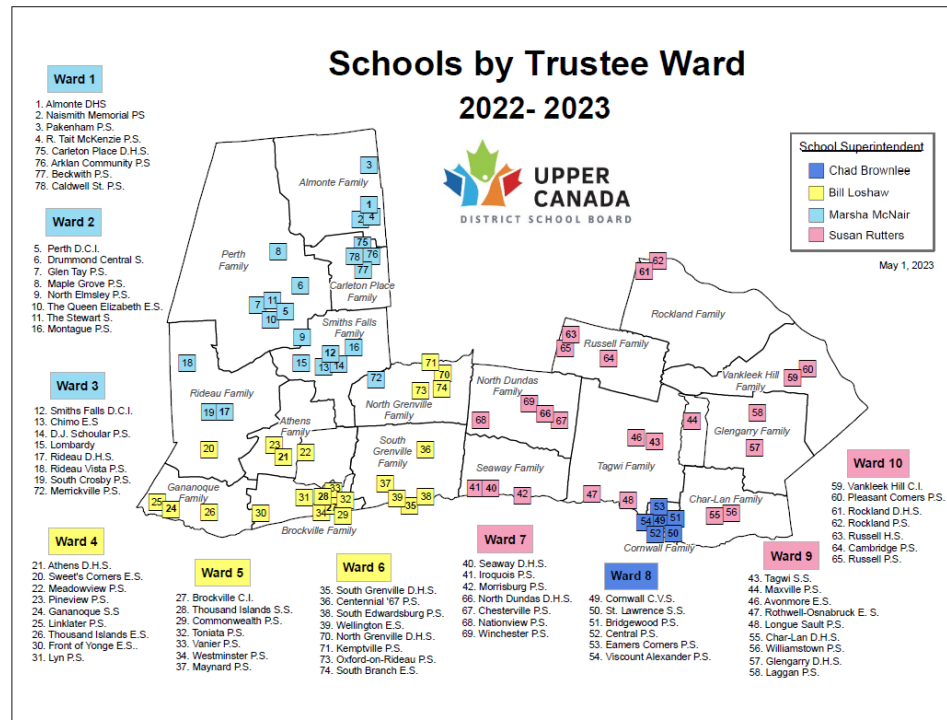


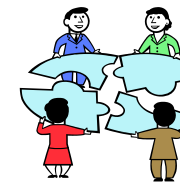
How do I reach board staff?



Superintendent	Family of Schools	Special Education Superintendent, and Principal of Special Education
Marsha McNair (marsha.mcnair@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 1	<b>Jennifer Perry,</b> Superintendent of Special Education  And  <b>Julie Symonds,</b> Principal of Special Education
Marsha McNair (marsha.mcnair@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 2	
Marsha McNair (marsha.mcnair@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 3	
Bill Loshaw (bill.loshaw@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 4	
Bill Loshaw (bill.loshaw@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 6	
Bill Loshaw (bill.loshaw@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 5	
Susan Rutters (susan.rutters@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 10	
Susan Rutters (susan.rutters@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 7	
Susan Rutters (susan.rutters@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 9	
Chad Brownlee (chad.brownlee@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 8	

Communication  
A Guide for Parents and Students

Communication



Students, parents, and educators all play important roles in the planning and implementation of a student's educational program. Recognizing everyone's contributions and setting observable, measurable, and realistic expectations for student achievement will lead to a positive school climate, the best possible education for the student, and minimal conflict.<sup>1</sup>

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is natural. When it is a catalyst for needed change, it can have a positive outcome. Conflict usually starts when someone decides that current conditions are unacceptable and need to be changed. Only one person is needed to start a conflict; others may become involved – whether they wish to or not – in response to this initial impetus for change (Windle & Warren, 1999).

**“Nothing motivates a child more than when learning is valued by schools and families/ community working together in partnership.”**  
Michael Fullan

When a conflict arises about a student's educational programs and services, it is essential that parents first speak to the person most involved in the student's education: the classroom teacher or the special education teachers. If the conflict cannot be resolved at this level, it may be necessary for the school principal to become involved. School board officials may also be called upon at this stage, as they bring an additional board-wide perspective to the issues in dispute.

In some circumstances, when discussions with school board officials do not resolve the issue, staff of the regional office of the Ministry of Education may be able to provide information to parents, educators, and school board officials. They may also be able to share examples of successful strategies or solutions developed by other school boards. It should be noted, however, that ministry staff cannot provide legal advice or direction either to parents or to school boards.

Various parent associations may be able to assist parents in their discussions with educators and school board officials. In addition, each school board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) has a mandate to make recommendations to the board about system-wide matters affecting the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services within the board. However, SEACs do not advise parents or school boards on matters involving individual students.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>(Source: Ontario Ministry of Education, *Shared Solutions: A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Needs*, 2007)

