



Special Education Plan

2023/2024

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1. Model for Special Education

The Wellington Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) is committed to inclusive education practices for all students. This commitment is summarized in Policy FBC.B.8 “Faith, Learning and Achievement” and can be found on the Board website in its entirety.

The Wellington Catholic DSB affirms its decades long commitment to the pursuit of inclusion strategies throughout its practices and services. It is critical all students, regardless of their social, emotional, behavioural, physical and developmental abilities will experience a sense of belonging and of being included in our community.

(WCDSB R.FBC.B.8)

The Wellington Catholic District School Board Special Education Plan has been designed to comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act and Regulations made under the Act.

The Board’s model for special education is rooted in the Catholic Faith tradition and reflects the Board’s commitment to the Catholic Graduate Expectations.

As members of the Wellington Catholic District School Board we believe:

- that all students can belong, learn and lead;
- in the Christian value of respect for personhood;
- that every student has an inherent right to a caring, effective and inclusive education;
- that all students are an essential component of a caring Catholic community; and
- that parents have the right to expect equality of educational opportunity and attainment for their son/daughter.

As a reflection of these beliefs, the service delivery model for special education includes:

- that all students, regardless of their social, emotional, behavioural, physical, and developmental abilities are welcomed and included in their community school and age-appropriate classroom for as much of the instructional day as possible;
- school teams working in partnerships with parents as a resource to the classroom teacher to ensure meaningful academic and social inclusion of all students;
- learning opportunities that are designed to meet individual strengths and needs;
- effective assessment that furthers development, growth and learning;
- student voices are heard in planning for instruction, transitions, and independence goals; and
- support assistance when required to ensure equal opportunity.

2. Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) Process; Special Education Placements provided by the Board; Individual Education Plans (IEP)

Wellington Catholic District School Board's (IPRC) Process

The *Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)* is composed of the school Principal or designate (usually the Vice-Principal in the secondary panel), the Special Education Resource Teacher and a teacher designated from the school staff. This structure has been developed to support parents and students, by providing interaction with those people in the school who are familiar and involved in developing and implementing the *Individual Education Plan (IEP)* for the *exceptional* student.

Each time an *IPRC* is initiated or an *IPRC Annual Review* is conducted, a copy of the Special Education Parent Guide is sent out to the parent, and where the student is 16 or over, to the student. This resource clearly outlines the IPRC process, and the programs and services provided by the Wellington Catholic District School Board.

Parents are strongly encouraged to be involved in all phases of the IPRC process. They are invited to attend and actively participate in the IPRC by giving a profile of their child's strengths, needs and areas in need of improvement. At the IPRC, the student's teacher(s) along with the Special Education Resource Teacher and other specialized support personnel present a *Summary Student Profile*, which summarizes all assessment(s) results/ recommendations, outlines the student's strengths, needs and areas in need of improvement, and makes recommendations for programming. Together, parents and school personnel discuss the placement which best meets the student's needs. Every attempt is made to meet parent/student wishes. Often the *Statement of Decision*, including the *identification and placement* is decided with the parents and signed at the *IPRC*, or sent out to the parents within a few days for their signature of agreement. Where there is a disagreement regarding identification, and/or placement, parents are contacted by the Principal or Special Education Resource Teacher to further discuss and clarify the decision.

The Wellington Catholic District School Board implements the following IPRC process and procedures as outlined by the Ministry of Education.

What is the role of the IPRC?

The IPRC will:

- decide whether or not your child should be identified as exceptional;
- identify the areas of your child's exceptionality, according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education;
- decide on an appropriate placement for your child:
 - regular classroom with indirect support;
 - regular classroom with resource assistance;
 - regular classroom with withdrawal assistance;
 - special education class with partial integration;
 - designated placement; or
 - reviews the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

Who is identified as an exceptional pupil?

The *Education Act* defines an exceptional pupil as “a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program.” Students are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education.

What is a special education program?

A special education program is defined in the *Education Act* as an educational program that:

- is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation; and
- includes a plan called an Individual Education Plan (IEP) containing specific objectives and an outline of special education services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil.

What are special education services?

Special education services are defined in the *Education Act* as the facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

What is an Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

The IEP must be developed for each exceptional child, in consultation with parents. It must include:

- specific educational expectations;
- an outline of the special education program and services that will be received;
- a statement about the methods by which your child’s progress will be reviewed; and
- a transition plan that outlines any necessary transition activities that support students moving from community to school, classroom to classroom, school to school and school to community or post- secondary.

The IEP must be completed within 30 school days after your child has been placed in the program, and the Principal must ensure that you receive a copy.

The IEP is reviewed each term or semester (at minimum). Revisions to the IEP can be made at any time, as students demonstrate progress towards the goals in the IEP.

What is the process for dispute resolution pertaining to an IEP?

The IEP is a working document and, as such, it can be reviewed at any time to ensure that the accommodations, strategies and learning goals are appropriate for the student. If a parent would like to review the IEP, request for a meeting is made through the Special Education Teacher or School Principal. System level support including the Special Education Coordinator, or other system resource teachers can also be requested by either the parent or the school staff. Parents are valuable members of the IEP Development Team, and their input is both necessary and valued.

WCDSB's IEP Template is included in **Appendix B**.

How is an IPRC meeting requested?

The Principal or designate:

- must request an IPRC meeting for your child upon receiving your written request; and
- may, with written notice to you, refer your child to an IPRC when the Principal and the child's teacher or teachers believe that your child may benefit from a special education program.

Within 15 days of receiving your request, or giving you notice, the Principal must provide you with a copy of the Special Education Parent Guide and a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

May parents attend the IPRC meeting?

Regulation 181/98 entitles parents and pupils 16 years of age or older:

- to be present at and participate in all committee discussions about your child; and
- to be present when the committee's identification and placement decision is made.

Who else may attend an IPRC meeting?

- the Principal of your child's school;
- other resource people such as your child's teacher, special education staff, board support staff, or the representative of an agency, which may provide further information or clarification;
- your representative - that is, a person who may support you or speak on behalf of you or your child; and
- an interpreter if one is required. (You may request the services of an interpreter through the Principal of your child's school.)

Who may request that they attend?

Either you or the Principal of your child's school may make a request for the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting.

What information will parents receive about the IPRC meeting?

At least 10 days in advance of the meeting, the chair of the IPRC will provide you with written notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend as an important partner in considering your child's placement. This letter will notify you of the date, time, and place of the meeting, and it will ask you to indicate whether you will attend.

Before or during the IPRC meeting, you will receive a written copy of information about your child that the chair of the IPRC has received. This may include the results of assessments or a summary of information.

What if parents are unable to make the scheduled meeting?

If you are unable to make the scheduled meeting, you may contact the school Principal to arrange an alternative date or time; or let the school Principal know you will not be attending. As soon as possible after the meeting, the Principal will forward to you, for your consideration and signature, the IPRC's written Statement of Decision noting the decision of identification and placement and any recommendations regarding special education programs and services.

What happens at an IPRC meeting?

The chair introduces everyone and explains the purpose of the meeting.

The IPRC will review all available information about your child. The members may:

- consider an educational assessment of your child;
- consider, subject to the provisions of the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, a health or psychological assessment of your child conducted by a qualified practitioner, if they feel that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
- consider classroom assessment, observations and other formative assessments;
- interview your child, with your consent if your child is less than 16 years of age, if they feel it would be useful to do so; and
- consider any information that you submit about your child or that your child submits if he or she is 16 years of age or older.

The committee may discuss any proposal that has been made about a special education program or special education services for the child. Committee members will discuss any such proposal at your request or at the request of your child, if the child is 16 years of age or older. You are encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion.

Following the discussion, after all the information has been presented and considered, the committee will make its decision.

What will the IPRC consider in making its placement decision?

Before the IPRC can consider a placement for your son/daughter, it must consider whether placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services will meet your child's needs and is consistent with the immediate and long-term goals of your son/daughter.

If, after considering all of the information presented to it, the IPRC is satisfied that placement in a regular class will meet your child's needs and that such a decision is consistent with your preferences, the committee will decide in favour of placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services.

If the committee decides that your child requires explicit instruction by a special education resource teacher for a portion of the school day, or a designated placement, it must state the reasons for that decision in its written statement of decision.

What will the IPRC's written statement of decision include?

The IPRC's written statement of decision will state:

- whether the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional; and
- where the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional;
 - the categories and definitions of any exceptionalities identified, as they are defined by the Ministry of Education;
 - the IPRC's description of your child's strengths and needs;
 - the IPRC's placement decision; and
 - the IPRC's recommendations regarding a special education program and special education services.

What happens after the IPRC has made its decision?

If you **agree** with the IPRC decision, you will be asked to indicate, by signing your name that you agree with the identification and placement decisions made by the IPRC.

If the IPRC has identified your child as an exceptional pupil and if you **agree** with the IPRC identification and placement decisions, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed for your child.

Once a child has been placed in a special education program, can the placement be reviewed?

A review IPRC meeting will be held within the school year, unless the Principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from you, the parent, dispensing with the annual review.

You may request a review IPRC meeting any time after your child has been in a special education program for 3 months.

What does a review IPRC consider and decide?

With your written permission, the IPRC conducting the review will consider the progress your child has made in relation to the IEP. It will consider the same type of information that was originally considered by the IPRC, as well as any new information.

The IPRC will review the placement and identification decisions and decide whether they should be continued or whether a different decision should now be made.

How can an IPRC review be waived?

The Wellington Catholic District School Board, in compliance with Regulation 181, conducts IPRC reviews as near to the original IPRC date as possible.

A parent may request, after consulting with the school Principal, that an IPRC review be waived for the current year when in agreement with their child's identification and placement.

Parents are invited to attend or waive an IPRC review on an annual basis. An IPRC letter is sent to parents by the District Office in the fall. Parents are given the opportunity to waive the IPRC or participate in the IPRC process. The school will schedule the IPRC meeting with parents if that is what is requested. Parents may request an IPRC meeting at any time throughout the school year.

Parents/Guardians are also requested to consult with the school staff to review and develop their child's IEP and any needed special education programs and services at each reporting term for the elementary panel and at each mid and final semester points for the secondary panel.

What can parents do if they disagree with the IPRC decision?

If you *do not agree* with either the identification or the placement decision made by the IPRC, you may:

- within 15 days of receipt of the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss your concerns; or
- within 30 school days of receipt of the decision, file a notice of appeal with M. Glazier, Director of Education, Wellington Catholic District School Board, 255 Speedvale Avenue West, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 1C5.

If you *do not agree* with the decision after the second meeting, you may file a notice of appeal within 15 days of your receipt of the decision.

If you do not consent to the IPRC decision but you do not appeal it, the board will instruct the Principal to implement the IPRC decision by mailing to the parent, Director and Superintendent of Education, a letter of placement without parent/guardian consent.

How do I appeal an IPRC decision?

If you disagree with the IPRC's identification of your child as exceptional or with the placement decision of the IPRC, you may, within 30 days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 days of receipt of the decision from the second meeting described above, give written notification of your intention to appeal the decision to M. Glazier, Director of Education, Wellington Catholic District School Board, 255 Speedvale Avenue West, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 1C5.

The notice of appeal must:

- indicate the decision with which you disagree; and
- include a statement that sets out your reasons for disagreeing.

What happens in the appeal process?

The appeal process involves the following steps:

The Board will establish a special education appeal board to hear your appeal. The appeal board will be composed of three persons who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal, one of whom is to be selected by you, the parent/guardian.

The chair of the appeal board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 days after he or she has been selected (unless parents and board provide written consent to a later date).

The appeal board will receive the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview any persons who may be able to contribute information about the matter under appeal. You, the parent/guardian, and your child, if he or she is 16 years old or over, are entitled to be present at, and to participate in, all discussions.

The appeal board must make its recommendation within 3 days of the meeting's ending. It may:

- agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented;
- or
- disagree with the IPRC and make a recommendation to the board about your child's identification or placement or both.

The appeal board will report its recommendations in writing, to you and to the school board, providing the reasons for its recommendations.

Within 30 days of receiving the appeal board's written statement, the school board will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations (boards are not required to follow the appeal board recommendation).

You may accept the decision of the school board, or you may appeal to a Special Education Tribunal. You may request a hearing by writing to the secretary of the Special Education Tribunal. Information about making an application to the tribunal will be included with the appeal board's decision.

What special education programs and services are provided by the board?

Special education services are defined in the *Education Act* as the facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

Special services provided through the Board include:

- System Assessment and Program Services;
- System IPRC Consultation;
- Speech and Language Services;
- Psychological Consultation and Assessment;
- Social Work Counselling Services;
- Behaviourist; and
- Mental Health Clinicians

At the school level special services may include:

- Special Education Resource Teacher assisting in assessment and student program services;
- Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing/Blind Low Vision;
- Educational Assistants;
- Child and Youth Workers;
- Social Workers; and
- Early Identification and Pre-Screening

All of the above personnel help to develop and support special education programs and services. In addition, the Home Care School Health Support program refers to the services that are provided to exceptional students with physical/medical needs. These services may involve:

- Registered Nurse;
- Physiotherapist;
- Occupational Therapist

These visits and or consultations take place in the school.

3. Special Education Staff

Superintendent of Education Responsible for Student Support Services

The Superintendent is responsible for the entirety of the Student Support Services Department. The Superintendent leads implementation of the Special Education Board Plan, the Board Improvement and Equity Plan and provides resources for the Special Education Advisory Committee. The Superintendent is responsible for special education staffing, staff development, the Student Support Services budget, funding initiatives and Home Instruction.

Student Support Services Coordinator and System SERTs

Student Support Services Coordinators report to the Superintendent responsible for Special Education. The coordinator facilitates the delivery of special education programs and services to elementary and secondary schools within the Wellington Catholic District School Board.

Student Support Services Coordinator:

- coordinates, facilitates and supports the delivery of Special Education services to both elementary and secondary schools within the Board;
- coordinates and supports the implementation of Ministry regulations and Board policies as they relate to special education services;
- provides leadership in current major initiatives involving Special Education;
- works in collaboration with Principals and special education staff in the delivery of special education programs and services;
- provides in-service and professional development opportunities to Special Education staff;
- provides support in the area of assessment, evaluation and reporting in the area of special education;
- assists Special Education Resource Teachers in the organization and delivery of programs and services;
- provides administrative support and leadership to the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC);
- prepares Board and Ministry reports and budgets as directed by Senior Administration;
- acts as a resource to school communities;
- works in partnership with a consortium of Catholic School Boards;
- works as part of a team of Program Coordinators to support program initiatives as they relate to special education, assigned by the Superintendent of Education; and
- works in partnership with community agencies to support students with special education needs.

Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)

The Special Education Resource Teacher is a qualified special education teacher who works in collaboration with the Principal, Student Support Services Coordinator, and the system team of Special Education Resource Teachers in the delivery of special education program and services.

The Special Education Resource Teacher provides direct service to students, acts as a resource to parents and staff for students with special education needs, either formally identified exceptional or know to be exceptional.

Direct Instruction:

- provides direct instruction for exceptional students based on student need;
- assesses students to determine an academic profile;
- provides support to exceptional students directly in the classroom and/or on a withdrawal basis.
- plans, delivers, and assesses alternative and modified programming for students requiring intensive level of supports (Tier 3 needs); and
- provides instruction to students as requested by the Principal.

Direct Service:

- assists in the implementation of Ministry regulations and Board directives as they relate to special education;
- provides leadership in current major initiatives involving special education;
- provides in-service opportunities to teachers as required;
- assists teachers in the organization, planning and the delivery of special education programs and services;
- provides professional resources on a needs basis; and
- collaborates with teachers, parents, and students to develop and to assist teachers to develop Individual Education Plans (IEP) for exceptional students, including informal assessments.

Organizational:

- meets regularly with the Principal to discuss, plan and review the delivery of special education services with the school;
- prepares Educational Assistants' schedules in consultation with the Principal;
- attends and maintains up-to-date records for the Student Support Services Team Meetings and/or IPRC's as required;
- collaborates with the Principal to oversee and maintain knowledge of the IPRC process within the school regarding:
 - IPRC schedules;
 - preparation, completion and distribution of IPRC;
 - paperwork for IPRC;
 - paperwork after the IPRC's;
 - follow-up regarding IPRC recommendations.
- completes preparations for the IPRC process, such as testing and reporting as required;
- prepares student files for the SEA Claims (equipment); and

- provides direction in assessment, evaluation and reporting in the area of special education.

