



DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NOTICE OF MEETING (REVISED)

**STANDING COMMITTEE
PUBLIC SESSION**

Monday, February 3, 2025

Chair: Deb Oldfield

Vice-Chair: Kelly Miller

Director of Education and Secretary to the Board: Camille Williams-Taylor

Recording Secretary: Gillian Venning

DATE: Monday, February 3, 2025

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Boardroom

ATTACHMENTS: Agenda

Copies to:

All Trustees

Director of Education

All Superintendents

STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Monday, February 3, 2025
7:00 p.m.

		PAGE
1.	<u>Call to Order</u>	Verbal
2.	<u>Land Acknowledgement</u>	Verbal
	<p>The Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.</p>	
3.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	Verbal
4.	<u>Motion to Approve Agenda</u>	Verbal
5.	<u>DDSB Presentations: Strategic Implementation</u>	
	(a) Inclusive Pathways – Integrated Transition Planning (Superintendent Andrea McAuley)	1-28
6.	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	
	(a) Approval of the Standing Committee Minutes, January 6, 2025 (Trustee Deb Oldfield)	29-32
7.	<u>Information Items</u>	
	(a) Student Trustee Report (Student Trustees K. Hoare, N. Poopalasundaram, S. Vijayakumar)	33-35
	(b) OPSBA Update (Trustees Donna Edwards, Kelly Miller)	36-37

	(c) Ignite Durham Learning Foundation (IDLF) Update (Trustee Michelle Arseneault)	38-39
8.	<u>Memos</u>	
	(a) 2425:66, Office Relocation in the Education Centre	40-41
	(b) 2425:67, High School Assessment Practices – Use of Levelled Questions	42-44
9.	<u>Correspondence</u>	
	(a) DDSB Statement of Support for Combatting Jew Hate	45
10.	<u>Adjournment</u>	

DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

REPORT TO: Durham District School Board

DATE: February 3, 2024

SUBJECT: Inclusive Pathways - Integrated Transition Planning **PAGE:** 1 of 7

ORIGIN: Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board
Andrea McAuley, Superintendent of Education

The Durham District School Board recognizes Indigenous rights are distinct. In the exercise of those rights, Indigenous staff and students shall not be subjected to actions with the aim or effect of depriving these distinct rights.

The Durham District School Board is committed to providing learning and working environments that centre human rights and equity and are safe, welcoming, respectful, equitable, accessible, inclusive and free from all forms of discrimination, oppression, harassment and harm.

1.0 **Abstract**

Comprehensive transition planning is key to ensuring that each student's educational program is reflective of their goals, growth, and pathways. Inclusive Student Services supports Integrated Transition Planning through many professional roles, working alongside families, school teams and community partners. This report provides an overview of how inclusive pathways for planning beyond secondary school are being supported through Integrated Transition Planning and the launch of a resource to support related connections. This school year, staff are using project funding to revise related resources. This report is provided for information and is accompanied by the staff presentation.

2.0 **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide Board of Trustees with information related to how inclusive pathways for planning beyond secondary school are being supported through Integrated Transition Planning and the launch of a resource to support related connections.

3.0 **Background**

It is important to support and celebrate students whose Durham District School Board (DDSB) learning journey leads to achievement other than an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). The DDSB is committed to supporting achievement, well-being and pathways for all students within School Learning Plans through collective and collaborative planning.

In November 2024, [Community Living Ontario \(CLO\)](#) reported over 50,000 adults with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities are waiting to access developmental services in Ontario. Of note, more than 30,000 people are waiting for community participation supports and 12,000 people are waiting for employment supports. CLO states approximately 3,000 more people apply for Ontario's services each year and only about one third receive services, while the others are added to the waitlist.

In *Unconditional Education – Supporting Schools to Serve All Students*, Detterman et al. (2019) state, “In an integrated system, adults not only know and understand their areas of expertise but also work collaboratively to create a common language across discipline and to lend their diversified expertise to shared goals.” (p.30). Integrated transition planning, occurring over a number of school years centers the students and wraps around the collaboration of home, school and community resources.

[Integrated Transition Planning](#) begins at age 14 for youth with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities. Early planning is key to ensuring that the students, and their families/caregivers:

- are centred in planning (goals/hopes),
- have access to information, and,
- that supports such as [Developmental Services Ontario \(DSO\)](#) application requirements and needed recent assessment are planned.

Inclusive pathway supports are activated at individual, classroom, school and district levels. We are collectively working to address ableism. The experience of every student is unique. Fostering skills of choice, goal setting and planning are important parts of learning.

3.1 Legislative Commitment – Education Act

Throughout their education, all students face a variety of transitions, including the transition from home or from an early years program to school, from one grade or level of schooling to another, from one school to another, and from secondary school to an appropriate postsecondary pathway. Such transitions can pose a challenge for all students, but they can be particularly difficult and overwhelming for students with special education strengths/needs and their families. The coordination of planning well before the transition takes place can ensure that the student has all the necessary supports in place to make a successful and smooth transition.

Since 1998, transition plans have been required under [Ontario Regulation 181/98, “Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils”](#), as part of the Individual Education Plan (IEP), for exceptional students over the age of 14 who were making the transition from secondary school to postsecondary activities and community living, if they were not identified solely as “gifted”.

In 2000, the Ministry of Education (Ministry) policy document [Individual Education Plans: Standards for Development, Program Planning, and Implementation](#) sets out additional requirements for the IEP, including the postsecondary transition plan. This policy document stipulated that the transition plan, as part of the student's IEP, must include the following components:

- specific goals for the student's transition;
- the actions required, now and in the future, to achieve the stated goals;
- the person or agency responsible for or involved in completing or providing assistance in the completion of each of the identified actions, and,
- timelines for the implementation of each of the identified actions.

In 2007, with the release of [PPM No. 140, “Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis \(ABA\) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders \(ASD\)”](#), it became a requirement for school boards to provide transition planning, as appropriate, between various activities and settings, for students with ASD. This policy also required that, where appropriate, relevant ABA methods be used to support transitions.

As of September 2014, [PPM No. 156, “Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs”](#), requires all students who have an Individual Education Plan, whether or not they have been identified as exceptional by an Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC), to have an up-to-date transition plan at every stage of their journey through school.

The development of a coordinated and detailed plan for each key transition will help ensure that staff at the school and District-level are prepared to meet the needs of the student, contributing to smooth transitions, and paving the way for the student's future success. The physical, emotional, and learning needs of a student must be considered when a transition plan is being developed as part of the IEP.

3.2 Ministry Requirement – Integrated, Multi-Ministerial, Transition Planning

Integrated, multi-ministerial transitions, for those with developmental disabilities, has been required since 2014.

The development of transition plans for students with special education needs often involves collaboration with community partners. In recognition of this need for collaboration, expectation was set forth requiring integrated transition planning for all students (14 years of age and older) who meet the definition of having a developmental disability.

Across the province, regional protocols have been developed to ensure that this transition-planning process is coordinated with the transition-planning process that is part of the IEP and leads to a single integrated transition plan for the student. The single integrated transition plan is expected to be a long range, evolving plan that is developed when the student is age 14 and reviewed and updated regularly as part of the IEP process. It should identify the steps needed – from the time the plan is implemented to the time the student is expected to leave school – for the student to attain their goals. The integrated transition plan has the same components as the transition plan that is developed as part of the IEP process.

