

Greater Essex County District School Board

**Special Education Plan 2024
Building Tomorrow Together**

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THE BOARD'S CONSULTATION PROCESS - Section A

Standard 1—The Board's Consultation Process

Standard 1: The Board's Consultation Process

The purpose of the standard is to provide details of the Board's consultation process to the Ministry and to the public.

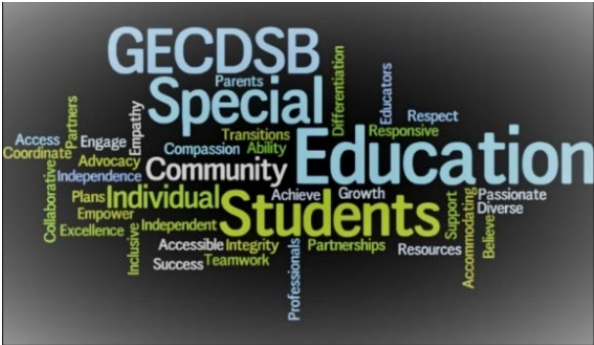
The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) values collaboration with families, community partners and stakeholders and we welcome input into our Special Education Plan. The GECDSB's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) formally reviews the Special Education Plan annually in the spring.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


There were no majority or minority reports concerning the Board's approved plan in 2023-2024.

New for the 2024-2025 School Year

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

- The 2024-2025 Special Education Plan will be uploaded to the board website for September 2024 public consultation. As part of this consultation process the public will be able to provide feedback through a Microsoft Forms survey. This survey will be anonymous. Results will be shared during the fall with SEAC members.
- Results from the student census that was conducted over the course of the 2023 – 2024 school year will be used to view Special Education programs and services through a lens of equity, resulting in more inclusive practices to enhance the learning outcomes for all students.
- IEP Consultation Form for Parents to be rolled out for the September 2024 school year. The consultation form provides parents and with consent, community partners input into the development of their child/ward IEP.
- During the course of the 2023-24 school year the board engaged in a review of the RISE (Reaching Individual Success and Excellence) program. This review of our partially-integrated classrooms was completed in the Spring of 2024. Information about the review and its recommendations can be found in Standard 9 - Special Education Placements Provided by the Board.
- Update our plan as changes occur to Ministry Standards for School Board's Special Education Plans.





SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES - Section B

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

Standard 2: The Board’s General Model for Special Education

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

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

Previously, the GECDSB has committed to not formally identifying students in Early Years. Identification only took place at parent/caregiver request. In an effort to reduce the automaticity of identifying younger students through the Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), resulting in young students being placed on an Individual Education Plan (IEP), the GECDSB is committed to not formally identifying students in Early Years to Grade 2. This direction is in response to the philosophy of destreaming students and changing their trajectory through opportunities to explore multiple pathways.

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

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

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

These questions keep the focus on the educator and how they can best meet the needs of the student or students who are struggling learners in their classroom.

The GECDSB collected demographic student data as part of the census in the 2023-2024 school year. This student census data will inform changes that need to be considered regarding special education services and how they are provided in the GECDSB. Change in direction may also be the result of the GECDSB Board

Improvement and Equity Plan (BIEP). The BIEP is intended to be a demographic data-driven tool designed to capture the experiences and outcomes of Indigenous, Black and other racialized groups of students, students with disabilities and/or special education needs (non-gifted), 2SLGBTQ+ students and students from low-income households.

Philosophy

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

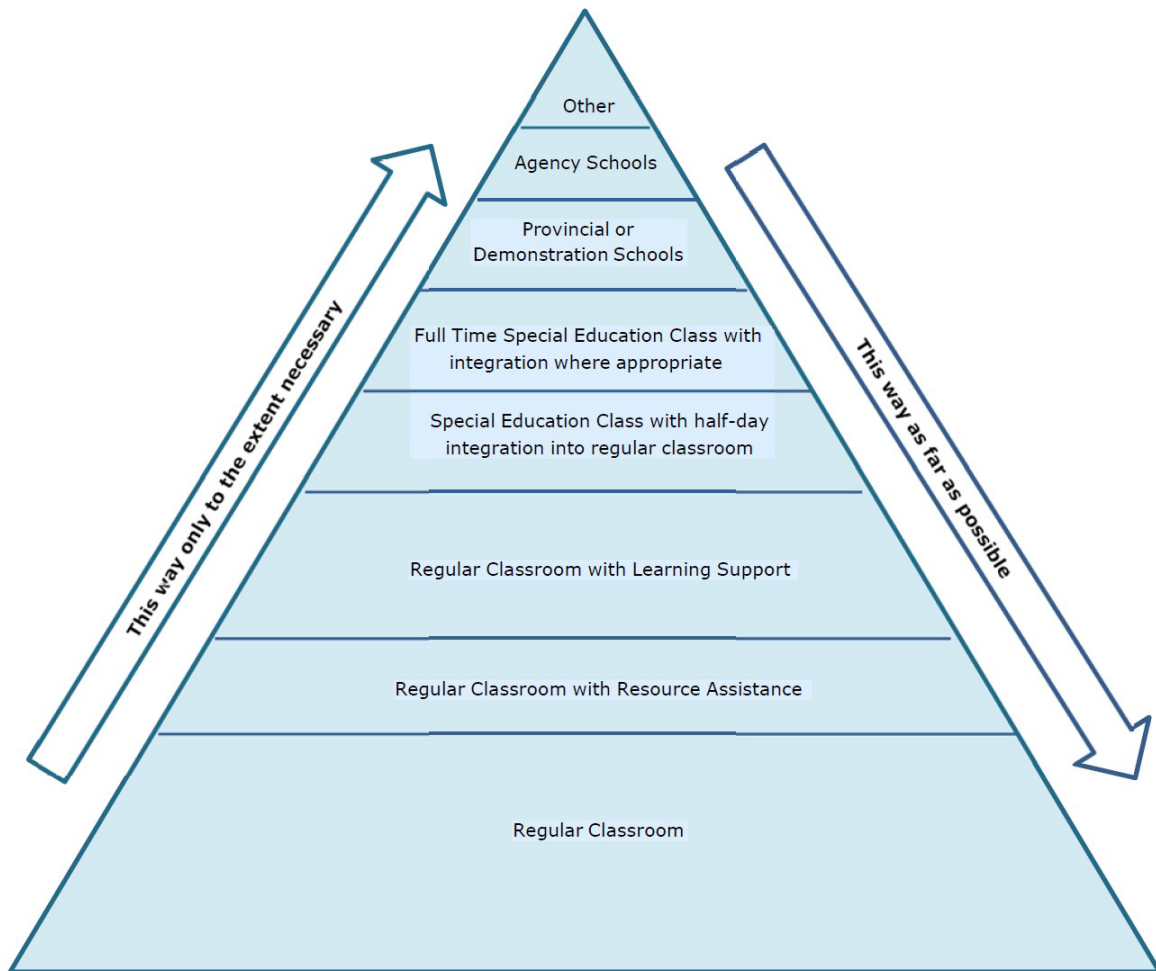
On February 28, 2022, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) released its Right to Read inquiry report on human rights issues affecting students with reading disabilities, calling for critical changes to Ontario's approach to early reading. According to the OHRC's report, the most fundamental responsibility of schools is teaching students to read. The GECDSB currently has Lexia Core5 licenses (Tier 2 intervention) and Sick Kid's Empower Reading Program (Tier 3 intervention) available in all of our elementary schools (with the exception of the Pelee Island site) to support students who are struggling readers. Lexia Power Up is used to support reading intervention in secondary. Over the last three years, the Special Education Department, in partnership with the Program Department, has developed PD and provided resources for teachers based on the Science of Reading (SOR). SOR is evidence-based and shows us how children learn to read and what instruction is required and is known to ensure all children have a solid chance of learning to read. SOR has shown us the importance of Structured Literacy, which applies the Science of Reading to classroom practice. We know that our reading instruction must become more explicit, focused, and structured and to follow the developmental sequence of reading skills. It was recognized that while our board had parts of these three key aspects in the reading instruction in our classrooms, that it would be important to ensure that these three key aspects were driven by SOR to ensure equity for all students in the development of their foundational reading skills and their reading comprehension. It is our goal to continue with this important work in the upcoming 2024–2025 school year.

Some students need the support of specialized programs and services which are offered at their home school, a neighbourhood school, Education and Community Partnership Program, a Section 68 School Authority, a Provincial School or other locations. The Cascade Model that follows, demonstrates the range of programs and services provided.

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

Range of Programs and Services Greater Essex County District School Board

Based on the Cascade or Reynolds Model (2007)* as a general procedure, educators often use what has become known as the Cascade Model as an explanatory principle to place students with exceptional needs in the environment that is least restrictive or most enabling.



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

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

Standard 2: The Board's General Model for Special Education Key Points

- As noted in the Ministry's IPRC document, our first placement option is at the student's home school (home school is defined as the school within the boundaries of the district in which the student resides).
- We strive to provide service and supports using the Home School model.
- The goal of the Home School model is to support struggling students within the school setting using the resources, supports and services available to the school.
- The Home School model provides supports for students experiencing mild, moderate or severe difficulties in all areas of exceptionality within the community school setting. The classroom teachers in conjunction with the learning support teacher, the school's special education team and educational support staff collaboratively develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) designed to enhance the learning outcomes for students identified as needing additional support.
- The school based team members work efficiently and in collaboration when creating solutions that require the allocation of resources, including human resources, to be distributed with great thought and integrity. We recognize and acknowledge the strong partnerships among parents/ guardians, education staff and community agencies are always in the best interests of the learner. This multi-disciplinary approach supports the learner as well as the classroom teacher and educational support staff and is a key component of our success in educating students as well as in our program delivery model.
- Depending on the nature and severity of the student's needs, supports outside the regular classroom may be employed. The supports available to elementary schools may include the Learning Support Teacher (LST), the school's RISE Teacher, GAINS Teacher, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Classroom Teacher. The supports available to secondary schools may include the Learning Support Teacher (LST), STEPS Teacher, MAPS Teacher and Stepping-In Classroom Teacher, (a fully self-contained secondary ASD system level placement for students with complex needs, including autism).
- Additional supports in both elementary and secondary schools may include: Educational Support Staff (ESS), as well as itinerant staff such as the Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Teachers of the Blind/Low Vision, Teacher Consultants, Special Educational Coordinators, staff from our Behaviour Transition Team, Speech and Language, Psychology, and/or Social Work/Attendance. Community agencies are also available to consult with the school team to strengthen and extend the existing supports within the school.

