

## Shared Expectations of Professional Support Services

March 27, 2020

Dear Attendance Counsellors, Child & Youth Workers & Counsellors, Occupational Therapists & Physiotherapists, Psychology Staff and Social Workers,

As efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19 continue all around us, I hope you and your families are doing well under what continue to be very challenging circumstances. I know the stress of social distancing, lack of routine and trying to balance work and family life as best as we can is continuing to mount for many of us.

As you know, the Ontario government has announced that schools will not be returning on April 6, as initially scheduled. We have not yet received any additional information on the length of school closures from the Ministry of Education but will update you as soon as we do.

The following interim expectations (week of March 30, 2020) may be updated during the closure period. It is complementary to communication sent to staff on March 23, 2020. Specific expectations for other members of Professional Support Services will follow next week. We appreciate your cooperation.

### Context

TDSB staff are caring adults who support students' mental health and well-being in their daily work. During these difficult circumstances, we must maintain our commitment to equity, anti-oppression and human rights by ensuring all students continue to have relationships and experiences to help them be successful now and in the future. Together, school staff, including the Professional Support staff (PSS) who serve many schools, and families provide a strong network of support and approaches to meet students' varied needs during this unprecedented time.

### Shared Expectations across Professional Support Services Staff

(Specifically - Psychology, Social Workers (including Attendance Counsellors), Child & Youth Workers & Counsellors, Speech & Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists & Physiotherapists)

- Re-connect with students and caregivers with whom there was a prior relationship (caseload) and as appropriate;

- Participate in Professional Learning and complete TDSB Compliance Training;
- Collaborate and consult with other staff and community partners, where required, to support students' needs;
- Respond to any new emerging needs in collaboration with principals/vice-principals, managers, and other staff to problem-solve needs and determine who in the circle of support should respond;
- Participate in crisis management, as requested and within a scope of practice and qualifications;
- Facilitate professional learning for others;
- Complete reports and writing of assessments and record keeping;
- Re-establish professional connections through participation in team meetings, and
- Planning, resource identification, development, vetting and projects work.

*Occupational Therapists & Physiotherapists (in addition to above)*

- As required, staff will provide consultation on the needs and use of equipment;

*Child & Youth Workers/Child & Youth Counsellors*

There are many similarities in the work between CYWs and CYCs. In general, the expectations above also apply to CYCs and CYWs but may look different than other PSS staff.

- **CYWs** can do check-ins, goal reviews and provide coping and other social and life skills as you reach out to support mental health and wellbeing. CYWs may engage in tasks such as: reviewing Zones of Regulation, reading books, playing games, sharing ideas to practice learning skills and helping kids connect to needed information.
- **CYCs** can do short term goal oriented counselling, goal reviews, provide coping and other social and life skills, support mental health and wellbeing. CYCs may engage in tasks such as connecting students to community resources and longer-term counselling and mental health supports.

All contact should take place through phone contact or using online tools to maintain appropriate social distance. Questions should be directed to your manager and/or principal/vice principal.



# Toronto District School Board

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Take care and thank you for your service under these challenging circumstances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Malloy', written in a cursive style.

John Malloy  
Director of Education