



YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Monday, September 14, 2026

6:30 p.m.

Catholic Education Centre

320 Bloomington Rd. West, Aurora, ON. L4G 0M1

Questions? Please complete this form to submit any questions

Land Acknowledgement:

We are gathered on the ancestral lands and waters of all Indigenous Peoples, who have left their footprints on Mother Earth before us. We respectfully acknowledge, those who have walked on it, those who walk on it now, and future generations who have yet to walk upon it. We pray to the Creator for strength and wisdom that all may continue to serve as stewards of the earth.

Pages

1. OPENING PRAYER

1.a Opening Prayer
Loving God,

Thank you for the gift of education in every form

As we prepare to start a new year

May confidence be our foundation,

May grace be our guide

May hope be our compass to a bright future.

I pray we have eyes to see the needs
of those around us and a heart to love well

May we face each day with positivity

Knowing that no matter what comes our way

We are not facing it alone.
Amen.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

3. ROLL CALL

4. APPROVAL OF NEW MATERIAL

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):

7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

8. **MOMENT OF INSPIRATION**
 - 8.a Fit Body Fit Mind Summer Camp
9. **PRESENTATIONS**
 - 9.a Accessibility Champions: Supporting Students with Disabilities in the Workplace. 7
10. **ACTION ITEM(S)**
11. **DISCUSSION ITEM(S)**
12. **INFORMATION ITEM(S)**
 - 12.a 2026-2027 SEAC Meeting dates 13
13. **NOTICES OF MOTION**
14. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S) / REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**
 - 14.a Request for presentations
Please reach out to Cindy Mong (cindy.mong@ycdsb.ca) for upcoming presentations
15. **NEXT MEETING**
October 19, 2026 at 6:30pm
16. **ADJOURNMENT**

Land Acknowledgement

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We pray to the Creator for strength and wisdom that all may continue to serve

as stewards of the Earth .

Land Acknowledgement by YCDSB's First Nations, Métis and Inuit Steering Committee adapted with PCS by Alana Miraglia and Elaine Marshal in collaboration with SLP Department

YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
MINUTES
of the SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Monday, June 8, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: A. Connolly, S. Leckey, M. Bujan, D. Legris, L. La Rosa, J. Sarna
Absent with Notice: M. Rennie, J. Man, A. Carter, S. Carnovale
Administration: J. Powers, L. Cippollone, L. Lausic
Recording Officer: C. Mong
Guest: S. Game
C. Weber

- 1. OPENING PRAYER**
- 2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF NEW MATERIAL**
THAT the new material be approved as presented.
- 5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
Moved by: D. Legris
Seconded by: A. Connolly
THAT the agenda be approved as presented.
- 6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):**
Moved by: M. Bujan
Seconded by: A. Connolly
THAT the Minutes of May 26, 2026, be approved as presented.
- 7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

8. MOMENT OF INSPIRATION

8.1 Through our eyes: 2 Students 2 experiences

This presentation featured speeches by two students who receive vision support and use assistive technology (AT) to access their academic programs. The student from St. Joseph the Worker spoke about living with aniridia, while the student from St. David shared his experiences as a student with autism.

9. PRESENTATIONS

9.1 Mental Health Department Year End Review

M. Prinzo, Mental Health Manager highlighted the priorities addressed by the Mental Health Team during the 2025–2026 school year. The presentation outlined the actions taken, key highlights and achievements, and next steps associated with each priority.

9.2 Special Education Plan - Finalize

Superintendent Powers shared the finalized Special Education Plan incorporating the SEAC feedback and input and the next steps for final approval.

9.3 Student Services Department Update

Superintendent Powers presented a recap of programs and services delivered by the Student Services department over the last month.

10. ACTION ITEM(S)

11. DISCUSSION ITEM(S)

12. INFORMATION ITEM(S)

12.1 SEAC Meeting Dates 2026-2027

12.2 York Hills - Summer Programs and Webinars

12.3 Easter Seals June Report

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

14. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S) / REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Please reach out to cindy.mong@ycdsb.ca for future presentation requests

15. NEXT MEETING

16. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: D. Legris

Seconded by: A. Connolly

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:12pm.



