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Subject	UNIVERSAL OTIS-LENNON SCHOOL ABILITY TEST SCREENING AND GIFTED IDENTIFICATION PROCESS
References	Policy 4180 – Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting of Student Achievement Education for All
Contact	Student Services – Special Education

1. Purpose

- 1.1 All students in Grade 3 are provided the opportunity to participate in the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) universal Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) screening process. This formal sequence of procedures provides an understanding of students' areas of relative strength and need as related to their verbal and non-verbal abilities in order to plan programs and supports accordingly. Results may also be used to inform identification (e.g., Intellectual: Gifted). Although the formalized screening processes are primarily focused on Grade 3 students, it is possible to screen using similar procedures beyond Grade 3.
- 1.2 Students with gifted characteristics can be found across all parts of society and cultural groups. Students who are socio-economically disadvantaged, racialized, have limited English language skills, and students with disabilities have historically been underrepresented in the group identified as gifted. The SCDSB has implemented universal screening for all Grade 3 students to ensure equity of opportunities and outcomes for all students.
- 1.3 Students with an unusually advanced general intellectual ability may require individualized and differentiated programming to ensure that they are motivated and challenged and thus able to meet their potential.
- 1.4 For students who have an English language barrier, or those who may have multiple exceptionalities such as learning disabilities, an alternative screening tool may be appropriate.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Intellectual Giftedness – the Ministry of Education defines giftedness as an unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.
- 2.2 The Continuous Assessment Process (CAP) – multidisciplinary and occurs in a continuous cycle that is fully integrated into the learning-teaching process at the outset of work, as work progresses, and at the conclusion to any work. 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. (*Education for All*, page 19).

- 2.3 Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) – the group-administered test used by the SCDSB as a screening instrument to measure cognitive abilities that relate to students' academic success in school. It evaluates a student's performance on a variety of tasks, including detecting likenesses and differences, recalling words and numbers, defining words, following directions, classifying, establishing sequence, solving arithmetic problems, and completing analogies.
- 2.4 Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children® - Fifth Edition (WISC-V) – a cognitive ability test that measures a child's intellectual ability, plus five specific cognitive domains that impact performance in the classroom and beyond. Empirically validated alternative or equivalent tests to the WISC-V will also be reviewed for consideration.
- 2.5 The General Ability Index (GAI) from the WISC-V – based on two Verbal Comprehension and two Fluid Reasoning subtests and one Visual Spatial subtest, and does not include the Working Memory or Processing Speed subtests.
- 2.6 Full Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ) – a theoretical construct used by psychologists within standardized tests as a means of describing an individual's intelligence level.
- 2.7 Verbal Comprehension Index (VCI) of the WISC-V – measures verbal reasoning abilities.
- 2.8 Visual Spatial Index (VSI) of the WISC-V – measures visual spatial abilities.
- 2.9 Fluid Reasoning Index (FRI) of the WISC-V – measures the ability to reason, form concepts, and solve problems using unfamiliar information or novel procedures.
- 2.10 Strength and Needs Committee (SNC) – a school-based problem-solving team. Through an ongoing, collaborative process, the team, in consultation with students and parent(s)/guardian(s), provides strategies and assistance for supporting individual students. SNC meetings to discuss students with special education needs are held regularly and the record of the meeting is shared with parent(s)/guardian(s) and saved in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR).
- 2.11 Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) – an important opportunity for a school and parent(s)/guardian(s) to meet to decide on an identification and placement for a student.

3. Universal OLSAT Screening Process

- 3.1 Roles:
 - 3.1.1 the school principal will inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of the universal OLSAT screening process for Grade 3 students by including information in the September school newsletter (APPENDIX A);
 - 3.1.2 in mid September, Business Services will forward all Grade 3 families the Consent for Otis-Lennon School Ability Test Screening Process form

