

# **Northwest Territories Program Support Guide 2008**

**To view the Program Support Guide electronically  
and access its many links visit the ECE website or  
use the accompanying CD entitled:**

*Programming for Student Success  
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**Part A: Overview of Program  
Support, and Roles &  
Responsibilities**



# Part A: Overview of Program Support, and Roles & Responsibilities

## A1) Introduction

### A1.1 Program Support Defined

---

Section 45 of the *Education Act* assigns classroom and subject area teachers the responsibility for delivering an **education program** to all students in their class(es). Given the diversity of students – their readiness, strengths, interests and learning styles – teachers know that a one-size-fits-all education program is not appropriate. In order to ensure that the education program as experienced by each student matches his or her learning profile, teachers make changes to the environment, their teaching methodologies, classroom materials, timing, expected learning outcomes, assessment methodologies, and so on.

The concept of Program Support refers to providing support to classroom or subject area teachers to help them determine and deliver an appropriate **education program** and **supports** if needed, to their students.

This concept shifts the perception of teachers from that of individuals working alone in their classrooms, to one where teachers are seen as responsible for educational programming but they are supported in this role through collaboration with a variety of individuals, structures and organizations. While Program Support Teachers (PSTs) and Support Assistants (SAs) are key partners at the school level, many others, starting with the Principal have important roles to play in the provision/facilitation of program support.

### A1.2 Purpose of this Guide

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The intent of this guide is to bring clarity to the concept of program support by describing current effective practices. The challenges of teaching in the NWT generally, and in small schools in particular, mean that some practices described herein are harder to implement than others. But that does not diminish the reality that they are effective practices, or the importance of continually striving towards them.



Section A of this guide considers the “big picture” of program support:

It reiterates the philosophy of inclusion on which schooling in the NWT is founded.

- It outlines typical roles of the various program support players -- at the school, district/division, ECE and NWTTA.
- It articulates a process for **education program planning** and the delivery of program support.

Given the key roles of PSTs and SAs, Parts B and C are for them:

- These sections focus on their roles in greater detail, and are intended to support them as they provide program support to and for the teachers and students in their schools.

### **A1.3 The NWT Context**

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Section 7 of the *Education Act*, entitled **Inclusive Schooling**, gives every student the statutory entitlement to receive the education program in a **regular instructional setting** in his or her home community. *The Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006* outlines the principles and beliefs on which inclusive schooling is based, as well as the vision of what an inclusive school looks like.

### **A1.4 Principles of Inclusive Schooling**

---

Inclusive schooling shall be based upon and be consistent with the following principles:

- Inclusive schooling shall be characterized by equal access to education opportunities.** Equal access means more than the right of all students to participate in education programs offered in regular instructional settings with their age peers. It also means the provision of support services as necessitated by the needs of individual students.
- Inclusive schooling shall be characterized by an approach to schooling which builds on student strengths and responds to student challenges.** Diverse instructional strategies are employed that respond to a variety of learning styles and intelligences. As well, supports are provided such as additional support personnel, transportation, specialized equipment or specialized services, which are necessary to enable equal access. Student Support Plans and Individual Education Plans are developed for some students.



- c. **Inclusive schooling shall be community-based.** Education programs are provided in the home community. Community-based schooling facilitates student participation in culturally relevant programs and offers the greatest support for student success.
- d. **Inclusive schooling shall promote the involvement of parents/guardians in their children's education.** Decisions about educational programming and supports for students involve parents/guardians who also have the right to appeal decisions that significantly affect the education, health or safety of the student.
- e. **Inclusive schooling shall be characterized by collaboration.** While classroom and subject teachers retain primary responsibility for all students in their classes, they are supported by parents, administrators, peers and other professionals who collaborate to make decisions related to the program and support needs of individual students.

## **A1.5 Vision**

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In a school which is truly inclusive every child feels accepted, valued and safe, and student strengths and challenges are central to all decisions. Core values and beliefs include:

- All students can learn.
- Students learn in different ways, at different rates and in different places.
- Students come from diverse backgrounds and want their differences to be respected.
- Students have the right to an appropriate education program and required supports.
- Parental involvement is essential.

Realizing the vision requires a set of compatible and deliberate practices including the following:

- Leadership at both the DEC/DEA level and school level welcomes all students, based on the belief that all students can learn and that there is value in diversity.
- Parents are actively involved in educational programming.
- Instructional leadership and support are provided by the Principal and Program Support Teacher to assist classroom teachers with educational programming for all students.

*Vision, continued.*

- A collaborative culture exists within schools (Instructional Team and School Team) and between schools, families and communities (Interagency Team), where a problem solving approach is used to address the needs of individual students.
- Appropriate support services are provided, having been determined collaboratively by parents, education staff and others involved in a student's program.
- Teachers, with support, teach all students.
- Support Assistants work in regular instructional settings helping teachers implement programs for various students, not just one.
- **Staff development** opportunities are provided which enhance staff ability to teach and support **diverse learners**.



The following chart expresses the vision of an inclusive school another way, and also clarifies what inclusive schooling is not:

### Inclusive Schooling ...

|                   | <b>The Concept:<br/>Vision, Beliefs,<br/>Philosophy</b>  | <b>The Concrete:<br/>In Practice</b>   |
|-------------------|--|--|
| <b>... is</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a belief that                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ all children belong</li> <li>○ every child can make a valued contribution</li> </ul> </li> <li>• an understanding that                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ every child is unique</li> <li>○ ALL children can learn</li> <li>○ with support, teachers can teach all students</li> </ul> </li> <li>• a commitment to                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ respect diversity</li> <li>○ provide all children with equal access to education opportunities</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a variety of partners supporting the classroom teacher to meet student needs</li> <li>• a focus on strengths and challenges, rather than labels and problems</li> <li>• placing students in a regular instructional setting with their age peers, and providing an education program and supports as needed</li> <li>• always a work in progress</li> </ul>   |
| <b>... is not</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a synonym for special education</li> <li>• only about disabilities</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a synonym for special education</li> <li>• assigning Support Assistants as the preferred support strategy</li> <li>• asking all students to learn the same thing, the same way</li> <li>• the sole responsibility of the classroom teacher</li> <li>• the sole responsibility of the Support Assistant</li> <li>• simply placing students with exceptional needs into a regular instructional setting without appropriate programming and required supports</li> <li>• an easy way to meet the needs of all students</li> </ul> |

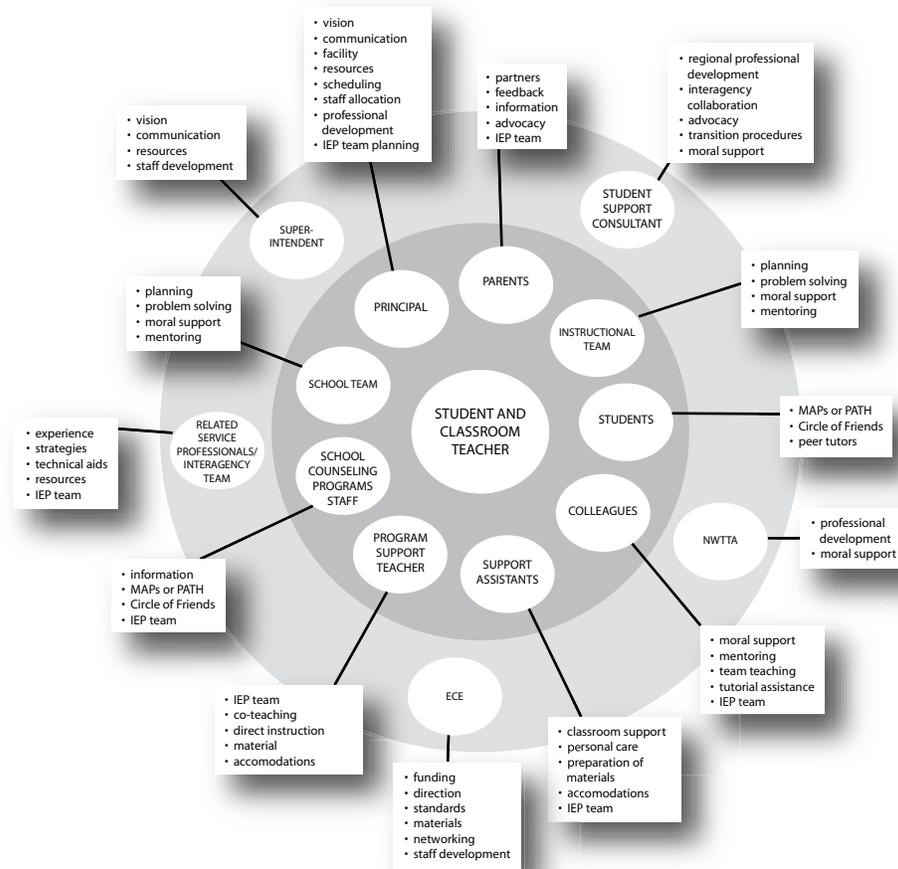


## A2) Roles and Responsibilities

### A2.1 Overview – Circles of Support

As discussed previously, while classroom/subject area teachers are responsible for planning, delivering and evaluating the education program for all students in their class, they often require support from a variety of partners in order to do so. The graphic illustrates and introduces the full range of **program support** players and provide examples of roles they typically play in the provision of program support. The inside circle shows program support roles and responsibilities at the school level, while the outside circle illustrates how the school is supported in the provision of program support by their district/division, outside agencies, ECE and the NWTTA.

# CIRCLES OF SUPPORT



Graphic adapted from “Understanding the Principal’s Role in Inclusion,” Haginal and Staniloff, The Canadian School Executive, Volume 16, Number 6, December 1996

## A2.2 Roles and Practices that Foster Program Support for All Teachers for All Students

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The number of partners involved in providing program support will vary, from few to many, depending on the strengths and challenges of both the student and the teacher. Before considering the roles of each of the individual partners identified in the two previous graphics it is important to consider the critical importance of a team approach, or collaboration among partners when providing a teacher with program support.

### A2.2a Instructional Teams

---

Even when a teacher is able to plan and deliver the education program without specifically seeking program support assistance, all teachers benefit from collaboration with their colleagues by participation in **Instructional Teams** – be they subject specific or grade level teams. Instructional teams serve as a type of **professional learning community** where teachers share ideas, problem solve, and make decisions affecting all on the team. They are also an effective way to share the workload of planning. The tone of collegiality set by these teams is fundamental for redefining the role of teacher from that of an individual working alone, to one where the teacher is the focal point for educational programming, but is supported through collaboration. And this, in turn, is fundamental if teachers are to teach all students.

### A2.2b School Team

---

Should a teacher exhaust his own and his Instructional Team's repertoire of instructional techniques and **accommodation strategies** for a particular student, the teacher then brings his/her need for programming assistance to the attention of the PST or school program support team (**School Team**.) School Teams act primarily as:

- √ problem solvers, or
- √ program planners, or
- √ both

The School Team is made up of personnel from within the school, and may include **parents**. School Teams often have common key members, such as the Principal and PST, along with “rotating members” who can help with an individual student for a variety of reasons – e.g. they know the student, the student likes them, or the parent has asked them to participate.



School Team, continued.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Document learning strengths and **challenges** of the student:

- √ Participate in **personal futures planning** (e.g. **MAPs** or **PATH**).
- √ Review the **Student Record** and other information available on a student.

Develop new approaches:

- √ Combine expertise.
- √ Use a problem solving approach.

Support the teacher:

- √ Provide material and personnel.
- √ Suggest strategies.
- √ Identify/provide necessary professional growth.

Support the student:

- √ Monitor progress.
- √ Provide mentors/ counseling.
- √ Address root issues.

Provide links with community-based expertise:

- √ Include other helping professionals and seek out their expertise.

Keeping in mind the critical importance of collaboration, each individual partner's role will now be considered in more depth. Role descriptions are not intended to be prescriptive – however they are considered to represent effective practices that foster educational programming and necessary supports for all students.

## **A2.2c Principal**

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At the school level the Principal bears responsibility for organizing the school so that it reflects the principles articulated in section A1.4 and strives to match the vision in section A1.5. The Principal is responsible for developing a **program support system** that adheres to the *Education Act*, Education Act Regulations, and the *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006*. Despite its title, much of the content of Part B is as relevant to the Principal as it is to the PST in fulfilling his/her program support roles.



Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Involve parents:

- √ Establish an 'open door policy.'
- √ Always invite parents to meetings when their child's program is being discussed.
- √ Provide regular communication about students and programs, using a medium that parents can understand.
- √ Encourage parents' participation as volunteers/tutors/mentors.

Accept all students:

- √ Look for and act upon opportunities to celebrate diversity.
- √ Demonstrate the belief that, with appropriate programming and supports, all students can learn.
- √ Demonstrate the belief that, with support, teachers can teach all students.
- √ Create a caring community in the school.

Work with other agencies:

- √ Participate in, or encourage establishment of an interagency committee to ensure a coordinated approach to meeting student needs.
- √ Promote positive community relations with the school.

Model inclusive schooling and establish it as a fundamental expectation:

- √ Use the *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006* as the standard to which the school strives, and reference it to clarify essential features and expectations.
- √ Build consensus with staff with respect to beliefs, values and attitudes.
- √ Articulate a clear vision for school-level implementation, and an action plan for continuous school improvement.
- √ Inform community groups about the philosophy and practices of inclusive schooling.
- √ Ensure use of the *Northwest Territories Student Support Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*, and template; and *Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*, and template.
- √ Include relevant actions in the school growth/ improvement plan.

Develop a collaborative team approach, and clear processes and procedures:

- √ Establish Instructional Teams.
- √ Identify a Program Support Teacher(s) (PST).
- √ Create a school program support team (School Team).
- √ Articulate procedures for in-school support from administration, PSTs, Support Assistants, and the School Team with respect to assessment, program planning, and necessary supports.
- √ Establish a problem solving process, such as **30-Minute Problem Solving**, to seek solutions to teachers' concerns regarding teaching of all students (e.g. student achievement, behaviour, teacher frustration).

Provide flexible scheduling and administrative support:

- √ Provide time for team meetings/ common planning periods.
- √ Provide time for PST/teacher consultation.
- √ Develop a system for making effective use of Support Assistants - see B8.1 - that includes:
  - flexible scheduling of Support Assistants on a needs basis, reviewed throughout the year, and
  - ensuring that Support Assistants are used effectively to support education programs, rather than performing “fill-in” jobs.
- √ Timetable regular in-school program support team (School Team) meetings.
- √ Provide release time for planning – e.g. Instructional Teams, PST & teacher, etc.

Monitor the effectiveness of decisions and implemented strategies, and facilitate necessary adjustments:

- √ Use data, not opinion.
- √ Facilitate staff discussions.
- √ Participate in School Team meetings.
- √ Participate in IEP planning meetings.
- √ Consult with parents.
- √ Employ formal evaluation processes.
- √ Facilitate the collection of information regarding needs and priorities.
- √ Show active support for teachers by visiting classrooms and working with students.



Principal, continued.

Be accountable for decisions made on behalf of students:

- √ Keep the *child's* best interests in focus.
- √ Investigate and resolve conflicts when necessary.
- √ Participate in the identification of **annual student outcomes** for students with IEPs.
- √ Ensure SSPs and IEPs are filed in accordance with: *Northwest Territories Student Support Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*; *Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*; and *Departmental Directive on the Management of Information in the Student Record and Other Records Pertaining to Students, 1998, under revision.*<sup>1</sup>
- √ Celebrate successes.

Facilitate systematic staff development and training:

- √ Encourage individual professional growth through courses, workshops, visits, **team teaching**, **co-teaching** and mentoring.
- √ Provide on-site, on-going staff development related to teaching methods and strategies effective with diverse learners. (See B4 – B7.)
- √ Provide opportunities for team teaching and exchanges in areas of expertise.
- √ Observe and provide feedback on programming and instruction.
- √ Establish **professional learning communities** in the school.

Identify and advocate for required resources:

- √ Substantiate resource needs.
- √ Account for the use of resources funded with **Inclusive Schooling Funding**.

Take responsibility for own professional growth and continuous learning.

Adhere to the NWTTA Code of Ethics.



<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 5, Professional Learning Communities in <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/panel/index.html>



## A2.2d Program Support Teacher (PST)

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The **Program Support Teacher (PST)** provides the central in-school support for teachers with respect to educational programming for all students in the school. This professional educator, along with the Principal, acts as an instructional leader and provides support to teachers as they plan, deliver, and assess/evaluate the education program for each of their students.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Use NWT documents as the basis for educational programming decisions and procedures, including:

- √ *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006.*
- √ Approved curricula at all levels.
- √ *Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006, and template.*
- √ *Northwest Territories Student Support Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006, and template.*

Develop a repertoire of instructional, assessment, and behaviour support techniques (B4 - B7) based on current, effective research-supported practices. For example:

- √ Differentiated Instruction (DI)
- √ Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- √ Multiple Intelligences
- √ Learning Styles
- √ Authentic Assessment
- √ Effective Behaviour Support
- √ Functional Behaviour Assessment and Behaviour Support Plan development

Collaborate with teachers to plan education programs for all students:

- √ Assist with classroom-based assessment;
  - Observe and make anecdotal notes.
  - Identify learning styles and preferred intelligences.
  - Provide teachers with tools from *SSP Teacher Resource Kit, 2006.*

- √ Help identify a student's **functional curricular level** when above or below grade level, and the curricular learning outcomes to be targeted in the student's Modified Education Program (and documented in a Student Support Plan).
- √ Share pertinent individual student information.
- √ Prepare/assist with assessment referrals.
- √ Facilitate **personal futures planning** (e.g. MAPs, PATH) for students with IEPs.
- √ Facilitate the development of IEPs, as per the *Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*.
- √ Assist teachers to understand the four different conditions/ situations when a **Student Support Plan (SSP)** should be developed for a student (as per first section of this binder).
- √ Assist teachers to choose the appropriate type of SSP for any given student, follow the SSP development process and complete the SSP template.
- √ Assist teachers to choose appropriate **accommodations** for students with SSPs and IEPs.
- √ Assist teachers to identify and select learning materials.

Support classroom/subject teachers in the delivery of the education program:

- √ Assume teaching responsibilities for individuals, groups, and **co-teaching**, as best meets the needs of the school.
- √ Teach/model/coach specific instructional strategies (e.g. differentiated instruction) as needed.
- √ Teach/model/coach specific assessment strategies as needed.
- √ Facilitate accommodations identified in SSPs and IEPs.
- √ Make recommendations to the Principal re: the use of Support Assistants (see B8.1).
- √ Facilitate IEP reviews and assist teachers in assessing student progress towards the **annual student outcomes** of an IEP.

Keep records and document information:

- √ Maintain **Program Support Records**, as per *Departmental Directive on the Management of Information in the Student Record and Other Records Pertaining to Students, 1998, under revision*.
- √ Maintain a tracking system of students with SSPs and IEPs;
  - Use view/ view by dates features of the IEP and SSP FileMaker Pro templates.



PST, continued.

- Advise teachers where SSPs and IEPs are stored -- in accordance with *Northwest Territories Student Support Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*; and *Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*; and *Departmental Directive on the Management of Information in the Student Record and Other Records Pertaining to Students, 1998, under revision*.

Support systematic staff development and training for teachers, Support Assistants and volunteers:

- √ Provide in-school workshops.
- √ Model/coach techniques such as those identified earlier in A2.2d – Differentiated Instruction, Universal Design for Learning, ..., Functional Behaviour Assessment and Behaviour Support Plan development.
- √ Advocate for and assist in the coordination of staff development activities.

Assist in the coordination of regular School Team meetings:

- √ Help to define roles of School Team members.
- √ Meet with the Principal to prioritize and set agenda.
- √ Distribute relevant information to participants before the meeting.
- √ Advise teachers to bring pertinent materials.
- √ Ensure that records of all meetings are taken and kept.

Facilitate effective use of Support Assistants:

- √ Clarify SAs' and teachers' roles with both parties (see B8.2).
- √ Meet regularly with SAs to review their work/goals.
- √ With the Principal establish a clear, consistent and fair process for the assignment of SAs (see B8.1).
- √ Provide in-school training.

Facilitate delivery of support services:

- √ Coordinate specific support services required by individual students.
- √ Expedite the provision of specialized equipment.
- √ Consult and collaborate with other professionals.
- √ Assist with transitions for students with IEPs (community to school, grade to grade, school to school, and school to community).

*PST, continued.*

Promote a team approach to support both student and staff needs:

- √ Encourage and facilitate cooperation and collaboration among staff.
- √ Build positive working relationships with Principal, teachers and SAs.
- √ Encourage a team approach to problem solving – e.g. 30-Minute Problem Solving.
- √ Invite meaningful parental involvement in the education of the child.
- √ Participate in interagency networking.
- √ Build positive working relationships with members of community agencies.

