

## The Staffing Process As It Relates to Special Education

### Background

Each year, between January and the middle of March, Special Education undertakes to align special education resources in the form of programs and the staff who will work within those programs to the wide range of student special needs across the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). Needs are determined through Identification, Placement, and Review Committees (IPRCs) and recommendations that come through School Support Teams that are reflected in the Individual Education Plans (IEPs). In March, principals are told which intensive support programs (ISPs) they will be receiving because they have been moved or a new program has been created and how many staff they will have in each program. Principals are also told if a program is moving to another location or if it is being closed.

### Opening a New Intensive Support Program (ISP) in a School

- *New programs are opened in schools for the following reasons:*
  1. There are a number of students close to the school who require the program;
  2. Access to this program has never been available to parents in their area or quadrant;
  3. Space is available to accommodate the program and any future growth;
  4. There are supports within the school, which will benefit the students and staff in the ISP (e.g., it is beneficial to have two or more ISPs with the same exceptionality in the school so that the staff can work collaboratively.)
- If a new program is being created at a school, the principal will be told the name of the program and the type and number of staff that will be allocated to the program.
- The names of staff who will be working within the program will not be available until staffing models are completed, surplus staff is placed and vacancies are advertised and filled. Principals know the dates when they can advertise and interview for positions and can share them with parents.

### Moving an Intensive Support Program from one School to Another

- *Programs are moved or transferred for several reasons:*
  1. Space is no longer available for an ISP;
  2. Lack of supports within the school, which will benefit the students and staff in the ISP (e.g., it is beneficial to have two or more ISPs with the same exceptionality in the school so that the staff can work collaboratively).
- Principals whose programs are moving are told in March, in most cases, where the program is moving to and can inform parents immediately. However, the current students may or may not know if they are moving with the program until offers of placements are made. Frequently, however,

the majority of students do move with the program. Similarly, principals who are receiving the programs can inform their parent body which program(s) they will be receiving at the same time.

- Support staff who has worked in the program which is moving has the option of moving with the program. If they choose not to move with the program, then vacancies are filled through the normal processes.

### **Closing an Intensive Support Program**

- *Programs are closed in a school because:*
  1. There are no or only one or two students who require the program;
  2. There are no new students who live close enough to come to the program and fill it.
- In most cases, the teachers and support staff who taught in the closed program are teachers who are assigned to the school. The decision as to whether the staff who taught in the program will stay in the school depends on whether the same number of staff is required for the following year and the seniority of the staff in question.
- Principals know more about their staffing situation by mid April.

### **Placing Students in Intensive Support Programs**

- After the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process, the special education coordinators in each quadrant consider the student's home address, the profiles of students and availability of space in the program and, then, place students in the appropriate program.
- The coordinators send the names of the students who have been placed in the programs to the principal of the school in which the program belongs.
- The principal of the student's current school will inform the parents at which school s/he has been placed .
- Parents will be invited to visit the school where the program resides or will reside to meet the principal and any staff who are available.
- Parents are asked to indicate their acceptance or refusal within 30 calendar days of receiving the placement. After 30 days have elapsed, the space may be offered to another family.
- Parents of students with a developmental disability will receive an offer or notice of placement during and/or following the week of April 30, 2007.
- Parents of students with the exceptionalities of communication, intellectual or physical will receive an offer or notice of placement during and/or following the week of May 7, 2007.

## **The Community-Based Resource Model (CBRM)**

- The Community-Based Resource Model is one of the ways the TDSB supports students who require Special Education support in their neighbourhood school up to Grade 8.
- CBRM is composed of Resource and Home School Program (HSP) and is in all neighbourhood schools.
- Further information on the CBRM can be found in *A Guide to the Community-Based Resource Model*, which is available on this website or in the TDSB Special Education Plan, which is also located on this website.

## **Placing Students in the Community-Based Resource Model (CBRM)**

- Usually, a student is placed in Resource or HSP after they have been formally identified as requiring support through the IPRC process.
- Depending on the availability of space in the CBRM, students who are not formally identified or who are awaiting identification may be recommended for CBRM support through the School Support Team.

## **Summary**

The information that has been provided in the preceding pages represents the normal process that occurs after allocations are given. From time to time, at the local level, there may be deviations to the process. If that occurs, the principal will be able to explain why and how the process has been changed. If for any reason, you require more information that the principal has, s/he can provide you with the name and number of the consultant or coordinator responsible for your school or your child's program.

One last item of note is that the number of special needs assistants (SNAs) is not determined until June 1 and most of the staff is assigned by the end of June. Staffing is completed over the summer and up until the beginning of school. Any remaining vacancies after that point are posted for application.

If you have questions or concerns that cannot be responded to by the school principal, the consultant or the coordinator, you may contact the Supervising Principal for your quadrant.