or further ascertain student's strengths and needs. Suggest recommendations re: student's strengths and needs. Participate in decision-making process. Assist in completion of IPRC paperwork at direction of Chair.
Special Education / Student Services Personnel	Provide the committee with information related to test results, student's strengths and needs, programming recommendations, and relevant diagnoses as documented in assessment reports. Respond to questions from committee members and other participants. Participate in discussion regarding student's strengths, needs and programming strategies. Assist in finalization of Statement of Strengths and Needs.
Home School Personnel	Make brief, timed presentation to IPRC committee to highlight pertinent information to support identification and/or placement criteria and discuss student's strengths and needs. Presentation should also provide overview of current program including discussion of current IEP. Address any questions from committee. Include parents/guardians and student as active participants during presentation.

Parents/Guardians	Provide input concerning the student’s strengths, needs, and suggestions regarding programs. Make inquiries during the meeting and answer questions of the IPRC committee. Consent (or do not) to the identification and placement determinations.
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3. After the IPRC Meeting

<b><u>Participant</u></b>	<b><u>Role / Responsibility</u></b>
IPRC Chair	Collect extra copies of IPRC documentation and ensure that they are shredded. Follow-up with Special Education Services regarding placement, if placement decision is special class. Inform home school principal of type and location of class, or of student’s status on Awaiting Placement list, as appropriate. Facilitate appeal process if initiated by parents.
Home School Personnel	Follow-up on required IPRC documentation, ensuring that originals are maintained within student’s OSR, and copies sent to parents/guardians. Implement program as per IPRC decisions and recommendations. Initiate transition process, if applicable, with receiving school, make transportation arrangements, if necessary, and participate in an intake meeting with receiving school to promote a successful transition.
Parents/Guardians	Initiate pre-appeal or appeal process as outlined in Regulation 181/98 if not in agreement with the IPRC decision.

**Special Education Placements Provided by the Board**

**Placement Options**

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board offers a spectrum of placement options for students with special education needs. These options include regular class programs with support, short-term intervention programs, special class programs, as well as a special day school. In consultation with stakeholders, including SEAC, and in accordance with Board policy regarding special class locations, special class programs are located strategically throughout the District. Where possible, a range of programs are placed within the same cluster of schools to provide clear pathways for students to remain with their classmates throughout their school career. Special classes are placed, where possible, in schools that offer maximum integration opportunities. The number and type of special programs and classes reflect system needs.

The special learning needs of all students, wherever possible, can and should be addressed in regular class placement within the home school. Thus, before considering the option of placement in a special education class, the Board considers whether placement in a regular class, with appropriate special education services, will meet the student's needs. Parents/guardians are always given the option, if that is their preference, to have the student's placement be in a regular class in the home school, regardless of the student's individual needs.

Regular classroom interventions can include whole class or small group targeted instruction, accommodated programming, as well as differentiated and evidenced-based classroom instruction. Short-term targeted interventions may include differentiated instruction that is specific to an identified need, and involve individual or small group instruction that can occur in the home school or, for a specific period of time, in another board location. All program interventions, whether in the regular class or in a targeted group setting, should be documented and given reasonable time to demonstrate their effectiveness.

Special classes, with the exception of gifted classes, receive a base allocation of between 0.5 and 2.0 FTE Educational Assistants (EAs). Additional EAs may be allocated to special classes based on individual student needs.

### **Short-Term Board Interventions**

At the elementary level, there are two short-term interventions which occur at alternate board locations and are available to students with particular needs, as follows:

#### **The Centre for Success Program**

A multi-disciplinary Special Education / Student Services team examined current research and best practices in other districts with regard to programming supports for elementary students with learning disabilities. From that research, the team developed a six-week intervention program for regular class grade five students who have basic literacy and numeracy skills, but who have experienced limited academic gains, and have become disengaged in their learning as a result of their learning challenges.

The Centre for Success Program is a strength-based, strategy-focused intervention program, designed to enable students with diagnosed learning disabilities to be able to identify and explain their personal learning profiles, develop a thorough understanding of the use of their assistive technology in order to maximize opportunities for them to demonstrate their learning, and to be able to self-advocate for the implementation of specific strategies to support their learning.

All students accessing the program have IEPs in place and have received a psychoeducational assessment with a diagnosis of a learning disability. Students also have access to a laptop computer through a Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claim. In order for the skills learned in the program to be transferable to the home school setting upon the students' return to the regular classroom, parents and home school staff form an integral part of the program. The students maintain daily contact with their home school teacher through email, and parents and home school staff are provided with opportunities to visit the Centre for Success to observe the students' progress. The program also incorporates a one week transition at the start of session, with special assignment teachers completing an initial observation in the home school environment, and a one week follow-up session in the home school at the conclusion of the Centre program. Students increase their knowledge of their personal assistive technology and develop an understanding of themselves as learners.

### Character Network Program

The Character Network Program is a tiered approach to addressing behavioural needs of elementary students, and is so named to reflect the inter-connectedness of the program with other board and community initiatives aimed at improving student success through improved student behaviour, and to emphasize the positive and proactive approach to addressing behavioural challenges. The main goal of the program is to enable the students to be able to fully participate in, and be available to, learning activities.

The program involves three differentiated levels of support:

Character Network: Pathways Program -	Universal Program - Inclusion Intervention;
Character Network: Centre Program -	Selected Program - Withdrawal Intervention;
Character Network: Class Program -	Targeted Program – Special Class (see next section)

Character Network relies on an inter-disciplinary approach to addressing behaviour, including connections to other supports and resources. Referrals to other system supports may be deemed appropriate, as a result of determining what is the underlying cause of a particular student's behaviour. Community supports for students and families are also explored, where appropriate.

Character Network prioritizes having students remain in their home school, with both the student and staff receiving useable strategies and interventions within the least restrictive environment. Character Network: Pathways staff work in the home schools with staff and students, focusing on a variety of strategies reflecting individual student needs which are implementable in the home classroom environment.

The Character Network: Centre part of the program is a short-term intervention designed to build the capacity of the selected students to function more independently in their home school through the transference of behavioural skills learned in a more intensive setting. The program provides focused and direct instruction on anger management, social skills, self-awareness, and other skills as required. The Centre staff work with the home school to increase the capacity of both the student and the home school staff to allow for the successful reentry and transference of strategies upon completion of the program. Critical to the students' success is the strong support and collaboration of Centre and home school staff in the successful transference of the learned skills and strategies. Parent engagement is emphasized and facilitated through the social worker assigned to the program. Community agencies are involved in the delivery of sections of the structured program.

### Empower™ Reading

Empower™ Reading is a reading intervention program that was researched and developed by the Sick Kids Hospital – Learning Disabilities Research Program (Toronto, Ontario). This is a tier 2 reading intervention strategy to support reading fluency that may be utilized in the classroom to support students' literacy skills. Research indicates that appropriate implementation of the program serves to reduce the number of students that may otherwise be formally identified as Learning Disabled at some point during their academic careers.

Learning Resource Teachers with special education qualifications have been trained and have administered the program over the current school year in half of the elementary schools across the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, and the rest of the elementary schools will be trained within the 2011-2012 school year. There have been several pilot programs in special classes at the secondary level utilizing the “Empower High School” program during the current school year, and this will be expanded to several more secondary schools during the 2011-2012 school year.

Only Empower™ trained teachers can deliver Empower™ Reading, and there are 3 trainers at the system level to provide this training to HWDSB teachers.

Parameters for implementation in elementary school include:

- ✓ One Learning Resource Teacher delivers this program to groups of 4-8 children in grade 2 for 110 hrs of instruction beginning in September and finishing in May or June of the same school year;
- ✓ The program is delivered on a daily basis in sessions of one hour;
- ✓ The delivery of the Empower Program is scheduled outside of formal literacy instruction that takes place in the classroom.

### The Speech and Language Program

The Speech and Language Program provides intensive support for Grade 1 students with moderate to profound language delays accompanied, in many cases, by a speech impairment. A speech and language assessment indicates moderate to profound expressive language and/or articulation delays with average receptive language skills and/or average cognitive skills. The student has no evidence of sensory neural deafness.

Instruction is based on the grade one curriculum with a speech and language focus. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed for each student. Maximum class size is twelve students. Classroom support is provided by a teacher with Special Education qualifications, a half time Educational Assistant, and part time Speech-Language Pathologist. The program focus for students may include the following:

- ✓ development and remediation of basic skills in listening, speaking, vocabulary knowledge and functional language for students whose language difficulties are not primarily the result of second language acquisition or acculturation;
- ✓ assistance in developing social skills related to weak communication skills; and
- ✓ development of pre-reading/phonemic awareness skills.

Placement is for up to one school year. The following year the student returns to a regular class in his/her home school. Transition meetings are held at the end of the school year with the parents and home school.

### **Special Class Placement**

Consideration of special class placement generally occurs only after differentiated strategies and/or modified programs and/or short-term interventions have been implemented, documented and evaluated in the regular class setting but have not proven sufficient to meet the student's needs. Every special class placement recommendation is made to allow the student's needs to be met in the most enabling environment. Most exceptional students attend programs with their age appropriate peers, with a focus on integration opportunities that are in accordance with student's strengths and needs.

Once an IPRC has recommended special class placement, and parents/guardians have consented, the Special Education Services Department informs the current school of the location of the program offered. Students are offered special class placements in accordance with their needs, and as close to home as possible. Parents/guardians are given the opportunity to visit the potential receiving school. At any time, parents/guardians may withdraw their consent for special class placement. If the parent/guardian accepts the special class placement offer, then the principal of the sending school will initiate a transition plan that meets the needs of the student, and those of the sending and receiving schools. In rare instances, a student's name may be placed on an awaiting placement list if no appropriate special class has an available position. The student's specific program interventions are documented in an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The needs and/or challenges of the child are taken into consideration when a special class placement is being discussed. Behaviour issues may preclude a student from a special class placement until a Behaviour Plan and Safe Intervention Plan have been put in place. The Character Network Pathways and/or Centre programs, as well as other system and community supports should be explored.

While the category of exceptionality provides some helpful information, decisions regarding placing students in appropriate classes are based on the students' needs, not their exceptionalities.

Students who transfer into the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board from a special class placement in another board first register at their home school. The home school, with support from Special Education/Student Services staff, will review the student's profile to determine if identification and special class placement are necessary within HWDSB.



3. Comprehensive: Communications Classes - Maximum Class Size: 12  
- Junior, Intermediate

A candidate for admission to a Comprehensive: Communications Class should demonstrate the following:

- ✓ the student meets the HWDSB criteria for identification as exceptional – Communication: Language Impairment, or Communication: Learning Disability with a severe language deficiency;
- ✓ the student has received replacement programming for a significant portion of the school day in literacy/numeracy, as documented in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP);
- ✓ other school-based and/or system based interventions have proven to be largely unsuccessful in improving the student’s assessed literacy/ numeracy achievement levels;
- ✓ the student’s assessed reading and writing achievement levels are more than two years below the expected grade level; and
- ✓ the student has a need for a structured setting with emphasis on intensive oral and written language development.

A student will be considered for demission when he/she demonstrates one or more of the following:

- ✓ the student does not require the same degree of significant replacement programming; and
- ✓ the student’s social and/or academic needs can be successfully addressed in a regular school setting or through other school/system program interventions, using appropriate accommodations, modifications and/or compensatory strategies.

4. Comprehensive: Intellectual Classes - Maximum Class Size: 12  
- Primary, Junior, Intermediate

A candidate for admission to a Comprehensive: Intellectual Class should demonstrate the following:

- ✓ the student meets the HWDSB criteria for identification as exceptional – Intellectual: Mild Intellectual Disability;
- ✓ the student has received replacement programming for a significant portion of the school day in literacy/numeracy, as documented in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP);
- ✓ other school-based and/or system based interventions have proven to be largely unsuccessful in improving the student’s assessed literacy/numeracy achievement levels;
- ✓ the student’s assessed reading and writing achievement levels are more than two years below the expected grade level; and
- ✓ the student has a need for a structured setting with emphasis on intensive academic development focusing on repetition, reinforcement, concrete examples and compensatory strategies.

A student will be considered for demission when he/she demonstrates one or more of the following:

- ✓ the student does not require the same degree of significant replacement programming; and
- ✓ the student’s social and/or academic needs can be successfully addressed in a regular school setting or through other school/system program interventions, using appropriate accommodations, modifications and/or compensatory strategies.

5. Comprehensive: Secondary - Maximum Class Size: 16

A candidate for admission to a Comprehensive: Secondary should demonstrate the following:

- ✓ the student meets the HWDSB criteria for identification as exceptional – Intellectual: Mild Intellectual Disability, Communication: Language Impairment, or Communication: Learning Disability with a severe language deficiency;
- ✓ the student requires replacement programming for a significant portion of the school day in English and/or Mathematics, as documented in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP);
- ✓ previous school-based and/or system based interventions have proven to be largely unsuccessful in improving the student’s assessed literacy/numeracy achievement levels;
- ✓ the student’s assessed reading and writing achievement levels are more than two years below the expected grade level; and
- ✓ the student has a need for a structured setting with emphasis on intensive academic development focusing on repetition, reinforcement, concrete examples, compensatory strategies, and/or intensive oral and written language development.

A student will be considered for demission when he/she demonstrates one or more of the following:

- ✓ the student does not require the same degree of significant replacement programming; and
- ✓ the student’s social and/or academic needs can be successfully addressed in a regular secondary school setting or through other school/system program interventions, using appropriate accommodations, modifications and/or compensatory strategies.

6. Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Class - Maximum Class Size: 10  
- Primary; Junior

A candidate for admission to a Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Class should demonstrate the following:

- ✓ the student meets the HWDSB criteria for identification as exceptional – Communication: Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing;
- ✓ the student has a hearing loss which, in combination with additional language-based deficits, significantly impacts upon his/her educational development;
- ✓ the student requires an individualized program which may include direct service instruction for at least 50% of the day;
- ✓ the student has received within the past year a pure tone and speech reception audiological assessment and a speech/language consultation or assessment by a Speech and Language pathologist.

A student will be considered for demission when he/she demonstrates one or more of the following:

- ✓ the student requires a less intensive level of need that could be met in a regular class with support, including support from an itinerant teacher of the hearing impaired;
- ✓ the student has a significant positive change in the level of hearing; and
- ✓ the student’s social and/or academic needs can be successfully addressed in a regular school setting or through other school/system program interventions, using appropriate accommodations, modifications and/or compensatory strategies.

7. Gifted Classes - Maximum Class Size: 25  
- Junior, Intermediate

A candidate for admission to a Gifted Class should demonstrate the following:

- ✓ the student meets the HWDSB criteria for identification as exceptional – Intellectual: Gifted; and
- ✓ the student has documented significant intellectual, academic and/or social needs which can be more successfully met in a special class rather than in a regular class with available support.

A student will be considered for demission when he/she demonstrates one or more of the following:

- ✓ the student's social and/or academic needs can be successfully addressed in a regular school setting or through other school/system program interventions, using appropriate accommodations, modifications and/or compensatory strategies.

8. Developmental Disability Class - Maximum Class Size: 10  
- Primary; Junior; Intermediate; Secondary;  
- Glenwood Special Day School

A candidate for admission to a Developmental Disability Class should demonstrate the following:

- ✓ the student meets the HWDSB criteria for identification as exceptional – Intellectual: Developmental Disability;
- ✓ the student has an inability to profit educationally in a regular class setting with significant support;
- ✓ the student has a need for instruction in functional communication, academic, self-care, life and social interaction skills; and
- ✓ the student MAY require the services of Specialized Health Support Services in the school setting.

A student will be considered for demission when he/she demonstrates one or more of the following:

- ✓ the student does not require the same degree of significant replacement programming; and
- ✓ the student's social and/or academic needs can be successfully addressed in a regular school setting or through other school/system program interventions, using appropriate accommodations, modifications and/or compensatory strategies.

9. Multiple Class - Maximum Class Size: 6  
 - Primary; Junior; Glenwood Special Day School

A candidate for admission to a Multiple Class should demonstrate the following:

- ✓ the student meets the HWDSB criteria for identification as exceptional – Multiple;
- ✓ the student has an inability to profit educationally in a regular class setting with significant support;
- ✓ the student has a need for a multifaceted approach to educational instruction in functional communication, academic, self-care, life and social interaction skills; and
- ✓ the student has significant physical limitations and/or requires the services of Specialized Health Support Services in the school setting.