- (APPENDIX B) via SchoolCash Online. The form will be available in SchoolCash Online until September 30;
- 3.1.3 school staff will provide families without internet access or a SchoolCash Online account, a manual copy of the Consent for Otis-Lennon School Ability Test Screening Process form. This form can be found on the StaffWeb under Explore/Special Education/Form, or through this [link](#);
 - 3.1.4 the first week of October, school staff will run a report via the student management system to confirm the Grade 3 families who provided consent, did not provide consent, or the consent form was not completed. School staff will also need make note of any manual forms received;
 - 3.1.5 school staff will follow up with Grade 3 families who did not complete a consent form. After September 30, a manual copy of the consent form is to be provided;
 - 3.1.6 school staff will file all Consent for Otis-Lennon School Ability Test Screening Process forms received manually or through SchoolCash Online in the students' OSR; and,
 - 3.1.7 special education resource teachers (SERTs) will inform Junior and Intermediate teachers of the opportunity for screening students entering Grades 4-8 who show gifted characteristics. The Consent for Otis-Lennon School Ability Test Screening Process form is required for any student who will be completing the OLSAT and will be filed in the student OSR. The consent form can be found on the StaffWeb under Explore/Special Education/Form, or through this [link](#).
- 3.2 Professional Development for Teachers:
Early in the school year, SERTs who are new to the role of universal OLSAT screening are expected to complete professional development to learn about common characteristics of gifted learners (APPENDIX C) and to become familiar with the universal OLSAT screening process, including the administration of the standardized group test. Specific dates will be sent to schools each fall via a numbered memorandum.
- 3.3 Students can be screened in any year beyond Grade 3 as there is significant statistical evidence that test scores can change from one year to the next.
- 3.4 Group Screening:
- 3.4.1 All Grade 3 students are encouraged to participate in the OLSAT group screening administered at the child's school after written consent is obtained from the parent/guardian (APPENDIX B). SERTs will work with Grade 3 regular class teachers to proctor the OLSATs within their classrooms.
 - 3.4.2 Students currently on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) with Modified goals for Reading, or a completely Alternative IEP (i.e., those that may require the instructions be read to them, and/or students not accessing Ontario Curriculum), will be allowed to use Read&Write for Google Chrome™ or have an educator read to them. All accommodations outlined in the student's IEP will be provided to allow them to access the test. The OLSAT evaluates thinking and learning, not reading or math, so providing these accommodations does not impact test results.
 - 3.4.3 A student suspected of having special education needs or English as a second language needs, may require an alternate assessment. This

decision would be made in consultation with the principal(s) of special education.

4. OLSAT and Other Cognitive Testing Results

4.1 Sharing OLSAT Results:

- 4.1.1 the OLSAT tests are scored externally with individual results returned to the board for all students who take the test;
- 4.1.2 central special education staff will share the results with school staff; and,
- 4.1.3 the special education consultant will contact the SERT to indicate which students require an IEP characterized by program extensions and enrichment.

4.2 Informing Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of Next Steps and Options:

- 4.2.1 results will be sent home to parent(s)/guardian(s) of all students who completed the test within 10 school days of receiving results. Specific dates will be sent to schools each fall via a numbered memorandum;
- 4.2.2 OLSAT total scores at or above 125, or at or below 79, should have these scores reflected in the record of an SNC meeting. OLSAT total scores between 80-124 do not require an SNC meeting;
- 4.2.3 students receiving an OLSAT total score at or above 125, with both the verbal and non-verbal scores at or above 115, are eligible for an IEP characterized by program extensions and enrichment; and,
- 4.2.4 students receiving an OLSAT total score at or below 79 are eligible for programming that supports their areas of relative strength and need as related to their verbal and non-verbal abilities.

4.3 In keeping with the CAP, all students obtaining an OLSAT total score of 125 or higher, where both verbal and non-verbal scores are at least 115, will be considered for an IEP characterized by program extensions and enrichment. If parent(s)/guardian(s), in consultation with school staff, believe that an IEP is contraindicated, one will not be developed and the process for determination of suitability for identification of giftedness will be discontinued. This should be clearly reflected in the record of the SNC meeting.

4.4 In keeping with CAP, students who have participated in a Psychological Assessment of Cognitive or Intellectual Abilities, (i.e., WISC – V or equivalent) and have obtained either a GAI Score or FSIQ of 125 or higher, where at least two of VCI, FRI, and VSI score at or higher than 115, will be considered for an IEP characterized by program extensions and enrichment. If parent(s)/guardian(s), in consultation with school staff, believe that an IEP is contraindicated, one will not be developed and the process for determination of suitability for identification of giftedness will be discontinued.

5. IEP Generation, Implementation, and Review

In keeping with CAP:

- 5.1 School staff should advise parent(s)/guardian(s) that their child's OLSAT scores suggest the possibility of unusually advanced intellectual ability and that the SCDSB's next step in determining programming needs is to develop or generate an IEP characterized by program extensions and enrichment. The parent's/guardian's

decision to have their child placed on an IEP should be clearly reflected in the record of the SNC meeting. Parent(s)/guardian(s) input into the IEP is very important and the IEP Consultation Form should be utilized to gain this input.

- 5.2 School staff will develop the IEP for implementation.
- 5.3 School staff, in consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s), will review the impact of the IEP on student achievement after the completion of the gifted programming trial. The review will occur in an SNC meeting. The SNC will determine whether the IEP should be continued, discontinued, or whether an IPRC to support gifted identification is recommended.
- 5.4 Procedures associated with the preparation and presentation to IPRCs would follow board protocol.

6. Gifted Identification Process

- 6.1 The SCDSB identification considerations guide the decision of the IPRC committee.
 - 6.1.1 If after the review of the IEP, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or the school SNC are of the opinion that a student demonstrates intellectual giftedness, the decision may be made to proceed to an IPRC.
- 6.2 Every effort should be made to ensure that the required special educational services will be provided in the student's home school. In some cases, IPRCs may decide that the most suitable placement would be an elementary County Class, only after considering a regular class placement in the student's home school.
- 6.3 SCDSB Identification Considerations – a student may be identified as gifted after giving consideration to the following:
 - 6.3.1 exhibits a total score on the OLSAT of 125 or higher, where both the verbal and non-verbal scores are at least 115, or the student exhibits a GAI or FSIQ from the WISC-V or equivalent of 125 or higher, where at least two of VCI, VSI, and FRI score at or higher than 115; and,
 - 6.3.2 demonstrates a need for alternative programming related to giftedness.