Prioritize program support needs in the school for:

- √ Staff development.
- √ Equipment and materials.
- √ Program support staff.

Take responsibility for own professional growth and continuous learning.

Adhere to the NWTTA Code of Ethics.

## **A2.2e Classroom/Subject Teacher**

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As noted earlier, classroom/subject area teachers are responsible for planning, delivering, assessing and evaluating the education program for all of their students but they are not expected to do so in isolation or without support. Many others have roles to play but it is the classroom/subject teacher who remains at the centre of educational programming for their students.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Accept all students:

- √ Expect diverse learners and get to know students' strengths, interests, preferred learning styles and preferred intelligences.
- √ Demonstrate the belief that with appropriate programming and supports all students can learn.
- √ Create a caring community in the classroom.
- √ Acknowledge and celebrate diversity.

Communicate regularly with parents:

- √ Encourage parents to visit the classroom.
- √ Make phone calls, send home notes, send home information letters.
- √ Report student progress in a manner that parents can understand.

Plan, implement, assess and evaluate an education program for all students:

- √ Read A3.1 to understand the NWT definitions of Regular, Modified and Individual Education Programs.
- √ Follow a programming planning process like that shown in A3.4.
- √ Know the curriculum and the learning outcomes for the grade level(s) in question.
- √ Review **Student Records**, and speak confidentially to students' previous teachers about pertinent information.
- √ Assess students using a variety of assessment techniques ranging from informal to formal, as shown in the graphic in A3.6.
- √ Follow the principles of **Universal Design for Learning** (B4.2a) to plan and teach the Regular Education Program using a range of instructional, assessment and management strategies which target student interests, intelligences and learning styles.
- √ Differentiate instruction (B4.2b), use a variety of materials, and vary teaching methods (B4.2c-g).
- √ Organize the classroom environment with particular needs in mind.
- √ Determine which students need a Student Support Plan or an Individual Education Plan, as per *Northwest Territories Student Support Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006* and *Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*.
- √ Develop Student Support Plans, as per *Northwest Territories Student Support Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*.
- √ Participate in the development of Individual Education Plans, as per *Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006*.
- √ Assess, evaluate, record and report on student progress in accordance with *Departmental Directive on Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting, 1998*.



- √ Determine and report **functional grade levels** (FGLs), type of education program, whether student has an SSP, and other information to ECE as required.

Facilitate delivery of required supports:

- √ Employ necessary **accommodations**, as documented in a Student Support Plan, with consistency.
- √ Update Student Support Plan as necessary.
- √ Access **supports** available at the school level.
- √ Communicate with the PST to coordinate other supports – e.g. specialized equipment.

Participate in a subject or grade level **Instructional Team**:

- √ Use the team for planning, problem solving and sharing of ideas/strategies.
- √ Support other teachers the same way.

Participate in School Team meetings as required/requested:

- √ Use the School Team to help with the development of education plans, and/or determining necessary accommodations and other supports.
- √ Support other teachers through active participation in the School Team.

Use designated Support Assistants (SAs) effectively, and support them:

- √ Supervise SAs on a daily basis.
- √ Include SAs in program and daily planning.
- √ Provide SAs with specific information and instructions about their duties and responsibilities, and the importance of fostering student independence.
- √ Utilize SAs to help with:
  - Instructional support.
  - Classroom management support.
  - Behaviour management support.
  - Personal care support, when necessary.

Maintain confidentiality of student information:

- √ Hold conversations of a confidential nature in an environment where confidentiality can be ensured.





- √ Ensure all student documents and records are managed in accordance with *Departmental Directive on the Management of Information in the Student Record and Other Records Pertaining to Students, 1998, under revision.*

Participate in **staff development** opportunities to enhance professional growth:

- √ Share new strategies/methods with, and learn from, peers.
- √ Learn and use various research-validated teaching methods (B4 - B5) – e.g. universal design for learning, differentiated instruction, co-operative learning, brain-based learning, authentic assessment.
- √ Identify areas of need and seek out learning opportunities.
- √ Participate in staff development and in-services offered.
- √ Engage in personal professional reading.
- √ Take responsibility for own professional growth and continuous learning.

Adhere to the NWTTA Code of Ethics.

## **A2.2f Support Assistants (SA)**

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Support Assistants (SAs) are paraprofessionals who are assigned to a particular classroom or team and work under the direction and supervision of a classroom teacher to help the classroom teacher deliver the education program to his/her students. The duties of the Support Assistant may be many and varied, depending on the particular situation, but they do not replace those professional responsibilities of the teacher(s) (see C4) nor do they relate solely to the needs of any specific student.

While the primary responsibility of Support Assistants may be to work with students who have learning difficulties, they are also a resource to the whole class. Since very few students require full time support, SAs generally work with other students/ the class or assigned on a part-time basis.

When any support is provided to a student, including the support of an SA the goal should *always* be to help the student do what they cannot do now, with as much independence as possible. Support Assistants must keep this concept as a central focus and do only what they have to, for as short a time as needed, in order to foster student independence.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Assist the classroom teacher with organizational tasks, as requested:

- √ Construct requested instructional materials.
- √ Manage learning center materials.
- √ Assist with classroom organization and record keeping.
- √ Operate audio visual equipment.
- √ Assist with routine classroom maintenance tasks.

Assist the classroom teacher in implementing **education programs** for students in the class, as requested:

- √ Participate in program planning and development as a team member.
- √ Reinforce concepts presented by the teacher.
- √ Present concepts in the student's language.
- √ Assist students with assignments as requested by the teacher.
- √ Monitor independent or group work.
- √ Provide direct support to students in collaboration with the teacher(s).
- √ Provide feedback to and share pertinent information with the teacher based on their activities and observations.

Support the classroom teacher in behaviour support strategies, as requested:

- √ Follow the established routines of the classroom.
- √ Assist with behaviour consequences<sup>2</sup> for students.
- √ Observe and record student behaviour.
- √ Provide students with feedback and reinforcement.
- √ Assist in monitoring student progress within and outside the classroom.
- √ Provide positive emotional support for students.

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<sup>2</sup> A consequence is something that logically or naturally follows an action. For example, if a student does not complete a homework assignment the logical consequence might be that s/he is required to complete it at lunch or after school. Consequences is not a synonym for punishment.



SA, continued.

Participate in Instructional Team and School Team meetings, as requested:

- √ Attend Instructional Team and School Team meetings.
- √ Assist in the development of Student Support Plans and Individual Education Plans.
- √ Share pertinent information regarding students.

Provide personal care support, as requested:

- √ Assist with emergency situations, e.g. fire drills.
- √ Provide;
  - mobility assistance.
  - toileting assistance.
  - feeding assistance.
  - dressing assistance.
- √ Provide/supervise health services and medical procedures following training by a qualified health professional.
- √ Check assistive devices such as medical, mobility and technological aids.

Participate in professional growth activities:

- √ Identify areas of professional growth need.
- √ Seek out professional growth opportunities.
- √ Request training through classroom teacher as required.

Act in a professional manner:

- √ Maintain confidentiality of school related information.
- √ Adhere to the expectations of the Code of Ethics for their position.

Refer to section 3C for a more complete list of Support Assistant expectations, as well as the Appendix for a Competency Profile related to the same.

## A2.2g Parents

As their child's first teachers, **parents** establish the foundation for lifelong learning. They are responsible for their child's early education, including the acquisition of language, culture and social skills.

While all students benefit from the involvement of their parents in schooling, parental involvement is even more crucial for those **students with learning differences**. The parent roles and



practices which follow are restricted to those pertaining to program support assistance, rather than more general roles such as ensuring the student attends school regularly. Some of the practices are specific to parents of students with Student Support Plans, or IEPs.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Maintain open communication with teacher(s) and other school personnel:

- √ Ask questions and call the school right away if there are concerns.
- √ Always ask what something means if they don't understand.
- √ Attend parent-teacher interviews.
- √ Discuss their child's programs and progress with the teacher(s) frequently and on an informal basis.
- √ Make appointments to meet with staff regularly.
- √ Address concerns, first with the teacher, and if not resolved then with the principal, and if still not resolved then with the superintendent.

Participate as a team member in the education of their child:

- √ Share perceptions of their child in the home and community.
- √ Share pertinent information, such as medical information, and pre-school experiences.
- √ Explain their views of their child's strengths and challenges.
- √ Describe strategies that they have found successful.
- √ Attend meetings to establish their child's long term goals and plan the education program.
- √ Identify annual student outcomes, for the IEP, most needed in the home and the community.
- √ Assist in maintaining taught skills at home.
- √ Approve and sign the IEP, or SSP.
- √ Fulfill their IEP/SSP responsibilities, if any, at home.



## A2.2h Students

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Both the student him/herself, as well as other students can play an important role in the provision of program support, particularly older students.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Participate in School Team meetings as requested:

- √ Share information on likes and dislikes.
- √ Share information on preferred learning styles and intelligences.

Contribute to long term planning and goal setting:

- √ Participate in personal futures planning such as PATH or MAPs.
- √ Participate in setting annual student outcomes for an IEP.

Support peers:

- √ Participate in a **Circle of Friends**.
- √ Act as a peer tutor.

Take ownership for learning:

- √ Self-monitor or co-monitor progress on appropriate objectives – e.g. working independently for 15 minutes.
- √ Ask for support when needed.
- √ Participate in selecting appropriate courses at the senior secondary level.

## A2.2i Other Teachers

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The role of other teachers in the provision of program support has already been considered in A2.2a, Instructional Teams, and A2.2b, School Team.

Other key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Teach the teacher:

- √ Choose an experienced/respected teacher to observe and provide feedback on instruction and classroom practices. (The teacher him/herself should choose the colleague.)

*Other Teachers, continued.*

- √ Provide moral support and a listening ear.
- √ **Co-teach.**
- √ **Team teach.**

Provide tutorial assistance:

- √ Share tutorials for like grades or subjects.

Take responsibility for own professional growth and continuous learning.

Adhere to the NWTTA Code of Ethics.

## **A2.2j School Counseling Programs Staff**

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The staff of school counseling programs provide advocacy, counseling and support services, as well as referrals for children, youth, families and staff that encourage mental health and well being, and active and successful participation in school programs and activities. Some students need the support of a school counseling program in order to fully access the education program and/or be successful in that **education program.**

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Provide school counseling programs and services:

- √ Crisis counseling
- √ Incident de-briefings
- √ Individual counseling with children, youth and families
- √ Small group counseling
- √ Family counseling
- √ Guidance counseling
- √ Career counseling
- √ Individual counseling with staff

Provide referral and liaison services:

- √ Assess need for a school counseling program or other mental health services.
- √ Provide referrals to school and community services.
- √ Liaise between child/youth, family and school or community service.



- √ Advocate and provide information to school and community services.
- √ Identify specific services and resources to staff and families.

Contribute to **education program planning** and delivery, as appropriate:

- √ Participate in **Instructional Team** and **School Team** meetings.
- √ Participate in **personal futures planning** such as **PATH** or **MAPs**.
- √ Participate in a **Circle of Friends**.
- √ Participate as a member of a student's IEP team;
  - Contribute knowledge of the student.
  - Act as an advocate.
- √ Develop resources.
- √ Provide classroom presentations and resources.
- √ Identify/develop/deliver prevention and other programs.
- √ Recommend strategies to children, youth, families, teachers and administration.

Participate in school response to incidents:

- √ Debrief incidents with both students and staff.
- √ Help the Principal coordinate crisis response.
- √ Participate in school and community intervention teams.

Use the following NWT documents as the basis for decisions and procedures:

- √ *Honouring the Spirit of Our Children: Framework and Handbook, 2004*
- √ *Dealing with Child Abuse: A Handbook for School Personnel, 2005*
- √ *NWT Child Abuse Protocol, 1999*

Take responsibility for own professional growth and continuous learning.

Maintain confidential and professional conduct through adherence to *Canadian Counseling Association: Code of Ethics, 2007* and *Standards of Practice for Counselors*, both available at or through [www.ccacc.ca](http://www.ccacc.ca).

## A2.2k Outside Agencies/ Interagency Team

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Some students/families have support needs which cannot be met by any one agency or organization and are beyond the mandate of the school. Provision of program support to the teachers of such students requires collaboration with other agencies.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Contribute expertise:

- √ Share knowledge.
- √ Offer suggestions and strategies.

Contribute resources:

- √ Provide technical aids.
- √ Provide assessments.
- √ Make referrals through their organization/network.
- √ Provide appropriate workshops/staff development to school personnel.

Collaborate in support of students:

- √ Focus on what the student needs to be able to do that the student cannot do now, with as much independence as possible.
- √ Participate in IEP team meetings as appropriate.
- √ Maintain regular communication with the Principal/PST/other school staff.

Recognize the expertise of teachers within their professional realm – i.e. education:

- √ Identify areas of need (e.g. transitions) and suggest possible strategies.
- √ Support the decision of the school as to which suggestion(s), if any, will be implemented. (The school may have other suggestions/processes that the “outsider” is not aware of that would also support the area of need.)



## A2.21 Student Support Consultant

Just as the PST coordinates many program support practices and procedures at the school level, the Student Support Consultant holds the central coordination role at the district/division level. The role and exact title of the Student Support Consultant varies somewhat among districts/divisions, but in all jurisdictions is one of advocacy, facilitation, training and coordination of inclusive schooling – i.e. schooling for all students in the jurisdiction. Typically no one at the school level reports to or is supervised by a Student Support Consultant so their role is one of suggestion, influence and modeling, rather than one of direction.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Work with other Student Support Consultants and ECE Student Support staff:

- √ Contribute to collaborative planning, projects and priorities that are NWT-wide.
- √ Act as liaison between ECE and the district/division and its schools in the area of **student support**.

Establish/coordinate district-wide policies and procedures:

- √ Ensure schools have, and support use of, key NWT documents, including;
  - *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006.*
  - Approved curricula at all levels.
  - *Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006, and template.*
  - *Northwest Territories Student Support Plans: Guidelines for Development, 2006, and template.*
- √ Develop and keep current district practices and procedures that support the above documents.
- √ Hold regular PST meetings/conference calls.
- √ Make recommendations to Superintendent and trustees regarding district priorities for the allocation of resources funded with **Inclusive Schooling Funding**.

Visit schools regularly to support the education of all students:

- √ Meet with the Principal, PST and others to share program successes and concerns.
- √ Spend time in classrooms – talking with students, helping the teacher.



- √ Participate in School Team meetings as requested.
- √ Engage in problem solving and troubleshooting as requested.

Provide information and training:

- √ Provide/coordinate staff development related to the provision of education programs for all students, e.g. (B4 - B7):
  - Differentiated Instruction (DI)
  - Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
  - Integrated Curriculum
  - Multiple Intelligences
  - Learning Styles
  - Brain-based Learning
  - Authentic Assessment
  - Effective Behaviour Support
  - Functional Behaviour Assessment and Behaviour Support Plan Development
- √ Present information to parents, trustees, community groups, as needed.

Develop partnerships with other agencies:

- √ Meet with community agencies to facilitate supports for specific students.
- √ Advocate for establishment of community and/or regional Interagency Teams and attend meetings as required.

Facilitate procedures at key transition points:

- √ Help identify children requiring supports prior to school entry.
- √ Help establish early intervention procedures/programs.
- √ Facilitate school to school transitions and transfers.
- √ Work with other agencies to establish supports students will need once they leave the school system.

Keep records and document information:

- √ Maintain **Support Services Records** for students whose supports are coordinated in whole or in part by the Student Support Consultant. (Procedures are prescribed in *Departmental Directive on the Management of Information in the Student Record and Other Records Pertaining to Students, 1998, under revision.*)



- √ Maintain a tracking system to document the provision of education programs to students in:
  - Treatment centres.
  - Group homes.
  - Medical/long term care facilities.
  - Other contracted education programs (e.g Alberta School for the Deaf).
  - Homebound students.
- √ Coordinate the collection of information required annually under the *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006*.

Take responsibility for own professional growth and continuous learning.

Adhere to the NWTTA Code of ethics.

## A2.2m Superintendent

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Reporting to a board of directors, the Superintendent is charged with responsibility for day-to-day operations that ensure that a board is meeting obligations assigned to it by the *Education Act*, *Education Act Regulations*, and Departmental Directives, including *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006*.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Demonstrate adherence to *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006*:

- √ Establish processes to reflect on/review current practices, and develop a clear improvement plan, at both central office and school levels. Assess progress.
- √ Ensure all written procedures/policies required by the Directive are in place and followed.
- √ Expend Inclusive Schooling Funds, in accordance with the Directive.
- √ Report annually to ECE in accordance with the Directive, including reporting on expenditures of funding allocated as Inclusive Schooling.

Demonstrate commitment and leadership:

- √ Model positive attitudes toward student diversity, and the ability of teachers, with support, to teach a diverse student population.



Superintendent, continued.

- √ Build consensus with respect to attitudes and beliefs about educating all students in **regular instructional settings** with their age peers.
- √ Communicate with trustees about the philosophy of inclusion and practices that support an appropriate **education program** for all students.
- √ Gather information on student and staff needs and use these in staff development and other planning.

Support and encourage staff development:

- √ Identify, as priority for **staff development**, research-supported instructional, assessment and behaviour support practices that foster inclusion of all students (B4 - B7) -- Differentiated Instruction, Universal Design for Learning, Integrated Curriculum, Multiple Intelligences, Learning Styles, Brain-based Learning, Authentic Assessment, Effective Behaviour Support, and Functional Behaviour Assessment and Behaviour Support Plan development.
- √ Identify funding to support same.
- √ Ensure that staff who acquire training/expertise have opportunities to share their learning with colleagues.

Take responsibility for own professional growth and continuous learning.

## **A2.2n Staff of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE)**

---

Staff at ECE carry out the work of the Minister of Education, and support education jurisdictions to carry out theirs. When it comes to providing education programs for all students, and program support to teachers of those students, ECE staff communicate the expectations of the *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006* and then support education jurisdictions to meet the many standards articulated therein.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Communicate expectations:

- √ Make presentations and conduct workshops with trustees, central office staff and others regarding ministerial expectations for providing education programs to all students.

Support education bodies to provide education programs to all students:

- √ Identify examples of relevant;
  - Effective practices.
  - Policies and procedures.
  - Staff development opportunities.
- √ Conduct relevant workshops at regional level for:
  - Teachers
  - Administrators
  - PSTs
  - SAs



Allocate **Inclusive Schooling Funding**:

- √ Collect information on students' needs for supports and use it to justify Inclusive Schooling Funding requests.
- √ Allocate funds under the heading of Inclusive Schooling to education bodies based on formula.
- √ Gather information to show how said funding was actually expended.



Coordinate NWT **Student Support** initiatives:

- √ Meet regularly with Student Support Consultants.
- √ Set priorities based on projects of benefit to all jurisdictions.
- √ Model the power of group problem solving.

Take responsibility for own professional growth and continuous learning.

## **A2.2o NWTTA**

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The Northwest Territories Teachers' Association (NWTTA) is the professional voice of educators as they provide quality education to Northwest Territories students. With commitment to growth, respect and security for its membership, the Association represents all regions equally, advocates for public education and promotes the teaching profession.

Key roles and examples of effective practices related to Program Support:

Promote professional growth and continuous learning:

- √ Administer the **Professional Development Fund**.



NWTTA, *continued.*

- √ Support members to take the **Educational Leadership Program**.
- √ Identify and promote professional development opportunities to help members work more effectively with a diverse student population.
- √ Deliver program support related sessions to members – e.g. communication with parents.

Establish professional standards for members:

- √ Ensure all members have By-Law 16 – Code of Ethics, available at [www.nwtt.nt.ca/bylaw-code\\_of\\_ethics.html](http://www.nwtt.nt.ca/bylaw-code_of_ethics.html).
- √ Establish the expectation that all members familiarize themselves thoroughly with the Code of Ethics.



## A3) Education Program Planning

Having considered the various partners involved in educational programming, and the roles of each, this section focuses on the *process* of **education program planning**.

The concept of education program planning involves two things:

- Determining the actual **education program** a student will follow – i.e. a Regular Education Program, a Modified Education Program, or an Individual Education Program, and also
- Determining what **supports**, including **accommodations** are needed, if any.