A student will be considered for demission when he/she demonstrates one or more of the following:

- ✓ the student does not require the same degree of significant replacement programming; and
- ✓ the student’s social and/or academic needs can be successfully addressed in a regular school setting or through other school/system program interventions, using appropriate accommodations, modifications and/or compensatory strategies.

Description of HWDSB Special Classes 2010/2011

Type of Special Class 2010-2011	# of Classes Elementary	# of Classes Secondary	Maximum Class Size
Autism Spectrum Disorder	7 (Pr./Jr.:4; Int.:2)	4	6
Character Network (Behaviour)	3 (Jr.:1; Int.:2)	0	8
Comprehensive – Communication	13 (Jr. :3; Int.10}	0	12
Comprehensive – Intellectual	20 (Jr. : 7;Int. :13)	0	12
Comprehensive – Secondary	0	9	12
Deaf / Hard of Hearing	1 (Pr./Jr.: 1)	0	10
Speech & Language	5 (Pr.:5)	0	12
Gifted	6 (Jr.:2; Int.:4)	0	25
Developmental Disability*	7 (Pr./Jr.:3; Int.:4)	9	10
Multiple*	2 (Pr./Jr. :2)	0	6

\* Glenwood Special Day School: Elementary & Secondary  
 9 classes in addition to what is listed above  
 Multiple and Developmental Disability

Special Education Classes by Type-2010/2011

<b>Type of Class</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>School</b>
Autism Spectrum Disorder	Primary/ Junior	Billy Green Dr. Davey
		Queen Victoria (2 classes)
		Westwood
	Intermediate	Billy Green
		Westwood
	Secondary	Glendale (2 classes)
		Hill Park
		Sir Allan MacNab
	Character Network (Behaviour)	Junior
Intermediate		Bennetto
		Sir Wilfrid Laurier
Comprehensive : Communication	Junior	Billy Green
		Greensville
		Holbrook
		Queen Mary
	Intermediate	Billy Green
		Chedoke
		Dalewood
		Elizabeth Bagshaw
		G.L. Armstrong
		Hillcrest
		Memorial (city)
		Mount Albion
		Queen Mary
		Ryerson
		Spencer Valley
W.H. Ballard		
Comprehensive : Intellectual	Primary	Linden Park
	Junior	Bennetto
		Earl Kitchener
		Hillcrest
		Linden Park
		R.A. Riddell
		Yorkview
	Intermediate	Adelaide Hoodless
		Cathy Wever
		Chedoke (2 classes)
		Gatestone
		Green Acres
		Hillcrest
		Lawfield
		Memorial (city)
Prince of Wales (2 classes)		
R.A. Riddell		
Ryerson		
Sir William Osler		

<b>Type of Class</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>School</b>
Comprehensive	Secondary	Barton
		Delta
		Hill Park
		Orchard Park
		Parkside
		Parkview
		Sir Allan MacNab
		Sir Winston Churchill
Deaf / Hard of Hearing	Preschool	Queensdale
	Primary / Junior	Queensdale
Speech & Language	Primary (Grade 1)	Cathy Wever
		Franklin Road
		Green Acres
		Prince Philip
		Queen Victoria
Gifted	Junior	Dundas Central
		Holbrook
	Intermediate	Dalewood (2 classes)
		Westview
		W.H. Ballard
Developmental Disability	Primary / Junior	Beverly Central
		Highview
		Woodward
	Intermediate	Highview
		Hillcrest
		Mount Albion
		Spencer Valley
	Secondary	Ancaster High
		Orchard Park
		Sherwood (2 classes)
		Sir Allan MacNab
		Sir Winston Churchill (2 classes)
		Westdale S.S. (2 classes)
	Pr./Jr./Int./Secondary	Glenwood Special Day School (5 classes)
	Multiple	Primary/Junior
Queen Mary		
Pr./Jr./Int./ Secondary		Glenwood Special Day School (4 classes)

Special Education Classes By School –2010/2011

School	Class	Level
Adelaide Hoodless	Intellectual	Intermediate
Bennetto	Intellectual	Junior
	Behaviour	Intermediate
Beverly Central	Developmental Disability	Primary/Junior
Billy Green	Autism (2)	Primary / Junior Intermediate
	Communication (2)	Junior Intermediate
Cathy Wever	Intellectual	Intermediate
	Speech & Language	Primary
Chedoke	Intellectual (2)	Intermediate
	Communication	Intermediate
Dalewood	Communication	Intermediate
	Gifted (2)	Intermediate
Dr. Davey	Autism	Primary/Junior
Dundas Central	Gifted	Junior
Earl Kitchener	Intellectual	Junior
Elizabeth Bagshaw	Communication	Intermediate
Franklin Road	Speech & Language	Primary
Gatestone	Intellectual	Intermediate
George L. Armstrong	Communication	Intermediate
Green Acres	Intellectual	Intermediate
	Speech & Language	Primary
Greensville	Communication	Junior
Highview	Developmental Disability (2)	Primary / Junior Intermediate
Hillcrest	Developmental Disability	Intermediate
	Intellectual (2)	Junior Intermediate
	Communication	Intermediate
Holbrook	Communication	Junior
	Gifted	Junior
Huntington Park	Multiple	Primary/ Junior
Lawfield	Intellectual	Intermediate
Lincoln Alexander	Behaviour	Junior
Linden Park	Intellectual (2)	Primary / Junior
Memorial (City)	Intellectual	Intermediate
	Communication	Intermediate
Mount Albion	Developmental Disability	Intermediate
	Communication	Intermediate
Prince of Wales	Intellectual (2)	Intermediate
Prince Philip	Speech & Language	Primary
Queen Mary	Multiple	Primary / Junior
	Communication (2)	Junior

School	Class	Level
		Intermediate
Queen Victoria	Autism (2)	Primary / Junior
	Speech & Language	Primary
Queensdale	Deaf / Hard of Hearing	Preschool
		Primary / Junior
R.A. Riddell	Intellectual (2)	Junior Intermediate
Ryerson	Intellectual	Intermediate
	Communication	Intermediate
Sir Wilfrid Laurier	Behaviour	Intermediate
Sir William Osler	Intellectual	Intermediate
Spencer Valley	Developmental Disability	Intermediate
	Communication	Intermediate
Westview	Autism	Intermediate
	Gifted	Intermediate
Westwood	Autism	Primary / Junior
Woodward	Developmental Disability	Primary / Junior
W.H. Ballard	Communication	Intermediate
	Gifted	Intermediate
Yorkview	Intellectual	Junior
Ancaster H.S.	Developmental Disability	Secondary
Barton S.S.	Comprehensive	Secondary
Delta S.S.	Comprehensive	Secondary
Glendale S.S.	Autism (2)	Secondary
Hill Park S.S.	Autism	Secondary
	Comprehensive	Secondary
Orchard Park S.S.	Developmental Disability	Secondary
	Comprehensive	Secondary
Parkside S.S.	Comprehensive	Secondary
Parkview S.S.	Comprehensive	Secondary
Sherwood S.S.	Developmental Disability (2)	Secondary
Sir A. MacNab S.S.	Developmental Disability	Secondary
	Autism	Secondary
	Comprehensive	Secondary
Sir Winston Churchill S.S.	Developmental Disability (2)	Secondary
	Comprehensive	Secondary
Westdale S.S.	Developmental Disability (2)	Secondary
Glenwood Special Day School	Developmental Disability (5)	Pr./Jr./Int./Secondary
	Multiple (4)	Pr./Jr./Int./Secondary

Special Education Classes By Cluster Area –2010/2011

Area	School	Class	Level
Cluster West	Parkside S.S.	Comprehensive	Secondary
	Greenville	Communication	Junior
	Spencer Valley	Developmental Disability	Intermediate
		Communication	Intermediate
	Dundas Central	Gifted	Junior
	Yorkview	Intellectual	Junior
	Beverly Central	Developmental Disability	Primary/Junior
	Sir William Osler	Intellectual	Intermediate
	Westdale S.S.	Developmental Disability (2)	Secondary
	Dalewood	Communication	Intermediate
		Gifted (2)	Intermediate
	Earl Kitchener	Intellectual	Junior
	Ryerson	Intellectual	Intermediate
		Communication	Intermediate
	Prince Philip	Speech & Language	Primary
Ancaster H.S.	Developmental Disability	Secondary	
Cluster North	Parkview S.S.	Comprehensive	Secondary
	Delta S.S.	Comprehensive	Secondary
	Dr. Davey	Autism	Primary/Junior
	Prince of Wales	Intellectual (2)	Intermediate
	Memorial (City)	Intellectual	Intermediate
		Communication	Intermediate
	Adelaide Hoodless	Intellectual	Intermediate
	Queen Mary	Multiple	Primary / Junior
		Communication (2)	Junior Intermediate
	Bennetto	Intellectual	Junior
		Behaviour	Intermediate
	Cathy Wever	Intellectual	Intermediate
		Speech & Language	Primary
	Queen Victoria	Autism (2)	Primary / Junior
		Speech & Language	Primary
	Glendale S.S.	Autism (2)	Secondary
	Elizabeth Bagshaw	Communication	Intermediate
	Sir Wilfrid Laurier	Behaviour	Intermediate
	Sir Winston Churchill S.S.	Developmental Disability (2)	Secondary
		Comprehensive	Secondary
	Hillcrest	Developmental Disability	Intermediate
		Intellectual (2)	Junior Intermediate
		Communication	Intermediate
	Woodward	Developmental Disability	Primary / Junior
	W.H. Ballard	Communication	Intermediate
		Gifted	Intermediate
	Orchard Park S.S.	Developmental Disability	Secondary

Area	School	Class	Level
	Green Acres	Comprehensive	Secondary
		Intellectual	Intermediate
		Speech & Language	Primary
Cluster South	Barton S.S.	Comprehensive	Secondary
	Lincoln Alexander	Behaviour	Junior
	Lawfield	Intellectual	Intermediate
	Sherwood S.S.	Developmental Disability (2)	Secondary
	Highview	Developmental Disability (2)	Primary / Junior Intermediate
	Billy Green	Autism (2)	Primary / Junior Intermediate
		Communication (2)	Junior Intermediate
	Huntington Park	Multiple	Primary/ Junior
	Hill Park S.S.	Autism	Secondary
		Comprehensive	Secondary
	Franklin Road	Speech & Language	Primary
	G.L. Armstrong	Communication	Intermediate
	Linden Park	Intellectual (2)	Primary / Junior
	Queensdale	Deaf / Hard of Hearing	Preschool
			Primary / Junior
	Sir A. MacNab S.S.	Developmental Disability	Secondary
		Autism	Secondary
		Comprehensive	Secondary
	Chedoke	Intellectual (2)	Intermediate
		Communication	Intermediate
	Holbrook	Communication	Junior
		Gifted	Junior
	R.A. Riddell	Intellectual (2)	Junior Intermediate
	Westwood	Autism	Primary / Junior
	Westview	Autism	Intermediate
		Gifted	Intermediate
	Gatestone	Intellectual	Intermediate
Mount Albion	Developmental Disability	Intermediate	
	Communication	Intermediate	
Special Education	Glenwood Special Day School	Developmental Disability and Multiple (9)	Primary / Junior / Intermediate / Secondary

Special Education/Student Services Supports – 2010/2011

The Special Education/Student Services Department offers these additional support services:

<b>Support Service</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>
Learning Resource Teachers (school-based resource)	X	X
Educational Assistants (school-based resource)	X	X
Psychoeducational Consultants	X	X
Speech-Language Pathologists	X	X
Special Education Consultants	X	X
Social Workers	X	X
Character Network Pathways (behaviour support)	X	
Character Network Centres (short-term behaviour intervention)	X	
Centres for Success (short-term learning disability intervention)	X	
Alternative /Augmentative Communication Team	X	X
Autism Spectrum Disorders Team	X	X
Assistive Technology Team	X	X
Itinerant Teachers: Deaf / Hard of Hearing	X	X
Itinerant Teachers: Visual Impairment	X	X
Itinerant Teachers: Empower Reading Program	X	
Kinesiologist	X	X
Communicative Disorders Assistants	X	X

### **The Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

In September 2000, the Ministry of Education released the policy document *Individual Education Plans: Standards for Development, Program Planning, and Implementation*. In 2004, an additional document entitled *The Individual Education Plan (IEP): A Resource Guide* was made available to schools. The purpose of these documents was to improve the consistency and quality of program planning for students who are receiving special education programs and services. The standards are also intended to help improve communication with parents about how their child will progress through the Ontario curriculum and about how that progress will be monitored.

#### Individual Education Plans

An IEP is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student. It is based on the student's strengths and needs as identified through appropriate assessment tools. The IEP identifies learning expectations that are modified from or alternative to the expectations given in the curriculum policy document for the appropriate grade and subject or course, and/or any accommodations and special education services needed to assist the student in achieving his or her learning expectations.

If the IPRC identifies a student as an exceptional pupil, and if the parent/guardian agrees with the IPRC identification and placement decisions, then an IEP will be developed for the student within 30 school days of the student's placement in a special education program.

An IEP can also be developed for a student in order for him/her to receive a special education program and/or related services, even if he/she has not been identified through the IPRC process. In this case, the school may determine an IEP is necessary in order to assess the student's achievement based on modified expectations, or the student regularly requires accommodations for instruction and/or assessment purposes.

#### Accommodations

Accommodations are teaching strategies, supports, and/or services that provide students with access to the curriculum and enable them to demonstrate learning. They may include human supports and/or individualized equipment. Accommodations do not alter the curriculum expectations for the grade.

#### Modifications

Modifications change the grade-level curriculum expectations for a subject or course to meet the learning needs of the student. These changes may involve developing expectations for the student that are taken from a different grade level and/or from decreasing the number and/or the complexity of the regular grade level expectations. The student may also require certain accommodations to help him/her achieve the learning expectations in subjects or courses with modified expectations

### Alternative Expectations

Alternative expectations are developed to help students acquire learning related to skill development in areas not represented in the Ontario curriculum. Examples of alternative expectations include social skills and personal care programs.

### Ministry IEP Audits

Since 2000, the Ministry of Education has conducted periodic reviews of IEPs with respect to compliance with the standards and appropriate content. Samples of IEPs were reviewed with respect to ensuring that they had measurable goals, appropriate instructional strategies, and appropriate accommodated, modified and/or alternative expectations. In response to the audit findings, HWDSB staff have provided in-service and support sessions over the last few years to ensure that IEPs developed in our school system are the best they can be in order to address student needs for individualized programming.

### System IEP Audit

During the school year 2008-09, HWDSB conducted an audit of a percentage of the IEPs in our school system, in order to assess how we were doing and to determine the next steps as far as professional development with regard to IEPs was concerned. A minimum of 6 IEPs were collected from each secondary school and a minimum of 3 IEPs were collected from every elementary school. Approximately 400 IEPs were collected. A template was developed to assist with the review.

Findings indicated that, overall as a system, learning and teaching expectations were appropriate to the students for whom the IEPs were developed. Accommodated, modified, and alternative expectations were generally clearly written and appropriate. More information needs to be provided in the areas of:

- ✓ clearly identifying specific student strengths and needs based on assessment information;
- ✓ ensuring alignment of various sections of the IEP;
- ✓ writing measurable (SMART) goals, particularly for annual learning goals; and
- ✓ providing more measurable assessment strategies.

Professional development has and will continue to focus on the above areas. In 2009-2010, the focus is on IEPs developed for students entering our system who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

HWDSB also participates in a regional IEP Review Projects, involving 16 public and Catholic boards. This provides us with a comparison of the results of our reviews with that of the region. Results of that comparison for 2008-09 indicated that our results were consistent with the findings for the region.