3.3 Support from Inclusive Student Services

The Inclusive Student Services team includes support of 2.5 FTE (2024-2025) Transition and Work Experience Coordinators. The Transition and Work Experience Coordinators connect with school teams to ensure that integrated transition planning for postsecondary is mobilized early in a student's secondary experience. This is necessitated both in a commitment to reverse planning from a student's transition to map experiences and skills development supportive of exploration of many pathways. In addition, the Transition and Work Experience Coordinator team works to meet Ministry expectation for Integrated Transition Planning and due to current waitlists for adult services and funding, this planning is imperative to student well-being.

Transition and Work Experience Coordinators also lead the Transition to Work special education placement program with the support of the System Lead.

All other teams within Inclusive Student Services are also part of the transition planning process supports include but are not limited to: Psychological Services commitments which include Psycho-Educational Assessment updates for students who will be qualifying for funding supports such as Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) funding.

3.4 Cooperative Education and Work Experience Training

Work experience and cooperative education programs provide students, including students with special education needs, with an opportunity to learn more about themselves (their strengths and interests), their communities, and the nature of the workplace. To ensure a meaningful learning experience for the student, educators who are involved in developing the student's learning plan and establishing the student's placement must ensure that both are consistent with the student's goals, strengths, and needs, as documented in the student's IPRC statement of decision and the student's IEP, including the transition plan.

3.5 Students Turning 21 and Completion Expectations

Students working towards an achievement other than an OSSD complete their secondary school experience by the June of the calendar year in which they turn 21; for example:

Specifically, 2004 date of birth:

- January -June birthdays – students are 21 before the end of the school year, complete in June 2025
- July and August birthdays – students are 21 before the start of the 2025-2026 school year, no '2nd year registration in calendar year in which they turn 21, complete in June 2025.
- September to December birthdays – students are 20 to start to the 2025-2026 school year, no '2nd year (2025-2026) registration in calendar year in which they turn 21, completed in June 2025

4.0 **Analysis**

4.1 Psychological Services Facilitated Assessments

Psychological Services team members may provide assessments that support application to DSO. These assessments can occur anytime during the young person's school career, as they can also inform transitions that occur from class to class, grade to grade, and elementary to secondary school. This support is responsive to individual student needs and pathways; the number of assessments fluctuates year to year as a result. During the 2023-2024 school year, 27 assessments in support of DSO access were completed. For the 2024-2025 school year, 93 referrals were received; the process remains open for those new to the district. Following an initial information gathering process, members of Psychological Services proceeded with 74 assessments; the remaining 19 assessments were determined to already have been completed at an earlier date.

4.2 Transition Planning: Getting Started – Resource Launch

The [Transition Planning – Getting Started](#) resource offers a comprehensive overview of key milestones for transitional-aged youth with developmental and intellectual disabilities. This resource features a timeline, sectioned by age from 14-21 years old, with each section detailing important transition milestones. Each milestone includes a brief description, its significance, eligibility criteria, and guidance on how to access related services.

The 'Transition Planning – Getting Started' resource serves as an all-in-one guide for parents, caregivers and guardians. It provides essential information on transition planning, helping facilitate a smooth transition to community supports and services for when their child exits school at age 21. This resource will enhance school teams' knowledge and capacity on key transition milestones.

In October 2024, the Transition and Work Experience Coordinator team collaborated with leading community partners in the adult developmental services sector, including Community Living Ajax Pickering Whitby and Participation House Durham. Feedback from community partners was used to ensure the resource contained timely information that addresses the current challenges faced by transitional-aged youth and their parents, caregivers and/or guardians.

The next phase of this project will include integrating fillable/interactive components that individuals can access online and downloaded for continuity of use.

5.0 **Financial Implications**

Staffing specific to support transition and related work experience opportunities is built into the service model of Inclusive Student Services and the related annual budget. Transition and Work Experience Coordinators (2.0 FTE) are reflected in the [DDSB Budget Book 2024-2025](#) reflected on p.33 (line 13).

Within Core Education Funding for the 2024-2025 school year, the Responsive Education Program (REP) Special Education Needs Transition Navigators is being leveraged to

support updating of resources and job embedded coaching for staff. The amount received by the DDSB is \$244,000. Currently funding has been committed to augment the Transition and Work Experience Coordinator team by 0.5 FTE (January to June). Further decisions on funding expenditure are currently in consideration.

6.0 Strategic Links

Meaningful Learning: Centering students and matching their educational experiences to their interests and goals to prepare them for a changing world.

- 2024-2025 Operational Plan: All students will reach key DDSB milestones on their unique pathways to individual success.

Connected Communities: Improved connections between home and school, fostering communication, engagement, and relationships grounded in trust, transparency, empathy, and appreciation for diversity.

- 2024-2025 Operational Plan: Review community service partnerships supporting students with specialized learning and or mental health needs to expand new partnerships and improve student support.

Well-Being: Creating safe, caring, and respectful environments where people can thrive

- 2024-2025 Operational Plan: Improved student well-being in a safe and affirming learning environment where each student feels a sense of connection, belonging, and community.

7.0 Communication/Implementation Plan

Specific to the communication of the launch of the [Transition Planning – Getting Started](#) resource, information was shared directly with:

- School Administrators, Special Education Resource Teachers, and Special Education Placement Program Staff,
- Inclusive Student Services department staff,
- Educational Assistants,
- Special Education Advisory Committee (November 7, 2024),
- Community Partners involved in Integrated Transition Planning,
- Direct email to parents/caregivers of students 14+ years old qualifying for Integrated Service Transition Planning, and,
- Direct email to registrants for the DDSB [Life Beyond High School](#) event (event held October 23, 2024).

The Transition Planning – Getting Started resource is posted to ddsb.ca within the Inclusive Student Services information.

Implementation will be supported through in-school supports and connections.

8.0 Conclusion

The District's commitment is to continue to grow and refine pathway supports for students supporting many paths to success that centre on their individual strengths, interests and expanding opportunities.

"Inclusive education is not static; there is no end point where the inclusive education project is complete. Inclusive education is a continual state of becoming. It is a project that requires continuous review, assessment, and revision."

Artiles et al in Parekh (2022), *Addressing Ableism in Education*, p.110

This report is provided to the Board of Trustees for information.

9.0 Appendices

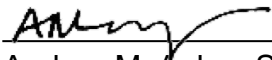
Appendix A – Transition Planning – Getting Started Resource

Appendix B – Inclusive Student Services Impact Update – Integrated Transition Planning

Report reviewed and submitted by:



 Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board



 Andrea McAuley, Superintendent of Education



Life **BEYOND** High School

TRANSITION PLANNING

Getting Started

**for students with intellectual
and developmental disabilities**



- ✓ Explore the transition pathway and begin planning supports and services for life after high school.

