

# SPECIAL EDUCATION: EMPOWERING FAMILIES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE AND NETWORKING

**WHEN:** Saturday, March 28, 2015 8:30 am – 2:30 pm

**WHERE:** Earl Haig Secondary School

**FOR:** Parents & Guardians in the TDSB

**HOW:** Registration is required, child-minding is provided for advance requests

**THEME:** EMPOWERING FAMILIES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE AND NETWORKING

**PURPOSE:** To empower students and their families by providing:

- Information about Ministry of Education policies and Toronto District School Board special education programs and services
- Information about successful practices from TDSB staff, agency representatives, students and parents
- Connections with other parents and school and community resource people to gain from their expertise and experience
- Access to agencies that can provide key information on available resources and funding

<b>SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY:</b>	8:00	Registration/Refreshments
	8:30 – 9:00	Opening ceremonies
	9:15 – 10:30	Workshop #1
	10:00 – 2:00	Marketplace – Open until 2:00 pm
	10:30 – 10:45	BREAK
	10:45 – 12:00	Workshop #2 (a repeat of #1)
	12:00 – 1:30	LUNCH
	1:30 – 2:30	Networking Q&A Sessions

Presenters of workshops are also asked to participate in the networking session in the afternoon, which will include some Marketplace reps too, so that parents have an opportunity to seek more information related to the exceptionality of interest to them.

**MARKETPLACE** (Table displays set up in Main Floor Centre Hallway – open 10:00 to 2:00)

The Marketplace will include SEAC and other non-profit organizations that can be helpful to students with special education needs both inside and outside school. The participants are:

SEAC (all confirmed)	Other (✓ confirmed) <i>(to be confirmed)</i>
✓ Association of Bright Children	<i>Surrey Place (Clovis)</i>
✓ Autism Society of Ontario – Toronto chapter	<i>South Asian Autism Association(Dagmar)</i>
✓ Brain Injury Society of Toronto	✓ CADDAC
✓ Community Living Toronto	✓ Extend-A-Family
✓ Down Syndrome Association of Toronto	✓ Macaulay Child Development Centre
✓ Easter Seals Ontario	✓ Geneva Centre
✓ Epilepsy Toronto	<i>Respite Services (Clovis)</i>
✓ Learning Disabilities Association	✓ Integra
✓ VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children	✓ TDSB Student Support Services
	✓ Ministry of Education

## WORKSHOPS

1. ADVOCACY – PARENTS SUPPORTING STUDENT SELF-ADVOCACY (Kate Cressman, Integra)
2. ADVOCACY – SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES TO ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD (Kim Southern-Paulsen, Extend-A-Family)
3. BULLYING AND STRATEGIES FOR CREATING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE (Safe Schools Admin – Gary Crossdale)
4. IMPORTANCE OF A SENSE OF BELONGING (TDSB Researcher Gillian Parekh)
5. INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (Cathy Macina-Ciardullo, Anita Lamba)
6. IEP – PARENT PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPING THE IEP (Lori Moore, Jyoti Sanwalka, SEAC Community Rep Nora Green)
7. MENTAL HEALTH & WELL BEING (Social Worker Heather Johnson, Trish Johnson)
8. PARENT PARTICIPATION IN THE IPRC PROCESS (Maria LoBianco, Juliet Jones, SEAC Community Rep Paula Boutis)
9. PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT (Dr. David Schwartzbein)
10. SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR BEGINNERS (Rebecca Hollingsworth-Moffitt & Janine Small)
11. SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION TO EARLY YEARS FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD) (Jan Fukumoto and Hannah MacPherson and Jeanny Scantlebury and **2 more people** from Surrey Place)
12. TECHNOLOGY – ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AT SCHOOL AND HOME (Christine Harvey-Kerr, Charlene Bourjot)
13. TECHNOLOGY – SEA CLAIMS (Angie Scarano-Iourio)
14. TRANSITIONS – FROM EARLY YEARS AND THROUGHOUT THE ELEMENTARY GRADES (Vicki Adelson, Melanie White)
15. TRANSITIONS – INTERMEDIATE TO SECONDARY (Sharon Petipas and Ellen Walsh)
16. TRANSITIONS – SECONDARY TO POST-SECONDARY SETTINGS (Wendy Roberts, Kien Luu, David Rankin)

## WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

### 1. ADVOCACY – PARENTS SUPPORTING STUDENT SELF-ADVOCACY

**Kate Cressman – Community Education & Engagement Facilitator, Integra**

This workshop will focus on how parents can support students in learning self-advocacy. Self-advocacy is seeking active support for change by taking action on one's own behalf. This requires the student to know HOW to ask, WHO to ask, WHAT to ask for, WHEN is the right time, in addition to KNOWING themselves (strengths, needs, systems). This workshop will review suggestions to help students gain the necessary skills.