### A3.1 Education Programs

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As prescribed in *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006* all students in the NWT follow one of the following three education programs:

- Regular Education Program
  - A Regular Education Program is determined by the **learning outcomes** articulated in NWT curricula for a specific grade level, from kindergarten to grade 12.
- Modified Education Program
  - A Modified Education Program retains the learning outcomes articulated in NWT curricula, but at a grade level other than the assigned grade level. Based on student strengths, needs and interests, a collaborative process is used to determine and document/record necessary program changes, in a Student Support Plan.
- Individual Education Program
  - An Individual Education Program is a student-specific program and is outlined in an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The plan is a comprehensive education plan with **annual student outcomes** and objectives determined through a collaborative process, and driven by the strengths and challenges of the student. It may or may not include learning outcomes articulated in NWT curricula.



In short, a student's program is characterized by its *written* learning outcomes.

- Regular Education Program = curricular learning outcomes at grade level, as written in approved NWT curricula
- Modified Education Program = curricular learning outcomes above or below grade level, as written in a Student Support Plan
- Individual Education Program = student specific annual learning outcomes which may or may not include curricular learning outcomes, as written in an Individual Education Plan

### A3.2 Supports – Including Accommodations

In addition to meeting students' statutory right to access the education program in a regular instructional setting in their home community, the *Education Act* also requires that the district or division provide students with support services as necessary to give effect to that access. In this document the term support(s) is used as a synonym for support services.

Regardless of which education program a student is following – Regular, Modified or Individual -- they may require one or more supports in order to meet the learning outcomes of their particular program. A support is defined as:

- an additional service or device provided to a student to enhance learning, or help the student overcome barriers to learning. Supports are services above and beyond that provided to all students as part of the overall school program. A few examples include:
  - provision of various **accommodations/accommodation strategies** -- defined as changes made to the teaching process, learning environment, materials, time demands, assistance, evaluation or student products. (For extensive examples of accommodation strategies, see *SSP Guidelines*, Appendix.)
  - programming assistance such as small group instruction, or homework assistance
  - assessment services
  - rehabilitative and medical services
  - Functional Behaviour Assessments and Behaviour Support Plans



- counseling to improve attendance or help deal with personal issues
- the provision of specialized equipment and resources

It must be emphasized that supports, including accommodations such as extra time do **not** alter the expected learning outcomes of a student's program – they merely help the student meet those expected outcomes.

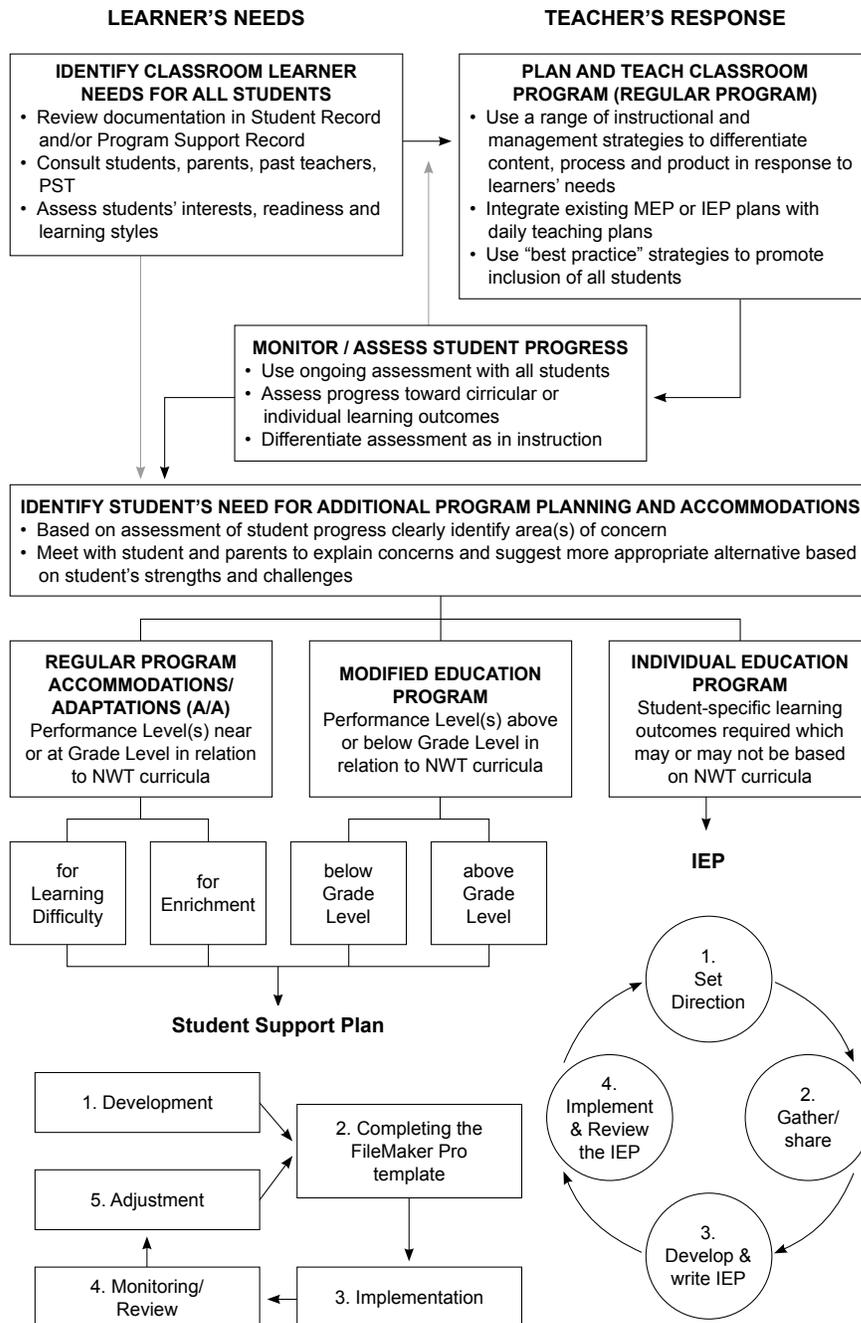
### **A3.3 Student Support Plans and Individual Education Plans**

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Necessary supports are documented either in a Student Support Plan, or an Individual Education Plan. Guidelines and tools to help with the development of SSPs and IEPs are the focus of the previous four dividers in this binder and will not be repeated here. The CD on the binder's inside cover contains the actual templates on which SSPs and IEPs are written. (Check to ensure you have the most recent version of the CD.)

## A3.4 Education Program Planning Process

The following graphic outlines a program planning process that indicates the teacher's response to the various learners' needs in the classroom and the process followed when specific accommodations or modifications are required to meet a particular student's strengths and challenges.



## **A3.5 Education Program Planning Illustrative Scenario**

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What the graphic in A3.4 does not show is the interaction of the classroom/ subject teacher with the other program support partners described and discussed in A2. The following three subsections present an illustrative example of how such interaction might play out -- at the classroom level, the school level, and the system level.

### **A3.5a At the Classroom Level**

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The classroom/subject teacher recognizes the influence of the independent variables of student, teacher, and curriculum on the student's learning. Gathering information on students by reviewing records and talking with previous teachers, as well as conducting ongoing assessment, are seen as integral to education program planning.

The teacher plans and teaches the Regular Education Program using a range of instructional and management strategies to differentiate content, process and product in response to learner needs. Existing SSPs or IEPs are integrated with daily teaching plans. Assessment is ongoing.

If the teacher recognizes that a student is not successfully learning, the teacher does further assessment such as:

- informal and formal observations
- meeting with parents
- identifying the student's preferred learning style and intelligences
- identifying the student's response to teaching style and strategies
- checking progress towards curricular learning outcomes

The teacher also meets with the Instructional Team (A2.2a) to combine expertise and generate ideas to support both the teacher and the student.

Based on these findings and discussion with student and parent, the teacher makes adjustments to the education program, delivery of instruction and/or supports.

### **A3.5b At the School Level**

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If and when a teacher or Instructional Team exhausts their repertoire of differentiation, instructional strategies, accommodations and other supports, or when a teacher needs help identifying appropriate learning outcomes for students with Modified Education Programs, s/he brings the need for education programming assistance to the attention of the PST, Principal, and/or School Team (depending on the established procedures at that particular school) which:

- reviews the learning strengths and challenges of the student.
- reviews what the teacher has already tried.
- combines expertise and uses a problem solving approach to develop new approaches and ideas to support the teacher and the student.
- conducts or coordinates further assessment.
- provides support to develop the teacher's skills and ability to meet the learning needs of the student.
- includes parents and other program support partners from within the school, as in shown in the Circles of Support graphic in A2.1.
- facilitates resources, equipment and/or further assessment.

### **A3.5c At the System Level**

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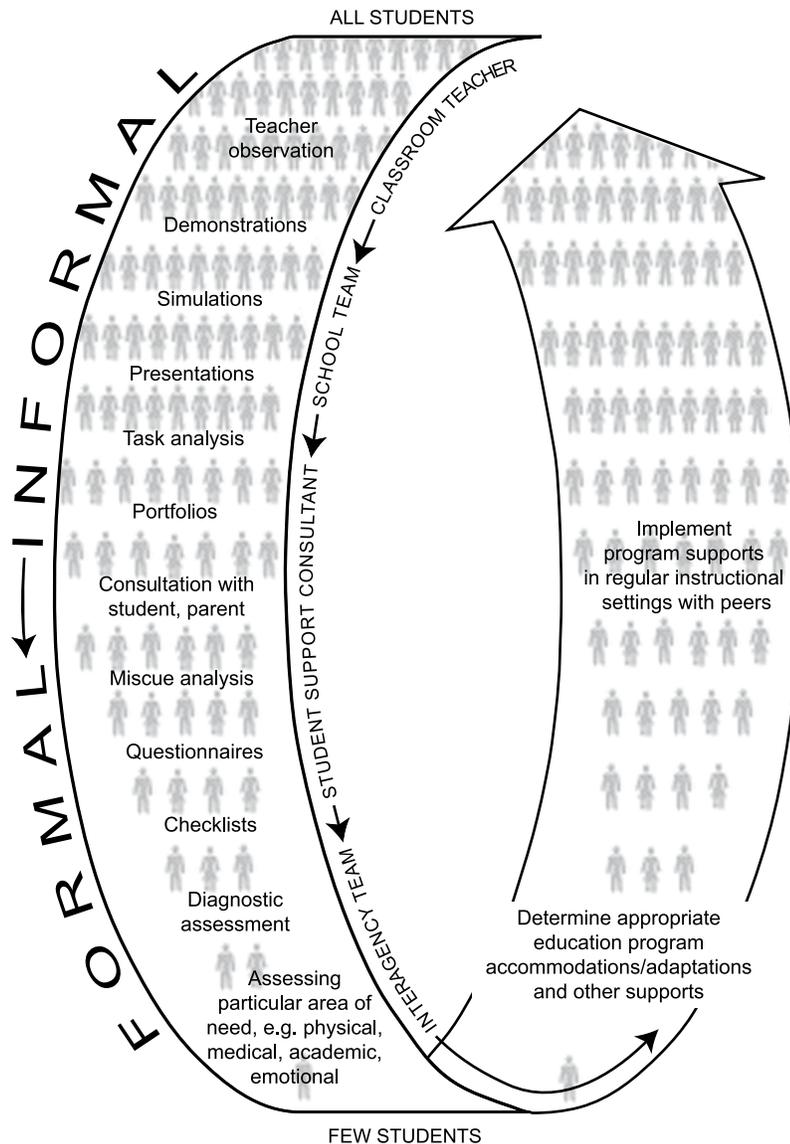
If school resources and expertise are exhausted, the PST and/or Principal brings the need for education programming assistance to the attention of the Student Support Consultant (A2.2l) and/or Interagency Team (A2.2k) to provide additional expertise and fresh observation.

This approach to education program planning needs to be promoted positively by the Principal in order to allay the concern of some teachers that asking for assistance is a sign of professional weakness. In the context of this model, asking for assistance is seen as an acknowledgement of the belief in a team approach to problem solving.

### A3.6 Assessment for the Purpose of Program Planning

Both the graphic in A3.4 and the illustrative scenario in A3.5 refer to assessment as a means of understanding the student’s strengths and challenges, and then using this information to plan and deliver the education program. The following graphic neatly summarizes a variety of assessments that might be used in educational programming, as well as the frequency with which each assessment might be used, and who would conduct/facilitate the assessment.

## ASSESSMENT



Terms used in A 3.6 include:

- Task Analysis
  - Analysis of how a task is performed, including a detailed description of both manual and mental activities.
- Portfolios
  - Systematic collection of a student's work.
- Miscue Analysis
  - Individualized assessment that provides in-depth information about what strategies a reader is using and helps to identify areas that need attention for reading to develop.
- Diagnostic Assessment
  - Individualized assessment to ascertain prior to instruction; a student's strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills.

For descriptions of Teacher Observation, Demonstrations, Simulations, and Presentations refer to B5.

## A4) Summary of Part A

Each school year classroom and subject teachers are faced with a new group of students who will almost certainly be characterized by diversity. Students learn at different rates and in different ways and teachers attempt to meet their learning needs through universal design for learning, differentiated instruction and a variety of other planning and teaching strategies. While teachers will be able to meet the learning needs of most of the students in the class, it is the rare class or teacher who does not require assistance in order to provide an appropriate education program and supports to the remainder.

Part A has clearly articulated that:

- the concept of program support refers to providing support to classroom or subject area teachers to help them determine and deliver an appropriate education program to their students.
- there are many program support partners, all of whom have important and distinct roles.
- in following an education programming planning process, a teacher may need program support assistance from one or a combination of those partners.
- schools need to be organized in a way that there is a **program support system** in place for teachers to seek and receive program support.



*Summary, continued.*

While all program support partners are important, PSTs and SAs have key and complex roles; parts B and C of this guide will focus in detail on their specific roles in the provision of program support to teachers.

## **Part B: For Program Support Teachers**



# Part B: For Program Support Teachers

## B1) Program Support Teacher Defined

The *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006* defines a Program Support Teacher as:

- A teacher who is knowledgeable about curricular outcomes at all levels and assists classroom/subject teachers with educational programming for students in their classes. The PST role is varied but typically includes consultation, assessment, and providing guidance about or modeling of instructional techniques, resources, and accommodations/ adaptations. PSTs typically coordinate the School Team, and the development of IEPs.

A shorter definition might define the PST as a skilled and respected teacher who provides support and assistance to other teachers, and Support Assistants.

## B2) Purpose of Part B

The role of the Program Support Teacher has already been described in A2.2d, from which it should be clear that the PST is only one partner in the provision of program support to teachers. Just as the classroom or subject area teacher cannot function effectively alone, neither can the PST provide program support on his or her own. That said, the PST is seen as the program support leader in a school – key in helping administrators develop a school-wide **program support system**, and in helping teachers develop the attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to provide an appropriate education program for their students. Part B of this manual is primarily for PSTs and it is intended to support them with the main roles that they typically fulfill.

## B3) Helping Teachers Choose, Develop, and Document Appropriate Education Programs and Supports for All Students

Much of the content of this *Programming for Student Success* binder is directed at this area:

- The Education Program Planning Process (A3.4) captures, in a nutshell, the process of determining which education program is suitable for a given student and how/where that program should be documented.



*Principals will find Part B relevant and helpful when fulfilling their various program support roles listed in A2.2c.*

- *Student Support Plans: Guidelines for Development and Teacher Resource Kit* – the first two dividers of the binder – articulate in detail who an SSP is for, what kinds of things are documented in an SSP, why documentation is necessary, and the process for developing an SSP. The template on the accompanying CD is used for actually writing/recording the SSP.
- *Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development and Teacher Resource Kit* – the third and fourth dividers of the binder – document in detail who an IEP is for and the process for developing an IEP. The template on the accompanying CD is used for actually writing/recording the IEP.

In short all of the resources that PSTs need to help teachers determine and develop appropriate education programs and supports are found in previous sections of this binder and will not be repeated here.

What needs to be considered, however is why teachers need help in this area.

- Many NWT teachers were trained elsewhere and arrive in the NWT familiar with the terminology and procedures associated with another jurisdiction. *Programming for Student Success*, along with *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling, 2006* was developed to articulate an *NWT system* – to define terms, and to lay out NWT processes and procedures. It is important that new teachers understand, for example, both the NWT definition of a Modified Education Program, and that that definition may be different than the one they knew elsewhere. That one small example illustrates the magnitude and importance of orienting new teachers to the way things are done in the NWT.
- Some teachers began their careers when the medical model dominated the approach to **students with learning differences**. When a student had difficulty, they were referred to an expert to help. Teachers did not retain the primary responsibility for educational programming for all students as they now do under an inclusive model. An inclusive model places more emphasis on intervention – i.e. working with the student in regular instructional settings – and less emphasis on testing and labeling. Some teachers, however willing, may need reassurance that they know which program is the right one.



- The term **Inclusive Schooling** can mean many different things to many different people. One misconception for some is that Inclusive Schooling means that everyone is following the same program (which, if it were true, would mean that there would be no decision to be made regarding whether a student should be following a Regular, Modified or Individual Education Program). Clarification of the term Inclusive Schooling may be all that is required: everyone is included with their peers while following the appropriate education program and receiving supports needed to be successful.
- Teachers may not be familiar with the curricular outcomes of grade levels other than their own, making it difficult to determine a student’s curricular level.
- Student diversity is increasing.

## **B4) Helping Teachers Deliver Education Programs for All Students**

### **B4.1 Co-teaching**

The role of the “special educator” – as well as the name – has shifted from one where they support students, to one where they support teachers to support students. For example, rather than working with a group of poor readers in the resource room – where the isolated nature of that approach prevents curriculum integration or making connections to other learning – a more effective method is for the PST to co-teach with the teacher in the classroom.

Co-teaching is defined as a classroom/subject area teacher and a Program Support Teacher working together in the same setting to provide instruction to students using one or more of a variety of co-teaching formats.

### Examples of Co-Teaching Formats<sup>3</sup>

This format can be used at any point of instruction within a curriculum unit.

| # of Student Groups | Teachers' Roles   | Format Description   |
|---------------------|---|--|
| One                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One teacher leading the lesson</li> <li>• One teacher providing mini lessons as student needs require</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One teacher teaches the planned lesson.</li> <li>• One teacher observes to identify students who require immediate instructional intervention and provides clarification and/or a mini lesson that will enable the student(s) to quickly become re-engaged in the lesson.</li> <li>• Students who require follow-up are noted.</li> </ul> |

This format works well when key concepts of a curriculum unit have already been introduced.

| # of Student Groups | Teachers' Roles   | Format Description   |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Two                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both teachers teaching the same content</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The class is divided into two heterogeneous groups for the teaching of the lesson, allowing incorporation of more interaction and support.</li> <li>• To draw a conclusion to the lesson, the students are brought together as one group for a review and summary of key concepts.</li> </ul> |

This format is useful when the need for consolidation of learning is identified. It also provides an opportunity for extending learning outcomes.

| # of Student Groups | Teachers' Roles   | Format Description   |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Two                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One teacher re-teaching</li> <li>• One teacher teaching additional information related to the topic/concept (i.e. extending outcomes)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are assigned to one of two groups based on their knowledge and skills and the progress made regarding the curriculum unit and/or concept.</li> <li>• These topic-specific groupings are intended to be both temporary and flexible.</li> </ul> |

<sup>3</sup> Taken from *Supporting Student Success: Resource Programming and Services*, Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2002

This format can be used with heterogeneous groups when concepts for a curriculum unit have been taught and students are engaged in activities designed to reinforce learning and application. It also lends itself to temporary groupings to allow for intervention to meet specific needs.

| # of Student Groups | Teachers' Roles   | Format Description   |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Multiple            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both teachers monitoring student learning and providing instructional intervention as necessary</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Topic-related activities, designed to meet the diverse strengths and challenges of the students, are set up at stations around the classroom.</li> <li>Both teachers circulate to monitor student progress and provide instructional intervention as required. Alternatively, one teacher may work with one group in order to address identified specific needs while the other teacher works with the remaining groups.</li> </ul> |

This format can be used at any point of instruction within a curriculum unit. It assumes that both teachers have previous experience both in co-teaching and in working collaboratively with each other.

| # of Student Groups | Teachers' Roles  | Format Description  |
|---------------------|--|---|
| One                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both teachers sharing teaching of same content</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both teachers share the responsibility for instruction throughout the lesson.</li> <li>Each teacher assumes the responsibility for leading the instruction for specific segments of the lesson.</li> <li>Both teachers work together throughout this dynamic process to support and clarify each other's efforts through the provision of extensions, examples, and specific strategies for students.</li> </ul> |

**Benefits to students include:**

- Greater inclusion of students in classroom learning experiences.
- Immediate intervention directly linked to classroom learning experiences.
- Simultaneous access to the instructional strategies of two teachers.
- Increased opportunities for students to learn from each other and to observe how others learn.

