Special Education, Part 1 Additional Qualifications

Slide 1 - Special Education, Part 1 Additional Qualifications

Module 3: Assessment and Programming for Students with Exceptionalities

Slide 2 - Module Outcomes

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Discuss the many aspects of teaching that can be differentiated.
- Explain how to choose and combine strategies for adapting and differentiating teaching.
- Describe large-scale assessment in Ontario and the accommodations used for exceptional students including tests, performance assessment, and portfolios.
- Describe the major components of managing behaviour in an inclusive classroom and explain how they can be adapted to meet the needs of exceptional students.
- Identify and describe the key elements of creating a classroom community.
- Discuss the ways in which social development, and social acceptance of exceptional learners are central to inclusion.

Slide 3 - The Assessment Process

Accurate assessment and evaluation are critically important to teachers who are committed to the inclusion of students with special needs.

The assessment process is multidisciplinary, and occurs in a continuous cycle that is fully integrated into the learning-teaching process. It is also multi-tiered, beginning and ending with the classroom teacher and leading to an ongoing evolution of effective instruction, reassessment, and access to opportunities for achievement based on changing student needs.
Slide 4 - Continuous Assessment

Assessment by the Classroom Teacher
• Observations
• Ontario Student Record Data
• Checklists
• Assessments
• Parent information

The Classroom Teacher selects instructional strategies and interventions to promote learning. If concerns continue, the teacher seeks assistance from the In-School Support Team.

Assessment by the In-School Support Team
• Observations
• Individualized assessments
• Intervention suggestions

The In-School Support Team provides more detailed assessment information and recommends individualized in-school interventions. It may seek further information from the Out-of-School Support Team.

Assessment by the Out-of-School Support Team
• Psycho-educational
• Medical
• Speech/OT/PT
• Community agencies

The Out-of-School Support Team (professionals supporting the student) provides recommendations for highly specific interventions and/or instructional strategies.

Reassessment
Achievement is evaluated and instructional strategies are refined.
• Clinical reassessments
• Agency updates
• Evaluation of efficacy of accommodations
• Ongoing monitoring of learning

adapted from: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/panel/speced.pdf
Special Education is inseparably linked to assessment. Students need to be assessed to determine if they meet the criteria for identification. Ongoing assessment is fundamental to the IEP process and programming. It is important, therefore, to have an understanding of the various kinds of assessment tools and reports that an exceptional student may have. The language used around issues of assessment allows various groups of professionals involved with a student to speak to each other with some understanding about issues, norms and criteria. While constructing our language around recognizable terminology and practices serves us, we also need to recognize ways in which it limits discussions we have about the students we serve.

**Psychological Assessments**

Psychological assessments can only be interpreted by individuals governed under the Regulated Health Professionals Act and specially trained. Generally the test vendor requires documentation that the person who will be using the test is qualified. Psychological Assessments measure the intellectual potential of an individual. The most commonly used instrument for that purpose in Ontario is the Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children, 4th edition (WISC-IV  2004.)

This is an individual, standardized, norm-referenced test designed to predict intellectual potential (IQ) and to offer information about a subject’s skills in a variety of areas. Test results give three overall scores: Verbal Scale, Performance Scale, and Full Scale IQ.

The Verbal Scale is built on six subtests: (general) information, similarities, arithmetic, vocabulary, comprehension, and digit span. These subtests evaluate such areas as attention span, analysis of relationships, social maturity, memory, and others.

The Performance Scale has seven subtests: picture completion, picture arrangement, block design, object assembly, coding, symbol search, and mazes. The Verbal Scale is much more closely correlated with classroom activities than the Performance Scale.
The Full Scale Score is what is generally referred to as one’s IQ.

**Standardized Achievement Tests**

These are tests used to measure how much information a child has acquired in a number of specified areas compared to a statistically significant number of children the same age. These tests are not necessarily linked to the curriculum.

**Slide 6 - How Can Assessment Be Used?**

**Assessment for Learning** (formative)
Assessment for learning happens in the middle of learning, often more than once, rather than at the end. It is interactive with teachers providing assistance as part of the assessment. It helps teachers to provide the feedback to scaffold next steps. An example would be providing samples of student work along the route to the finished product. It could also include teaching students to provide descriptive feedback for themselves to improve their work or drawing students’ attention to one key attribute of their work while reminding them that at the end, they will assemble all the pieces.

**Assessment of Learning** (summative)
This is summative assessment that often refers to assessments/tests done after learning was assumed to have taken place and was intended to provide parents and teachers with a summary of the students’ learning and relative standing.

**Assessment as Learning** (metacognitive skills)
Assessment done properly will empower students to ask reflective questions and to consider a range of strategies for learning. When students self-evaluate and self-regulate we are moving into the ultimate goal of assessment as learning. Students link assessment and learning as “their own best assessors”.

When a teacher is concerned about a student’s academic and/or behavioural difficulties, the teacher can create a learning profile focusing specifically on that student. This profile draws on a range of information sources.