Educational Assistant (EA)

assists in the development, implementation and reporting of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for exceptional students or those deemed to be exceptional, as requested;

- assists the student in other areas such as:
 - toileting and varied washroom routines of exceptional students including diapering and assisting with self-catheterization, when necessary;
 - developing and reinforcing life skills and independence identified by the Occupational Therapists and/or Physiotherapists;
 - providing health care assistance in accordance with Board Policy R.SMW.F.1;
 - developing proper hygiene habits;
 - developing appropriate social and behavior skills;
 - developing communication skills or a communication system;
 - developing study skills, management skills and work habits;
 - correcting and completing his/her work; and
 - eating lunch and snacks (where a nurse is not required).
- assists with the supervision of other students in the classroom while the teacher is providing direct instruction to exceptional students;
- meets with the classroom teacher to review and record student progress based on IEP expectations;
- may attend meetings with staff and parents to discuss student programs, as requested;
- provides written and/or verbal communication to the Principal and staff who are directly involved with the student, as requested;
- assists the classroom/subject teacher to identify student needs and makes appropriate observations and recommendations to the teachers and/or the Special Education Resource Teacher;
- supervises students with special needs during regular school activities (e.g. field trips, recess, lunch, physical education, etc.);
- employs non-violent intervention techniques when necessary;
- assists with student transportation (arrival, departure and supervision) as requested;
- works cooperatively and collaboratively with the teacher, the SERT, the Principal and other EAs to address the needs of exceptional students; and
- reports any unresolved issues to the Principal.

Speech-Language Pathologists

The schools Speech-Language Pathologists provide assessment, consultation, in- servicing, and program support to those students with speech and language needs. Each school has access to their school Speech-Language Pathologist who provides support to the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), the classroom teacher and most importantly, the students, by supporting them in their academic program.

Speech-Language Pathologists may:

- assess, monitor and review individual students;

- work collaboratively with school teams and board professionals to build educator capacity regarding the link between oral language and literacy development;
- work directly with students who are minimally verbal/non-verbal to support the augmentative communication needs;
- prepare reports for individual pupils including assessment results, programming suggestions and recommendations;
- consult with parents, administration, classroom/subject teachers, Special Education Resource Teachers, and Educational Assistants; and
- meet with other professionals (e.g. Home Care, School Health Support Services and Pre-School Resources Services, etc.)

System Student Support Services

The Wellington Catholic District School Board has created a Student Support Services team. This team may consist of Youth Workers, Social Workers, Speech- Language Pathologists, Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Blind and Low Vision Teacher, System SERTs, Digital Learning Coach, ASD SERT, Multidisciplinary Team, Mental Health Clinicians and Student Support Services Coordinators. Each member of the team is an employee of the Wellington Catholic District School Board. Many challenging situations arise within the school experience. By working collaboratively and drawing on their varied expertise, talents and skills, the team provides a wide range of support to the students, families and school personnel.

The Board uses the Problem-Solving Process to address challenges that may arise. The student, group or class is initially referred to the School Team. If resolution is not achieved by using the school level resources, the student(s) may be referred to the System Student Support Services Team or Services. Before service begins, the school requests parental permission to refer the student. Once permission is obtained, communication begins between the parents and the System Student Support Services Team/Services in collaboration with school personnel.

The System Student Support Services Team/Resources provides delivery of service in the following four major areas:

Classroom Support

- observation of student behavior and interactions;
- provides behaviour management strategies;
- encourages work completion, positive work ethics and appropriate role modeling; and
- directly monitors and supports students identified on their caseload by priority.

Group Skills Development

- self-esteem;
- anger management;
- peer relationships;
- peer pressure;
- social skills;
- self-regulation;
- life skills;
- stress/anxiety management; and

- conduct class discussions.

Individual Problem Solving

- identifying coping strategies;
- decision making;
- enhance self-image;
- goal setting; and
- future planning.

Family Support

- community referrals;
- case conferences; and
- consultation

Itinerant Teachers

Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing provides speech, language, academic support and auditory services for deaf and hard of hearing students. The role of the itinerant teacher is enhanced by close communication with the classroom teacher and the student's parents.

The Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing provides two major categories of service:

a) Consult Service

All deaf and hard of hearing students receive "consult services". This means that the itinerant teacher provides advice and guidance to school staff and parents, and checks how students are performing in class, including whether their assistive listening devices are working effectively in the classroom.

b) Direct Service

The second level of service is called "direct service". Direct service includes those students who need scheduled instruction of the classroom lesson plans' reinforcement of skills previously taught or missing from the student's knowledge bank, and direct support of their IEP goals.

In addition, the teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing also provide teaching strategies and monitor assistive listening devices for the Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) students in the Wellington Catholic District School Board.

Blind / Low Vision Teacher

Blind and Low Vision Teacher provide direct and/or consultative services relating to the visual impairment. The level of support depends on the severity of the eye condition or visual function. Depending on the needs of the student, Blind and Low Vision Teacher can teach blind students how to read and write braille and they can help students with low vision learn to maximize their remaining vision to access the curriculum. A large part of what Blind and

Low Vision Teacher does is to help classroom teachers develop appropriate teaching strategies and accommodations for learners who are visually impaired. The Blind and Low Vision Teacher can interpret medical eye reports as they relate to educational environments; contribute to the development of the IEP and consult with outside agencies, for example, ophthalmologists, W. Ross School for the Blind, the Waterloo Low Vision Clinic, CNIB and Orientation and Mobility specialists. Students who are visually impaired rely heavily on assistive technology to access the curriculum. The Blind and Low Vision Teacher can support students in learning how to use specialized equipment such as keyboard training using JAWS; Duxbury Braille translation software coupled with an electronic braille; a laptop with screen enlargement programs such as Zoom text; CCTV video magnifier; a braille embosser (printer); a portable braille note taking device, and a global positioning system. The Blind and Low Vision Teacher can help with arranging assessments regarding specialized equipment that may be beneficial to ensure that the student can access the educational program.

Home Care School Health

The Home Care School Health Support program refers to the services that are provided to exceptional students by a Case Manager, Registered Nurse, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, or Speech-Language Pathologist. These visits take place in the school. A team approach to consultation and treatment includes parents, classroom teachers, Special Education Resource Teachers, Principal and other school personnel.

Pre-School Resource Services

After consulting with parents, preschool agencies may forward assessment/program information to the appropriate elementary school board personnel for processing.

Psychological Services

Wellington Catholic purchases psychological services in a variety of capacities to support student programming. Psychological assessments are contracted through various service providers. These in-depth assessments attempt to identify a student's individual strengths and needs and greatly assists parents and school personnel in the development of a student's program to address these needs.

This assessment is comprehensive and includes the following:

- an initial parent interview;
- several individual sessions with the student;
- sharing of the report with the parents; and
- the report is shared at a meeting with the parents and school personnel and recommendations are made for developing school programs based on the findings of the assessment.

Mental Health Strategy

The MH Strategy is a three-year plan for enhancing student emotional and behavioural regulation, and social problem-solving. It includes:

- actions for increasing educator awareness regarding the role of schools in enhancing social, emotional, and behavioural competence;
- a primary prevention plan based upon strengths-based learning and resilience training for all students;
- a focus on the provision of proven effective services for students with moderate and serious social, emotional, and behavioural needs; and,
- ongoing work with community partners to ensure smooth referral for services for students with severe mental illness or social, emotional, or behavioural difficulties.

The Mental Health strategy is overseen by the Mental Health Lead, who also provides consultation to the Student Support Services Coordinator regarding students with severe mental illness or social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The Student Support Services Department refers to all specialized staff who provide support to students, parents and staff from across the system. This includes:

System Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Superintendent of Education - Mental Health Lead - Student Support Services Coordinators - Child & Youth Workers - ASDSERT - SEA/Technology SERT - BCBA's - Teacher of the Deaf and Hard ofHearing and Blind Low Vision - Mental Health Clinicians - Social Workers

School Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational Assistants - Child and Youth Workers - Special Education Resource Teachers - Social Workers - Speech & Language Pathologists

SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF
Elementary and Secondary Panels

Special Education Staff	FTE	Staff Qualification
1. Teachers of Exceptional Students		
1.1 Teachers for Resource-Withdrawal Programs & Indirect Support	34.9	Minimum Part 1 Special Education
2. Other Special Education Teachers		
2.1 Itinerant Teachers	3.0	Minimum Part 1 Special Education 1.0 Specialist Teacher of the Deaf/Visually Impaired 1.0 ASD SERT 1.0 SEA/Technology SERT
2.2 Coordinators	2.0	Specialist in Special Education
3. Educational Assistants in Special Education		
3.1 Educational Assistants	148.5	EA Program/ECE/Other Equivalent
4. Other Professional Resource Staff		
4.1 Psychologists	0	
4.2 Speech/Language Pathologists	3.0	Master's Degree in Speech/Language
4.3 Social Workers	8.5	Master of Social Work
4.4 Child and Youth Workers	15.8	CYW Diploma
4.5 Board Certified Behavioural Analyst	3.0	Master's Degree and Graduate Training in Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)

5. Paraprofessional Resource Staff	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services from the following Professionals are purchased as needed at the discretion of the Board. 	
Psychometrists	Orientation and mobility personnel
Psychologists	Consultation
Psychiatrists	Transcribers (for blind students)
Audiologists	Intervenors (for deaf-blind students)
Occupational Therapists	Physiotherapists
Auditory – Verbal Therapists	Oral interpreters (for deaf students)
Educational Audiologist	Sign interpreters (for deaf students)

4. Specialized Equipment

The Student Support Services Department reviews recommendations from qualified professionals based on the assessment of student needs. A SEA (Special Equipment Amount) process has been developed to accommodate students who require SEA funded equipment.

When a qualified professional makes a recommendation for equipment, every effort is made to find equipment that both addresses the student need and meets Health and Safety Regulation in school facilities. In the case that the recommended equipment cannot be safely installed or used within a school facility, an alternate piece of equipment may be purchased. All equipment is subject to Health and Safety inspection. Some equipment may require specific yearly safety audits by a qualified professional (i.e. lifts).

Each claim must be documented by:

- an assessment from an appropriately qualified professional that indicates that this particular device is essential in order for the student to benefit from instruction and/or the disability that this device will help improve;
- a copy of the invoice or proof of cost;
- an Individual Education Plan (IEP); and
- a completed copy of the appropriate checklist. Types of devices and equipment include, but are not limited to:
 - braille equipment;
 - FM systems and Soundfield systems;
 - sensory equipment;
 - communication aids;
 - mobility devices;
 - computer hardware; and
 - computer software.

The Wellington Catholic District School Board's ICT Department has a strategic plan for the acquisition of computer technology. Funds are available for equipment in the Special Equipment budget and improvements are planned for each school year as needed.

5. Transportation

Wellington Catholic District School Board has an existing transportation agreement in place with our coterminous board, the Upper Grand District School Board, for transporting all students including students with special needs wherein costs are shared as applicable.

All students identified with special needs are eligible to receive alternate transportation if they cannot be safely transported on regular school bus routes. To initiate alternate transportation, the home school staff completes a Special Education Transportation Request Form for submission to the Student Support Services Coordinator for review.

The criteria to determine whether students are transported individually or collectively is based on safety issues, availability of vehicle space and equipment. Companies providing transportation for pupils are required to comply with Ministry of Transportation Regulations.

Students with special needs who are eligible to receive transportation and the ways in which these students can access the transportation are as follows:

Students in special education programs, including students who are in regular classrooms

- Board regulation R.BSS.E1 Pupil Transportation describes eligibility for transportation and would apply to all students, including those students with special needs. The school database and the Transportation Consortium identify students who qualify for transportation according to policy and regulation.
- Transportation is arranged as follows for students with special transportation needs as identified by the Principal (in consultation with the Special Education Resource Teacher) and parent(s):
 - the Principal (in consultation with the Special Education Resource Teacher) completes the **Special Education Transportation Request Form**;
 - the Principal sends the Special Education Transportation Request Form to the Student Support Services Coordinator who reviews the request;
 - the Student Support Services Coordinator then forwards the request to the Superintendent of Corporate Services for approval; and
 - the Superintendent then forwards the approved Special Education Transportation Request Form to the Transportation Consortium who make the necessary transportation arrangements.

Students in educational programs in care or treatment of specialized schools

- For students requiring a placement in a care, treatment or correctional facility as determined through a case conference, IPRC and the application to register at such a facility is approved, transportation is arranged as follows:
 - the Principal in consultation with the Special Education Resource Teacher completes the Special Education Transportation Request Form;
 - the Principal sends the Special Education Transportation Request Form to the Student Support Services Coordinator who reviews the request;
 - the Student Support Services Coordinator then forwards the request to the Superintendent of Education for approval; and
 - the Superintendent of Education sends the approved Special Education Transportation Request Form to the Superintendent of Corporate Services for approval and necessary transportation arrangements.

Students attending Provincial and Demonstration Schools

School boards that transport students attending residential programs and Demonstration Schools on a weekly basis, in cooperation with the Provincial Schools Branch, may report these expenses through financial reports and receive direct reimbursement and expenditure approval.

Funding for daily Provincial/Demonstration School transportation is reimbursed based on

expenditures reported by the board, as approved by the Ministry and will flow directly to the board. All inquiries for Provincial/Demonstration Schools should be forwarded to the Ministry of Education Provincial Schools Branch.

- For students requiring a placement at a Provincial or Demonstration School as determined through a case conference and/or an IPRC, and the application to register is approved, transportation is arranged as follows:
 - the Principal in consultation with the Special Education Resource Teacher completes the Special Education Transportation Request Form;
 - the Principal sends the Special Education Transportation Request Form to the Student Support Services Coordinator;
 - the Student Support Services Coordinator then forwards the request to the Superintendent of Education for approval; and the Superintendent of Education sends the approved Special Education Transportation Request Form to the Superintendent of Corporate Services for approval necessary transportation arrangements.

Students who require transportation in order to attend summer school programs

- For students who meet the Ministry's criteria for attendance at a summer school program transportation is arranged as follows:
 - the Principal in consultation with the Special Education Resource Teacher completes the Special Education Transportation Request Form;
 - the Principal sends the Special Education Transportation Request Form to the Student Support Services Coordinator who reviews the request;
 - the Student Support Services Coordinator then forwards the request to the Superintendent of Education for approval; and
 - the Superintendent of Education sends the approved Special Education Transportation Form to the Superintendent of Corporate Services who forwards the request to the Transportation Consortium who make the necessary transportation arrangements.

The process for deciding whether a student with special needs will be transported with other children or whether it is in the best interests of the students to be transported separately.

- The Principal (in consultation with the parent and the Special Education Resource Teacher) determine whether a student with special needs will be transported with other children or whether it is in the best interest of the student to be transported separately;
- If it is determined that it is in the best interest of the student to be transported separately, transportation is arranged as follows:
 - the Principal (in consultation with the Special Education Resource Teacher) completes the Special Education Transportation Request Form;
 - the Principal sends the Special Education Transportation Request Form to the Student Support Services Coordinator who reviews the request;
 - the Student Support Services Coordinator then forwards the request to the Superintendent of Education for evaluation and approval; and
 - the Superintendent of Education sends the approved Special Education Transportation Request Form to the Superintendent of Corporate Services who forwards the request to the Transportation Consortium who make the necessary transportation arrangements.

6. Transition Planning & Coordination of Services with other Ministries or Agencies

As there is an increased demand for a more rapid response rate to student needs there is a need to establish school team meetings that ensure a smooth transition for students with special needs who are entering or leaving a school.

When a student requires support, it is the school's responsibility to initiate a meeting with any outside agencies, school support personnel and any additional board staff.

Developing an Entry Plan enables school personnel to meet the special needs of the student and alleviates anxieties for the student, parent and staff.

Transition planning includes but is not limited to:

Elementary

- Establish a contact person;
- Arrange a meeting with child and family and relevant support services;
- Visit the child in present setting whenever possible;
- Transfer of information between agency, school or community partner;
- Case conference or school team meeting arrangements;
- Information sharing amongst all team members including any action items from case conference;
- Programming for curriculum modification, behavior supports and any other resources;
- Monitor/review program for a follow-up meeting; and
- Initiate problem solving process as required.