### 2. ADVOCACY – SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES TO ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD

**Kim Southern-Paulsen – Co-ordinator, Extend-A-Family**

Kim is a Coordinator and the inclusive education resource at Extend-A-Family. She supports children and youth with developmental disabilities to develop meaningful relationships and encourage participation in the community. She is a parent, parent-advocate, and former PIAC alternate. Kim's passion concerning education, advocacy and inclusion stems from shifts in her personal life. Working with information gained over the years from supporting families, workshops, inspirational speakers and life within the educational system, she will share strategies which have been helpful for her family - and the families she supports at Extend-A-Family. *This is a different approach to advocacy. Put down your gloves – it is not about the fight...It is about the partnerships and the people.*

### **3. BULLYING AND STRATEGIES FOR CREATING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE**

**Gary Crossdale – TDSB Safe Schools Administrator**

This workshop will focus on what bullying is according to the Caring and Safe School's procedure with a particular emphasis on how to create a positive school climate. It will include specific ideas for School leaders, teachers, parents and community agencies. Attention will be given to the bullying challenges faced by children with special education needs and how parents and schools can work together to support them.

### **4. IMPORTANCE OF A SENSE OF BELONGING**

**Gillian Parekh – Coordinator, TDSB Research and Information Services**

The sense of belonging is central to students' perception of self and can shape students' overall school experience. Defined as a sense of membership, shared power, safety and inclusion, this study explores the close relationship between student identity and their sense of belonging with peers, in school and in their classrooms. Using quantitative data pulled from the Toronto District School Board's Student Census, a scale of belonging was developed and measured across student identity and program participation. Results demonstrated notable differences across disability, ethno-racial, class, sexuality, and generational categories.

### **5. INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)**

**Cathy Macina-Ciardullo – TDSB Special Education Coordinator, Communication Exceptionalities**

**Anita Lamba – Special Education Family of Schools (FOS) Consultant**

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is used in schools to support and direct a child's educational program as well as evaluation of that child's progress. This workshop will review the Ministry of Education requirements regulating the development and use of an Individual Education Plan. The different kinds of accommodations and modifications possible to support a student with special education needs will be identified. TDSB processes for decision-making in IEP development will be reviewed.

### **6. INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN – PARENT CONSULTATION IN DEVELOPING THE IEP**

**Lori Moore – Supervising Principal for Special Education, TDSB East Region**

**Jyoti Sanwalka – TDSB Special Education Coordinator, Communication Exceptionalities**

**Nora Green – TDSB parent and SEAC SW Community Representative**

This workshop will review parent involvement in the Individual Education Plan. It will include a review of the home-school partnership involved in developing the IEP, the rights and responsibilities of all participants and information that will help direct parents' input and ongoing involvement. It will also include practical advice about best strategies when working with the school in developing the IEP.

### **7. SUPPORTING STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

**Heather Johnson and Saleem Haniff – Social Workers Mental Health & Well-Being – System Support**

**Trish Johnson – Special Education Family of Schools (FOS) Consultant**

The TDSB's Children and Youth Mental Health and Well-Being strategy was launched in January 2014 and reflects the commitment to create a board-wide culture that develops resilience in school communities and recognizes the profound understanding of the connection between mental health and student achievement. This session will discuss the important role that parents play as partners in supporting mental health and well-being. This workshop will increase parents' awareness of mental health and well-being, provide information and resources. We will also outline the "Anxiety Awareness" training module which has been delivered to TDSB staff. It helps to develop understanding of the physical, social, emotional and cognitive signs of anxiety. Specific focus will be on the increased mental health challenges of students with unique learning needs.

## **8. PARENT PARTICIPATION IN THE IPRC PROCESS**

**Maria LoBianco – Supervising Principal for Special Education, TDSB West Region**

**Juliet Jones – Special Education Vice Principal, TDSB West Region**

**Paula Boutis – TDSB parent and SEAC SW Community Representative**

The Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) is part of a process that brings together teachers, school administration and parents/guardians, often with a variety of professionals, to determine if a child can be designated with a learning exceptionality according to the Ministry of Education's classification system and to recommend a degree of program support. The purpose is to ensure students with special education needs receive the available supports and services they need to be successful in school. This workshop will include a review of the IPRC process and provide practical information to facilitate parent understanding, input and participation at an IPRC.

## **9. PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

**Dr. David Schwartzbein – Chief of Psychological Services – TDSB Area D**

At this workshop, parents will learn about the educational assessment carried out by a psychological professional (either within the TDSB or outside the TDSB), that examines the psychological aspects of learning such as intelligence, language and learning skills. This session will explain why it is done, what it means, how it can be used to direct learning and what the limitations are.

## **10. SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR BEGINNERS**

**Rebecca Hollingsworth-Moffitt and Janine Small – Special Education Vice Principals, TDSB East Region**

This workshop will provide parents with information about what to do if their child is struggling. It will include what to ask and who to approach for help both within and outside the school system, depending on kinds of support needed. It will review the TDSB special education system, including processes and possible supports.

## **11. SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION TO EARLY YEARS FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)**

**Jan Fukumoto – TDSB Central Coordinator Autism Services**

**Hannah MacPherson and Jeanny Scantlebury – School Support Program, Surrey Place Centre**

During this session participants will have the opportunity to learn about, *Connections For Students*, a Ministry of Education and Ministry of Children and Youth Services that support students who are transitioning from Toronto Partnership Autism Services (TPAS) to full time school. Presenters will also review common best practices that are shared with educators in Early Years classrooms to support these transitions.