Reasons for developing a student learning profile:

- To consider opportunities for using and building on student’s strengths in various subject areas
- To draw on student’s prior knowledge, learning styles, and interests to motivate and support his or her learning
- To develop targeted instructional strategies
- To consider options for grouping and activities
- To plan for the use of particular supports and accommodations (e.g., media and technologies)

Gather information on student’s strengths and areas of need, learning styles/preferences, interests, motivational needs, readiness to learn

- Parent input
- Rubrics
- Previous teacher(s)
- Ontario Student Record (OSR)
- Systematic observations
- Checklists
- Student portfolio
- Curriculum-based tests

Provide Accommodations to Help Meet Students’ Needs

- Provide accommodations that will help individual students learn and demonstrate their learning, and that will also enhance classroom dynamics (e.g., seating arrangements and grouping strategies, organizational tools, access to assistive technology, adjustment of time lines for assignment and projects).
- Recognize that providing accommodations is an important aspect of realizing the principles of UDL - ensuring that planning is flexible,
supportive, adjustable, and focused on increasing access to the curriculum by all students.

**Devise Instructional Strategies** and Monitor Progress and Determine Next Steps

- Perform gap analysis
- Design instructional strategies that target critical skills
- Apply UDL and DI principles
- Monitor student’s response to instructional strategies, make necessary adjustments, and devise interventions of increased intensity, if needed (applying the tiered approach)

**Refer to In-School Support Team** for:

- Further accommodations
- Additional interventions
- Further assessment
- Possible determination of the need for an IEP (if special education supports and services, and modifications to curriculum expectations, are needed)

**Develop Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

- Individualized accommodations
- Modified learning expectations
- Alternative programs

**Tap other sources** as necessary to confirm indications of additional areas of concern:

- Academic
- Emotional
- Behavioural
- Social
- Cognitive
- Physical

**Slide 9 – Adapting**

When there is a mismatch between a student's strengths and the demands of the classroom:
**Use a bypass strategy**
Teaching around strategies allow students to succeed in the classroom using alternative means. They are used after the teacher and student have tried traditional methods unsuccessfully for a period of time. One example of a Bypass strategy is allowing a student with a spelling disability to use spell checker.

**Use remediation or acceleration**
Remediation is more intensive and is designed to address basic skills or learning strategies that the student needs and that you believe the student can acquire. For example, a resource teacher may do unison reading with a slower grade nine reader to help the student increase reading speed so he can comprehend his textbooks. Remediation can also take place with small groups of students.

Acceleration is used to move academically advanced students into more challenging learning. Students who have demonstrated knowledge in the particular subject are given material to explore that is beyond the scope of the regular classroom curriculum and is of interest to the students.

**Teach through the mismatch**
1. Why do I teach this? Adapt outcomes for exceptional learner if necessary.
2. How do I teach this? Adapt presentation if necessary.
3. How do students learn this? Adapt student practice if necessary.
4. How do students show they have learned this? Adapt assessment if necessary.

NOTE: Differentiating does not mean creating an individual lesson plan for each student

**Slide 10 - What You Can Adapt**

Analyze your teaching to discover what you can adapt.

**SUBSTANCE**
- Content
- Outcomes
• Cognitive Complexity
• Authenticity
• Interest of Task

**PROCESS**
• Environment
• Method of Instruction
• Pace
• Quantity

**PRODUCT**
• Assessment

**PRACTICE**
• Engagement
• Additional Practice
• Form of Practice

**Slide 11 - Strategies for Differentiating Instruction**

1. Alternate Goals
   • use the same material
   • adapt the curriculum expectations

2. Substitute Curriculum
   • use alternative instruction and/or materials

3. Size/Amount
   • adjust the number of items or concepts

4. Difficulty
   • adapt the skill level required
   • simplify or extend the concept/activity

5. Input
   • change the instructional methods
   • use visual/auditory/tactile supports

6. Participation
   • increase/decrease active participation within task/lesson
• adapt the environment

7. Output
• adapt the student's response (verbal, assistive technology, etc.)

8. Level of Support
• increase assistance (peers, volunteers, etc.)
• increase independence

9. Time
• individualize the timelines for learning, task completion and/or testing

Slide 12 - Types of Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction can include:

Tiered Activities - Vary tasks within an activity so that students are working on the same ideas but at differing levels of difficulty.

Scaffolding - Provide support that enables a student to do more than he/she could independently.

Grouping - Divide students into pairs or small groups based on interests, abilities (mixed ability or similar ability), or personal choice.

Collaborative or Co-operative Learning - Have students work together and rely on each other to learn.