Secondary

- Establish a contact person;
- Meet with Guidance, Special Education Resource Teacher, student and family and any relevant support services;
- Visit the student in present setting if possible;
- Transfer information between agency, school or community provider;
- Case conference or school team meeting;
- Information sharing amongst all team members including any action items from case conference;
- Specific programming and course selection with a view to pathway planning;
- Monitor/review program for a follow-up meeting if required; and
- Problem solving model.

Advance planning is done for students with special needs who are **arriving** from programs such as the following:

- Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC);
- Programs offered by other school boards;
- Preschool programs for students who are deaf/hard of hearing/blind or low vision
- Preschool speech and language programs;

- Intensive early intervention programs for children with autism; and
- Care, treatment, and correctional programs.

It is the Wellington Catholic School Board's practice to accept student assessments from these programs. Students may be reassessed, if necessary, prior to their IPRC.

Early Learning and Child Care Programs Offered by Other School Boards

Establish a Contact Person

- Principal and/or SERT.

Arrange a Meeting

- SERT arranges to meet the child and family to gather information for a case conference. At that time, the child and family are given an orientation of the school.

Visit Child in Present Setting (with parental consent, if possible)

- SERT arranges a visit to child's present setting to dialogue with the teacher, observe the student, and collect additional information for a case conference.

Transfer of Information

- SERT contacts the child's teacher. SERT or other appropriate personnel arranges a transfer of information.

Case Conference or School Team Meeting

- SERT arranges a Case Conference with the Principal, preschool personnel, receiving teacher, (if possible), SLP, parents and any other support personnel/agencies involved with the child to share relevant information (i.e. family history, medical/or special needs including equipment, educational, psycho-social information etc.).

Information Sharing

- Principal and/or SERT share information with the teacher and any other support personnel who will be involved with the child.
- Discuss program and/or medical needs, physical structure adjustments and/or special equipment needs.
- Discuss EA and/or SERT support, if appropriate.

- Discuss preparation of staff/student population and transition into school community.
- Share relevant information and strategies with the staff to prepare them in welcoming and meeting the needs of the child (e.g. hallways, school yard).

Programming

- Classroom teacher in consultation with the SERT establishes goals and expectations, modifies, or individualizes program needs as well as accesses services and specialized equipment if necessary.

Monitor/Review Program

- Classroom teacher in consultation with the SERT monitors and reviews the child's program and makes any necessary adjustments.

Problem Solving Process

- Consider Remediation or IEP.

Pre-school Programs for Students Who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Establish a Contact Person

- Principal and/or SERT.

Arrange a Meeting

- SERT schedules a meeting for the Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing to meet with the child and parents, to gather history and information and explain his/her role.

Visit Child in Present Setting (with parental consent, if possible),

Transfer of Information

- Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing arranges a visit to the child's present setting to speak with the teacher and the itinerant Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, to observe the student and collect additional information.
- Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing collects information from the child's OSR and obtains parental consent to acquire copies of specific information that is needed (i.e. audiological reports, audiograms).

Arrange Case Conference or School Team Meeting

- Principal and SERT arrange a Special Education Team meeting to:
 - share information;
 - discuss program and/or medical needs; physical structure adjustments and/or

- special equipment needs;
- discuss additional support, if appropriate, from an EA and/or SERT; and
- discuss preparation of staff/student population and transition into school community.

Information Sharing

- SERT schedules a meeting for the Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing with the child's teacher and EA at the receiving school to share information about the child and relevant teaching strategies to be used with the student and to explain his or her role. The Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing explains the time allotment for direct service by the Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing and arranges with the new teacher an appropriate time for withdrawal, within the child's program schedule.

Programming

- Classroom teacher in consultation with the SERT and the Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing establishes goals and expectations, modifies or individualizes program needs (if necessary) as well as accesses any specialized equipment that may be necessary.

Monitor/Review Program

- Classroom teacher in consultation with the SERT and the Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing monitor and review the child's program and make any necessary adjustments.

Problem Solving Process

- Consider Remediation, Action Plan or IPRC, if necessary.

Preschool Speech and Language Programs

In collaboration with parents/caregivers, the preschool Speech-Language Pathologist will:

- Complete and have parents sign a release of information to allow exchange of information between preschool agencies and the WCDSB; and
- complete **Speech-Language Pathology Referral Information** form to access services as needed. This form must be forwarded to the school board SLP Department by June of the year preceding the child's entry to Full Day Kindergarten.

Each preschool agency will prepare a list of students who would benefit from speech and language follow-up upon entry to Year II of Kindergarten. The lists will be sent to the school board Speech-Language Pathology Department by the **end of May**. SLP's in private practice will also be encouraged to provide similar lists. The lists will include the following information:

- school name;
- student name;
- date of birth;
- nature and severity of communication/swallowing difficulty; and
- whether a referral was initiated to any other agencies.

The Wee Talk Preschool Screening Program will also generate a list of those children who are

recommended for follow-up but have not been referred to the preschool service providers because the cut-off date for referrals has passed. These names will be provided to the school board by the **end of August** along with information obtained during the screening.

The preschool agencies will forward a discharge report for each child to the school boards by the **end of August**. The report will include the following information:

- relevant background information (medical history, other agency involvements);
- specific speech & language information including tests administered & scores obtained;
- list of communication goals and the child's progress; and
- comments on other testing completed (hearing, vision).

Once the discharge report has been received, the school Speech-Language Pathologist will use the information for program planning and assist in screening priorities in the fall. A copy of this discharge report must be filed in the student's OSR.

As school begins in September, the Speech-Language Pathologist and the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) of each school will discuss the list of children entering Full Day Kindergarten, Year II and will prioritize students based on their speech and language needs.

If appropriate, the SERT will send the **Consent for Communication Assessment** and **Speech and Language Referral Information Form** home to be signed by the parent/guardian. These forms will then be forwarded to the Speech-Language Pathology Department. Should other release of information forms be required between relevant community agencies or health professionals, the Principal or the Special Education Resource Teacher will send these to parents/caregivers for signature to exchange information.

The preschool and school-based Speech-Language Pathologists *may* meet in September to devise communication goals and share therapy techniques. Following this meeting, the WCDSB SLP will meet with the kindergarten educator(s) (if necessary) to discuss special communication strategies. It is important to note that the Wee Talk Program provides support services and intervention up until the summer prior to entry into Year II of Full Day Kindergarten. Therefore, this *can* encompass children older than five years of age. When necessary, the referring SLP and WCDSB SLP *may* provide overlapping support in the fall to assist parents and school staff with transition.

Planning of a case conference may also be warranted for a child with special needs, and the invitation to individuals to attend will be at the discretion of the Principal and the child's parents/caregivers. Discussion will involve the child's strengths and weaknesses and the need, if any, for further involvement or follow-up from other agencies.

As part of the transition from preschool to school age services, it is important for information regarding change in services to be shared with parents. The school Speech- Language Pathologists will provide the preschool agencies and Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) with **A Parent Guide to Speech and Language Services** and **Moving from Preschool Speech and Language Services to School Based Services** explaining speech and language services provided in the schools. The brochure will then be distributed to parents as needed.

Once their child enters the school system, information sessions will also be arranged between the preschool agencies and the school board SLPs for parents. These will be held **in the spring**

and will describe service delivery, address parent questions and concerns, and give families an opportunity to meet their child's school board SLP.

School Health Support Services:

As part of the transition plan, a referral for School Health Support Services (KidsAbility) may be recommended by the preschool agency. If so, documentation will be sent to the school board SLP to complete who will then forward the referral to the KidsAbility intake case manager.

The Preschool Agency Referral Process to Community Health Support Services, (KidsAbility) follows:

- Preschool agency Speech-Language Pathologists may refer children to KidsAbility when they meet the criteria for School Health Support Services. Referrals to KidsAbility may be made for:
 - moderate to profound articulation/phonology;
 - voice and resonance.
 - fluency/stuttering; and
 - feeding and swallowing.
- Preschool agency Speech-Language Pathologists are requested to forward signed copies (by parent/guardian) of both the *Speech-Language Pathology Referral Information* and *Request for School Health Support Services* forms to the school board SLP Department when making such referrals.
- Once the School Speech-Language Pathologist receives the above two forms, the Principal will sign the "*Request for School Health Support Services*" form. The SLP will then forward both forms to the KidsAbility Pediatric Case Manager who will assess the student's needs and eligibility for services and direct referral to the KidsAbility Speech-Language Pathology Department when appropriate. The KidsAbility Speech- Language Pathologist will inform the school board Speech-Language Pathologists when their direct involvement with the student begins.
- Copies of the *Consent* and *Information* forms are also kept in the student's OSR.

NOTE: In the case of voice referrals, the SLP will inform parents if an ENT consult is required.

Information Exchange/Updates between Agencies:

- Community inter-agency meetings continuously occur on a regular basis (fall and spring of each year) in order for community SLPs (including private practitioners) to share information, problem solve towards joint initiatives and review the transition process.
- Sharing of information will also occur at the Preschool Speech and Language Advisory Committee meetings (which includes an SLP representative from the preschool agencies and local school boards) to encourage the exchange of information and update policy and procedures related to early identification and intervention. Periodic meetings of all SLPs working in the Wellington-Dufferin area will be held to encourage information exchange and sharing of new ideas.

“Connections for Students” Supporting Seamless Transitions for Students with ASD from Autism Intervention Programs to School

Children with Autism who are arriving into any grade from an intensive intervention program follow a unique transition process. “*Connections for Students*” is a collaborative initiative between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. The initiative originates from the Ministry of Education’s Policy / Procedure Memorandum No. 140. The process is designed to facilitate the smooth transition of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) from Intensive Behaviour Intervention (IBI) with the Autism Intervention Program (AIP) to Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) instructional methods in full time school.

For each student transitioning, a collaborative, school-based transition team is established. The team may include the Principal, parents / guardians, teacher, SERT, the ASD System Resource Teacher, and an ASD Transition Consultant from KidsAbility and any other relevant support services. The Connections Student Transition Team meets monthly for up to six months before, and for six months after discharge from IBI.

Monthly Planning Guide

Meetings during *Connections for Students* typically occur for up to six months prior to discharge from IBI and for six months after discharge from IBI. Meetings are held once a month. This timeline can be used as a guide for these meetings.

Month One - Transition Meeting #1

Suggested Agenda:

- Welcome & Introductions;
- Complete release of information forms as needed;
- Overview of the *Connections for Students* process;
- Roles and responsibilities of team members;
- Family provides information about their child;
- AIP provides information about the child’s IBI program;
- Teacher/School Team shares information about their student;
- ASD Transition Consultant shares information from observations of IBI program and classroom;
- Team sets goals/expectations and specific strategies;
- Team discusses transition plan for moving toward full time school;
- Determine attendees for upcoming team meetings; and
- Determine date of next meeting(s).

Months Two to Five -Transition Meeting #2 to #5

Suggested Agenda:

- Family shares updates, progress and needs;
- Teacher/School Team review success of previous goals;
- ASD Transition Consultant contributes information from observations of IBI program and classroom;
- Discuss progress and next steps;
- Develop IEP goals;

- Review transition plan;
- Discuss need for professional development/consultation regarding ABA principles; and
- Determine date of next meeting(s).

Month Six - Transition Meeting #6

Suggested Agenda: Final Meeting before IBI Discharge

- Family shares updates, progress and needs;
- Teacher/School Team review success of previous goals;
- ASD Transition Consultant contributes information from observation of IBI program and classroom;
- Discuss progress and next steps;
- Develop IEP goals;
- Review transition plan; and
- Determine date of next meeting(s).

Months Seven to Eleven Transition Meeting #7 to #11

Suggested Agenda: Full Time Entry to School

- Family shares updates, progress and needs;
- Teacher/School Team review success of previous goals;
- ASD Transition Consultant contributes information about goals and strategies/shares resources;
- Discuss progress and next steps;
- Develop IEP goals;
- Discuss need for professional development/consultation; and
- Determine date for next meeting.

Month Twelve - Transition Meeting #12

Suggested Agenda: Final Meeting

- Family shares updates, progress and needs;
- Teacher/School Team review success of previous goals;
- ASD Transition Consultant contributes information about goals and strategies/shares resources;
- Discuss progress and next steps;
- Develop IEP Goals;
- Review the process for ongoing support for the student and the classroom team; and
- Discuss transition plans for next school year.

Care, Treatment, Correctional and Provincial Demonstration Schools

- *The following procedures may be implemented for:*
 - students in care, treatment, correctional and Provincial Demonstration Schools;
 - students from other boards who have significant social, emotional and/or behavioural concerns; and

- students entering JK/SK with significant social, emotional and/or behavioural concerns that are integrating or reintegrating into our Board.
- *The Student Support Services Team will:*
 - when possible, visit the present school/facility to observe the student in his/her learning environment;
 - attend Case Conferences at the present school/facility, (i.e. Agatha/KidsLink, Lutherwood, CPRI, Woodview and Pine Grove) to gather information re the progress of the student during his/her placement and assess the needs for reintegration;
 - arrange for outreach personnel from the present school/facility to assist school personnel and Student Support Services Team members (Youth Workers and School Social Worker) in effective learning techniques/strategies that are being implemented in the present placement;
 - arrange a Case Conference at the receiving school involving the parents, school personnel and support personnel from the present school/facility to develop a transition plan for reintegration and to discuss any supports needed at the school level, including those available through community agencies;
 - meet with the Student Support Services Team and the Special Education Resource Teacher to develop any Remediation/Behavioural or Individual Education Plan (IEP);
 - obtain from the parents any Consent to Disclosure required for the sharing of information with the previous school/facility and any community agencies (i.e. CMHA, F&CS) that may be involved in working with the student/family;
 - arrange for a possible Shared Services Meeting in the community to appoint a case manager to ensure support for the family;
 - meet with the Student Support Services Coordinator to request any additional support, if necessary;
 - in-service, with the Student Support Team, teachers, EAs, parents, and school staff regarding effective strategies to be used when teaching, supporting or interacting with the student; and
 - prepare for an IPRC if needed.

Advance planning and information sharing is also done for students with special needs who are **leaving** the board to attend the following:

Programs Offered by Other School Boards, Care, Treatment, Correctional Provincial Demonstration Schools

- *The Student Support Services Team will:*
 - assist parents and school personnel with the application process for an alternate placement if required;
 - arrange and attend Shared Services Case Conferences, Single Point of Access to Residential Care Committee meetings and any other agency meetings to gain community resources to support a case for an alternate placement for the student if required;
 - assist school personnel in preparing transfer of information including support documentation (e.g. IEP, Behaviour Plans, OSR);
 - arrange a case conference for the parents with personnel at the new placement to share relevant information (i.e. family setting, medical/or special needs

- including equipment, educational, psycho-social behavioural information) necessary for programming for the student;
- prepare the student for the new placement (i.e. sessions to discuss/answer student's questions, fears etc.); also, if possible, arrange a visit to the site of the new placement and accompany the parent and student, if requested;
 - arrange transportation if the student is admitted into a day treatment program;
 - inform community agencies who have been involved with the student/family of the alternate school placement; or of the transfer to another school board to ensure a continuation of support services in the new community;
 - communicate with Student Support Services personnel at the new placement to share needs in the areas of support, supervision that may be required during unstructured times, health concerns, medications and any special equipment that might be required for the student to access his/her learning environment;
 - visit the new placement to share verbal and written reports addressing social, emotional, and behavioural needs, strategies, and supports that have been used by the Student Support Services Team;
 - attend any case conferences to review the progress of the student at the new placement, to give support to the student and parents and to gain additional information as to assessments, techniques and new programming that is being implemented with the student; and
 - visit the student at the new placement to maintain contact with the Student Support Services Team member.

7. Roles and Responsibilities in Special Education

The Ministry of Education has defined roles and responsibilities in elementary and secondary education in several key areas:

- legislative and policy framework;
- funding;
- school system management; and
- programs and curriculum.

It is important that all involved in special education understand their roles and responsibilities, which are outlined below.