- ✓ Academic Upgrading
- ✓ Modified Post-Secondary Program
- ✓ Workplace Level College Programs
- ✓ Post Secondary School (College & University)

- ✓ Day Programs
- ✓ Social & Community Programs
- ✓ Sport & Team Programs
- ✓ Creative and Arts Programs
- ✓ Self-Developmental & Skill Building Programs
- ✓ Respite



Talk to your Classroom Teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher, or Transition Coordinator for more information and resources.

TRANSITION PATHWAY



- ✓ Attend all Individual Education Plan (IEP), Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) and Transition Planning meetings and discuss long term transition planning.
- ✓ Apply for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC)
- ✓ Open and contribute to Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)
- ✓ Explore community supports and services for life after high school.

HELPFUL TIP

This is a suggested timeline for transition events. If you're older than a certain age but haven't completed the tasks for that age, please make sure to finish them.



- ✓ Begin collecting/preparing documentation for future applications.
 - **Birth Certificate**
 - **Health Card**, also called an OHIP card
 - **Social Insurance Number**, also called SIN
 - **Passport**
- ✓ Open a **bank account**.
- ✓ Obtain a copy or request a **Psychological Assessment***.
- ✓ Apply for an **Access2 Card**.

HELPFUL TIP

Begin exploring Community Supports & Services!



- ✓ Apply for **Developmental Services Ontario** (DSO).
To apply you will need:
 - **Proof of Age** (i.e., Birth Certificate)
 - **Proof of Ontario residence** (i.e., Health Card)
 - **Psychological Assessment** — with scores on both *Cognitive and Adaptive Functioning*
- ✓ Apply for an **Ontario Photo Card**.

HELPFUL TIP

When you apply for DSO, you are also applying for Passport Program funding.



- ✓ If student is beneficiary of a RDSP, begin filing personal income tax returns to ensure the continuity of grants and bonds at 19 years old.
- ✓ Apply for **Ontario Disability Support Program** (ODSP).
To apply you will need:
 - SIN Card
 - Health Card
 - Banking information
 - Immigration Documents (if applicable)
 - Tax returns (if applicable)

HELPFUL TIP

Having a letter of eligibility from DSO can help speed up the process of applying for ODSP.



- ✓ **Adult Funding and Services begin.**
(i.e., DSO funded services, Passport funding, ODSP income support and benefits)
- ✓ **Begin planning supports and services needed for life after high school.**
(i.e., learning about transit services, explore options for support workers, tour and meet with local day programs).

HELPFUL TIP

Call DSO 6 months before leaving high school to let them know you are looking for supports and services!

General Considerations

- ✓ Attend all **Individual Education Plan** (IEP) meetings, and **Identification, Placement and Review Committee** (IPRC) meetings and discuss long term transition planning.

- ✓ Apply for the **Disability Tax Credit** (DTC).

WHAT: The DTC is a non-refundable tax credit, that helps people with a disability, or their supporting family member reduce the amount of income tax they have to pay.

WHY: It is also required to open a **Registered Disability Savings Plan** (see more information in the next section).

WHO: To be eligible for DTC a person must (1) have a severe impairment in physical or mental functions, (2) the impairment must be prolonged, and (3) must be restricted at least 90% of the time.

WHEN: There is no age requirement, meaning if you qualify you can apply at any age.

HOW: Apply for DTC by completing Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) form T2201.

✓ Open and contribute to **Registered Disability Savings Plan** (RDSP).

WHAT: The RDSP is a savings plan for people with disabilities intended to support long-term financial security. RDSP are made up of personal contributions, and bonds and grants contributed by the federal government.

WHY: Having RDSP does not affect **Ontario Disability Support Program** eligibility (see more information about ODSP, under 17.5 years old)

WHO: To be a beneficiary of RDSP a person must (1) qualify for Disability Tax Credit, (2) have a valid Social Insurance Number, (3) be resident of Canada, and (4) be under the age of 60.

WHEN: After qualifying for Disability Tax Credit, an RDSP can be opened until 59 years old.

HOW: If the RDSP beneficiary is under 19, a legal parent, guardian, or public department, agency or institution can open an RDSP as a Plan Holder. Plan holders can contact participating financial institutions that offer RDSPs.



14-15
years old

✓ **Begin collecting/preparing documentation for future applications.**

- **Social Insurance Number**, also called SIN
- **Health Card**, also called an OHIP card
- **Passport**
- **Birth Certificate**

✓ **Open a bank account**

WHAT: A bank account can be used for everyday payments and savings.

WHY: Having a separate bank account provides important benefits when it comes to employment, cashing cheques, safety and accessibility. When you apply for ODSP, financial assistance will be deposited directly into your bank account.

HOW: You can open a bank account online, in person or by calling a financial institution. You will either need to provide two pieces of identification, or provide one piece of identification and have someone who is in good standing with the bank or community confirm your identity.

✓ **Start learning about Transit Supports and Services offered in Durham Region.**

For more information see page 12.



✓ Obtain a copy or request a **Psychological Assessment***

WHAT:

A psychological assessment is a written evaluation of an individual's behaviour, abilities and other characteristics and capabilities completed by a psychologist or psychological associate.

WHY:

It is required for Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) application. Specifically, DSO requires assessments containing information on **Cognitive Functioning**, and **Adaptive Skills**.

WHO:

You can request a copy or make a request to have a psychological assessment completed by either:

- **Contacting your Physician**
- **Contacting your Teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), or Curriculum Lead**

✓ Apply for an **Access2 Card**.

WHAT:

The Access 2 Card is a program that allows cardholders to eliminate or reduce admission fees for accompanying support persons.

WHY:

Presenting an Access 2 card at participating venues decreases admission fees for a support person.

WHO:

To be eligible for an Access 2 Card, individuals must (1) live with a permanent disability, and (2) the nature of the disability requires the assistance of a support person when visiting venues.

WHEN:

The Access 2 card is for all ages and types of permanent disabilities that require the assistance of a support person.

HOW:

To apply for an Access 2 Card individuals must complete an application and pay the administration fee.

*DDSB supports provision of Psychological Assessments without precedence and subject to annual review of resources.

16
years old

✓ Apply for **Developmental Services Ontario** (DSO).

WHAT: DSO is the access point for all adult developmental services that are funded in Ontario. Government funded services include, the **Passport Program***, Housing Supports, Community Participation Supports, Caregiver Respite Supports and Specialized Supports such as Person Directed Planning, and Adult Protective Services.

WHY: At 18 years old all children's developmental services end, such as Special Services at Home (SSAH), Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD), and Ontario Autism Program (OAP). DSO is the adult funded supports. Having a letter of eligibility for DSO will also help speed the process of applying for the **Ontario Disability Support Program** (ODSP).

WHO: To be eligible for DSO, individuals must (1) have a developmental disability, (2) live in Ontario, and (3) be 18 years or older.

DSO services begin at 18 years old, however, individuals can apply for DSO at 16 years old.

HOW: Individuals can apply when they have:

- **Proof of age** (i.e., birth certificate)
- **Proof of Ontario residence** (i.e., health card)
- **Psychological Assessment with scores on Cognitive and Adaptive Functioning and age of onset.**



*What is the **Passport Program**?

WHAT:

Passport is a reimbursement program where people and families submit invoices and receipts for admissible expenses. Then we reimburse admissible expenses up to the amount of the annual funding allocation of \$5,500.