- Our staff is to be applauded for their dedication and commitment to our students. The center of every conversation is the learning of students and how to improve their academic achievement. In the Special Education Department, we pay close attention to improving literacy and numeracy skills as well as promoting independence. The leadership of the school principal is critical in terms of fostering a team approach as well as creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students.

We are committed to fulfilling the Greater Essex County District School Board's 2021 - 2025 Strategic Plan

Greater Essex County District School Board Strategic Priorities

Our Vision: Building tomorrow together.

Our Mission: Leading excellence in public education by creating confident learners, engaging diverse communities and demonstrating ethical stewardship.

The four strategic priorities are:

1. Student Success and Well-Being.
2. Demonstrating ethical stewardship through thoughtful and purposeful use of financial, human, environmental and community resources.
3. Creating confident learners through personalized learning, supportive environments and trusting relationships.
4. Engaging communities through equitable and reflective practices that honour and respect our diversity.



Greater Essex County District School Board | **Strategic Priorities**





Standard 3—Roles and Responsibilities

Standard 3: Roles and Responsibilities

The following information is taken from Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Resource Guide 2017, pp A10 – A14.

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

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

- defines, through the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services, and prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality;
- ensures that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils;
- establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model. The model consists of the Foundation Grant, the Special Education Grant, and other special purpose grants;
- requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education; sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement;
- requires school boards to maintain special education plans, review them annually, and submit amendments to the Ministry;
- requires school boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs);
- establishes Special Education Tribunals to hear disputes between parents/guardians and school boards regarding the identification and placement of exceptional pupils;
- establishes a provincial Ministry Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to special education programs and services;
- operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

The District School Board (519-255-3200)

- establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program

- memoranda;
- provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for the exceptional pupils of the board;
- obtains the appropriate funding and reports on the expenditures for special education;
- develops and maintains a special education plan that is amended from time to time to meet the current needs of the exceptional pupils of the Board;
- reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education;
- provides statistical reports to the ministry as required and as requested;
- prepares a parent guide to provide parents/guardians with information about special education programs, services and procedures;
- establishes one or more IPRCs to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them;
- establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC);
- provides professional development to staff on special education.

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

- makes recommendations to the Board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the Board;
- participates in the Board's annual review of its special education plan;
- participates in the Board's annual budget process as it relates to special education;
- reviews the financial statements of the Board as they relate to special education; and
- provides information to parents/guardians, as requested.

The School Principal

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, and through Board policies;
- communicates Ministry of Education and school board expectations to staff;
- ensures that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes;
- communicates Board policies and procedures about special education to staff, students, and parents/guardians;
- ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, through an IPRC, is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and Board policies;
- consults with parents/guardians and with school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional pupils;
- ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements;
- ensures that parents/guardians are consulted in the development of their

- child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP;
- ensures the delivery of the program as set out in the IEP; and ensures that appropriate assessments are requested if necessary and that parent/guardian consent is obtained.

The Classroom Teacher

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

The Special Education Teacher, in addition to the responsibilities listed above under "The Teacher"

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

The Early Childhood Educator

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

- plans for and provides education to children in Kindergarten;
- observes, monitors, and assesses the development of Kindergarten children;
- maintains a healthy physical, emotional, and social learning environment in the classroom;
- communicates with families;
- performs duties assigned by the principal with respect to the Kindergarten program.

The Parent/Guardian

- is familiar with and informed about Board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child;
- participates in Identification, Placement and Review Committees (IPRCs), parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities;
- participates in the development of the IEP;

- is acquainted with the school staff working with the student;
- supports the student at home;
- works with the school principal and educators to solve problems;
- is responsible for the student's attendance at school.

The Student

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



Standard 4—Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies

Standard 4: Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies

Preschool Children partnerships between the GECDSB and community agencies have been strengthened over the years and certainly serve as a strong preliminary step in identifying children “at risk” or children with special needs.

- At the preschool level numerous agencies may be involved, assessments and reports may be available and parents/guardians may have begun partnering with other professionals to ensure the needs of their children will be met. Preschool identification assessment and programming is a collaborative effort between parent/caregiver, school and agencies. Early identification procedures and programs are reinforced and strengthened by ongoing dialogue and appropriate responses.
- Early Years registration occurs in February at the home school. The school personnel complete a registration form with the parents/guardians that provides useful information for the planning of educational services. Information about the child’s growth and development as well as health related issues, for example allergies, and any community involvement are collected.
- In many cases, early learners with special needs are referred to the school through local community agencies such as Children First, John McGivney Children’s Centre, Talk to Me or regional autism service providers.
- Once school begins in September, the classroom teacher leads the team, if applicable, to provide continuous and ongoing assessment of the student’s growth and development in the cognitive, social-emotional, language, and physical areas to parents/guardians. School assessments will guide the teacher in implementing Tier One strategies. When concerns arise about a student’s development, the teacher will consult with the Learning Support Teacher (LST). The principal may engage other special education staff for assistance such as the Special Education Coordinator, Speech and Language, Psychological Services or Social Work school-based teams. In some cases, a referral to the School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS) may be in order.

Speech and Language Services Model

- When issues around speech or language development arise our Speech-Language Services staff will become involved. Staff consists of Registered Speech-Language Pathologists and Communicative Disorders Assistants. Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) are professionals with training at the Masters degree level in communication development and disorders. They provide service in accordance with the standards of professional practice of The College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario and adhere to the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) and associated

legislation including the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).

Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies: Scope of SLP Services 2024-2025

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

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

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

Ongoing SLP Services: JK-Grade 12

- Meet with LST's and school administration
- Report writing
- GAINS/STEP consultation/collaboration
- RISE classroom consultation/collaboration
- System level PD presentations
- School-based PLC's
- Articulation therapy for Grade 2 students (3-6 sessions; if have not previously had 2 blocks in JK to Grade 1)
- Other consultations in the elementary and secondary panels

General consideration for SLP Services

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

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

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

Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies

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

Behaviour Support Team Service Model

- The Greater Essex County District School Board is committed to providing learning opportunities in a safe and nurturing environment. From time to time, students may present complex challenging behaviours or mental health concerns that require early intervention and/or intensive short-term support from a multi-disciplinary team beyond the school-based team.
- The GECDSD Behaviour Support Team includes a Supervisor of Behaviour Support Services (a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst), Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBA), a Behaviour Management Service Worker (BMSW), a Developmental Management Service Workers (DMSW), Applied Behaviour Analysis Facilitators (ABAF) and Tier 3 Itinerant Support Teams, each team is composed of a teacher and a Developmental Services Worker (DSW). Members of the Behaviour Support Team provide direct and consultative intervention services to the students referred to them for support while working to build capacity with staff across the system around strategies that promote positive behaviour.
- Special Education Coordinators, along with consultation from the school principal, facilitate the referral to the Behaviour Intake Team for additional

short-term intensive support. Behaviour Analysts allocated by family of schools typically do the initial consultative assessment to determine which level of team support is a best fit for the current need of the student. Students do not need to be identified as Exceptional to receive services from the Behaviour Support Team.



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



Standard 5: The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee

- Regulation 181/98 requires that all school Boards set up Identification Placement Review Committees (IPRCs). The GECDSB has a well-established process which identified approximately 5565 students or 15% deemed as Exceptional. Of those 5565, there are 1468 non-identified IEPs which makes up 4% of that total. This means 4097 identified students or 11% and 1468 non-identified students or 4%.
- In the 2023 – 2024 school year, as of March 31, 2024, a total of 404 initial IPRCs were conducted. There were 761 IPRC reviews held (this number does not include parents who waived their right to hold an IPRC Review meeting) during this same time period.
- There were no parent/guardian appeals filed last year with our Board.
- Parents/guardians and students, 16 years of age or older, shall be full partners with regard to assessment, identification and placement decisions. As full partners parents/guardians and students 16 years of age or older will be made aware of their rights in the entire process including the right to mediation and/or appeal.
- Upon the completion of the initial identification process, continued support and partnership between home and school is strongly encouraged.
- The Individual Education Plan (IEP) will assist parents/guardians, administrators, teachers, and educational support staff in developing common goals for students. The GECDSB endorses a model of special education that supports and encourages partnerships between school, family and community.

IPRC Statement of Decision

- The Statement of Decision must state whether the IPRC has identified the student as exceptional and indicate the placement. The placement does not mean the school location, rather the type of placement, for example, regular classroom, fully self-contained etc. If deemed Exceptional then the categories and definitions of the exceptionality must be stated as they are found in the Section “Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities.”
- The Statement of Decision must also include a description of the student’s strengths and needs. The IPRC decision regarding placement and the reasons for special education class placement will be stated. Stressed in Regulation

181 is the requirement that the IPRC shall place a student in a regular class when such placement meets the student's needs and is in accordance with parental/ guardian preferences. This regular class option must be explored as the first option at all IPRC meetings.

- Parents/guardians or students over the age of 18 will sign the IPRC.
- The original IPRC statement is to be placed in the Ontario Student Record (OSR) and copies are distributed to the parent/guardian and to the Board's Special Education Department.
- Throughout the IPRC process, we encourage parents/guardians to meet with school personnel to resolve any outstanding issues or misunderstandings. Home and school communication is critical at all stages of the IPRC process.

When parents/guardians, or students over the age of 18 disagree with the IPRC decision, they have the right to request that a meeting be reconvened within 15 days to reconsider the IPRC decision. Prior to moving to the appeal process, as outlined in Ministry Regulations, mediation of the process is facilitated by the Superintendent of Special Education.

