

TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Agenda

Public Session

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2009

Trustee Members

Ann Andrachuk

Paul John Crawford

Vice-Chair, Angela Kennedy

Dario Imbrogno, Chair
Community Representative

Judith Andrenacci
Community Living Toronto

Don Cameron
Community Representative

Rosanna Del Grosso
Association for Bright Children

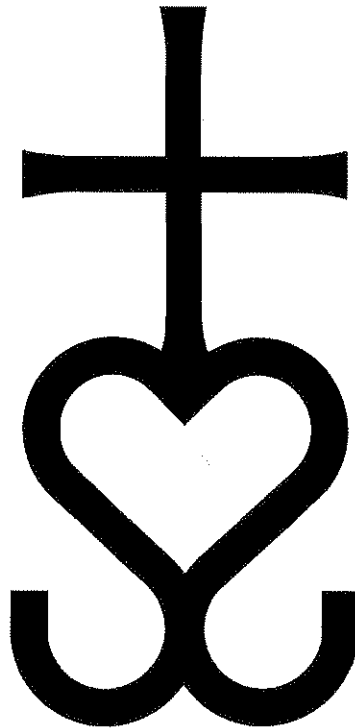
John Lentz
Voice for Hearing Impaired

Ashleigh Molloy
Down Syndrome Association

Virginia Pearce
Community Representative

Marilyn Taylor
Learning Disabilities Association

Ara Zoviguian
Autism Society Ontario



Recording Secretary : Lalita Fernandes 416-222-8282 Extension 2293

In a school community formed by Catholic beliefs and traditions,
our Mission is to educate students to their full potential.

Ann Perron
Director of Education

AGENDA
THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2009

7:00 p.m.

- 1. Memorials and Prayer.**

- 2. Roll Call and Apologies.**
 - a) Oath of Office – Rosanna Del Gross.

- 3. Approval of the Agenda.**

- 4. Declarations of Interest.**

- 5. Approval and Signing of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held September 16, 2009. p.1-p.4.**

- 6. Delegations:**

7. **Presentations:**
 - a) Christiane Kyte, Acting Chief Speech and Language , regarding speech and language services.

8. **Unfinished Business:**

9. **Notices of Matter and Trustee Matters: (for which ninety-six hours notice has been given)**

10. **Communications:**
 - a) Briefing Note on screening of gifted children. **p.5-p.6**
 - b) Flyer regarding Education and Community Resource Fair to be held November 7, 2009. **p.7**
 - c) Parent Guide to Special Education (**to be distributed**).

11. **Matters Referred/Deferred to the Committee by the Board and Other Committees.**

12. **Reports of Officials and Special and Permanent Committees Requiring Action.**

13. **Reports of Officials and Special and Permanent Committees for Information:**

14. Inquiries and Miscellaneous:

- a) Christmas Social and possible change of date for December 2009 meeting of SEAC.

15. Association Reports:

16. Update from Trustees on resolutions recommended to the Board by the Committee:

17. Update of Pending List

DATE REQUESTED	SUBJECT	DUE DATE
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18. Adjournment.

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
HELD WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2009**

PUBLIC SESSION

PRESENT:

Dario Imbrogno, Chair
Judith Andrenacci
Don Cameron
Ashleigh Molloy
Virginia Pearce
Marilyn Taylor
Ara Zoviguian

Trustees: Ann Andrachuk
Angela Kennedy

Angela Gauthier
Frank Piddisi
Susan Menary
Maria Kokai
Odilia Pariselli
Lea Cardinalli
Mary Gomes
Michael Colella
A. Sablinskas
Christiane Kyte
S. DiNallo

Lalita Fernandes, Recording Secretary

Apologies were received from John Lentz and Trustee Crawford who were unable to attend the meeting.

MOVED by Trustee Andrachuk, that the agenda, as amended, be approved.

CARRIED

MOVED by Ashleigh Molloy, that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held June 3, 2009 be approved.

