

TCDSB Student Eligibility Criteria

The School Based Support Learning Team (SBSLT) is required to meet, to consider and recommend to the Identification, Placement & Review Committee (IPRC), if applicable, suitable candidates for Hub placement in the appropriate Empower Reading program based on the general requirements* below:

- Appropriate age on entering the program
- The student is formally identified as LD/LI, or being assessed/tracked for LD/LI difficulties
- The primary presenting concern is difficulty in decoding and/or word identification, or text comprehension, as appropriate for the program being considered
- The student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- The student has demonstrated consistent attendance in the past and is able to participate in the program regularly
- The student is able to participate appropriately in a group and has no disruptive behaviour that may impact on the delivery of the program

(*Details of the full set of eligibility criteria for the specific programs are available at the home school. Deadline for admission of eligible students into Empower programs is June of the preceding school year, after which no admission will be considered).

Empower™ Reading Outcomes: TCDSB Research Data Highlights

- Assessment, teacher interviews and longer-term analyses indicate that Empower™ Reading: Decoding and Spelling is effective in improving student literacy, especially decoding for struggling readers
- Students have also improved on Board and Provincial tests administered after completion of Empower™, relative to those taken beforehand
- Teachers also reported substantial improvement in reading and increased confidence and participation
- Preliminary results indicate that students participating in Empower™ Reading: Comprehension and Vocabulary, Gr. 2-5 have consistently improved over the course of instruction

TCDSB

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Empower™ Reading within TCDSB



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Empower™ Reading within TCDSB Elementary Schools

TCDSB & SickKids Partnership



Empower™ Reading was developed through a rigorous research program which spans over 30 years.

The TCDSB and the Learning Disabilities Research Program (LDRP) at the Hospital for Sick Children were involved in a research partnership to develop the PHAST intervention program for students who have demonstrated significant difficulties in reading.

In 2006, TCDSB commenced the implementation of Empower™ Reading (the commercial version of PHAST) as a Tier-3 reading intervention in select elementary schools.

What is Empower™ Reading?

- Addresses core learning deficits preventing children from reading successfully
- Teaches the skills needed to decode words, analyze texts and successfully extract meaning from written materials
- Includes instructional features found to yield positive long-term outcomes for struggling readers

TCDSB Empower™ Reading Programs

Currently, TCDSB provides the following Empower™ Reading Instructional programs to eligible students in select elementary schools:

Decoding and Spelling, Grade 2-5

Decoding and Spelling, Grade 6-8

Comprehension and Vocabulary, Grade 2-5

Empower™ Reading: Decoding and Spelling Program, Gr. 2-5,6-8

This program is designed for eligible students who struggle with decoding and spelling skills.

Empower™ Reading: Comprehension and Vocabulary Program, Gr. 2-5

This program is designed for eligible students who struggle with understanding texts and acquiring vocabulary.

Empower™ Reading, Program Delivery in TCDSB Elementary schools

- To serve community needs across the system, select elementary schools with a trained Empower™ teacher are designated as Empower™ Hubs to allow eligible students from neighbouring schools to access this one-year program.
- In addition, select local elementary schools with a trained Empower™ teacher receive Board support to provide this program to qualified students in their schools.

