



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

Memorandum

To: Board of Trustees
From: Tracy Barill, Director of Education
Date: December 19, 2022
Subject: **Special Education Review Update**
Origin: Susie Lee-Fernandes, Superintendent of Student Services

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update regarding the Special Education Review that was originally presented to the Board of Trustees on November 22, 2021.

Background

The purpose of the special education review is to ensure that all members within the education system have a shared vision and understanding of the Board's special education plan. Using a collaborative and team approach, each member of the Board's multi-disciplinary team plays an essential role in providing an inclusive school environment where students with special education needs can thrive and be inspired to reach their full potential. In honouring the Durham Catholic District School Board's (DCDSB) commitment to Equity, we are working to recognize and remove systemic barriers, while ensuring transparent oversight and accountability for the timely and effective accommodations and modifications to programming and services.

As a result of supply coverage issues and other challenges during the 2021-2022 school year, the Special Education Review was paused and has restarted this year.

Information

A Special Education Review Committee of 54 members with a broad cross-section has been formed including representation from Academic Services, Student Services, Senior Administration, Union/Affiliate groups, DCDSB Advisory Committee Representatives and school-level staff.

This year, we have partnered with the Abilities Centre to guide the Special Education Review Committee through a LEAD (Leading Equitable and Accessible Delivery) Process that is a system-integrated approach to accessibility and inclusion. The LEAD Process is an evidence-based self-assessment process whereby organizations evaluate, rate and provide evidence of their accessibility and inclusion strategies.

Highlights of steps taken to date:

- October 14, 2022 – Disability Inclusion Workshop
- October 27, 2022 – Self-Assessment Session 1
- October 6, 2022 – Communication to parents/guardians sharing link to complete Special Education Review Parent/Guardian Feedback
- November 2, 2022 – Self-Assessment Session 2
- November 2, 2022 – Parent/Guardian Engagement Session
- December 15, 2022 – Self-Assessment Follow-Up Meeting

Feedback surveys have been developed for parents/guardians, the Student Services Department, and school staff to inform goals and strategic actions for improvement.

Next Steps

- Present summary and analysis of feedback/input surveys
- Determine goals and strategic actions in alignment with the new Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP)

TB/SLF