WHY:

Passport funding can be used to help individuals get involved in their community, by providing funding that can be used to purchase services and supports for community participation, activities of daily living and person-directed planning.

WHO:

To be receive Passport funding individuals must be eligible for DSO.

WHEN:

Passport funding begins at 18 years old.

HOW:

Once DSO has determined eligibility for funded services, individuals must consent to a referral to the Passport Program. This happens during the DSO application process. Individuals will then be referred to a local Passport agency to receive funds.



Apply for an **Ontario Photo Card**.

WHAT:

The Ontario Photo Card is a government issued identification available to Ontarians who do not have a driver's licence.

WHY:

Having an Ontario Photo card makes it easier for individuals to do things that require official identification (i.e., open a bank account, domestic travel).

WHO:

Available for individuals who (1) do not/will not have a driver's licence, (2) are an Ontario resident, and (3) are 16 years of age or older.

WHEN:

16 years of age or older.

HOW:

To obtain an Ontario Photo card individuals must go to a ServiceOntario centre and bring documents to prove their legal name and date of birth (i.e., passport, birth certificate, health card).

17
years old



If student is beneficiary of a RDSP, begin filing personal income tax returns to ensure the continuity of grants and bonds at 19 years old.



✓ Apply for **Ontario Disability Support Program** (ODSP).

WHAT: The Ontario Disability Support Program provides financial and job support for people with disabilities. It helps cover costs like food, housing, and medical needs, including drug and vision care. ODSP also offer assistance to help you find and keep jobs.

WHY: ODSP offers valuable supports for individuals with disabilities and is the only government financial assistance for people with disabilities.

WHO: To be eligible for ODSP, individuals must (1) be 18 years or older, (2) be an Ontario resident, (3) have assets that are no greater than the limits set out by ODSP, (4) be in financial need, and (4) meet ODSP's definition of a person with a disability.

WHEN: ODSP income and health benefits begin at 18 years old, however individuals can apply for ODSP at 17.5 (6 months before their 18th birthday).

HOW: To apply for ODSP individuals will need the following documents:

- **SIN**
- **Health Card**
- **Birth Certificate**
- **Immigration documents** (if applicable)
 - › This may include Unique Client Identifier and/or Sponsor Information.
- **Income Tax Return** (if applicable)
 - › This is only for individuals who have filed a personal income tax return.
- **Up to date banking information**

Applications can be completed online, sada.mcsc.gov.on.ca/intake/home-page, by calling, **1-888-999-1142**, or visiting the ODSP office, **850 King St W, Oshawa, ON, L1J 2L5**.

18-21
years old

- ✓ At 18 years old children services and funding end, this includes **Special Services at Home (SSAH)**, **Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD)**, and **Ontario Autism Program (OAP)**.

- ✓ **Passport funding and ODSP income support and health benefits start.**

- ✓ **Explore transit services through Durham Region Transit.**

TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)



- **The Transit Assistance Program** is for customers receiving social assistance (including ODSP) in Durham Region.
- To apply for TAP, individuals can bring their **monthly social assistance statement** to a DRT PRESTO point of sale.

SUPPORT PERSON CARD



- **The Support Person Card** is available for customers who require the support of another person as it relates to communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs.
- The correct fare is to be paid by the customer, and the support person travels for free when the support person card is presenting upon boarding.
- Cards are valid for 3 years.

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SPECIALIZED SERVICES



- **Durham Region Transit (DRT) Specialized Services** provides public transit service for eligible persons with disabilities who are unable to use conventional transit services for all or part of their ride.
- Individuals must complete an application package.
- **DRT** will confirm eligibility by mail.
- For more information visit <https://www.durhamregiontransit.com/en/routes-and-schedules/on-demand-specialized.aspx> or call 1-866-247-0055



Begin planning supports and services needed for life after high school (i.e., learning about transit services, explore options for support workers, tour and meet with local day programs).

WHAT:

Supports and services for life after high school will look different for everyone. They may include:

- **Continuing Education**
- **Employment/Volunteer**
- **Community**

WHY:

Planning for supports and services before leaving school is important as there may be wait times, registration periods, fees, or other considerations to be aware of. These may impact how quickly individuals will be able to access supports and services.

WHO:

Planning supports and services for after high school is important for all students.

- You can explore supports and services by:
- Attending DDSB's annual **Life Beyond High School Event** or checking out the **Life Beyond High School Transition Supports webpage**, ddsb.ca/en/family-and-community-support/life-beyond-high-school-transition-supports
- Talk to your Classroom Teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher, or Transition Coordinator for more information and resources!

OTHER TRANSITION PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

HOME & LIVING SITUATIONS



There isn't a single 'right' or 'best way' to live. Choices about home and living situations are influenced by personal preferences, needs, finances, resources and what's available.

*Please be aware that wait times for government funded housing can be long, depending on priority and need.

Examples of housing options that focus on the needs of adults with intellectual disabilities might include:



LIVING WITH FAMILY

Living with your family in your family home. You may qualify for support with activities of daily living from a Personal Support Worker.

Contact [Ontario Health atHome](#) if you are interested in learning more about home care services.

SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING

Living more independently, with someone to help with daily activities. You receive between 2-10 hours of support during the day every week. You are alone overnight.

Contact [Developmental Service Ontario \(DSO\)](#) if you are interested in learning more about this option.



GROUP HOME LIVING

Living with a few unrelated people, with support 24 hours per day and accommodate you based on your needs and abilities.

Contact [Developmental Service Ontario \(DSO\)](#) if you are interested in learning more about this option.

HOST FAMILY HOME/ASSOCIATE LIVING SUPPORT

You live with a family who can provide you with care and support. You are encouraged to become an active member of the household. You are matched with a family that has similar interests, needs, and lifestyle.

Contact [Developmental Service Ontario \(DSO\)](#) if you are interested in learning more about this option.



CREATIVE HOUSING OPTIONS

Explore innovative, forward-thinking housing options, by exploring some of the resources listed below.



Housing Toolkit

from Developmental Services Ontario



Housing Resources

from ConnectABILITY.ca



Housing Navigator for DSO Central East Region

Kathrine Pickard
1 855 277 2121 ext. 2218 or
kpickard@yssn.ca



A Place to Call Home, Housing Resources

from Partners For Planning (P4P)



Imagining Home Meetings

offered by Durham Association for
Family Resources and Support

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS



Legal considerations may apply to young adults with intellectual disabilities, depending on their needs and situation.

Examples of legal considerations may include supported decision making and/or substitute decision making for property & personal care, legal guardianship, estate planning, trusts, Microboards and more!

Check out the resources for more information on Legal Considerations:

- [Future Planning Tool from Plan Institute](#)
- [Planning Guide from Individual Funding \(IF\) Library](#)
- [Legal and Estate Planning Resources from Partners for Planning](#)
- [Financial and Legal Resources from ConnectABILITY.ca](#)



Disclaimer: This Transition Planning: Getting Started document is intended for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal, technical, business, or other advice and should not be relied on as such. Please consult a professional if you have any questions related to the topics discussed in this document. Durham District School Board (DDSB) does not endorse any commercial product, process or service referenced in this document, or its producer or provider. The DDSB also does not make any express or implied warranties, or assumes any legal liability for the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, or usefulness of any information contained in this document, including web-links to other servers. All URLs mentioned in this document will link to an external website.