The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC)

Process Leading to IPRC

- On-going assessment of the student's strengths and needs by a teacher
- Discuss with the classroom teacher next steps and interventions/strategies in the regular class
- A possible meeting with the School-based-team (Principal, Learning Support Teacher, Teacher, Parent) to determine possible changes to the academic program, homework assignments, and accommodations (i.e. allow for extra time, quiet working environment, reduce writing requirements, use of a scribe or assistive technology)
- Consultation with the special Education Services to review your child's profile (standardized assessment may be recommended.)

The IPRC Meeting

- The Parent/Guardian along with the school's review team meet to determine exceptionality and placement as defined by the Ministry of Education.
- If the student warrants a formal identification, their strengths and needs are determined from assessment data presented at the meeting.

- IPRC documentation includes basic documentation on the student, current school, strengths and needs assessment data and dates, and the student's placement (i.e., grade seven and/or special education class)
- The regular class is always considered the first option
- Direction from parents in terms of the student's placement is always considered and respected by the IPRC committee

Following the IPRC Meeting

- Strengths and needs statements from the IPRC Statement of Decision are used to create a an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Student receive accommodations and/or modifications to the curriculum so that opportunities for success are provided
- On-going assessment of the students is determined by the criteria set out in the Individual Education Plan
- Changes are made to the student's IEP as their goals are achieved and new goals are created
- The Parent/Guardian along with the school's review team meet at an annual IPRC meeting to consider updated assessment data, current and future placement options and to review IEP goals
- Parents may waive their right to attend the IPRC review; however, attendance is encouraged
- IPRC reviews will not be waived when the student is in grade 7 or 8

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



Standard 6—Educational and Other Assessments



Standard 6: Educational and Other Assessments

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

The Process for Parent/Guardian Consent

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

The Process to Share Assessment Information and Protect Privacy

- It is expected that all reports or results be shared with parents/guardians in a timely fashion following the completion of testing or assessment.
- Special Education staff are required to share a written report with parents/guardians at least 15 days before an IPRC meeting is held.
- A written copy of the report will be given to parents/guardians at the time of feedback.
- A copy of the assessment report is kept in the Ontario Student Record (OSR) file at the school.
- Teachers, parents/guardians, school administration and supervisory officers have access to the assessment reports. The professional special education staff will access the reports in a student's Ontario School Record file only with the written permission of the student's parents/guardians.
- When a report in the OSR has been read by teachers, school administrators or members of the professional special education staff, they will record on the front of each assessment report that they have read the contents. It is

extremely important that the reports be kept confidential.

- The *Release of Information* form has clear and concise instructions explaining to parent/ guardian(s) and administrators what information is being asked for, to whom the information will be disclosed, where the information will be kept, and the time limits for the document.
- A constant concern is the importance of protecting all completed test protocols which are kept in a locked (digitally) area.

Educational and Other Assessments

Educational/Psychological/Speech & Language Assessments:


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

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

The types of assessment tools used by the GECDSB vary from informal checklists and surveys to standardized normed complex measures, which may include: Annually, in the month of February, the GECDSB administers the Insight Test to all Grade Two students and the Canadian Achievement Test 4th Edition (CAT 4) to all Grade Seven students. Results are shared with teachers for educational programming and parents/guardians.

The GECDSB has developed an internal electronic tracking system, Case Management System (CMS), that is used to access numbers of students waiting for Psychological, Speech and Language and Social Work services. Average wait times vary but toward the end of each school year we use flexible scheduling of Psychological Services Staff to target schools with longer wait lists. For this school year, Ministry funding was

provided to address the wait lists.



Standard 7—Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings

Standard 7: Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings

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

Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS) provided by the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) provides Children's Health Support Services on a priority-needs basis. HCCSS professionals assess students to determine how urgently services are needed. Children with complex needs who require assistance in order to safely attend school are the top priority.

Through the Children's Health Support Services program, a HCCSS Care Coordinator arranges in-school access to a range of services.

For students in public schools, private schools or students who are home schooled, the HCCSS may provide the following services:

- Nursing services
- Dietetic services
- Information and referral services
- Coordination of services

In addition to delivering care in schools, visiting professionals may also provide health-related education, teaching and consultation services to school staff and parents/guardians in the school setting.

A child or youth may be eligible for Children's Health Support Services, if the child or youth:

- has a valid Ontario Health card;
- is registered as a student at a school as defined under Ontario's Education Act;
- has assessed needs for Children's Health Support Services and requires those services to be able to attend school, receive instruction and participate in school routines; and,
- would experience a significant disruption in attendance, instruction or participation without the support of the program.



Standard 8—Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

Standard 8: Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

The following information is taken from *Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Resource Guide (2017)*. **These categories and definitions of exceptionalities are provided by the Ontario Ministry of Education.**

Behaviour

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

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Behaviour

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

with parents/guardians and teachers.

Communication - Autism

A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Communication - Autism

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

Communication - Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

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

Communication - Language Impairment

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

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Language Impairment

- a language impairment to the extent that, in the opinion of a qualified

speech and language pathologist, significant modification to program is required.

Communication - Speech Impairment

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Speech Impairment

- an impairment or disorder in articulation, voice or fluency that significantly interferes with communication, social interaction and academic progress to the extent that, in the opinion of a qualified speech/language pathologist, augmentative/alternative communication device is required. Examples:
 - d) a student with apraxia (motor planning) who is so unintelligible that picture communication symbols are necessary to supplement oral communication;
 - e) a student whose stuttering is so severe during oral presentations in the classroom that written communication becomes more effective;
 - f) a student with a cleft palate whose speech is so unintelligible due to hyper nasality that a Digivox is programmed with routine classroom request.

Communication – Learning Disability

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

- Affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are at least in the average range;
- Results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support;
- Results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills;
- May typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes,

such as phonological processing; memory and attention; processing speed; perceptual-motor processing; visual-spatial processing; executive functions (e.g., self-regulation of behavior and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making);

- May be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities;
- Is not the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction.

Criteria for Formal Identification: Learning Disability

- This is a learning disorder that affects one or more ways that a student takes in, stores, or uses information. This is a “life-long” condition, but can be addressed by identifying the individual’s strengths and potential compensatory strategies.
- Individuals receiving an identification of Communication: Learning Disability often have at least average levels of abilities in some key areas, such as language abilities and/or nonverbal/perceptual skills, as assessed on accepted measures of learning and intelligence (e.g., Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fifth Edition [WISC-5]). In all cases the student is not performing at their full potential in fundamental academic abilities such as reading, writing, and/or arithmetic. The student’s difficulties may sometimes be masked by the tremendous amount of effort they exert to successfully perform these basic tasks. The presence of a learning disability may also be reflected in more “nonacademic” areas, such as executive functioning (e.g., planning, organizing, self-regulation, or monitoring activities) and/or social interactions. A Learning Disability may sometimes occur in the presence of other disorders (diagnosed or undiagnosed) or with another area of exceptionality. An identification of Communication: Learning Disability can only be made in the absence of other factors and/or circumstances that may adversely impact upon academic achievement (e.g., generalized intellectual delays, visual and/or auditory deficits, socio-economic factors, cultural differences, ESL/ ELL factors, lack of motivation, or gaps in learning).

Intellectual - Giftedness

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Intellectual Giftedness

- In many cases, children who may meet the Ministry's criteria for giftedness are viewed (considered) by their parent/guardian and/or classroom teacher as more advanced than their peers before any formal type of assessment occurs.
- Within the GECDSB, a two-step process is used to aid in identifying giftedness; all Grade Two students (with parental/guardian consent) participate in the Insight cognitive test; and on the basis of the score obtained (i.e., at or beyond the 98th percentile) and consultation with the psychological services personnel, a recommendation to undergo individualized intellectual assessment is made. Children who meet this criterion are then administered the Wechsler

Intelligence Scale for Children (4th or 5th edition). An overall score at or beyond the 98th percentile is required in order for a recommendation of giftedness to occur. In some cases, a student may demonstrate superior intellectual abilities, but also display a learning disorder. The identification of giftedness may occur at any grade level.

- The same criteria may be applied to external psychological assessment reports provided by the parents/guardians.

Intellectual - Mild Intellectual Disability

A learning disorder characterized by:

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Intellectual - Mild Intellectual Disability

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

Intellectual - Developmental Disability

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Intellectual Developmental Disability

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

Physical - Physical Disability

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Physical Disability

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

Physical - Blind and Low Vision

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

Criteria for Formal Identification: Physical – Blind and Low Vision

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

Multiple - Multiple Exceptionalities

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



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

Standard 9: Special Education Placements Provided by the Board

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

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

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

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

The five options for placement within the GECDSB are:

1. Regular Classroom/Indirect Support

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

2. Regular Classroom with Resource Assistance

- Student remains in the regular classroom for most or all of the day.
- Support is provided by the Itinerant Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Itinerant Teachers of the Blind/Low Vision.

3. Regular Classroom with Withdrawal Assistance

- Student remains in the regular classroom.
- Some specialized assistance such as our Learning Support Teachers (LST) for a specified amount of time but less than 50% of the day.
- All elementary and secondary schools have an LST.

4. Special Education – Partially Integrated

- Students receive specialized programming for at least 50% of the day, for example, our Reaching Individual Success and Excellence (RISE) placements in elementary. Most elementary schools have RISE programs.

5. Special Education Fully Self-Contained

- The student remains in a full day self-contained classroom.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD Room)
- Giving Attention to Individual Needs (GAINS) at the elementary level.
- Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) in the secondary panel.
- Stepping-In in the secondary panel
- My Achievement Pathway to Success (MAPS) in the secondary panel.

RISE (Reaching Individual Success and Excellence - Partially-Integrated Classroom) Program Review

In July of 2022, a research team was approached to consider conducting a program review of the Greater Essex County District School Board's Reaching Individual Success and Excellence (RISE) program. The central question guiding the review was whether RISE was meeting the needs of participating students. RISE is a partially integrated special education program offered in the majority of elementary schools across the system. Access to RISE typically requires students to be identified through the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process and be at least two years behind in either Language or Mathematics (or both). Students participating in RISE mostly attend RISE for Language and Mathematics and return to their homeroom for rotary subjects. The research team and plan were fully assembled from across three universities and prepared in Fall 2023. A report was prepared and shared with senior administration of the Greater Essex County District School Board in Spring 2024.