The Ministry of Education:

- defines, through the *Education Act*, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education program and services, and prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality;
- ensures that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional students;
- establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding

model; the model consists of the Foundation Grant, the Special Education Grant, and other special purpose grants;

- requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education;
- sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement;
- requires school boards to maintain special education plans, review them annually, and submit amendments to the ministry;
- requires school boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs);
- establishes Special Education Tribunals to hear disputes between parents and school boards regarding the identification and placement of exceptional pupils;
- establishes a provincial Advisory Council on Special Education to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to special education programs and services; and
- operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools for students who are deaf, blind or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

The district school board or school authority;

- establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the *Education Act*, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- monitors school compliance with the *Education Act*, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- requires staff to comply with the *Education Act*, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- directs qualified staff to develop programs and deliver services for the exceptional pupils;
- obtains the appropriate funding and reports on the expenditures for special education;
- develops and maintains a Special Education Plan that is amended from time to time to meet the current needs of the exceptional pupils of the board;
- reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education;
- provides statistical reports to the ministry as required and as requested;
- prepares a parent guide to provide parents with information about special education programs, services and procedures;
- establishes an IPRC process to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them;
- establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee; and

- provides professional development to staff on special education.

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC):

- makes recommendations to the board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board;
- participates in the board's annual review of its Special Education Report;
- participates in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education;
- reviews the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education; and
- provides information to parents, as requested.

The School Principal:

- carries out duties as outlined in the *Education Act*, regulations and policy/program memoranda, and board policies;
- communicates Ministry of Education and school board expectations to staff;
- ensures that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes;
- communicates board policies and procedures about special education to staff, students and parents;
- ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, through an IPRC, is done according to the procedures outlined in the *Education Act*, regulations and board policies;
- consults with parents and with school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional pupils;
- ensures the development, implementation and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements;
- ensures delivery of the program and services as set out in the IEP;
- ensures that parents are consulted in the development of their child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP; and
- ensures that appropriate assessments are requested if necessary and that parental consent is obtained.

The Teacher:

- carries out duties as outlined in the *Education Act*, regulations and policy/program memoranda;
- follows board policies and procedures regarding special education;
- maintains up-to-date knowledge of special education practices;
- where appropriate, works with special education staff and parents to develop the IEP for an exceptional pupil;
- provides the program for the exceptional pupil in the regular class, as outlined in the IEP;
- communicates the student's progress to parents; and
- works with other school board staff to review and update the student's IEP.

The Special Education Resource Teacher in addition to the responsibilities listed above under “the teacher”:

- holds qualifications, in accordance with Regulation 298, to teach special education;
- monitors the student's progress with reference to the IEP and modifies the program as necessary; and
- assists in providing education assessments for exceptional pupils.

The parent/guardian:

- participates in the development of the IEP
- becomes familiar with and informed about board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child;
- participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities;
- becomes acquainted with the school staff working with the student;
- supports the student at home;
- works with the school Principal and teachers to solve problems; and
- is responsible for the student's attendance at school.

The student:

- complies with the requirements as outlined in the *Education Act*, regulations and policy/program memoranda;
- complies with board policies and procedures; and

- participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other activities as appropriate.

8. Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

The Wellington Catholic District School Board uses the Ministry's categories and definitions of exceptionalities when making decisions on identification and placement. If a student is determined to be exceptional, these terms are used by the IPRC in its **Statement of Decision**.

The Ministry's categories and definitions of exceptionalities are as follows:

Behaviour:

A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

- an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships;
- excessive fears or anxieties;
- a tendency to compulsive reaction; and/or
- an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof.

Communication:

Autism

A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

- a) disturbances in:
 - rate of educational development;
 - ability to relate to the environment;
 - mobility;
 - perception, speech, and language;
- b) lack of the representational symbolic behaviour that precedes language.

Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.

Language Impairment

A learning disorder characterized by impairment in comprehension and/or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may:

- a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and
- b) include one or more of the following:
 - language delay;

- dysfluency;
- voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.

Speech Impairment

A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm, and stress.

Learning Disability

According to PPM 8, Identification and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities, the Ministry of Education defines learning disability as one of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that:

- affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are at least in the average range;
- results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support;
- results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills;
- may typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; memory and attention; processing speed; perceptual-motor processing; visual-spatial processing; executive functions (e.g., self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making);
- may be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities;
- is not the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction.

Intellectual

Giftedness

An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.

Mild Intellectual Disability

A learning disorder characterized by:

- a) an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable

curriculum modification and supportive service;

- b) an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development; and
- c) a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

Developmental Disability

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

- a) an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development;
- b) an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development; and
- c) a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

Physical

Physical Disability

A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or developmental level.

Blind and Low Vision

A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects education performance adversely.

Multiple

Multiple Exceptionalities

A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities, that is of such nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

Special Education Placements Provided by the Board

The Wellington Catholic District School Board's SEAC and school board personnel collaboratively developed the range of special education placements provided by the board. These placements acknowledge that placement of a student in a regular class is the first option considered by an IPRC.

Types of Placements at the Elementary and Secondary Levels

There are five instructional placements available in our schools to teachers and parents of students with special needs through the School Based Identification, Placement, and Review

Committee, or the System IPRC:

- A Regular Class with Indirect Support;
- A Regular Class with Resource Assistance;
- A Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance;
- A Special Education Class with Partial Integration; and
- A Designated Placement.

A Regular Class with Indirect Support

The student is placed in a regular class for the entire day, and the teacher receives specialized consultative services.

A Regular Class with Resource Assistance

The student is placed in the regular class for most or all of the day and receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a qualified Special Education Teacher or Educational Assistant.

A Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance

The student is placed in the regular class and receives instruction outside of the classroom for less than 50% of the school day, from a qualified Special Education Teacher or Educational Assistant.

A Special Education Class with Partial Integration

The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 32, for at least 50% of the school day, but is integrated with the regular class for at least one instructional period daily.

Designated Placement

For some of our exceptional students it may be necessary to provide alternative programs and facilities outside their home schools. This placement may include schools for the deaf or blind, care, treatment or correctional centres, or other appropriate settings. In some cases, it may be necessary to purchase services.

NOTE:

A designated or alternative placement is usually considered after all other options have been explored and it is determined by the parents and school personnel that a designated or alternative placement would best serve the student's needs.

The decision to explore alternative placements is often initiated by the parents. Options for a designated placement are shared with parents at an IPRC meeting or during a Principal/SERT/parent conference when an alternative placement is being considered.

The criteria used for determining the need to change a student's placement are as follows:

- the goals of the placement have been met as determined through a case conference (e.g. a designated/alternative placement);
- the placement does not meet the student's needs as determined through a case conference and or IPRC meeting; or
- the needs of the student have changed as a result of additional information (e.g. assessment results/recommendations, social, emotional and behavioral needs,

medical etc.) as determined through a case conference and or IPRC.

Inclusion in the Regular Classroom

Inclusion is foremost in our minds when we speak of the education of students. It requires:

- a clear understanding of the Wellington Catholic District School Board's philosophy and policy;
- a clear understanding of expectations;
- a clear understanding of available support services;
- a well-developed IEP; and
- communication, trust and frequent teacher, student, parent meetings.

Most students are able to be fully included into the regular classroom when given appropriate accommodations. Programming is the responsibility of the classroom teacher in consultation with the Special Education Resource Teacher. School and District resources are also available to the classroom teacher through the Problem Solving process to ensure meaningful inclusion in the regular classrooms.

Some students are included in the regular classroom with some additional support provided by the SERT who works in consultation with the classroom/subject teacher. The resource assistance may occur in the regular classroom or on a withdrawal basis. The amount of resource assistance time can range from an hour per day to a full day depending on the needs of the student.

Inclusion with Resource Assistance and Withdrawal:

Some students are included in the regular classroom and may receive additional support in the regular classroom as well as some withdrawal time outside the regular classroom in another part of the school suitable for one to one instruction or small group at the determination of the IPRC or team recommendation. The amount of resource assistance time can range from an hour per day to a full day depending on the needs of the student. The Hub Classroom and Resource Room are examples of models used throughout the district to provide specialized instruction outside of the regular classroom.

Inclusion and Withdrawal (Hub/Resource Room):

Students requiring intensive supports may be best served through the direct instruction of a qualified Special Education Teacher. This direct instruction could be provided for a portion of the day in a Hub/Resource Room. The time spent in the classroom may be slowly increased over a period of time as the student feels comfortable within the classroom environment. For the rest of the instructional day, the student would receive small group instruction from the SERT who would work closely with the classroom/subject teacher to plan, deliver and evaluate the program during the withdrawal time. Regular collaboration with the classroom / subject teacher is critical.

Range of Placement Options Available

1. A Regular Class with Indirect Support
2. A Regular Class with Resource Assistance
3. A Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance
4. A Special Education Class with Partial Integration
5. A Designated Placement

Elementary

Exceptionality	1	2	3	4	5	Other		Notes
Behaviour	•	•	•		•			Designated Placements: Care, Treatment or Section 23
Autism	•	•	•		•			Designated Placement: IBI
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	•	•	•		•			Designated Placement: Ernest C. Drury School
Blind/Low Vision	•	•	•		•			Designated Placement: W. Ross MacDonald
Speech/Language Impairment	•	•	•					
Learning Disability	•	•	•		•			Designated Placement: Trillium School
Gifted	•	•	•					
Mild Intellectual	•	•	•					
Developmental Disability	•	•	•					
Physical Disability	•	•	•					

Secondary

Exceptionality	1	2	3	4	5	Other		Notes
Behaviour	•	•	•		•			Designated Placements: Care, Treatment Alternate school placement
Autism	•	•	•					
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	•	•	•		•			Designated Placement: Ernest C. Drury
Blind/Low Vision	•	•	•		•			Designated Placement: W. Ross Macdonald School
Speech/Language Impairment	•	•	•					
Learning Disability	•	•	•		•			Designated Placement: Trillium School
Gifted	•	•	•					
Mild Intellectual	•	•	•					Life Skills K Code Alternative Program
Developmental Disability	•	•	•					Life Skills K Code Alternative Program
Physical Disability	•	•	•					

9. Ontario Provincial and Demonstration Schools in Ontario

Provincial Schools and Provincial Demonstration Schools:

- are operated by the Ministry of Education;
- provide education for students who are deaf or blind, or who have severe learning disabilities;
- provide an alternative education option;
- serve as regional resource centres for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;
- provide preschool home visiting services for students who are deaf or deaf-blind;
- develop and provide learning materials and media for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;

- provide school board teachers with resource services; and
- play a valuable role in teacher training.

W. Ross Macdonald School: School for the Blind and Deaf-Blind

W. Ross Macdonald School is located in Brantford and provides education for students who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. The school provides:

- a provincial resource centre for the visually impaired and deaf-blind;
- support to local school boards through consultation and the provision of special learning materials, such as Braille materials, audiotapes,
- and large-print text books; and
- professional services and guidance to ministries of education on an interprovincial, cooperative basis.

Programs are tailored to the needs of the individual student and:

- are designed to help these students learn to live independently in a non-sheltered environment;
- are delivered by specially trained teachers;
- follow the Ontario curriculum developed for all students in the province;
- offer a full range of courses at the secondary level;
- offer courses in special subject areas such as music, broad-based technology, family studies, physical education, and mobility training;
- are individualized, to offer a comprehensive “life skills” program;
- provide through home visiting for parents and families of preschool deaf-blind children assistance in preparing these children for future education.

Provincial Schools for the Deaf

The following Provincial Schools offer services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students:

- Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf in Belleville (serving eastern Ontario);
- Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf in Milton (serving central and northern Ontario);
- Robarts School for the Deaf in London (serving western Ontario); and
- Centre Jules-Leger in Ottawa (serving francophone students and families throughout Ontario).

Admittance to a Provincial School is determined by the Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296.

These schools provide elementary and secondary school programs for deaf students from preschool level to high school graduation. The curriculum follows the Ontario curriculum and parallels courses and programs provided in school boards. Each student has his or her special needs met as set out in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP). Schools for the deaf:

- provide rich and supportive bilingual/bicultural educational environments which facilitate students’ language acquisition, learning, and social development through American Sign Language (ASL) and English;
- operate primarily as day schools; and
- provide residential facilities five days per week for those students who do not live within reasonable commuting distance from the school.

Transportation to Provincial Schools for students is provided by school boards.

Each school has a Resource Services Department which provides:

- consultation and educational advice to parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and school board personnel;
- information brochures;
- a wide variety of workshops for parents, school boards, and other agencies; and
- an extensive home-visiting program delivered to parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing preschool children by teachers trained in preschool and deaf education.

Provincial School Contacts

Teachers may obtain additional information from the Resource Services departments of the Provincial Schools and the groups listed below.

Provincial Schools Branch, Ministry of Education

Provincial Schools Branch
255 Ontario Street South
Milton, ON L9T 2M5
Tel: (905) 878-2851 Fax: (905) 878-5405

Schools for the Deaf

The Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf
255 Ontario Street South
Milton, ON L9T 2M5
Tel: (905) 878-2851 Fax: (905) 878-1354

The Robarts School for the Deaf
1090 Highbury Avenue
London, ON N5Y 4V9
Tel: (519) 453-4400 Fax: (519) 453-7943

The Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf
350 Dundas Street West
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2
Tel: (613) 967-2823 Fax: (613) 967-2857

Schools for the Blind and Deaf-Blind

W. Ross Macdonald School
350 Brant Avenue
Brantford, ON N3T 3J9
Tel: (519) 759-0730 Fax: (519) 759-4741

Centre Jules-Leger
281 rue Lanark
Ottawa, ON
Tel: (613) 761-9300 Fax: (613) 761-9301

Provincial Demonstration Schools

The Ministry of Education provides the services of four Provincial Demonstration Schools for Ontario children with severe learning disabilities. These schools are the following:

Amethyst School
1090 Highbury Avenue
London, ON N5Y 4V9
Tel: (519) 453-4408 Fax: (519) 453-2160

Centre Jules-Leger
281 rue Lanark
Ottawa, ON K1Z 6R8
Tel: (613) 761-9300 Fax: (613) 761-9301 TTY: (613) 761-9302 and 761-9304

Sagonaska School
350 Dundas Street West
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2
Tel: (613)967-2830 Fax: (613) 967-2482

Trillium School
347 Ontario Street South
Milton, ON L9T 3X9 Tel: (905) 878-8428 Fax: (905) 878-7540

Each Provincial Demonstration School has an enrolment of forty students. The language of instruction at the Amethyst, Sagonaska, and Trillium schools is English; at Centre Jules-Leger, instruction is in French.

Application for admission to a Provincial Demonstration School is made on behalf of students by the school board, with parental consent. The Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities (PCLD) determines whether a student is eligible for admission.

Although the primary responsibility to provide appropriate educational programs for students with learning disabilities remains with school boards, the ministry recognizes that some students require a residential school setting for a period of time.

The Demonstration Schools were established to:

- provide special residential education programs for students between the ages of 5 and 21 years;
- enhance the development of each student's academic and social skills;
- and
- develop the abilities of the students enrolled to a level that will enable them to return to programs operated by a local school board within two years.

In addition to providing residential schooling for students with severe learning disabilities, the provincial Demonstration Schools have special programs for students with severe learning disabilities in association with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD). These are highly intensive, one-year programs.

The Trillium School also operates Learning for Emotional and Academic Development (LEAD), a special program for students with severe learning disabilities who require an additional level of social/emotional support.

Further information about the academic, residential, LEAD, and LD/ADHD, programs is available from the Demonstration Schools through the Special Needs Opportunity Window (SNOW) website at.

An in-service teacher education program is provided at each Demonstration School. This program is designed to share methodologies and materials with teachers of Ontario school boards. Information about the programs offered should be obtained from the schools themselves.

The Principal, in consultation with the Special Education Resource Teacher and the parents, initiates the referral process for a student to attend a Provincial School or a Provincial Demonstration School. The referral is reviewed by the Student Support Services Coordinator and the Superintendent of Education to ensure that the student meets the eligibility criteria. Application for admission to a Provincial or Demonstration School is made on behalf of the student by the Wellington Catholic District School Board, with parental consent.

- Admittance to a Provincial School is determined by the Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296.
- Admittance to a Provincial Demonstration School is determined by the Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities (PCLD) who decides whether a student is eligible for admission.

Transportation is approved for a student and an assistant, if necessary, attending a Provincial or Demonstration School by the Superintendent of Education. The Wellington Catholic District School Board has an existing transportation agreement in place with our coterminous board, the Upper Grand District School Board, for transporting all students including students with special needs attending Provincial or Demonstration Schools wherein costs are shared as applicable.

10. Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies

Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies are formulated to meet our Board's educational philosophy and the requirements of the Policy/Program Memorandum No. 11 which states that:

“boards must have in place procedures to identify each child's level of development, learning abilities, and needs, and they must ensure that educational programs are designed to accommodate these needs and to facilitate each child's growth and development”; and

“these procedures are a part of a continuous assessment and program planning process which should be initiated when a child is first enrolled in school or no later than the beginning of a program of studies immediately following Kindergarten and should continue throughout a child's school life”.

Our Full Day Kindergarten programs provide an extension and strengthening of the partnership already present among home, church, and school. Catholic values and beliefs are a significant part of our program. Children are provided with an environment which allows for exploration, inquiry, and experience. The programs are child-centred; activities based and promote learning by doing. Children learn through play which promotes social skills, language development and

co-operation.

Program Goals:

- to nurture each child's growth - spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially;
- to enhance the growth of each child's self-concept and to develop a positive self-image;
- to develop early literacy and knowledge & skills in mathematics, science & technology;
- to promote learning and thinking abilities through exploration, manipulation, problem-solving, and language development;
- to foster creativity, imagination, and curiosity which will lead to a desire for life-long learning;
- to encourage the development of physical abilities through opportunities for participation in activities using large and small muscles; and
- to assist in providing a link and continuum among home, school, parish and community.

The Teacher's Role in Early Identification

Beginning in Full Day Kindergarten, educators use a variety of assessment for, of and as learning to identify students who may need additional support or resources. The Primary Literacy Assessment Resource provides a number of diagnostic assessments that assist educators in identifying students who may not be making growth or who may need additional challenges. Understanding that students in FDK will demonstrate a wide range of both readiness, school readiness skills and foundational understandings, educators provide appropriate learning experiences and organize a stimulating learning environment based on diagnostic assessment and observation of student progress.

Educators work collaboratively with parents and the school team, to address student need in any area of the curriculum following the Problem-Solving Process (Appendix C).

The Parent's Role in Early Identification

Parents have an important role to play in supporting their child's learning. Children benefit greatly when parents are involved with their children's education. Parents need to communicate with teachers, offer useful information and ask relevant questions about their child's progress. Parents are encouraged to meet with the teacher or Principal, as needed, if questions or concerns arise. Knowledge of Ontario's Ministry of Education Full Day Kindergarten curriculum will help parents to interpret the assessment of their child's learning and to work with the teacher to improve and facilitate their child's progress. Parents are encouraged to support their interest in their child's education by participating in all facets of school life.

Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies

The Full Day Kindergarten program offered in the Wellington Catholic District School Board is intended to provide every child with an environment that fosters learning by doing and promotes individual progress and development. It provides a partnership between home and

school where teacher and parent can observe, assess and facilitate learning in a risk free, safe, welcoming environment.

Our Early Identification procedures begin at registration. Each family/parent is welcomed to one of our schools and asked to complete the registration process. At that time, they will receive information which identifies the philosophy and goals of the Full Day Kindergarten Program and familiarizes parents with routines, timetables, and procedures in place for the spiritual, developmental, educational, and safe well-being of their child. A school information form is completed.

An opportunity is provided for teachers to transfer information regarding students from Year I Kindergarten who are moving to Year II Kindergarten and for Year II Kindergarten students moving to Grade one. These transfer sessions are intended to assist in groupings and placement for the next school year. They identify leaders, group dynamics and possible concerns.

Children who experience difficulties or are observed to have developmental delays, will be referred to the School Team following the Problem-Solving Process.

Assessment Tools and Strategies

We continue to use a standard assessment tool to allow us to measure achievement and progress in Early Literacy skills in Full Day Kindergarten. This tool is administered by the kindergarten teacher.

Checklists, teacher observations, ongoing student profiles and anecdotal comments are some of the means used to gather information on students to assist in the development of appropriate educational programs.

All Grade 1 to 8 students are assessed using a variety of Diagnostic Assessments in the fall of each school year. Ongoing assessment tools are chosen for board wide use as part of the Ministry Early Reading Strategy.

Students “at risk” or at Level 1 or 2 are assessed again using Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) in the spring term. This is done to determine progress and to identify strengths and needs for further programming in Reading.

Early Intervention

Differentiated instruction and universal design for learning are strategies that allow educators to identify and address gaps in learning or provide more challenging material for students who are ready. Early intervention strategies include small group instruction, and gradual release of responsibility allow educators to support students throughout the learning process. All of these strategies are included in Wellington Catholic DSB’s *Foundations of Best Practice*. Frequent diagnostic assessment is essential in identifying students who continue to struggle and may need support beyond the classroom to be successful.

Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies in Speech and Language

The following procedures and transition plans are a part of a continuous assessment and program planning process which is initiated when a child is first enrolled in school and continues to be

updated throughout the child's school life. Policy and procedures for Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) involvement are outlined for students who may need to access speech and language support.

The Wee Talk Wellington-Dufferin Preschool Speech and Language Service System was created to ensure that children in Wellington and Dufferin Counties have access to a service which provides prevention, early identification and treatment of speech and language problems. It consists of nine community agencies (hospitals, Public Health, KidsAbility, WEE Talk and the LHIN) which work together to provide speech and language support to preschool children.

A formal transition process ensures that children at risk for speech and language disorders. A formal plan has been implemented between preschool agencies and local school boards to promote a smooth and timely transition for children and their families as they change speech and language service providers. This process was designed to minimize the waiting period for students during the transfer of service and to insure a continuation of service.

The Preschool to School Transition Process for Speech and Language Services

In collaboration with parents/caregivers, a preschool Speech-Language Pathologist will:

- Complete and have parents sign a *release of information* to allow exchange of information between preschool agencies and the Wellington Catholic District School Board;
- Each pre-school agency will prepare a list of students who would benefit from speech and language follow-up upon entry to Senior Kindergarten. The lists will be sent to the school board Speech- Language Pathology Department by the end of May. Speech- Language Pathologists in private practice will also be encouraged to provide similar lists. The lists will include the following information:
 - school name;
 - student name;
 - date of birth;
 - nature and severity of communication/swallowing difficulty; and
 - recommendation for school-based SLP to refer student to KidsAbility.

In collaboration with parents/caregivers, a school-based Speech-Language Pathologist will:

- Obtain parental consent in order to complete an assessment;
- Complete an assessment to deem eligibility for KidsAbility referral;
- Complete the *School Health Support Services Referral and Consent* and *KidsAbility School Health Services Speech Language Pathology Information Form* to access services from KidsAbility (if warranted).

The preschool agencies will forward a transition plan or discharge report for each child to the school boards by the end of August. The report will include the following information:

- relevant background information (medical history, other agency involvements);
- specific speech & language information including tests administered & scores obtained;
- list of communication goals and the child's progress;
- comments on other testing completed (hearing, vision); and

- recommendation for a KidsAbility referral.

As school begins in September, the Speech-Language Pathologist and the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) of each school will discuss the list of children entering Year II Kindergarten and will determine if further involvement is required.

If appropriate, the SERT will send the *Consent to Discuss Information from Wee Talk Speech and Language Services* home to be signed by the parent/guardian, and then forwarded to the Speech-Language Pathology Department.

Should other release of information forms be required between relevant community agencies or health professionals, the Principal or the Special Education Resource Teachers will send these to parents/caregivers for signature to exchange information.

The preschool and school-based Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP) *may* meet in September to devise communication goals and share therapy techniques. Following this meeting, the WCDSB SLP will meet with the kindergarten teacher (if necessary) to discuss special communication strategies. It is important to note that the Wee Talk Program provides support services and intervention up until the summer prior to entry into Year II Kindergarten. Therefore, this *can* encompass children older than 5 years of age. When necessary, the preschool SLP and WCDSB SLP *may* provide collaborative support in the fall to assist parents and school staff with transition.

Planning of a Case Conference may also be warranted for a child with special needs, and invitation of individuals will be at the discretion of the Principal and the child's parents/caregivers. Discussion will involve the child's strengths and weaknesses and the need, if any, for further involvement or follow-up from other agencies.

As part of the transition from preschool to school age services, it is important for information regarding change in services to be shared with parents. The preschool Speech-Language Pathologists will provide the parents with the following pamphlet:

A Parent Guide to Speech and Language Services Moving from Preschool Speech and Language Services to School Based Services explaining the transition process and speech and language services provided to the schools.

School Health Support Services:

As part of the transition plan, a referral for School Health Support Services (KidsAbility) may be recommended by the preschool agency.

Preschool agency Speech-Language Pathologists may recommend to the school-based SLP that the child be referred to KidsAbility when they meet the criteria for School Health Support Services. Referrals to KidsAbility may be made for:

- moderate to profound articulation/phonology;
- voice and resonance;
- fluency/stuttering; and
- feeding and swallowing.

In collaboration with parents/caregivers, a school-based Speech-Language Pathologist will:

- Obtain parental consent in order to complete an assessment.
- Complete an assessment to deem eligibility for a referral to KidsAbility.

- Complete the *School Health Support Services Referral and Consent* and *KidsAbility School Health Services Speech Language Pathology Information Form* to access services from KidsAbility (if warranted).

Once the School Speech-Language Pathologist completes the above two forms, the Principal and parents must sign the *School Health Support Services Referral and Consent*. The school will then forward both forms to KidsAbility Pediatric Case Manager who will assess the student's needs and eligibility for services and direct the referral to KidsAbility Speech-Language Pathology Department when appropriate.

Copies of the *School Health Support Services Referral and Consent* and *KidsAbility School Health Services Speech Language Pathology Information Form* forms are also kept in the student's OSR.

NOTE: In the case of voice referrals, the SLP will inform parents that an ENT consult is required prior to the referral being submitted.

Information Exchange/Updates between Agencies

Community inter-agency meetings continuously occur on a regular basis (Fall and Spring of each year) in order for community SLPs (including private practitioners) to share information, problem solve towards joint initiatives and review the transition process.

Children enrolled in the Year I Kindergarten program currently receive their speech and language services through the preschool community agencies (e.g. WEE TALK, St. Joseph Health Centre, Guelph, Groves Memorial Hospital, Fergus, North Wellington Health Care Corporation, and KidsAbility). As these children transition into school, some have been screened and/or assessed by the preschool agencies, and therefore may already be identified with speech and language needs and receiving some type of direct or indirect service.

Children in Year I Kindergarten not previously identified by a preschool agency can still be eligible for preschool speech and language support. If a student in Year I Kindergarten demonstrates a number of concerns, the classroom teacher and/or SERT will inform parents about the WEE TALK program and provide a pamphlet about their service.

For Year II Kindergarten students, if teachers feel speech and language involvement is warranted, they are asked to complete a referral package with support from the SERT for further consideration of SLP involvement. The package is then submitted to the school SLP who will review it and determine if further testing is required.

The Referral Process for Speech-Language Pathology Services

The SERT/classroom teacher or Principal discusses the need for Speech-Language Pathology Services.

- A referral package is filled out by the classroom teacher and forwarded to the SERT.
- Any other informal assessments completed by the teacher and/or the SERT are then shared with the SLP.
- The Speech-Language Pathologist in consultation with the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) will determine a student's eligibility for SLP services, and prioritize students based on their needs.
- All consent forms sent home requesting a speech and language assessment will

have *A Parent Guide to Speech and Language Services* attached, which outlines the services offered by the SLP Department. The SLP services should be discussed with the parent/guardian prior to submitting the referral package and obtaining formal consent.

- Once SLP involvement is determined to be required, the SERT/Principal completes the **Consent for Communication Assessment and Speech and Language Referral** forms and forwards them to the parent/guardian to be signed.
- Once signed and returned, the SERT/Principal forwards a photocopy of the **Consent, Speech and Language Referral Form**, and **Speech and Language Pre-Referral Checklist** to the School Speech-Language Pathologist.

NOTE: The original consent form is kept in the student's O.S.R.

The SLP Department uses a variety of standardized and non-standardized tools when completing a speech and language assessment. The results of such testing is used to assist both special education personnel and classroom teachers with programming suggestions necessary for children with special needs.

Prior to beginning an assessment, the SLP gathers as much information as possible to establish a general profile of the student. This can be done through a parent/teacher interview, developmental history, classroom observations and review of the OSR file.

Standardized Assessment Tools are listed in the Educational and other Assessments section.

Once the assessment/consultation has been completed, parents will receive a written report within a four to six-week time period. It is the responsibility of the SLP to review the final report and share the information with the school staff and the parents. The assessment report will be made available through the OSR to classroom teachers. This allows the teacher to review the recommendations which can be implemented within the classroom environment. If a specific program or resource is recommended, the SLP may consult directly with the classroom teacher and/or the Educational Assistant on how to implement a program or how to use recommended resources.

The SLP may also work with parents to provide them with programs or activities which can be completed in the home environment. Home programs and practical strategies are discussed with parents to enable them to assist their children at home. For those children with special needs, the SLP may also consult with outside agencies, when necessary, in order to access more specialized programming for a child's particular needs (e.g. children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Developmental Disabilities).

SLPs are not qualified to provide a formal diagnosis or identification (e.g. Developmental Disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder, or Autism Spectrum Disorder). The SLP can, however, indicate whether a student is demonstrating a mild, moderate or severe delay in the areas of speech and language development.

The school board SLP is responsible to provide services to all students from Year II Kindergarten - Grade 4. Through a local community agreement, Year I Kindergarten students are the responsibility of the approved community agencies, therefore, the school SLP has limited involvement in these classrooms with these children. The school SLP, however, is often in

contact with the Full Day Kindergarten educators and students and can direct them to the appropriate services. The school SLP's role and responsibilities to the Year I Kindergarten classrooms follow:

- To re-direct all speech and language referrals to the Wee Talk Preschool Speech and Language System;
- Provide FDK educators with information about the Wee Talk Program;
- Normal/disordered speech and language development; and importance of language and literacy;
- FDK educators will receive this information during In-services (professional development for teachers) through the program department;
- Distribution of the school board's *A Parent Guide to Speech and Language Services and Moving from Pre-school Speech and Language Services to School Based Services*;
- Attending information nights for parents about school speech & language services; and through resources distributed and recommended by school SLPs;
- Participate in case conferences or meetings which involve transferring information from various personnel involving students with special needs. Discussion of specific goals or strategies may also occur at these meetings; and
- Serve as a liaison between the preschool agencies and school board personnel to ensure proper transition of therapy equipment and/or strategies which will assist the child in his/her academic program.

11. Educational and Other Assessments

Qualified Special Education Resource Teachers (Special Education Specialist: Part I) and our System Assessment SERTs use a variety of formal and informal assessment tools when conducting educational assessments. The areas assessed include reading, writing and mathematics. The results of such testing are used to assist teachers and SERTs in developing appropriate programming to meet their students' individual needs.

Parental Consent

When completing formal assessments, (academic, behavioural, social /emotional, Speech and Language, Psychological Assessment), written parent consent is always requested and required. WCDSB's Problem Solving process includes consultation with parents at each step of the process in an effort to keep all partners (parents, educators, and support staff) aware of the student's progress. It is always ideal to have the most comprehensive information possible. For this reason, formal assessments are very valuable, and parents are encouraged to gather as much information about these assessments as necessary before deciding on consent. In all cases, assessment results and recommendations are shared with parents and parental input is valued. When parental consent is declined, educators proceed with the informal classroom assessment (observation, conversation, products) as sources of information for program planning.

Curriculum Based Assessment

In line with the Board's Needs Based Philosophy, the typical manner in which Principals, Special

Education Resource Teachers and classroom teachers identify students' strengths, learning needs and characteristics as learners is that of a dynamic curriculum-based assessment. Assessment procedures link directly to curriculum expectations and instructional practices. Assessment results provide the necessary information to plan, modify and adjust or provide alternative program opportunities. Curriculum based assessments are most frequently developed in the areas of language and mathematics. Through careful analysis of the information collected, the student's strengths, weaknesses and needs are clearly identified in the student's profile.

Standardized Assessment

Where more formal assessment data is required to identify specific knowledge and skills for further in-depth instruction and assessment, standards tests (criterion- referenced/standards referenced) are used in order to provide an age norm and/or grade equivalency. A Special Education Resource Teacher may consider the administering of a standardized test when there is concern that current programming is not allowing for progress or growth in the child's learning.