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ME!**



Durham District School Board (DDSB)

Inclusive Student Services Impact Update

2024-2025 • Issue 2

Integrated Transition Planning

In a commitment to supporting achievement, well-being and pathways within School Achievement Plans, how we plan for, support and celebrate students whose achievement is other than an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) is important.

[Integrated Transition Planning](#) begins at age 14 for youth with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities. Early planning is key to ensuring that students, and their families/caregivers:

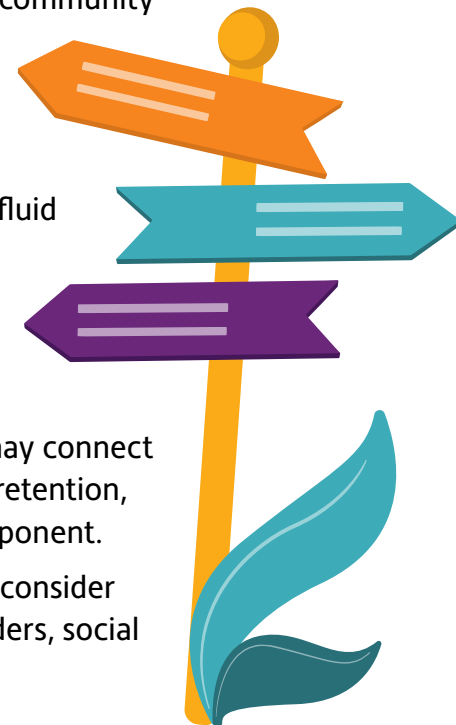
- are centred in planning (goals/hopes);
- have access to information and;
- that supports such as [Developmental Services Ontario](#) (DSO) application requirements such as recent assessment are planned.

Transition planning is personalized for each student. All transition plans should include a range of considerations, both long and short-term. Long-term considerations may include the transition to postsecondary activities and services like day programs, while short-term considerations may lead to opportunities through their school and in the community before transitioning to post-secondary pathways.

Post-Secondary Pathways

Each student's pathway will look different shaped by students' unique strengths, needs, and vision for the future. Post-secondary pathways are fluid and change over time.

- Continuing Education: Students wanting to continue their education may look into modified college programs like Co-Operative Education through Community Integration (CICE).
- Employment: Students looking to follow the pathway to employment may connect with employment service providers for support with job searching and retention, employment readiness programs, or programs with a volunteering component.
- Community: Students wishing to explore community participation may consider connecting with community-based services such as day program providers, social groups, sports leagues, or other supported opportunities.



Importance of Families/Caregivers

Integrated Transition Planning is about future planning. Families and caregivers share the responsibility with school teams to initiate conversations on transition planning for their child. When families and caregivers take an active role in the development of their child's transition plan, there is a better chance the plan is successful and appropriate for the child's future. Families and caregivers hold a wealth of information on their student's unique strengths, needs, and vision for the future.



"Having support as we navigate the transition to adult services and plan for life after high school really helps. I know I don't have to do everything alone."

—Parent

”

Importance of School and District Support Team

Each student's classroom team is their first circle of care and support at school. Classroom teams include professionals in a variety of roles including Teachers, Educational Assistants and may include others, for example Intervenors and ASL Interpreters.

The school team is central in transition planning processes with students and families/caregivers. The team is also able to draw on the expertise of district staff to support Integrated Transition processes. Two examples:

Transition Coordinator Team members support school teams in developing Integrated Transition Plans for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities. This support is tailored to meet the unique needs and pathways of each student. Coordinated planning can include transition meetings with students, families, school teams and community partners. During the 2023-24 school year, 181 new referrals were made to Transition Coordinators. There are currently 315 students being supported by Transition Coordinators. Further, Transition Coordinators collaborate with key community partners across the region to ensure that relevant resources, programs and services supporting the transition to adult services are shared with students, families and school teams in a timely manner. The Transition Coordinator team maintains contact with over 50 services providers across Durham Region and Ontario.

"The Transition Coordinator knows of resources, how to access resources, and is another caring adult who our families can rely on. As well, I've been able to locate information for myself that lets me do a better job as a Practical Learning Program class teacher".

—Anderson C.V.I. Teacher

Psychological Services team members may provide assessments that support application to DSO. These assessments can occur anytime during the young person's school career, as they can also inform transitions that occur from class to class, grade to grade, and elementary to secondary school. This support is responsive to individual student needs and pathways; the number of assessments fluctuates year to year as a result. During the 2023-2024 school year, 27 assessments in support of DSO access were completed. At this time in 2024-2025, information is currently being reviewed based on 81 referrals. Consideration will be made for what information is already available as some students already have assessments considered current for purpose of programming and application and assessments will be confirmed for those requiring.

“Transition coordination has been seamlessly integrated into our annual planning to support both students and families on a yearly basis. Together, in combination with Guidance and Inclusive Student Services, transition coordination has taken student success and achievement to the next level!” –Eastdale C.V.I. Inclusive Student Services Team

Importance of Community Partners

Integrated Transition Planning plays an integral role in getting students and families connected with community partners. This is one of the first opportunities for families to familiarize and engage with community partners as they prepare for life beyond high school. When looking at student’s pathways, this often includes direct support from community partners through their services. Engaging with community partners is essential for effective transition planning, helping families and caregivers understand the services available when students turn 18 or 21. Community partners provide comprehensive information on support and services available.

““

“The Transition Coordinator team is very passionate about their role and supporting teens with disabilities. That passion really shows up in their commitment to help all teens and parents—there hasn’t been a question or request that they haven’t been able to support us with.”
–Melly’s Workplace, Community Partner

“I would tell students and families to gather as much information as they can from the transition coordinator, take advantage of the meeting times they are offered and really use them as a resource and a guide to transitioning from children’s services to adult services.”

–Community Living Ajax Pickering Whitby, Community Partner

””

**For more information about the
DDSB Inclusive Student Services Impact Update,
please visit [DDSB Inclusive Student Services](#).**



Report of the Durham District School Board Standing Committee Public Session January 6, 2025

A meeting of the Standing Committee of the Durham District School Board was held on this date.

1. Call to Order:

The Chair of Standing Committee, Deb Oldfield called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Chair Deb Oldfield

Members Present: Trustees Michelle Arseneault, Tracy Brown, Emma Cunningham, Donna Edwards, Mark Jacula, Stephen Linton, Kelly Miller, Carolyn Morton, Shailene Panylo, Christine Thatcher, Student Trustees Kayla Hoare, Nitishan Poopalasundaram, Shampavi Vijayakumar

Regrets:

Officials Present: Director of Education Camille Williams-Taylor, Associate Director Jim Markovski, Associate Director David Wright (virtual), General Counsel Patrick Cotter, Superintendents Michael Bowman, Lauren Bliss, Erin Elmhurst, Mohamed Hamid, Margaret Lazarus, Andrea McAuley, Heather Mundy, Stephen Nevills, Martine Robinson, Kandis Thompson, Senior Manager Dervla Kelly

Recording Secretary: Gillian Venning

2. Land Acknowledgement

Chair Deb Oldfield gave the Land Acknowledgment: The Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this time.

