



TDSB Service Excellence Program Overview

To: Committee of the Whole

Date: 20 May, 2020

Report No.: 05-20-3886

Strategic Directions

- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being
- Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students

Recommendation

It is recommended that the report on the TDSB's Service Excellence Program be received for information.

Context

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Toronto District School Board's (TDSB) Service Excellence Program.

The Service Excellence Program is designed to support the TDSB's [Vision for Service](#), aimed at fostering a culture in central departments that values excellent service to schools, and to each other. This focus on excellence allows school staff to concentrate on improving student achievement and supporting the health and well-being of students.

After 18 months of development, the Service Excellence Program was launched at the beginning of the 2018/19 school year, focusing on 14 central business and school operations departments, including Facility Services, Employee Services, IT Services and Business Services.

Within the participating departments there are over 5,300 staff directly and indirectly engaged in the program. Eleven hundred of these staff are directly engaged. They are organized into 75 smaller unit teams and are responsible for implementing service

excellence initiatives that will have an impact on the 4,200 staff who are indirectly engaged. For a description of the staff engaged, see Appendix A.

System Alignment

The TDSB's Service Excellence commitment is one of the major levers for change in the TDSB at the department and school level, together with the Leadership Capacity Plan and the School Improvement Process. This work is guided and supported at the system level by the TDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

Program Design

The Service Excellence Program is built around five focus areas that align with the TDSB's strategic priorities, and provide the direction for Service Excellence.

- a. Establishing Equity as the Foundation
- b. Fostering Leadership and Teamwork
- c. Strengthening Service Delivery
- d. Celebrating Service Excellence
- e. Developing Leadership Capacity

Within the focus areas are eleven expectations. For example, under Strengthening Service Delivery, expectation #6 asks:

Does your unit team create the foundation for strengthening service delivery by:

- a) Determining core services and aligning them within department/TDSB strategic priorities.
- b) Setting objectives with measurable targets for each of your core services to assess effectiveness.
- c) Documenting existing processes, practices and protocols for core services.
- d) Ensuring documentation required for core service delivery is accessible to all unit team members.

As shown in Appendix B, the focus areas and expectations are organized into a Unit Team worksheet. This document is the core of the program, and is used both as a reflection and assessment tool to help guide the service improvement work of the 75 unit teams.

Annual Service Improvement Cycle

All unit teams are expected to continuously build their capabilities to improve services and deliver excellence. An annual service improvement cycle was created as a road map for how teams plan, implement and assess their service excellence work. Appendix C illustrates the flow of this annual cycle.

Measuring Impact: Certification

The cornerstone of the Service Excellence program is certification – an annual assessment of each team that measures their level of achievement against the program expectations, and their attainment of the annual program target.* The four certification achievement levels are outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Certification levels

Level Name	Level	Description
Explorer	Level 1	The team is beginning to attend to the task.
Implementer	Level 2	Practices and improvements are becoming established.
Specialist	Level 3	Practices and improvements are based on data, and are consistent and regularly followed.
Master	Level 4	Practices and improvements are advanced, meeting a high level of client satisfaction and demonstrate best practice.

The Service Excellence targets below are the key measurables that indicate how teams are expected to progress annually:

1. 2018/19: All teams participate in Cycle 1 - **92% of teams participated**
2. 2019/20: All teams achieve level 1 or 2*
3. 2020/21: All teams achieve level 2 or 3

*Note: Due to the pandemic, assessments are optional for teams this year.

Driving Continuous Improvement

At the end of each annual cycle, every team receives an assessment report with a certification level based on how the team's practices and processes demonstrate the 11 Service Excellence expectations. A team's certification level provides an objective, rigorous approach to measurement. Team strengths and recommendations on areas to improve are also important elements of the report. System leaders receive aggregated report data annually with recommendations to drive both department and team excellence.

Looking Ahead

Future Service Excellence initiatives include:

- Setting certification targets beyond the 2020-2021 cycle to ensure teams strive to continuously improve services that exceed clients' expectations.