**Benefits to teachers include:**

- Opportunities to learn from each other and to share expertise.
- Ongoing face-to-face communication between classroom/subject teacher and Program Support Teacher.
- Shared materials and resources.
- Shared responsibility for direct support for students in the classroom.

**Ongoing consideration of the following questions may assist program support and classroom/subject teachers in planning for co-teaching:**

- How will joint planning time be achieved?
- What learning outcomes are to be addressed and what content will be used to address them?
- Which students are likely to require support and/or follow-up?
- Which co-teaching format(s) will be used?
- Which instructional strategies will be used?
- What materials and/or resources are required?
- How will learning be assessed and reported?
- What are the specific roles and responsibilities for each teacher?

## B4.2 Helping Teachers with Effective Instructional Methods

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Given the importance of PSTs as a support for other teachers, and that those teachers deal with a wide diversity of learners, PSTs require a large repertoire of instructional methods and strategies. In other words they need a lot of tools in their toolkit.

Research shows that the instructional methods, strategies and programs listed below help all students perform better, not just those with learning differences, thus providing additional incentive to educators to use these methods on a regular basis in all classrooms and schools. One way the PST can demonstrate and model effective practices is through co-teaching, as described in B4.1.

### **Multi-level Classrooms**

Although examined separately Universal Design for Learning (B4.2a), Differentiated Instruction (B4.2b) and Integrated Curriculum (B4.2c) are more than just complimentary; they are essentially inseparable in mixed-ability, multilevel classrooms – which in reality means most classrooms in the NWT.

## B4.2a Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

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UDL mirrors the universal design movement in architecture and product development, which calls for designs that from the outset consider the needs of the greatest number of possible users, eliminating the need for costly, inconvenient, and unattractive adaptations later on.

In teaching, this means designing instruction based on an actual class profile. (Contrast this with planning instruction for average students and then making after-the-fact modifications for those with learner differences.)

“Universal” does not imply a single optimal solution for everyone, Instead, Universal Design for Learning calls for:

- *Multiple means of representation*, to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge,
- *Multiple means of expression*, to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know,
- *Multiple means of engagement*, to tap into learners’ interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation ([www.cast.org](http://www.cast.org)).

UDL, continued.

UDL uses technology's power and flexibility to make education more inclusive and effective for all.

## Resources

[www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/](http://www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/)

Includes practice sessions, forums, tools, case studies – something for everyone.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/panel/index.html>

The title, *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6*, belies both its practicality as a tool for teachers, and its focus on all students. A valuable day-to-day resource which, among other things, shows teachers how to develop a class profile, and links UDL (for planning) with Differentiated Instruction (for specific skills and difficulties.)

## B4.2b Differentiated Instruction

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Differentiation of instruction is a teacher's response to learners' needs guided by general principles of differentiation, such as respectful tasks, flexible grouping and ongoing assessment and adjustment.

Teachers can differentiate:

- content
- process, and
- product

according to their students':

- readiness
- interests, and
- learning profile

through a range of instructional and management strategies such as:

- Multiple intelligences
- 4MAT
- Tiered centres
- Taped material
- Interest centers
- Learning contracts
- Varying organizers
- Varied homework
- Group investigation
- Orbitals
- Literature circles
- Complex instruction
- Tiered lessons
- Jigsaw
- Varied questioning strategies
- Tiered products
- Anchor activities
- Interest groups
- Small-group instruction
- Varied texts
- Compacting
- Varied journal prompts
- Independent study
- Varied supplementary materials

From *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* (1999) by Carol Ann Tomlinson. Available from ASCD. (See also, second resource which follows.)

## Resources

<http://www.ascd.org>.

There is no shortage of resources on differentiation of instruction. Many excellent ones can be obtained from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

<http://members.shaw.ca/priscillatheroux/differentiatingstrategies.html>

Practical: “How to ....” Among other things, many of the strategies listed above are defined/explained.

[http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac\\_diffinstruc.html](http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_diffinstruc.html)

Provides guidelines that make differentiation possible for teachers to attain, and looks at evidence of effectiveness.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/panel/index.html>

As mentioned in B4.2a this document considers both Universal Design for Learning, and Differentiated Instruction, along with several of the instructional strategies which follow.

The message from Carol Ann Tomlinson, Differentiated Instruction guru, is that in order to differentiate instruction teachers must “be clear about what matters in subject matter.”<sup>4</sup> The same point applies when teachers integrate curriculum.

## **B4.2c Thematic or Interdisciplinary Instruction, or Integrated Curriculum**

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Two or three subject areas are combined in a single unit that focuses on a theme, issue, problem, topic or concept – e.g. fish camp, climate change. Using this central theme, key learner outcomes which can be covered in the theme are identified from various curricula, and then instruction is designed to reach those learner outcomes. This approach helps students connect what they learn from one subject to another and to discover relationships. Interdisciplinary projects promote thinking strategies that cross content areas and transfer into real-life application.

### **Resources**

[http://xnet.rrc.mb.ca/glenh/understanding\\_by\\_design.htm](http://xnet.rrc.mb.ca/glenh/understanding_by_design.htm)

As with differentiation, curricular integration requires teachers to be clear about what matters in subject matter by beginning with the end in mind. In other words it is essential to identify the curricular learning outcomes the theme will address and work backwards to plan how to get there. Scroll down to the Backward Design Model.

<http://suzyred.com/integratedten.htm>

“Ten reasons to integrate curriculum” is short, to the point and all teachers will relate to reason #10!

[http://www.funderstanding.com/thematic\\_instruction.cfm](http://www.funderstanding.com/thematic_instruction.cfm)

A basic overview of thematic instruction, with an example.

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4      Comment made during workshop on Differentiated Instruction, Yellowknife, 2003.

*Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design: Connecting Content and Kids* (2006) by Carol Ann Tomlinson and Jay McTighe.

Understanding by Design is predominantly (although not solely) a curriculum design model, while differentiation is predominantly (although not solely) an instructional design model. This book, available at [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org), connects the two. Sample chapters are available on-line. Follow home>publications>books>browse sample chapters.

### **Knowing Student Strengths and Preferences**

Educational research has taught us a lot about how students actually learn. Learning styles (B4.2d), multiple intelligences (B4.2e), and how the brain affects learning (B4.2f) have significant impact on what kinds of learning activities are most effective for learners. So, in turn, they have significant implications for the way teachers teach.

## **B4.2d Classroom Applications of Learning Styles Theory**

The way a person best processes information becomes the basis for his/her learning style. Both perceptual strengths and student preferences affect a learner's ability to process information. The identification of students' learning styles (and teachers' teaching styles) involves an examination of their preferences with respect to instructional styles, learning environment, thinking styles, and expression or output style.

### **Resources**

<http://www.ldpride.net/learningstyles.MI.htm#Learning%20Styles%20Explained>

Describes three learning styles: auditory, visual and kinesthetic. Also identifies multiple intelligences, along with the strengths and possible careers associated with each.

<http://www.chaminade.org/inspire/learnstl.htm>

A one page questionnaire to help identify preferred learning style.

<http://teachersnetwork.org/ntol/howto/adjust/>

Several articles presented under the heading of How to Adjust Your Teaching Style to Your Students' Learning Styles. As could be expected some are better than others, but definitely worth a few minutes of surfing.

<http://www.longleaf.net/teachingstyle.html>

This one is for teachers – a teaching style survey that is completed and scored on line. It only takes a few minutes and would be a useful catalyst to get teachers thinking about/ discussing how they teach, and the fit with how their students learn.

## **B4.2e Classroom Applications of Multiple Intelligences Theory**

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Dr. Howard Gardner has identified ‘nine kinds of smart:’

- Verbal/linguistic
- Naturalist
- Logical/mathematical
- Musical
- Existential
- Visual/spatial
- Bodily/kinesthetic
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal

While everyone possesses each of these intelligences, the levels and the nature of their combination vary from person to person and impact the way a person learns best.

“Traditional classroom teaching” tends to recognize and reward those students who show strengths in verbal/linguistic and logical/mathematical intelligences. Students weak in those intelligences are often identified as slow learners or educationally at risk; however, when concepts are presented through the intelligences in which they are strong, they are as capable of learning as their traditionally successful peers.

Robert Sternberg identifies a shorter set of intelligences:

- Analytic: “schoolhouse” intelligence, preference for learning in linear ways often typical of school
- Practical: contextual intelligence, preference for seeing how and why things work in the world as people actually use them
- Creative: problem-solving intelligence, preference for making new connections, innovation

Carol Ann Tomlinson suggests that it may be enough for teachers to adapt their methods to take into account Sternberg’s three intelligences, rather than trying to keep nine intelligences in mind as they plan instruction.<sup>5</sup> In the end, like so many other things related to teaching, it’s probably a matter of personal preference.

<sup>5</sup> Comment made during workshop on Differentiated Instruction, Yellowknife, 2003.

## Resources

*Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom (2nd edition)* by Thomas Armstrong

A must have. Available from ASCD, a couple of chapters can be reviewed at [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org). The true value of this book lies in its focus on the implications for teaching. Lots of examples. Follow home>publications>books>browse sample chapters.

[http://www.support4learning.org.uk/education/learning\\_styles.cfm](http://www.support4learning.org.uk/education/learning_styles.cfm)

Several articles on learning styles, some for teachers and some for learners.

## B4.2f Classroom Applications of Brain-based Learning Theory

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Although brain-based learning is based on brain research, many would argue that it's just common sense. For example, most teachers do not need research to tell them that the best way to learn is, not through lecture, but by participation in realistic environments that let learners try new things safely.

In her Integrated Thematic Instruction model, Susan Kovalik articulates nine brain-compatible elements that link brain-based learning to integrated curriculum (B4.2c):

- Absence of Threat
- Meaningful Content
- Choices
- Movement to Enhance Learning
- Enriched Environment
- Adequate Time
- Collaboration
- Immediate Feedback
- Mastery (application level)

## Resources

<http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic70.htm>

A quick summary of the twelve principles of brain-based learning, the three conditions necessary for complex learning to occur, and Susan Kovalik's nine brain-compatible elements for integrated thematic instruction. Also has some links.

[http://www.funderstanding.com/brain\\_based\\_learning.cfm](http://www.funderstanding.com/brain_based_learning.cfm)

Some repeat information from the resource above, but some additional things too. More ideas/implications for classroom practice.

*Brain Matters: Translating Research into Classroom Practice*, 2001, by Patricia Wolfe.

Available from ASCD, two chapters can be reviewed at [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org). Follow home>publications>books>browse sample chapters.

*The Brain-Compatible Classroom: Using What We Know About Learning to Improve Teaching*, 2003, by Laura Erlauer.

Available from ASCD, two chapters can be reviewed at [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org). Chapter 2: Emotional Wellness and a Safe Environment has lots of illustrative examples. Follow home>publications>books>browse sample chapters.

## **B4.2g Co-operative/Collaborative Learning**

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Co-operative learning is the practice of assigning a common task to a small group of students who work together to accomplish a common goal. In co-operative learning situations there is a positive interdependence among students; the teacher structures the task so that no member of the team can complete it on his/her own. If students do not have small group skills these need to be explicitly taught.

Co-operative learning teaches students to interact with, learn from, and value others of varying ability levels, interests, talents and personalities.

### **Resources**

*Co-operative Learning in the Classroom* (1994) by David Johnson, Roger Johnson and Edythe Holubec.

Available from ASCD, two chapters can be reviewed at [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org). Follow home>publications>books>browse sample chapters.

*Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* by Marzano, Pickering and Pollock, 2001, as well as *A Handbook for Classroom Instruction that Works*, Marzano et al., 2001.

Available at [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org) each includes a chapter on co-operative learning. Follow home>publications>books>browse sample chapters.

<http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/intech/cooperativelarning.htm#activities>

A bit of theory, then some examples of class activities that use co-operative learning. Cute graphics.

### **B4.3 Promising Practices**

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*Promising Practices: Ideas that Work in Northern Secondary Classrooms*, is a compilation of “ideas” – activities, teaching strategies, classroom organization, school climate, etc. that have worked in NWT classrooms. It can be found on the ECE website.

### **B5) Helping Teachers Monitor Student Progress and Evaluation**

What we now know about learning indicates that assessment and learning are closely and intimately linked; good assessment practices mirror the learning process. For example, if we want to assess students’ problem solving skills, we would not use a multiple-choice test. More authentic assessment methods would require students to supply answers, perform observable acts, demonstrate skills, create products, and supply portfolios of work.

Just as teachers (and PSTs) need a lot of tools in their instructional toolkit, they need a lot of tools in their assessment and evaluation toolkit. Taken from *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind*<sup>6</sup>, the following table summarizes what those tools are:

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6 *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind*, Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, 2004.

| <b>Examples of Assessment Tools</b>                        |   |
|--|---|
| Method   | Description   |
| <b>Gathering Information</b>                               |   |
| Questioning  | Asking focused questions in class to elicit understanding   |
| Observation  | Systematic observations of students as they process ideas   |
| Homework   | Assignments designed to elicit understanding  |
| Learning conversations or interviews                       | Investigative discussions with students about their understanding and confusions  |
| Demonstrations, presentations, performances or exhibitions | Opportunities for students to show their learning in oral and performance media   |
| Quizzes, tests or examinations                             | Opportunities for students to show their learning through written response  |
| Rich assessment tasks                                      | Complex tasks that encourage students to show connections that they are making among concepts that they are learning              |
| Computer-based assessments                                 | Systematic and adaptive software applications keyed to curriculum outcomes  |
| Simulations or docudramas                                  | Simulated or role-playing tasks that encourage students to show connections that they are making among concepts they are learning |
| Learning logs  | Student-maintained descriptions of the process they go through in their learning  |
| Projects and investigations                                | Opportunities for students to show connections in their learning through investigation and production of reports or artifacts     |

| Interpreting Information          |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Checklists                        | Descriptions of criteria to consider in understanding students' learning   |
| Rubrics                           | Descriptions of criteria with gradations of performance described and defined  |
| Reflective journals               | Student maintained reflections and conjecture about how their learning is going and what they need to do next                                      |
| Self assessment                   | A process in which students reflect on their own performance and use defined criteria for determining the status of their learning                 |
| Peer assessment                   | A process in which students reflect on the performance of their peers and use defined criteria for determining the status of the peer's learning   |
| Record Keeping                    |  |
| Student profiles                  | A summary of information about the quality of students' work in relation to curriculum outcomes and/or outcomes outlined on a student's SSP or IEP |
| Video or audio tapes, photographs | Visual or auditory images that provide artifacts of student learning   |
| Portfolios                        | A systematic collection of a student's work that demonstrates accomplishments, growth and reflection about their learning                          |

As its title suggests *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind* emphasizes the importance of being clear about the purpose of assessment and then designing assessment for that purpose. The document considers three purposes:

- Assessment *for* learning – in other words formative assessment.
- Assessment *of* learning – in other words summative assessment.
- Assessment *as* learning – when a student is actively engaged in assessment, they make sense of new learning, relate it to prior knowledge and use it for new learning.

The complete document can be accessed on-line at <http://www.wncp.ca/assessment/rethink.pdf>. It contains many examples, and has an excellent list of other assessment resources.

### Resources

*Departmental Directive on Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting*, 2001, Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Available at [www.ece.gov.nt.ca](http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca) this document articulates NWT standards and expectations for both classroom and systemic assessment.

Alberta Assessment Consortium [www.aac.ab.ca](http://www.aac.ab.ca)

Pricy, but excellent, the Alberta Assessment Consortium supports its members through:

- A resource library, and five professional publications reflecting the latest research in assessment and communication practices.
- Ongoing professional growth, including conferences and workshops.
- Individual consultation in assessment matters.
- Teacher-developed performance assessments, rubrics and exemplars available on the web site [www.aac.ab.ca](http://www.aac.ab.ca).
- Recognition and compensation of contributing teachers.

Some resources can be accessed by non-members.

## B6) Helping Teachers with Assistive Technology for Learning

While all students use some sort of assistive technology in the classroom – a pencil grip or calculator for example – **assistive technology for learning** (ATL) refers specifically to materials and equipment that allow access to learning for students who have barriers due to their sensory, physical, cognitive or other learning challenges.



Choosing appropriate ATL has been discussed in detail in Appendix II of *Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development* – the third divider of this binder – so it will not be repeated.

Suffice it to say here that the important part of ATL is not understanding what's available and buying it; the important parts are buying the right tool for a given student in given situations, training the student and teacher in its use, and ensuring that the ATL is maintained. These are all “soft tech” issues, but the unfortunate reason why much ATL sits on the shelf.

## **B7) Helping Teachers Deal with Behaviour**

Teachers rarely disagree with the philosophy behind inclusion – such as all students belong with their peers, all are capable of learning and so on. They don't always have the knowledge and skills to transfer the philosophy into the practices of classroom teaching, but they believe in the concept.

The exception, if there is one, is for students with difficult, challenging, complex and chronic behaviours; and teachers have some very valid reasons for questioning the inclusion of these students with their peers in regular educational settings:

- fear
- safety concerns
- lack of skill and knowledge about “what to do”
- the disruption of other students' learning

Clearly it is an area where teachers need a lot of help, support and training.

Since the development of behavioural knowledge and expertise is best acquired through hands on workshops, summer institutes and courses, rather than through websites and print materials, it also makes it a more difficult area in which to gain competence. For that reason more detail is provided in the area of helping teachers with behaviour than is the case with other areas discussed.

In addition, current practices indicate that effective behavioural practices are not always well understood. All teachers need to understand:

- the processes and features of Effective Behaviour Support (EBS), also known as Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support (PBIS).
- that inappropriate behaviours may be symptoms of the real problem – such as work which is too difficult, teaching methods which don't match the student's strengths, interests and learning style, or even a poor relationship with the teacher.
- that what they see as a negative consequence (e.g. sending to office) may be seen as a reward from the student's point of view.
- that a one size fits all approach to behaviour management is inappropriate (just as a one size fits all approach to teaching is inappropriate.)

The additional detail in this section is intended to help the PST clarify these issues, and more, with the teachers in their school.

The vast majority of students in a school will behave as desired as long as the behavioural expectations are clear, reasonable, have been directly taught, and are consistently expected and acknowledged/reinforced. It also works best when students have input into what those expectations are. Many schools in the NWT are following a model known as Effective Behaviour Support (EBS) in which the school *builds* its own discipline system – as opposed to applying a packaged program – based on its unique culture, values, student needs, staff strengths and so on.

## **B7.1 Effective Behaviour Support Overview**

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Effective Behaviour Support (EBS) is NOT a program or package. It is a *systematic process* which is coordinated by a school-based EBS Team and results in a school-wide approach to discipline – applicable to all students, all staff, and all settings – that is tailored to that school's unique needs, strengths, & context.

### **EBS Prerequisites:**

In order to develop an effective school-wide discipline system a school must have:

- Behaviour as one of the school's top three priorities
- Administrator support
- 80% of staff on side – in other words:
  - wanting to “do something” about behaviour, and
  - understanding that the way to do that is to use a team-based problem solving process. (It is not about using an off-the shelf program, hiring an expert to fix things, or quick fixes. It's about building together an approach to discipline which is tailored to the unique local needs and context.)

The above criteria are prerequisites. Without them efforts will be limited, at best.

