



Annette Street Public School/High Park Alternative

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Nancy Keenan, Principal Edita Tahirovic, Vice-Principal

May 2016

Re: Introduction of a Universal Screening Process for Grade 3 Students

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Effective September 2016, the Toronto District School Board (Board) will be introducing a universal screening process for all grade 3 students across the board. The purpose of this universal screening test is to:

- Provide information to classroom teachers about the strengths and learning needs of each student in order to better support teachers in programming for students;
- Help teachers to know when to bring a student forward to the In School Team (IST) or School Support Team (SST) for programming suggestions, and, in some cases for referrals to psychology in light of high or low cognitive functioning or otherwise remarkable cognitive profiles;
- Improve equity of access for all students to differentiated programming;
- Make the process of identification for students with low or atypical profiles clearer for the teacher, by providing them with general information of cognitive needs of these students;
- Make the process of identification for giftedness more comprehensive and equitable, which would reflect best practices and align with the processes of other GTA boards as our current process for identification of giftedness is outdated, inequitable and does not effectively identify all the students in the Board who could benefit from differentiated programming
 - The current process for nominating students to be considered for an assessment potentially leading to the identification of a gifted exceptionality is solely based upon parent and teacher nominations

The Process for Gifted Identification will now change to the following:

Step 1

Universal screening of students through a group test using the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT 7).

This test will be used to assist teachers in developing a classroom profile of student functioning to support teachers as they program plan for students.

The test consists of three parts (Verbal Battery, Quantitative Battery and Nonverbal Battery) which are each assessed over a 30 minute period for a total of 90 minutes of testing time.

The test will be administered during the week of Monday, September 26 to Friday, September 30, 2016. School principals will be required to return the testing slips in prepaid courier postage no later than Friday, October 7, 2016.

Parental permission, given through signed consent forms for your child to participate in the screening test, is required. This permission form will be sent home with the September package that schools provide to parents/guardians each year.

Step 2

Administration of a Gifted Rating Scale (GRS) – a teacher measure of academic performance, creativity, and motivation – will be completed for students who meet the criteria on the screening test. The GRS has excellent reliability and validity and is supported by a great deal of cross-cultural research. This will enable staff to capture a broader range of characteristics than can be realized by IQ testing only.

The GRS will be administered in late October to early November.

Step 3

In November, students who have met the criteria on both the screening tool and the GRS, will be brought to the School Support Team to be considered for either enhancement through an IEP, or a referral for individual intellectual testing.

Thank you for your support in our next steps. Our Special Education staff team looks forward to providing continued support to schools.

If you have any further questions, please contact your Learning Centre Coordinator or Consultant.

Sincerely,



Nancy Keenan
Principal
Annette Street Public School/High Park Alternative

"This document contains important information. Please take it to someone who can read English or to your School Office so that they can arrange for an interpreter or translation."