- A one day Executive retreat was scheduled in March 2020 however due to the pandemic, it was replaced by three 2 hour sessions to take place over April, May and June 2020.
- Inter-departmental collaborative approach for resolving system-wide service delivery issues.
- Formally and publicly recognizing unit teams who demonstrate excellence in their practices, processes or projects.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

N/A

Resource Implications

Program resources are managed in the current departmental budget.

Communications Considerations

The TDSB [Service Excellence website](#) was launched in the fall of 2018 as an online information and learning resource. Further communication media and resources will be developed in 2020/21.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

N/A

Appendices

- Appendix A: Service Excellence Staff Engagement & The Cascade of Influence
- Appendix B: Service Excellence Unit Team Worksheet
- Appendix C: Service Excellence Annual Service Improvement Cycle

From

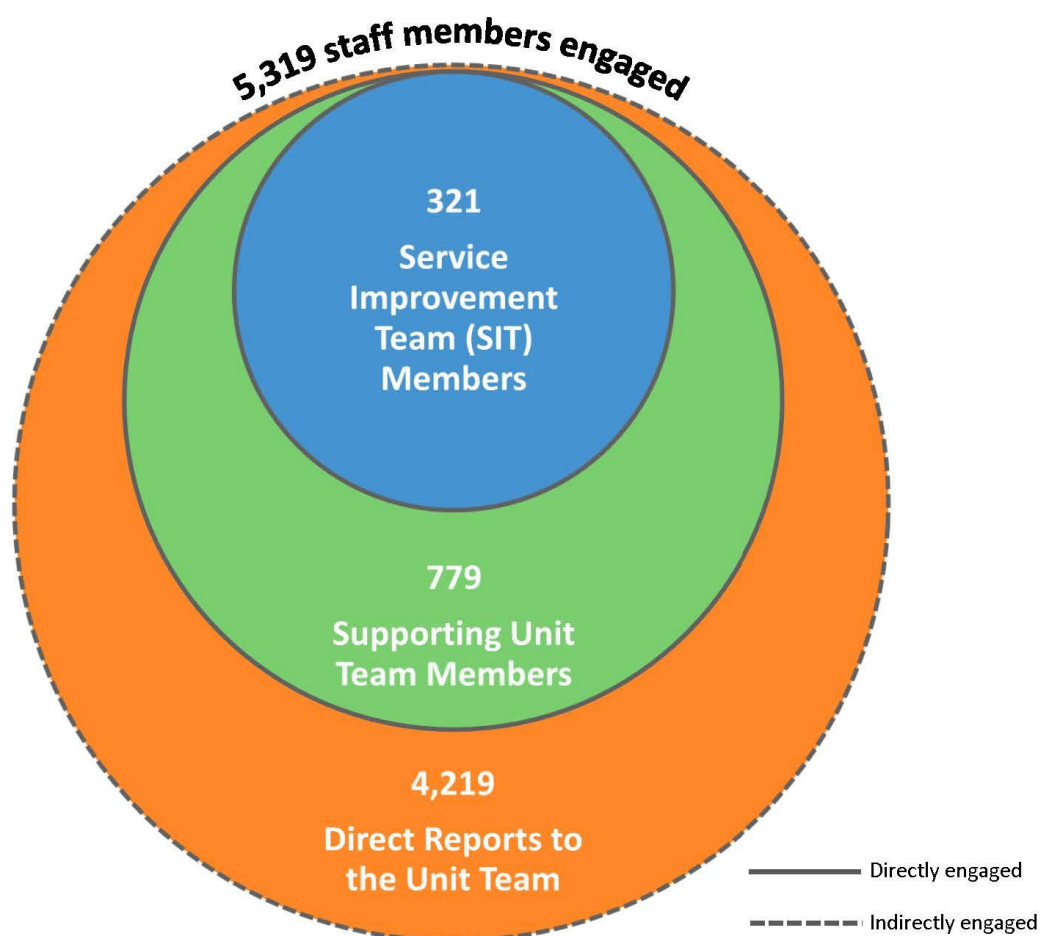
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Appendix A: Service Excellence Staff Engagement & The Cascade of Influence

The Service Excellence program currently engages 5,319 staff across Business and School Operations¹. Eleven-hundred staff are directly engaged through workshops, coaching sessions, and assessment of the unit team's work through certification. Over four-thousand staff (e.g., caretakers, skilled trades) are indirectly engaged as a result of influence by directly engaged staff.