Slide 13 - Curriculum Modification Process

The following five approaches for curriculum modification should prove helpful as you begin to consider what curriculum modifications will be required for the student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Same Activity</th>
<th>Goals and objectives from the student's IEP are able to be addressed within the regular curriculum/lessons.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same Goal</td>
<td>Example: Bob participates in the writing activity using the same materials and under the same expectations of performance as his peers. No adaptation is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same Materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Same Activity | The activity remains the same, but the objectives of the student
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modified Goal</th>
<th>Same Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same Materials</td>
<td>The activity the student is engaged in remains the same as his/her peers, but the goal and materials are changed to enable the student to remain an equal participant in the activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example: Bob uses a template to trace numbers on a wide-lined piece of paper.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Same Activity</th>
<th>Different Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Different Materials</td>
<td>The student participates in activities taken from the curriculum that are linked to what his/her peers are doing. The focus for the student with disabilities is on the development of core IEP goals and objectives. Instruction is highly individualized. The teacher works hard in this case to connect his IEP goals to the theme of the unit of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example: Bob uses a computer to work on numeric concepts of more/less, few/many, empty/full and long/short.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modified Goal</th>
<th>Different Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same Theme</td>
<td>This level of curriculum adaptation represents a focus in functionality and direct application to the day-to-day life of the student with a disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different Tasks</td>
<td>Example: Using his bin of supplies, Bob matches items with pictures of materials he will need for the next activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different Goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Slide 14 - Analyzing Tests**

Things to consider when deciding to make accommodations for tests:
1. Setting
2. Timing
3. Scheduling
4. Presentation
5. Response

**Slide 15 - Adapting Assessment for Exceptional Learners**

- Adapt learning outcomes
- Adapt tests during test construction, and test administration
- Adapt marking of classroom tests
• Use adapted performance assessments
• Utilize portfolios as classroom assessments
• Use formative assessment (student/teacher conferences, journaling, exit cards)

Below are some examples of testing adaptations.

**Before the Test**
• Study guides
• Practice test
• Teaching test-taking skills
• Modified test construction
• Individual tutoring

**During the Test**
• Alternative forms of response
• Alternative means of response
• Alternative sites
• Direct assistance
• Extra time

**After the Test**
• Change letter or number grades
• Change grading criteria
• Use alternatives to number and letter grades

**Slide 16 - Steps in Portfolio Assessment**

Collect - in a container, efficient for your classroom
Select - purposefully, contents related to learning outcomes
Reflect - in student-teacher conferences
Inspect - to compare accomplishments with outcomes

**Slide 17 - Influences on Behaviour**

The following are examples of potential areas that could influence behaviour seen in the classroom.

• Home Life
Past Experiences
Social Skills
Emotional Health and Well-Being
Cognitive Processing Skills
Learning Abilities
Physical Health
Academic Achievement
Self-Regulation and Self-Monitoring Skills

Slide 18 - Positive Classroom Climate

Relationships
- Student-teacher
- Teacher-parent
- Teacher-admin

Physical Space
- Classroom design (lighting, temperature)
- Classroom layout (quiet space, group space)
- Maintenance

Teaching and Learning
- Responsive teaching
- Classroom management
- Professional development

Safety
- Physical Safety
- Social Safety
- Emotional Safety

Slide 19 - Preventing Behaviour Problems

A majority of behaviour problems can be prevented by:
- Establishing a predictable and orderly classroom
- Ensuring that expectations and consequences are clearly communicated
- Establishing a positive classroom environment
- Focusing on the positive rather than the negative attributes of your students

Consider the following guidelines when establishing classroom rules.

- Keep the rules brief and state them clearly (4-8 would be sufficient)
- Discuss the specific consequences if they are violated
- State them in a positive way - avoid statements that are negatively worded
- Post the rules in a location that all students can see
- Discuss exceptions in advance so that students understand them
- Teach the rules through modeling and practice
- Review them on a regular basis and when new students are placed in the class
- Use reminders of rules as a preventive measure when possible disruption is anticipated
- Involve students in rule setting and avoid introducing too many procedures at once
- Incorporate any school regulation of importance and relevance into classroom procedures

**Slide 20 - Low-Key Proactive Responses**

Read about the following low-key proactive responses that may help to decrease undesirable behaviour.

**Planned Ignoring**
If a student's behaviour is not likely to harm others or to spread to others, you might decide to ignore it, especially if the behaviour signals another problem. Planned ignoring should be used for attention-seeking behaviour. For example, a student who repeatedly sighs loudly could be signaling a loss of interest; instead of responding to the sighing, recognize that students need to change activities soon.

**Signal Interference**
Communication with students about surface behaviours by using non-verbal signals such as eye contact or gestures (e.g., finger to lips to request silence). These signals can be effective warning for impulsive behaviour.
Some teachers use a three-card system, the first two cards are warnings usually placed on the student's desk, and the third card often means a certain consequence is put into place.

**Proximity Control**
Sometimes, simply moving closer to a misbehaving student or moving the student closer to you resolves the problem.

**Interest Boosting**
If a student appears to be losing interest in a task or activity, refocus attention by asking a specific question about the student's progress or by otherwise paying specific attention to the student's work.

**Humour**
For some minor misbehaviour, your best response might be humour. A joke or humorous statement can often help to reduce tension or frustration.