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board  
IEP STANDARDS REVIEW TOOL

SCHOOL:	
GRADE/PLACEMENT:	
STUDENT NAME:	

IEP STANDARD	MET STANDARD		N/A	STANDARD IS NOT MET (Give reason or rationale for No)	SECTION OF STANDARDS DOCUMENT
	YES	NO			
<b><u>Student Profile</u></b> Essential profile information is provided: student's full name, OEN, current school year, grade, school, current Principal, date of birth, gender.					Student Profile
<b><u>IPRC Information</u></b> Date of most recent IPRC annual review is included					Page 21-IEP Resource Guide
Date of waived annual review is included					Page 21-IEP Resource Guide
<b><u>Reason For Developing an IEP</u></b> Reason for IEP development is clearly stated and consistent with identified exceptionality, if applicable					Reason for Developing an IEP
<b><u>Relevant Assessment Data</u></b> Date and Source of assessment data is noted					Student Profile
Summary of Results support identified strengths and needs and the identification of exceptionality if applicable					The Student's Strengths and Needs
<b><u>Strengths and Needs</u></b> Strengths identified and supported by assessment data					
Needs identified and supported by assessment data					The Student's Strengths and Needs Review and Updating
<b><u>Health Support Services</u></b> Specialized health support services required to enable the child to attend school (e.g. tube feeding)					Student Profile
<b><u>Subjects or Courses to Which the IEP Applies</u></b> All subjects or courses in which student requires accommodations and/or modified expectations and all alternative programs are listed and are identified appropriately					The Special Education Program Page 27-IEP Resource Guide

IEP STANDARD	MET STANDARD		N/A	STANDARD IS NOT MET (Give reason or rationale for No)	SECTION OF STANDARDS DOCUMENT
	YES	NO			
Subjects, courses and alternative programs selected for IEP are appropriate to the student's strengths and needs					The Special Education Program Page 25-IEP Resource Guide
<b><u>Program Exemption/Substitution Information</u></b> Program exemptions and/or substitution information is included and educational rationale is provided					Student Profile
<b><u>Diploma/Certificate Attainment (Secondary)</u></b> Statement indicating student is working towards attainment of secondary school diploma (OSSD), school certificate or certificate of accomplishment is included					Report Card Standards
<b><u>Accommodations</u></b> Accommodations are listed separately according to the following categories: <b><u>Instructional - Assessment - Environmental</u></b>					Special Education Strategies, Accommodations, and Resources Page 28- IEP Resource Guide
Unique to student					
<b><u>Individualized Equipment</u></b> is included (not confined to SEA equipment)					Individualized Equipment
<b><u>Provincial Assessment</u></b> Accommodations for provincial assessments are noted if it is an assessment year (Gr. 3, 6, 9, 10)					Provincial Assessment
Provincial assessment exemption information is identified					
Educational rationale for exemption is included					
<b><u>Modified Programs</u></b> <b><u>Current Level of Achievement-Elementary</u></b> Letter grade/mark and curriculum grade level (usually previous June) for modified subjects is included <b><u>Current Level of Achievement-Secondary</u></b> Name of prerequisite course if applicable, letter grade/mark and curriculum grade level (usually previous semester) for prerequisite course is included					The Special Education Program

IEP STANDARD	MET STANDARD		N/A	STANDARD IS NOT MET (Give reason or rationale for No)	SECTION OF STANDARDS DOCUMENT
	YES	NO			
<b><u>Annual Program Goal</u></b> Year long or semester outcome statement, observable, realistic and measurable for all subjects that are modified .					The Special Education Program
<b><u>Learning Expectations</u></b> Developed by term/semester					The Special Education Program Page 32, 39- IEP Resource Guide
Reviewed every reporting period and updated as necessary (record on consultation page)					
Based on student's learning strengths and needs <b><i>and incorporate relevant ABA methods where appropriate</i></b>					The Special Education Program <i>PPM 140 page 4</i>
Specific, realistic, measurable outcomes upon which performance will be evaluated and which child can demonstrate independently and should emphasize transfer or generalization of skills					The Special Education Program Page 32- IEP Resource Guide 2004 <i>PPM 140 page 5</i>
Grade level is identified and is consistent with assessed strengths and needs.					The Special Education Program Page 32-IEP Resource Guide
<b><u>Differentiated Teaching Strategies</u></b> Focused instructional strategies that are unique to student					Special Education Strategies, Accommodations, and Resources
Relates to particular expectation					
<b><u>Assessment Method</u></b> Record assessment method used to assess achievement of each learning expectation					Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting
Measurable					Ministry Audit Report Card
<b><u>Alternative Program</u></b> <b><u>Current Level of Achievement</u></b> Progress relative to achievement of alternative expectations described in current level of achievement					The Special Education Program

IEP STANDARD	MET STANDARD		N/A	STANDARD IS NOT MET (Give reason or rationale for No)	SECTION OF STANDARDS DOCUMENT
	YES	NO			
<b>Annual Program Goal</b> Annual program goal for alternative subjects is based on student's strengths and needs.					The Special Education Program
Year long/semester outcome statement, observable, realistic, and measurable for all subjects/courses.					The Special Education Program
<b>Learning Expectations</b> Developed by term/semester					The Special Education Program Page 32, 39- IEP Resource Guide
Reviewed every reporting period and updated as necessary (record on consultation page)					
Based on student's learning strengths and needs <b><i>and incorporate relevant ABA methods where appropriate</i></b>					The Special Education Program <i>PPM 140 page 4</i>
Specific, realistic, measurable outcomes upon which performance will be evaluated and which child can demonstrate independently <b><i>and should emphasize transfer or generalization of skills</i></b>					The Special Education Program Page 32- IEP Resource Guide 2004 <i>PPM 140 page 5</i>
<b>Differentiated Teaching Strategies</b> Focused instructional strategies that are unique to student					Special Education Strategies, Accommodations, and Resources
Relates to particular expectation					
<b>Assessment Method</b> Record assessment method used to assess achievement of each learning expectation					Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting
Measurable					
Human Resources Type of service; intensity/frequency and location is noted					Special Education Strategies, Accommodations, and Resources Page 39-- IEP Resource Guide
<b>Evaluation</b> Reporting dates noted					Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

IEP STANDARD	MET STANDARD		N/A	STANDARD IS NOT MET (Give reason or rationale for No)	SECTION OF STANDARDS DOCUMENT
	YES	NO			
<p><b><u>Transition Plan</u></b> For student who are 14+ years unless solely identified as gifted</p>					The Transition Plan
Goals, actions required to meet the goals, names of individuals responsible for coordination and development of transition plan and timelines are included					The Transition Plan Page 40- IEP Resource Guide
<p><b><u>IEP Developed By</u></b> Names and position of staff members involved with IEP development are included</p>					Staff Involvement with the Development of the IEP
<p><b><u>Parent/Guardian/Student Consultation</u></b> Parents, and the student (if 16 or older) asked to indicate they were consulted, declined the opportunity to be consulted, received a copy of the IEP and invited to provide any comments</p>					Parent/Student Consultation
Parents, and the student (if 16 or older) are consulted in the <b><u>development</u></b> of the student's IEP					Parent/Student Consultation Review and Updating

### Special Education Staff

#### 1. Elementary Panel:

Special Education Staff	FTE	Staff Qualifications
Self-Contained Class Teachers	64	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Learning Resource Teachers	134.5	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Principal: Special Education	0.5	Special Education Specialist; Principals I-II
Special Education Consultants	6.0	Special Education Specialist
Itinerant Teachers: Deaf/Hard of Hearing	5.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Itinerant Teachers : Blind/Low Vision	3.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Itinerant Teachers: Augmentative Communications	2.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Itinerant Teachers: Autism Spectrum Disorder	2.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Itinerant Teachers: Character Networks	10.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Itinerant Teachers: Learning Disabilities	3.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Itinerant Teacher: Assistive Technology	0.5	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Educational Assistants	422.5	College Training Certificate
Communication Disorders Assistants	4.0	College Training Certificate
Kinesiologist	0.5	B.A.; Kinesiology Certification
Manager: Psychological Services	0.5	Psychologist
Psychoeducational Consultants	11.0	Master of Psychology
Manager: Communication Services	0.5	Speech-Language Pathologist
Speech-Language Pathologist	15.0	Speech-Language Pathologist
Manager: Autism Services	0.5	Speech-Language Pathologist
Manager: Social Work Services	0.5	Master of Social Work
Social Workers	15.0	Master of Social Work or Bachelor of Social Work
Mental Health Strategy Social Worker	.5	Master of Social Work

2. Secondary Panel

<b>Special Education Staff</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Staff Qualifications</b>
Self-Contained Class Teachers	22.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Learning Resource Teachers	41.5	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Principal: Special Education	0.5	Special Education Specialist; Principals I-II
Special Education Consultants	3.0	Special Education Specialist
Itinerant Teacher: Deaf/Hard of Hearing	1.0	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Itinerant Teacher: Blind/Low Vision	0.5	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Itinerant Teacher: Assistive Technology	0.5	Special Education Additional Qualifications
Educational Assistants	108.5	College Training Certificate
Kinesiologist	0.5	B.A.; Kinesiology Certification
Manager: Psychological Services	0.5	Psychologist
Psychoeducational Consultants	5.0	Master of Psychology
Manager: Communication Services	0.5	Speech-Language Pathologist
Speech-Language Pathologist	2.5	Speech-Language Pathologist
Manager: Autism Services	0.5	Speech/Language Pathologist
Manager: Social Work Services	0.5	Master of Social Work
Social Workers	12.0	Master of Social Work or Bachelor of Social Work
Mental Health Strategy Social Worker	.5	Master of Social Work

3. Contracted Services

HWDSB has contracts with outside agencies to provide:

- ✓ Audiology Services; and
- ✓ Orientation and Mobility Services.

4. Care, Treatment and Corrections Programs

HWDSB provides the following staff to service educational programs:

- ✓ principal;
- ✓ vice-principal;
- ✓ consultant;
- ✓ 7 elementary teachers;
- ✓ 25 secondary teachers; and
- ✓ one educational assistant

5. Additional Secondary School Social Workers

Two additional social workers were provided through Urban Priorities funding.

### **Special Equipment**

HWDSB purchases specified equipment for students with special education needs in order for these students to be able to access the Ontario Curriculum and/or to attend school. As per Ministry direction, HWDSB is expected to make cost effective choices about acquiring appropriate equipment and will ensure that students (where appropriate), teachers and board staff who work with the student have received training in order to make the best use of the equipment.

HWDSB Board responsibilities include ensuring that:

- ✓ equipment is functioning properly and that the equipment is meeting students' needs;
- ✓ equipment is replaced as required when students outgrow equipment or when equipment wears out through use;
- ✓ upgrades and refurbishment are considered as an option before replacement;
- ✓ equipment is reused by/transferred to other students when no longer required by the student for whom it was purchased;
- ✓ efforts are made to share equipment among several students when appropriate and possible; and
- ✓ reasonable efforts are made to acquire a fair market value when disposing of used equipment.

The need for special equipment must be supported by the IEP for the student. The IEP must demonstrate that the student is using the equipment, and, where appropriate, that the student is using the equipment for provincial testing.

### **Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Funding**

HWDSB allocates internally an adequate amount of funding to support the costs associated with purchasing equipment for students with special needs who require it. In addition, the Ministry provides Special Equipment Amount (SEA) funding to school boards to assist with the costs of equipment essential to support students with special education needs where the need for specific equipment is recommended by a qualified professional. The Board is responsible for:

- ✓ the first \$800 of each SEA order,
- ✓ the purchase of equipment that costs less than \$800 for students who require low-cost items;
- ✓ insurance costs;
- ✓ consumables such as toner and paper for printers;
- ✓ the cost of parts for upgrading or refurbishing equipment; and
- ✓ staff costs for managing and purchasing equipment, set-up, repairs and training.

Students do not have to be identified as exceptional students through the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process for boards to apply for SEA funding, but their need for equipment must be recommended by a relevant qualified professional and the equipment cannot be available through the board's regular funding arrangements. Prior to ordering, a trial period occurs in order to determine the benefits of the recommended equipment.

Eligible equipment includes items required to meet students' personal care and safety needs such as lifts. Other examples of eligible expenses include:

- ✓ FM systems;
- ✓ soundfield systems;
- ✓ print enlargers for students with low vision;
- ✓ computer hardware;
- ✓ software that provides access to curriculum (e.g., operating systems and accessibility programs);
- ✓ adjustable desks or computer tables;
- ✓ Braille;
- ✓ symbol or letter voice translators;
- ✓ communication aids;
- ✓ positioning devices for sitting, standing and lying;
- ✓ personal care items;
- ✓ lifts or harnesses for moving students;
- ✓ warranties; and/or
- ✓ service contracts for technology.

### **Transportation for Students with Special Needs**

The Board-designated school for Special Education students will be the school at which the student is placed in a self-contained classroom as determined by the Identification Placement and Review Committee. Eligibility for transportation services will be dependent on an assessment of the individual student's physical or intellectual capabilities.

As well, students with special needs who attend their own home school, but are limited by conditions relating to intellectual, physical, emotional or severe communicational challenges may also receive special transportation to and from school. The request for this service is initiated by the school principal and must be supported by the appropriate Superintendent of Education.

Transportation services will be provided for secondary special education students who meet all of the following criteria:

- ✓ an Identification Placement Review Committee has identified student as exceptional;
- ✓ out-of-catchment application is submitted by or on behalf of the student for special education program purposes;
- ✓ out-of-catchment application is approved by all of the following:
  - Principal of sending secondary school;
  - Principal of receiving secondary school; and
  - Superintendent of Education for the receiving school; and
- ✓ the student meets the distance eligibility requirement

Students in Care, Treatment and Correctional Facilities and students attending Provincial and Demonstration Schools are eligible to receive transportation services. Access to transportation is initiated through a request by the Principal through Special Education/Student Services to Transportation Services.

For students enrolled in the Gateway program, the parent will arrange for the transportation of his/her child to and from this temporary placement.

In most cases, students are transported in the most cost-effective manner possible. However, from time to time, students may be transported in smaller groups, or individually. Decisions regarding mode of transportation are made by Transportation Services, in consultation with the school and/or Special Education/Student Services and the parent/guardian.

#### Vehicles

1. All vehicles used for transporting pupils must be properly licensed and equipped according to current Provincial and Municipal regulations.
2. The interior of the vehicle is to be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.
3. The vehicle must be maintained in good mechanical repair to provide optimum safe and trouble-free service.
4. Vehicles will carry no more pupils at anyone time than the licensed seating capacity of any such vehicle.
5. All vehicles must be equipped with an operable two-way radio capable of direct contact with the Operator's dispatch centre.
6. All vehicles exceeding a seven-person capacity will be equipped with an operable reverse movement alarm.
7. All vehicles must meet all CSA-D250 and D-409 standards.
8. All vehicles exceeding a sixteen-person capacity will be painted in the chrome yellow school bus colour.
9. No vehicle with greater than a seven-person capacity shall be older than ten years from the date of manufacturer.
10. No vehicle with less than eight-person capacity shall be older than eight years from the date of manufacturer.
11. The Operator will provide a video camera housing unit on every vehicle exceeding a 24-passenger capacity. If space permits and at the request of the Board the Operator will provide video camera housing units in vehicles with less than a 24-passenger capacity. The Board will provide the housing units for installation by the Operator. The Board will provide some video cameras for use on vehicles where the Principal has granted permission for such use. The Operator may choose to supply additional cameras at it's own expense, however those will only be used with the permission of the school Principal.
12. Wheelchair accessible vehicles will be equipped with an emergency blanket located by the rear door.
13. Safety harness use must be approved by the Superintendent with responsibility for Special Education.

Drivers

1. Each driver shall have and maintain in good standing at all times, licenses required by the *Public Vehicles Act*, the *Highway Traffic Act* or any Regulations to either statute, or any Municipal By-law.
2. No smoking of any substance is permitted at any time. The driver will not eat or drink while transporting pupils. Profane or abusive language in front of the pupils will not be tolerated.
3. Drivers are not to reward or discipline the pupils in any way. Any problem with the pupil should be reported to the school Principal. The Operator must supply the driver with an appropriate supply of Student Misconduct Reports for completion and submission to the school Principal. The Board shall supply the Operator with the revised "Code of Conduct on School Buses" of the Board, and each driver is to be made aware of the Code of Conduct.
4. The flashing signals lights shall be activated when the vehicle is stopped to pick up or discharge pupils.
5. The vehicle ignition is to be turned off and the ignition key removed by the driver when leaving the vehicle.
6. All breakdowns or delays, which will cause the pupils to arrive later than usual at school or at home, must be reported by the driver to the key person in time for him to notify the Principal.
7. All drivers must wear an identification badge which includes the following information:
  - ✓ company name and logo;
  - ✓ driver name; and
  - ✓ photograph.
8. The Operator acknowledges that the Board has the right to require the removal of any driver from any trip.
9. The Operator will conduct or arrange for the training of each driver such that he/she is ably skilled in all emergency situations which include: bus/vehicle evacuation, defensive driving, basic first aid and epi-pen administration. In the case of wheelchair vehicles, this will also include the loading and unloading of students, manual ramp operation and tie-down procedures.
10. The Operator will conduct criminal checks/vulnerable person checks on all the drivers and notify the Board when any employee's record could place the safety of pupils at risk.
11. The Driver will ensure that all students disembark the vehicle at the end of each trip.
12. The Operator will train drivers in the inspection requirements under the Regulations to the *Highway Traffic Act*.