List of Assessment Tools:

Reading

- Brigance Diagnostic Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills
- Catholic Curriculum Co-operative (Assessment Units)
- Ontario Curriculum Reading Exemplars Gr. 1-8
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, 3rd ed. (KTea-3)
- Phonological Awareness Kit
- Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA)
- LAR – Literacy Assessment Resource

Writing

- Brigance Diagnostic Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills
- Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale
- Ontario Curriculum Writing Exemplars (Gr. 1-8)
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, 3rd ed. (KTea-3)
- LAR – Literacy Assessment Resource
- AFAC – A Functional Assessment and Curriculum
- OWR - Ontario Writing Assessment

Mathematics

- Key Math Revised/Updated Canadian Norms (Kdg - Gr. 10)
- Key Math 3 (Kdg – Gr. 12)
- Catholic Curriculum Co-operative (Assessment Units)
- Brigance Diagnostic Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills
- AFAC – A Functional Assessment Curriculum
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, 3rd ed. (KTea-3)

Secondary

In addition to the above assessments the secondary SERTs also make use of the following assessment tools:

- Brigance Diagnostic Comprehensive Inventory of Essential Skills, Employability Skills and Life Skills; and
- a number of Behavioural Checklists are also used for assessment and monitoring purposes. These checklists are used for ADHD, adaptive functioning skills etc.

Qualifications for Administrators of Assessment Tools

Our educational assessments are administered by qualified Special Education Resource Teachers.

Average Waiting Time for Educational Assessments

The average waiting time for educational assessments varies from 2-8 weeks. This variation is dependent upon such factors as:

- the number of IPRC students at each school site;
- the number of Special Education Resource Teachers available to administer the assessments at each school site; and
- the number of new referrals and/or new students arriving with special needs.

Criteria for Managing Waiting Lists

Elementary

A priority list is established at the beginning of the school year in collaboration with the Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher and the Student Support Services Team. This list is adjusted and updated as needed. Listed below is the priority list for elementary sites.

Initial IPRC Referrals -

- a comprehensive educational assessment is administered prior to the IPRC meeting;

IPRC Reviews -

- a comprehensive educational re-assessment is administered in preparation for an IPRC review when the current program is not allowing for growth or progress;
- New students identified by teachers, parents, Principals, Special Education Resource Teachers and/or the Student Support Team as having special needs; and
- Other students' teachers are concerned about after having proceeded through the steps in the Board's Problem Solving Process.

Secondary

Listed below is the priority list for secondary sites:

Initial IPRC Referrals -

- a comprehensive educational assessment may be administered prior to the IPRC meeting;

IPRC Reviews -

- a comprehensive educational re-assessment may be administered when current programming is not allowing for growth or progress in the student's learning;
- when the exceptional student is accepted at a post-secondary institution as part of the support application package; and
- new students identified by teachers, parents, Principals, Special Education Resource Teachers and/or the Student Support Services Team as having special needs/concerns.

Parental Consent

The majority of students who are being assessed are being done because of parental request or as a result of a parent/teacher conference where it was agreed to pursue further assessment. Otherwise, the teacher or Special Education Resource Teacher contacts parents to let them know that an assessment is being conducted and for what reason.

Communication of Assessment Results to Parents

Assessment results are communicated to parents through an in-school meeting. The meeting may be an IPRC or a parent interview and usually involves the parent(s), classroom teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher and in many instances the Principal. If a parent is not able to attend a meeting, a parental contact is made over the phone or in writing and a copy of the assessment results are sent home. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if any clarification is needed.

Protocols for Sharing Information with Staff and Outside Agencies

Internally, information is shared with relevant staff members at a School Team Meeting or through an informal meeting between the SERT and staff member. At the end of the school year, a transfer of information also takes place between the receiving teacher(s), current teacher(s), SERT and often the Principal.

For outside agencies, parents sign a Consent Form allowing for an exchange of information between the parties involved. These forms are kept in the OSR.

Privacy of Information

Under the supervision of the Principal, educational assessment information is shared with board personnel directly involved with the student. If that person is not an employee of the Wellington Catholic District School Board, a Consent Form or another exchange of information form has been signed by the parents and agencies involved. All student information and consent forms are kept in the OSR. Information that is not needed or no longer pertinent is to be purged from the OSR.

Speech-Language Assessments

The Speech-Language Pathology Department uses a variety of standardized and non-standardized tools when completing a speech and language assessment. The results of such testing are used to assist both the SERT and classroom teacher with programming suggestions necessary for children with speech and language needs.

List of Standardized Assessment Tools

AFAC	A Functional Assessment and Curriculum
ABLLS-R	Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills – Revised
ALL	Assessment for Literacy and Language Augmentative and Alternative Communication Profile
CELF-4,5&P	Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals - Fourth Edition, Fifth Edition & Preschool 2nd Edition Ekwall-Shanker Reading Inventory
ELT	Expressive Language Test
EVT-2	Expressive Vocabulary Test - 2
GFTA-R	Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation – Revised
LPT-R	Language Processing Test - Revised
OWLS-2	Oral & Written Language Skills, 2 nd Edition
PPVT-4	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Fourth Edition
PARP-I	Phonological Awareness Reading Profile – Intermediate
PAT-2	Phonological Awareness Test – 2
PLS-4	Preschool Language Scale - Fourth Edition
SCAN-3	Children, Adolescent and Adult Screening for Auditory Processing Disorders Social Language Development Test - Elementary and Adolescent
SPAT-D/2	Structured Photographic Articulation Test, 2 nd Edition
SPELT-P&3	Structured Photographic Expressive Language Test – Preschool & Level 3
TACL-4	Test of Auditory Comprehension of Language – 4
TAPS-3	Test of Auditory Processing Skills, 3 rd Edition
TNL	Test of Narrative Language
TOAL -3	Test of Adolescent / Adult Language - Third Edition
TOLD-P	Test of Language Development - Primary
TOLD-I	Test of Language Development - Intermediate
TOPL -2	Test of Pragmatic Language - 2 nd Edition
TOPS-R	Test of Problem Solving - Revised - Elementary
TOPS - 2	Test of Problem Solving - Adolescent - 2 nd Edition
TOWL-3&4	Test of Written Language - Third & Fourth Editions
TTFC-2	Token Test – Second Edition The Listening Comprehension Test - 2
VB-MAPP	Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment & Placement Program
GAPS	The Gillian Autism Rating Scale
SPI	Stuttering Prediction Instrument
TLC Expanded	Test of Language Competence - Expanded Edition (Level 1 and 2)

Qualifications for Administration of Assessment Tools

Many of the assessment tools used by the SLPs provide specific guidelines for administration, scoring and interpretation procedures, as well as examiner qualification. Most of the assessment tools suggest that examiners who administer and interpret these standardized tests have some formal training in assessment.

Training should result in a basic understanding of testing statistics; procedures governing test administration, scoring and interpretation; and specific information about educational evaluation. Some assessments specifically state that the standardized tool is designed for trained professionals such as Speech-Language Pathologists, Psychologists and Special Education Consultants.

Qualifications for Speech-Language Pathologists

Individuals must have a Master's Degree or equivalency in order to practice in the field of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. Registration with the *College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO)* is mandatory in order for SLPs to practice within the province. Membership with the *Speech & Language Pathologists and Audiologists of Canada (SAC)* and *Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (OSLA)* is optional at this time.

Speech-Language Pathologists must maintain good standing in their college requirements.

Managing Waiting Lists

Under the current service delivery model, the Speech-Language Pathology Service provides assessment and consultative services to the elementary and secondary schools. The SLP must work closely with the SERT in prioritizing students based on their needs.

Listed below is the priority list which includes the estimated waiting period for the SLP to assess a student:

1. New School Health Support Services (KidsAbility) Referrals
Screening completed immediately - less than one month waiting period.
2. Preschool Agency Referrals (or children entering Year II Kindergarten)
Screened immediately - within 1 - 3 months.
3. Students identified with ASD will be referred to a waiting list for community services.
4. New Speech and Language Referrals will be seen within a 4-month period by the WCDSB SLP.
5. Secondary School Referrals
Consultation for students by SLP Department is available on an as needed basis.

Protocol for Sharing Information

A total of three copies are made for each SLP assessment completed. The copies are distributed to:

Parent/Guardian
OSR File
SLP Department File

Parents

Parents will receive a copy of the speech and language assessment from the school SERT. It is the responsibility of the SLP to review the final report and share the information with the parents when requested.

School Personnel

The SLP shares the assessment report with the classroom teacher during a feedback session if requested. This allows the teacher to review the recommendations which can be implemented within the classroom environment. If a specific program or resource is recommended, the SLP may consult directly with the classroom teacher or the Educational Assistant on how to implement or use the program.

Outside Agencies

At times, the SLP may suggest that further testing be considered in other areas (e.g. Hearing, Central Auditory Processing, and Vision). With consent from parent/guardian, the SLP's report may need to be shared with outside agencies to assist them by providing specific information regarding the request for further testing.

Assessment reports are shared with outside agencies if consent is provided by parents/guardians. A parent has the right to copy a report and provide it to other parties at their discretion. All information resulting from an SLP assessment remains confidential and is not shared with professionals or agencies outside the school board (e.g. family physicians, clinics, and learning centre) unless the parent signs a "Release Form for Disclosure or Examination of a Clinical Record".

Psychological Assessments

Psychological assessments are contracted through a variety of psychological service agencies. These in-depth assessments attempt to identify a student's individual strengths and needs and greatly assist parents and school personnel in the development of a student's program to address these needs.

Where after repeated efforts, the school continues to experience difficulty in ascertaining the instructional format most advantageous to the student, and where mental health issues or insights regarding a student's cognitive/ intellectual functioning, personality or behaviour are needed, the student may be referred for psychological assessment by the Principal. Requests for psychological assessments are referred to the Student Support Services Coordinator. The Wellington Catholic District School Board has developed *Psychological Assessment Referral Guidelines* and a *Referral Protocol* to assist schools in deciding when a psychological assessment referral is necessary.

Assessment Tools

It is the practice of the Psychological Service providers to use published, well- standardized tests to provide psychometrically sound data, consistent with the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing endorsed by the Canadian Psychological Association. They use the presenting problem to guide the type of assessment they conduct and therefore do not have a fixed battery of tests that they use. However, the following is a list of some of the instruments commonly used:

Cognition/Intelligence

- Differential Ability Scales - Second Edition (DAS-II)
- Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children - Second Edition (KABC- II)
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales, 5th Edition (SB5)
- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale - Fourth Edition: Canadian (WAIS- IV CDN)
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - Fifth Edition: Canadian (WISC-V CDN)
- Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence - Fourth Edition: Canadian (WPPSI-IV CDN)
- Woodcock Johnson Test of Cognitive Abilities - Fourth Edition (WJIV)
- Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence, Second Edition (CTONI-2)
- Test of Nonverbal Intelligence - Fourth Edition (TONI-4)
- Wechsler Nonverbal Scale of Ability: Canadian (WNV CDN)

Memory

- Children's Memory Scale (CMS)
- Test of Memory and Learning: Second Edition (TOMAL-2)
- Wechsler Memory Scale - Fourth Edition (WMS-IV)
- Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning, Second Edition (WRAML2)

Language

- Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals - Fifth Edition (CELF-5)
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processes - Second Edition (CTOPP-2)
- Test of Language Competence - Expanded Edition (TLC-E)

Achievement/Skills

- Gray Oral Reading Tests-5 (GORT-5)
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Third Edition (KTEA-3)
- Oral and Written Language Scales, 2nd Edition (OWLS-II)
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - Fourth Edition (PPVT-4)
- Test of Written Language - Fourth Edition (TOWL-4)
- The Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement - Fourth Edition
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test - Third Edition: Canadian (WIAT-III)
- Wide Range Achievement Test 4 (WRAT4)
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests - Third Edition (WRMT-III)

Adaptive Skills

- Adaptive Behavior Assessment System, Third Edition (ABAS 3)
- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales - Third Edition

Attention/Executive Function

- Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function, Second Edition (BRIEF2)
- Brown Attention-Deficit Disorder Scales
- Conners Continuous Performance Test 3rd Edition
- Conners 3
- Comprehensive Executive Function Inventory (CEFI)
- NEPSY-Second Edition

Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Autism Diagnostic Interview - Revised (ADI-R)
- Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, 2nd Edition (ADOS-2)
- Autism Spectrum Rating Scales (ASRS)
- Childhood Autism Rating Scale, Second Edition (CARS2)
- Gilliam Autism Rating Scale, Third Edition (GARS -3)
- Social Responsiveness Scale, 2nd Edition (SRS-2)

Behaviour

- Behavior Assessment System for Children, Third Edition (BASC-3)
- Child Behavior Checklist for Ages 6 - 18 (CBCL/6-18)
- Conners Comprehensive Behavior Rating Scales (CBRS)
- Conners Early Childhood (2 - 6 years)

Social/Emotional/Personality

- Children's Depression Inventory, 2nd Edition (CDI 2)
- Millon Adolescent Clinical Inventory (MACI)
- Millon Adolescent Personality Inventory (MAPI)
- Millon Pre-Adolescent Clinical Inventory (M-PACI)
- Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory - Adolescent (MMPI-A)
- Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children, 2nd Edition (MASC2)
- Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, 2nd Edition
- Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale: Second Edition (RCMAS-2)
- Roberts Apperception Test for Children, Second Edition

Qualifications of Personnel

Most of the tests used by the psychologists are restricted tests, in that they can only be purchased or used by personnel with a graduate degree and appropriate training in assessment. All clinical services are provided by a registered Psychologist or Psychological Associate, or by M.A. or Ph.D. level graduate students or by a Psychometrist under the direct supervision of registered staff, in accordance with the Standards for Practice of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.

Average Waiting Time

The waiting list for accessing a psychologist from any of our contracted providers varies seasonally and has been as long as six months and as short as four weeks. On the average, clients wait two to three months between the time of referral and their first appointment.

Parental Consent

Regardless of the referral source, when providing psychological services, the client is the child and, in the case of a minor child, the parent or guardian. Psychological services cannot be provided without signed, informed consent provided by the parent or guardian. Further, information from assessments cannot be shared with the Wellington Catholic District School Board without the additional consent from the parent. In rare circumstances, parents have withheld permission to release assessment results to the school board, and this has been respected.

Conveyance of Results to Parents

Parents receive both verbal and written feedback regarding the assessment results, in the form of a feedback interview and a Psychological Assessment Report.

Protocols for Sharing Information

Services are provided under the Registered Health Providers Act (RHPA, 1991) and Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (FIPPA, 1990), in which respect, all information is held in confidence unless written consent is obtained to share information with a third party, and that includes the Wellington Catholic District School Board. A Release of Information form is to be completed in the sharing of information.

Privacy of Information

As described above, Psychological Assessment Service providers function under the regulation of RHPA (1991) and FIPPA (1990). All client information is held in confidence and cannot be released to a third party without written consent from the client. Records are retained by the service provider and are stored in accordance with the Standards of Practice of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.

Behavioural Assessments

When a student, group of students or a class is referred to the Student Support Services Team, the team members assigned to the school utilize some or all of the following tools/strategies in conducting an informal assessment of social, emotional and/or behavioural needs.

List of Assessment Tools/Strategies:

- observe classroom and school yard behaviour;
- consult with teachers, Special Education Resource Teachers, parents and administration;
- review Ontario Student Records (OSR);
- attend school-based Student Support Services Team meetings, IPRC meetings and parent meetings;
- attend parent/teacher conferences;
- consult with community agencies/medical professionals that have been involved with the student and family;
- contact previous schools or educational placements;
- a number of Behavioural Checklists are also used for assessment and monitoring purposes; these checklists are used for ADHD, adaptive functioning skills etc.;
- use student, parent and teacher skills checklists (taken from Skill streaming the Pre-school, Elementary and Adolescent School Aged Child – A Guide for Teaching Pro-Social Skills);
- attend case conferences at alternate placement facilities (e.g. CPRI, Kids Link, Lutherwood, Woodview etc.); and
- arrange home visits and sessions with all family members when required and with parental permission.

Qualifications for Administrators of Assessment Tools

Youth Workers

- A Child and Youth Worker Diploma (three-year program) at a registered Community College approved by Human Resources Department.

Waiting Time for Assessments

At all elementary and secondary schools, an informal assessment is completed within a one to two-week period of the referral. Often the assessment may continue for a longer period due to the number of meetings and contacts that must be made and depending on the complexity and severity of each individual case.

Criteria for Managing Waiting Lists

In most cases, waiting lists do not exist. If a waiting list is established at a school, the informal behavioural assessment is usually completed within one or two months. The Principal and the Student Support Services Team prioritize the caseload. Parental requests, however, are addressed as soon as possible. Often the informal assessments are followed by suggestions to the parents as to next steps in regard to contacting pediatricians, community agencies and other professional services.

Management of Student Files

- If a student transfers to a school within our board, the student's file should be transferred to the Youth Worker of the receiving school;
- If a student transfers to a school outside our board, the student's file should be transferred to the Mental Health Lead;
- If a student no longer requires service, the file remains at the elementary or secondary school in case service is reactivated;
- If a student transfers to an alternate placement, i.e.: Kids Link, Lutherwood or the Steps Program, the file remains with the Youth Worker/Social Worker until the student is reintegrated;
- All grade 8 active files should be transferred to the Social Worker at the appropriate secondary site in September;

Parental Consent

Communication with parents is essential to the day-to-day operations of the Student Support Services Team. Parental consents, both verbally and in written form are obtained for every step of the informal assessment. Parent conferences are a key component in the informal behavioural assessment process.

How Results are communicated to Parents

The results of the informal assessments are communicated to parents during school meetings, so as to involve all personnel that work with the student. These meetings are generally of a problem-solving nature, so that the parent will feel supported as all school personnel work together to address the needs of the student and participate in the plan of support for the child in all areas: academically, emotionally, socially and behaviourally.

Protocols for Sharing Information with Staff and Outside Agencies

Under the supervision of the Principal, the sharing of information with school personnel is done

verbally. Written assessments or reports are not provided since the Student Support Services Team members are not qualified psychiatrists or psychologists; and the assessments which identify the social, emotional and behavioural needs of a student are usually based on their previous experiences and knowledge of similar cases in our schools. The Student Support Services Team members function as part of the entire school team in supporting the student and the family in planning and problem solving towards the most successful school plan for the student.

When sharing information with outside agencies in regard to a student within one of our schools, Consent to Disclosure of Information is obtained from the parent.

Privacy of Information

With regard to the obtaining and sharing of information throughout the process of the informal behavioural assessment; the Student Support Services Team members are particularly mindful of the sensitivity and confidentiality of the information that may be shared. The parents are always contacted with regard to their child. Before the information is shared, both verbal and written consent is obtained. The informal assessments are shared only with those persons that have direct contact with the student in the school environment.

Mental Health and Related Assessments

When a student or group of students is struggling with issues related to mental health, a referral may be made for assessment by the school Social Worker. Social Workers do not conduct diagnostic assessments. However, they have graduate level training in the use of formal and informal approaches to assessing risk and service needs, and in monitoring progress when working with individuals.

List of Assessment Tools/Strategies

Interviews with students, staff, and parents
Conduct home visits and family interviews
Review of OSR or other third-party reports on file
Attend school-based Student Support/ Student Success Team meetings
Consult with community agencies/medical professionals involved with student
Contact previous Boards or educational placements
Administer self-report checklists (e.g., screeners for anxiety, depression, trauma effects, motivation, attention, executive functioning, substance use, etc.)
Attend community case conferences

Qualifications for Administration of Assessment Tools

The assessments conducted by Social Workers do not involve the administration of restricted tests; however, all Social Workers hold a Master of Social Work degree from an accredited University and registration with the Ontario College of Social Workers.

Waiting time for Assessments

At the secondary level, the Student Success Team prioritizes referrals to the Social Worker. Students may refer themselves to the Social Worker or may be referred by other school staff. An initial contact with the Social Worker can occur within one to five days. Elementary schools may request the services of a Social Worker and in these situations the wait time can vary, based on

the severity and urgency of the situation but can range from immediate response to a wait of two weeks.

Criteria for Managing Wait List

In most cases, waiting list for assessment by the Social Worker does not exist. Requests for support from the school team, parents, or from students themselves are seen in order of urgency, priority, and availability of the Social Worker.

Management of Student Files

If a student transfers to a school within our Board and the information transferred includes Social Work files, they are transferred to the school Social Worker. If a student transfers to a school outside our board, Social Work files are transferred to Student Support Services unless requested, with consent, by the receiving school or agency. If a student transfers to an alternate placement, i.e., in-patient facility, the file stays with the Social Worker until the student is reintegrated. If a student no longer requires service, the Social Work file remains with the school in case it is reactivated, until such time as the student graduates, at which time the files are returned to the Program Office.

Parental Consent

Students who are aged 14 and over may consent to see the school Social Worker and are legally able to request that information shared during their contact with the Social Worker is not shared with the school or with parents. Every effort is made to encourage students to involve parents and staff who can potentially support the student. However, Social Workers must abide by applicable privacy legislation when supporting youth who are legally able to provide or withhold consent.

When consulting to elementary schools, Social Workers act as part of the school team, with the consent of the parents or of the student if age 14 or older. For students aged 14 and over, every attempt is made to encourage the open sharing of information with parents and staff who support the student. However, students age 14 and over can determine who can be included in the information sharing.

Parental consent is generally obtained by the elementary school prior to involving the Social Worker. Social Workers obtain parental consent for students aged 14 and under, and every effort is made to encourage the inclusion of parents in all intervention and planning for students over age 14. However, Social Workers must abide by applicable privacy legislation when supporting youth who are legally able to provide or withhold consent. Note that consent is not required for a Social Worker to conduct an assessment of risk in the event that there is concern about immediate risk of harm to self or others.

Protocols for Sharing Information with Staff and outside Agency

Sharing of information regarding Social Work assessments is done by the Social Worker, with the consent of the parent and/or of the student, if age 14 and over. Information shared is usually verbal; written reports are not prepared. When sharing information with outside agencies, Consent for Disclosure is required.

Privacy of Information

Information collected by Social Workers for the purpose of assessing a student for risk, service needs, or potential mental health concerns, is treated as sensitive and confidential, shared only with permission, with individuals who have direct contact with the student, and only for the purpose of ensuring the best support for the child or youth.

12. Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings

Goals

The goals for School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS) are based on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care goals. They are;

- to ensure students with medical and rehabilitation needs have the opportunity to attend school and receive an education; and
- to empower students to achieve optimum independence in the school setting.

Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria for KidsAbility for School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS) are listed below. The student:

- has an Ontario Health Number;
- has a SBRS application signed by the Principal and the parent has an assessed need for nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech language pathology, and dietetic services;
- must also meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - the student's routine would be seriously disrupted by leaving school to receive treatment;
 - the provision of the treatment after school hours would not be clinically advantageous to the student's success in school
 - the student requires service during critical developmental stages and it is unlikely that other community resources will be able to provide the services he/she requires; or
 - the student would not be able to participate in school routines and instruction if SBRS were not provided in the school setting.

Range of Services

School Based Rehabilitation Services include nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology and dietetic services.

For Example

Nursing

- Sterile catheterization, deep suctioning, manual expression of bladder or stoma, tube feedings, dressing changes, consultation with teaching staff (e.g. seizure management).

Physiotherapy/Occupational Therapy

- Intensive clinical treatment, consultation with teaching staff (e.g. equipment, safety, management of the environment, Activities of Daily Living).

Speech/Language

- Treatment for motor speech disorders (apraxia, dysarthria) voice disorders, resource problems, dysfluency, or any other medical problem requiring a medical team, consultation with teaching staff.

Dietetic

- Treatment for diet insufficiencies usually associated with a medical problem, consultation with staff.

Equipment

- The student or his/her family is responsible for the provision and transportation of any specialized equipment required for the student to participate in an educational program.
- Equipment may be provided by SHSS when the equipment is required on a short-term basis or the equipment is not available through the Assistive Devices Program and is essential to support the student's medical rehabilitation needs in the school setting.

Role of KidsAbility

- KidsAbility is 100% funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to provide School Health Support Services.
- KidsAbility Care Coordinators are responsible for:
 - Determination of eligibility;
 - Assessment of needs;
 - Development of a service plan for each eligible student;
 - Referral to the appropriate service provider agency;
 - Monitoring and revision of the service plan; and
 - Discharge planning.

A KidsAbility Care Coordinator is the staff person who liaises with each family, the physician, service providers, teachers and the school Principal. The extent of the Care Coordinator's role will vary with the complexity of each student's needs and service plan.

Responsibilities

The Board

- Administration of oral medication which is prescribed for use during school hours. (*Wellington Catholic District School Board Reg. R.SMW.F.1 Health Care Assistance*).
- For physically disabled pupils, provide services such as lifting and positioning, assistance with mobility, feeding and toileting, and general maintenance exercises. Speech remediation and correction.
- Assess and provide services for students with language disorders.
- Establish policies for provision of these support services including administrative procedures, personnel roles, and routine safeguards.

KidsAbility

- At the request of the school board, assess pupil needs and provide services such as

injection of medication, manual expression of the bladder, stoma care, postural drainage, suctioning and tube feeding.

- Provide intensive physio-occupational and speech therapy.
- Assist school boards in the training and direction of school board staff performing certain other support services.

Discharge from Service and Review Process

Services through KidsAbility are goal focused. When service is initiated, the care provider establishes goals for each student / client. Goals are focused on assisting the child to be as independent as possibly at school. Once goals are achieved or the care provider feels that the student has reached a plateau in their development, the care provider and KidsAbility Care Coordinator develop a discharge plan. The discharge plan is shared with parents and school staff.

Review or appeal of the decision to discharge is a process internal to KidsAbility. Parents may work with their Care Coordinator to discuss this process and information from the school can be provided as necessary.

Specialized Health Support Service	Agency or position of person who performs the service (e.g., KidsAbility, board staff, parent, student)	Eligibility criteria for students to receive the service	Position of person who determines eligibility to receive the service and the level of support	Criteria for determining when the service is no longer needed	Procedures for resolving disputes about eligibility and level of support (if available)
Nursing	KidsAbility (contracted service)	Meets the KidsAbility eligibility criteria and the student needs sup service for one of the following: -sterile catheterization; -manual expression of bladder/stoma -deep suctioning; -dressing changes; -consultation with teaching staff (e.g. Seizure management).	KidsAbility Case Manager	Professional judgment of the nurse in consultation with the school and parent.	Case conference with the parent, Principal and KidsAbility case manager to resolve the dispute.
Occupational Therapy	KidsAbility (contracted service)	Meets the KidsAbility eligibility criteria and the student requires a qualified therapist for intensive clinical treatment. Consultative model used to plan program with teacher and educational assistant to enhance learning environment through modification of sensory input	KidsAbility Case Manager	Goals have been met and in consultation with care providers.	Case conference with the parent, Principal and KidsAbility Case Manager to resolve the dispute.
Physiotherapy	KidsAbility (contracted service)	Meets the KidsAbility eligibility criteria. Services are provided to primarily prevent or alleviate physical movement dysfunction. Provide Board personnel individual exercise programs using a consultative model. May include teaching staff on mobility aids and equipment.	KidsAbility Case Manager	Goals have been met and in consultation with care providers.	Case conference with the parent, Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher, KidsAbility Case Manager to resolve the dispute.
Nutrition	KidsAbility (contracted service)	Meets the KidsAbility eligibility criteria and the student requires interventions for dietary modifications usually associated with a medical condition.	KidsAbility Case Manager	Goals have been met and in consultation with care providers.	Case conference with the parent, Principal and KidsAbility Case Manager to resolve the dispute.
Speech/Language Therapy	KidsAbility (contracted service)	Meets the eligibility criteria and the Speech and Language. Referral form is completed. The student requires direct treatment for:	KidsAbility Case Manager with assessment of Board SLP (or community SLP in case of student entering	Professional judgment of the in conversation with the school and parents.	Case conference with the parent, Principal, SLP, Special Education Resource Teacher and KidsAbility Case Manager to resolve the dispute.

		-motor speech disorders (apraxia, dysarthria); -voice disorders; -resonance problems; -dysfluency; -augmentative communication; -or any other medical condition; requiring a medical approach including feeding and; swallowing assessments.	school.)		
Speech Correction and Remediation	Board SLP	Speech and Language Referral Form is completed. Results of the Speech and Language Assessment and the consultation with the Special Education Resource. Teacher determine the need for speech correction and/or remediation	SLP in consultation with the Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher and parent.	Professional judgment of the SLP in consultation with the Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher and parent.	Case conference with the parent, Principal, SLP and the Special Education Resource Teacher.
Administering of Prescribed Medications - Oral	Student as authorized Parent as authorized Board personnel	A "School Assistance in HealthCare" form is completed and forwarded to the Principal prior to the commencement of the assistance. Procedures are then followed as outlined in WCDSB Reg. R.SMW.F.7 Health Care Assistance Policy.	KidsAbility Case Manager	The attending physician in Determine that the goals have been met.	Case conference with the Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher and parent to resolve the dispute.
Administering of Prescribed Medication -Injection	Student as authorized Parent as authorized Health professional (KidsAbility) Epi-pen for anaphylaxis emergency any personnel (refer to Board procedure)	Meets the KidsAbility eligibility criteria and the student requires support services for the injection of medication.	KidsAbility Case Manager	The attending physician in consultation with the KIDSABILITY health professional, school and parent determine that the goals have been met.	Case conference with the Principal, parent and the KidsAbility health professional to resolve the dispute.
Catheterization	Student Board personnel KidsAbility (contracted service)	Meets the KidsAbility eligibility criteria and through the KIDSABILITY's assessment it is determined that the student requires support services with catheterization KidsAbility will train Board personnel in this procedure. KidsAbility will do the sterile catheterization. Teaching of self-catheterization to student may be required by KidsAbility.	KidsAbility Case Manager School Board Personnel	Goals have been met.	Case conference with the parent, Principal and the KidsAbility Case Manager to resolve the dispute.

Suctioning	Board Personnel KidsAbility (contracted services)	Meets the KidsAbility eligibility criteria and through the KidsAbility assessment it is determined that the student requires support services with suctioning and the level of support is determined. KidsAbility will train Board personnel in mouth	KidsAbility Case Manager School Board Personnel	Goals have been met in consultation with care provide	Case conference with the parent, Principal and the KidsAbility Case Manager to resolve the dispute.
Lifting and Positioning	Board personnel trained by KidsAbility is necessary	Meets the KidsAbility eligibility criteria and through the KIDSABILITY's assessment it is determined that the student requires support services with lifting and positioning to ensure safe transfer and allowing for	KIDSABILITY Case Manager School Board Personnel	Goals have been met with all service providers.	Case conference with the parent, Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher and the KIDSABILITY Case Manager to resolve the dispute.
Assistance with Mobility	Board Personnel trained by KIDSABILITY is necessary	Meets the KIDSABILITY eligibility criteria and through the KIDSABILITY's assessment it is determined that the student requires assistance with mobile KIDSABILITY may also make recommendations to the physical structure equipment (e.g., braces, grab bars, ramps etc.	KIDSABILITY Case Manager	Goals have been Met with all service providers	Case conference with the parent, Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher and the KIDSABILITY Case Manager to resolve the dispute.
Feeding	Board Personnel	A student is eligible for assistance with oral feeding if the student is not able to manage food intake themselves (usually for safety reasons).	Principal Special Education \Resource Teacher KIDSABILITY (based on Case Manager assessment if tube	Goals have been Met and the student has graduated to Self-care	Case conference with the parent, Principal and Special Education Resource Teacher resolve the dispute.
Toileting	Board Personnel	A student is eligible for assistance with toileting if the student: -is not able to toilet themselves -needs assistance with toileting -is diapered -needs to be on a regular toilet schedule.	Principal Special Education Resource Teacher	Goals have been Met and the student has grade to self-care.	Case conference with the parent, Principal and Special Education Resource Teacher to resolve the dispute.

13. Staff Development

Overall Goal of the Special Education Staff Development Plan

The overall goal of the Student Support Services staff development plan is to ensure that special education personnel have awareness and an understanding of current Ministry Policy Documents and initiatives. As well, opportunities for professional growth and development are provided to further enhance their expertise in special education in order to assist parents, students and staff in the development and delivery of quality special education programs and services for all students with special needs.

Professional Development Opportunities

School board staff is made aware of the board's special education plan and of professional development opportunities through their:

- Principal/SERT at staff meetings; and
- Professional development opportunities for board staff are also electronically posted on the Teacher Conference.