**Hurdle Help**
For some students, beginning an assignment can be overwhelming. As a result, they refuse to start working or they misbehave to avoid the work. You can help them begin by assisting with the first example, asking questions to facilitate their thinking, or prompt them to follow steps, avoiding a behaviour issue.

**Removing Distracting Objects**
When students bring radios, toys, or other distracting items to school, including dangerous objects, teachers should usually hold them for "safe-keeping". Other objects in the classroom environment can also become a focus for misbehaviour and should be hidden.

**Successive Approximations**
Remember to reward children when they are moving in the right direction. Acknowledge all the small steps or improvements. Always take time to "catch them being good."
**Gramma's Rule**
Least desirable activity before more desirable activity, e.g., Finish your carrots before you go out to play. Complete your math before moving to the computer centre.

**Slide 21 - Behavioural Strategies**

**LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES**
A consequence should be the logical, reasonable outcome of a student’s behaviour. The consequence should not appear arbitrary, and the direct connection should be clear to the student. A brief statement that the behaviour is unacceptable should immediately precede the introduction of the consequence. No excuses on the part of the student should be entertained or accepted when rules that have been made clear are violated.

**SELF-CORRECTION AND OVER-CORRECTION**
Self-correction and over-correction require time and effort from the student who has broken a rule of behaviour. The long-range goal is to motivate the student to comply with the rule. Self-correction requires the student to repeat in the correct manner a behaviour that was done incorrectly. ("Always walk in the halls. Please go back and try again.") Over-correction requires the student to repeat the correct behaviour a number of times.

**P.E.P.**
When students break rules, try using the P.E.P. method of enforcement.
- **Proximity:** Be physically close.
- **Eye Contact:** Make direct eye contact.
- **Privacy:** Make sure that when you do deliver the message the student is the only one that hears it.

**AVOIDING POWER STRUGGLES**
Power struggles get worse if escalated. As each side tries to win, they dig in deeper and fight harder, use more weapons and escalate the struggle. The issue then becomes dignity vs. dignity, and it is impossible for either side to back down. Neither the student nor the teacher will WIN.
USE ACTIVE LISTENING
Active listening is a technique that can be used to diffuse a power struggle. When a teacher uses active listening, he neither agrees nor disagrees with the student, but rather acknowledges the student's remarks by paraphrasing them without judgement. When both parties are hot (full of emotion) it is very difficult to reach any sort of resolution. Set up a time to speak with the student at a later date, after the use of active listening.

THINK PAPER
When the misbehaviour occurs, have the student stop what he is doing and think about it by writing 'THINK PAPER'. The 'Think Paper' should be a brief paragraph on each of the following areas:
- What am I doing?
- Why am I doing it?
- Who am I hurting or disturbing?
- What am I going to do about it?
- When am I going to start?

PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURE
Involve the student in a PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCEDURE. The teacher and the student jointly:
- Define the problem - determine and describe the problematic behaviour
- Generate possible solutions - brainstorm, write down each potential solution without evaluation
- Evaluate the solutions - remove those unacceptable to either party
- Make the decision - with both parties agreeing on the solution
- Determine how to implement the decision - who will do what by when
- Assess the success of the solution - be flexible and ready for a better solution.

S.T.O.P.
'S.T.O.P.' is a program that can be used to assist students in making wise decisions as to behaviour when relating to others.
- Stop means simply that.
- Think means to think about the situation or problem itself.
• **Options** means to identify or list all possible responses to the situation (e.g. when offered a cigarette you may accept, say no, point out that the package itself says they are dangerous to your health).

• **Pick** means to choose the option which will have the most positive outcome.

**TIME-OUT**

Time-out is used when a student needs to be separated or removed from the environment where inappropriate behaviour is occurring until he/she can demonstrate appropriate behaviour. It should not be used as a punishment, but rather as a time for student self-reflection. It is a pro-active strategy to support self-monitoring. It is important for the student and teacher to resolve the issue before the next class. Time-out involves removing a student from opportunities for reward.

If you use time-out, keep in mind the following considerations:
The length of the time-out should vary depending on the student’s age, the type of challenging behaviour, and the amount of time for the time-out to achieve the result of decreasing an undesirable behaviour. Younger students and those with limited cognitive ability often require shorter time-out periods than older students with learning and behaviour problems.

When using time-out, students should be given a warning, should know why they are given a time-out and should not have access to attractive activities during time-out. The warning provides students an opportunity to correct the behaviour, the explanation ensures that students understand the reason for time-out, and the absence of attractions guarantees that time-out does not become a reward for the student.

Giving a student attention as part of a time-out process sabotages its effectiveness. For example, if a teacher who is using time-out accompanies a student to the time-out area, explains the student’s behaviour on the way, and/or argues with the student about the time-out procedure, they are providing the student with a great deal of attention. This attention may reinforce the student’s behaviour and, in effect, negate the effect of using time-out.
If a student refuses to go to a time-out location, you may need to ask for assistance in enforcing your decision. However, you should also keep in mind that if time-out becomes a power struggle between you and a student, it might not be the appropriate strategy to use.