CARRIED

Paul Crawford, Superintendent of Education, made a presentation to the Committee regarding Suspension/Expulsion Data 2009-2009.

MOVED by Trustee Andrachuk, that the presentation by Paul Crawford, Superintendent of Education, regarding Suspension/Expulsion Data 2009-2009 be received.

CARRIED

John Del Grande, Trustee Ward 7, addressed the Committee regarding the Learning Disabilities and the Arrowsmith Programs.

MOVED by Trustee Andrachuk, that the presentation by John Del Grande, Trustee Ward 7, regarding the Learning Disabilities and the Arrowsmith Programs be received.

CARRIED

MOVED by Judith Andrenaaci, that item 12a) be adopted as follows:

- 12a) **Report regarding Nomination to Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) – Rosanna Del Grosso** that Rosanna Del Grosso be appointed as the Association for Bright Children of Ontario's representative to the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee effective October 2009.

CARRIED

MOVED by Virginia Pearce, that item 13a) be adopted as follows:

- 13a) Report regarding Suspension/Expulsion Data 2008-2009 – received.**

CARRIED

MOVED by Trustee Kennedy, that item 13b) be adopted as follows:

- 13b) Verbal Update from the Superintendent of Special Services regarding the Organization.**
1. SEAC requests that the Board undertake a formal evaluation of the Arrowsmith Program consistent with the SEAC recommendations of February 18, 2009.
 2. That the Verbal Update from the Superintendent of Special Services regarding the following initiatives being undertaken in the Special Services Department be received:
 - a) Reorganization of the department into five support regions.
 - b) Initiation and accountability frame-work for each exceptionality.
 - c) Programming documentation for each exceptionality.
 - d) Launching of the Autism Services Department.

CARRIED

MOVED by Trustee Kennedy, that item 13c) be adopted as follows:

- 13c) Verbal Report by Maria Kokai, Chief Psychologist, regarding gifted screening that the Verbal Report be substantiated by a Briefing Note to be submitted to the next meeting of SEAC.**

CARRIED

MOVED by Judith Andrenaaci, that item 13d) be adopted as follows:

**13d) Verbal Report by Susan Menary, Chief of Autism Services,
regarding Autism Services – received.**

CARRIED

MOVED by Virginia Pearce that the meeting adjourn.

CARRIED

SECRETARY

CHAIR

Briefing notes to SEAC

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN THE GIFTED SCREENING PROCESS
FROM: MARIA KOKAI, CHIEF PSYCHOLOGIST
DATE: September 24, 2009

Executive Summary

A one-tier universal Gifted screening process using the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test – 8th Edition (OLSAT 8) at the grade 4 level will replace the current two-tier process which uses the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children –4 (WISC4). The OLSAT 8 will be administered by Assessment and Programming Teachers and Gifted Program Teacher Testers, who will be trained in the administration procedures.

Previous Practice:

TCDSB was applying a two-tier screening process, which was based on a group screening test (CCAT¹) administered to all grade 4 students, and an individual intelligence test (WISC²) administered to selected students based on predictions from the group screen. Selection criteria were based on careful analysis and evaluation of student data provided by these measures.

Challenges:

When in 2004 a new version of the WISC had to be applied (WISC IV), the appropriateness of existing selection criteria had to be re-evaluated. Based on extensive data collection³ it was found that CCAT scores in the mid-high and middle ranges were not able to predict very high WISC 4 scores, resulting in a high percentage of:

- false negatives (Gifted students not being picked up through the routine screening process)
- false positives (students being identified for as potential candidates by the group screening but not meeting identification criteria), which lead to heightened parental expectations, an increase in the number of potentially disappointed students and parents, and an increase in assessments and staff time.

Consequently, piloting a new group screening tool (OLSAT8⁴) as a potential replacement for the CCAT was recommended. . Although, based on the data collected, the predictive value of the OLSAT-8 appeared very similar to the CCAT, the OLSAT-8 as a potential replacement for the CCAT in the future was not eliminated. Additionally, due to changes in assessment practices, a TCDSB report to SEAC (May 20, 2009) recommended that educational assessments other than the WISC IV be administered to screen students for Gifted placements starting in 2009-10.