## Transition Planning

Transition planning for students with special education needs begins with the student's entry to school and continues throughout their school career until the student exits from school. Transition planning is an important process for all students.

### Entry to School Process

In the HWDSB engages in a collaborative partnership with our community with regard to the entry to school process for students with special needs who have been involved with community partners. A committee with representation from the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, Community Care Access Centre (CCAC), McMaster Children's Hospital, Early Words, the City of Hamilton, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, District Council of Co-operative Pre-schools, and Community Living meet to implement the process for a smooth transition into school. This entry to school process was developed to build parent confidence by communicating the programs, supports and services that are available to students in schools. It also assists the schools to have available the resources required for September when the student arrives.

The committee begins meeting in September a year prior to the student entering school. In December, an information sheet entitled *Tell Us About Your Child* (that is to be completed for the designated school board) and an invitation to a *Parent/Guardian Information Night* (held in January) is distributed. In the spring, individual meetings are held with the parents, individuals they wish to invite, school and board staff, pre-school teachers and resource teachers, and case managers from CCAC. Discussions at these meetings focus on the child's strengths and needs, in order to arrange appropriate supports and services to be available in September. With parents'/guardians' consent, school staffs are encouraged to visit the student in their pre-school setting.

HWDSB has also partnered with McMaster University and the Offord Centre for Child Studies as part of a research project focusing on the early school adjustment of students with special needs, following their transition from pre-school to the school environment. The trajectory of the adjustment process is being investigated in the areas of developmental, social, and academic competencies. Family context (parenting competence, parent stress, supports) and experiences of services (perception of quality of care, satisfaction) are being explored for their impact on child adjustment. The objectives of this study are to explore the following:

- √ parenting competence, stress and access to services are associated with social-behavioural and academic outcomes at the beginning of kindergarten; and
- √ the magnitude of change in family and services between pre- and post-transition years has an impact on the trajectory of adjustment.

### **Grade to Grade Transition Process**

Policy/Program Memorandum 140 requires that school board staff must plan for the transition between various activities and settings involving students with ASD. The HWDSB believes that the transition process is important for all students with special needs. To this end a *Transitions for Students Grade to Grade Transition Planning Workbook* and a *This is Me in grade --- to help you get to know me!* booklet (based on Thames Valley Children's Centre: School Support Program/ASD materials) has been developed and is currently being vetted by teachers, central office staff and special education consultants to assist the smooth and seamless process. Also, any visual and curriculum supports are transferred from grade to grade as the student moves.

### **Elementary to Secondary School Transition**

Students with special needs transitioning from elementary to secondary school have the following components to their transition plan:

- ✓ Same as any other student where appropriate;
- ✓ The Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) review is held in the Fall of each student's grade eight year with the appropriate secondary special education staff in attendance with parents, other support staff and community services;
- ✓ Transition meetings with secondary schools occur at varying times throughout the grade eight year as determined mutually by the sending and receiving school. Students with special needs are a focus in these discussions to ensure a successful transition;
- ✓ Host secondary schools also host a variety of visits and events to which their incoming grade nine students are invited;
- ✓ Community and Continuing Education (CEC) offers summer school programs in the home secondary school for students entering grade nine.

### **Beyond Secondary School Transitions**

The transition from school to work, further education, and community living can be particularly challenging for some exceptional students. The probability of a successful transition is significantly increased when schools work with parents/guardians, employers, community agencies, and providers of further education to develop coordinated transition plans for exceptional students.

School principals are required to ensure that a transition plan is prepared, as part of the Individual Education Plan (IEP), for each exceptional student who is 14 years of age or older, unless the student is identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness. These requirements are set out in Ontario Regulation 181/98. The Regulation designates the school principal as the individual responsible for ensuring that transition plans are developed and maintained in accordance with the regulation. The process must include consultation with:

- ✓ the parent/guardian (and the student, if age 16 or over); and
- ✓ such community agencies and postsecondary educational institutions as the principal considers appropriate.

Students with developmental disabilities usually leave high school in their 21<sup>st</sup> year although some students choose to leave earlier.

Transition from high school can be a very challenging time; uncertainty about the future coupled with the loss of familiarity and routines can be trying. This can also be an exciting time as students and their families anticipate the next phase in their lives.

In June 2006, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) announced a new way of accessing community participation supports called Passport. Access to Passport, other community participation supports and other developmental services is through Contact Hamilton.

This transition plan continues to be implemented as part of the contract between HWDSB and CONTACT Hamilton for all students with developmental disabilities.

In addition Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) works with HWDSB staff to support the transitioning of students with physical needs from one location to another and from one program or grade to another. This is done through the referral process set up by CCAC.

HWDSB is currently reviewing the transitions of students with developmental disabilities as they prepare to leave secondary schools. Efforts to improve this process will continue in 2010-2011.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Ministry of Education:**

- ✓ Defines, through the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services, and prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality;
- ✓ Ensures that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils;
- ✓ Establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model. The model consists of the Foundation Grant, the Special Education Grant, and other special purpose grants;
- ✓ Requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education;
- ✓ Sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement;
- ✓ Requires school boards to maintain special education plans, review them annually, and submit amendments to the ministry;
- ✓ Requires school boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs);
- ✓ Establishes Special Education Tribunals to hear disputes between parents and school boards regarding the identification and placement of exceptional pupils;
- ✓ Establishes a provincial 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, blind, or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

**The district school board or school authority:**

- ✓ Establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- ✓ Monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- ✓ Requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- ✓ Provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for the exceptional pupils of the board;
- ✓ Obtains the appropriate funding and reports on the expenditures for special education;
- ✓ Develops and maintains a special education plan that is amended from time to time to meet the current needs of the exceptional pupils of the board;
- ✓ Reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education;
- ✓ Provides statistical reports to the ministry as required and as requested;
- ✓ Prepares a parent guide to provide parents with information about special education programs, services, and procedures;
- ✓ Establishes one or more IPRCs to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them;
- ✓ Establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee;
- ✓ Provides professional development to staff on special education.

**The Special Education Advisory Committee:**

- ✓ 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;
- ✓ Provides information to parents, as requested;
- ✓ SEAC participates in a wide range of committees.

**The school principal:**

- ✓ Carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/ program memoranda, and through board policies;
- ✓ Communicates Ministry of Education and school board expectations to staff;
- ✓ Ensures that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes;
- ✓ Communicates board policies and procedures about special education to staff, students, and parents;
- ✓ Ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, through an IPRC, is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and board policies;
- ✓ Consults with parents and with school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional pupils;
- ✓ Ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements;
- ✓ Ensures that parents are consulted in the development of their child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP;
- ✓ Ensures the delivery of the program as set out in the IEP;
- ✓ Ensures that appropriate assessments are requested if necessary and that parental consent is obtained.

**The teacher:**

- ✓ Carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/ program memoranda;
- ✓ Follows board policies and procedures regarding special education;
- ✓ Maintains up-to-date knowledge of special education practices;
- ✓ Where appropriate, works with special education staff and parents to develop the IEP for an exceptional pupil;
- ✓ Provides the program for the exceptional pupil in the regular class, as outlined in the IEP;
- ✓ Communicates the student's progress to parents;
- ✓ Works with other school board staff to review and update the student's IEP.

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

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

**The parent/guardian:**

- ✓ Becomes familiar with and informed about board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child;
- ✓ Participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities;
- ✓ Participates in the development of the IEP;
- ✓ Becomes acquainted with the school staff working with the student;
- ✓ Supports the student at home;
- ✓ Works with the school principal and teachers to solve problems;
- ✓ Is responsible for the student's attendance at school.

**The student:**

- ✓ Complies with the requirements as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- ✓ Complies with board policies and procedures;
- ✓ Participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other activities, as appropriate.

### Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

The Ministry of Education provides the list of categories and definitions of exceptionalities. The following five categories of exceptionalities have been identified in the Education Act definition of *exceptional pupil*:

- ✓ Behaviour;
- ✓ Communication (autism; deaf and hard-of-hearing; language impairment; speech impairment; learning disability);
- ✓ Intellectual (giftedness; mild intellectual disability; developmental disability);
- ✓ Physical (physical disability; blind and low vision); and
- ✓ Multiple.

The HWDSB identifies students as exceptional through the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process, according to the Ministry categories and the HWDSB criteria.

#### Behaviour

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships;</li> <li>b) excessive fears or anxieties;</li> <li>c) a tendency to compulsive reaction; or</li> <li>d) an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory or other health factors, or any combination thereof.</li> </ul>
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>A written report from a member of either the College of Psychologists or the College of Physicians and Surgeons or a Social Worker from the College of Social Work and Social Service Workers which identifies and describes significant and persistent behaviour problems (externalizing or internalizing); and</p> <p>Evidence of <b>all</b> of the following which adversely affect educational performance of self and/or others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) consistently poor educational performance that is primarily due to severe and persistent behaviour problems rather than to learning factors;</li> <li>b) behaviour problems that are evident in more than one setting at school and may be evident in the home and the community and have persisted for more than six months; and</li> <li>c) current documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) that indicates the strategies and/or supports in academic and behavioural programming that are in place to support the student’s learning needs.</li> </ul>

**Communication: Autism**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	<p><b>Autism</b>                  A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) disturbances in:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ rate of educational development;</li> <li>✓ ability to relate to the environment;</li> <li>✓ mobility; and</li> <li>✓ perception, speech, and language; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) lack of the representational symbolic behaviour that precedes language.</li> </ul>
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>A written report from a professional member of the College of Psychologists or the College of Physicians and Surgeons which gives a diagnosis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Autism/Autism Spectrum Disorder, or other forms of Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) (Current DSM criteria); or</li> <li>b) Rett Syndrome; or</li> <li>c) Childhood Disintegrative Disorder;</li> <li>d) Asperger's Disorder; or</li> <li>e) Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDDNOS); and</li> </ul> <p>Documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) of one or more of the following which adversely affect educational performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) social interaction impairment;</li> <li>b) communication impairments as documented by a Speech and Language assessment;</li> <li>c) restricted and stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests and activities (ex., repetitive motor mannerisms or persistent preoccupation with parts of objects);</li> <li>d) ritualistic and compulsive behaviour; and/or</li> <li>e) poor self-regulation skills.</li> </ul>

**Communication: Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	<p>An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.</p>
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>Documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) that educational performance, social and/or other activities are adversely affected by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a significant chronic conductive or permanent hearing loss (bilateral or unilateral) as documented by an audiologist, and</li> <li>b) a delay or disorder in one or more communication skills, such as receptive/expressive language or articulation as documented by a Speech and Language assessment.</li> </ul>

**Communication: Language Impairment**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	<p>A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and</li> <li>b) include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ language delay;</li> <li>✓ dysfluency; and/ or</li> <li>✓ voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>Evidence of the following which adversely affect educational performance as documented by a Speech and Language assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) moderate to profound impairment in oral expressive language functioning, which may be accompanied by a speech disorder and/or receptive language disorder, which is not due to intellectual deficits and/or cultural difference; and</li> <li>b) a Psychoeducational assessment which indicates that the best estimate of cognitive functioning is within the average range or higher or a Speech and Language assessment which indicates that the best estimate of receptive language functioning is within the average range or higher.</li> </ul>

**Communication: Speech Impairment**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>Evidence of the following which adversely affect communication and educational performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a severe to profound impairment in articulation, phonology, motor speech and/or fluency which may significantly reduce social and/or emotional development as documented by a Speech and Language assessment; and/or</li> <li>b) phonological or motor speech disorders resulting in severely to profoundly unintelligible speech as documented by a Speech and Language assessment.</li> </ul>

**Communication: Learning Disability**

<p><b>Ministry Definition</b></p>	<p>A learning disorder evident in both academic and social situations that involves one or more of the processes necessary for the proper use of spoken language or the symbols of communication, and that is characterized by a condition that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) is not primarily the result of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ impairment of vision;</li> <li>✓ impairment of hearing;</li> <li>✓ physical disability;</li> <li>✓ developmental disability;</li> <li>✓ primary emotional disturbance;</li> <li>✓ cultural difference; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) results in a significant discrepancy between academic achievement and assessed intellectual ability, with deficits in one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ receptive language (listening, reading);</li> <li>✓ language processing ( thinking, conceptualizing, integrating);</li> <li>✓ expressive language (talking, spelling, writing);</li> <li>✓ mathematical computations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) may be associated with one or more conditions diagnosed as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ a perceptual handicap;</li> <li>✓ a brain injury minimal brain dysfunction;</li> <li>✓ dyslexia;</li> <li>✓ developmental aphasia.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Board Criteria</b></p>	<p>Evidence of each of the following five criteria which adversely affect educational performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the best estimate of assessed intellectual functioning is within the average range or higher as documented by a psychoeducational assessment; and</li> <li>b) a significant discrepancy between assessed cognitive ability and academic achievement in one or more of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ reading (decoding and/or comprehension);</li> <li>✓ mathematics (computation and/or application);</li> <li>✓ written language; and/or</li> <li>✓ listening comprehension as documented by a standardized academic assessment;</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) learning difficulties associated with one or more of the following psychological processes as documented by a psychoeducational assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ memory and attention;</li> <li>✓ processing speed;</li> <li>✓ perceptual motor integration;</li> <li>✓ language processing;</li> <li>✓ visual spatial processing;</li> <li>✓ executive functioning skills; and or</li> <li>✓ linguistic awareness;</li> </ul> </li> <li>d) documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) that indicates that Special Education resources and/or strategies are in place to support the student’s learning needs;</li> <li>e) documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) indicates that the student’s programming includes modified expectations and/or significant accommodations.</li> </ul>

**Intellectual: Giftedness**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	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.
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>Evidence of the following :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) WISC-IV Full Scale at the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile; or</li> <li>b) WISC-IV Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) at the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile, General Ability Index (GAI) at the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile, and the Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI) at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile; or</li> <li>c) WISC-IV Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI) at the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile, General Ability Index (GAI) at the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile and the Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile.</li> </ul> <p>For Board designated ESL students, evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) WISC-IV Full Scale at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, and</li> <li>b) either the Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) or Perceptual Reasoning Index (PRI) at the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile, with the other Index (PRI or VCI) at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile.</li> </ul>

**Intellectual: Mild Intellectual Ability**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	<p>A learning disorder characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive services;</li> <li>b) an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development; and</li> <li>c) the potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.</li> </ul>
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>Evidence of each of the following four criteria which adversely affect educational performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the best estimate of assessed intellectual functioning is below the 9<sup>th</sup> percentile as documented by a psychoeducational assessment; and</li> <li>b) adaptive functioning skills (if assessed) are above the Moderate to Profound range of delay according to current DSM criteria as documented by a member of the College of Psychologists or the College of Physicians and Surgeons; and</li> <li>c) weak academic functioning as documented by a standardized academic assessment (or, for very young students who cannot demonstrate a baseline score on standardized tests, school documentation as evidence);</li> <li>d) documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) indicates that academic performance is considerably below grade level curriculum expectations and requires significant curriculum modifications and/or accommodations and/or alternative specialized programming.</li> </ul>

**Intellectual: Developmental Disability**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	<p>A severe learning disorder characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development;</li> <li>b) ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development; and</li> <li>c) a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.</li> </ul>
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>Evidence of each of the following criteria which adversely affects educational performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a Moderate to Profound delay according to current DSM criteria in overall intellectual functioning as documented by a psychoeducational assessment (augmented by a language assessment where appropriate; and</li> <li>b) a Moderate to Profound delay in adaptive functioning skills according to DSM criteria as documented by a member of the College of Psychologists or by the College of Physicians and Surgeons; and</li> <li>c) a severe delay in academic functioning as documented by a standardized academic assessment (or for students who cannot demonstrate a baseline score on standardized tests, school documentation as evidence) or a written statement in the psychoeducational report which may indicate that the student is not testable; and</li> <li>d) documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) indicating that academic performance is severely below grade level curriculum expectations and requires extensive curriculum modifications and/or accommodations and/or alternative specialized programming.</li> </ul>

**Physical: Physical Disability**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>Documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) that educational performance is adversely affected by a chronic physical and/or orthopaedic condition which requires special assistance in learning situations as documented by a qualified medical practitioner.</p>

**Physical: Blind and Low Vision**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.
<b>Board Criteria</b>	Documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) that educational performance is adversely affected by a condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision as documented by a written medical diagnosis from an eye specialist.