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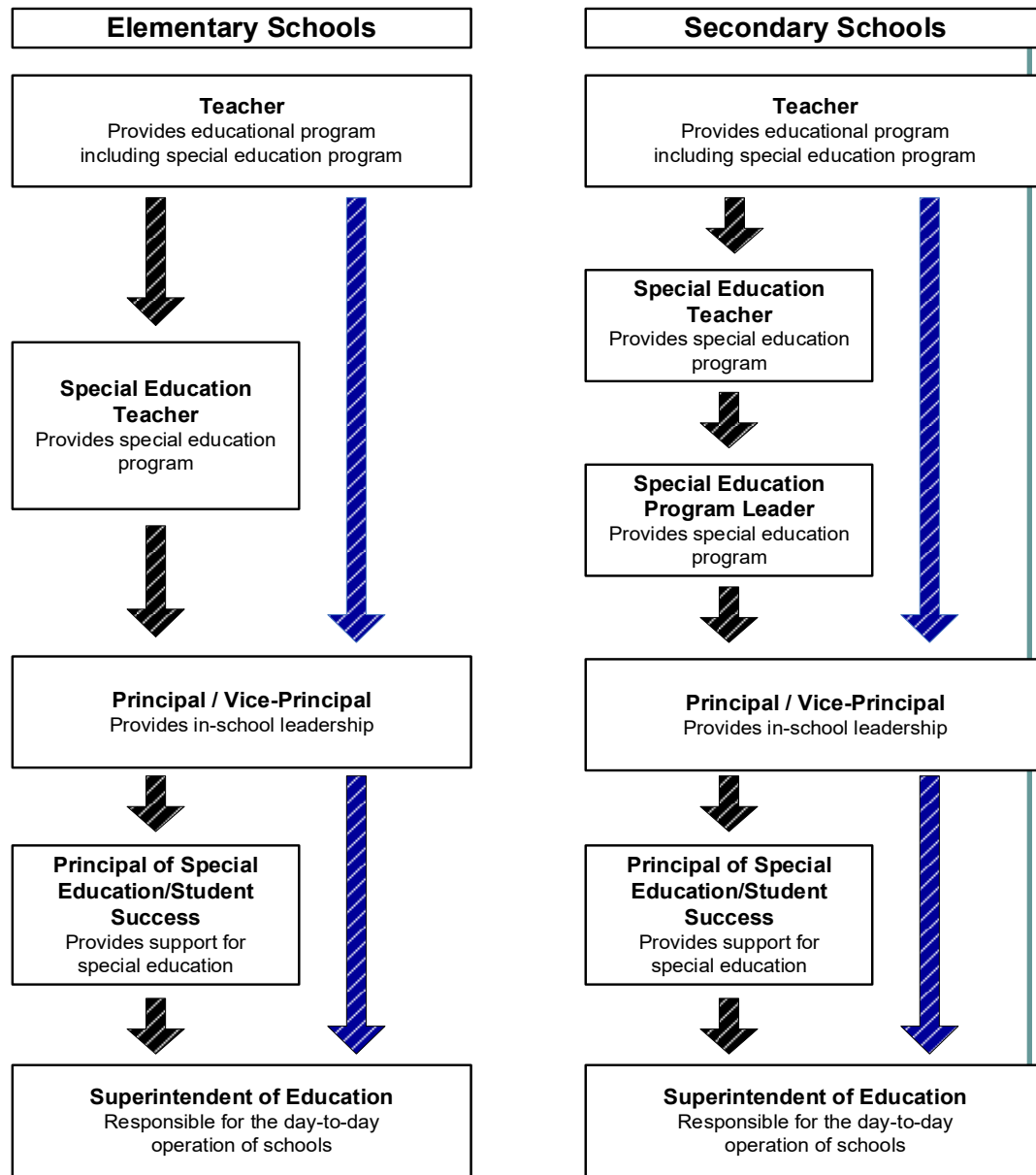


## Who Should I talk to?



**Please Note:** School board staff and community partners may attend at points in the process.

The blue arrow indicates the path that may be taken when Special Education resources are not required.



**"We prepare all students for a successful life."**



### Parent Notes and School Contact Information



## Tips for Shared Solutions

- ◆ Be positive:
  - Think that everyone can win and that a solution can be found.
  - Be open to the ideas and suggestions of others.
  - Be willing to explore creative ways of reaching a shared solution.
- ◆ Share information that you feel is important about your child.
- ◆ Keep the focus on the student's strengths, needs and interests.
- ◆ Focus upon one or two things at a time.
- ◆ Request a summary of actions, decisions, and responsibilities.
- ◆ Communicating effectively with the school is an ongoing process.
- ◆ Sometimes getting to the best solution takes time.
- ◆ Identifying and solving an issue is a shared responsibility.
- ◆ The student's progress and well-being should be the primary focus of discussions between parents/guardians and educators.
- ◆ Give some thought to the outcome you would like to see. Remember there may be more than one way to achieve this outcome.

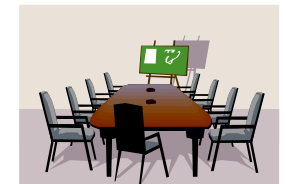
### Remember<sup>2</sup>

- \* *Your concern is important – sometimes getting to the best solution takes time. Planning for your child's success is an ongoing process.*
- \* *Keep communicating – ongoing communications is important.*
- \* *Focus on the actions/outcomes/decisions that are in the best interest of your child.*

<sup>2</sup>(Source: York Region District School Board *Special Education, A Communication Guide for Parents and Students.*)

## Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

**What is SEAC?** SEAC is a standing of the Board committee mandated by legislation. This makes it a standing committee of the Board. The members of the committee include representatives of local associations (defined in the regulation), members of the school board, and First Nations representation, membership may also include additional members-at-large who do not represent an association.



### Responsibilities of SEAC

- ◇ To make recommendations to the board in respect of any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board;
- ◇ To participate in the board's annual review of its special education plan;
- ◇ To participate in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education;
- ◇ To review the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education.
- ◇ SEAC does not advise parents or school boards on matters involving individual students.

**SEAC Meetings** Regular meetings take place 10 times per year. Special meetings may be called as required. Meeting dates and arrangements will be determined annually and communicated to members. All meetings of the Special Education Advisory Committee are open to the public to attend as observers.

For further information on SEAC:  
 Upper Canada District School Board  
 225 Central Avenue W, Brockville, ON K6V 5X1  
 phone 613-342-0371 or 1-800-267-7131, or  
 e-mail: lydia.foley@ucdsb.on.ca