4. Motion to Approve the Agenda

2025:SC01

MOVED by Trustee Christine Thatcher

SECONDED by Trustee Carolyn Morton

Standing Committee Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2025

THAT THE AGENDA BE AMENDED TO INCLUDE OFFICE SHIFTS.

Trustee Christine Thatcher called for a recorded vote.

The motion was defeated on the following recorded vote:

Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Christine Thatcher	Michelle Arseneault		
	Tracy Brown		
	Emma Cunningham		
	Donna Edwards		
	Mark Jacula		
	Stephen Linton		
	Kelly Miller		
	Carolyn Morton		
	Deb Oldfield		
	Shailene Panylo		

2025:SC02

MOVED by Trustee Carolyn Morton

SECONDED by Trustee Mark Jacula

THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

5. Community Presentations

(a) OSSTF/FEESO District 13 Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit

Julia McCrea, President, OSSTF/FEESO District 13 Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit, shared a presentation.

There were no trustee questions.

(b) Common Sense Classrooms Inc.

Patricia Poku-Christian, President, Common Sense Classrooms Inc., shared a presentation.

There were no trustee questions.

6. DDSB Presentations: Strategic Implementation

(a) Early Reading Screener Results: Building Meaningful Learning

Superintendent Erin Elmhurst introduced System Lead Lanya Lewis and Facilitator Rachel Cosford, who shared a presentation on Early Reading Screeners; summarizing

Standing Committee Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2025

fall 2024 Screener results for DDSB students in Year 2 Kindergarten through Grade 2 and the ways in which staff are supporting meaningful learning and engagement in literacy.

Trustee questions were answered.

7. Recommended Actions

(a) Approval of the Standing Committee Minutes, December 2, 2024

Trustee Deb Oldfield presented the minutes from the December 2, 2024 Standing Committee Meeting.

2025:SC03

MOVED by Trustee Kelly Miller

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 2, 2024 STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

8. Information Items

(a) Student Trustee Report

Student Trustees Kayla Hoare, Nitishan Poopalasundaram and Shampavi Vijayakumar shared the following:

Student Senate has recently taken part in discussions and collecting feedback from students around levelling assessment in mathematics in secondary schools and the use of Mentimeter to hear from students about what they feel are the biggest barriers/issues in DDSB schools.

Under the leadership of the Student Senate Vice President, a charity drive was organized prior to the winter break and \$930 was raised to provide gift cards to students in need.

Trustee questions were answered.

(b) OPSBA Update

Trustee Donna Edwards shared Trustee Edwards shared a reminder about the upcoming Public Education Symposium and provided an overview of the conference program and workshops that will be available to attendees.

There were no trustee questions.

Standing Committee Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2025

(c) Ignite Durham Learning Foundation (IDLF) Update

Trustee Michelle Arseneault shared a video highlighting recent fundraising campaigns and initiatives that have been undertaken, including Toonie Tuesday, Holiday Helper and Chew Chew Train in support of DDSB families in need. Appreciation to all donors, volunteers and IDLF was extended.

Trustee questions were answered.

9. Memos

- (a) 2425:61, School Year Calendar Consultation Process
- (b) 2425:62, Secondary Enrolment and Staffing Update
- (c) 2425:63, Director of Education Performance Appraisal Mid-Year Review Process

The memos were shared for information and Trustee questions were answered.

10. Adjournment

2025:SC04
MOVED by Trustee Stephen Linton
SECONDED by Trustee Mark Jacula

THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:22 p.m.

Chair

Secretary



Durham District School Board

Student Trustee Report

February 3, 2025 Standing Committee

Ignite Learning:

As you know, we are in the Board-wide stage of the DDSB Student Trustee elections for the 2025/26 school year. This is an exciting time for secondary students across the board to have a direct impact on their education. Voting for the Student Trustee elections is taking place from February 3rd to February 7th, and every currently enrolled DDSB secondary student is eligible to vote. If you are eligible, you should have received an email today with the voting link, as well as videos from all six running candidates, so you can get to know them and their platforms before casting your vote.

The Student Trustee Candidates Forum was originally scheduled for January 28th, however, due to inclement weather, it has been postponed. More information will be coming out about this soon. The results of the election will be announced on February 10th, and we encourage all students to take part in this process. Your vote matters, and by voting, you are helping to ensure that the next Student Trustees truly represents the voice of the student body. We wish good luck to all the candidates!

Ignite Connection:

In addressing the transportation needs and concerns raised by students across Durham, it has become evident that there are several key issues regarding the availability, affordability, and accessibility of Durham Region Transit (DRT) services. Feedback from various areas has highlighted both common challenges and distinct regional needs, which we must consider in order to improve the overall experience for students moving forward.

Students from northern Durham have reported that the use of public transit to get to and from school is almost nonexistent, with the majority of students relying on personal transportation, bussing, or walking as it is more accessible. This highlights a gap in the accessibility or appeal of the DRT system for those living in more rural or less densely

populated areas, where transit routes are not as frequent or extensive. In Oshawa and Whitby, students have pointed out that while many rely on DRT services, the cost of student fares is a significant barrier. They have noted that the existing fare structure, combined with an insufficient number of routes, discourages a larger number of students from using public transit. Many students have expressed that they would be more likely to use the service if there were more affordable options and better route coverage, particularly during peak hours or in areas that are currently underserved. Meanwhile, in Ajax and Pickering, students have raised concerns about the lack of accommodations for individuals with disabilities on DRT services. They pointed out that bus stops can be far away and less accessible to those in wheelchairs. Additionally, due to the large crowds that are often at these stops, it is challenging for those with disabilities to get on the bus. Students in these communities emphasized the need for greater investment in accessible transportation options.

Feedback across all areas suggests that there is a lack of awareness regarding how to properly use public transportation, including understanding rules, regulations, and etiquette. Students believe that more education on how to effectively navigate the transit system would improve the experience for everyone, especially for those who may be unfamiliar with using public transit on a regular basis. Tools like DTS's "Travelling with Us" section on their website could be better utilized in assisting students with effectively planning their trips and taking transit properly.

To summarize, the feedback from students has identified a clear need for:

1. **Improved accessibility**, particularly in rural and less densely populated regions, to make DRT services more appealing to a wider range of students.
2. **Lowered fares** and **expanded routes** in Oshawa to increase the affordability and availability of transportation for students.
3. **Enhanced accessibility for students with disabilities**, with a focus on ensuring that all buses are equipped to meet diverse mobility needs.
4. **Educational opportunities** to ensure students understand how to use public transit safely and effectively

It is crucial that these issues be addressed to ensure that all students, regardless of where they live, their mobility needs, or their financial circumstances, have equitable access to efficient, affordable, and accessible transportation.

Ignite Well-being:

A recurring issue raised by students over the years is the condition and atmosphere of school bathrooms, often tied to concerns about school safety, inclusivity, and overall well-being. Feedback from our Student Senators has highlighted areas for improvement, including the cleanliness of bathrooms, the general environment within these spaces, and the growing issue of vape culture.