### **EBS Process (1 and 2 may be reversed)**

1. An EBS team is created – the composition needs to be representative of the staff:
  - Need representation of different grade levels, parent(s), student(s).
  - Must have an administrator – who can influence budgets, time for meetings, reluctant staff, etc.
  - Important to understand that the team coordinates the EBS effort but does not take total control and responsibility – which must be shared by all (or at least 80% of) staff.
2. The EBS team surveys staff regarding the current behavioural situation, and which areas should be priorities for action. Results are compiled, shared with staff and used to develop consensus around areas of concern, first steps, staff development and so on.
3. The EBS team's prime function is to coordinate (always ensuring staff buy in):
  - Development of three to five positively worded behavioural expectations (e.g. Respect Yourself, Respect Others, Respect the Environment) followed by:
    - Development of a matrix of specific behaviours for each school setting. e.g.

|                         | All Settings  | Hallways                                  | Playground                                       | Assembly etc.                                |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Respect Yourself        | Be on task<br>Give your best effort<br>Be prepared      | Walk                                      | Have a plan                                      | Sit in one spot                              |
| Respect Others          | Be Kind<br>Hands/feet to self<br>Help/share with others | Use normal voice<br>Walk to the right     | Play safe<br>Include others<br>Share equip.      | Listen/watch<br>Use appropriate applause     |
| Respect the Environment | Recycle<br>Clean up after self                          | Pick up litter<br>Maintain physical space | Use equip. properly<br>Put litter in garbage can | Pick up litter<br>Treat chairs appropriately |

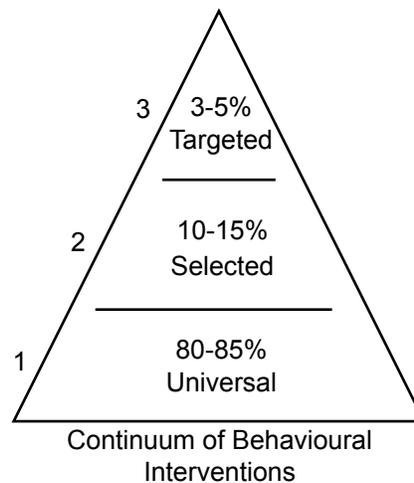
- Teaching the matrix behaviours *in* the actual settings – tell, demonstrate/model, practise, correct, practise again, etc. just as one would teach academics.
- Adoption of research-validated procedures for acknowledging and reinforcing desired behaviours when students display them. The goal is *at least* 4 positive reinforcers: 1 negative.
  - When desired behaviours are displayed, specific verbal acknowledgement by staff is essential – e.g. not “Good job,” but “Thanks for walking on the right.”
  - Tangible rewards often help reinforce new behaviours, *and* they serve to remind staff to acknowledge the behaviours. They are not bribes (as in “If you do x I’ll give you y”) but rather, like verbal comments they *recognize* that a specified performance standard has been met. If tangibles are used they need to be weaned.
- Adoption of research-validated procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviours when they occur, including:
  - Agreement on which behaviours will be dealt with by teachers, and which will be office-referred.
  - Agreement on definitions of these behaviours – e.g. “inappropriate language,” “fighting,” etc.
  - Agreement on appropriate consequences for/responses to these behaviours.
  - An office referral process including a user friendly referral form.
- Procedures for collecting and sharing data, and *using* it to make decisions about what needs to be done, the effectiveness of interventions, etc.

EBS does not start with any particular model of discipline. It is a process through which schools “compose” a discipline system tailored to their personality, philosophy and realities.

### **Additional Features of EBS:**

Although the EBS process focuses on and leads to a school-wide discipline system it is not a one size fits all approach to discipline. An effective school discipline system recognizes the need for a continuum of behavioural supports – to match the continuum of behaviours typical of a school, and as illustrated by the following triangle.

1. The majority (80-85%) of the school population respond to universal interventions such as social skills training programs or direct instruction in expected school behaviours.
2. A minority (10-15%) of the school population require more intensive social skills instruction & increased monitoring/ reinforcement of desired behaviours, with this support being delivered in the classroom or to small groups.
3. A few students (3-5%) with unique/ chronic behavioural challenges require more intensive social skills instruction and individual behaviour support plans.



**The students at the top of the triangle need intensive, individualized behaviour support. They do not respond to more general universal, or even small group, interventions. Behavioural expertise is required.**

### **EBS Assumptions:**

- Behaviour is learned (so it can be taught.)
- Students do not automatically know “how to behave.”
- Appropriate behaviour in one context does not generalize (so it needs to be taught again.)
- Research shows that behavioural success correlates with academic success.
- Student behaviour change follows adult behaviour change. (In other words if you want the kids to do something differently, what are you going to do differently?)



## B7.2 The Students at the Top of the Triangle

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One of the things that happens when an EBS approach is used consistently by all staff is that it “pulls students toward the bottom of the triangle.” In other words teaching the behaviours you want, etc. is *mandatory* if you want to know who’s really left at the top of the triangle.

The students at the top need intensive, individualized behaviour support. They do not respond to more general, universal, or even small group interventions. Just as a few students need an Individual Education Plan, a few need a **Behaviour Support Plan**. And for that, some additional behavioural expertise is required.

### B7.2a Behaviour Support Planning 101

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While the details are beyond the scope of this document an overview of developing a Behaviour Support Plan will be considered and illustrated with one *very* simple example. In the example the behaviour of concern is crumpling up math assignments and throwing them to the floor, perhaps accompanied by, “I’m not doin’ that and you can’t make me.”

It is important to understand some behaviour basics:

- Behaviour has a purpose or reason or function for the student.
  - Understanding what the purpose is – from the student’s point of view – is critical to responding *effectively*.
- Behaviour is learned, so it can be unlearned and replaced with new learned behaviour.
  - Responding effectively to the behaviours you don’t want involves identifying the ones you want instead and then planning for teaching them.
- Behaviour is a form of communication.
  - Crumpling the math paper and throwing it on the floor may mean, “This math is too hard, but I don’t want to admit it.”
- Behaviour may be different in different settings.
  - For example, the student is fine with computations but always crumples word problems.

- Behaviour is highly influenced by environmental conditions surrounding it – what happened before the behaviour, what happened after?
  - Understanding the purpose of the behaviour requires looking at everything around it. What happened right before the behaviour, and what happened after? Who else was there? Was the student working alone or in a group? etc.
  - To go back to the crumpled math paper example, if the teacher required students to work on a math sheet, and then the student crumpled the sheet, and then the teacher sent the student to the office, it's likely that the function of the behaviour was to escape the math – which was too difficult – and so the behaviour “worked” (from the student's point of view.) And in fact (from the student's point of view) the teacher “rewarded” the behaviour by sending the student to the office. Is s/he likely to repeat the behaviour in the same situation? – absolutely! If it worked once why not do it again? (Some teachers find it difficult to understand that sending the student to the office rewards behaviour; they think it's a punishment. But it's the student's view of being sent to the office that matters. And if the student was trying to escape the difficult math, then being sent to the office was *not* a punishment.)

The above is an oversimplified example of what is known as a **Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA)**. One or more individuals observe the behaviour of concern, *in context*, and develop a hypothesis – in this case that the function of the behaviour was to escape the difficult math.

Using the FBA hypothesis, a **Behaviour Support Plan** is written to replace the undesired behaviour with a desired behaviour. In many cases a new behaviour has to be taught (although in the crumpled math paper example it probably does not) and in *all* cases the environment where the behaviour occurred *must* be altered by the teacher. This could mean fewer questions, working with a peer, providing one fully developed question/answer as a model, frequent breaks, etc.

The purpose of a Behaviour Support Plan is to replace behaviour you don't want with behaviour you do want, and to make the old behaviour irrelevant or unnecessary. If the student could do the math he would not have chosen to crumple the paper and throw it on the floor to escape the math. That behaviour would be unnecessary.



Of course in a very simple situation, like the example just given, significant behavioural expertise is not really required. But when behaviours are severe, multiple, chronic or complex it's not as easy to understand the reason for any given behaviour, and design a Behaviour Support Plan to replace the behaviours with new ones and alter the environment in which the behaviours occur. That's where some expertise is required in conducting a Functional Behaviour Assessment and using the information to develop a Behaviour Support Plan.

## **B7.2b Developing Basic Behaviour Expertise – School/District-based**

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Individuals and teams can access basic training in the establishment of a school-wide effective behaviour support system in their schools, in the following ways:

- EBS Coaches Summer Institute in BC: 3 – 5 days, sometimes at UBC, sometimes at one or more BC school divisions. For information about upcoming summer institutes contact Kathleen Champion, [kchampion@richmond.sd38.bc.ca](mailto:kchampion@richmond.sd38.bc.ca), or Don Chapman, [donc33@telus.net](mailto:donc33@telus.net)
- Training for School Teams – 1 or 2 days
  - Tom Schimmer, Penticton, BC – [tschimmer@summer.com](mailto:tschimmer@summer.com)
  - Craig Gillis, Campbell River, BC – [craig.gillis@sd72.bc.ca](mailto:craig.gillis@sd72.bc.ca)
  - Janice Coomer, Coquitlam, BC – [janice\\_coomer@hotmail.com](mailto:janice_coomer@hotmail.com)
  - Robyn Cook, Nanaimo, BC – [rlcook@sd38.bc.ca](mailto:rlcook@sd38.bc.ca)
  - Peter Malloy, Kelowna, BC – [pmalloy@sd23.bc.ca](mailto:pmalloy@sd23.bc.ca)
  - Kent McIntosh, U. British Columbia – [kent.mcintosh@ubc.ca](mailto:kent.mcintosh@ubc.ca)
  - Tim Lewis, University of Missouri
  - Terry Scott, or Ann Todd, both University of Oregon
- *Making Connections* Annual Conference, in BC each fall
- Special Education Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association
  - Contact the Special Education BC Council for resource personnel for workshops on BOATS, explained below.

The importance of hands on sessions, such as the above, notwithstanding *BOATS: Behaviour, Observation, Assessment, Teaching, Strategies*, 2006 is a resource developed by the Special

Education Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. It is intended for all teachers, assistants, and PSTs and it covers behaviour from A – Z. All the bases touched on above are considered in detail in BOATS. It's written by teachers for teachers – very clear with lots of examples. The document is available on-line at [www.specialeducation.ab.ca](http://www.specialeducation.ab.ca). Click on publications.

Developing behaviour expertise requires both knowledge and skills. As previously discussed, reading a book such as BOATS will certainly impart some knowledge, but it will not develop skills, because the development of skills requires practice. BOATS could be used to structure school-based skill development, which is where the role of the Principal comes in – to facilitate some time for the PST and teachers to develop themselves in this area.

To develop/practise skills in the area of Functional Behaviour Assessment and Behaviour Support Plans (for the students near the top of the triangle) it is best to start with a student for whom success is predictable. Tempting as it may be, don't start with the most difficult student when skills are new/emergent. That would be akin to attempting a black run for your first time on skis! Start with a green run and work your way up through blue before tackling black.

Another site with significant information, resources and presentations in the area of effective behaviour support is [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org).

## **B7.2c Developing More In-Depth Behaviour Expertise – UBC Courses**

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As professionals, many teachers combine their summer holidays with their own professional growth. The University of British Columbia has two excellent courses in conducting functional behaviour assessments and building behaviour support plans. EPSE 433 is an undergraduate course offered for three weeks, most summers, while EPSE 514 is a graduate course offered for three weeks some summers. These courses require that teachers apply to and be accepted at UBC – they can't just sign up for the course.

### **EPSE 433 (3) Assessment and Positive Behavioural Support in School and Community Settings**

Conducting functional behaviour assessments and designing positive behaviour support plans for individuals with significant behaviour problems in home and school settings.

### **EPSE 514 (3) Seminar in Behavioural Assessment and Intervention**

Prerequisite: EPSE 433

An advanced seminar on functional behaviour assessment and designing positive behaviour support plans for individuals across the age and ability range in home and school settings. Emphasis is placed on programming for generalization and maintenance, and on implementation supports.

UBC also offers a diploma program for teachers in BC, Yukon and NWT.

### **Diploma in Special Education, with Concentration in Behaviour Disorders**

Students with a special interest in meeting the educational needs of individuals with behaviour problems in school and community settings may wish to concentrate their studies in this area. Upon completion of the program, students receive a Diploma in Special Education. (30 credits; one course typically = 3 credits)

More information on all of the above is available at <http://www.ecps.educ.ubc.ca/>.

## **B8) Helping Teachers Use Support Assistants Effectively<sup>7</sup>**

A Support Assistant is not to be viewed as personal assistant for an individual student, but rather as a support to the classroom teacher, providing individual support only when absolutely needed.

Also referred to as program support assistant, student support assistant, special needs assistant and aide, a Support Assistant is defined in the NWT *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling*, 2006 as:

- An **education assistant** (paraprofessional) who assists in carrying out instructional plans, assists with classroom management, and provides instructional and other supports to students, under the direct supervision of a qualified teacher. (Does not include French monitors, aboriginal language assistants, or general classroom assistants.)

<sup>7</sup> Much of this section has been summarized with permission from: Bain, Karen and Sautner, Brenda. 2006. Teacher and teaching assistant roles and responsibilities: Searching for best practice. *The Special Educator* XXXVI, no. 2: 5-13. The full article can be found at [http://www.specialeducation.ab.ca/documents/EA\\_Matrix\\_and\\_Article.pdf](http://www.specialeducation.ab.ca/documents/EA_Matrix_and_Article.pdf).



The requirement that education assistants – of which Support Assistants are one type – be supervised directly by a classroom teacher is rooted in the *Education Act*, 1996:

Section 45(1), Duties of teachers:

“A teacher may assign duties to an education assistant that are consistent with that person’s contract of employment and shall supervise the performance of those duties.”

Section 62(1), Duties of an education assistant:

“An education assistant employed in a school shall follow the directions of a teacher.”

Having a Support Assistant in the classroom is reassuring for many teachers and parents; parents feel their child is getting support, and teachers have an extra person to share the challenges of the classroom. However, this is true **only if** the Support Assistant fulfills an appropriate role, **and if** the teacher remains engaged with the student and his/her learning.

While one-on-one support is appropriate in some situations, very few students require the support of a full time Support Assistant -- it is definitely a case of more is not better. As Giangreco and Broer<sup>8</sup> point out, neither research nor common sense support assigning the least trained person to provide the bulk of instruction to students with the biggest learning and behavioural challenges. Research also tells us that:

- the student becomes dependent on adults for direction and social cues.
- constant adult assistance interferes with normal peer interactions and socialization.
- an insular relationship develops to the degree that the only “friend” the student has is the one paid to help him/her.
- the student often fails to achieve the IEP annual student outcomes set by the teacher.

The above concerns aside, Support Assistants are an invaluable source of support to both students and teachers, and a well established part of our school system. However, in order to realize the full potential of this resource it is important to develop a system for making effective use of Support Assistants.

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8 Giangreco, M.F. and Broer, S.M. 2003. The professional conundrum: Why we need alternative support strategies. *TASH Connections* (March/April): 22-23.

## B8.1 Developing a System for Making Effective Use of Support Assistants

The PST and administrative team are encouraged to establish, and communicate with all staff, a *system, or consistent processes*, related to SAs – their assignment, what they are expected to do, training, collaborative planning time, and so on.

The following matrix identifies key decision areas and provides examples of effective practices in each of those key areas. The right hand column provides space to record actions that need to be considered at the school level in order to establish a system for making effective use of Support Assistants.

| Key Area  | Expectations/ Effective Practices   | To Do/ Action Plan |
|---|---|--------------------|
| Criteria for assigning Support Assistants (SAs) to classroom teachers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment of SAs is based on criteria and is known to all staff</li> <li>• Safety and security is the first consideration for the assignment of SAs</li> <li>• Classroom teacher is assigned supervision and leadership for working with each SA in the classroom</li> <li>• Teacher training is provided in teamwork and co-teaching</li> <li>• School Team assists in decisions related to SA assignments and supports</li> </ul> |                    |
| Other supports currently available                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student learning groups are flexible and change often</li> <li>• SAs are assigned to different groups for different purposes at different times</li> <li>• SAs work with classroom teachers in a variety of regular instructional settings to provide assistance to all students</li> </ul>  |                    |

| <b>Key Area</b>   | <b>Expectations/ Effective Practices</b>  | <b>To Do/ Action Plan</b> |
|---|---|---------------------------|
| <p>Student learning outcomes, and accommodations/ adaptations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are working on similar learning outcomes, only differentiated</li> <li>• Students with IEPs have annual student outcomes known to all staff working with the student</li> <li>• The learning outcomes for students on modified education programs are documented in an SSP and known to all staff working with the student</li> <li>• If improved behaviour is a goal, a Functional Behaviour Assessment is conducted and used to develop a Behaviour Support Plan which is implemented by all staff working with the student</li> <li>• Agreed upon accommodation strategies are documented in a student’s SSP or IEP and are known to all staff working with the student</li> <li>• Student independence is planned through deliberate strategies including use of peers and reduced SA time</li> <li>• Students with significant learning needs/differences work in groups with other students, not at the back of the room or at a separate table</li> <li>• Students with significant learning needs/differences are given responsibilities that build a sense of belonging and social interactions with other students; they are not given only menial jobs that other students don’t do</li> </ul> |                           |

| <b>Key Area</b>            | <b>Expectations/ Effective Practices</b>   | <b>To Do/ Action Plan</b> |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Intensive student supports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with severely disabling conditions have annual student outcomes and strategies in their IEPs to increase independence</li> <li>• Peers are used as natural supports for basic skills – e.g. putting on boots and opening lunch containers</li> <li>• Students are taught to seek out peers for assistance – e.g. opening doors or locker</li> <li>• The teacher determines when it is essential for an SA to sit next to a student, versus having a group of students provide assistance</li> </ul>  |                           |
| SA training and support    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SA is assigned to classroom teacher(s)</li> <li>• SA is provided with direction and support directly from each classroom teacher for each lesson/ daily schedule</li> <li>• SA is provided with regular opportunities to meet with teacher(s) and provide input into lesson activities and student assignments</li> <li>• SA is provided with information on the needs of students by the classroom teacher, including tips on behaviour support and the nature of disabling conditions</li> <li>• Consultation and advice from others (e.g. occupational therapist) are provided to the teacher who then communicates key strategies/ suggestions to the SA</li> <li>• SA has access to workshops, courses and other training opportunities</li> </ul> |                           |

| <b>Key Area</b>   | <b>Expectations/ Effective Practices</b>   | <b>To Do/ Action Plan</b> |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| Collaborative planning time                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular ongoing time is provided to SA and teacher(s) to meet</li> <li>• Teachers are provided with regular ongoing collaborative planning time during the day or week to proactively plan for students needing additional help/ support</li> <li>• Collaborative time includes site-based staff development in effective instructional, assessment and behaviour strategies</li> <li>• Activities such as field trips are preplanned with input from the SA</li> </ul>                         |                           |
| Clear roles and responsibilities                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School administration clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of SAs</li> <li>• Roles are communicated to staff each year</li> <li>• Each teacher meets and discusses classroom roles and expectations in collaboration with the SA</li> </ul>   |                           |
| School-based teams, i.e. Instructional Teams, and School Team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAs are included in school-based teams as needed</li> <li>• SA ideas and expertise are included in the decision-making process</li> <li>• School-based teams meet regularly</li> <li>• School-based teams provide support and assistance to all staff to support all students</li> <li>• Focus of meetings is on solutions/ strategies to meet the needs of all staff and students</li> <li>• SAs are provided with lieu time or overtime for additional meetings outside work hours</li> </ul> |                           |

With a school-based system for making effective use of Support Assistants in place, individual assistants still have to be assigned to work with specific teachers in specific classrooms. Bain and Sautner (2006) pose ten questions to be considered to ensure best practices related to the assignment and function of SAs in individual classrooms.<sup>9</sup>

- What information has been provided that clearly documents an identified need for an individual Support Assistant?
- In what areas will learning be enhanced through individual adult supports?
- In what ways will adult supports lead to increasing student independence?
- How are Support Assistants provided with information regarding the various disorders/conditions and specific knowledge they must have to do their jobs well?
- How can time be arranged to ensure that a relationship of collaboration and rapport will be established between the classroom teacher and the Support Assistant?
- Does the presence of an adult with a child in any way interfere with social inclusion or participation with peers?
- Are Support Assistants valued as equal members of the Instructional Team/School Team/ IEP team?
- Does the work done with a Support Assistant generalize to other adults/situations?
- Are the supports being used clearly documented in the IEP and regularly reviewed? Does the transition plan include increasing levels of independence?

A concrete example of a completed procedure for the allocation of Support Assistants can be found by referring to New Brunswick Education's *Teacher Assistant Support Protocol*. Developed to help its districts meet the challenge of assigning teacher assistant support, it is concise, yet thorough. It can be found at <http://www.gnb.ca/0000/publications/ss/TeacherAssistantSupportProtocol.pdf>

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9 For a more complete discussion of each of the ten questions, see footnote 7.

## B8.2 Teachers and Support Assistants: Making the Relationship Work

Making the relationship between teachers and Support Assistants work is a shared responsibility. As discussed in B8.1 the school administration and PST are responsible for developing a system for the assignment, use and evaluation of SAs. Having a system in place contributes to positive working relationships as all school staff have the same understanding of procedures and expectations.