**Multiple**

<b>Ministry Definition</b>	A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities, that is of such nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorder, impairments, or disabilities.
<b>Board Criteria</b>	<p>Evidence of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) students must meet the criteria of at least two exceptionalities, and it is not possible to determine a primary exceptionality which accounts for the student's difficulties in educational achievement; and</li> <li>b) the combination of disorders, impairments or disabilities are of such severity and complexity that, for educational achievement, the student requires a multi-faceted approach to learning; and</li> <li>c) documentation (ex., report cards; IEP; assessment; work samples) of academic achievement which is well below age-appropriate curriculum expectations that indicates the need for considerable curriculum modifications and/or accommodation, and/or alternative specialized programming.</li> </ul>

### **Ontario Provincial and Demonstration Schools**

Provincial Schools and provincial Demonstration Schools:

- ✓ Are operated by the Ministry of Education;
- ✓ Provincial Schools Branch oversees the policies and operation of these schools;
- ✓ Qualified teachers who are employed by the Provincial Schools Authority or seconded from District School Boards deliver the educational programs;
- ✓ The Provincial Schools Resource Services Department provides a range of services to families and school boards in support of students who are blind, deaf-blind, low-vision, deaf, hard of hearing or who have a severe learning disability;
- ✓ Programs include workshops, on-line learning opportunities and early intervention programs designed to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and ideas so that students across the province are able to achieve their full academic potential
- ✓ Provide an alternative education option;
- ✓ Serve as regional resource centres for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;
- ✓ Provide preschool home visiting services for students who are deaf or deaf-blind;
- ✓ Develop and provide learning materials and media for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;
- ✓ Provide school board teachers with resource services;
- ✓ Play a valuable role in teacher training;
- ✓ Provide residential services and programs for those students living outside the day travel area.

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

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 centre for the visually impaired and deaf-blind;
- ✓ Support to local school boards through consultation and the provision of special learning materials, such as Braille materials, audiotapes, and large-print textbooks;
- ✓ Professional services and guidance to ministries of education on an interprovincial, cooperative basis.
- ✓ Programs are tailored to the needs of the individual student and:
- ✓ Are designed to help these students learn to live independently in a non- sheltered environment;
- ✓ Are delivered by specially trained teachers;
- ✓ Follow the Ontario curriculum developed for all students in the province;
- ✓ Offer a full range of courses at the secondary level;
- ✓ Offer courses in special subject areas such as music, broad-based technology, family studies, physical education, and mobility training;
- ✓ Are individualized, to offer a comprehensive “life skills” program;
- ✓ Provide through home visiting for parents and families of preschool deaf-blind children to assist in preparing these children for future education;
- ✓ The Resource Services Library, which provides Braille and alternate print formats for students across Ontario. For more information on this service please go to [aero.psbnet.ca](http://aero.psbnet.ca);
- ✓ A learning centre that offers information to parents, students, educators and other professionals.

## **Provincial Schools for the Deaf**

The following Provincial Schools offer services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students:

- ✓ Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf in Belleville (serving eastern Ontario)
- ✓ Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf in Milton (serving central and northern Ontario)
- ✓ Robarts School for the Deaf in London (serving western Ontario)
- ✓ Centre Jules-Léger in Ottawa (serving francophone students and families throughout Ontario)

The Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296 determines admittance to a Provincial School. These schools provide elementary and secondary school programs for deaf students 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 his or her special needs met as set out in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Schools for the deaf:

- ✓ Provide rich and supportive bilingual/bicultural educational environments which facilitate students' language acquisition, learning, and social development through American Sign Language (ASL) and English;
- ✓ In the elementary grades, the ASL curriculum is fully implemented to provide the student with an understanding of their first language (American Sign Language);
- ✓ Operate primarily as day schools;
- ✓ Provide residential facilities five days per week for those students who do not live within reasonable commuting distance from the school.

School boards provide transportation to Provincial Schools for students.

Each school has a Resource Services Department, which provides:

- ✓ Consultation and educational advice to parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and school board personnel;
- ✓ Information brochures;
- ✓ A wide variety of workshops for parents, school boards, and other agencies;
- ✓ An extensive home-visiting program delivered to parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing preschool children by teachers trained in preschool and deaf education.

Provincial Schools for those with Learning Disabilities

Application for admission to a provincial Demonstration School is made on behalf of students by the school board, with parental consent. The Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities (PCLD) determines whether a student is eligible for admission.

Although the primary responsibility to provide appropriate educational programs for students with learning disabilities remains with school boards, the ministry recognizes that some students require a residential school setting for a period of time. The Demonstrations Schools were established to:

- ✓ Provide special residential education programs for students between the ages of 5 and 21 years;
- ✓ Enhance the development of each student's academic and social skills;
- ✓ Develop the abilities of the students enrolled to a level that will enable them to return to programs operated by a local school board within two years
- ✓ Deliver specialized educational instruction;
- ✓ Residential services and programs;
- ✓ Specialized programming in association with Attention Deficit hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD);
- ✓ Teacher training and consultation services to school boards who have similar services and programs serving the needs of LD students in their local community.

In addition to providing residential schooling for students with severe learning disabilities, the provincial Demonstration Schools have special programs for students with severe learning disabilities in association with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD). These are highly intensive, one-year programs.

The mandate of these programs is to return students to their home boards at the end of one year (2 semesters). Service agreements will be signed by all parties shortly following admissions, and transition planning will be initiated during the first semester of the program.

***Program interventions include:***

- ✓ Individualized instruction in academic and social skills;
- ✓ Frequent use of computers;
- ✓ Low stimulus, structured environments;
- ✓ Physical activities that promote pro-social and team values;
- ✓ Support and counseling programs that focus on understanding, accepting and coping with ADHD and learning disabilities;
- ✓ Cognitive behaviour modifications and cognitive behaviour therapy;
- ✓ Ongoing psychiatric assessment and monitoring by a specialist in this area;
- ✓ Effective medication control;
- ✓ Parent education and support groups that focus on understanding and managing behaviour; and
- ✓ A partnership with the home, the school board and the provincial demonstration school to facilitate the return of the student to an appropriate school placement, including teacher training in understanding and accommodating the needs of the ADHD student in the school setting.

The Trillium School also operates Learning for Emotional and Academic Development (LEAD), a special program for students with severe learning disabilities who require an additional level of social/emotional support. The LEAD program provides a milieu designed to support these students, thereby increasing their ability to benefit from the specialized teaching and learning environment that the Demonstration Schools provide.

Further information about the academic, residential, LEAD, and LD/ADHD programs is available from the Ministry of Education through the website:

<http://www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/trillium/index.html>

An in-service teacher education program is provided at each Demonstration School. This program is designed to share methodologies and materials with teachers of Ontario school boards. Information about the programs offered should be obtained from the schools themselves.

### **Transportation**

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board provides transportation to and from Provincial Demonstration schools upon approval from a Superintendent of Education. Transportation to and from E.C. Drury or W.R. MacDonald occurs daily from a pupil's residence to either E.C. Drury or W.R. MacDonald respectively. With respect to Trillium Demonstration School, transportation occurs from a pupil's residence Monday morning of the school week and return to a pupil's residence on Friday afternoon of the same school week.

#### **School for the Deaf and Deaf-Blind**

W. Ross Macdonald School  
350 Brant Avenue  
Brantford ON N3T 3J9  
Phone: (519) 759-0730

#### **Schools for the Deaf**

Ernest C. Drury School  
255 Ontario Street South  
Milton ON L9T 2M5  
Phone: (905) 878-2851  
TTY: (905) 878-7195

Robarts School  
1090 Highbury Avenue  
P.O. Box 7360, Station E  
London ON N5Y 4V9  
Phone & TTY: (519) 453-4400

Sir James Whitney School  
350 Dundas Street West  
Belleville ON K8P 1B2  
Phone & TTY: (613) 967-2823

#### **Francophone School for the Deaf and for those with Learning Disabilities**

Centre Jules-Léger  
281 rue Lanark  
Ottawa ON K1Z 6R8  
Phone (613) 761-9300  
TTY: (613) 761-9302 & 761-9304

#### **Demonstration Schools for English-speaking students with ADHD And Severe Learning Disabilities**

Sagonaska School  
350 Dundas Street West  
Belleville ON K8P 1B2  
Phone: (613) 967-2830

Trillium School  
347 Ontario Street South  
Milton ON L9T 3X9  
Phone: (905) 878-8428

Amethyst School  
1090 Highbury Avenue  
London ON N5Y 4V9  
Phone: (519) 453-4408

Each provincial Demonstration School has an enrolment of forty students. The language of instruction at the Amethyst, Sagonaska, and Trillium schools is English; at Centre Jules-Léger, instruction is in French.

### **Criteria For Applying For Placement in a Provincial Demonstration School**

The following criteria are used for applying for placement:

#### **Admissions**

- ✓ Prospective students must demonstrate the ability to benefit from the methods and techniques of the school. All appropriate and available programs and services available in the board have been utilized but the student is still experiencing significant academic delays;
- ✓ Admission to a Provincial School is determined by an admission committee and the appropriate superintendent.

#### **General Criteria:**

- ✓ Students applying to the secondary program must be under the age of 21 on the first day of the school year for which the application is made;
- ✓ Students applying for the junior kindergarten programs (offered only by Schools for the Deaf) must be 4 years of age by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the school year for which the application is made.

#### **Process:**

- ✓ Families interested in enrolling their child(ren) in a Provincial School must contact their local school board;
- ✓ In most cases, an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meeting will be arranged;
- ✓ Completed applications for a Provincial School should be submitted to the School Admission Committee;
- ✓ Process details may vary depending on the Provincial School for which admission is sought;
- ✓ A school's special education consultant has been involved in the decision-making process to apply to a provincial or demonstration school;
- ✓ The school has discussed the possible application with the Board's Principal of Special Education Services.

The Admission Committee and/or the Educational Consultant may request additional information regarding community support services required by the student, such as services from the Ministry of Health (MOH) or Community Care Access Centre (CCAC).

**Residence:**

- ✓ Students will be considered for admission to residence if they live beyond reasonable commuting distance from the school;
- ✓ Students with additional needs may not be eligible for the residence program;
- ✓ Students must meet all school eligibility requirements.

Note: student placement in a Provincial School is reviewed annually.

The home school is responsible for compiling the application package. The Principal of Special Education Services is responsible for submitting the application package to the provincial or demonstration school and acts as Board contact with the provincial or demonstration school.

**Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies**

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Early Identification Policy and Procedure has been designed to create a smooth transition from pre-school into our school system and to establish a positive relationship with the families of children with special needs. Early intake meetings put in motion the processes for additional support, equipment, augmentative communication supports, and occupational or physiotherapy supports.

Involvement of other Ministry/Agencies

Involvement with Ministry and Community agencies is an essential component to the Early Identification School Entry Process for student with special needs. Ongoing planning and coordination occurs to facilitate a smooth transition from pre-school agencies to the school system.

The agencies involved in this process are as follows:

- ✓ St. Joseph's Hospital
- ✓ Community Care Access Centre
- ✓ Early Childhood Integration Support Services
- ✓ Hamilton Association For Community Living
- ✓ McMaster Children's Hospital (Children's Development and Rehabilitation Program, Pervasive Development Disorder Services, Speech and Language Pathology, and Augmentative Communication Support Services)
- ✓ Red Hill Regional Family Day Care
- ✓ Ministry of Child and Youth Services (MCYS)

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board also has links to the following agencies:

- ✓ Umbrella Family and Child Centres of Hamilton
- ✓ Affiliated Services for Children and Youths
- ✓ The Ontario Association for Child Care in Education
- ✓ The Association of Early Childhood Educators: Hamilton Branch
- ✓ The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board

School board support staff provide in-service annually to preschool resource teachers on topics related to school entry, and the School Entry Intake process for the upcoming school year.

A parent/guardian information night presented by members of the school entry committee provides an overview of the transition process to Junior and Senior Kindergarten programs as well as specific programs and services available in the board.

### School Entry Intake Process

The School Entry Intake Process has been designed to meet the needs of children for whom concerns in development have been identified during their preschool years. Parents/guardians are invited to attend a School Entry Intake Meeting, along with the preschool agencies and therapist involved in their child's care, to provide information about their child to school board personnel (e.g. board resource staff, school principal, learning resource teacher, Kindergarten teacher). Each student's strengths and needs are presented, required equipment and services are discussed, and plans are made for September placement and programming. Parents/guardians are encouraged to share as much information as possible, including professional assessments.

Determination of the need for system resources is made during the School Entry Intake Process, and includes:

- ✓ Augmentative/Alternative Communication Team;
- ✓ Autism Spectrum Disorders Team;
- ✓ Early Childhood Consultant Support (consultation);
- ✓ Occupational Therapy Support (provided through Community Care Access Centre);
- ✓ Physiotherapy Support (provided through Community Care Access Centre); and
- ✓ Nursing Support (provided through the Community Care Access Centre).

Documentation received during the School Entry Intake Meetings is reviewed by Special Education Services during the allocation of resources to schools for the upcoming school year.

Parents/guardians are encouraged at registration time to share as much information as possible, regarding any services they have received. It is the teacher's responsibility to gather information regarding a student through the Social History form, completed by the parent, as well as through observation and informal assessments. The teacher is required to inform parents/guardians regarding any concerns they have during scheduled parent/guardian observations in February, although open dialogue is expected at any time the teacher has a concern.

Parents/guardians and school board personnel need to work together to be sure that the necessary supports are in place to provide a positive school-entry experience. A planned transition to school will help to prepare for future success. Depending on the specific needs, the process may include:

- ✓ Identifying the persons who have worked with the child in the past;
- ✓ Identifying the persons who will play a role in supporting the child at school;
- ✓ Identifying the support staff who will continue to work with the school as part of the transition to school; and
- ✓ Developing the program, supports and services that will be in place to meet the child's needs once in school.

Additional meetings at the school may be scheduled to discuss specific program requirements. The Principal may request assistance from system Special Education / Student Services staff. The school will consult with parents/guardians regarding any meetings.

### **Educational and Other Assessments**

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board considers assessment as an integral part of the instructional process. Classroom teachers and learning resource teachers (LRTs) regularly use educational assessments to determine student achievement and student progress. Psychoeducational consultants and speech-language pathologists conduct specialized assessments to determine learning needs.

Teachers use a variety of assessment tools as an ongoing part of the instructional process. These include observation, journaling, running records, ongoing review, curriculum-based assessments, and standardized achievement tests. The Development Reading Assessment (DRA) assessment is one of the assessment tools used to evaluate the reading skills of students at the elementary level. The Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Test is also used as a tool for assessment of individual learning needs. LRTs across the district receive training in the administration of this assessment instrument.

Results of the teacher's assessments may be kept in the Ontario Student Record or the teacher's classroom files. Parental/guardian consent is not obtained for regular, ongoing curricular assessments that are part of the instructional process. Parents/guardians are informed through the regular reporting and interview process of their child's progress.

EQAO assessments are conducted during grade 3 (reading, writing and mathematics), grade 6 (reading, writing and mathematics), grade 9 (mathematics) and grade 10 (literacy) by classroom teachers and LRTs as part of the instructional process.

Informed parental/guardian consent is required for all assessments that are undertaken by professionals that are not employed as teaching staff (e.g. speech/language pathologists, psychoeducational consultants and social workers). Consent is obtained and filed with the report in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR). Information regarding students or student data is shared with outside agencies only through signed, informed parental/guardian consent.

#### Communication Services

Assessments in the area of speech and language are conducted to evaluate and develop programs for students with communication difficulties.

The Board's Speech-Language Pathologists are registered members of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario provide assessments. Speech-Language Pathologists are governed by various pieces of legislation including Regulated Health Professions Act, Education Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Personal Health Information Protection Act.

Criteria for acceptance as outlined in the document, Standards of Referral, are:

- ✓ Evidence of oral language errors that are not developmental;
- ✓ Difficulties consolidating skills necessary for literacy;
- ✓ Previous involvement with pre-school services, if errors persist; and
- ✓ Voice and fluency problems.

Parental/guardian consent is required for all referrals. Once an assessment has been completed parents/guardians are provided with the opportunity to have the results shared with them orally, by telephone or face-to-face contact. A copy of the report is provided to parents/guardians. The results of the assessment are provided to school staff and other appropriate professional staff involved with the student for the purposes of programming appropriately for student.

#### Autism Services

Assessments in the area of social communication development are conducted to evaluate and develop programs for students with Autism.

Autism Services Speech-Language Pathologists are registered members of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario provide assessments. Speech-Language Pathologists are governed by various pieces of legislation including Regulated Health Professions Act, Education Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Personal Health Information Protection Act.