Despite the hard work of our custodial staff, bathrooms are often left in poor condition due to student behavior. Senators have reported that overflowing trash, litter on the floor, vandalism, and unsanitary conditions are a common occurrence in school bathrooms. This is particularly concerning considering the hard work of our janitorial staff, who dedicate themselves to keeping our schools clean and safe.

Vaping has become a significant concern, with students often leaving class to use e-cigarettes in bathroom spaces. This has created an environment where many students feel unsafe or uncomfortable going into the bathrooms, especially when there is a strong scent of vape smoke or when students are visibly using vaping devices. As a result, some students have reported that they actively avoid using the bathrooms during the school day, choosing to wait until they get home instead. This not only disrupts their ability to take care of basic needs while at school, but it also contributes to a broader sense of unease and discomfort in these spaces.

While administration and staff are doing their absolute best to monitor and enforce rules, they can only do so much. The vaping culture, along with students leaving bathrooms in disarray or vandalizing them with graffiti, makes it increasingly difficult for custodial staff and administrators to maintain a clean and safe environment. We are beginning these recurring issues to the board's attention in order to continue highlighting the ongoing concerns surrounding the state of school bathrooms. These are not just minor inconveniences; they are real issues that directly impact students' lives every day. We aim to foster continued dialogue among trustees and senior staff members by addressing student concerns directly. As Student Trustees, we are committed to advocating for meaningful improvements and a safer, cleaner DDSB school environment.



Durham District School Board

OPSBA Report

February 3, 2025 Standing Committee

Public Education Symposium

The OPSBA Public Education Symposium (PES) was held on January 24-25 in Toronto. Many DDSB trustees, the Director and some senior staff attended the symposium.

The keynote speaker for the first day was Ovide William Mercredi, Indigenous Leader, Lawyer and Former National Chief of the assembly of First Nations who gave a powerful talk on nationhood.

Assistant Deputy Minister, Education Equity and Governance Secretariat, and Chief Equity Officer spoke about her personal journey and her experience with school boards. She talked a little about the essential role of strong governance in school boards.

A panel of political education critics gave their insight into the education system challenges as we move into a provincial election. There was also a panel of education strategists discussion on education priorities as the provincial election looms.

Trustees had the opportunity to choose from many workshops: A timely Threat – School Board Ransomware Attacks and how to best deal with it, Education and Human Rights: A focus on tackling anti-Black racism and discrimination in Education, School Board Budgeting and Finance, Implementation of Jordan's Principle in Ontario School Boards, Problem Solving Frameworks to Navigate Tension, Strategies for Effective Community Parent Engagement, Trustee Code of Conduct: New Policy Requirement sand Breach Investigation Procedures, Understanding and Minimizing Unconscious Bias, Connecting Community to Strategy, Parting to Support Healthier Democracies in Ontario Municipalities, Working through the New Director's Performance Appraisal Process, Tearing Down Disability Barriers in the K-12 School System, etc.

I know some of my fellow trustees chose different workshops than I did. I am sure

we have all come back with different questions and learnings as we attended the various workshops and networked with trustees from other boards. Personally, I came back from the Problem-Solving Frameworks to Navigate Tensions workshop wanting to learn more about Pro/Prop charting strategy that is being used in several boards to navigate difficult discussions while ensuring everyone's voice is being actively listened to. This strategy is also being taught to students within several boards. I also could not wait to read a free resource – a personal memoir of a blind lawyer and volunteer disability rights advocate (quoted from his memoir) describing his involvement in and sharing his perspective on the fight to get equal rights for people with disabilities included in the Charter of Rights. This resource contains a mix of legal and legislative history, personal insight and struggles on his advocacy journey.

The journey of getting the “disability” added to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is not well known or documented. These are just a few insights to what I learned from presentations and discussions with fellow trustees across the province.

Central East Meeting

Regional Meetings were held at PES, where trustees met and discuss issues like the National School Food Policy. Funding does not go directly to school boards but to lead agencies and indigenous partners across the province. Some school boards have been told they will not receive funding from the National School Food Program, as they currently have a “food program” in their board. This is of great concern as many of our food programs rely on volunteers. Without the support of volunteers, school program can and have shut down.

Other Items

- The Ontario Autism Coalition (OAC) released a report detailing the results of their Special Education survey conducted in the Spring of 2024. The survey data showed that the “special education system” is not meeting the needs of a huge number of kids it is meant to educate.
- School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) launched By Your Side, a new parent/caregiver learning hub that has been designed to meet the needs of Ontario's families. It contains resources and supports in multiple formats to ensure that families can easily access information and strategies that promote mental health and well-being at home.



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MEMORANDUM

To: Trustees

Memo: No. 2425:66

From: Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board

Date: January 22, 2025

RE: Office Relocation in the Education Centre

As a publicly funded corporation focused on serving students, and by extension, their families, our school district attends carefully to maximizing the resources at our disposal. Prudent deployment of resources: material, capital, human, financial and time, are key to providing our students with a productive and effective experience at school. Managing a staff complement that provides myriad services to schools is a part of that responsibility, and, like our student population, our staff complement continues to grow. Additionally, evolving needs and approaches to staff deployment is an important consideration in maintaining a stable and agile team that supports every aspect of the DDSB ecosystem.

The analysis of space utilization, shifting staff teams, and the repurposing of office and work spaces is inherent to the growth of our organization and its workforce. To accommodate changes to our team over the past number of years, and to ensure we are also appropriately planning for the future, Facilities Services has been working throughout the building, gathering information on the current and future space needs for centrally located staff at the Education Centre. In December, trustees received an email message explaining that there are some areas within the Education Centre that are undergoing some changes. These space planning adjustments began last fall and will continue to unfold in the months ahead.

As we shared in a note to staff recently, here is a brief overview of the upcoming changes:

1. Some departments will be relocating to different areas in the building where they will have a more suitable space that meets their current operational requirements.
2. Some previously unused spaces (used for storage) have now been designated or repurposed for office space use.
3. Every effort is being made to create cohesive space plans that allow all departmental team members to be located in the same area, and to provide a variety of right-sized private and group working and meeting spaces.
4. In some cases, staff will be moving from an office to an open workspace as we look to maximize space utilization and adjust to a hybrid work model.

5. These moves will continue to take place over the next several months. Existing offices and furniture are being reassigned wherever feasible to make moves as streamlined as possible and mitigate cost.

These changes are being implemented with careful consideration, and any costs associated with the moves are within our approved operational budget.

The staff at the Education Centre are a critical part of ensuring our system runs smoothly, and that we deliver on our mission to provide ongoing student-centered improvement and success. Supporting a growing district by efficiently using the space available is a far more effective use of resources than building additional space. We believe that these changes in space utilization at the DDSB Education Centre will bring about positive outcomes for each team and DDSB as a whole.



MEMORANDUM

To: Trustees

Memo: No. 2425:67

From: Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board
Mohamed Hamid, Superintendent of Education

Date: January 30, 2025

RE: High School Assessment Practices - Use of Levelled Questions

The purpose of this memo is to follow up on concerns and feedback raised by the student trustees regarding the use of levelled questions in some high school math assessments.