Over the course of collection, researchers met with participants, for interviews and/or focus groups, to learn from their experience with the RISE program. Following the qualitative data collection, the research team worked closely with the board's Information Technology (IT) Department who shared important system-level data to inform their analyses. To address the question as to whether RISE was meeting the needs of students, they explored how the program addresses students' academic and social needs in the immediate as well as examined system data to better understand students' long-term outcomes.

From the interviews and focus groups conducted with participants, it was clear that the

RISE program is overwhelmingly valued by the community. Researchers heard from many participants that students were receiving important supports through the RISE program and that educators were able to engage in effective pedagogical practices. However, the research also uncovered important structural concerns that warrant further investigation and attention. As such, the researcher's findings are nuanced and any response to their report must ensure that it centres the best interest of the child.

EXAMINING THE STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE OF RISE

1. Evidenced opportunities and consequences of tying student support directly to a partially integrated special education program structure.

1.1 Enhance Awareness and Ensure Implementation of Accommodations

1.2 Professional Development Opportunities for Educators

1.3 Resource Allocation

2. Varied perspectives on the purpose and aims of RISE.

2.1 Develop and Communicate the Purpose of RISE

EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RISE FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

3. Mixed Results Reported for Students' Academic Skills and Achievement in RISE.

3.1 Develop a framework that sets out program expectations for and documents assessment, pedagogical strategies, reporting practices and timelines for the RISE Program

3.2 Support recruitment of teachers with Literacy and Mathematics specializations to inform their pedagogy in RISE

3.3 Maintain High Expectations for Student Learning

3.4 Employ differentiated instruction and universal design strategies

4. A trend analysis shows that participation in RISE is highly correlated to elementary and secondary program pathways, which can shape access to postsecondary education.

5. Approximately 1/5 of students in RISE will leave and join the regular class before end of Grade 8.

5.1 Track and share program and pathway information with families.

6. Secondary School Pathways are fairly distinct, particularly for Mathematics.

7. Students in RISE were more likely to pursue courses and programs that have more limited opportunities to complete an OSSD as well as access to postsecondary education.

7.1 Access to Guidance Counsellors with high expectations and knowledge on elementary/secondary/postsecondary pathways.

7.2 Encourage and support students to pursue more challenging pathways.

7.3 When planning for students' programs and pathways, consider the implications on students' future access to postsecondary education.

8. Even when controlling for achievement, participation in RISE is related to greater

barriers for students' secondary and postsecondary options.

8.1 Investigate and remove potential barriers

RISE AND THE WORK OF FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS

9. RISE perceived as 'only option' for support.

9.1 Diversify Support Options

9.2 Engage Families in the Decision-Making Process

9.3 Improve Support and Recognition for RISE Educators

9.4 Foster a Community of Practice

9.5 Value the roles of all educators in the system

10. Families are engaging in extensive labour and connecting to external services to support their Children

10.1 Engage Families as Partners in the Care and Education of Children

10.2 A greater emphasis on sharing assessment information, and the potential pathways from RISE is needed

RISE AND THE EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS

11. Partially integrated, partially segregated - RISE as a safe space

11.1 Promote Inclusive Practices

11.2 Identify and address incidences of disability discrimination

11.3 Provide Comprehensive Training for Educators on Creating Inclusive, Trauma- Informed Safe Spaces

WHO DO THESE STRUCTURES AFFECT? EXAMINING STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

12. Overall demographics suggest that students in RISE, and for most identified special education categories, are more likely to be white, male, speak English as a first language and have always lived in Canada.

12.1 Ensure Equitable Access to Special Education

12.2 Further Examination of the Data.

12.3 Capture Socioeconomic Status in Future Data Collection

12.4 Adopt culturally responsive support and resources.

13. A need to address and challenge deficit understandings of disability

13.1 Embrace Sociocultural Perspectives on Disability and Difference

13.2 Recognize and respond to intersectional experiences

13.3 Adopt Differentiated Instruction and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in all classrooms

During the Spring of 2024 the senior team began the process of reviewing the above recommendations. From the report, Porter (2010) has outlined the steps required to ensure a successful transition. One of the steps indicates that, "We need to make a plan for transition and change and accept that this will take at least 3-5 years to do properly". While there were some immediate actions that took place decisions about the future of the RISE program will continue into the 2024-2025 school year.

For the 2024-25 school year:

1. **The RISE program will continue to exist**
2. **Demitting Gr. 8 students where possible** – This allows for students to increase self-advocacy skills needed for high school within a safe, established, trusting environment.
3. **Paused IPRC placements this year during RISE Review** – To ensure equitable access to programs and appropriate supports for students.
4. **Continue to pause IPRC's into RISE** – Concern from the research about fixed pathways for students, further marginalizing these students within and beyond the school context.

Further Actions:

Special Education staff submitted project proposals to the Ministry of Education for additional funding to support the following areas:

1. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) - A key component of this initiative is fostering collaboration and communication between departments. This interdepartmental learning will ensure that all staff members are working towards common goals, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the initiative. Enhanced collaboration across K-12, Special Education, Program, Student Success and Equity through effective understanding and implementation of UDL will lead to improved student outcomes and a reduction in the need for modifications in curriculum for students. This project aligns with recommendation in the Right to Read report including requiring school boards, to implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL) across all of the various education departments/systems.

We know that designing lessons through a lens of UDL that individual students differences are recognized from the outset to remove or minimize barriers. A UDL lesson is designed to meet the needs of all students in the classroom thereby minimizing the need to subsequently differentiate the lessons for individual students.

With this project the GECDSB is hoping to accomplish the following:

- Striving towards no program modifications before Grade 3
- A reduction in program modifications, especially in mathematics, before Grade 7
- A reduction in the number of students that are streamed into certificate pathways in grade 9
- Full participation for all students as we work towards phasing out partially integrated classrooms and work towards a more inclusive model of education
- Develop a greater understanding of how to leverage students' strengths
- Develop a greater understanding of the tools that can be utilized through Universal Design for Learning
- Start a mindset shift from placement of students in partially or fully integrated

- classrooms to one of lesson design and principles of UDL
- Start a mindset shift in secondary so that teachers implement new practices to address all learners in de-streamed pathways

We believe that all students deserve access to high quality literacy and mathematics and that teachers need support to meet the growing complexity and diverse learner needs within a classroom.

2. Differentiated Language and Literacy in Junior Classrooms – Our primary goal is to build teacher capacity to implement evidence-based literacy instruction and differentiation strategies within the classroom. With our secondary goal to Improve language and literacy outcomes for students with intellectual, language, and learning disabilities. We will target Grade 4 through 6 teachers across selected schools in GECDSB.

The Speech Language Pathologist will collaborate with teachers and the Teacher Consultant from the Program Department to:

1. Develop and support the implementation of a science-based literacy block.
2. Train teachers in the use of universal screeners, diagnostics, and intervention strategies.
3. Provide ongoing in-class support and coaching to ensure effective application of learned strategies.
4. Assist in progress monitoring and data collection to inform instructional adjustments.

This initiative will contain three professional development days held at each individual school. The days will include, capacity building which will involve learning about the science of reading and writing, screeners, and diagnostics to use to develop student profiles. Teachers will also receive information that pertains to what a literacy block will look like for all students. The last day will outline differentiation during the literacy block for students with language differences using the data collected.

3. Inclusive Math Intervention Pilot Project - This pilot project aims to expand our efforts in Tier 2 and 3 interventions within homeroom classrooms, equipping teachers with the skills needed to support students who struggle in mathematics. By fostering a more inclusive learning environment, we strive to address diverse learning needs and promote equitable access to mathematics education. Through ongoing professional development and support from the teacher interventionist/facilitator, homeroom teachers will gain the skills and knowledge necessary to implement effective math intervention strategies. This will ensure that teachers are well-equipped to support students with disabilities beyond the initial year of the project, creating a sustainable model for inclusive math education. By implementing the Jump Math intervention tool, we will use an evidence-based approach to address the specific needs of students with disabilities. This tool has been shown to be effective in improving mathematical understanding and skills, particularly for those who require additional support. The project will focus on enhancing instructional strategies to better prepare students with

special education needs for de-streamed math in secondary school. Teachers will learn how to differentiate instruction and use various teaching methods to engage all students, ensuring that those with learning disabilities are not left behind. By creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, we aim to increase student engagement in mathematics. This will help prevent learning gaps and ensure that students are well-prepared for the transition to de-streamed Grade 9 math.

4. Inclusive Physical Education Engagement Project - This project looks to expand upon the skills built through the Breaking Barriers: All Star Baseball project to support additional opportunities to train our high school Leadership classes on inclusive physical education to partner with the STEPS students. This will allow both semesters to have the opportunity to train with the Jays Care Foundation and provide reverse inclusion opportunities for leadership students to run programming for our STEPS students.

5. Inclusion Coach Pilot Project - Our pilot project proposes an Inclusion Coach position to support students with significant special education needs, including those who are non-verbal with autism spectrum disorder, have physical disabilities, and cognitive challenges. Many of these students will be transitioning to school for the first time or transitioning from elementary school to secondary schools. The Inclusion Coach will work to remove learning barriers by providing classroom coaching, co-creating accessible materials, conducting environmental assessments, and fostering inclusive learning environments. They will also build educators' capacity to implement inclusive practices confidently.

6. Project Search - The Project SEARCH Transition-to-Work Program is a unique, one-year employment preparation program for independent/high-functioning students with intellectual/ developmental disabilities that takes place entirely at the workplace. The school board would run a classroom in the business partner's space. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training through worksite internships. The program culminates in individualized job development. Students are immersed at a host business and get more than 700 hours of hands-on work experience geared to in-demand roles in the local labour market. A typical cohort would have approximately 10 students per year. This program targets independent students with intellectual/developmental disabilities (and in some cases mild intellectual disabilities) who are planning to pursue paid employment upon graduation.

Elementary System Specialized Placements

Our elementary Giving Attention to Individual Needs (GAINS) classes are full day self-contained programs for students with profound and complex needs. The total is 45 GAINS rooms plus the ASD classroom as of September 2024.