Current plan to address the challenges:

The current plan to address the challenges is based on the following considerations:

- Ministry of Education definition of Giftedness
- Significant positive developments in group aptitude assessment tools

¹ Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test

² Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children

³ about 10% of the approximately 7,000 grade 4 students were given the WISC-IV and 52% of them met criteria for admission to the Gifted Program.

⁴ Otis-Lennon School Ability Test 8

- The need to accurately identify Gifted students with diverse learning profiles (addressing the “false negatives”)
- A need for a more efficient/streamlined screening model (addressing the “false positives”).

The screening instrument to be used is the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test-8th Edition, and is to replace the currently used CCAT for the following reasons:

- Up-to-date test and norms (2003)⁵, and the application of local TCDSB norms providing a better fit for our local student population.
- Psychometric properties of OLSAT8 as a universal screening tool allow for more accurate identification of Gifted students with diverse learning profiles. 15 subtests measure a wide range of abilities in order to provide a good measure of overall school learning ability (Antonyms, Sentence Completion, Sentence Arrangement, Arithmetic Reasoning, Logical Selection, Word/Letter Matrix, Verbal Analogies, Verbal Classification, Inference, Figural Analogies, Pattern Matrix, Figural Series, Number Series, Numeric Inference, Number Matrix).
- The standardized pre-test training process for students ensures that all students are familiar with the format of the test and task demands before the actual test, promoting fairness and equitability for students, and increasing the likelihood of getting valid results.
- Individual test results provide valuable information on each student’s learning profile
- Shorter administration times are required for OLSAT8 (20 min. practice test and 40 min. group screening).
- Pilot study (2006-07) feedback indicated that the OLSAT8 was engaging for the students.

Screening process

In all TCDSB Grade 4 classes a core group of trained administrators (Assessment and Programming Teachers and Gifted Program Teacher Testers) will administer the OLSAT 8 (both Practice Test and the actual test), which will ensure consistency of administration, and equitability. Older students who missed the grade 4 screening could be included in subsequent group screening sessions in their school with the grade 4 students, receiving a version of OLSAT 8 that is appropriate to their age/grade level. Cut-off scores will be established to capture the top 3-4% of students (who meet the MOE definition of Giftedness) in the Grade Four cohort, but to be flexible enough in their catchments numbers to meet the changing needs of the Board using local norms.

Although the Board will no longer be offering individual intellectual screening assessments to determine eligibility for inclusion in the Gifted program, we will continue to accept individual assessments for students which have been obtained outside of the Board or through the regular JTM process (e.g. students with other needs) using the above cut-off criteria.

⁵ Norms become less valid over time, resulting in "over-identification" of Gifted.)



Working Together To Educate All

Education and Community Resource Fair

Hosted By

The Toronto Catholic District School Board

Special Services Department & Special Education Advisory Committee

Saturday November 7th, 09 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 pm.

Catholic Education Centre, 80 Sheppard Avenue East

Including presentations on:

GETTING READY FOR HIGH SCHOOL

**PREPARING YOUR CHILD WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES FOR
TRANSITION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Registration: (416) 397-6800 x 8900

YOUR TEEN: MOODY?....MAD?....SAD?....

**RECOGNIZING THE EARLY SIGNS OF TEENAGE DEPRESSION AND
BIPOLAR DISORDER**

Registration: (416) 222-8282 x 3291

USING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING

No registration required.

Other topics include: Autism Spectrum Disorders - Blind and Low Vision Support

- Deaf and Hard of Hearing - Identification, Placement and Review Committees

(IPRCs) / Individual Education Plans (IEPs) - Early Language Interventions -

Learning Disability Supports - Intellectual Disability Resources - Rehabilitation

Services, and others

**Parents, Teachers, Support Staff and Students are all
welcome!**

If you require the services of an interpreter/translator for this day,
please call 416 222-8282 x 2286 and indicate the language that you speak.