Parental/guardian consent is required for all referrals. Once an assessment has been completed, parents/guardians are provided with the opportunity to have the results shared with them orally, by telephone or face-to-face contact. A copy of the report is provided to parents/guardians. The results of the assessment are provided to school staff and other appropriate professional staff involved with the student for the purposes of programming appropriately for student.

#### Psychological Services

Psychological assessments are conducted to evaluate and to address the learning, social-emotional or behavioral needs of children and adolescents.

The components of the assessment process may include, as required, the administration of standardized measures of various domains of functioning such as cognitive, academic and adaptive, questionnaires, classroom observations, examination of the Ontario Student Record, and interviews. Psychological assessments maintain adherence to current best practices guidelines. Diagnostic statements are included in assessment reports. Board identification criteria across several categories require a psychological assessment.

Although the majority of psychological assessments are psychoeducational in nature, there are other assessments, which focus on the behavioural and emotional status of students. Also, individual cognitive assessments to identify giftedness are conducted.

Psychological assessments are provided by registered members of the College of Psychologists of Ontario or individuals working under the supervision of a member of the College. Registered members are both Psychologists and Psychological Associates. Psychological staff is governed by various pieces of legislation including the Education Act, the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1993, and the Psychology Act, 1991.

The process to obtain informed consent from parents/guardians for psychological involvement with their child or adolescent includes obtaining a dated signature on a formal consent form.

The results of the psychological assessment are typically communicated to parents/guardians at an arranged meeting, which includes school personnel, and, at times additional staff from Special Education / Student Services. Parents/guardians receive a copy of the assessment report. Parents/guardians sign a consent form for the psychological assessment report to be shared with outside agencies or community professionals.

### Social Work Services

Social Work Services provides support across all three tiers of intervention. School-wide and system-wide support is available through system assignments such as Violence Prevention and Mental Health Coordination. In addition, school social workers work closely with schools to support programming and professional development that assist students with their social and emotional wellbeing as well as enhancing academic achievement.

Social Work Services also provides targeted interventions for groups of students in a specific area as well as individualized assessment, consultation and direct intervention. These types of direct service require parental/guardian consent unless the student has reached the age of 16. Students between the ages of 12 and 16 may consent to individual counselling without parental consent if deemed to be in the best interest of the student not to inform the parent at that time. Prior approval must be granted by the Manager of Social Work Services in such extenuating circumstances.

Social workers may administer a variety of assessment tools to assist them in better understanding the student's needs, such as the Brief Child and Family Phone Interview (BCFPI) tool, which is a screening tool used to guide clinical interventions or the Kearny School Refusal Assessment Scale. School social workers can provide direct intervention as well as facilitate referrals to outside community agencies.

### **Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Mental Health Strategy**

During the development year of the Mental Health Strategy essential infrastructure (i.e. Mental Health Coordinator, Mental Health working group, Mental Health advisory committee, community of practice) and processes (i.e. vetting criterion for community collaborations, mental health continuum and mental health tiered framework of intervention) were established.

Engagement of parents, students and staff increased awareness of the interrelatedness of student mental health and achievement, developed an appreciation for the prevalence and type of student mental health problems, and established an understanding of the role that schools and educators occupy in relation to student mental health and well-being.

Responding to preference data related to strategy priorities and knowledge exchange activities, the District Mental Health Strategy supported three pilot projects designed to improve educators' knowledge about common mental health problems, signs and symptoms that might be observed in the classroom, initial steps in supporting students who are struggling, and where to seek additional in-depth assistance. Educator mental health literacy will continue to be a priority for the 2011/12 year.

Data from a school-by-school mapping exercise revealed that schools are engaging in strategies that promote student mental health and prevent the escalation of problems with students who are at-risk. However, these efforts lack coordination and there is an absence of programming that addresses administrators' key areas of identified need (i.e. anxiety and depression). Consistent with evidence-based practice and attention to implementation, two pilot projects were initiated this year that focused on mental health promotion and prevention programming. Focused interventions for mental health promotion and prevention will continue for the upcoming year, and additional strategies and programming specifically related to student anxiety are in the planning stages.

### **Coordination of Services with Other Ministries or Agencies**

#### Educational Programs in Care, Treatment and Corrections Programs

##### **Overview**

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board continues to provide extensive programming for those students whose needs are such that they cannot be met in a regular community school. In 2010-2011 the Board signed 14 separate Care, Treatment and Corrections Program agreements with 10 different approved community agencies for the delivery of Care, Treatment and Corrections programming in 32 different classrooms (7 elementary, 25 secondary) across Hamilton. Of these classes:

- ✓ 19 were "Treatment" classes with foster/mental health agencies (7 elementary & 12 secondary);
- ✓ 5 classes were delivered in "Care" settings (1 elementary & 4 secondary); and
- ✓ 8 classes were delivered at the secondary level in "Corrections" sites.

The total number of students registered in Care, Treatment and Corrections classes on any given day will vary from approximately 245 to 260 individuals. Over the course of a year three or more times this number of individuals may be served due to high student mobility, especially in custody settings. Grades will extend from the primary to the senior division. As in previous years, reduced-day summer programming for students in custody settings is planned.

The agencies with whom the Board partnered in the delivery of Care, Treatment and Corrections services in 2010-2011 are:

- ✓ Banyan Community Services;
- ✓ Charlton Hall Child & Family Centre;
- ✓ Dawn Patrol Child & Youth Services;
- ✓ Hatts-Off Specialized Services;
- ✓ Lynwood Hall Child & Family Centre;
- ✓ Hamilton Health Sciences;
- ✓ Salvation Army in Canada;
- ✓ White Rabbit Treatment Homes;
- ✓ Woodview Children's Centre; and
- ✓ Ausable Family Services.

### **Treatment and Corrections in the Leadership and Learning Department**

Care, Treatment and Corrections programs fall within the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Leadership and Learning Department. There is a close functional relationship with Special Education Department personnel including the principal and consultants. Liaison is enhanced by close administrative and field-level contact between these two program areas and the other departments in the Board's Student Services Division. While a student is registered in a Care, Treatment and Corrections treatment program, case conference, admission/demission procedures and discharge planning necessitates the involvement of and collaboration between Care, Treatment and Corrections and Special Education Consultants. When discussions surrounding programming and planning for transition occur, representation from the various Special Education/Student Services (Psychological Services, Communication Services, Social Work Services) departments may become necessary.

Information about students entering community schools from care, treatment, and correctional classrooms is shared with the school often through the Special Education Department. Before and during this reintegration phase, for any given pupil, there is extensive dialogue and considerable documentation (facilitated by Care, Treatment and Corrections staff) involving the multi-disciplinary team, the parents/guardians, the home school and the Special Education Department, plus other Student Services personnel as needed. The majority of students in the Board's Care, Treatment and Corrections treatment classes are students with mental health concerns, behavioural profiles, and social/emotional issues. Previously documented assessments detailing academic and treatment issues/concerns accompany the student back into a community school setting and, generally, additional assessment work is not a precondition for admission unless there are significant major changes concerning the student's case. IPRC work and subsequent assessments, if deemed necessary, are undertaken after admission. In almost all cases, there is sufficient documentation derived from pre Care, Treatment and Corrections assessments, combined with treatment plan goals/outcomes, to provide an adequate basis for re-entry into an appropriate community school context.

In the case of a student leaving one of the Board's community schools/programs to enter one of its partnership programs in a care, treatment, or correctional facility, information regarding students in need of care and/or treatment is also shared in a similar fashion to that described above for students re-entering community school/programs. The liaison functions previously described are utilized, as needed, for demission from community school/programs and transfer to Care, Treatment and Corrections programming. In all cases, the OSR legislation is the governing document regarding transfer of Special Education Information.

The Principal of Special Education and the Principal of Care, Treatment and Corrections Programs carry the primary responsibility to ensure the successful admission or transfer of students from one program to another, under the supervision of the Superintendent with responsibility for Special Education.

## Social Work Services

### **Overview**

Social Work Services at The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board aims to assist students who are experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties that are adversely affecting their learning. In order to best meet the diverse needs of our students, Social Work Services has developed specific mental health partnerships with local agencies and hospitals. We have also collaborated with a number of community services to enhance the services being offered to students and their families.

### Mental Health Services

HWDSB has developed a partnership with McMaster Children's Hospital Regional Child and Youth Mental Health Services in which the hospital is providing 4 hours per month of on-site clinical consultation service to HWDSB with the following intention:

- ✓ promoting access to scarce and specialized clinical resources;
- ✓ building capacity across the system; and
- ✓ working collaboratively with the current systems in place at the school board.

The service provides a comprehensive mental health assessment for individual students that includes the student, his/her parent/guardian and school personnel. Provision of ongoing psychiatric/clinical service to individual clients is determined at the discretion of the Regional CYMHS consultant and includes provision for ongoing service coordination with the physician and the HWDSB staff to ensure integrated treatment planning across services.

A consultation committee comprised of professional staff from the HWDSB/HWCDB and local mental health service providers (coordinated by the Cleghorn Clinic at St. Joseph's Hospital) meet on a monthly basis to discuss students/families who are presenting as in need of mental health and addiction support services. The goals of the consultation process are:

- ✓ to provide information and support to school social workers with regard to mental health and addictions system navigation; and
- ✓ to help build the capacity of school social workers to support students with mental health issues through clinical consultation.

Dr. Pytka provides consultation services to HWDSB regarding students who may have psychiatric issues or who have severe behavioural difficulties and board resources have been exhausted. The service provides staff with insights and recommendations for programming/interventions.

### Additional Partnerships

- ✓ Lynwood Hall Child and Family Centre
- ✓ John Howard Society
- ✓ Alternatives for Youth
- ✓ Bereaved Families of Ontario (Hamilton/Burlington)
- ✓ The Children Aid Society of Hamilton
- ✓ The Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton
- ✓ CONTACT Hamilton
- ✓ Community Child Abuse Council
- ✓ Child and Adolescent Services
- ✓ The Family Health Team
- ✓ Banyan Youth Services
- ✓ Student Support Leadership Initiative
- ✓ Hamilton Police Services
- ✓ Public Health
- ✓ Youthnet
- ✓ Sexual Health Network
- ✓ FASD Leadership Team
- ✓ Hamilton Pathways to Education
- ✓ McMaster University School of Social Work
- ✓ Wilfred Laurier School of Social Work
- ✓ Mohawk College
- ✓ The Provincial Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health
- ✓ The Offord Centre
- ✓ Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board Social Work Department
- ✓ Halton Catholic District School Board Social Work Department

### Autism Services

Connections for Students: Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and McMaster Children's Hospital (MCH)'s Autism Intervention Program (AIP).

Connections for Students - is a cross-ministry initiative between the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and the Ministry of Education (EDU). Connections ensures that a student being discharged from McMaster Children's Hospital's Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) program transitions to full time attendance at school in a coordinated and seamless way. This is accomplished through the support of an identified collaborative team and process.

The transition team is chaired by the student's school principal (or designate) and includes parents/guardians, teacher(s), the school's Learning Resource Teacher, an AIP School Support Program consultant (SSP), members of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) team, and other relevant community or school board personnel. The student's IBI Senior Therapist attends the first Connections meeting to provide a summary of intervention strategies. The school's Special Education Consultant is also invited to attend meetings as required.

The student specific multidisciplinary team meets monthly for approximately 6 months before a student transitions from IBI to school. During this time, both the classroom teacher and the AIP work on mutually established goals, as facilitated by the AIP School Support Program Consultant. This transition team continues to meet monthly to support the student for approximately 6 months after he or she has left IBI.

Following the Connections process, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Autism Spectrum Disorders team continues to provide ongoing support to the student.

A student's Connections team works together within evidence and strength based model, facilitating the use of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) strategies to achieve the goals established by the student's Connections team through assessment and the systematic use of data. Joint problem-solving, classroom consultation, visual strategies and resources, formal school-based professional development, peer awareness presentations, and assistance with incorporating structured teaching and other ABA strategies within the student's IEP and programming are amongst the supports provided.

#### Character Network Program

The Special Education/Student Services staff has been working on an extensive expansion of behavioural services since May 2008 in order to meet identified system needs. Recognizing that the services have been evolving as part of the implementation experience, the information contained here is reflective of the process to date.

Purpose of the expansion:

- ✓ Improve the outcomes for students with behavioural concerns by:
  - identifying and addressing their unique behavioural needs; and
  - providing appropriate support.
- ✓ Increase the capacity of staff and students through:
  - focused interaction between system and school staff; and
  - improved knowledge of specific behavioural strategies.
- ✓ Address mitigating factors by:
  - approaching behaviours in a more proactive manner.

The Character Network Program strives to improve the educational outcomes for students with behavioural challenges through a focus on the attributes of the HWDSB Character Builds initiative, and the core principles of:

- ✓ Justice: Will your actions be considered right or fair?
- ✓ Caring Relationships: Will your actions enhance or maintain a healthy relationship?
- ✓ Well being of Others: Will your actions help others?

The Program aims to assist the students through the development of social skills and anger management techniques, and through understanding themselves as learners. The goal is to enable the students to be able to fully participate in, and be available to, learning activities.

The Character Network Program involves three differentiated levels of support:

- ✓ Character Network: Pathways Program;
- ✓ Character Network: Centre Program;
- ✓ Character Network: Class Program.



### **Character Network: Centre Program**

The Centre Program offers a higher level of intervention for a particular group of students, while enabling them to remain connected and registered with their home school. The Program involves students remaining on the home school register and attending a Centre site for a 6-week block of time. The purpose of the Centre Program is to build the capacity of the selected students to function at an increased independent level in their home school through the transference of behavioural skills learned in a more intensive setting. Students entering the Centre Program generally have had previous Character Network: Pathways involvement.

Key concepts of the revised program include:

- ✓ Pro Social Skills program based on Skill Streaming in the Elementary School by Ellen McGinnis.
- ✓ Professional development for Centre and Pathways staff. (This included Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, Behaviour Management Systems and Restorative Justice training).
- ✓ Collaboration of support between Centre and Pathways staff.
- ✓ Social workers in-services on the Brief Child and Family Interview (BCFPI) process as well as on depression and anxiety.
- ✓ In-service on programming for students at risk.
- ✓ Program redesign and intake process by a multidisciplinary team consisting of special education, social work, psychological and communication services staff.
- ✓ A dedicated social worker who focuses on parent engagement supports.
- ✓ Four classes set up for an intervention time of 10 weeks including a transition in and out period of two weeks each and six weeks in-class time.
- ✓ Community Agency support from John Howard Society and Lynwood Hall.

#### **Staffing:**

4 Centre Teams	Each Team:	1 Centre Teacher 2 Centre Educational Assistants
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Program Support:	Special Education Consultant with Behaviour System Portfolio Social Worker with Behaviour System Portfolio Consultative support from Psychology and Communication Services
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#### **Responsibilities:**

- ✓ Analyze and Plan
  - proactively work with school teams to plan IEPs/SIPs/Behaviour Plans
  - conduct FBA/ABA/other behavioural assessments and provide feedback to the school team
- ✓ Intervention
  - provide direct instruction to a selected group of students on anger management, social skills, self awareness, and other skills as required
  - assist in the transference of skills to the home school environment
  - develop individual behaviour programs
- ✓ Program Referral
  - assist in providing referral to other Character Networks programs, in consultation with appropriate school and system staff, as appropriate

Inclusive in the intake section of the program are processes for referral, information gathering, observation, planning and implementation. Review and follow-up processes for each student are also done with parents and school staff.

**Transitions:**

During the intake transition period, the teachers and educational assistants get to know the student and the home school support staff in preparation for their time at the Centre. In the two-week transition period following the Centre session, students are transitioned back into their home school classroom. Centre staff work with the students on the transfer of their skills to the home environment.

**Character Network: Class Program**

**Focus:**

Targeted Program: Self-Contained Class Intervention

The majority of students assigned to the Character Network: Class Program have an externalizing behaviour disorder diagnosis, as well as having experienced significant problems of a psycho-social issue and/or other learning difficulties. Many have had significant attendance issues. Character Network: Classes offer a self-contained setting with a high staff-to-student ratio. Although selected students may have had previous Character Network involvement, entry to the Class program is not necessarily following those intervention programs. However, significant documentation, including various formal and informal types of assessments and the effectiveness of previous interventions, is required.