Anderdon - 1

AV Graham - 1 GAINS, 1 ASD

Beacon Heights - 1

Begley - 1

Brock - 1

Campbell - 1

Coronation - 1

Dougall 1

Eastview Horizon – 2
Erie Migration - 1
Essex - 3
Ford City -1
Forest Glade - 2
Hetherington - 1
King Edward - 2
LaSalle – 1
Legacy Oak - 1
Marlborough - 2

McWilliam - 2
M.D. Bennie - 1
Northwood - 3
Princess Elizabeth - 1
Queen Elizabeth - 2
Queen Victoria - 1
Southwood - 3
Suzuki -1
Talbot Trail - 3
West Gate - 2

Standard 9: Special Education Placements Provided by the Board

The Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Classroom is a short-term placement in a specialized self-contained classroom for students with Autism who have significant behavioural/safety and communication needs. The classroom provides intensive multi-disciplinary interventions for the purpose of transitioning students into the appropriate classroom.

Secondary System Specialized Placements

Our Secondary Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) are full day self-contained programs for students with profound and complex needs. These are the STEPS classrooms as of 2024.

Belle River – 2 STEPS,
1 Stepping In
Erie Migration – 1
Essex - 2
Herman - 3
Leamington - 1
Massey - 5

North Star -1
Riverside - 3
Sandwich - 2
Tecumseh Vista Academy - 2
Walkerville - 3
Westview Freedom Academy – 4
STEPS, 1 Stepping In

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

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

All secondary schools offer Locally Developed Compulsory Courses (LDCC) for Grade 9 and 10 students. These courses offer a pathway for students who are pursuing a secondary school diploma. A student does not have to be formally identified to attend these programs.

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



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

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

Individual Education Plans (IEP)

IEP Standards

- Students with IPRC designation will have IEPs.
- In addition, there is a category of “IEP non-identified” in some cases. Consultation with the principal, LST, the Educational Coordinator and parents/guardians is required. Most students with “IEP – non-identified” are moving towards further assessment and possible IPRC.
- Students with IEPs are entitled to modifications and/or accommodations that support and enhance success to assist them in reaching their full potential.
- The IEP is a working document that should have flexibility to be adjusted as needed throughout the school year to meet the needs of the student. IEPs are revised every reporting period.

IEP Standards & Report Card

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

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

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

Good communication and collaboration with parents/guardians during the initial stages of completing an IEP are very important in order to ensure that everyone is working toward common goals for a student. New for September 2024 is the introduction of the IEP Consultation Form. The IEP Consultation form will help to facilitate parental or guardian involvement in shaping the Individualized Education Program (IEP). With this form, parents/guardians can offer insights into the IEP's formation, and they have the option to engage a community partner who aids their child/ward. Furthermore, students aged 16 and above are encouraged to join in the consultation process.

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

- All assessments, recommendations from medical reports, IPRC strengths and

needs statements as well as parent/guardian input is reviewed collaboratively by the school team and parents/guardians or student, where appropriate, to determine major goal areas for a student's IEP. Parents/guardians may wish to include strategies for support at home.

- The classroom teacher prepares a draft IEP and shares the draft with key team members, parents/ guardians and the student, where appropriate. Input on the draft copy is reviewed by the school team and the final IEP copy is developed by the school team.
- The final copy is shared with teachers, parents/guardians and, where appropriate the student. The final copy is filed in the OSR. A copy goes home to parents/guardians and a copy is forwarded to the classroom teacher(s). Ongoing consultation and open communication with teachers and parent/guardian throughout the IEP process will prevent disagreement and difficulties with respect to IEP interpretation and implementation.
- When a parent/guardian disagrees with significant aspects of the IEP, the principal will convene a team meeting with special education staff, parent/guardian and key teachers to review concerns and find solutions.

Note: Individual Education Plan (IEPs) audits are conducted on an annual basis in both the elementary and secondary panels. The goal of these audits is to ensure quality and consistency in IEPs.

Transition Planning at GECDSB

Throughout their education, all students face a variety of transitions, including the transition from home or from an Early Years program to school, from one grade or level of schooling to another, from one school to another, and from secondary school to an appropriate post-secondary pathway. Positive transition planning and implementation requires a team, including the student, parents/guardians and school staff. Outside organizations can be particularly important when assisting students leaving school on a post-secondary pathway. All of our transition processes have one important thing in common and that is to reduce the level of anxiety students and families may experience.

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

1. Entry to School

- A child could be coming from home or has been in child care;
- If, when a child is registered at their community school in the spring for the first time for attendance at school in the fall, and parents and board staff agree that the child could benefit from a special education program and/or services, a case conference would be held with the school team;
- The case conference would include parents/guardians, their advocates, when invited by parents/guardians, and community partners as deemed appropriate;

- The student's profile would be developed, including strengths and areas of need, which would be the starting point of developing the IEP if required.

2. School to School Transition

- Many students change schools, whether because of program considerations or relocation of the family. Regardless of the reason, the transition can be made more smoothly with advance planning;
- When a transition is occurring, parents/guardians need to register their child at their new community school. Upon receiving the registration, the school principal shall initiate the appropriate transition process;
- In accordance with *The Ontario Student Record Guideline (2000)*, pertinent information about the student should be shared with the receiving school prior to the student's arrival so that appropriate supports are put in place;
- In planning programming the receiving school should use assessments from the originating school;
- The new school will receive a copy of the student's IEP, including the transition plan, as part of the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR).

3. Transition from Elementary to Secondary School

- Included in the IEP for all identified students;
- Students in Grade 7 to 12 are supported in their transition to school through the required development of an Individual Pathways Plan (IPP);
- To support students with special education needs transitioning from elementary to secondary, educators need to provide these students with information regarding types of secondary school programming and the requirements to complete the programs;
- Our expectation at GECDsB is that board staff help students understand their learning profiles/ needs so that they can further develop their self-advocacy skills.

4. Transitions from School to Work, Postsecondary Education, and Community Living

- The transition from secondary school to post-secondary destinations – whether further education or training, work, or independent living can be intimidating to many students. This transition can be particularly challenging for some students with special education needs. The probability of success is greatly increased when schools work with the student, parents/guardians, employers, community agencies, and providers of further education coordinated plans for exceptional students;
- Information shared with educators by students as documented in their IPP provides valuable information for developing the secondary-to-post-secondary transition plan;
- In addition, to support a student with special education needs in making the transition to work, further education, and/or community living, this process could include making provisions to help the student connect with post-secondary

institutions, community agencies, and/or the workplace, as appropriate.

(Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Resource Guide, 2017, pgs. C26- C33)

APPLIED BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS (ABA)

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

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

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

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

- Participation in our demonstration sites (elementary and secondary) to assist with capacity building in evidence-based strategies for students with special needs. These include: Early Years, RISE, ASD, GAINS, MAPS, STEPS and Stepping In.
- Professional Development opportunities for educators and administrators, including ABA topics such as, Reinforcement, Promoting Positive Classroom Behaviour, Function-Based Intervention, Classroom-Based Strategies to Promote Self Regulation, Structured Learning Supports, Explicit Teaching of Skills, and Practical Functional Assessment.
- On-site Behavioural Skills Training in assessing behaviour through the lens of meeting student needs in order to determine the best way to teach replacement skills.
- On-site training in completing Functional Behaviour Assessments (FBA) and the use of Universal Protocols in order to determine the function of a student's behaviour and maintain safety, televisibility and rapport;
- On-site training with educators in order to support the incorporation of ABA methods and strategies into the IEP;

- Staff conferences on Edsby and Microsoft Stream that are easily accessible to all staff for information, resources, strategies, documents, downloads, etc.;
- Consultations to educators and classroom teams by board personnel and/or community partners such as Thames Valley Children's Centre (TVCC) and John McGivney Children's Centre (JMCC);
- Developing individualized data collection materials based on need(s);
- Classroom observations and consultations in order to assist teams with setting up Structured Learning Environments;
- Environmental scans (Look-Fors) and Behavioural Management Systems supports to assist classroom teams with implementing best practices across multiple domains;
- Mandatory completion of the Introduction to Autism or ABA learning modules through Geneva Centre for Autism for all of our Educational Support Staff; including the opportunity of RBT training through the Enhanced training package
- Behaviour Analyst Implementation of a Ministry Pilot Project to implement Practical Functional Assessment and Skill Based Intervention with staff training to support their understanding of reinforcement-based needs and explicit teaching of skills for targeted students. The goal of the program is to determine how to create an environment that supports any student to become happy, relaxed and engaged while at school, whatever that may look like, to fuel their learning ability. From there, skills are developed in a systematic order, including expressing wants/needs, tolerance to the word 'No', and cooperation with instructions. Learning is continuously extended to increase how much is expected of the student and their flexibility within the classroom environment, all while prioritizing safety and relationships.
- Behaviour team staff training on supporting students with excessive behaviour and interfering stereotypes using advanced applications of ABA including Interview Informed Contingency Analyses.
- Implementation of classroom-wide behaviour technologies to promote self-regulation skill development, through both in-class training and consultation, as well as a Self-Regulation based pilot project throughout select kindergarten classrooms
- Classroom management and Behaviour Management Systems training opportunities for all Early Years teaching staff





Standard 11—Provincial Demonstration Schools in Ontario

Standard 11: Provincial Demonstration School in Ontario

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

Provincial School Contacts

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

The Provincial School for students who are Blind/Visually Impaired or Deaf-Blind:

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

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

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

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

The Provincial Schools for the Deaf:

The Robarts School for the Deaf

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

Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf

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

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

Schools for the deaf:

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

Each school has a Resource Services Department which provides:

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

Demonstration School for Students with Learning Disabilities:

Amethyst School

1090 Highbury Avenue London, Ontario N5Y 4V9

Tel: (519) 453-4400

Fax: (519) 453-2160

The Amethyst School provides a targeted instructional plan for students who have severe learning disabilities. They provide:

- educational programs for students in a residential setting;
- a specialized program that incorporates severe learning disabilities in association with an attention deficit hyperactivity disorder;
- self-advocacy training, social skills, individualized instruction and counseling;
- resources to school boards; and
- teacher training.