¹ Business and School Operations is defined as departments that fall within the portfolios of the Associate Director of School Operations and Service Excellence (excluding Outdoor Education Centres, and Museum and Archives which are academic focused.), the Associate Director Business Operations and Service Excellence and the Executive Officer Government, Public and Community Relations.

Unpacking Levels of Staff Engagement


Group	Who are they?	How are they engaged?	Number of staff	Directly Engaged in SE
Service Improvement Team (SIT) Members	Key staff within a unit team who have committed to <i>leading</i> service improvement planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend service excellence workshops Take stock of existing practices and identify gaps Plan and take action on initiatives Engage the whole unit team Prepare for certification visit 	321	
Supporting Unit Team Members	Unit team members, not on the SIT, who <i>implement</i> the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide feedback on initiatives Implement the initiatives developed through the SIT Support certification process 	779	
Total Unit team members:			1,100 ²	
Group	Who are they?	How are they engaged?	Number of staff	Indirectly Engaged in SE
Direct Reports to the Unit Team	Staff that directly report to the unit team For example, Plant Operations has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 SIT members (Team Leaders) 34 supporting unit team members (Regional Managers & Team Leaders) 2,219 direct reports to the unit team (Caretakers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support implementation of relevant initiatives developed by the unit team Provide feedback on initiatives <p>NOTE: The level of impact on these staff will increase as their respective unit attains a higher certification level.</p>	4,219	
Total additional service delivery members:			4,219 ³	
Total staff members engaged:			5,319	

² Of the 1,100 staff members directly engaged in SE, 494 are Schedule II.

³ All of these staff members would be non-schedule II staff (e.g., CUPE D, Skilled Trades).

Appendix B: Service Excellence Unit Team Worksheet

The Unit Team Worksheet outlines the five focus areas and the expectations for each (11 in total). The Worksheet is designed to be used as a checklist for teams to assess their current practices, gaps and opportunities for improvement. Teams also use it to reflect on their certification level so they can map their progress.



Establishing Equity as the Foundation *(Worth 15%)*

Equity is the foundation of service excellence. Using a critical equity lens in all that we do enables us to centre the needs of the staff, students, and communities we serve, ensuring we provide barrier-free, fair, respectful, and inclusive services that meet individual needs.

1. Does your unit team create equitable working conditions and full access to services for all by:

- ☐ a) Participating in equity learning opportunities.
- ☐ b) Reflecting on personal and team practices to identify bias and barriers that prevent full accessibility to the workplace and/or services.
- ☐ c) Using an equity lens when allocating resources for students, schools, staff, community, or external clients.
- ☐ d) Reviewing existing documents, and practices with an AODA lens and making revisions as needed to improve accessibility for unit team staff and clients.
- ☐ e) Planning and implementing service improvements designed to create equitable workplaces and services for unit team staff and clients.

Based on the expectation examples you selected, how would you assess your team?

☐ 0
No Evidence

☐ 1
Exploring

☐ 2
Implementing

☐ 3
Specializing

☐ 4
Mastering

2. Does your unit team build healthy relationships that improve the client experience by:

- ☐ a) Communicating positively using personal interactions.
- ☐ b) Responding positively to client issues in a way that enables client satisfaction.
- ☐ c) Identifying problems with your manager that could escalate, and determining strategies for a timely and satisfactory resolution.
- ☐ d) Tracking and analyzing client issues to proactively minimize re-occurrences.
- ☐ e) Collaborating consistently with another team and/or client group to review practices, resolve problems or plan and implement improvements.