Classroom teachers can help make the relationship work by scheduling regular meetings to discuss students, obtain feedback and hear concerns. They are also responsible for helping SAs understand their own role, the role of the teacher and where the two overlap. Following is a summary of duties as articulated by the Alberta Teachers' Association, 2005, with minor adaptations to better reflect the NWT context and terminology. The full document from which it was taken, *Teachers and Teacher's Assistants: Roles and Responsibilities*, can be found at <http://www.teachers.ab.ca/Quick+Links/Publications/Other+Publications/Teachers+and+Teachers++Assistants++Roles+and+Responsibilities/>.

|                                    | <b>Duties of Teachers</b>   | <b>Joint Activities</b>   | <b>Duties of Support Assistants</b>   |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Behaviour Expectations and Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish clearly understood classroom behaviour expectations, routines, and consequences</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet regularly to discuss student progress</li> <li>• Discuss and clarify expectations</li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work within established structures</li> </ul>  |
| Assessing                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess learning needs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss student strengths and challenges</li> <li>• Attend program planning meetings as appropriate</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe student behaviour/performance and provide information to teacher(s)</li> </ul> |

|                          | <b>Duties of Teachers</b>  | <b>Joint Activities</b>  | <b>Duties of Support Assistants</b>  |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|
| Planning and Programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish priorities</li> <li>• Choose strategies/ solutions from available alternatives</li> <li>• Choose appropriate accommodations</li> <li>• Prepare SSPs</li> <li>• Prepare IEPs with PST</li> <li>• Maintain current student and class profiles</li> <li>• Plan lessons and choose resources</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss desired learning outcomes for students</li> <li>• Prepare materials, including those with accommodations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the scope of their own professional qualifications suggest possible courses of action for the teacher to follow</li> <li>• Provide advice on available resources</li> <li>• Assist in preparing materials, creating displays</li> </ul>                                  |
| Teaching                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement lesson plans and direct teaching</li> <li>• Supervise and facilitate student learning</li> <li>• Model techniques and appropriate language</li> <li>• Provide resources for assistants</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify and share outcomes and experiences</li> <li>• Discuss specific strategies, activities and outcomes</li> </ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify elements of the lesson for students who are having trouble</li> <li>• Supervise reinforcement activities</li> <li>• Implement specific techniques, strategies and language as directed by the teacher</li> <li>• Document, monitor and report to the teacher</li> </ul> |
| Evaluating               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate student progress</li> <li>• Ensure progress toward IEP annual student outcomes is evaluated</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss observations</li> <li>• Exchange information</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect data for use in student evaluation</li> <li>• Mark objective tests for the teacher to review</li> </ul>   |

|                       | <b>Duties of Teachers</b>  | <b>Joint Activities</b>  | <b>Duties of Support Assistants</b>  |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| Reporting             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to parents both formally and informally</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss student information as appropriate</li> <li>• Maintain confidentiality</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to teachers on student strengths, achievements and challenges</li> <li>• Report to teachers on observed student behaviours and outcomes</li> </ul> |
| Staying Current       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep up to date on school, district/ division and territorial policies, procedures, guidelines and directives</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow same</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep up to date on school, district/ division and territorial policies, procedures and directives</li> </ul>  |
| Evaluating programs   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate programs</li> <li>• Document and share concerns</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify program needs</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise teachers about the degree to which the program structure promotes or inhibits student development, and the best use of the SA's skills</li> </ul>  |
| Evaluating Assistants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the development of an evaluative process, with school administration, that includes specific competencies and performance standards (see Appendix)</li> <li>• Document and share concerns</li> <li>• Seek training for SAs as appropriate</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss strengths and concerns</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarize self with evaluation process, expected competencies and performance standards</li> <li>• Advise on training and other needs</li> </ul>        |

## B8.3 Tips for Individual Teachers

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Working with a Support Assistant in the classroom may initially take some adjustment for both teacher and SA. Following are some specific suggestions that PSTs can share with teachers.

### Professional Behaviour

- Set an example of professionalism in carrying out teacher responsibilities.
- Let your SA know that he/she is an important member of the team.
- Treat your SA with respect and consideration.
- Be clear about the need for flexibility and model flexible behaviour yourself.

### Communication

- Take the time to clarify the issue of lines of communication and reporting relationships so your assistant will have the same sense of the school organization and of how things operate.
- Take the time to plan and connect with your SA on a daily basis or on an as needed basis.
- Establish a common vocabulary and understanding of the most common education phrases.
- To enhance the effectiveness of your communication with the SA -- and therefore your relationship -- seek clarification on why s/he does things a particular way, and if appropriate clarify your expectations about how you would *prefer* to have things done.
- Plan in advance for your SA; include a column in your daybook for the assistant or use another written recording device.
- When you are absent, let the substitute teacher know what the SA's responsibilities are.

### General Expectations of your SA

- Clarify your expectations of the SA and make sure s/he knows what to expect from you, as well as the criteria for acceptable job performance.
- Be clear that SAs are not teachers and will not be requested or required to teach new material or evaluate students.
- Establish some regular routines and duties for the SA.

- Be specific about what and how the SA can communicate with parents.

### **Fostering SA Growth**

- Assist the SA in defining his/her position as an authority figure.
- Find ways to tactfully correct and constructively criticize. Be sensitive to the SA's feelings.
- Be prepared to make suggestions and give examples.

### **Assignment of Specific Duties**

- Build on the strengths, experiences and interests of your SA.
- Avoid assigning 'busy work', e.g. photocopying should be related to the students they are working with in respect to the students' programs.
- Retain prime responsibility for all students and their activities.
- Ensure the SA works under your supervision and follows the same behaviour management and instruction procedures that you use.
- Have the SA work with other students, for example leading a craft activity, while you work with the student(s) with learning differences.
- Assign a variety of duties to the SA to ensure that independence is fostered in the student(s) with learning differences.

## **B8.4 Fostering Student Independence**

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The importance of students *not* becoming dependent on a Support Assistant cannot be overstated. This issue is also considered in Part C, from the SA's point of view, but it is something that classroom teachers and PSTs also have to be aware of, and if required, make changes to the SA's role and schedule.

"... care must be taken not to provide excessive support or attention so that the student is isolated from their classmates, the teacher, or the activity. The (SA) should be perceived as an additional support to the classroom teacher and class providing one-on-one assistance only when absolutely needed. ...ideally the right amount of support allows the student to make maximal learning gains while participating in typical and valued activities. To ensure that students receive the most appropriate kind of support (SAs) need training and guidance from professional staff."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Downing, June (2002). *Including students with severe and multiple disabilities in typical classrooms: Practical strategies for teachers (2nd edition)*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks Publishing.

See also, C6. The last paragraph in that section is important enough that it's worth writing twice. The research is clear that teacher engagement with students with challenging needs is one of the most important contributors to the success of that student in a regular instructional setting. The teacher needs to remain engaged with all the students in the class and not assign a Support Assistant to specific students while s/he teaches everyone else.

## **B9) Web References for Some Difficult Issues for PSTs**

Anaphylaxis, catheterization, gastro-intestinal tubes, diabetes testing...: what is the role of the school? Where is the boundary between health services/ responsibilities and education responsibilities? If "health" stops doing something, like checking for head lice, does this mean the school has to do it? Does this mean the school *should* do it?

Tough questions and ones to which there are no easy, clear, or consistent answers – at least not in the NWT. Some provinces such as Ontario have an interministerial protocol for the provision of health support services in school settings. For any given support, from oral medication to tube feeding, three Ontario ministries have agreed who will administer the support and who will provide the training for the same. Unfortunately, no similar agreement exists in the NWT at this time. If it did, the questions at the beginning of this section would have answers.

In the absence of a territorial protocol/agreement schools/boards are essentially left to work out less formal agreements with their local/ regional health centre or health authority. The role of the Principal in fostering such interagency collaboration was identified in Part A.

### **B9.1 Health Support Services/ Medical Procedures in Schools**

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The lack of an NWT interministerial protocol for the provision of health support services in school settings notwithstanding, it is fundamental that no one in a school should be expected to carry out any medical or health related service/procedure until they have received *both* approval for delivering the service/procedures *and* training in the same from a qualified health practitioner.

In this section a number of web references are identified to help education bodies, Superintendents, Student Support Consultants, school administrators and PSTs determine how to handle some of these more difficult issues should they arise.

Caution is advised when checking any of the following web sites.

- **THEY ARE FOOD FOR THOUGHT -- FOR REFERENCE ONLY.** Many are based on provincial, state, or US Federal legislation, on collective agreements, or on interministerial protocols that don't reflect NWT legislation, government structure and agencies. They cannot be adopted without question.
- **ECE IS NOT RECOMMENDING OR ENDORSING ANY PARTICULAR PROCEDURES.** It is simply providing examples of what others have done.

## **Prudent Parent**

Application of the “prudent parent” filter might also help when deciding how or if a health service or medical procedure should be undertaken by the school. Essentially, when considering a given health service/procedure (“x”), the filter is this:

- Could a prudent parent be trained to do “x?” If so, then it is reasonable to expect that someone at the school can be trained to do “x.”

## **B9.1a Policy and Procedures: Departments of Education & School Boards**

### **British Columbia**

[www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/8\\_ inschoolnursing.htm](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/8_ inschoolnursing.htm)

In-School Nursing Support Services for Special Needs and Inter-Ministerial Protocols – Provision of Support Services are described as part of the document *Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines*.

[www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m149-89.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m149-89.pdf)

Support Services for Schools Ministerial Order describes Specialized Health Services in schools by education staff.

[www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec\\_needs/nursing.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/nursing.htm)

[www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec\\_needs/pdf/cfd\\_nursing\\_support\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/pdf/cfd_nursing_support_factsheet.pdf)

Ministry of Child and Family Development websites related to Nursing Support Services for Children with special health care needs, available at home, at school and in the community. Direct nursing care and delegated nursing care are described as well as eligibility requirements.

## Alberta

<http://education.alberta.ca/departement/policy/k-12manual/section1/services.aspx>

Policy at provincial level for provision of health-related services to students. General description mandating inter-ministerial and agency collaboration for service delivery.

[www.ecsd.net/policies\\_forms/gapdf/gar120-1.pdf](http://www.ecsd.net/policies_forms/gapdf/gar120-1.pdf)

Edmonton Catholic Schools policy for Administering Medication and Medical Treatment to Students.

<http://www.rockyview.ab.ca/pdfs/ACF538.pdf>

Board level policy on Administering Medication or Medical Treatment to Students – gives responsibilities and rights of students, parents and staff.

[www.eics.ab.ca/pdfs/IHCD%20-%20Meds.pdf](http://www.eics.ab.ca/pdfs/IHCD%20-%20Meds.pdf)

Board level Policy on Administration of Medication/Medical Treatment to Students. Includes guidelines, procedures and sample forms.

## Saskatchewan

<http://www.learning.gov.sk.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=190,211,107,81,1,Documents&MediaID=1371&Filename=CS-PolicyFramework.pdf>

Policy Framework for Children's Services – refer specifically to Policy 7.7. Health Related Services for Children and Policy 7.10 Integrated School-linked Services.

[www.saskschools.ca/~outlook/policies/7063.pdf](http://www.saskschools.ca/~outlook/policies/7063.pdf)

Board level sample policy for Outlook School Division on Administration of Medication and/or Medical Procedures.

## Ontario

[www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/81.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/81.html)

Governing policy in Ontario schools – Policy/Program Memorandum No. 81: Provision of Health Support Services In School Settings – includes description of inter-ministerial provision of services including model chart with roles of education and health personnel.

[www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills\\_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=135&isCurrent=false](http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=135&isCurrent=false)

Sabrina's Law – effective in 2006 outlining the obligation of each school board to establish a policy related to anaphylaxis and maintain individual plans for any pupils with an anaphylactic allergy.

[www.tvdsb.on.ca/policies/policydocs/Medical\\_Health.pdf](http://www.tvdsb.on.ca/policies/policydocs/Medical_Health.pdf)

Policy example at Board level on medications, non-emergency and emergency injections, blood glucose monitoring, specialized health support services - also forms used and resource materials.

[www.ugdsb.on.ca/policies/509%20resource%20handbook.pdf](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/policies/509%20resource%20handbook.pdf)

Health Support Services Handbook of the Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph region with explanations of conditions, services and resource materials for schools.

[www.tldsb.on.ca/pdfs/Policies/Educational%20Services/ES\\_5565.pdf](http://www.tldsb.on.ca/pdfs/Policies/Educational%20Services/ES_5565.pdf)

Clear detailed example of Board Policy including which procedures education staff do or do not perform – includes sample forms such as Medical Care Plan.

[www.umanitoba.ca/publications/cjeap/articles/edhealth.html](http://www.umanitoba.ca/publications/cjeap/articles/edhealth.html)

Article from Canadian Journal of Education Administration and Policy -- describes best practice in Toronto and how many service issues have been successfully addressed for children with complex health care needs within the existing policy framework.

## **New Brunswick**

[www.gnb.ca/0000/policies.asp](http://www.gnb.ca/0000/policies.asp)

Health Support Services policy for the public education system – describes procedures for emergency services and essential routine services and includes appendices with approved forms and letters to parents. Scroll to Health and Safety, policy #704.

[www.district8.nbed.nb.ca/district8policy/pages/pdf/healthsupport.pdf](http://www.district8.nbed.nb.ca/district8policy/pages/pdf/healthsupport.pdf)

Example of pamphlet for parents on health support services.

[www.unb.ca/education/bezeau/eact/eact18.html](http://www.unb.ca/education/bezeau/eact/eact18.html)

Chapter 18 of a book on Educational Administration for Canadian Teachers, titled Medical Problems in Schools, it examines the challenges faced by teachers in dealing with children with health care needs.

## **Prince Edward Island**

[www.gov.pe.ca/educ/index.php3?number=76608](http://www.gov.pe.ca/educ/index.php3?number=76608)

Minister's Directive No. MD97-06, Procedures for Dealing with Life-Threatening Allergies.

[www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/ed\\_anaphylactic.pdf](http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/ed_anaphylactic.pdf)

Information Handbook on Anaphylactic Shock – published jointly by the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Social Services.

[www.edu.pe.ca/esd/pdf/policies/jlcd\\_r.pdf](http://www.edu.pe.ca/esd/pdf/policies/jlcd_r.pdf)

Board level policy/administrative regulation for provision of services to students requiring assistance with medications, injections, catheterization, suctioning, tube feeding, physical therapy or other intensive clinical treatment.

## **Newfoundland and Labrador**

[www.mcsey.nl.ca/guidelinesissp.html](http://www.mcsey.nl.ca/guidelinesissp.html)

Guidelines to be followed by inter-departmental personnel to facilitate the implementation of the child-specific Individual Support Services Planning Process according to the Model for Coordination of Services to Children and Youth (1995).

[http://www.cormacktrail.k12.nf.ca/school\\_board/policy.htm](http://www.cormacktrail.k12.nf.ca/school_board/policy.htm)

Board level policy specifies educator and medical professional responsibilities. Scroll down to Policy #506 and 506.1

## **New Jersey**

[www.state.nj.us/njded/parents/shg.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/njded/parents/shg.pdf)

State of New Jersey School Health Services Guidelines – Sections 4 and 5 describe services to students with special needs and introduce the Individualized Health Care Plan. Sections 8A, 8B and 8C describe Managing Chronic Health Conditions, Asthma and Diabetes.

## **B9.1b Roles and Responsibilities and Legal Issues**

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[www.saskschoolboards.ca/EducationServices/ResearchAndDevelopment/ResearchReports/HumanResources/92-10.htm](http://www.saskschoolboards.ca/EducationServices/ResearchAndDevelopment/ResearchReports/HumanResources/92-10.htm)

Research project on deployment of instructional assistants in Saskatchewan elementary schools showed considerable consensus that IAs should not administer medication or be trained by the school nurse to perform simple medical procedures.

Note: Regina Catholic Schools recently advertised for a Medical Assistant to perform “non-invasive or invasive Paramedical functions such as stomach care, seizure care, catheterization or tracheotomy care under the direction of parents, guardians or medical personnel.”

[www.teachers.ab.ca/Quick+Links/Publications/Other+Publications](http://www.teachers.ab.ca/Quick+Links/Publications/Other+Publications)

Follow Publications Catalogue>Teachers as Professionals and scroll down to Teachers and Teachers' Assistants: Roles and Responsibilities

Alberta Teachers Association article on what duties can be assigned to Teacher Assistants. General article but touches on health-related services.

[www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/transition\\_protocol.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/transition_protocol.pdf)

Manitoba Guidelines for Early Childhood Transition to School for Children with Special Needs – the information on health care needs clearly defines procedures called “health care routines” which can be performed by non-health care professionals in the school who receive training and monitoring by a registered nurse, as well as procedures called “complex medical procedures” that must be performed by a registered nurse when the child is apart from family/caregivers -- i.e. in school.

[www.emsc.nysed.gov/sss/HealthServices/nursinginschoolsetting.htm](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/sss/HealthServices/nursinginschoolsetting.htm)

FAQs about Roles and Responsibilities in Relation to Nursing Procedures and Health-Related Activities for All Children in the School Setting in New York State. This article provides clarification on issues arising from a memorandum issued to govern nursing tasks and health-related activities for students with special health care needs.

[http://www.tracheostomy.com/networking/parent/medical\\_services.htm](http://www.tracheostomy.com/networking/parent/medical_services.htm)

An article entitled Medical Services: The Disputed Related Service, provides the detailed USA legal history behind a Supreme Court decision re: the provision of medical services in the public school setting and looks at implications of the court decision.

[http://www.tracheostomy.com/networking/parent/school\\_nursing.htm](http://www.tracheostomy.com/networking/parent/school_nursing.htm)

A lawyer's advice to parents seeking special nursing services in school for children requiring specialized services.

## **B9.1c General Information on Health Conditions**

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[www.fraserhealth.ca/HealthTopics/SchoolHealth/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.fraserhealth.ca/HealthTopics/SchoolHealth/Pages/default.aspx)

Provides School Health Index Information with information on such topics as medical conditions at school, allergic reactions and anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, seizures, and epilepsy as well as information on Nursing Support Services to schools.

[www.uchsc.edu/schoolhealth/res\\_pages/res\\_index.htm](http://www.uchsc.edu/schoolhealth/res_pages/res_index.htm)

University of Colorado Health Services – Office of School Health operates School Health Resource Services including a search engine for a reference collection of over 5000 school health related documents.

[www.disabilityresources.org/index.html](http://www.disabilityresources.org/index.html)

A guide to Disability Resources on the Internet. DRM Webwatcher has annotated resources on disabilities and many related topics – can be searched alphabetically or through the main index.

[www.healthinschools.org](http://www.healthinschools.org)

Website of the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools – Google search available for publications of the organization or the web on any health topic.

## **B9.1d Resources for Specific Conditions**

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### **Diabetes**

[www.diabetes.ca/Files/kwd\\_standard.pdf](http://www.diabetes.ca/Files/kwd_standard.pdf)

Standards of care are described which outline the responsibilities of both the school and family/student. Topics covered are communication/ education, blood glucose monitoring, hypoglycemia, and insulin administration.

[www.diabetes.ca/Files/kwd\\_faq.pdf](http://www.diabetes.ca/Files/kwd_faq.pdf)

Answers to questions on types of diabetes, signs and symptoms and school personnel actions and responsibilities.

[www.nj.gov/njded/edsupport/diabetes/](http://www.nj.gov/njded/edsupport/diabetes/)

A document in PDF format, entitled Guidelines for the Care of Students with Diabetes in the School, by the New Jersey Department of Education. Gives detailed information on circumstances, reactions, roles of personnel delivering services and knowledge needed by others. Also provides details on the Individual Health Care Plan (IHP).

[www.ndep.nih.gov/resources/school.htm](http://www.ndep.nih.gov/resources/school.htm)

Lists publications of the National Diabetes Education Program with links to PDF copies. Of particular interest is Helping the Student with Diabetes Succeed: A Guide for School Personnel. It includes information on actions and responsibilities of school personnel, parents and students, tools for effective diabetes management and sample Medical Management and Emergency Plans.

[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

Website of the American Diabetes Association has a Google search engine. Diabetes in Schools yielded many resources including an article on Tips for Diabetes Management at School. Or, follow Home>For parents and kids>For schools.

## **Anaphylaxis**

[www.csaci.medical.org/schools.html](http://www.csaci.medical.org/schools.html)

Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology article entitled Anaphylaxis in Schools and Other Child Care Settings gives definitions, symptoms, actions, management and sample plans.

[www.allergysafecommunities.ca](http://www.allergysafecommunities.ca)

Site has excerpts from, and supports the 2006 manual, Anaphylaxis in Schools and Other Settings – contains many suggestions for home, school and community responses.

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/tools.htm>

British Columbia has several documents related to anaphylaxis including some released in September 2007. By scrolling to Other Related Resources, links can be found for Ministerial Order (Anaphylaxis Protection Order, 2007), BC Anaphylactic and Child Safety Framework (2007), and Anaphylaxis: A Handbook for School Boards (2001).

[www.allergysafecommunities.ca/assets/appendix\\_a\\_eng.pdf](http://www.allergysafecommunities.ca/assets/appendix_a_eng.pdf)

Suggestions for Board level policy.