For the 2024–2025 school year, we have the following number of GECDSD students in each program:

- W. Ross Macdonald School for the Deaf-Blind – 2
- The Robarts School for the Deaf – 0
- Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf – 0
- Amethyst School for Learning Disabilities - 0



Standard 12—Special Education Staff

Standard 12: Special Education Staff

Special Education Staff

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

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

Education Support Staff (ESS)

We also have educational support staff to support students. These students have been identified as needing intensive support due to the complexity of their needs. Education Support Staff consist of Student Support Worker (SSW), Child and Youth Worker (CYW), and Support Worker for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SWDHH).

- ESS are not assigned as a “one-on-one” support for a student.
- Very few students who have IPRCs will require support from ESS.
- ESS have the goal of developing independence in the students that they work with and are not intended to be constant supervision for the students as they grow and develop.
- Students who require the assistance of a SWDHH may have “one-on-one” support.

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

Staff	Actual For 2023-2024	Projected for September 2024	Minimum Qualifications of Personnel
Special Education Coordinators	8	8	Bachelor of Education Special Education Part 1
Itinerant Teachers for Deaf/Hard of Hearing	4	4	Bachelor of Education Deaf Part 1

Itinerant Teachers for Blind/Low Vision	7	7	Bachelor of Education Blind Part 1
Behaviour/Transition Specialist	1	1	Completion of a post-secondary degree or diploma; post-graduate studies or equivalent field experience in behavioural science (e.g. in autism and behavioural science, psychology)
Special Education Needs Transition Navigators		1	Specialist in Special Education; Master or Doctoral Degree in Special Education would be an asset

Professional Student Services Personnel	Actual For 2023-2024	Projected For September 2024	Minimum Qualifications of Personnel
Psychologist	6	6	Ph.D., & registration with the College of Psychologists of Ontario (C.Psych)
Psychological Associate	0.5	0.8	MSc. & registration with the College (C.Psych.Assoc.)
Psychoeducational Consultant	3	3	M.A., M.Ed., or M. Sc. – supervised by Ph.D.
Board Certified Behaviour Analyst(BCBA)	3	5	M.A., Board Certified Behavioural Analyst
Applied Behaviour Analyst Facilitator	3	5	Ontario Secondary School Diploma

Speech/Language Pathologists	9	9	M.Sc. & registration with the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologist of Ontario (CASLPO)
Communicative Disorder Assistant	1.5	1.5	Communicative Disorders Assistant Diploma –

Educational Support Staff	Actual for 2023-2024	Projected for September 2024	Minimum Qualifications of Personnel
Student Support Workers		556	Ontario Secondary School Diploma
Educational Assistants funded by Jordan Principle	28	33	Ontario Secondary School Diploma
Child and Youth Worker (CYW)	76	77	CYW Diploma
Support Workers for Deaf and Hard of Hearing	18	17	Level 2 - Interpreter Training Program from a recognized institution. American Sign Language proficiency rating of 3. Level 1 – related community college diploma and/or courses and/or lived experience. American Sign Language proficiency rating of 2.

For the 2024 – 2025 school year, the positions formally known as Educational Assistants and Developmental Service Workers have been changed to the new job title of Student Support Workers.



Standard 13—Staff Development



Standard 13: Staff Development

Staff Development

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

- Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression;
- Continued focus on ABA/Autism professional development for all staff;
- Planning a clear and coherent vision for programming for gifted students;
- Promoting independence skills for all students;
- Individual Education Plans in both the elementary and secondary panels;
- Reading interventions;
- Early intervention.

Our professional development reflect these priorities. The GECDSB continues to strongly endorse professional development through school day or after school workshops and conferences. The Ministry documents, *Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Gr. 12, Policy and Resource Document 2017*, and *Learning for All 2013* continue to provide a strong philosophical basis of our professional development.

Equity PD

All Staff will take

- N Word Resources
- Gender Identity Training
- Islamophobia

Reading Intervention PD

Coaches and Early Intervention Teachers will take:

- Acadience Training – Grade 1&2 English, French Immersion and Kindergarten French Immersion
- Science of Reading

Learning Support Teachers will take:

- Empower Training - New to the Role
- Empower Refresher Training
- Acadience Training

Teachers will take:

- Lexia Core5 Training

Kindergarten, Grades 1 – 3 Teachers, RISE, ELL, LST, Early Childhood Educators, Itinerant Teachers for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- Science of Reading

- Informal training and support

Selected GAINS Teachers will take:

- Science of Reading

Positive Behavioural Supports PD

Applicable Staff will take:

- Behaviour Management Systems Training and Recertification

Kindergarten Teachers

- Self-Regulation and Well-Being - Focus on Early Years
- Feed the Need: Teaching Functionally Equivalent Replacement Behaviour

Job Specific PD

Early Childhood Educators

- Mathematics (K-8)

Child and Youth Workers

- Responding to Student Mental Health Needs
- Parent Based Information – School Based Anxiety
- Depression in Children and Adolescents
- Boost Your Behaviour Plans: Tools to Enhance Implementation (Elementary only)
- Behaviour and Safety Plan Training
- Can't Read, Can't Write, Here's My Book (Elementary only)
- Compassion Fatigue (Elementary only)
- Building Better Behaviours: Applying Behaviour Change Strategies in the Classroom (Elementary Only)

Developmental Service Workers (DSW) will take:

- Trauma Informed Training
- Lesson Pix Software Training
- Lesson Pix Question/Answer Support Session
- Boom Card Software Training
- Advanced Boom Card Software Training
- Can't Read, Can't Write, Here's My Book (Elementary only)
- Compassion Fatigue (Elementary only)
- Building Better Behaviours: Applying Behaviour Change Strategies in the Classroom (Elementary Only)

Educational Assistants

- Structured Learning (Elementary only)
- Can't Read, Can't Write, Here's My Book (Elementary only)

- Compassion Fatigue (Elementary only)
- Building Better Behaviours: Applying Behaviour Change Strategies in the Classroom (Elementary Only)

Support Worker for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- Provincial Schools Branch Session
- Can't Read, Can't Write, Here's My Book (Elementary only)
- Compassion Fatigue (Elementary only)
- Building Better Behaviours: Applying Behaviour Change Strategies in the Classroom (Elementary Only)

GAINS Teachers

- New to GAINS
- GAINS Team PD (included DSW and EA)
- Behaviour Management Systems Refresher Training

Learning Support Teachers (LST) will take:

- Elementary LST Workshop
- New to LST

RISE Teachers

- New to RISE

Secondary Learning Support Teachers

- Secondary LST Workshop
- Add Subject Specific Day

STEPS Teachers

- Behaviour Management Systems Refresher Training

Teachers who support students who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing

- Hearing Awareness Workshop

Teachers who support students who are Blind and/or Low Vision

Ministry of Education funding was allocated to the GECDSB this year to subsidize teachers in both the elementary and secondary panels, to complete a wide range of Special Education Additional Qualification courses. At this time, given the subsidy available, 20 teachers across the elementary and secondary panel have signed up for additional qualifications in the area of Special Education.

Ministry of Education funding was allocated through the Ontario Educator Autism Training Program – Online Course Stream 2023/2024 through the Sonderly platform,


the training division of the Geneva Centre for Autism. This training was offered to all Educational Support Staff on a first-come first-serve basis until all spots had been filled.

Additional Ministry funding was provided for our Early Childhood Educator's (ECE). Thirteen ECE's took the Self-Regulation in Early Childhood Development Certificate Program offered through the MEHRIT Centre in 2021-2022.

Priorities in the area of staff development are determined by Ministry of Education initiatives, Board initiatives, Superintendent initiatives, professional development session feedback from participants, the ESS PD Committee, school-based determination of needs, staff and student needs and parent concerns.

Staff are trained with regard to legislation and Ministry policy on Special Education through NTIP workshops, after school workshops, and PA Day workshops. The Board allocates a budget to address staff development centrally and learning opportunities are coordinated by the Special Education Department.

Partnerships are initiated between Program, Safe Schools and Special Education Departments to ensure that Special Education is incorporated into all professional development sessions.



Standard 14—Equipment

Standard 14: Equipment

Special Education Equipment

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

School Year	# of Students	Total Application Cost	Board Cost
2023-2024 SEA Per Pupil*	653	\$930,263.80	Nil
2023-2024 Claims Based	92	\$351,955.90	\$73,600

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

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

The following are examples of some of the equipment the Board purchases to support students who are Exceptional and who are eligible for the Ministry Special Equipment Amount:

- Grab Bars
- Scanners
- Toilet Seats
- Computer
- Tables/Wheelchair Tables
- Toileting Slings
- Computer Software

- Commodes
- Personal FM Units

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

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

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

SEA Equipment Training

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) provides SEA Equipment training through the Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor Essex County (LDAWE).

Training to be provided by LDAWE on the following items:

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

Initial Student Training

All training will take place in the student's home school. Training will be based on the software and hardware ordered for the student. GECDSB Special Education will approve all software-training plans. All lesson plans for both the laptop will be available for review by the GECDSB personnel. Training for students will include:

Laptop (up to grade 6) - (up to 5 hours)

- Hardware, file organization, accessibility features
- Immersive Reader
- Microsoft Dictate
- Word Q
- Office 365 (OneNote, OneDrive, Word, PowerPoint)
- Toy Theater Virtual Manipulatives

Laptop (grade 7 and older) - (up to 2.5 hours)

- Hardware, file organization, accessibility features, calendar
- Immersive Reader

- Microsoft Dictate
- Office 365 (OneNote, OneDrive, Word, PowerPoint)
- Equatio

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

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



Standard 15—Accessibility of School Buildings

Standard 15: Accessibility of School Buildings

Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) – Plan for 2022

The Board of Trustees for the GECDSB passed the Policy and Regulation for the AODA Customer Service Standard at the Public Board Meeting on February 6, 2017.

The GECDSB remains committed to the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity. Our actions will demonstrate our belief in the strength diversity brings to our communities. Training for GECDSB staff will continue to be conducted regarding Accessibility Awareness as new employees are hired. A second mandatory training for all staff on AODA was conducted in May 2019. This training is conducted in a 5 year cycle and will be completed in May 2024.