Be aware that for some students, isolation is in itself rewarding. For students who prefer isolation, time-out is clearly not an appropriate strategy for reducing misbehaviour.

Attend to the safety needs of students in time-out settings. It is highly unethical to send an upset student to an unsupervised time-out location. If time-out is employed, it must include adult supervision, a safe location for the student, and monitoring for student comfort and safety.

**Slide 22 - Developing a Behaviour Plan**

Many behavioural concerns will be addressed through prevention, effective teacher practices and positive classroom climates. However, some students will require a specific behavioural plan to address a specific behavioural issue. A comprehensive behaviour plan should incorporate the following elements:

1. **Student participation in the plan**: the student has a role in the planning, implementation and review of the plan
2. **Parent participation in the intervention plan**: parents are involved in all aspects of the plan
3. **A mechanism**: to monitor and manage student misbehaviour and to prevent it from happening in the future
4. **A teaching component**: teaching positive behaviour to the student
5. **Visual tracking** of progress for the student (tracking sheets, contracts, sticker and signature books, etc.)
6. **A comprehensive system**: of rewards and consequences. The consequences should not be linked to reward, e.g., taking away a reward as a consequence
7. **Goals**: that focus on positive behaviour and are stated in positive terms
8. **Regular review**: reinforcement should be faded and this withdrawal should be planned for.
Reinforcement is any response or consequence that increases a behaviour. It is important to note that reinforcement can increase negative as well as positive behaviours.

**Positive and negative reinforcement.**
When you respond to a behaviour with a consequence that makes it more likely for the behaviour to occur again, you are using a positive reinforcement. Negative reinforcement operates somewhat differently. Any increase in behaviour to avoid a response is called negative reinforcement.

**Kinds of Reinforcers**

**Social reinforcers** are a variety of positive interactions that a teacher, parent, or peer can give students for appropriate behaviour and that increase the behaviour. These reinforcers might include a positive phone call home to parents, a pat on the back, verbal praise, or selection as Student of the Week.

**Activity reinforcers** involve activities such as additional time in gym or on the computer, helping a teacher in another class, and participating in other desired individual or group activities.

**Tangible reinforcers** are prizes that students can earn as symbols of achievement and that students want to obtain. A student who is earning hockey cards or stickers for completing work is receiving a tangible reinforcer.

**Primary reinforcers** are food or other items related to human needs that a student finds rewarding. Primary reinforcers used in schools are often edible and might include a piece of candy, soft drink, or a piece of fruit.

**Slide 24 – Cognitive Behaviour Modification**

Cognitive behaviour modification (CBM) is a broad term describing many specific techniques that teach self-control. All work by increasing a student's
awareness of cognitive processes and knowledge of how behaviour affects learning.

CBM interventions require student evaluation of performance rather than teacher evaluation.

Self-instruction is one technique that helps students to regulate their own behaviours - social and academic. It uses self-statements to help students recall the steps required to solve academic or social problems, such as rushing through assigned work, lack of focus on assigned work, talking out of turn and eating or giving food to others in the classroom. Initially, students say the steps aloud to a teacher or parent, then to a peer or themselves, then they say the steps covertly.

Read about CBM in action.

The actions a teacher and student follow include:
1. The teacher and student agree on a problem - social or academic - that is getting in the way of learning.
2. The teacher makes a cue-card to prompt the student to use the steps of self-instruction.
3. The teacher models using the self-instruction steps to solve a problem.
4. The student practises using the self-instruction steps aloud with the teacher.
5. The student practises with a peer and then alone, using the steps to solve the problem.
6. The teacher arranges booster practice regularly to review the strategy with the student, using verbal rehearsal, as well as practising in familiar and new situations.
7. The teacher and the student decide on a signal for the teacher to use to let the student know when to use the steps. Use of the signal is then phased out since the student should do the monitoring.

**Slide 25 - Safe and Accepting Schools**

We know that a safe, inclusive and accepting school is essential for student achievement and well-being. That is why the government introduced Bill 13, the Accepting Schools Act, which has now been passed into law.
**What is Bill 13?**

Bill 13 requires school boards to prevent and address inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour among students in our schools. These behaviours include bullying, discrimination and harassment. The new law makes it clear that these behaviours are unacceptable in our schools. It promotes respect and understanding for all students regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or any other factor.

**How does Bill 13 help schools and boards prevent and address inappropriate behaviour, including bullying?**

Bill 13 builds on the work already done by school boards and schools. Bill 13 requires boards to:

- Have policies in place on progressive discipline, bullying prevention and intervention, and on equity and inclusive education.
- Consider tougher consequences for students who bully others including suspending and considering expulsion if: the student has already been suspended for bullying and the student’s presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of others, or the bullying was motivated by bias, prejudice or hate.