Based on the expectation examples you selected, how would you assess your team?

☐ 0
No Evidence

☐ 1
Exploring

☐ 2
Implementing

☐ 3
Specializing

☐ 4
Mastering



Fostering Leadership and Teamwork (Worth 15%)

Building a service excellence culture is critical at all levels of an organization. To achieve this unit teams must demonstrate excellence in how they lead and work as a team.

3. Does your management team continuously support your unit team in achieving service improvement goals by:

- ☐ a) Ensuring a [Service Improvement Team \(SIT\)](#) is in place to lead and guide unit team staff in achieving service improvement goals.
- ☐ b) Aligning service improvement work with departmental/[TDSB strategic priorities](#).
- ☐ c) Empowering the SIT and all members of the unit team to work collaboratively to implement improvements.
- ☐ d) Ensuring unit team staff have the tools and resources needed to provide [core services](#).
- ☐ e) Checking in regularly with unit team staff engaged in service improvements to provide feedback and guide their efforts.
- ☐ f) Facilitating unit team staff reflection on practices to determine strengths and opportunities for improvements.
- ☐ g) Supporting the collection of [documentation for the service excellence portfolio](#).

Based on the expectation examples you selected, how would you assess your management team?


<input type="checkbox"/> 0 No Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Exploring	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Implementing	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Specializing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Mastering
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4. Does your Service Improvement Team (SIT) effectively organize to achieve service improvement goals by:

- ☐ a) Defining [SIT roles and responsibilities](#).
- ☐ b) Meeting regularly as a SIT and keeping notes.
- ☐ c) Working collaboratively with the unit team to plan and implement improvement goals for core services.
- ☐ d) Guiding the collection of documentation for the service excellence portfolio.
- ☐ e) Communicating with unit team members to ensure service excellence work and program information is shared.

Based on the expectation examples you selected, how would you assess your team?

<input type="checkbox"/> 0 No Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Exploring	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Implementing	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Specializing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Mastering
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Strengthening Service Delivery *(Worth 40%)*

Finding better ways to deliver services to clients must be a continuous work activity. Understanding client needs and soliciting their feedback is the foundation for ongoing service improvements

5. Does your unit team demonstrate client responsiveness by:

- ☐ a) Modelling the TDSB [Best Practices for Business Communications \(BPBC\)](#) standard.
- ☐ b) Using [client feedback](#) and/or [data](#) to measure the team's responsiveness.
- ☐ c) Developing team strategies and practices to enable all team members to demonstrate client responsiveness, including the BPBC standard.
- ☐ d) Creating client communications that provide service delivery information that is clear, up-to-date, and fully accessible.

Based on the expectation examples you selected, how would you assess your team?

☐ 0
No Evidence

☐ 1
Exploring

☐ 2
Implementing

☐ 3
Specializing

☐ 4
Mastering

6. Does your unit team create the foundation for strengthening service delivery by:

- ☐ a) Determining core services and aligning them with department/TDSB strategic priorities.
- ☐ b) Setting [objectives with measurable targets](#) for each of your core services to assess effectiveness.
- ☐ c) Documenting existing [processes](#), practices, and [protocols](#) for core services.
- ☐ d) Ensuring documentation required for core service delivery is accessible to all unit team members.

Based on the expectation examples you selected, how would you assess your team?

☐ 0
No Evidence

☐ 1
Exploring

☐ 2
Implementing

☐ 3
Specializing

☐ 4
Mastering

7. Does your unit team continuously implement simple service improvements by:

- ☐ a) Seeking [unit team staff feedback](#) to understand strengths and areas to improve.
- ☐ b) Reviewing data to inform improvements.
- ☐ c) Ensuring improvements occur annually across core services.

Based on the expectation examples you selected, how would you assess your team?