**Staffing:**

3 Class Programs:                    1 Junior Level Class  
    2 Intermediate Level Classes

Each Class Program:                1 Class Teacher  
    2 Class Educational Assistants

Program Support:                    Additional Educational Assistants may be assigned, through Ministry Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Funding, based on the severity of the behaviours exhibited by students attending the program

**Responsibilities:**

- ✓ Analyze and Plan
  - proactively plan IEPs/Safe Intervention Plans (SIP)s/Behaviour Plans for the students in the program
  - conduct FBA/ABA/other behavioural assessments as necessary in order to program for the students according to the needs identified in their IEPs
- ✓ Intervention
  - plan and deliver the pro social skills based program through a professional learning community team approach in consultation with the special education consultant with a behaviour specialty.
  - involve and work with the community support agencies to assist in anger management and social skill development
  - support social worker in parent engagement

- assist in the transference of skills to other parts of the school environment
- develop individual behaviour program
- collaborate and work closely with school staff, system staff, and the students' families on specific aspects of the program

**Referral Process:**

Students are placed in the Character Network: Class Program through the Identification, Placement and Review process. All referrals are previously discussed with the school's Special Education Consultant.

**Coordination with Hamilton Preschool Speech and Language Services – 'Early Words'**

A closely coordinated relationship exists between the HWDSB and Hamilton Preschool Speech and Language Services – 'Early Words' for students in junior and senior kindergarten.

Early Words will accept referrals from school board speech-language pathologists for children who are new referrals to Early Words, present with severe speech delay/disorders, are in JK, and the referral is made prior to March 1st of the year the child is eligible for SK. These children will be eligible for up to, but not necessarily 20 sessions, of treatment, and will be discharged from Early Words upon completion of their block of treatment, by SK entry or upon pickup by CCAC SHSS (whichever comes first).

For children who are currently being served by Early Words and are in JK as their services are completed they will be discharged, at the latest by SK entry.

For children with speech concerns who are entering JK in September, they will be offered at least one block of intervention during the JK year. If there is a severe speech delay/disorder, then that child will be eligible for up to but not necessarily 20 sessions of treatment. All children in this group will also be discharged from Early Words by SK entry or pickup by CCAC SHSS, whichever comes first.

Early Words will accept referrals from school board speech-language pathologists for children who present with concerns for fluency who are enrolled in JK and SK, and the referral is made prior to March 1st of the year the child is eligible for Grade 1; Early Words will serve these children until they are picked up for service by the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) School Health Support Service (SHSS) or grade 1 entry (whichever comes first).

For children who are currently being served by Early Words who present with concerns for fluency, Early Words will continue to serve these children until they are picked up for service by CCAC SHSS or grade 1 entry (whichever comes first).

### Relationships with Third Party Professionals/Paraprofessionals

HWDSB developed a procedure to address working relationships with third party professionals / paraprofessionals in 2007-08, in collaboration with the employee groups representing board social workers, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, and educational assistants. In 2009-10, the procedure was redeveloped to bring it into accordance with the recently released Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda (PPM) 149: Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals. The objective of this directive is to provide schools with a framework to manage successful working relationships with third party professionals/paraprofessionals that provide support and/or services to students.

The procedures were further reworked in 2011 to include an application process for community professionals and agencies who wish to partner with Board. The purpose of the application process is to ensure adherence to PPM 149 as well as other Board policies and guidelines such as Safe and Caring Schools and the District Mental Health Strategy.

### **Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings**

The School Health Support (SHSS) Program of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) is responsible for providing health supports for students in the school setting. The Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) is responsible for ensuring the provision of health support services in children's residential care and treatment facilities.

In order to access the services of the SHSS Program for nutrition counseling, nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy or speech services, the school, in consultation with the parent/guardian, is required to complete an application form. This form is sent to the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) where a case manager is assigned. CCAC makes the determination of the need for services and, if services are to be provided, the specifics regarding that service.

An assessment is conducted by a health care professional at the student's school. Results are shared with parents/guardians and school staff. A written report is provided which is included in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR). If the assessor determines that the student requires continued support, a plan of consultation services is developed. A review of the student's progress and needs is conducted annually.

Where a student requires specialized medical care, a CCAC case manager will assess the level of medical care required. Some students may require the services of a full time nurse in order to attend school. Others may require nursing part-time (e.g., a student with diabetes requiring an injection during the school day). Nursing staff may also provide health teaching to school staff specific to the care of an individual student.

Board staff are responsible for the administration of oral medication where such medication has been prescribed for use during school hours. For physically disabled pupils, Educational Assistants with the Board provide such services as lifting and positioning, assistance with mobility, feeding and toileting, and general maintenance exercises. Speech-language pathologists with the Board provide language and literacy and correction programs.

In December 2010, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board approved the Medical/Health Supports Pillar Policy: Equity #1.03.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ✓ demonstrate the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's commitment to ensuring the provision of plans, programs, and/or services that will enable students with health/medical needs to attend school;
- ✓ share the responsibility for providing such plans, programs, and/or services with families and community agencies/partners; and
- ✓ ensure that key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity are reflected and valued in our learning and working environment.

The guiding principles of the policy are as follows:

- ✓ All health support services must be administered in a manner that respects, to the degree possible in the circumstances, the student's right to privacy, dignity, and cultural sensitivity.
- ✓ All procedures related to medical/health supports for individual students will include consultation processes with families and, where required, appropriate service providers.
- ✓ Students with special medical/health needs will be maintained in their home school settings whenever possible; however, when this is not possible, students will be supported in appropriate facilities within the system to address their individual needs.
- ✓ Procedures related to medical/health needs of individual students will address physician or health professional prescribed plans of care and relevant legislation and policies.
- ✓ Medical/health services may be requested in accordance with the Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum 81: Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings.
- ✓ The designation of roles and responsibilities for medical/health support services in school settings does not preclude, in emergency situations, the provision of assistance by school board personnel.
- ✓ Staff who provide health supports to students shall have full coverage under the Board's liability policies.
- ✓ Services and supports as described in the directives contained within this policy shall be rendered by authorized personnel only (i.e., Board staff who have received pertinent information and training). Students and volunteers are not considered authorized personnel.

The following directives were established under the policy:

- ✓ Administration of Oral Prescription Medication;
- ✓ Diabetes Management and Education;
- ✓ Blood Borne Pathogens;
- ✓ Anaphylaxis;
- ✓ Pediculosis;
- ✓ Use of Service Dogs in Schools;
- ✓ Catheterization and Suctioning, Lifting, Positioning, and Physical Management.
- ✓ Use of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

If it is determined, in future, that other directives need to be developed depending on system needs and as additional issues arise, they would also be located under this policy.

Services provided by both SHSS and the Board are as follows:

<b>Support Service</b>	<b>Administered By:</b>	<b>Provided By:</b>	<b>Training / Direction</b>
sterile, intermittent catheterization manual expression of bladder stoma care postural drainage deep suctioning tube feeding	Health Professional	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
clean, intermittent catheterization shallow surface suctioning	Educational Assistant	School Board	School Board and Ministry of Health
lifting and positioning assistance with mobility feeding toileting	Educational Assistant	School Board	School Board and Ministry of Health
physio/occupational therapy: - consultative model	Qualified Therapist	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
physio/occupational therapy: - general maintenance exercises	Educational Assistant	School Board	Ministry of Health
nutrition counseling	Health Professional	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
speech therapy	CCAC Speech-Language Pathologist	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
speech assessment and referrals for services	Board Speech-Language Pathologist	School Board	School Board
speech remediation	Communicative Disorders Assistant	School Board	School Board

### **Staff Development**

The goal of staff development is to increase staff expertise and capacity (i.e. knowledge and skills) in order to provide appropriate support and programming for students who are at-risk and/or have special education needs. It is important that staff development be provided for the system by Special Education/Student Services staff. However, it is equally important that Special Education / Student Services staff receive professional development in order to increase their knowledge and ability to provide expertise to the system that is relevant and current.

The following staff development sessions/opportunities were provided to the system in 2009-10:

**Special Education Staff:**

- ✓ Individual Education Plan (IEP) standards
- ✓ Role of the LRT for new Learning Resource Teachers (LRTs)
- ✓ eSIS training for Learning Resource Teachers
- ✓ accommodations for Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)
- ✓ Special Education Regional Consultants and Coordinators Conference (hosted by HWDSB)
- ✓ Moderation process for Levels of Need with Learning Resource Teachers
- ✓ Woodcock-Johnson III (WJIII) Training for new LRTs in conjunction with Psychological Services
- ✓ IEP drop in sessions
- ✓ IEP writing support at schools
- ✓ Gifted Programming Presentation to schools
- ✓ Grade 6 Boys Book Club in conjunction with Program Department
- ✓ Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and our Schools
- ✓ Transitioning Inservices to parents of students with developmental disabilities done in conjunction with Contact Hamilton and HWDSB
- ✓ Inservice to Lynwood Hall staff on strategies for students with dual exceptionalities, the IPRC process and implementing the IEP
- ✓ Non Violent Crisis Intervention (NVC) Training

**Psychological Services Staff:**

- ✓ Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) training for Learning Resource Teachers
- ✓ Woodcock-Johnson III (WJIII) training for Learning Resource Teachers
- ✓ Understanding the psychological assessment and report
- ✓ Introduction to structured teaching (Autism Spectrum Disorders)
- ✓ Learning Disabilities (for teachers and for students at the Centre for Success)
- ✓ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- ✓ Memory
- ✓ Slow Learners
- ✓ Nonverbal Learning Disabilities
- ✓ Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- ✓ Learning Profiles and Individual Education Plans
- ✓ Depression
- ✓ Executive Functioning
- ✓ Attention Deficit Hyper-activity Disorder (ADHD)
- ✓ Learning Disability and Non-verbal Learning Disability
- ✓ Memory

**Autism Services Staff:**

- ✓ Individual Education Plan (IEP) Development for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- ✓ Autism Spectrum Disorders: Approaches to Understanding and Addressing Behaviour
- ✓ The Hidden Curriculum in Developing Social Skills for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- ✓ Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders
- ✓ Understanding Emotional Self-Regulation in Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- ✓ Applied Behaviour Analysis Training

**Social Work Services Staff:**

- ✓ Domestic Violence Presentation
- ✓ Duty to Report – Child in Need of Protection
- ✓ Roots of Empathy
- ✓ Role of Social Work
- ✓ Presentation on Violence Presentation
- ✓ Presentation on Strong Feelings
- ✓ Presentation on Mental Health – Anxiety
- ✓ Attendance in-services pertaining to new legislation
- ✓ Hugs & Tugs - Grade 1 Class Substance Use for Secondary Educational Assistant Professional Development Day
- ✓ In-Service on Child Abuse
- ✓ Making a Difference – Mental Health presentation to Teachers
- ✓ Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders (FASD) presentation
- ✓ Presentations on legislation changes regarding Supervised Alternative Learning
- ✓ Presentations on the District Mental Health Strategy

**Communication Services Staff**

- ✓ Making it KLLIC! – Kindergarten Language and Literacy in the Classroom
- ✓ Class Act – Phonological Awareness Activities
- ✓ Phonological Awareness in the Classroom
- ✓ Differentiated Instruction for Oral Language Skill Development
- ✓ Structural Reading Program
- ✓ Savvy Signing – An Introduction to Sign Language (6 week course)
- ✓ Kindergarten Intake Kits for Special Needs
- ✓ Oral Motor Skill Development
- ✓ Functional Independent Skills Handbook (FISH)
- ✓ Enhanced Bridge Reading Program
- ✓ Curriculum-based Visual Material

All Special Education/Student Services staff participated in the following staff development sessions/opportunities in 2010-2011

- ✓ Anaphylaxis
- ✓ Safe Schools
- ✓ Accessible Customer Service Standards
- ✓ Positive Space Training
- ✓ WHMS Training

Special Education/Student Services staff participated in the following additional staff development sessions/opportunities in 2010-2011

**Special Education Staff:**

- ✓ Ontario Writing Assessment
- ✓ Learning for All – Kindergarten to Grade 2
- ✓ Fountas & Pinnell Levelled Literacy Intervention Training
- ✓ Levelled Literacy Training-Roll Out
- ✓ Levelled Literacy Focus Groups
- ✓ Children's Mental Health, Restorative Practices, Ministry initiatives re Special Education
- ✓ Auditory-Verbal project with VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children
- ✓ Mental Health project at Barton with Stan Kutcher
- ✓ Premier Assistive Technology
- ✓ Behaviour Management Systems Training
- ✓ The tiered intervention model
- ✓ Wilson Training (Reading Intervention Program through Student Success)
- ✓ Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Funding and Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Claim Training through Ministry of Education
- ✓ Brock Hamilton Campus School-College-Work Initiatives: Services for Students with Special Needs at College
- ✓ Upgrading at Mohawk College: College and Career Preparation
- ✓ Special Education Regional Consultants and Coordinators Fall Conference
- ✓ Applied Behaviour Analysis Regional Network

**Care, Treatment and Corrections Staff**

- ✓ Writing Education Plans
- ✓ Information on Tourette Syndrome
- ✓ E-Learning
- ✓ Essential Elements
- ✓ Nutrition in the Classroom

**Psychological Services Staff:**

- ✓ Ethical issues in the practice of school psychology
- ✓ Practice issues
- ✓ Autism Spectrum Disorders: Universal Training and ADOS administration
- ✓ Behavior Management
- ✓ Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders
- ✓ Learning Disabilities and psychological assessments

**Autism Services Staff:**

- ✓ A Behavioral Approach to Language Assessment and Intervention for Children with Language Delays
- ✓ Picture Exchange Communication (PEC) Training
- ✓ Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children (TEACCH) - Advanced Topics Seminar
- ✓ Geneva Centre Training-Webinar
- ✓ Stages of Autism: Adolescent & Beyond
- ✓ Center for Inclusive Education, Faculty of Education University of Western: Coaching to Inclusion
- ✓ Geneva center training-The Ziggurat Mode

**Social Work Services:**

- ✓ Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy Training
- ✓ Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders
- ✓ Restorative Justice Training
- ✓ The Impact of Poverty on Early Childhood Development
- ✓ Ontario Association for Counselling and Attendance Services
- ✓ Numerous workshops/presentations related to mental health
- ✓ Numerous workshops/presentations related to child behaviour
- ✓ "Why Try" –Alternative Learning program
- ✓ Working with Victims of Crime
- ✓ Blending Play-Based techniques with Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- ✓ Respond, Reflect, Recharge Compassion Fatigue
- ✓ School Engagement
- ✓ Attendance Services

**Communication Services Staff**

- ✓ Curriculum-based Resources for Literacy
- ✓ Augmentative and Alternative Standardized Materials
- ✓ CoCo Writes – Bringing Write Traits to Kindergarten
- ✓ Writing in Kindergarten
- ✓ Kindergarten Read-Aloud
- ✓ Read-Alouds: Kindergarten, Primary, Junior, Intermediate
- ✓ Phoneme Touch and Say
- ✓ Childhood Anxiety
- ✓ Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) training
- ✓ Auditory Neuropathy
- ✓ Selective Mutism
- ✓ Attention Deficit Hyper-activity Disorder (ADHD), Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD), or Listening Problems
- ✓ It Takes a Village to Raise a Reader
- ✓ Play and Language Workshop
- ✓ Artful Language – Creating with Crayola
- ✓ Students Experiencing Violence
- ✓ Non-Violent Crisis Intervention
- ✓ Inclusive Education
- ✓ SMART Board Inclusion and Introduction to SMART Boards
- ✓ SMART Board and Comprehensive Literacy
- ✓ Learning for All - Intervention at K, Grades 1 & 2
- ✓ Premier Assistive Technology

## Accessibility

The purpose of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province. To this end, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is committed to:

- ✓ providing services to our students that are free of barriers and biases; and
- ✓ ensuring that the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity are reflected and valued in our learning and working environment;
- ✓ continually improving the access to school board facilities, programs, and services for students with disabilities.

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board continues to identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities through the following processes:

- ✓ **Architectural**
  - The Board continues to move forward on its vision of School Revitalization by building new schools with accessibility features.
  - As a feature of the Boards' School Revitalization Program all newly constructed schools incorporate Barrier Free Design.
- ✓ **Physical**
  - Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board continues to access the Ministry of Education Special Equipment Amount (SEA) funding, which assists with the costs of equipment essential to support students with special education needs.
  - Each year the Board allocates an amount from the annual School Renewal Grant (SRG), provided by the Ministry of Education, to address school accessibility issues (ie: washroom upgrades, auditorium upgrades), or to meet the emerging needs of a specific handicap (accessibility upgrades – ramps, visible fire alarms, acoustic treatments).
- ✓ **Information / Communication**
  - The Board's website will continue to be monitored to ensure accessibility to staff, students, and the community, including accessibility to JAWS, which is a web-page screen reader.
  - The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Special Education Plan is available on the Board website.