Ways in Which Staff Provide Input for the Plan

Staff provides input for the staff development plan as follows:

- throughout the year at the monthly Student Support Services meetings with the Student Support Services Coordinator; and/or
- by contacting the Student Support Services Coordinator directly with their professional development suggestions.

Ways in Which the School Board's SEAC Is Consulted About Staff Development

- The school board's SEAC is consulted about staff development as follows:
 - staff development plans for the upcoming year for special education personnel are shared with SEAC at their monthly meetings by the Student Support Services Coordinator. Throughout the year, at the monthly meetings, updates on in-services, workshops and conferences attended by special education personnel are also discussed; and
 - suggestions for staff development are generally raised by SEAC at their monthly meetings as issues are discussed throughout the year. These suggestions are noted by board personnel and addressed when possible.

Methods of Determining Priorities in the Area of Staff Development

Ministry policies and initiatives are the first priority for in-service for special education personnel and these policies and initiatives usually drive the staff development plan.

The Superintendent of Education and the Student Support Services Coordinator develop the staff development plan after carefully considering and analyzing system needs, Ministry policies and initiatives and the professional development suggestions from the following:

- SEAC;
- Principals;
- Educational Assistants;
- Special Education Resource Teachers;
- Parents (School Councils);
- Specialized Support Personnel (Speech-Language Pathologists, Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing; and
- Community Partners/Agencies.

Ways in Which Staff Are Trained with Regard to the Legislation and Ministry Policy on Special Education, In-service Training, Professional Development and Training for New Teachers

Student Support Services Meetings are scheduled monthly for all Special Education Resource Teachers and specialized support personnel, with an invitation extended to Principals and vice-Principals, throughout the school year. In-service training with regard to legislation, Ministry policies as well as other professional development occurs during these monthly meetings. Besides the monthly meetings, additional in-services, workshops and conferences are provided throughout the school year. All new Special Education Resource Teachers also receive in-services and workshops on a wide variety of related special education topics throughout October, November and December.

The Ministry of Health, through their outreach programs, has provided, upon request, a variety of free professional development opportunities for our Special Education Resource Teachers, board staff and students. In-services and workshops have been made available through the following:

- Canadian Back Institute (CBI);
- Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA);
- Family and Children’s Services (F&CS);
- Wellington Association for Community Living;
- University of Guelph;
- Erinoak/Geneva Centre (ASD-SSP);
- Kids Ability Centre for Child Development;
- Child Parent Research Institute (CPRI);
- Trillium Demonstration School; and
- Bridges Canada.

The *Student Support Services Staff Development Plan* includes in-services, workshops and conferences offered by Wellington Catholic District School Board and includes:

- in-service training with regard to legislation and Ministry policies for SERTs, Principals/vice-Principals and Board staff;
- in-service training for new Special Education Resource Teachers;
- in-service training for Educational Assistants;
- in-service training for specialized support personnel;
- professional development in-services, workshops and conferences for Special Education Resource Teachers;
- professional development in-services for new teachers; and

- professional development in-services for classroom teachers specifically regarding ABA techniques, assistive technology, and IEP programming.

Professional Development for 2019-2020 will primarily focus on the following topics:

- Goals for the Board and School Improvement Plans for Student achievement;
- Technology for all students;
- Mental health for all students;
 - IEP writing and in-service
- Transition planning
- Ongoing ASD In-service
- Assessment Report Review

14. Accessibility of School Buildings

The Wellington CDSB Accessibility document can be found by following the link below.
<http://www.wellingtoncdsb.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

Sensory Accommodations

Student's with sensory and mental health needs often require calming and quiet areas within the school setting. Many schools have found spaces that include areas to rest, calm and use sensory equipment to make schools accessible with students with these kinds of needs. Sensory equipment is often provided through school budget and/or special equipment allocations. In rare instances, required equipment necessitates a change to the school structure.

15. Special Education Parent Guide

The Special Education Parent Guide can be found in the Special Education section of this website: <http://www.wellingtoncdsb.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

16. The Special Education Advisory Committee

The Wellington Catholic District School Board's SEAC members can be found in the Special Education section of this website: <http://www.wellingtoncdsb.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

Meeting Times and Location

The Special Education Advisory Committee meets monthly from September through June, with the exception of March. The meetings are held monthly at 6:30 p.m. at Wellington Catholic District School Board Office, 255 Speedvale Avenue West, Guelph, Ontario. The minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting are forwarded and presented to the Board monthly.

Detailed information about SEAC, and monthly meeting minutes can be found on Wellington Catholic DSB's website.

<http://www.wellingtoncdsb.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

SEAC Meeting Dates

SEAC meeting dates for the school year 2023-2024 are:

September 20, 2023
October 18, 2023
November 18, 2023
December 6, 2023
January 17, 2024
February 21, 2024
March 20, 2024
April 17, 2024
May 15, 2024
June 19, 2024

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of SEAC are as follows:

- making recommendations to the board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional students within the board; and
- participating in the board's annual review of its Special Education Report.

17. Policy for Partnerships with Community Agencies/Service Providers (Collaborative Agreements as per PPM 149)

To provide a framework for the development and maintenance of Partnerships with External Agencies, for the provision of programs and services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals, the Wellington Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) developed Policy SCR.E.2 outlining Policy/Procedures and Protocols for such partnerships. The Policy may be accessed at:

<https://22.files.edl.io/81e2/03/09/23/164622-f0081cc9-5b81-4ab6-aec4-f704f9c28b96.pdf>

All External Partnership Agreements with Regulated Professionals and Memos of Understanding/Collaborative Agreements are posted to the Board Website.

Appendix A

Special Education Parent Guide

1. Special education services

What are Special Education Services

Special Education services are facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

Special Services provided at Wellington Catholic include:

- System assessment and program services;
- Speech and language services;
- Psychological services for students with learning difficulties and behavioural needs; and
- Social work counselling services.

At the school level Special Services may include:

- Special education resource teacher assisting in assessment and student program services;
- Educational Assistants;
- Counselling and skill development services; and
- Child and Youth Workers.

All of the above personnel help to develop and support special education programs and services. Where required, services are also available from specialist teachers for students with hearing and visual impairments. In addition, the Home Care School Health Support program refers to the services that are provided to exceptional students with physical/medical needs. These services may involve a registered nurse, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, and a nutritionist. These visits and or consultations with parents and school personnel take place in the school.

2. “Exceptional” students and program

Who is an exceptional pupil?

An exceptional pupil is one whose behavioral, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he/she is considered to need placement in a special education program. Students are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education and Training.

What is a Special Education Program?

A special education program is:

- based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation
- includes an Individual Education Plan (IEP) containing specific expectations and
- an outline of special education services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil

Such programming might be provided within a regular class, in a regular class with withdrawal or in facilities outside the student's home school.

What is an Individual Educational Plan (IEP)?

An IEP is a written plan. It is a working document which describes the strengths and needs of an individual exceptional student, the special education program and services established to meet that student's needs, and how the program and services will be delivered. It also describes the student's progress.

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) must be developed for each exceptional student, in consultation with parents. It must include:

- specific educational expectations;
- an outline of the special education program and services that will be received;
- a statement about the methods by which the student's progress will be reviewed;
- for students 14 years and older, a plan for transition to appropriate activities on the completion of high school is included such as work, further education and community living.

The IEP must be completed within 30 days after the student has been placed.

What placements are available for exceptional students?

a. Regular classroom placement

Many students with special needs are taught within the regular classroom setting with appropriate special education services. Wellington Catholic considers it important that all children be an integral part of their peer group.

b. Regular classroom placement with special education withdrawal

There may be a need to withdraw a student from the classroom to address specific areas of need. The student continues on their IEP in the regular classroom setting, but receives additional support from qualified staff. The amount of withdrawal support is dependent upon the particular needs of the student.

c. Designated placement

For some exceptional students it may be necessary to provide alternative programs and facilities outside their home schools. This placement may include schools for the deaf or blind, care, treatment or correctional centres, or other appropriate settings. In some cases, it may be necessary to purchase services.

3. Identification, Placement and Review Committee

What is the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)?

The Identification, Placement and Review Committee is often referred to as IPRC. It is composed of your local school Principal, the Special Education Resource Teacher, and a teacher representative.

The IPRC's function is to:

- decide whether or not the student should be identified as exceptional;
- identify the area(s) of the student's exceptionality;
- decide an appropriate placement; and
- review the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

Parents are invited and encouraged to attend meetings.

How is an IPRC meeting requested?

The Principal of your child's school:

- 1) must request an IPRC meeting upon receiving your written request;
- 2) may, with written notice to you, refer your child to an IPRC when the Principal and the child's teacher or teachers believe that your child may benefit from a special education program; and
- 3) within 15 days of receiving your request, or giving you notice, the Principal must provide you with a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

May parents attend the IPRC meeting?

Parents and pupils 16 years of age or older are:

- to be present at and participate in all committee discussions; and
- to be present when the committee's identification and placement decision is made.

Who else may attend an IPRC meeting?

- The Principal of your child's school.
- Other resource people such as your child's teacher, special education staff, board support staff, or the representative of an agency, who may provide further information.
- Your representative - that is, a person who may support you or speak on behalf of you or your child.

- An interpreter, if one is required, upon request through the Principal of your child's school

Who may request that they attend?

Either you or the Principal of your child's school may make a request for the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting.

What information will parents receive about the IPRC meeting?

At least 10 days in advance of the meeting, the chair of the IPRC will provide you with written notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend as an important partner in considering your child's placement. This letter will notify you of the date, time, and place of the meeting, and it will ask you to indicate whether you will attend. Before the IPRC meeting occurs, you will receive a written copy of any information about your child that the chair of the IPRC has received. This may include the results of assessments or a summary of information.

What if parents are unable to make the scheduled meeting?

Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in the IPRC meeting. However, if you are unable to make the scheduled meeting, you may:

- contact the school Principal to arrange an alternative date or time; or
- advise the school Principal that you will not be attending. As soon as possible after the meeting, the Principal will forward to you, for your consideration and signature, the IPRC's written decision noting the identification and placement and any recommendations regarding special education programs and services.

4. Student placement decision

What happens at an IPRC meeting?

If the committee decides that your child should be placed in a regular classroom placement with Special Education withdrawal or a designated placement, it must state the reasons for that decision in its written statement of decision.

What will the IPRC consider in making its placement decision?

Before the IPRC can consider placing your child in a special education class, it must consider whether placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services will:

- meet your child's needs; and

- be consistent with your preferences.

If, after considering all of the information presented to it, the IPRC is satisfied that placement in a regular class will meet your child's needs and that such a decision is consistent with your preferences, the committee will decide in favour of placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services.

What will the IPRC's written statement of decision include?

The IPRC's written statement of decision will state:

- whether the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional;
- where the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional;
- categories and definitions of any exceptionalities identified, as they are defined by the Ministry of Education;
- the IPRC's description of your child's strengths and needs;
- the IPRC's placement decision;
- the IPRC's recommendation regarding a special education program and special education services;

and

- where the IPRC has decided that your child should be placed in a regular classroom placement with Special Education withdrawal or a designated placement; it must state the reasons for that decision in its written statement of decision.

What happens after the IPRC has made its decision?

- If you agree with the IPRC decision, you will be asked to indicate, by signing your name, that you agree with the identification and placement decisions made by the IPRC.

5. Appealing IRPC decisions

Once a child has been placed in a special education program, can the placement be reviewed?

- A review IPRC meeting will be held within the school year, unless the Principal of

- the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from you, the parent, dispensing with the annual review.
- You may request a review IPRC meeting any time after your child has been in a special education program for 3 months.

What does a review IPRC consider and decide?

- With your written permission, the IPRC conducting the review will consider the progress your child has made in relation to the IEP. It will consider the same type of information that was originally considered by the IPRC, as well as any new information
- The IPRC will review the placement and identification decisions and decide whether they should be continued or whether a different decision should now be made.

How do I appeal an IPRC decision?

If you disagree with the IPRC's identification of your child as exceptional or with the placement decision of the IPRC, you may, within 30 days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 days of receipt of the decision from the second meeting described above, give written notification of your intention to appeal the decision to the Director of Education. The notice of appeal must:

- indicate the decision with which you disagree; and
- include a statement that sets out your reasons for disagreeing.

What happens in the appeal process?

The appeal process involves the following steps.

- a) The board will establish a special education appeal board to hear your appeal. The appeal board will be composed of three persons (one of whom is to be selected by you, the parent) who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal.
- b) The chair of the appeal board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 days after he or she has been selected (unless parents and board both provide written consent to a later date).
- c) The appeal board will receive the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview any persons who may be able to contribute information about the matter under appeal.

- d) You, the parent, and your child, if he or she is 16 years old or over, are entitled to be present at, and to participate in all discussions.
- e) The appeal board must make its recommendation within 3 days of the meeting ending. It may: agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented; or disagree with the IPRC and make a recommendation to the board about your child's identification, placement, or both.
- f) The appeal board will report its recommendations in writing, to you and to the school board, providing the reasons for its recommendations.
- g) Within 30 days of receiving the appeal board's written statement, the school board will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations (boards are not required to follow the appeal board recommendations).
- h) You may accept the decision of the school board, or you may appeal to a Special Education Tribunal. You may request a hearing by writing to the secretary of the Special Education Tribunal. Information about making an application to the tribunal will be included with the appeal board's decision the program, and the Principal must ensure that you receive a copy.

Appendix B



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INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN

Student Profile

Name:	DOB:	Ontario Education Number:
School:	Principal:	Grade/Year:
IPRC Most Recent Date:	Date IPRC Waived by parent:	

Reasons for Developing the IEP

.
.

IEP Initial Date:

IEP Completion Date:

IEP Staff Development Team

Member(s)	Position
.	.
.	.

Assessment Data Used in the Development of the IEP

Information Source	Date	Summary of Results
.		

Sources Consulted

Sources
.

Areas of Strengths & Needs

Strengths	Needs
.	.

Accommodations

Instructional Accommodations	Environmental Accommodations	Assessment Accommodations
.	.	.

Appendix C

Problem Solving Process

Step 1 – UNIVERSAL PROBLEM-SOLVING: CLASSROOM INTERVENTIONS

Assess:

- Classroom teacher assesses, collects information (e.g. observations, achievement information, assessment data, etc.)
- Classroom teacher develops class profile
- Classroom teacher confers with parents and other teachers, Program Department, and student as required and appropriate
- Classroom teacher consults with relevant in-school specialized support staff (e.g. EA, SERT, CYW, SW, SLP, itinerant resource teachers, ELL teachers, Student Success Teacher, Guidance Counsellor)

Plan/Act/Review:

- Classroom Teacher plans and implements interventions for small groups or individuals
- Implements recommendations from consultation from in-school specialized support staff
- If effective, no further intervention required.
- If not effective, return to assessment / planning phase

Student or Group Needs Additional Support

Step 2 – REFERRAL TO SCHOOL BASED TEAM for groups or individual students by Classroom Teacher

School Based Team includes:

- Classroom Teacher(s)
- Principal/VP
- In-school support staff (E.g. EA, CYW, SW, SERT, Guidance Counsellor, Student Success Teacher)
- Others (E.g. parent, student advocate)

Assess:

- Background information
- Effectiveness of Tier 1 interventions
- Classroom assessments and observational data

Defines the Problem

Intensive Support Required

- Identify information needed
- Identify specialized support needed
- Obtain consents for referrals to relevant support staff and any relevant community partners

Review:

- Data collection is on-going
- If effective, continue to monitor
- If ineffective, modify plan based on data
- May begin an IEP

Plan / Act:

- Brainstorm interventions for targeted groups or individual students
- Implement recommendations for intervention
- Develop monitoring tools and schedules, and data collection
- May begin an IEP

Step 3– INTENSIVE PROBLEM SOLVING FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

Nature of support will vary depending on student concern and may include individualized supports.

- School team expands to include additional Student Support Services Staff (E.g. EA, CYW, SW, SLP, CDA, Coordinator) and community members as appropriate.

Assess:

- Review data from step 1 and 2 interventions
- Case Conferencing
- Recommendation for intervention

Plan/Act:

- Implements recommendations including an IEP and possibly other support plans

Reviews:

- Data collection is on-going
- If effective, continue to monitor
- If ineffective, modify plan based on data

Referral to Additional Community Resources, Multidisciplinary Assessment and Programming Services (MAPS), or other supports

Obtain consents for referrals to relevant support staff