## **12. TECHNOLOGY – ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AT SCHOOL AND HOME**

**Christine Harvey-Kerr – TDSB Special Education Consultant, Special Equipment Amount (SEA)**

**Sharlene Bourjot – Special Education Coordinator, Behaviour Exceptionality**

This workshop will provide an overview of the Board and Ministry licensed assistive technology software used to support special education needs of students. In addition, specific features of assistive technology software available for home use (e.g., Read and Write Gold), and how those features can be used to support student learning, will be reviewed.

### **13. TECHNOLOGY – SEA CLAIMS**

**Angie Scarano-Iourio – TDSB Special Education Coordinator, Special Equipment Amount (SEA)**

This workshop will provide an overview of the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) provided by the Ministry of Education to support students who require assistive technology in school to access the curriculum. It will address student eligibility criteria as well as the application process and timelines. There will be an opportunity for questions of a more general nature. For specific, student/situation-based questions, contact information will be made available.

### **14. TRANSITIONS – EARLY YEARS ENTRY AND THROUGHOUT THE ELEMENTARY GRADES**

**Vicky Adelson and Melanie White – Special Education Family of Schools (FOS) Consultants**

This workshop will give an overview of different kinds of transitions for children with special education needs in elementary schools, including transitioning into school and exiting to intermediate/middle school grades. It will identify some of the strategies used both at home and school to help children navigate these transitions.

### **15. TRANSITIONS – INTERMEDIATE TO SECONDARY**

**Sharon Petipas and Ellen Walsh – TDSB Special Education Consultants for Secondary Schools**

This workshop will provide information to parents/guardians about how to plan a successful transition to secondary school for students on IEPs'. We will examine the kinds of educational considerations involved in the transition of students with special education needs moving from Grade 8 to 9 – moving from the elementary to the secondary school division. It will review the different kinds of accommodations available in secondary schools and look at program implications for secondary pathways. Parents will receive a tip sheet to help in planning transitions to secondary settings.

### **16. TRANSITIONS – SECONDARY TO POST-SECONDARY**

**Wendy Roberts – Special Education Vice Principal, TDSB West Region**

**Kien Luu – TDSB Coordinating Vice Principal, Teaching and Learning**

**David Rankin – TDSB Special Education Coordinator – Low Incidence**

This workshop will give an overview of transitions for children with special education needs currently in secondary school and will include preparing and planning for post-secondary destinations. It will incorporate information about new advances in e-Learning, and familiarize parents with the TDSB planning tool My Blueprint. It will include a tip sheet for parents and resources to help with the post-secondary transition.

*Margo to arrange a facilitator for the following Workshops: 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12*

*See next page for Networking Q&A*

## NETWORKING Q&A SESSIONS (1:30 to 2:30)

The purpose of the Networking Q&A Sessions is to provide opportunity for small Q&A/discussion groups led by workshop presenters and Marketplace representatives:

- To allow parents the opportunity to address specific questions they may have regarding their child's exceptionality as it relates to their educational experience
- To allow parents to make connections and learn from each other and from support organizations and TDSB staff

The following chart shows the suggested groupings for joint hosting:

SESSIONS IN SEPARATE ROOMS	PROPOSED PARTICIPATION <i>(To be confirmed)</i>
IEP & IPRC Processes	TDSB Staff: Cathy Macina-Ciardullo, Anita Lamba Ministry of Education
ASD	TDSB Staff: Jan Fukumoto, Jyoti Sanwalka, <i>Geneva Centre; Autism Society, South Asian Autism Assoc'n</i>
THE GIFTED CHILD	TDSB Staff: Lori Moore, Allyson Jeffrey SEAC ABC – Diana Avon and Catherine Drillis
MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES	TDSB Staff: Wendy Roberts, Vicki Adelson <i>SEAC DSAT, SEAC Community Living</i>
SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION	TDSB Staff: Sharon Petipas, Ellen Walsh
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES	TDSB Staff: Maria Lo Bianco, David Rankin <i>Surrey Place</i>
MENTAL HEALTH, ANXIETY & BEHAVIOUR	TDSB Staff: Rebecca Hollingsworth – Moffitt, Gillian Parekh, Heather Johnson, Trish Johnson, <i>SEAC BIST; Epilepsy Toronto</i>
COMMUNICATION (LD, LANGUAGE) PHYSICAL DISABILITY B/LV, D/HH	TDSB Staff: Juliet Jones, Janine Small, Melanie White, Trish Johnson, Carol Farrenkopf (B/LV), Tim Myrden (D/HH) <i>SEAC VOICE , SEAC Easter Seals, SEAC LDATD</i>
ATTENTION DEFICIT DISABILITY	TDSB Staff: <i>Professional Support Services, Sharlene Bourjot</i> CADDAC
TECHNOLOGY	TDSB Staff: Angie Scarano-Iourio, Christine Harvey-Kerr, Kien Luu