✓ **Attitudinal**

- In 2010-2011 schools were again provided with websites and information about the International Day of Disabled Persons (December 3, 2010), and encouraged to have their staff and students participate in activities associated with the day.
- Through *Character Builds* (a character development initiative), the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board endeavours to help every student strengthen their character, become caring and contributing citizens, and reach their full potential. The ten attributes associated with *Character Builds* and they are acceptance, caring, citizenship, courage, empathy, honesty, integrity, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness.
- The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Equity Policy states Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's commitment to the principles of equity through inclusive programs, curriculum, services, and operations, in accordance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Education Act.

✓ **Technology**

- Assistive technology plays an increasing role in the provision of differentiated instruction.
- Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board continues to access the Ministry of Education Special Equipment Amount (SEA) funding to provide students with accommodations to access the Ontario curriculum and/or a board-determined alternative program and/or course. This equipment includes such items as soundfield systems, FM systems, computer hardware, computer software that provides access to curriculum, Brailers, and other communication aids.
- In addition to this equipment, the Board has purchased the license for Premier Assistive Technology, an assistive technology software package, which has been installed on the Board Computer Image in order to provide all students access to this technology in their home schools.
- Additional assistive technology (such as Smartboards) is being purchased by schools for the use of all students, under the universal design premise of "good for all and essential for some".

✓ **Systemic**

- As policies/procedures are developed and/or revised, they will be examined to reflect the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board directions with regard to accessibility.

**New Renovations**

Adelaide Hoodless – new front barrier free entrance from main parking lot, new interior stair lift from main entrance, barrier free pathway from parking lot (in progress), designated handicap parking spot (in progress) and completely new universal barrier free washroom (in progress), on first floor beside main office.

Barton – male and female student washrooms on first floor have barrier free stalls.

Chedoke – complete washroom retrofit to barrier free design for male and female student washrooms on first floor.

Ridgemount – new exterior barrier free entrances for main entrance, from parking lot and new barrier free exterior ramps.

Rosedale – new front barrier free side entrance from main parking lot, barrier free pathway from parking lot and designated handicap parking spot.

Westmount – new front barrier free main entrance and barrier free entrance parking lot, barrier free pathway from parking lot and designated handicap parking spots at main entrance.

### **New School Openings**

Guy Brown, Winona, Binbrook

**HWDSB School Accessibility Data**

School	Ground Floor Wheelchair Access	Exterior Auto Door Opener.	Ground Floor All At One Level	All Ground Floor Levels Wheelchair Accessible	Number of Storeys	Elevator	Corridor Lifts	Boys Wheelchair accessible washrooms.	Girls Wheelchair accessible washrooms.	A separate Co-Ed accessible washroom.
A. M. Cunningham	Yes	No	Yes	No	3	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Adelaide Hoodless	No	No	No	No	2	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Allan A. Greenleaf	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ancaster High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Ancaster Meadow	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ancaster Memorial	No	No	Yes	No	2	No	No	No	No	No
Ancaster Senior	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	No	No	No
Balaclava	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Barton	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Bellmoore	No	No	No	No	1	No	No	No	No	No
Bell-Stone	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Bennetto	Yes	No	No	No	2	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Beverly Central	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	No
Billy Green	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Buchanan Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	Yes
C. H. Bray	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	No
Cardinal Heights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cathy Wever	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cecil B. Stirling	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Central	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chedoke	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Collegiate Ave.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	No	No
Crestwood	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dalewood	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	No
Delta	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	3	No	No	No	No	No
Dr. J. Edgar Davey	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dr. John Seaton	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dundana	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Dundas Central	Yes	Yes	No	No	2	No	No	No	No	No

## 2010-2011 HWDSB Special Education Report

School	Ground Floor Wheelchair Access	Exterior Auto Door Opener.	Ground Floor All At One Level	All Ground Floor Levels Wheelchair Accessible	Number of Storeys	Elevator	Corridor Lifts	Boys Wheelchair accessible washrooms.	Girls Wheelchair accessible washrooms.	A separate Co-Ed accessible washroom.
Earl Kitchener	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Eastdale	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	No
Eastmount Park	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Education Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Elizabeth Bagshaw	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Fessenden	Yes	Yes	No	No	1	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Flamborough Centre	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	No
Franklin Road	Yes	No	No	No	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Gatestone	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
George L. Armstrong	Yes	No	No	No	3	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
George R. Allan	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	3	No	No	No	No	No
Glen Brae		No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	No
Glen Echo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	Yes
Glendale	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Glenwood	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gordon Price	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Green Acres	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	Yes	No
Greensville	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guy Brown	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Helen Detwiler	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hess Street	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	No
Highland	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Highview	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	No
Hill Park	Yes	Yes	No	No	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hillcrest		Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Holbrook	Yes	No	No	Yes	2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Huntington Park	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
James MacDonald	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Janet Lee	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
King George	No	No	No	No	3	No	No	No	No	No
Lake Ave.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

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School	Ground Floor Wheelchair Access	Exterior Auto Door Opener.	Ground Floor All At One Level	All Ground Floor Levels Wheelchair Accessible	Number of Storeys	Elevator	Corridor Lifts	Boys Wheelchair accessible washrooms.	Girls Wheelchair accessible washrooms.	A separate Co-Ed accessible washroom.
Lawfield		Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lincoln Alexander	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Linden Park	Yes	No	No	No	1	No	No	No	No	Yes
Lisgar	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Maple Lane	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mary Hopkins	Yes	Yes	No	No	3	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memorial (City)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memorial (County)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	No	No
Millgrove	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	No
Mount Albion	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	No
Mount Hope		No	No	No	2	No	No	No	No	No
Mountain Sec.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Mountain View	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Mountview	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	Yes
Norwood Park	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	No
Orchard Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parkdale	No	No	No	No	2	No	No	No	No	No
Parkside	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	No	No	No	No
Parkview	No	No	No	No	3	Yes	No	No	No	No
Pauline Johnson	No	No	No	No	1	No	No	No	No	No
Prince Of Wales	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prince Philip	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Queen Mary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Queen Victoria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Queen's Rangers	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	No
Queensdale	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
R. A. Riddell	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	No
R.L. Hyslop	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	Yes	No	No
Ray Lewis	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Redhill	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Richard Beasley	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	No

## 2010-2011 HWDSB Special Education Report

School	Ground Floor Wheelchair Access	Exterior Auto Door Opener.	Ground Floor All At One Level	All Ground Floor Levels Wheelchair Accessible	Number of Storeys	Elevator	Corridor Lifts	Boys Wheelchair accessible washrooms.	Girls Wheelchair accessible washrooms.	A separate Co-Ed accessible washroom.
Ridgemount	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rosedale	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	No
Rousseau	Yes	No	No	No	1	No	No	No	No	No
Roxborough Park	Yes	No	No	No	2	No	No	No	No	No
Ryerson	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Saltfleet	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sanford Avenue	No	No	Yes	Yes	3	No	No	No	No	No
Sherwood Sec.	Yes	Yes	No	No	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sir Allan MacNab	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	3	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sir Isaac Brock	Yes	No	No	No	1	No	No	No	No	No
Sir John A. MacDonald	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sir Wilfrid Laurier	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Sir William Osler		Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sir Winston Churchill	Yes	No	No	Yes	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spencer Valley	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Strathcona	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Tapleystown	Yes	No	No	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	Yes
Templemead	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vincent Massey	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	No
Viscount Montgomery	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
W. H. Ballard	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Waterdown	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Westdale	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Westmount	Yes	No	No	No	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Westview	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	Yes
Westwood	Yes	No	No	No	1	No	No	No	No	Yes
Winona	Yes	No	No	Yes	1	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Woodward Ave.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	No	No	No	No	Yes
Yorkview	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	2	No	No	No	No	No

### **Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

In accordance with Education Act Regulation 464/97, every district school board shall establish a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board SEAC has established the following parameters:

#### **HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

##### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is committed to working in partnership with the staff and resources of the Board to assure quality educational services for all students.

SEAC advocates for students with special needs by:

- ✓ assisting students to receive the best programs that meet their social, physical, emotional and educational needs;
- ✓ advising the Board about best practices; and
- ✓ working to ensure that all students are welcomed and included within their schools.

##### **Name:**

The name of the committee shall be The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee.

##### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

###### **Mandate:**

The mandate of the Special Education Advisory Committee of the Board is to make recommendations to the Board regarding matters related to the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services.

###### **Composition:**

The Special Education Advisory Committee shall consist of:

- ✓ one representative from no more than twelve local associations. Local association is defined as an association or organization of parents/guardians 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 interest and well-being of one or more groups of exceptional children or adults;
- ✓ one alternate for each representative to sit at the table;
- ✓ two trustees appointed by the Board; and
- ✓ up to eight additional members. Additional members are defined as members who represent an organization which furthers the interests and well-being of one or more groups of exceptional children or adults and who are neither representative of a local association or members of the Board or another committee of the Board.

The composition of the SEAC membership shall reflect the range of exceptionalities within The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

**Qualifications:**

A member of SEAC must be a Canadian citizen, 18 years of age or older, a resident within the area of jurisdiction of the Board and a public school board elector. A person is not qualified to be a member of SEAC if he/she is employed by the Board.

**Terms of Office:**

The members of the Committee shall hold office during the period of time for which the Board of Trustees holds office. The Board may fill vacancies for the remainder of the term of the vacancy. Until the vacancy is filled, the alternate shall act in the member's place.

**Responsibilities of Committee Members:**

Each member is expected to:

- ✓ respond to the needs of all exceptional students under the jurisdiction of 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;
- ✓ present to the Committee the interests, concerns, and suggestions of the association which he/she represents, regarding the programs or services of the Board;
- ✓ suggest items of concern for inclusion on the agenda;
- ✓ suggest appropriate educational topics for discussion;
- ✓ make motions for debate and decision;
- ✓ keep the local association which he/she represents informed of the proceedings of the Committee;
- ✓ be available as an informed and knowledgeable resource to the parents/guardians of exceptional children. This could include providing information on the special education programs, services, and procedures of the Board, including, in particular, the Identification, Placement and Review (IPRC) procedures and appeals;
- ✓ be available as an informed and knowledgeable resource for the schools and the community;
- ✓ attend meetings on a regular basis, or to inform the alternate and the SEAC chair or SEAC secretary when he/she cannot attend the meeting. When so informed, it is the responsibility of the alternate to attend the meeting and act in the member's place.

**CODE OF ETHICS**

- ✓ A member shall promote a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
- ✓ A member shall treat all other member and guests with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
- ✓ A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the committee, and of all persons in attendance at the meetings.
- ✓ A member shall act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of the Special Education Advisory Committee as identified by the Education Act of Ontario, and by the Board of Education in the Terms of Reference.
- ✓ A member shall become familiar with the Board of Education policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
- ✓ A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the committee.
- ✓ A member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.
- ✓ A member shall promote high standards of ethical practice at all times.

## **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

### **Meeting Dates and Times:**

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board SEAC committee meets on the last Wednesday of each month between September and June unless otherwise decided by the Committee. The meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and end at 9:15 p.m. Extensions may be made by a majority vote.

### **Quorum:**

A quorum is defined as the majority of the members of the Committee.

### **Rules of Order:**

The appropriate rules of the Board shall govern the order and conduct of the meetings of the Committee.

### **Election of the Chair/Vice-Chair:**

At the first meeting of the Committee following the Board's initial meeting, the members shall elect one of their members as chair and one of their members as vice-chair for a one-year term. The vice-chair shall act as the chair in the chair's absence.

### **Voting:**

Every member present at a meeting, or his/her alternate when attending the meeting in place of the member, shall have one vote. The chair may vote with the membership. In the case of a tie vote, the motion shall be lost.

## **DUTIES OF THE BOARD**

- ✓ the Board shall make available to SEAC personnel and facilities necessary for the proper functioning of the committee;
- ✓ the Board shall provide the members of SEAC and their alternates with timely information and orientation regarding:
  - The role of SEAC and the Board in relation to special education and
  - Ministry and Board policies and Board decisions relating to special education;
- ✓ prior to making a decision on a recommendation made by SEAC, the Board shall provide an opportunity for SEAC to be heard by the Board or any other committee of the Board to which the recommendation is referred;
- ✓ SEAC shall have the opportunity to participate in the Board's annual review of the Special Education Plan;
- ✓ SEAC shall be provided with the opportunity to participate in the annual budget process as it relates to special education; and
- ✓ SEAC shall be provided with the opportunity to review the financial statements of the Board that relate to special education.

## **THE MEETING AGENDA**

The agenda is the responsibility of the Chair, with assistance as necessary from the Superintendent with responsibility for Special Education. All members have the right to suggest items for the agenda. The agenda should be prepared well in advance of the meeting; copies should be in the hands of the members before the meeting begins.

Agendas should include:

- ✓ items of current importance, relevant information, and topics for study or discussion dealing with special education, including the annual review of the Special Education Plan, as mandated by the Ministry of Education;
- ✓ reports from trustee members concerning current or projected Board activities and, in particular, information concerning proposed changes, which might affect special education, programs and services;
- ✓ reports from members representing the local associations, including association concerns and suggestions, in addition to information about conferences and meetings;
- ✓ reports from administrators providing new or updated information on special education matters;
- ✓ discussion of priority items established by the Committee on an annual basis; and
- ✓ any other matters of importance to the members relating to the mandate of the Committee.

#### **Meeting Attendance by SEAC Members:**

SEAC members are expected to attend all meetings. It is the SEAC member's responsibility to contact the alternate to attend the meeting in his/her place. It is the responsibility of a SEAC member to inform the Minute Room that he/she will be absent and that an alternate will attend (if possible). As much notice as possible should be given to the Minute Room. A representative will lose his/her seat as a member of SEAC if he/she is absent from three consecutive regular meetings without authorization by resolution.

#### **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN** **(as per Education Act Regulation 306)**

Each school board must submit an annual review of its special education plan, which provides information about delivery of programs and services to the exceptional students residing within the Board. The Ministry of Education sets the parameters of the annual review. Every board shall ensure that the board reviews the Special Education Plan of the Board annually and that the review is completed prior to July 31<sup>st</sup> in each year. Every board shall ensure that its Special Education Plan provides for the enrolment and placement of each person under the age of twenty-one years who is qualified to be a resident pupil of the Board and who resides or is lodged within the area or jurisdiction of the Board.

#### **DOCUMENTS**

##### **Ministry of Education Documents**

Documents of which the Committee members should be aware are as follows:

- ✓ the Education Act and Revised Regulations, and in particular
  - Regulation 181/98 (Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils),
  - Regulation 306 (Special Education Programs and Services), and
  - Regulation 464/97 (Special Education Advisory Committees);
- ✓ Ministry Memoranda (available at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/ppms.html>); and
- ✓ Additional Ministry resource information (available at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/speced.html>).

##### **Board of Education Documents**

- ✓ Special Education Plan;
- ✓ Annual Accessibility Plan; and
- ✓ other documents and information which may be available through the supervisory officers, principals, managers, or consultants of the Board.

## Parents' Guide

Education is a responsibility shared by parents/guardians, school staff, and the students themselves. Regular, ongoing communication, initiated by families or staff, is a valued part of the team approach. Students, parents/guardians, and educators all play important roles in the planning and implementation of a student's special education program.

Special Education/Student Services information for parents/guardians is available on the HWDSB website at <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/specialed/>. There are several versions of the guide (including an interactive version) located on that site. It is hoped that the information summarized there and on the connecting pages is helpful to families. After browsing through the web site, should further information about programs, services and supports in special education or student services be required, parents/guardians are directed to contact their local school or call 905-527-5092 x 2625 to have their call directed to the appropriate staff/department.

The Parents' Guide for Special Education/Students Services was revised in collaboration with the HWDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) in 2008-09, and was entitled: *Working Together: A Guide to Special Education and Student Services*. A Ministry of Education Parent Reaching Out grant was obtained in order to print the handbook in the following languages (which were identified by Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO) as the most common languages of new Canadians using their services in Hamilton):

- √ Arabic,
- √ Chinese;
- √ English;
- √ Spanish; and
- √ Urdu.

Print copies of the guide are available to schools by contacting the Special Education/Student Services department. All versions are also available on the above listed website.

An additional Parent Reaching Out grant was obtained by SEAC in 2010-11 in order to host a parent Special Education/Student Services Information Night for parents/guardians and local service providers and family support services. Copies of *Working Together: A Guide to Special Education and Student Services* in the above languages, were made available on that night.