During the January 6, 2025 Standing Committee meeting, student trustees presented feedback from their peers regarding the use of levelled questions in some high school math classes. This practice involves providing students with differentiated questions (Levels 1 through 4) to demonstrate their understanding at varying levels of complexity. The intent is to create a structured approach that allows students to engage with content at a level they feel confident in while still challenging them to advance their skills. Staff pursued this inquiry by speaking with educators, subject specialist and students. This practice is not employed in every classroom nor in every school and has been in use prior to the development of the 2024-2025 Math Achievement Action Plan. It is important to note that levelled questions are not contemplated as part of the Math Plan.

Students highlighted both benefits and challenges with the levelled system:

- **Positive Feedback:**

- *Opportunities for Success:* Students shared that the levelled system mitigates the risk of failure, allowing them to engage with questions suited to their readiness level, to build confidence and improve skills.
- *Equity in Assessment:* The system ensures students can earn marks by demonstrating their understanding, even at foundational levels, which was appreciated by learners who may otherwise struggle.
- *Weighted Scoring System:* Some students recognized that the system provides an incentive for engaging with more complex questions, as higher-level questions carry more weight. This approach allows students to challenge themselves while still having opportunities to demonstrate their learning at various levels.

- **Concerns Raised:**

- *Confidence and Mental Health:* Students may feel unprepared for more complex questions causing them to opt out of important opportunities to improve their skills.
- *Preparation for Higher-Level Questions:* There were concerns that instructional time often focuses on Level 3 questions, leaving students underprepared for the more complex Level 4 questions, which are introduced only during assessments or summative evaluations.
- *Post-Secondary Readiness:* Some students expressed concern that this system differs from post-secondary evaluation practices, which may create challenges when transitioning to higher education.

The feedback so far reflects the complex dynamics of designing equitable assessments that meet diverse student needs while preparing them for future academic and professional settings.

Levelled questions aim to differentiate assessments in ways that promote equity and support student success. However, the student feedback also highlights opportunities for improvement to mitigate the unintended disadvantage that this approach can cause for some students:

1. **Alignment Between Instruction and Assessment:** There is a need to ensure that instructional strategies effectively prepare students for the complexity of Level 4 questions prior to summative assessments.
2. **Well-Being:** Creating the everyday conditions for student success and well-being is enhanced by focusing on intentional classroom practices and discussions that promote and support varied and diverse learning paths; this may include learning conditions built on the principles of universal design.
3. **Enhancing Equity and Readiness:** Exploring how the levelled system can better prepare students for uniform evaluation standards in post-secondary education is a critical consideration.

[Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2010](#), emphasizes that assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices should be fair, transparent, and equitable for all students, providing multiple opportunities to demonstrate the full range of their learning in ways that align with their needs, experiences, and learning goals (Growing Success, 2010, p.6). In keeping with this principle, we recognize that ethical assessment practices benefit from a triangulated approach—balancing conversations, observations, and student products. While levelled questions on quizzes and tests provide valuable insight into student understanding, incorporating a broader range of assessment opportunities ensures that students can fully demonstrate their learning in ways that extend beyond traditional testing. This approach respects educators' professional judgment while supporting inclusive and equitable assessment practices, building confidence and scaling up skills.

To address these areas, staff are engaging in collaborative discussions to respond to the inconsistency experienced by students across the system. The goal is to build on the positive aspects of the levelled system to balance equity with opportunities for growth and high achievement.

44

The goals of the 2024-2025 Math Achievement Action Plan focus on fostering student expression, professional collaboration, and developing practices that advance confidence, equity, and academic success. While levelled questions are not part of the Math Plan, the focus on refining assessment practices will contribute to achieving these goals.

To: chair@durham.ca; shaun.collier@ajax.ca; Marilyn.crawford@ajax.ca; Sterling.Lee@ajax.ca; Joanne.dies@ajax.ca; walter.schummer@brock.ca; michael.jubb@brock.ca; mayor@clarington.net; ganderson@clarington.net; wwoo@clarington.net; mayor@oshawa.ca; jneal@oshawa.ca; TDMarimpietri@oshawa.ca; BChapman@Oshawa.ca; rkerr@oshawa.ca; BNicholson@Oshawa.ca; mayor@pickering.ca; council@pickering.ca; mbrenner@pickering.ca; lcook@pickering.ca; dpickles@pickering.ca; wwotten@scugog.ca; imcdougall@scugog.ca; mayor@uxbridge.ca; bgarrod@uxbridge.ca; roye@whitby.ca; mulcahyr@whitby.ca; leahyc@whitby.ca; yamadas@whitby.ca; shahidm@whitby.ca; lees@whitby.ca; cardwellm@whitby.ca; lundquistn@whitby.ca; bozinovskiv@whitby.ca

Cc: shaun.collier@ajax.ca; Marilyn.crawford@ajax.ca; Sterling.Lee@ajax.ca; Joanne.dies@ajax.ca; rob.tylermorin@ajax.ca; nancy.henry@ajax.ca; lisa.bower@ajax.ca; walter.schummer@brock.ca; michael.jubb@brock.ca; peter.frank@brock.ca; claire.doble@brock.ca; angela.canavan@brock.ca; cria.pettingill@brock.ca; lynn.campbell@brock.ca; mayor@oshawa.ca; jneal@oshawa.ca; RMcConkey@oshawa.ca; TDMarimpietri@oshawa.ca; JAlee@Oshawa.ca; BChapman@Oshawa.ca; BMarks@Oshawa.ca; rkerr@oshawa.ca; DGiberson@Oshawa.ca; BNicholson@Oshawa.ca; jgray@oshawa.ca; mayor@pickering.ca; council@pickering.ca; mbrenner@pickering.ca; lcook@pickering.ca; dpickles@pickering.ca; lrobinson@pickering.ca; mnagy@pickering.ca; sbutt@pickering.ca; wwotten@scugog.ca; imcdougall@scugog.ca; dleroy@scugog.ca; jguido@scugog.ca; rrock@scugog.ca; hwright@scugog.ca; tcoyne@scugog.ca; mayor@uxbridge.ca; tsnooks@uxbridge.ca; wpoppp@uxbridge.ca; zpickering@uxbridge.ca; gshreeve@uxbridge.ca; pbeach@uxbridge.ca; bgarrod@uxbridge.ca; bgarrod@uxbridge.ca

Subject: DDSB Board of Trustees' Statement of Support for Combatting Jew Hate
Date: January 31, 2025 8:36:00 AM

This message is being sent on behalf of the Board of Trustees, Durham District School Board

To: Regional Chair and Council of the Regional Municipality of Durham and Mayor and Council of the Town of Whitby

We have been made aware of two motions being brought forward for consideration at Whitby Council on February 3, 2025, and Durham Regional Council on February 12, 2025, in response to the rise of Jew hate in the region and around the world.

The DDSB Board of Trustees would like to express its strong support for any actions and steps taken to address the rise of Jew hate and antisemitism. We stand united as allies in our commitment to fostering a region free from hate and discrimination.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,
 DDSB Board of Trustees

Cc: Mayor and Council, Town of Ajax; Mayor and Council, Township of Brock; Mayor and Council, City of Oshawa; Mayor and Council, City of Pickering; Mayor and Council, Township of Scugog, Mayor and Council, Township of Uxbridge