The Education Act already requires supports for suspended and expelled students:

- If students are expelled or on long-term suspension (more than five school days), they receive academic/non-academic support through a suspension/expulsion program. Students who are suspended for up to five school days receive a homework package.
- Provide training and information to teachers and other school staff on an annual basis about bullying prevention and promoting positive school climates.
- Include goals around positive school climate and bullying prevention in their multi-year plans and make these plans available to the public.

**Does Bill 13 change the role of principals?**

The Bill 13 gives principals new, specific responsibilities. They are now required to:

- Investigate any incident reported by a board employee which could lead to a student being suspended or expelled, including bullying.
- Notify the parent/guardians of students who have harmed another student about the incident, when the students’ behaviour could lead to them being suspended or expelled. Also invite the parents to discuss the supports that will be provided to their child.
- Invite the parents/guardians of the student who was harmed in the incident to discuss the supports that will be provided to their child. Principals were already required to notify these parents.
- Communicate with teachers and where appropriate, other board employees, who reported an incident which could lead to a student getting suspended or expelled. Principals will be required to inform them about the results of their investigation into the incident.

**How does Bill 13 support boards and schools to engage parents, students and other staff and stakeholders?**

Bill 13 helps parents to learn more about the support available to their children through the school and the efforts the school is making to build a more positive school climate.

Boards are required to:
- Set up a process for parents to follow if they have concerns about the support their child is receiving.
- Develop a procedure that allows students, parents and others to safely report incidents of bullying.
- Conduct school climate surveys of staff, students and parents at least every two years.
- Offer parents more opportunities to learn about student safety and school climate.

**Slide 26 - Preventing Bullying and Harassment**

Bullying and harassment can have a serious and significant impact on learning, student safety and the school climate. In fact, principals must now consider suspension when dealing with acts of bullying.

School climate is the sum of all personal relationships between all members of the school community. A positive climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable and accepted. A positive school
climate is essential for students to succeed in school. Click on each question below to see the answers.

**What do I need to know?**

What is bullying?

The ministry's definition in PPM 144:

_Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation._

Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

Bullying can take many forms:
- physical - hitting, shoving, stealing, or damaging property
- verbal - name calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist, or homophobic comments
- social - excluding others from a group, spreading gossip or rumours
- electronic (commonly known as cyberbullying) - spreading rumours and hurtful comments through the use of e-mail, cellphones, social media websites and text messaging

**What are schools doing?**

Safe Schools Teams

Every public school in Ontario is required to have a safe schools team. The team is made up of parent representatives, students, the school principal, teachers, non-teaching staff and a community partner. The team must review the results of the school's School Climate Survey.

Staff Training

Teachers and principals have received training on bullying prevention and, most recently, training on _Keeping Our Kids Safe At School Act_ to understand responding and reporting requirements.

Code of Conduct

Ontario's provincial code of conduct sets clear standards of behaviour for individual school boards to follow, so they can develop their own codes of conduct. Each board must follow the Ontario code of conduct. Each school
must have a code of conduct and a bullying prevention and intervention plan and procedures in place as part of their School Improvement Plan.

Promoting Positive School Climate
Promoting a Positive School Climate is a resource that provides examples of practices and activities that will help schools improve the overall school climate. Many of the suggestions offered may be familiar and may already be happening in schools. This resource has been designed to help schools and safe schools teams identify practices that could work for schools or be adapted to suit their needs.

What is the Ontario ministry doing?
Safe Schools Strategy
This strategy requires that all schools have a bullying prevention and intervention plan and procedures in place, as well as a safe schools team. Schools have been provided with resources and training for teachers and principals. Our partnership with Kids Help Phone helps them provide confidential counselling services for children and youth.

Ontario's new approach to discipline
This strategy is based on a new approach to discipline. "Progressive discipline" involves the whole school and promotes a positive school climate. It enables the principal to choose the appropriate consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and offers students multiple supports to promote positive behaviour.

Code of Conduct
Ontario's Code of Conduct sets clear standards of behaviour by outlining the roles and responsibilities for everyone in the school community, including students, parents, school staff and community partners.

Bill 212 - Progressive Discipline and School Safety
Whether it happens in person or online, students who engage in bullying, including cyberbullying, can get suspended from school. These rules apply to both elementary and secondary students.
Policy/Program Memorandum 144
This memorandum defines bullying and outlines expectations for school boards on bullying prevention and intervention.

Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act
This legislation came into effect February 1, 2010 and builds on Ontario's safe schools strategy. It deals with how staff must report serious incidents, including bullying, and respond to inappropriate behaviours that take place at school.

Updated Sample School Climate Surveys
These new sample surveys will help schools assess perceptions of safety. This information must be used to help schools and safe schools teams make planning decisions about how to help prevent all forms of bullying and harassment, and promote safe and inclusive schools.

Ontario Equity and Inclusive Strategy
The Ontario Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy was launched in April, 2010. This new strategy outlines how the ministry, school boards and schools are supporting stronger equity and inclusive education. Read the strategy, as well as the new policy and program memoranda and guidelines.