Accessibility Champions: Supporting Students with Disabilities in the Workplace

PEP Centralized Placement: Toro Group of Companies



Pathways to EmployABILITY Program (PEP)



- ◆ PEP is an experiential learning program intended for students aged 16 – 21 with disabilities who require accommodations to overcome barriers in accessing work experience opportunities. Each experiential learning opportunity prepares the student for success in a future experience of greater intensity, sharper focus, and longer duration. Work placements are offered both in school and in the community, for students who are willing to learn job readiness skills and participate in transit training. Admission into this program is via application in consultation with the Itinerant Work Experience Teacher and Special Education teacher.
- ◆ The Toro Group of Companies is a local manufacturing company interested in offering supported work placements for students with disabilities and works closely with the Itinerant Work Experience Teacher (WEST) to select suitable candidates for the PEP placements.

Background

Ontario

- ◆ YCDSB's initial partnership with Toro Group began in the 2024/2025 school year through a Ministry of Education grant to be used to provide targeted supports for students with disabilities pursuing Cooperative Education credits within a variety of work placement opportunities, including those related to technological education and the skilled trades.
- ◆ The Student Services department received MOE funding to be used to remove barriers and create accessible experiential learning opportunities for students with disabilities by:
 - providing individualized support in a work placement;
 - identifying accessible community placement opportunities;
 - working with the student and placement supervisor/employer to set-up conditions at the placement to ensure the student's success; and
 - helping the student throughout the placement to ensure completion and skills development.

Centralized Placement Goals

- ◆ To provide neurodiverse students with meaningful, supported workplace experience in the trades through mentorship and supervision by Toro's Workplace Accommodation Specialist.
- ◆ To enhance the educational experiences of students and gain insight in making career decisions and developing essential skills, knowledge and attitudes by combining classroom learning with on-the-job training.
- ◆ To integrate classroom theory with learning experiences in the community so that students are able to apply, expand, and refine knowledge and skills acquired.
- ◆ To help students with disabilities in credit or non-credit cooperative education programs develop the skills required for success after graduation.



Framework for Cooperative Education Placements

- ❖ Occur during a semester (September to January, February to June)
- ❖ Two Credit, Half-Day daily placements, from 12:30pm - 3:30pm
- ❖ School Board covers WSIB, as per the Work Education Agreement (WEA)
- ❖ Pre-placement lessons are taught at school before placement begins, usually for approximately two weeks, topics include:
 - Employability skills
 - Health and Safety skills
 - Job Readiness skills

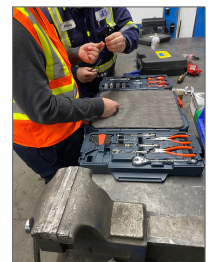


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Toro Aluminum Group of Companies: 2024-2025

- ❖ Toro Group hosted two students in ProTemp Glass during Semester 2, February - June 2025, and it was so successful that those students worked in paid employment during July and August 2025.



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Work Placement 2025-2026 - Semester 1 September - January

- ❖ Itinerant Work Experience Teacher, West, met with local high schools' Cooperative Education departments to determine possible candidates and accommodations required.
- ❖ Two students who showed a keen interest in manufacturing and trades were chosen to participate at Commdoor Aluminum.
- ❖ One student who showed an interest in administrative tasks and supporting order processing was chosen to participate in Woodbridge Glass Distribution.
- ❖ Students were mentored onsite by the Workplace Accommodation Specialist, under the guidance of their Supervisor and Manager.



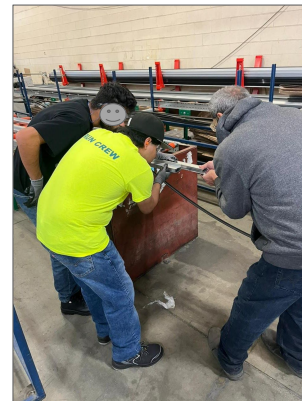
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Commdoor Aluminum: Farid and Elijah

Students worked from 12:30pm to 3:30pm daily assisting with:

- ❖ general cleaning of shop, including cleaning finished products before shipping
- ❖ making doors and windows of different shapes, operating cutting machines, and
- ❖ packaging aluminum products using shrinkwrap and packing tape to secure metal.



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Commdoor Aluminum: Farid and Elijah



"This is the area where I perform various tasks, including general cleaning, making doors and windows of different shapes, operating some cutting machines, and packaging aluminum products. I work alongside other employees to help ensure the products are clean, protected, and ready for shipment." Farid

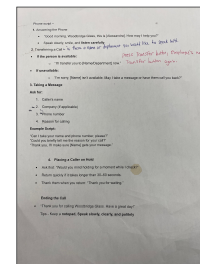
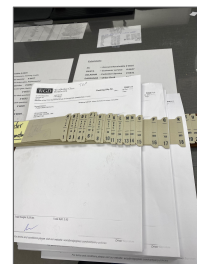
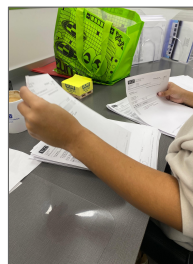
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Woodbridge Glass Distribution: Alessandra

Student worked from 8:30am - 11:30am daily assisting with:

- ❖ Sorting and filing purchasing orders by numerical sequence
- ❖ Reviewing shipping documents to ensure accuracy
- ❖ Answering phones and directing calls to appropriate staff, following phone tree



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Woodbridge Glass Distribution: Alessandra



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Work Placement 2025-2026 - Semester 2 February - June

- ❖ Meetings with co-op departments to identify students interested in a hybrid role of on the shop floor tasks as well as office duties.
- ❖ One student was interested in pursuing both a hands-on placement learning tools and machinery as well as learning about Health and Safety in the workplace.
- ❖ Student was mentored onsite by the Workplace Accommodation Specialist, as well as the Health and Safety team at Toro.



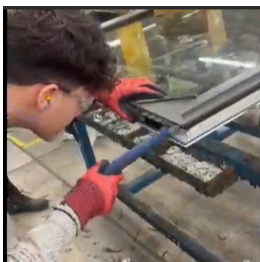
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Toro Aluminum Railings: Lucas

Student worked from 12:30pm - 3:30pm daily assisting with:

- ❖ Inventory of manufacturing parts and materials
- ❖ Shipping and Receiving duties
- ❖ Packing finished materials and components
- ❖ Health and Safety Department support:
 - Walk-throughs and checklists
 - Resource development



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Growth Areas for Students

Identifying Strengths & Setting Goals: Students are guided in recognizing their individual abilities and interests while setting realistic, meaningful goals for their employment or training path.



Developing Core Skills: Strengthening foundational workplace skills: communication, time management, punctuality, and self-regulation, while in a safe learning environment.

Professional Communication & Self-Advocacy: Students practice appropriate workplace communication and learn how to express their needs, ask for help, and advocate respectfully for themselves in a job setting.



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Accessibility and Inclusion Recognition 2026

The City of Vaughan Accessibility Champion Award Nomination

- ❖ The Accessibility Champion Awards celebrate individuals and businesses that foster an accessible environment in Vaughan.
- ❖ Committed to treating everyone in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence.
- ❖ Integration and fair access for residents, visitors and employees with visible or non-visible disabilities – organizations advocating for an accessible city, advancing inclusive practices and creating environments where everyone can participate fully.



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Student, Parent, Teacher and Administrator Testimonials

- ❖ *"I want to thank everyone at TORO Pro Temp Glass for making my co-op last semester such an awesome experience. I got to meet some really great people like Mark, Andre, Tony and Rohan, who showed me around Pro Temp, taught me how to work safely, and took the time to show me what it means to be a good employee."* **Brody, Student, SJDB**
- ❖ *"The Toro Group's inclusive co-op program is truly one of a kind. By integrating the expertise of an Occupational Therapist Assistant, who now serves as their Workplace Accommodation Specialist, the program has been specifically designed with student success in mind without a doubt. This thoughtful approach has created an environment where young people with disabilities can thrive, develop new skills, and gain real-world work experience that will serve them throughout their careers."* **Ms. Tucci, Parent, SJDB**

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Student, Parent, Teacher and Administrator Testimonials

- ❖ *"It is often difficult to find placements that are willing to accommodate and work with our students as they require more mentorship, resources and flexibility to be successful at the workplace. Toro has given our students the opportunity to use real tools, work on assembly lines, and take inventory of the various materials used. Being part of the team matters to Toro, and everyone on the shop floor has welcomed our students and trained them at their own pace."* **Melissa Vitta, Special Education Department Head, FBH**
- ❖ *"What truly sets Toro apart is their demonstrated commitment to accessibility and inclusion in action, not just in principle. The organization showed flexibility, understanding, and innovation in meeting the individual needs of both students, while maintaining high standards and meaningful work expectations. Toro's approach reflected a strong belief in the abilities of people living with disabilities and a commitment to providing equitable opportunities for learning, employment, and professional development."* **Tara Murphy, Co-op Department Head, SJDB**

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Student, Parent, Teacher and Administrator Testimonials

- ❖ *"For many of our students with disabilities, the pathway beyond secondary school can present additional and complex barriers. Community partners such as Toro Group do more than provide placements; they create belonging. They help students build confidence, develop employability skills, and see themselves as capable contributors within the workforce. Their leadership reflects not only corporate responsibility but community stewardship."* **Chad Garel and Gianluca Saggese, Admin Team SJOA.**
- ❖ Seven testimonials were provided to support Toro's nomination.
- ❖ Eight Large Organizations were nominated in their category.

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Winner! Accessibility Champion Award

Toro Group of Companies in the Large Business (for profit) category.

In partnership with local educators, Toro Group launched a pilot co-operative education program, creating meaningful opportunities for high school students with disabilities to explore careers in manufacturing and construction. Under the leadership of Franco DiMarco, the company has demonstrated a strong commitment to inclusion, providing hands-on experience, dedicated workplace accommodations and ongoing support. This initiative is already making a lasting impact, helping students build skills, confidence and pathways to future employment.



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Winner! Accessibility Champion Award



On May 26, the City celebrated the recipients of the 2026 Accessibility Champion Awards.

Congratulations to this year's honourees!

[Link](#) for more information



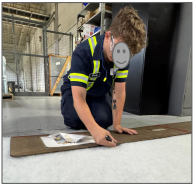
Joel Cummings, Workplace Accommodation Specialist, Toro Group
Krista Vines, Talent Acquisition and Development Manager, Toro Group
Maria Liberatore, Itinerant Work Experience Teacher, YCDSB

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Summer Employment Opportunities

- ❖ This program has shown that neurodiverse students can thrive in the right setting, with support, structure, and purpose.
- ❖ Brody worked in July and August in the Maintenance Department at Toro's ProTemp Glass division and has developed the confidence, skills and experience for post-secondary success. He is attending Humber Polytechnic completing the General Arts and Science - College Transfer program and would like to pursue a career in the Trades.



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Toro Group of Companies and YCDSB Next Steps

- ❖ 2026/2027 school year will continue to see students with disabilities placed within the Toro sites.
- ❖ Two students will be selected to participate in Semester 1 across high schools in Vaughan and Richmond Hill areas.
- ❖ Candidate profiles will be submitted and the selection process will be completed soon with Toro's team and YCDSB staff.



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Thank You!



"For every student is God's handiwork,
created with purpose and prepared for good works."
Ephesians 2:10

Thank you for all those who have worked hard to support this collaborative effort including:

- Toro Group
- Ministry of Education
- Parents
- Students
- School Cooperative Education Teachers
- Special Education Departments



Through the successful partnership of school, home and community, we continue to provide meaningful work experiences for our students with disabilities.

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YCDSB SEAC Meeting Dates 2026-2027

September 14, 2026

October 19, 2026

November 9, 2026

December 7, 2026

January 11, 2027

February 8, 2027

March 8, 2027

April 12, 2027

May 10, 2027

June 7, 2027

Meeting date changes made in red



Learning Together in Christ
Engaging. Enabling. Empowering