7. System Notification

- 7.1 Principals will be informed each fall by a numbered memorandum of the yearly timeline for universal OLSAT screening, including specific dates for professional development, testing, completion deadline, and distribution of results. Questions regarding the universal OLSAT screening process should be referred to the special education staff identified in the numbered memorandum.

8. Responsibilities

- 8.1 The universal OLSAT screening process requires the coordination of professionals from both the school setting and at the Education Centre. In order to ensure the successful completion of the annual screening process, it is essential that clear expectations are outlined regarding the responsibilities of all staff members involved in the process. A timeline for the universal OLSAT screening process can

be found in the yearly universal OLSAT screening process numbered memorandum.

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Issued under the authority of the Director of Education

(September School Newsletter Insert:
will be included in the School Newsletter Insert Package)

UNIVERSAL OTIS-LENNON SCHOOL ABILITY TEST SCREENING PROCESS

The Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) is a standardized group test of ability. The results of this test will help us gain a better understanding of students' areas of relative strength and need as related to their verbal and non-verbal abilities so that we can plan our programs and supports accordingly. Results may also be used to inform identification (e.g., Intellectual: Gifted).

Students who display an advanced degree of general intellectual ability may require additional program support to reach their educational potential. This support may be through enhancing the curriculum, differentiated instruction, and through providing program extensions and enrichment. This type of programming is important to engage, motivate, and challenge students who are identified as gifted in either the regular classroom or in an elementary gifted classroom placement.

A consent form examining the universal OLSAT screening process in greater detail will be sent to parent(s)/ guardian(s) of students in Grade 3 via SchoolCash Online in September.

If you require further information about the universal OLSAT screening process, please contact the school.

(SchoolCash Online: to be sent centrally from the Business Services department)

CONSENT FOR OTIS-LENNON SCHOOL ABILITY TEST SCREENING PROCESS

Dear Parent(s)/Guardians(s):

We are requesting consent for your child to participate in the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) this fall. The OLSAT is a standardized group test of ability that the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) uses to screen all students in Grade 3 for giftedness.

Your child will be given some instruction regarding the test and will have the opportunity to participate in a practice test prior to the actual test. Once the school receives the results, they will be shared with you and a copy will be placed in your child's Ontario Student Record (OSR). The school staff will also explain any potential next steps.

The results of this test will help your child's teacher gain a better understanding of your child's areas of relative strength and need as related to their verbal and non-verbal abilities so they can plan programs and supports accordingly. Results may also be used to inform identification (e.g., Intellectual: Gifted). Central staff may also use test results to establish a basis for the evaluation of existing programs and to assist in developing appropriate programming at the system level. Individual test results will be treated confidentially, and any data used for purposes of reporting to the public will be done generically without disclosure of identifying information.

If you agree to the inclusion of your child in this testing, please indicate your consent by selecting from the options below by September 30. Although there is no cost associated with this item, once the form is completed electronically you must checkout in SchoolCash Online in order to complete the submission process.

If you require additional information regarding the OLSAT, please contact the school.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

CONSENT FOR OTIS-LENNON SCHOOL ABILITY TEST (OLSAT)

- I GIVE consent for my child to participate in the OLSAT screening process.
 I DO NOT give consent for my child to participate in the OLSAT screening process.

Parent/guardian name: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

- I confirm that I am the child's parent/guardian. I understand that I may withdraw my consent upon written notification to the school principal.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED LEARNERS

Common characteristics and identifiers of giftedness may include the following:

Advanced Cognitive Ability

- displays an unusual ability to conceptualize and to generalize;
- abstracts at high levels at an early age;
- is developing all aspects of language (reading, speaking, writing, and listening) at an advanced level;
- processes information quickly;
- acquires an extraordinary quantity of general knowledge.

Intellectual Curiosity

- takes pleasure in intellectual activities;
- is intuitive;
- is perceptive;
- is curious and questioning;
- delights in an exchange of ideas;
- has a wide range of interests.

Sensitivity and Creativity

- possesses strong creative and imaginative ability;
- has the ability to be a fluent, flexible, original, and elaborative thinker;
- has a keen sense of humour;
- sees unusual and diverse relationships;
- is sensitive to beauty.

Capacity for Intense Motivation

- shows above-average ability to concentrate, to attend, and to retain;
- is task-committed, goal-oriented, and self-directed;
- works efficiently and unusually independently;
- is persistent and responsible;
- has a high energy level.

Advanced Affective Capacity

- is highly motivated by the need for intellectual, social, and emotional development;
- displays evidence of positive self-concept;
- is self-critical;
- displays unusual sensitivity to the expectation and feelings of others.