[www.cdnsba.org/publications/publications.php](http://www.cdnsba.org/publications/publications.php)

Download available from the Canadian School Boards Association publication Anaphylaxis: A Handbook for School Boards.

[www.eworkshop.on.ca/allergies](http://www.eworkshop.on.ca/allergies)

Learning tool designed for educators in Ontario schools – links to EpiPen and Twinjet websites for virtual training on Epinephrine.

[www.allergicliving.com](http://www.allergicliving.com)

Site based on Allergic Living Magazine – has chatroom for parents and people with anaphylaxis, asthma, allergies – section for schools on laws, practices and allergies in the news – many links to resources.

[www.calgaryallergy.ca](http://www.calgaryallergy.ca)

Offers a search engine for practical information and resources on allergies and asthma and a subject index of multi-sources of information including some for schools.

[www.aaia.ca](http://www.aaia.ca)

Allergy/Asthma Information Association offers links to publications and resources on all aspects of allergies.

[www.caasthma.org/files/3182%20Plan\\_final.pdf](http://www.caasthma.org/files/3182%20Plan_final.pdf)

California Department of Health Services presents an Asthma Action Plan for Schools and Families.

The following American organizations and their websites are listed as additional resources:

School Asthma & Allergy Knowledge Exchange –

[www.schoolasthmaallergy.com](http://www.schoolasthmaallergy.com)

Allergy and Asthma Network/Mothers of Asthmatics –

[www.aanma.org](http://www.aanma.org)

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America – [www.aafa.org](http://www.aafa.org)

## Catheterization

<http://www.kpdsb.on.ca/>

Follow Home>Board Information>Board Policies and scroll down to #312, Administration of Medication to Students. See also #312, Forms G and H.

Policy example from Keewatin-Patricia District School Board in Ontario which specifies Clean Catheterization and Shallow Suctioning to be provided by a trained Education Assistant.

[http://www.healthinschools.org/static/ejournal/december\\_print.aspx](http://www.healthinschools.org/static/ejournal/december_print.aspx)

Scroll down to Article on the issue of Catheterization of school children by paraprofessionals.

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/p2422.7.pdf>

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/bshp-sectionI.doc>

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/bshp-sectionII.doc>

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/bshp-sectionIII.doc>

West Virginia Public Schools Policy 2422.7, Standards for Health Care Procedures, and Basic and Specialized Health Care Manual for West Virginia Public Schools, 3 sections. Refers to various procedures such as catheterization under Specialized Health Care.

[www.healthcare.uiowa.edu/cdd/patients/cic.asp](http://www.healthcare.uiowa.edu/cdd/patients/cic.asp)

Information about Clean Intermittent Catheterization and how children can learn to do the procedure at school with or without assistance.

[www.cincinnatichildrens.org/health/info/urinary/procedure/catheterization-qa.htm?view=content](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/health/info/urinary/procedure/catheterization-qa.htm?view=content)

Questions and answers about intermittent catheterization.

## Tube Feeding

[www.cdlsusa.org/askthedoctor/answers/medical\\_needs\\_school.html](http://www.cdlsusa.org/askthedoctor/answers/medical_needs_school.html)

Describes situation in New Hampshire school re: tube feeding. All US schools must provide G-tube feedings. Who feeds is based on the Nurse Practice Act of each state and state rules and regulations.

[www.dysphagia.com/mlist/2001-December/msg00103.html](http://www.dysphagia.com/mlist/2001-December/msg00103.html)

The Dysphagia Resource Center – presents answers to questions on Tube Feeding in Children – particular question in this article has to do with positioning of a child being tube-fed at school.

[www.pedisurg.com/PtEduc/Tube\\_Feeding.htm](http://www.pedisurg.com/PtEduc/Tube_Feeding.htm)

Parent Education article on details of reasons for tube feeding, necessary surgery and types of g-tube.

[www.equipmentshop.com/ProductDetail.asp?ProductID=238](http://www.equipmentshop.com/ProductDetail.asp?ProductID=238)

Recommended video Taking Tube Feedings to School is available at cost of \$59US – describes the steps involved in sending tube fed children to school and gives supportive practical information for families and school personnel.

<http://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/HealthAZ/Gastrostomy-Care.aspx?articleID=8618&categoryID=>

Article on Gastrostomy care aimed at parents and other caregivers.

[http://health.ocde.us/School\\_Nurse\\_Support/Specialized\\_Physical\\_Health\\_Care\\_Services\\_SPHCS\\_.htm](http://health.ocde.us/School_Nurse_Support/Specialized_Physical_Health_Care_Services_SPHCS_.htm)

Procedures for Administration of Specialized Health Care Services by School Personnel from the Orange County California School Nurses Organization. These procedures are outlined for school nurses to use in training unlicensed district personnel and represent a standard of care for Orange County Public Schools. Many procedures are available, each in PDF format, with very detailed descriptions including those for Gastrostomy Tube Feeding, Sterile Catheterization and Oral-Nasal Suctioning.

## Other conditions

<http://infantrefluxdisease.com/reflux-school.php>

Detailed article entitled Going to School with Acid Reflux: A Parent's Guide written by authors from the Pediatric Gastro Esophageal Reflux Association.

## **B10) Summary of Part B**

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Program Support Teachers have a unique and challenging role. Part B has been written to bring clarity to that role and to describe current best/ promising practices in the various areas discussed. The PST advises and supports the Principal in the establishment of program support systems in the school, and they support teachers and Support Assistants in any number of ways ranging from “just listening,” to researching, assessing, coaching, modelling and problem solving. They are required to be knowledgeable about the curriculum at all levels.

Part B of this manual has considered a number of the roles and tasks that PSTs typically take on and in some ways it describes “an ideal.” As such, it is recognized that striving for that ideal is a process. Schools, classrooms, teachers, Support Assistants and others will continue to need support to move closer to the ideal “for as long as there are students.” It is hoped that the content of Part B will help the PST as they continue to help others.

## **Part C: For Support Assistants**



# Part C: For Support Assistants

## C1) Support Assistant Defined

Also referred to as program support assistant, student support assistant, special needs assistant and aide, a Support Assistant is defined as:

- An education assistant (paraprofessional) who assists in carrying out instructional plans, assists with classroom management, and provides instructional and other supports to students, under the direct supervision of a qualified teacher. (Does not include French monitors, aboriginal language assistants, or general classroom assistants.)

In short the role of the SA is to support a teacher or classroom. A Support Assistant should never be viewed as a student's personal assistant.

## C2) Purpose of Part C

The role of the SA has already been outlined in A2.2f from which it should be clear that the SA is one of many program support partners.

Given that SAs work with and under the direct supervision of a classroom teacher it is impossible to consider the role of an SA without also looking at how their role interacts with the teacher's role. This was discussed in B8.2 in which a chart shows:

- responsibilities that typically fall to the Support Assistant,
- responsibilities of the teacher, and
- responsibilities that the teacher and SA share.

Part C of this guide is primarily for Support Assistants. It describes what is typically expected of them, what should not be expected of them, and it also looks at things that they can do to work effectively with both students and teachers. The appendix, entitled Support Assistant Competency Profile, contains a tool which can be used in a variety of ways to help develop and evaluate Support Assistant expectations.

### **C3) Support Assistant Expectations**

Support Assistant expectations have been identified under seven headings below. Of course no SA would be expected to carry out all of these expectations, all of the time, but the lists below show the range of an SA's role, and what a teacher could expect them to do over the course of their employment as an SA.<sup>11</sup>

#### **C3a Professional Behaviour**

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Support Assistants are expected to:

- √ Promote an atmosphere of respect for students and adults.
- √ Demonstrate ethical and confidential behaviour.
- √ Demonstrate an appropriate and independent use of time.
- √ Demonstrate responsible behaviour towards attendance and work schedule.
- √ Address conflicts with teachers at the classroom level first, school level second and district level third.
- √ Participate in staff development activities.
- √ Make a positive contribution to the school's functions and activities.
- √ Adhere to the expectations of the Code of Ethics for their position.
- √ Undertake any necessary training, particularly in the area of student health issues which are increasing.
- √ Identify areas of professional growth need and request training as required.

#### **C3b Rapport with Students**

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Support Assistants are expected to:

- √ Show enthusiasm when working with students.
- √ Show patience and understanding towards students.
- √ Actively foster independence of students they work with.
- √ Treat students in a respectful, responsible and fair manner - with due consideration for students' culture, as well as physical, social and psychological development.
- √ Maintain effective and co-operative relationships with students.

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<sup>11</sup> Adapted, with permission, from *Teacher Assistant Guidelines for Standards and Evaluation* (1994). New Brunswick, Department of Education.

- √ Demonstrate appropriate responses to student-initiated interactions.

### **C3c Team Support**

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Support Assistants are expected to:

- √ Participate co-operatively when acting as a member of an Instructional Team, the School Team, or an IEP Team.
- √ Demonstrate effective communication skills with teachers, school administrators, PST(s) and other support personnel.
- √ Share relevant information at Instructional, School and IEP Team meetings and parent/teacher interviews.
- √ Use established communications systems with teacher(s) – e.g. log book.
- √ Communicate with parents as requested by the classroom teacher.

### **C3d Instructional Support**

---

Support Assistants are expected to:

- √ Help students with assigned tasks and class work, reinforcing concepts and skills presented by the teacher.
- √ Monitor independent or small-group work.
- √ Listen to students read.
- √ Read to students.
- √ Present concepts in the student's language.
- √ Demonstrate a sense of when either the teacher or a student needs assistance.
- √ Adapt materials as planned and directed by the teacher.
- √ Act as a note-taker or scribe, if required.
- √ After appropriate training, assist students with the operation of assistive technology for learning.
- √ Assist students in meeting their learning outcomes within community settings.
- √ Record required information on student activities, as directed by the teacher.

### **C3e Implementation of Student Support Plans and Individual Education Plans**

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Support Assistants are expected to:

- √ Carry out teacher-directed activities to achieve IEP annual student outcomes, on an individual basis or within a group.
- √ Consistently apply the accommodations/strategies identified in students' Student Support Plans.
- √ Assist with the preparation of specialized teaching aids and materials as planned by the teacher.
- √ After appropriate training, carry out recommendations provided by consultants (e.g. speech).
- √ After appropriate training use appropriate reinforcement strategies such as prompting and modeling.
- √ Provide the teacher with daily feedback on student progress.

### **C3f Social/Behavioural Support**

---

Support Assistants are expected to:

- √ Use a consistent behaviour support system when working with students – e.g. behavioural expectations and routines - as established by the teacher.
- √ Provide students with feedback and reinforcement on the students' performance in targeted behaviours and accommodations/strategies identified in an SSP, or IEP.
- √ Redirect inappropriate behaviours in a positive manner.
- √ Monitor student behaviour in various school settings.
- √ Observe and record student behaviour in accordance with the teacher's plan.
- √ Provide opportunities and activities for students to participate with peers.
- √ Demonstrate skill in acknowledging and encouraging expected behaviours during instruction and transition periods.

### **C3g Non-instructional Support**

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Support Assistants are expected to:

- √ Make instructional materials, such as games, posters, booklets.

- √ Make displays and bulletin boards.
- √ Locate and display instructional materials.
- √ Operate audio-visual and other equipment.
- √ Assist the teacher with correcting and recording, as appropriate.
- √ Assist with routine administrative tasks, such as photocopying, related to student programming.
- √ Assist with school supervision duties.
- √ Assist individual students with physical needs such as feeding, lifting, mobility, exercising, cleaning, dressing and toileting.
- √ Assist individual students in emergency situations – e.g. fire drills.
- √ Check assistive devices such as medical, mobility and technological aids.
- √ Give medication and record appropriately according to school policy/procedures.
- √ After appropriate training perform specific medical procedures – e.g. taking blood pressure, diabetes testing, or administering needles.

#### **C4) What Support Assistants Should Not Do**

Because the *Education Act*, Section 45 assigns certain duties to qualified teachers there are some tasks that a person employed as a Support Assistant should not be performing:

Instructional duties Support Assistants should NOT perform:

- x Be solely responsible for a classroom, or a professional service.
- x Be responsible for diagnosing students' learning needs.
- x Be responsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating instruction.
- x Be responsible for assigning grades to students.
- x Be used as a substitute for certified teachers unless s/he possesses the appropriate certifications and is hired as a substitute teacher.
- x Assume full responsibility for supervising assemblies or field trips.
- x Perform a duty that is primarily instructional in nature.
- x Be assigned to work with students with the most challenging behaviours, in an area without interruption or supervision, for the majority of the day.

Non-instructional duties Support Assistants should NOT perform:

- x Assume full responsibility for planning and supervising activities.
- x Choose educational activities or materials for students.
- x Grade subjective tests/assignments.
- x Perform any medical or health related service/procedure that, even with training, is beyond what a prudent parent would perform.

## **C5) Working Effectively as a Support Assistant**

As an SA you are a part of a **teaching team** – you do not work alone. Here are some ways you can work effectively with teachers to create a positive learning environment for students and a positive working environment for yourself.

- Understand and accept that your role is to assist and support the teacher in delivering instruction and other services:
  - Meet with the teacher(s) and discuss each activity you might be responsible for.
  - How much supervision and guidance will you have?
  - What responsibilities will be shared, and what is the teacher responsible for?
- Orient yourself to the school:
  - Who will be my supervisor? When will we meet?
  - Is there a weekly schedule? Does it include planning time with the teacher(s)?
  - Will I be evaluated on my work? Who will do it? How will it be done?
  - What is the process for assigning Support Assistants to teachers/classes? For reassigning?
  - What are school policies on safety and behaviour? What is expected of me in terms of enforcing these policies?
  - Am I expected to attend staff meetings?
  - Am I expected to attend parent conferences?
  - Will I have an e-mail account? Mailbox?
  - If I have work-related problems who should I discuss these with?
- Establish a relationship with the teacher(s):
  - Get to know the teacher(s) and let the teacher(s) know what strengths and experiences you bring to the job.

- Provide input on planning.
- Give the teacher(s) feedback about how your working relationship is going. Be respectful but bring any concerns to the teacher'(s) attention.
- Try to get training:
  - Talk to the teacher(s), PST, or Principal about what training might be available for you.
- Maintain confidentiality:
  - Only discuss student information with those working directly with a student.
  - Don't discuss student information outside of school.
  - Don't discuss staff personalities or problems.
  - Don't talk to parents about student progress unless requested by the teacher(s). If a parent brings it up refer them to the teacher.
- Self-evaluate your work from time to time:
  - Did I review the lesson plan beforehand?
  - Was I prepared? Did I have the materials I needed?
  - Did I use appropriate reinforcement techniques?
  - Did I record or summarize students' performance?
  - Were students engaged?
  - Did I discuss the results with the teacher?
- Make sure others can count on you:
  - If you can't be at school because of illness or an emergency let the Principal/ supervisor know as soon as possible.
  - Arrive early enough so that you can talk to the teacher(s) before class starts.
  - Stay with the teacher/class unless otherwise instructed.
  - Be flexible. Your schedule might change because of a special activity, illness, etc.

## C6) Promoting Student Independence

Support Assistants are an invaluable support to both the teachers and the students they work with. But they *can* provide too much support, particularly if they are providing one-on-one assistance to students. Some of the things that can happen if there is too much one-on-one assistance:

- The student becomes dependent on the SA.
- The student does not socialize with their peers the way other students do.
- The student may not achieve the annual student outcomes of their IEP.

Here are some things to keep in mind so that you help students when they need it, but work to reduce your help as soon as you can:

- Be clear about exactly what the student needs help with, and only do those things.
- With the teacher, develop a plan to directly teach skills (such as self care) that currently limit the student's independence.
- With the teacher, develop a plan to gradually fade or reduce the amount of help.
- If a student has a particular disorder or condition, ask for information about it. Ask for training, if appropriate.
- Ask peers to provide help, as appropriate, so dependence is not created on one person.
- For the same reason, take a class activity, such as a craft, while the teacher works with the student.

Remember that a student has not really learned how to do something until the skill can be performed under natural conditions as independently as possible. For example if a student raises his hand, instead of crying out, but only when someone touches their elbow as a reminder, then they have not really learned that behaviour. Touching the elbow is fine at one point in the student's learning but it needs to be faded over time – for example by moving to an oral cue, then “a look”, then having the student give themselves a check mark when they raise their hand. Three check marks earn a reward, etc.

Some students and Support Assistants form close ties and wonderful friendships. And sometimes student progress can be attributed in part to the consistency of support from one key person.

However, over time, the student must be challenged to work with different people and in different settings. A Support Assistant is not going to always “be there” and if a student only performs with the SA at his/her side, s/he is too dependent on the SA; in the long run this is not helping him/her.

Finally, the research is clear that teacher engagement with students with challenging needs is one of the most important contributors to student success in regular instructional settings. The teacher needs to remain engaged with all students in the class, and not assign a Support Assistant to specific students while s/he teaches everyone else.

## **C7) Summary of Part C**

Support Assistants are an established part of the NWT education system, and their support is valued by students, parents and teachers alike. The role of the Support Assistant is not an independent one; an SA works directly with students, but under the direction of a teacher. If an SA works in more than one classroom the duties that each teacher wants them to perform may be quite different.

Part C has attempted to clarify the duties and relationships that an SA can expect, by:

- describing the full range of what a Support Assistant might be asked to do -- over time and in different classrooms with different teachers and students.
- suggesting ways that SAs can work most effectively with the teachers they support.
- suggesting ways that SAs can work most effectively with the students they support, in a manner that promotes student independence.



# **Glossary**

# GLOSSARY

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## **Accommodations/Adaptations/Accommodation Strategies**

Changes made to the teaching process, learning environment, materials, time demands, assistance, evaluation or student products to help students achieve the expected learning outcomes (See Appendix of SSP Guidelines.) When accommodations are made/provided the expected learning outcomes as stated in curricular documents are not changed.

## **Annual Student Outcomes**

Learning outcomes for students with IEPs. Concise descriptions of what a student with an Individual Education Plan will know and be able to do by the end of the school year. Well-written annual students outcomes should be “SMART” – i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time related.

## **Assessment**

A systematic process of gathering and interpreting information about what a student knows, is able to do and is learning to do. (*Departmental Directive on Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting* (2001))

## **Assistive Technology for Learning (ATL)**

A broad range of classroom materials, devices, media and other technologies that allow access to learning for students who have barriers due to their sensory, physical, cognitive or other learning challenges.

## **Authentic Assessment**

Performance-based assessment which presents students with real-world challenges that require them to apply their relevant skills and knowledge.

## **Behaviour Support Plan**

See Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA). Information from an FBA (i.e. an understanding of the purpose of a repeated misbehaviour) is used to develop a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP). Rather than simply focusing on eliminating the problem behaviour, the focus is on modifying the context so the behaviour is less likely to occur in the first place, and on teaching replacement behaviours so that the problem behaviour becomes irrelevant or inefficient. Both the FBA and the subsequent development of the BSP are time consuming and

require a team approach. Just as very few students require an IEP to outline their education program, typically very few students have behavioural needs severe enough to call for the FBA and BSP processes.

### **Challenges**

Term used in this document to refer to the learning needs or the areas of difficulty of a student.

### **Circle of Friends**

The 'circle of friends' approach works by mobilizing a young person's peers to provide support and engage in problem solving with the person in difficulty. For more information visit Inclusion Press at [www.inclusion.com](http://www.inclusion.com).

### **Co-teaching**

Refer to Team Teaching as well as to B4.1. The main difference between Co-teaching and Team Teaching is that Co-teaching significantly reduces the pupil teacher ratio – the PST works with the classroom teacher-- whereas Team Teaching does not.

### **Diverse Learners**

Refers to the many ways students differ from one another. Cultural background, gender, socioeconomic status, ability levels, learning styles, and interests, all impact students' strengths and challenges as learners. These in turn impact their achievement and therefore the education program and support needs. NWT classrooms are characterized by diversity.

### **Education Assistant**

Generic term for a number of specific paraprofessional positions including general Classroom Assistant, Aboriginal Language and Culture Assistant, French Monitor, and Support Assistant. Only Support Assistants are discussed in this document. Education Assistants are assigned to a particular classroom or team and work under the direction and supervision of a certified teacher to help that teacher deliver the education program and any required supports to the students in the class. (See also, Support Assistant)

### **Education Program**

Generic term that means any or all of Regular Education Program, Modified Education Program or Individual Education Program. As per *Departmental Directive on Inclusive Schooling*, 2006 all students must follow one of these three programs.

**Education Program Planning**

Process for determining the education program – Regular, Modified or Individual – plus necessary supports, if any.