The annual ODA plan and previous plans can be accessed through the Board website at the following address:

<https://www.publicboard.ca/en/family-and-community-support/accessibility.aspx>

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

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

If you are the parent/guardian of a student who needs the accommodation of a certified service animal (CSA), please contact the Principal of your community school and they will guide you through the application process.





Standard 16—Transportation


Standard 16: Transportation for Students with Special Education Funds

Student transportation is provided through the Windsor-Essex Student Transportation Services (WESTS), which is a separate legal entity, services four school boards which include the GECDSB, Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board, Conseil Scolaire Viamonde, and Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence.

- The Consortium is governed by the Board of Directors comprised of representatives of the four member Boards. The Board of Directors sets transportation policies for the Consortium that are applied to each member Board on a fair and equitable basis.
- The Special Educational Coordinator, in consultation with the transition team, parents/guardians and community agencies complete information about specific student transportation needs. This information is forwarded to the Board for processing. The Board will consult with the Transportation Consortium to determine the best possible mode of transportation for a child. The final decision regarding transportation will be made by the Special Education Department.
- Depending on the identified needs of the child, the following transportation options are considered:
 - Regular school bus (community or home stop)
 - Wheelchair accessible school bus
 - Taxi cab
 - Parent paid transportation
- Students attending care and treatment facilities, or correctional facilities often require transportation for integration into community schools, as well as daily transportation to their specific programs. These needs are communicated to our Transportation Consortium by the Principal of the Agency Schools.
- Decisions regarding the transportation of students presenting “high risk” behaviours are generally discussed at the ~~initial~~ IPRC meeting. Often further consultation with the Special Education Department and the Transportation Consortium occurs due to the high costs associated with this type of transportation request. Students presenting unsafe travel behavior may need to be transported separately. Decisions about special accommodations for students with safety needs are made in partnership with parents/guardians, the Transportation Consortium, the Superintendent of Special Education, and team members in the student’s program.
- All students requiring special transportation must have the Special Education Transportation Application and the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act) form completed, the AODA form identifies any equipment requirements or accommodations required for transportation completed. This equipment may include seatbelts, buckle guard, and vests.

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

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



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC) - Section C

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

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

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

Procedures for Selection

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

Process for Filling SEAC Vacancies

<https://www.publicboard.ca/en/programs-and-learning/special-education-advisory-committee.aspx>

Application and Nomination forms

<chrome-extension://efaidnbnmnnibpcajpcgiclfindmkaj/https://www.publicboard.ca/en/programs-and-learning/resources/Documents/SEAC-Nomination-Form.pdf>

Roles and Responsibilities

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

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

SEAC Meetings

The Special Education Advisory Committee meets 10 times a year. Meetings will be posted on the board website. Meetings begin at 1 pm and are open to the public. The meeting dates for the 2024–2025 school year are:

Wednesday, September 11, 2024
Wednesday, October 9, 2024
Wednesday, November 13, 2024
Wednesday, December 11, 2024
Wednesday, January 8, 2025

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
Wednesday, March 19, 2025
Wednesday, April 9, 2025
Wednesday, May 13, 2025
Wednesday, June 11, 2025

Meetings are held at the Board Office but may be held elsewhere at the committee's discretion. SEAC members elect a chairperson annually in January and meetings follow a prepared agenda.

Greater Essex County District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee Membership -2022-2026

Autism Ontario (Windsor Essex) Tim McCarthy

Jan Matte Gasparovic (Alternate)

<https://www.autismontario.com/>

Community Living Windsor-Essex County

Martha Vukov

TBA (Alternate)

<https://www.communitylivingessex.org/>

Home and School Associations

(Windsor Council)

Chelsey Lackovic

TBA (Alternate)

Windsor-Essex County Up About Down Syndrome Parent Association

Joanna Conrad

Monica Gilles (Alternate)

<https://www.upaboutdown.org/>

Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex

Mary-Ann Fuduric

Lucy Coppola (Alternate)

<https://www.ldawe.ca>

Indigenous Community – First Nations, Metis, and Inuit (FNMI)

Louise Cervini

Kimberly John (Alternate)

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise

Sarah Yang

Erin Jordan (Alternate)

<https://www.hdgh.org/>

Trustee

Kim McKinley

Linda Qin (Alternate)

<https://www.publicboard.ca>

Trustee

Nancy Armstrong

Linda Qin (Alternate)

<https://www.publicboard.ca>



COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES - Section D

**GECDSB Coordination with Ministries and
Agencies**



Coordination of Services with Other Ministries or Agencies

The GECDSD in partnership with the community provide learning opportunities which support, challenge and inspire all students to achieve their full potential and enable them to participate meaningfully in their communities.

- The GECDSD is committed to developing partnerships within the community in order to plan for and provide special education programs and services for students who are entering the system from other agencies and programs or moving from the system to other agencies and programs.
- Building strong partnerships within our community on behalf of students and parents/guardians is viewed as an important goal in special education.
- As the number of children experiencing difficulties in the school and community continue to rise it is crucial to consider innovative ways to meet the needs of students.
- The following list of partnerships with community agencies and programs reflects those used most frequently by the board: Associations for Community Living (Windsor and Essex), Autism Ontario, Big Sisters/Big Brothers, Canadian Hearing Society, Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Parent Association, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Essex Preschool Speech and Language Services, Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario, Family Respite Services, Local Resolution Table, Home and School Associations, Children First, Essex- Windsor Chapter of Integration Action for Inclusion, Learning Disabilities Association Windsor-Essex, John McGivney Children's Centre, Maryvale, New Beginnings, Parents for Children's Mental Health, Talk 2 Me, United Way, Voice, Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society, Windsor Essex County Health Unit, and Windsor Regional Children's Centre.
- The Board website contains a Mental Health and Well-Being page for students, parents and staff. This page provides a point of access for mental health information. It can be accessed at:
<https://www.publicboard.ca/en/family-and-community-support/mental-health-and-well-being.aspx>

Education and Community Partnership Program

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

External Agency Partnership Protocol

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

Transitions into School

Entry to school represents a major threshold and transition in a child's life. Familiarity with the expectations of the school setting helps children adjust more easily to school and reduces anxiety for both parents/guardians and children during this transition. For children with special needs, entry to school can be more complex and therefore requires careful planning and coordination. Effective transition planning for children with special needs must occur at both the community level and at the level of the individual child and family to be successful. Each fall the Inclusion Network of Windsor and Essex County meet in October to review and make changes to the Transition Protocol with the goal of further refining the transition process for new students to area school boards, including the GECDSB.

Transition plans are developed for students with exceptional needs to ensure a smooth transition from pre-school child care settings to school. Special Education Coordinators collaborate with staff from pre-school child care settings. Special Education Coordinators meet with representatives from the various Ministries to establish links and relationships with parents/guardians and children prior to the child's entry into school in the GECDSB.

Education and Community Partnership Program

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

Assessments from Other Boards, Ministries or Agencies

The school, in conjunction with the appropriate personnel (such as Psychological Services, Speech-Language Pathology and Social Work) will review assessments accompanying students entering the GECDSB system from other boards, Ministries, or agencies. Where identification as an exceptional pupil is being considered, the Ontario Student Record (OSR) contents and assessments will be reviewed by appropriate school board personnel to determine whether or not the student meets the criteria for identification. Additional assessments will be recommended if additional information is required. Assessments would generally be completed in a six to eight week period.

Information Sharing

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

School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS)

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

- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Physiotherapy (PT)
- Speech Language Pathology (SLP)

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

The objectives of the SBRS are:

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

Who is Eligible for the School Based Rehabilitation Services?

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

School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS) Referral Process

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

Administration as prescribed medication and injections.

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

Administration as prescribed oral medication.

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

- Parent or Guardian reviews assessment with Principal to verify procedure and resolve any disputes about eligibility and level of support.

Occupational Therapy (OT).

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

Physical Therapy (PT).

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

Nutrition

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

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

- JMCC has qualified Speech Language Pathology Providers (SLP) to provide service.
- Speech Language Pathology Assessment by registered SLP determines eligibility: Severe Articulation, fluency, voice and non-verbal
- SLP determines when goals are met and no further intervention is required.
- SLP consults with parent or guardian and possibly JMCC manager if any further issues arise.

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

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

- HCCSS Care Coordinator and qualified medical practitioner meet with parent/ guardian

Lifting/Positioning and Assistance with mobility and toileting.

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



SUBMISSION AND AVAILABILITY OF THE PLAN - Section E



2024-25 Special Education Plan Checklist


Please submit to your regional office by July 31, 2024

District School Board/School Authority: Greater Essex County District School Board		
Compliance with <i>Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans (2000)</i> reproduced in full in <i>Special Education in Ontario Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Resource Guide (2017)</i>	Report on the provision of Special Education Programs and Services 2023-24	Amendments to the 2024-25 Special Education Plan
Special Education Programs and Services		
Model for Special Education	√	
Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) Process	√	
Special Education Placements Provided by the Board	√	√
Individual Education Plans (IEP)	√	√
Special Education Staff	√	√
Specialized Equipment	√	√
Transportation for Students with Special Education Needs	√	
Transition Planning	√	
Roles and Responsibilities	√	
Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities	√	
Provincial and Demonstration Schools in Ontario	√	
The Board's Consultation Process	√	√
The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)	√	√
Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies	√	√
Educational and Other Assessments	√	
Coordination of Services with Other Ministries or Agencies	√	
Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings	√	
Staff Development	√	√
Accessibility (AODA)	√	√
Parent Guide to Special Education	√	
<i>Where programs and services have not been provided as outlined in the 2023-24 Special Education Plan, please provide a description of the variance:</i>		

Additional Information:	
Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals (PPM 149) posted on school board website.	√
Special education is included in our ongoing self-improvement with respect to the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement.	√

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

Name of the Director of Education	
Vicki Houston	

Signature of the Director of Education	Date
	September 18, 2024
_____	_____

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Individual Education Plan (IEP) Template

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

Appendix 3 – Individual Education Plan (IEP) Consultation Form

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

Appendix 5 - Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) Plan for 2022-23

Appendix 6 – Special Education Acronyms

Appendix 1: The IEP Template

Student Name

School Year:

OEN:

DOB:

Grade:

School:

Principal:

IEP Date:

IPRC Date:

Waiver Date:

Reason for Development:

Exceptionality:

IEP Date:

IPRC Date:

Waiver Date:

Reason for Development:

Placement Information

Placement Start Date

Placement

Sources for IEP Creation

IEP Development Team

Position

Staff Member

Program Information

Program Exemptions and/or Substitutions:

Reporting Dates

First Reporting Date
Date

Second Reporting Date

Third Reporting

Reporting Format

Assessments

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

Strengths and Needs

Areas of Strength	Areas of Need

Subjects, Courses or Alternative Programs to which the IEP applies

Subject/Course	Program Type

Modifications/Alternative

IEP Accommodations

Instructional	Environmental	Assessment

Transition
Overall Goals

Actions	Persons Responsible for Actions	Timeline

Communication

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

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

Principal

Date

- I was consulted in the development of the Individual Education Plan.
- I declined the opportunity to be consulted in the development of the Individual Education Plan.
- I have received the Individual Education Plan.
- I understand that my child's IEP may be shared with all of his/her teachers and support staff.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Student's Signature

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

Appendix 2—Parent Guide to the IEP

Parent Guide to the Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Developing the IEP

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

You can help by:

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

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

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

Carrying out the IEP at Home - Making Learning a Priority

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

Tips for Parents

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

How do I work as an effective IEP partner?

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

As a parent:

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

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Parent Guide to the Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Assessment & Review

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

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

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

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

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Appendix 3—Individual Education Plan (IEP) Consultation Form

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) CONSULTATION FORM

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

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

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

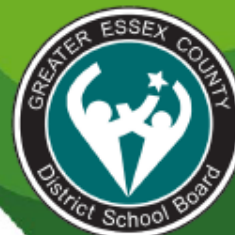
Area	From the Parent/Guardian/Student Input
AREAS OF STRENGTH What is [student] good at doing, things they do on their own?	
AREAS OF NEED In what areas does [student] need help?	
AREAS OF INTEREST What are the [students'] talents, interests and hobbies?	
STUDENT PREFERENCES What kind of positive reinforcement/rewards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

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

Appendix 3—Parent Guide to the IPRC

Parent Guide to IPRC

(Identification, Placement and Review of Exceptional People)



Our Philosophy

The Greater Essex County District School Board offers a range of special education programs and services to address the needs of students. Most students with special needs will be encouraged to succeed in the regular classroom with appropriate supports, modifications and accommodations. The placement of a student in a regular class setting is the first option in the range of programs and services provided, that is considered by the IPRC and shared with parents.

Some students however need specialized support to achieve success. Occasionally, some students need the support of specialized programs and services which are offered at neighborhood schools, another school, or other locations.

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

Parents/guardians and pupils 16 years of age or older shall be full partners with regard to assessment, identification and placement decisions. As full partners, parents/guardians will be made aware of their rights in the entire process including the right to mediation and/or appeal. Upon the completion of the initial identification process, continued partnership between home and school is strongly encouraged. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) is viewed as a valuable and necessary document that will assist parents and teachers in developing common goals for exceptional students.

Who is an exceptional pupil?	The Ministry of Education defines an exceptional pupil as: <i>"A pupil whose behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he/she is considered to need placement in a special education program by a Special Education Identification, Placement and Review Committee."</i>
What are Special Education Programs and Services?	Special Education Program is an educational program that is based on assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil. Special Education Services are facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing, a special education program (Ministry of Education Definition)
How are Special Education Programs Delivered?	The type of special education program depends on the intensity of the educational needs of the pupil. The options include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular class with consultative support. • Regular class with withdrawal support in a resource room or within the classroom. • Special education class part time. • Special education class full time. • Provincial demonstration school (i.e. Robarts School in London).

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What does an IPRC do?	<p>An IPRC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May determine your child to be exceptional. • Shall determine the placement of your child if he/she is exceptional. • Shall review the placement of your child at least annually. • Shall set the date on which the Board will be notified of its decision. • Shall provide you with a written statement of the Committee's determinations about your child, or to the pupil if he/she is an adult, and to the principal.
What is the composition of an IPRC?	<p>Each IPRC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a minimum of three members, one of whom shall be a principal/vice-principal or a supervisory officer/designate employed by the Board. • Has other persons appointed by the Board who can assist the Committee. <p>*Please note that other staff members may attend as well. You may also invite others to the /PRC meeting to support you.</p>
What is an IEP?	<p>An Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed for your child in consultation with you. The IEP outlines the special education programs and services that will be received and specific educational expectations. The IEP must be completed 30 school days after your child has been placed in the program. You will be consulted and will receive a copy of your child's IEP.</p>
Who determines that your child is exceptional?	<p>The Principal of your school requests a committee appointed by the Board, called the Special Education Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), to determine whether or not your child is exceptional.</p>
What information is presented to the IPRC?	<p>The Principal presents the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Cards • Educational Assessment • Psychological Report • Social Work Report (if required) • Speech-Language Pathology Report (if required) • Other reports that you feel should be considered by the /PRC.
What do you do if you disagree or have concerns about the determination?	<p>Within 15 days, write the Principal of your school of your concerns and the Committee will schedule a second meeting within seven (7) days or at a mutually agreeable time. If you still disagree with the identification, and/or placement of your child, within 15 days of the second meeting with the Committee, you may make an appeal by writing to: The Secretary of the Board Greater Essex County District School Board 451 Park Street West, Windsor, Ontario N9A 6K1.</p>
Can you as a parent request that your child be referred to the IPRC?	<p>Yes. You should write your request to the Principal who must then refer your child to the IPRC. You should also send a copy of the letter to the appropriate Superintendent of Schools.</p>



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

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

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



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Appendix 4 – ODA 2024-2025 Plan

Greater Essex District School Board

Administrative Building: 451 Park Street West, P. O. Box 210, Windsor, Ontario N9A 6K1, **Telephone** (519) 255-3200

GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ODA) FOR THE YEAR SEPTEMBER 2023 TO AUGUST 2024

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

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

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

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

The ODA Committee would like to provide an on-going opportunity for all staff, parents and community partners of the Greater Essex County District School Board to communicate accessibility concerns to the School Board. To share your suggestion and input, please email the committee at: ODACommittee@publicboard.ca

Plan In Accordance with Ontarians With Disabilities Act (ODA) for the year September 2023 to August 2024

1. List of Barriers, Objectives, and Responsibilities

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

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

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

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

Resources: Facility Services

Time Line: 2023/24 School Year projects chosen on an “as needed basis: with students as the priority

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

Barrier: Accessible Washrooms

Objective: To provide access and functionality to washrooms

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

Performance Criteria: Meets the needs as necessary

Resources: Appropriate materials required to modify the washrooms

Time Line: 2023/24 School Year projects chosen on an “as needed basis” with students as the priority

Responsibility: Facility Services, Special Education Department, School Principal

Barrier: Accommodations for the Visually Impaired as deemed appropriate

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

Means to Prevent or Remove: Provide appropriate accommodations

Performance Criteria: Meets the needs as necessary

Resources: As deemed appropriate

Time Line: 2023/24 School Year projects chosen on an “as needed basis” with students and staff as the priority

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

Barrier: Automatic Doors – graduated implementation

Objective: To provide access to schools for people with disabilities

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

Performance Criteria: People with disabilities will have access to schools

Resources: As deemed appropriate

Time Line: 2024/25 School Year projects chosen on an “as needed basis” with students as the priority Responsibility: Facility Services, Special Education Department, School Principal)

The ODA Committee has reviewed the ODA Plan for the 2024/25 school year.

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

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

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

2. Renovations completed at elementary and secondary schools during 2023/24 school year:

Glenwood PS: Barrier-free washroom upgrades (current barrier-free washroom does not meet building code).

Hugh Beaton PS: New barrier-free washroom, washroom upgrades which will include barrier-free upgrades, relocation of existing office (currently on the second floor) to main entrance creating a barrier-free access to the office space.

Riverside SS: Special Education upgrades which include a barrier-free washroom as the current barrier-free washroom does not meet the building code.

3. Renovations planned at elementary and secondary schools for completion during the 2024/25 school year:

Massey SS: Replacement /modification of 12 interior doors to create a barrier-free path of travel. Replacement of 7 exterior doors/vestibules to meet barrier-free path of travel requirement.

Forest Glade / Forest Glade PLC: Washroom upgrades which include barrier-free upgrades.

Queen Elizabeth PS: New barrier-free washroom

Information & Communication:

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

Employment Standards:

During the 2022-23 school year, the Board undertook an Employment Systems Review to create a more diverse workforce by evaluating formal and informal policies and practices related to the recruitment, hiring and selection processes. A plan to adopt recommendations is currently being developed.

Note: Cleaning protocols will be continued to ensure that high touch surfaces, such as elevator buttons and automatic door opener buttons are disinfected. Hand sanitizing stations continue to be maintained at all building entrances.

Appendix 5 – Glossary

Acronyms

AODA: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorder
CYW: Child and Youth Worker
DSW: Developmental Service Worker
EA: Educational Assistant
GAINS: Giving Attention to Individual Needs
GECDSB: Greater Essex County District School Board
HCCSS: Home and Community Care Support Services
IEP: Individual Education Plan
IPRC: Identification, Placement Review Committee
LIHN: Local Health Integration Network
LDCC: Locally Developed Compulsory Credits
LST: Learning Support Teacher
MACSE: Minister’s Advisory Council on Special Education
MAPS: My Achievement Pathway to Success
OSR: Ontario Student Record
OT: Occupational Therapy
PT: Physical Therapy
RISE: Reaching Individual Success and Excellence
SHSSP: School Health Support Services Program
SEA: Special Education Amount
SEAC: Special Education Advisory Committee
SIP: Special Incidence Portion
SLP: Speech-Language Pathologist
SSLI: Student Support Leadership Initiative
SSW: Student Support Worker
STEPS: Steps to Enhance Personal Success
SWDHH: Support Worker for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing