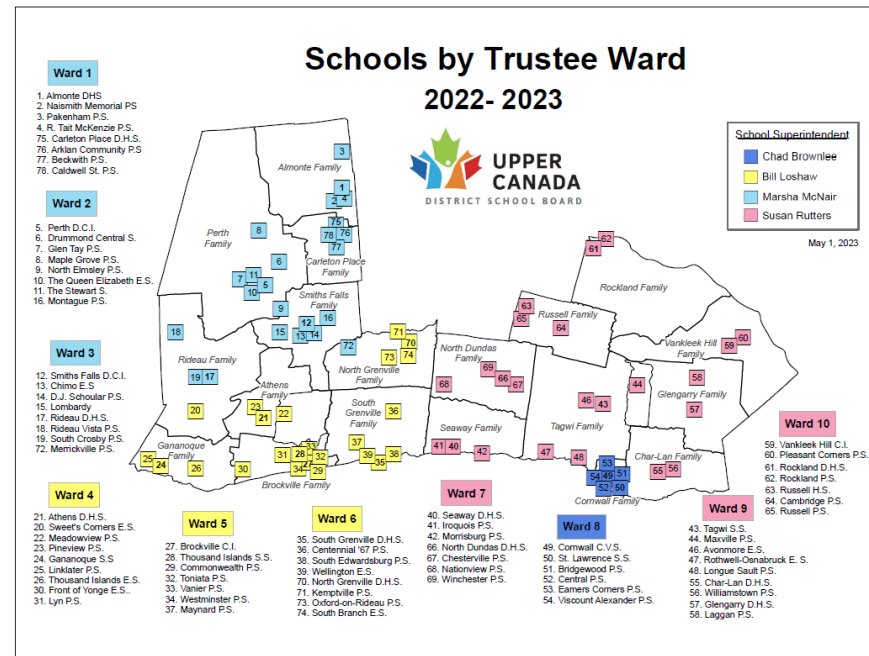


How do I reach board staff?



Superintendent	Family of Schools	Special Education Superintendent, and Principal of Special Education
Marsha McNair (marsha.mcnair@ucdsb.on.ca)	Ward 1	<p>Jennifer Perry, Superintendent of Special Education</p> <p>And</p> <p>Julie Symonds, Principal of Special Education</p>
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	
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Assessment

A Guide for Parents and Students

Source: Education For All, Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005

Purposes of Assessment

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning and functioning within classroom and school environments. Assessment may therefore:



- Specify and verify a student's strengths and needs;
- Determine requisite instruction;
- Determine particular interventions that may be necessary for the student to gain access to opportunities for achieving desired outcomes.

Assessment also helps to inform decisions about programs suitable to a student's learning needs.

Assessment is an on-going process!

Assessment is the process of systematically gathering information about a student from a variety of sources, using a variety of techniques and tools. This information can be used to develop class and individual **profiles**. Teachers assess students all the time through observation and data collection. Assessment can relate to the instructional or working environment and/or the requirements of a particular strand or subject area. Teachers may periodically assess students to determine the learning that has occurred in the classroom and to plan accordingly. Informal **diagnostic** assessments represent a type of assessment that provides specific information on the reasons a student may be experiencing learning difficulties. Student Success Team meetings (SST) may be called when there are specific concerns about a student's progress in school.

The **Special Education Teacher and possibly Special Education Staff** may collaborate with the regular classroom teacher for such **diagnostic** purposes. These assessment results form the basis for program accommodation/modification and require continual observation by the classroom teacher for effectiveness. The key purpose of an assessment for students is to ensure that they are provided with the most effective programming possible for optimizing learning. Accurate assessment and evaluation are critically important for ensuring that all students can participate and learn effectively in regular classrooms.

Educational Assessment

An educational assessment involves the use of a combination of **criterion referenced** or **norm referenced** tools to gather information about a student's academic achievement and functioning. It can also provide information with respect to how a student approaches tasks and utilizes learning strategies in various strands or subject areas. Educational assessments help identify areas of the curriculum in which the student is performing well and areas that may require more support. These assessments are usually completed by members of the in-school team. An educational assessment is used for programming purposes in specific subject areas. It does not result in a diagnosis. Educational assessments may also provide the basis upon which a referral for a psycho-educational or speech-language assessment is made.

"We prepare all students for a successful life"



A definition of **bolded words** can be found in the **Key Terms** section on Page 3 of this guide.

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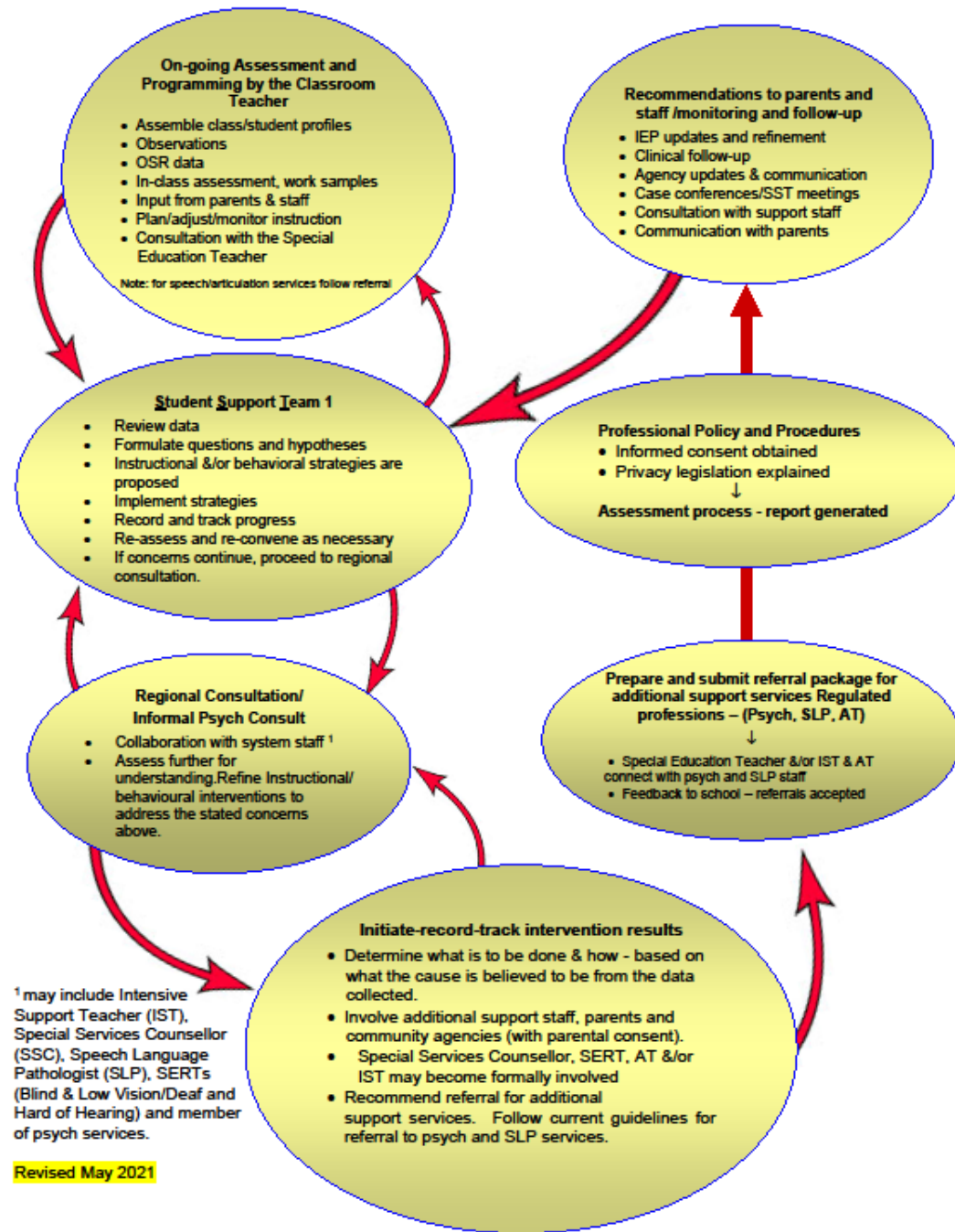
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If you wish to receive this parents' guide in Braille, large print, or audio-cassette format, please contact the board at the address or telephone number shown on the last page of this guide.