Character Development
The goal of the Character Development initiative is to develop school environments where all people - students, teachers, administrators and support staff - treat each other with care and respect. This initiative supports academic achievement by developing well-rounded citizens who will help build respectful, safe, caring and inclusive school environments.

Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week
Ontario's Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week will be recognized the third week of every November, starting with November 13-19, 2011. Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week focuses the school community on promoting a safer learning environment for all students, which is essential to their success. It is also a valuable opportunity to raise awareness of bullying-related issues with parents and the local community.
What should parents expect if their child is being bullied?

- A parent may expect you or another teacher the child trusts to be able to solve the problem or have suggestions about the kind of help a child needs.
- Have parents talk to your principal to learn more about the services available through the school including access to your school's code of conduct.
- School staff is expected to make every effort to fully investigate a parent's concerns, while protecting students' privacy.
- Teachers should discuss bullying openly in class and help students understand the importance of respect, caring about the feelings of others, and friendship.
- Direct parents to your school's bullying-prevention policy. The policy outlines what the school staff can do to solve the problem.
- All school staff must report incidents of bullying to the principal. School staff who work directly with students must respond to any incidents of bullying.
- If, after a reasonable amount of time, a parent is not satisfied with the school's response, they may contact the supervisory officer of your school board.

Slide 27 - An Effective Code of Conduct

An effective Code of Conduct is important because it:

- Explains rules of student behaviour
- Defines roles, rights, and responsibilities of all persons involved in the school setting, parents and police
- Describes consequences for misbehaviour
- States that striking another person may be considered a criminal act and dealt with as such (especially in secondary school)
- States that every student has a right to be safe and secure from threats and harassment
- Includes a policy against crimes of property, racism, sexual harassment, and sexual assault
Ontario's current children's mental health system has the capacity to serve less than 1 in 3 children who need help. (Ontario Provincial Auditor, 2003)

Between 15% and 21% of children/youth have at least one mental health issue.

14% suffer from a diagnosed psychiatric disorder; and suicide is the second-leading cause of death for youth 15 to 19. (Ministry of Children & Youth Services)

Mental health problems often manifest themselves as behavioural issues in school and include a range of social, emotional, & behavioural problems including: bullying, violence, ADHD, eating disorders, depression, self-harm, suicidal behaviour, anxiety, addictions, mood disorders, autism spectrum disorders, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, oppositional behaviours, conduct disorders, psychosis.

**What does this mean for students?**

Many of these children/youth with undiagnosed mental health disorders are so anxious or depressed they can't concentrate, they cannot attend school regularly, they fail and even drop out.

Untreated mental health issues often become more severe, increasing the likelihood of school failure, family breakdown, and involvement with the youth justice system.

Treatment works. Prevention and early intervention are effective, leading to significant improvements in academic progress, social development, behaviour, and mental well-being.

The focus is on early intervention and support to protect our children from the many associated costs of mental illness and addictions and help steer them on the road to safe, healthy, and happy futures. It will:
• Provide children, youth and families with fast access to high quality services;
• Identify and intervene in child and youth mental health and addictions issues early;
• Close critical service gaps for vulnerable children and youth, children and youth at key transition points, and those in remote communities.

In summary it will give more children, youth, adults and their families the services they need, more quickly, and more effectively to prevent and reduce the personal, social and economic costs of mental health and addictions problems.

**Slide 30 - Assistive Technology**

Assistive Technology is:

> any device, item, piece of equipment, or product system, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

Assistive Technology differs substantially from other types of technology that assist students. It does not include Adaptive Equipment such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, and glasses for vision.

A Ministry's Special Equipment Allocation grant is available for purchasing Assistive Technology for students who require it.

**Slide 31 - Types of Assistive Technology**

Read below to discover AT tools that will help your students.

**Reading**

**OCR** (Optical Character Recognition) software scans reading material and reads the text to students. This allows students with challenges in reading to access curriculum material.

**Speech synthesizers** are screen readers. They assist in tracking and highlighting text. They read text that is displayed on the computer monitor, allowing students to gain independent access to assignments, books, and
research. It can also be used to monitor written work for editing. The rate in which the text is read can be adjusted.

Other electronic reading formats are **audiobooks** and **podcasts**.

**Writing**

**Speech to Text** software allow students to talk to the computer and it will type what has been said. This allows students with fine motor and writing challenges to express themselves in writing where otherwise it would be very laborious.

Dyslexic-style **spell checkers** check for reversed letters (b and d, a and c, p and q), missing first letters. They also check for dyslexic-style phonetic errors, such as an f for ph.

**Word Prediction** software display a window that lists high-frequency words as the student types. The student can listen to each word and easily select the correct one.

**Organization**

**Mind mapping** software allow students to easily make planning graphic organizers. They can be manipulated by category of ideas to emphasize relationships between categories. Templates are available for specific tasks.

**Electronic organizers** are also available.

**Communication**

**Communication systems** that utilize pictures with related speech output are available for computers and touch technology such as iPads.