☐ 0
No Evidence

☐ 1
Exploring

☐ 2
Implementing

☐ 3
Specializing

☐ 4
Mastering

8. Does your unit team use the Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) method to implement complex service improvements by:

Plan:

- ☐ a) Gathering client/staff feedback and data related to the service issue to be improved.
- ☐ b) Analyzing feedback and service data to identify the root cause(s) of service issues and resources required for the improvement.
- ☐ c) Identifying dependencies and risks that impact successful implementation.
- ☐ d) Creating a plan and setting objectives with measurable targets.

Do:

- ☐ e) Implementing a pilot or full scale roll-out of the intended improvement.
- ☐ f) Tracking objectives throughout implementation.
- ☐ g) Ensuring the client experience is proactively managed as the plan is being implemented.

Check:

- ☐ h) Continuously analyzing implementation data, including staff and client feedback, and making changes to improve implementation.

Act

- ☐ i) Conducting a post-implementation analysis to determine lessons learned and measure achievement of objectives.
- ☐ j) Implementing processes and/or practices to sustain the improvement.

Based on the expectation examples you selected, how would you assess your team?

<input type="checkbox"/> 0 No Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Exploring	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Implementing	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Specializing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Mastering
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Celebrating Service Excellence *(Worth 10%)*

The efforts of individuals and teams underpin the services we provide to staff, students, and communities; recognizing and celebrating these efforts confirms that staff and their work are valued.

9. Does your unit team recognize and celebrate individual and team efforts by:

- ☐ a) Ensuring [equity is central in the development of any recognition activities](#).
- ☐ b) Organizing [inclusive](#) and engaging team activities.
- ☐ c) Formally and informally recognizing and showing appreciation for individual and team efforts.
- ☐ d) Celebrating work [milestones](#) achieved by both individuals and the team.
- ☐ e) Sharing team successes with management.
- ☐ f) Recognizing excellent service by staff in your unit or other areas of Business and School Operations through the [Random Act of Service Excellence \(RASE\) program](#).

Based on the expectation examples you selected, how would you assess your team?

☐ **0**
No Evidence

☐ **1**
Exploring

☐ **2**
Implementing

☐ **3**
Specializing

☐ **4**
Mastering



Developing Leadership Capacity *(Worth 20%)*

Providing opportunities for others to build their leadership capabilities promotes team engagement and encourages new ways of working.

10. Does your unit team foster a climate of shared leadership within your unit team by:

- ☐ a) Reflecting on the way the team works together to determine strengths and challenges.
- ☐ b) Empowering unit team staff to find ways to work together effectively.
- ☐ c) Ensuring all unit team staff feel safe providing feedback and addressing issues that may disrupt how work is currently conducted.
- ☐ d) Giving all unit team staff with a stake in an issue the opportunity to actively participate in planning, decision-making and assessing service improvements so all perspectives are valued.

Based on the expectation examples you selected how would you assess your team?

<input type="checkbox"/> 0 No Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Exploring	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Implementing	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Specializing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Mastering
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11. Does your unit team build staff's capacity to demonstrate leadership in their role by:

- ☐ a) Supporting the leadership development of all team members.
- ☐ b) Supporting each other in practicing new leadership skills and thinking.
- ☐ c) Providing opportunities for unit team staff to share their leadership knowledge with team members.
- ☐ d) Supporting new unit team staff through their onboarding.
- ☐ e) Supporting a smooth transition of working knowledge when a unit team staff member leaves a position.
- ☐ f) Encouraging unit team staff to participate in the TDSB's leadership development learning activities.
- ☐ g) Encouraging staff to attend service excellence workshops.

Based on the expectation examples you selected how would you assess your team?

<input type="checkbox"/> 0 No Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Exploring	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Implementing	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Specializing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Mastering
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Appendix C: Service Excellence Annual Service Improvement Cycle

The annual service improvement cycle is a road map for the 75 teams of how they engage in the Service Excellence program, so they are equipped with the learning, tools and resources to conduct service improvements. The figure below highlights the key team activities needed and the timing for each.