Learning Support Process Chart

Learning Support Process Chart



Parent Notes and School Contact Information



Psycho-educational Assessment

Psycho-educational assessments are completed by, or under the supervision of, a Psychologist or Psychological Associate, who are members of the College of Psychologists of Ontario and are regulated health professionals. Referrals for assessment are made by the school team when questions and concerns about student functioning persist despite in-school assessments and interventions. A psycho-educational assessment consists of a series of **standardized** and **norm referenced** measures that evaluate a student's level of functioning on a broad range of factors as dictated by the referral concern: **cognitive**, memory, developmental, social/emotional, behavioural, **adaptive**, and academic. The assessment usually provides a detailed breakdown of processes that may underlie specific academic weaknesses or other factors that are interfering with a student's ability to function in the classroom and school environments. Assessment provides additional clarity and refinement to a student's program and Individual Education Plan (IEP). It can result in a specific diagnosis such as learning disability or developmental disability and can also provide information for an Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) decision. Psycho-educational assessment results are carefully communicated by the assessor to parents and school staff. Follow-up is encouraged to ensure that students benefit from these extensive assessments.

Speech-Language Assessment

Speech-Language assessments are completed by Speech-Language Pathologists. They are members of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario and are regulated health professionals. Referrals for assessment are made by the school team when questions and concerns arise about student speech and language skills. Referrals are also made by community agencies who have identified and been working with young children at school entry on articulation and/or language skills. Speech-Language assessments play an important role in identifying language related factors that contribute to early literacy development and early learning difficulties. Speech-Language Pathologists develop programs to help remediate and build articulation and/or language skills. Programming may occur within the regular classroom or, where indicated, might be carried out by Speech-Language Assistants under the direction of the Speech-Language Pathologist. Follow-up occurs to measure speech and language development following these assessments and interventions.

Key Terms

Adaptive: Adaptive behaviour includes the age-appropriate behaviours necessary for people to live independently and to function safely and appropriately in daily life. It can be thought of as a sort of "practical intelligence." It is usually measured by scales that identify how well a person manages within his or her own environment.

Cognitive: All the mental activities linked to thinking, knowing, and remembering. A term which refers to reasoning or intellectual capacity.

Criterion Referenced: A test that is designed to measure that a person has reached a pre-determined level of performance or competence. Example: EQAO tests.

Diagnostic: In general, diagnostic is a term used when one is using information to clarify characteristics about a person. In education, informal diagnostic testing occurs when a teacher is using information obtained during in-class testing to determine a student's learning needs. For regulated health professionals (i.e., medical doctors, psychologists) diagnostic refers to the process of identifying a condition, disorder or disease from its signs and symptoms. This leads to a medical diagnosis. When a qualified professional diagnoses a child, he or she looks at the signs or symptoms the child displays, such as various behaviours, ways of communicating, or thoughts that a child may have.

Norm Referenced: A test that has been given to a very large group or groups of people. A score obtained by one person taking the test can be compared to scores from the "norming group". This allows test administrators to make statements about how a person's abilities (or achievement, or behaviour, etc.) compare to those of people who are of similar ages/grades. Ex. CCAT; Most Psycho-educational and Speech-Language tests.

Profiles: The classroom teacher is responsible for meeting the learning needs of his or her students. Effective instruction begins with an understanding of the needs of the learners. The teacher needs to know about both the needs of the entire class as a group, and the needs of individual students. If a child is demonstrating difficulties in school, it is important to identify the causes and take appropriate steps to alleviate them. This can lead to informal diagnostic testing.

Standardized: Tests that are made to be given and scored in a consistent and objective way. In order to compare one person's performance on a test to another person's performance on a test, it is important that people take the test under the same conditions, and that the same scoring procedure is applied in every case. Example: EQAO; CCAT; Psycho-educational and Speech-Language tests.