



SEAC SOUNDBYTES

Raising awareness of the Special Education process at HCDSB

March 2017

Special Education Board Resources

As parents, we always worry about how our children with special needs will be supported when we are not with them, and school is no different.

When our exceptional children enter the school system, we want to ensure that they have the best resources and tools available to help them maximize their learning opportunities and educational experience. The HCDSB places great emphasis on supporting all students, and this includes a dedicated focus on students with special needs. Students benefit from a team of educators focused on special education, including Special Education Resource Teachers, Special Education Consultants, Itinerant teachers, psychologists and social workers, speech pathologists, audiologists, educational assistants and many more professionals in addition to their classroom teacher. For those students who require it, specialized equipment and technology is made available. Examples may include FM Systems, computer hardware and software, seating systems, and writing aids. In cases where required, specialized transportation is also provided.

In the same way that some children require special resources and support, some children benefit from specialized learning environments, and as such there are different placements that are available for educators and families to consider, that best meet the needs of the student. There are options that range from placements where students remain in a regular classroom with supports or withdrawal assistance to Special Education classrooms with full time or part time integration.

In order to determine what support resources or classroom placements would best benefit their child, meetings are scheduled with the school team and the student's parents or guardians to discuss and evaluate the needs of the student. Parental input in this process is vital and the more information that can be shared with the school team, the better, so that they may be able to properly assess which resources would best meet the needs of the student. Once it has been decided what that student will require, a referral is sent in to request the applicable resources. In some cases, the local CCAC (Community Care Access Centres) will also be included in the discussion because they coordinate in school support for special education students in the areas of Physical and Occupational Therapy, and in some cases additional Speech and Language Therapy.