**Educational Leadership Program (ELP)**

An 8 or 9 nine day program taken over two summers designed to help northern educators develop key leadership skills. Principals are required to take the ELP in order to be certified as such.

**Effective Behaviour Support (EBS)**

Refer to B7.1

**Functional Behaviour Assessment**

A systematic process for understanding severe, chronic and/or complex problem behaviours by identifying the function that the behaviour serves from the student's point of view. Refer to B7.2a for an example. An FBA always takes place through observation in the natural context/ setting where the problem behaviour occurs. By understanding the function of a problem behaviour (through an FBA) this information is used to develop a Behaviour Support Plan. (See also, Behaviour Support Plan.)

**Functional Curricular Level**

Refers to the grade level of curricular learning outcomes on which a student is currently working. This level may be different for different subjects -- e.g. Grade 5 in Math and Grade 4 in English Language Arts.

**Functional Grade Level (FGL)**

Information reported to ECE in May of each year. Refers to the grade level of curricular learning outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics that the student has worked on for the *majority of the school year*.

**Inclusive Schooling**

Inclusive Schooling begins with the philosophy that *all* students belong with their peers and should have equal access to educational opportunities. In practice, inclusive schooling translates into finding ways to include all students in regular instructional settings by meeting their unique needs in terms of both the education program and required supports.

**Inclusive Schooling Funds/Funding**

One of several headings used by ECE to allocate funds, by formula, to

NWT education bodies. *Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling*, 2006 specifies what funds received under the heading of Inclusive Schooling are to be used for, as well as what they are not to be used for.

### **Individual Education Program/Plan (IEP)**

An Individual Education Program is a student-specific program and is outlined in an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This plan is a comprehensive written education plan with annual student outcomes and shorter-term objectives, determined through a collaborative process, driven by the strengths and needs of the student. It may or may not include learning outcomes articulated in NWT curricula. A student on an IEP usually requires supports, accommodations, facilities, resources and equipment beyond those required by his/her peers. These are detailed in the Individual Education Plan.

### **Instructional Team**

Refer to A2.2a.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Descriptions of the knowledge and skills that students are expected to know and be able to do at the completion of a course or grade in a subject area. For students following a Regular Education Program or a Modified Education Program the learning outcomes are stated in NWT curricula. For students on an Individual Education Program, the learning outcomes are the annual student outcomes described in their IEPs (and for some students with IEPs learning outcomes from approved NWT curricula.)

### **MAPs**

Making Action Plans is a person-centered planning tool which, through facilitation, encourages the telling of a person's "story". The process focuses on the individual's gifts and strengths and looks at steps needed to move towards a desired future. For more information visit Inclusion Press at [www.inclusion.com](http://www.inclusion.com).

### **Modified Education Program**

A Modified Education Program retains the learning outcomes articulated in NWT curricula, at a level other than the assigned grade level. Based on student strengths, needs and interests, a collaborative process is used to determine and document/record necessary program changes in a Student Support Plan.

### **Multiple Intelligences**

Refer to B4.2e

**Parents**

The biological parents or adoptive parents, or the individual who has legal custody or guardianship of a student.

**PATH**

Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) is an example of a person-centered planning process based on a commitment by a group of individuals to form a network of support to assist an individual in identifying and working towards a desired future. For more information visit Inclusion Press at [www.inclusion.com](http://www.inclusion.com)

**Peers**

Students of approximately the same chronological age.

**Personal Futures Planning (PFP)**

An approach used to create a person-centered plan, or vision of the future for an individual. The plan is developed with all the individuals actively involved in a person's life. Typically there is a broad focus, including the personal preferences and strengths of the person and not just the problems and difficulties. Personal futures planning offers a broad context for and the cornerstone on which to build Individual Education Plans. MAPs and PATH are examples of PFP.

**Professional Development Fund**

Fund for NWTTA members administered by the Central Professional Development Committee of the NWTTA. Used for the benefit of GNWT NWTTA members for various professional development activities whether at the individual, school, regional or territorial level.

**Professional Learning Community**

A collegial group of administrators and school staff who share a vision, work and learn collaboratively, visit and review other classrooms, and participate in decision making. Benefits to the staff and students include a reduced isolation of teachers, better informed and committed teachers, and academic gains for students. (Hord, S.M. (1997). Professional learning communities: What they are and why they are important. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 6(1).)

**Program Support**

Providing support to classroom or subject area teachers to help them determine and deliver an appropriate education program, and supports if needed, to their students. Providing program support requires a collaborative process with the teacher and one or more individuals, groups or organizations identified in A2.2.

**Program Support Record**

Includes information used to support programming decisions for students who require additional supports and services. Information typically found in the Program Support Record, such as medical or psychological reports, is often prescribed by the *Education Act* and *Student Record Regulations* to be excluded from the Student Record. (For details refer to *Departmental Directive on the Management of Information in the Student Record and Other Records Pertaining to Students*, 1998, under revision.)

**Program Support System(s)**

Procedures related to the provision of program support, agreed upon and known to all in the school – e.g. procedure for allocating SAs, procedure for accessing support of the School Team.

**Regular Education Program**

A Regular Education Program is determined by the learning outcomes articulated in NWT curricula for a specific grade level.

**Regular Instructional Setting**

Location best suited for a given type of instruction or learning experience. Includes all school settings such as classrooms and gymnasium. Also includes out-of-school settings such as a field trip location.

**School Counseling Programs Staff**

Generic term that refers to all staff who deliver the counseling programs offered in a given school.

**School Team**

Refer to 2.2b

**Staff Development**

Generic term that includes all types of professional growth activities, regardless of the purpose, duration, or source of funding.

**Students with learning differences**

Students for whom a teacher may seek program support because of learning difficulty, or the need for enrichment.

**Student Record**

Commonly referred to as the cum file, the Student Record is the only record referred to in the *Education Act* and Regulations. Contains basic information and progress reports, but does not

include more sensitive information such as medical or psychological reports, or reports from Social Services and Justice. (For details refer to *Departmental Directive on the Management of Information in the Student Record and Other Records Pertaining to Students, 1998*, under revision.) (See also, Program Support Record and Support Services Record.)

## Student Support

Term used in the NWT instead of “special education.” Student Support is broader than special education -- ALL students need support to enhance learning/ overcome barriers to learning, but the type, duration and quantity vary along a broad continuum from students who need few, short term supports – e.g. the student who sees a counselor because her dog died – to students who need multiple, complex and ongoing supports. (See also, Supports.)

## Student Support Plan

A one or two page written plan, generated with a FileMaker Pro template, that documents one of:

- *Regular Education Program with Accommodations for Difficulty (K-12)*
  - Documents accommodations to address area(s) of difficulty; with said accommodations the student is expected to meet curricular outcomes at grade level.
- *Regular Education Program with Accommodations for Enrichment (K-12)*
  - Documents accommodations for enrichment for students who are able to meet grade level learning outcomes but need additional challenge.
- *Modified Education Program – Below Grade Level (K-9 only)*
  - Documents targeted curricular outcomes for subjects in which a student is working on curricular outcomes below grade level, and also documents accommodation strategies designed to address area(s) of difficulty.
- *Modified Education Program – Above Grade Level (K-9 only)*
  - Documents targeted curricular outcomes for subjects in which a student is working on curricular outcomes above grade level, and also documents accommodation strategies designed to provide additional challenge. (This type of SSP should be used rarely and only after extensive accommodations have been made to the Regular Education Program to provide additional challenge.)

*(Note: Grade 10-12 courses cannot be modified. By definition, learning outcomes for senior secondary courses are written for one grade level only.)*

## Strategies

See Accommodations/Accommodation Strategies

## Support Assistant

Also referred to as program support assistant, student support assistant, special needs assistant and aide, a support assistant is an education assistant (paraprofessional) who assists in carrying out instructional plans, assists with classroom management, and provides instructional and other supports to students, under the direct supervision of a qualified teacher. Does not include French monitors, aboriginal language assistants, or general classroom assistants. (See also, Education Assistant)

## Support Services Record

Includes information used to support programming decisions for students who require additional supports and services beyond those that a school is able to provide/coordinate. Those services are coordinated by the education body. (For details refer to *Departmental Directive on the Management of Information in the Student Record and Other Records Pertaining to Students*, 1998, under revision.)

## Supports/ Support Services

An additional service or device provided to a student to enhance learning, or help the student overcome barriers to learning. Supports are services above and beyond that provided to all students as part of the overall school program. A few examples include:

- provision of various accommodations/accommodation strategies
- programming assistance such as small group instruction, or homework assistance
- assessment services
- rehabilitative and medical services
- Functional Behaviour Assessment and Behaviour Support Plan
- counseling to improve attendance or help deal with personal issues
- the provision of specialized equipment and resources

It must be emphasized that supports, including accommodations such as extra time do **not** alter the expected learning outcomes of a student's program – they merely help the student meet those expected outcomes.

**Teaching Team**

Teacher and Support Assistant.

**Team Teaching**

Two teachers combine their classes and actively share the instruction of content and skills to all students. (See also, Co-teaching.)

**30 Minute Problem Solving**

Refers to a resource published by the Roeher Institute called *Teachers Helping Teachers: Problem-solving Teams that Work* -- an effective process for team problem solving in 30 minutes. Teachers who want suggestions bring their problem to the team – e.g. “Jason is always late for my class and I’ve tried everything.” The team follows an efficient process in which the teacher explains the problem, the team members ask questions and then generate suggestions from which the teacher selects ones to try. Available through [www.roeher.ca](http://www.roeher.ca) for a cost. Well worth the price.



# **Appendix**



# APPENDIX: Support Assistant Competency Profile

The Support Assistant Competency Profile which follows is a description of the specific job expectations of a person employed as a Support Assistant. Job expectations are organized under seven headings, and match the job expectations identified in section 3C. A five point rating scale (1 = low performance, 5 = high) plus a column marked N/A (meaning not applicable) is provided for each job expectation.

## Purpose of the Support Assistant Competency Profile

The Support Assistant Competency Profile is designed to be used as a tool to develop the competencies of the Support Assistant within the teacher-SA teaching team. The Profile clearly identifies skills related to supporting teachers and students in the classroom and provides performance criteria with which to monitor the development of these skills and competencies. The competency profile can be used in a number of different ways, including:

- **Self Evaluation**

Support Assistants can use the profile to reflect on their levels of competence in the specific expectations associated with their position as an SA.

- **Professional Growth**

Support Assistants, the teachers they work with, Program Support Teachers and school administrators can use the profile to identify and discuss areas for training and development.

- **Performance Evaluation**

School administrators can incorporate use the profile into the process for evaluating the performance of Support Assistants.

**It is critical that all participants, including the SA, teacher, PST and Principal, agree as to the purpose and function of the profile prior to its use. If it is to be used as a tool for self evaluation or as a basis for professional dialogue and growth, it must be clear that the discussions and analysis of performance are formative in nature. If, on the other hand, the profile is intended to be used as a summative tool, the SA must be aware of the process and criteria of evaluation.**



# **Northwest Territories**

## **Support Assistant Competency Profile**



**Northwest Territories  
Support Assistant Competency Profile**

Support Assistant: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose (choose one):

- Self Evaluation
- Professional Growth
- Performance Evaluation

Participants: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

Signatures:

## SUPPORT ASSISTANT COMPETENCY PROFILE

For each specific job expectation for a person employed as a Support Assistant, circle the number which most appropriately rates current performance. A number of indicators are given to assist in rating the job expectation in question.

- 1 = This expectation is never or rarely evident.
- 3 = This expectation is sometimes evident.
- 5 = This expectation is consistently evident.

### PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

### Rating Scale

|   |  |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| A | Promotes an atmosphere of respect for students & adults  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| B | Demonstrates ethical and confidential behaviour  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| C | Demonstrates an appropriate and independent use of time  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| D | Demonstrates responsible behaviour towards attendance and work schedule                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| E | Addresses conflicts with teachers at the classroom level first, school level second and district level third | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| F | Participates in staff development activities   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| G | Makes a positive contribution to the school's functions and activities                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| H | Adheres to the expectations of the Code of Ethics for their position   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| I | Undertakes any necessary training, particularly in the area of student health issues which are increasing    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| J | Identifies areas of professional growth need and requests training as required                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

#### INDICATORS FOR RATING PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

| 1  | 3   | 5  |
|--|---|--|
| Requires constant supervision to complete tasks. Depends on others to identify needs and solutions. Has low interest in training. Does not follow established policies and procedures. Attendance is poor. | Requires little supervision to complete assigned tasks. Engages in activities with students. Accepts constructive advice and direction. Willing to participate in training sessions. Dependable attendance. | Is aware of and carries out assigned tasks independently. On-going self evaluation. Actively seeks and obtains appropriate resources and training. Follows established policies and procedures. Attendance is exemplary. |

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

## RAPPORT WITH STUDENTS

### Rating Scale

|   |  |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| A | Shows enthusiasm when working with students  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| B | Shows patience and understanding towards students  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| C | Actively fosters independence of students they work with   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| D | Treats students in a respectful, responsible and fair manner - with due consideration for students' culture, as well as physical, social and psychological development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| E | Maintains effective and co-operative relationships with students   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| F | Demonstrates appropriate responses to student-initiated interactions   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

### INDICATORS FOR RATING RAPPORT WITH STUDENTS EXPECTATIONS

| 1   | 3   | 5  |
|---|---|--|
| Lacks interest in students. Becomes irritated when students fail. Demonstrates dominate behaviour over students. Does not allow students to attempt activities with independence. | Is as responsive to students at the end of the day as at the beginning. Facilitates opportunities for student success. Communicates encouragement, not frustration or impatience. | Exhibits an established rapport with students and keeps communication open and active. When working with students shows enthusiasm, patience, understanding and humour. Facilitates appropriate self-generated behaviours in students. |

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

**TEAM SUPPORT**

**Rating Scale**

- A Participates co-operatively when acting as a member of an Instructional Team, the School Team, or an IEP Team 1 2 3 4 5 N/A
- B Demonstrates effective communication skills with teachers, school administrators, PST(s) and other support personnel 1 2 3 4 5 N/A
- C Shares relevant information at Instructional, School and, IEP Team meetings and parent/teacher interviews 1 2 3 4 5 N/A
- D Uses established communications systems with teacher(s) – e.g. log book 1 2 3 4 5 N/A
- E Communicates with parents as requested by the classroom teacher 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

| <b>INDICATORS FOR RATING TEAM SUPPORT EXPECTATIONS</b>   |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 1  | 3  | 5  |
| A negative or non-professional relationship exists. Avoids other staff. Responds defensively to new ideas. Critical of other staff or administration. Does not use the established communication system. | A relationship exists but it may be tenuous due to inadequate communication. In general the quality of the professional relationship is positive. Uses established communication system. | Effectively exhibits positive interactions with team members, other staff and administration. Uses effective and appropriate communication skills. Attends meetings and makes a positive contribution. |

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

## INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

### Rating Scale

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| A | Helps students with assigned tasks and class work, reinforcing concepts and skills presented by the teacher | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| B | Monitors independent or small-group work  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| C | Listens to students read  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| D | Reads to students   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| E | Presents concepts in the student's language   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| F | Demonstrates a sense of when either the teacher or a student needs assistance                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| G | Adapts materials as planned and directed by the teacher   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| H | Acts as a note-taker or scribe, if required   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| I | After appropriate training, assists students with the operation of assistive technology for learning        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| J | Assists students in meeting their learning outcomes within community settings                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| K | Records required information on student activities, as directed by the teacher                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

### INDICATORS FOR RATING INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT EXPECTATIONS

| 1  | 3  | 5  |
|--|--|--|
| Focuses on one student. Is not aware of other students in group. Little or no reinforcement given to students. | Is aware of group needs but may require a lot of direction from classroom teacher in order to work with the group. Provides some opportunity to practise learned skills outside the classroom. Is able to attend to group or student but only able to deal with one situation at a time. | Demonstrates skill in anticipating needs of a group. Requires minimal direction from classroom teacher in order to work with the group. Spontaneously gives attention where needed. Looks for opportunities for transfer of skills learned throughout the day. Easily adapts to the situation at hand. |

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

**IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT SUPPORT PLANS AND INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS**

**Rating Scale**

|   |  |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| A | Carries out teacher-directed activities to achieve IEP annual student outcomes, on an individual basis or within a group | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| B | Consistently applies the accommodations/strategies identified in students' Student Support Plans                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| C | Assists with the preparation of specialized teaching aids and materials as planned by the teacher                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| D | After appropriate training, carries out recommendations provided by consultants (e.g. speech)                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| E | After appropriate training uses appropriate reinforcement strategies such as prompting and modeling                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| F | Provides the teacher with daily feedback on student progress   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

| <b>INDICATORS FOR RATING IMPLEMENTATION OF SSPs AND IEPs EXPECTATIONS</b>  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>3</b>  | <b>5</b>   |
| Does not follow planned activities. Does not apply accommodations in SSPs. Little follow-through in carrying out recommendations of consultants. Little or no reinforcement given. Gives limited feedback to teacher and only when specifically asked. | Assists in the planning of activities when appropriate. Organizes materials in advance. Applies accommodations in SSPs with direction from teacher. Follows teacher's plans including objectives, materials and procedures. | Assists teachers in presenting appropriate materials and tasks. Assists teachers in adjusting task difficulty to meet the needs of the students. Adapts quickly to changes. Consistently applies accommodations in SSPs. Uses materials as directed by the teacher to meet developmental and instructional objectives. Cooperates fully with careful implementation of recommendations of consultants. Student independence is promoted and SA's expectations are appropriate. |

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

## SOCIAL/BEHAVIOURAL SUPPORT

### Rating Scale

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| A | Uses a consistent behaviour support system when working with students – e.g. behavioural expectations and routines -- as established by the teacher             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| B | Provides students with feedback and reinforcement on the students' performance in targeted behaviours and accommodations/strategies identified in an SSP or IEP | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| C | Redirects inappropriate behaviours in a positive manner   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| D | Monitors student behaviour in various school settings   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| E | Observes and records student behaviour in accordance with the teacher's plan  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| F | Provides opportunities and activities for students to participate with peers  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| G | Demonstrates skill in acknowledging and encouraging expected behaviours during instruction and transition periods   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

| INDICATORS FOR RATING SOCIAL/BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT EXPECTATIONS   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1   | 3   | 5   |
| Does not follow established behaviour support system. Uses behaviour support accommodations/strategies inconsistent with the teacher's expectations. Focus is on negative behaviour. Inconsistent response to inappropriate behaviours. Uses punishing or derogatory remarks. | Follows established behaviour support system with teacher reminders. Carries out SSP/IEP behaviour support accommodations/strategies but may be inconsistent or need reminders from the teacher to do so. Inappropriate behaviour is redirected but no attempt is made to facilitate self-control. (The SA is the control factor.) Positive acknowledgement of most appropriate target behaviours. Tone of remarks is usually positive. | Consistent adherence to established behaviour support system. Accommodations/ strategies applied consistently. Expectations are modified based on individual student needs. Response to inappropriate behaviour is logical, consistent with the established behaviour support system, and administered with respect. Ongoing feedback is provided to the teacher. Focus is on the facilitation of self-control and promotion of social/ emotional growth. |

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS;

## NON-INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

### Rating Scale

|   |  |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| A | Makes instructional materials, such as games, posters, booklets  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| B | Makes displays and bulletin boards   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| C | Locates and displays instructional materials   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| D | Operates audio-visual and other equipment  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| E | Assists the teacher with correcting and recording, as appropriate  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| F | Assists with routine administrative tasks, such as photocopying, related to student programming  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| G | Assists with school supervision duties   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| H | Assists individual students with physical needs such as feeding, lifting, mobility, exercising, cleaning, dressing and toileting         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| I | Assists individual students in emergency situations – e.g. fire drills   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| J | Checks assistive devices such as medical, mobility and technological aids  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| K | Gives medication and records appropriately according to school policy/procedures   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| L | After appropriate training performs specific medical procedures – e.g. taking blood pressure, diabetes testing, or administering needles | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

| INDICATORS FOR RATING NON-INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT EXPECTATIONS  |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1   | 3  | 5   |
| Requires constant supervision to carry out preparation of materials, administrative tasks or supervision. Does not consider assisting students with physical needs and/or medical procedures as an appropriate expectation or is reluctant and complains about carrying out these duties. | Follows teacher's directions in making, locating and displaying instructional materials and carrying out administrative tasks and supervision. Assists with supervision, physical and medical needs of students. | Is eager and creative in making instructional materials. Quickly understands their use and appropriateness. Performs administrative tasks and supervision and anticipates needs. Assists students with physical and medical needs with care, understanding and dignity. Anticipates physical needs. |

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: