

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT: ELEMENTARY SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT MODEL

EDUCATION, POLICY AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

February 7, 2024

Purpose

To provide Trustees with an update on the findings of the Special Education review and proposed changes to the current special education service delivery model in elementary schools to better meet the needs of complex learners within an inclusive learning environment.

Background

A special education review was completed in the Spring of 2023 to gather feedback from students and families related to key supports and services that directly impact student success.

Findings from the review identified the need for ongoing capacity building for educators and support staff, multi-tiered systems of support within schools, and flexible and responsive learning environments with a focus on purposeful, planned, and meaningful inclusion.

Achievement and success of students with special education needs continues to be an area of concern within LDSB and alternative approaches to supporting students in the margins should be explored.

Schools and families continue to advocate for school-based supports for complex learners to safely and supportively engage in inclusive learning environments.

Students shared that they need flexible and responsive spaces within the school setting to regulate, access support, and connect to caring and knowledgeable adults.

LDSB currently has four District Autism Classrooms (DAC), five District Learning Centres (DLC), and 2.5 Learning Disability Programs (LD). In addition, there are currently 19 Itinerant and Site-Based School to Community teachers, and a 1.0 Itinerant Behaviour teacher. School to Community teachers primarily serve students who have an identification of Developmental Disability through the

Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process. Similarly, the Itinerant Behaviour teacher provides service to a small number of students with behaviour/safety concerns.

At the system level we currently have three district teams: the Behaviour Action team, the School to Community team, and the Autism team. These teams are deemed to be Tier 3 interventions and as such, are only available through a referral process. These teams contain the following staff: 1.8 Speech Language Pathologist, 0.5 Clinical Consultant, 8 Student Support Counselors, 1 Board Certified Behaviour Analyst, and 3 Intervention Assistants.

Finally, Educational Services is supported by four Special Education Coordinators, two of whom primarily support students with Autism and Intellectual Disabilities, and two who support other services such as Individual Education (IEP) development and Transition to Kindergarten.

Current Status

Based on the special education review and an assessment of services provided by Educational Services, we will be proposing some changes to the current service deliver model based on the following considerations:

- Equity of access to supports and services in a students' home school.
- Flexible and responsive support, programming, and access to spaces that adapt and respond to a students' unique learning profile.
- Fully inclusive learning environments supported by caring and knowledgeable staff.
- Increased access to supports/services through a reduction of independent, and identification specific, service delivery.

A more fulsome report on these changes will be discussed with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) on Wednesday, February 14th, 2024. Trustees will be advised of any recommendations from SEAC, and the final plan presented at the February 28th, 2024 Board Meeting.

Recommendation

That this report be received for information purposes.

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