**Dynamic screen devices** provide spoken messages that are activated by touchscreens.

**Online chat with video** relay allows students who use sign language to communicate online.
Mathematics
Talking calculators and computer assisted instruction for various math concepts are available.

Virtual manipulator software that allows students to manipulate concrete material on the computer.

The Daisy Player will allow you to read aloud math documents that have been converted into a Math Daisy format.

Electronic math worksheets assist with organizing, aligning, and working through math problems on a computer screen.

OCR software recognize math symbols in combination with speech output.

Slide 32 - Implementation of Assistive Technology
Obtaining equipment is only the beginning.
- Start with student need and match technology to their need
- Assess the environment in which the student will use AT (e.g. how can it be accessed for ease of use)
- Assess how the technology helps the student access curriculum
- Teacher and student training is an important component.
- Teachers need to know and understand the AT being used
- Ongoing monitoring is critical for continuing effective use
- Assess practical implications (e.g. where is the computer stored and charged?)

Quality Indicators:
- Level of independent use by the student
- Alignment with curriculum expectations
- Usefulness for task completion
- Ease of use
- Accessibility to equipment

Slide 33 - Developing Awareness

How do you develop awareness about students with exceptionalities?
• Information communicated by direct instruction
• Guest speakers
• Using videos and literature
• Using adaptive equipment
• Using simulation activities
• Personal perspective sharing (student or family)
• Online resources (websites, YouTube)

**Slide 34 - Preparing Your Class**

How do classroom teachers prepare for students with exceptionalities?

**Get to Know Your Students**

• Talk to the special education teacher about your initial questions and concerns. If one is not available, talk to the principal or district special education contact.
• Request the student's file and any background materials related to the student. Review the previous Individual Education Plan. It will provide you with detailed assessment, accommodation and modification information.
• Talk to the parents or guardians. They can be an invaluable source of information both at the early stages of planning and later. Establish a collaborative working relationship early.
• If possible contact previous teachers for their input. Previous teachers may be able to provide samples of the student's work. Establish a collaborative working relationship early.

**Prepare Your Room**

Once you have learned about the student, assess your class environment. Is it physically set up for needs? Do you require wide rows for a wheelchair? Does the student require a quiet working area?

**Prepare Your Students**

• Promote positive responses to difference through the development of student profile or Multiple Intelligence activities. These activities prepare students to understand that all people have strengths and needs.
• Help children understand that everyone has a valuable contribution to make to the classroom community. Promote team building and cooperative work over competition.
• Structure learning activities to promote social interactions among all students and make the social climate a priority.

• Children can be systematically taught to be caring, empathetic and supportive of one another (Sapon-Shevin, 1999).

• Find activities to promote a sense of fairness that emphasizes equity over sameness. Fairness is not that everyone gets the same but that everyone gets what they need.

**Slide 35 - Social Skills for Peer Interactions**

The following are strategies for increasing social skills for peer interactions.

• Incidental Teaching
• Teachable Moments
• Analyzing an Incident
• Supporting the processing of an incident (thoughts, feelings, actions, reactions)
• Coaching Emotional Responses
• Social Stories and connecting emotions to activities

**Slide 36 - Facilitating Friendships**

Teachers can be very effective at facilitating friendships by making the classroom a more inviting place for everyone. Note the following suggestions for various age groups:

**Early Years**
During the early years the teacher can provide a structured and supervised social program that helps young children practice relationships.

**Primary/Junior**
In primary/junior it helps to provide activities that encourage prosocial interaction during unstructured times of the day when some children may be excluded. At this age, children choose friends on the basis of personality and interests and friendships become increasingly stable. Boys may form groups, while girls tend to form small intimate groups.
**Preadolescence**
During this period, helping and confiding replace playing and many students need assistance with conversational skills. Involving students in co-operative and collaborative activities throughout these years gives you an opportunity to teach social skills as part of the regular curriculum.

**Adolescence**
During adolescence, friendships are about trust, intimacy, and the sharing of deeply personal thoughts. These close relationships are complemented by membership in larger groups identified by taste in music, clothing styles, and vernacular expressions.

**Slide 37 – Advocacy Groups**

Parent advocacy groups can be excellent sources of support and information. These groups can guide parents by providing information and direction on both parenting and school related concerns. Many of these groups are represented on your School Board Special Education Advisory Committee which is a mandated committee that each Board in Ontario must have in place.

**Slide 38 - Exceptional Teachers**

1. Respect all members of the class
2. Make all students feel their presence counts
3. Communicate caring and acceptance
4. Avoid teasing and sarcasm
5. Communicate high expectations
6. Provide adaptations and support
7. Are good role models
8. Negotiate when required
9. Are always ready for a FRESH START
**Slide 39 - Wrap Up**

You have completed Special Education Part 1, Module 3.

Be sure to review and respond to this module’s further readings and discussion questions in the forum. You must also complete the culminating assignment.