

2.11: Special Education Staff

To meet the needs of exceptional students, the Lambton Kent District School Board provides a range of personnel, under the leadership and supervision of the Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education. Many classroom teachers have taken additional qualifications in the area of special education and attended professional development activities provided by the Board. These initiatives have assisted regular classroom teachers in meeting the needs of their exceptional students in regular classroom settings. Teachers whose primary assignment is to work with exceptional students have additional ministry qualifications in special education. In addition to the teaching staff, the Board employs Educational Assistants who assist in the implementation of student programming and assist individual students or small groups. The Lambton Kent District School Board's Psychology Department employs a Psychological Associate and several Psychoeducational Clinicians who provide direct service to schools. In addition, the Board employs a Mental Health Leader and Supervisor of Social Workers, Social Workers, ABA Specialists, Speech-Language Pathologists and Communication Disorder Assistants. The chart (Appendix 2.11.1) shows the current number of resource and Special Class Teachers, Educational Assistants and support staff employed by the Lambton Kent District School Board.

1.0 SPECIAL EDUCATION COORDINATORS

Special Education Coordinators, qualified teachers who have Special Education certification, are responsible for the coordination and efficient operation of the central and school-based Identification, Placement and Review Committees. As well, the in-service training and professional development of Special Education staff within the system is a shared responsibility among the Coordinators. Special Education Coordinators work in consultation with Special Education and Resource Teachers to develop implementation strategies for new programs and Ministry initiatives. They provide on-going support for schools through consultation. The Special Education Coordinators organize the acquisition of equipment and resources, compile data and reports, and centrally coordinate special education supports for schools.

2.0 INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL

2.1 Resource Teacher (Elementary and Secondary)

A Resource Teacher utilizes strategies, specialized equipment and resources that are necessary for the instruction of an individual or small group of pupils for varying amounts of time. The duties of the Resource Teacher include diagnostic assessment, assistance with program planning and evaluation, consultation, liaison, teaching, assisting in the completion of Individual Education Plans, assisting in the completion of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claims, and coordination of programs and services. Resource Teachers also assist classroom teachers in the modification of programs through provision of materials and advice concerning teaching strategies. Resource Teachers are expected to have completed additional qualifications in Special Education accredited through the Ontario College of Teachers.

2.2 Special Education Teacher (Elementary and Secondary)

Special Education Teachers instruct exceptional pupils in a special education classroom setting. The Special Education Teacher is responsible for the classroom program and Individual Education Plan of the students. They also assist in the completion of any Special Equipment Amount (SEA) claims. Special Education Teachers are expected to have completed additional qualifications in Special Education accredited through the Ontario College of Teachers.

2.3 Itinerant Resource Teacher of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

A teacher of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing is a qualified teacher with deaf education certification who provides support programs on an individual basis to pupils. The Teacher of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing provides direct instruction to students, as well as support to school staff working with deaf or hearing-impaired students. These Itinerant Resource Teachers also help in the acquisition of equipment and resources.

2.4 Itinerant Resource Teacher of the Blind and Low Vision

A teacher of the Blind and Low Vision is a qualified teacher with certification in education of the blind who provides support programs on an individual basis to pupils with partial or total impairment. Teachers of the Blind and Low Vision provide direct instruction to students, as well as support to school staff working with blind students or children with low vision. They also help in the acquisition of equipment and resources and complete environmental assessments for all school and classroom transitions.

2.5 Itinerant Resource Teacher of Enrichment/Gifted

A teacher of the Enrichment/Gifted is a qualified teacher with certification in education of the gifted who provides support programs on a group basis for pupils identified as gifted who demonstrate a need for challenge beyond classroom enrichment. Teachers of the Enrichment/Gifted also provide support for schools in the selection of students for enrichment, for classroom programs and for family of schools' enrichment opportunities (as outlined in Section 2.3.2).

2.6 Student Support/Multidisciplinary Resource Teacher

A Student Support/Multidisciplinary Resource Teacher is a qualified teacher with additional qualifications in special education who provides consultative support to the School-based Team. Through observation and direct interaction with students they help to develop behavioural and social skills programs to assist students in the regular classroom. They also help school teams develop programs to support student wellness and school culture.

2.7 Itinerant Resource Teacher of Assistive Technology

A teacher of Assistive Technology (AT) is a qualified teacher with expertise in the area of Technology and Special Education. They provide training, coaching, and support to staff and students for Special Equipment Amount (SEA) computers and software. The AT Teacher and coaching and support to all staff in assistive technologies in addition to the SEA process.

2.8 Itinerant High Needs Resource Teacher

An Itinerant High Needs Resource Teacher is a qualified teacher with additional qualifications in special education who provides consultative support to the School-based Team. Through observation and direct interaction with students they help to develop communication and behavioural programs to assist students in the regular classroom or the special education classroom.

3. PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

The Psychology Department functions as a unit within the Special Education Department, providing mental health consultation, student assessment, and counselling services upon the request of principals, teachers, and parents. These services are provided on behalf of all school-aged children within the regular school program and those receiving or seen as requiring special education support.

3.1 Manager of Psychological Services

The Manager holds a master's degree in psychology and accreditation through the Ontario College of Psychologists. The Manager monitors the provision of psychological and psycho-educational services including:

- assessment and counseling services to students.
- consultation services to school personnel, parents, community health care, child welfare and related social services personnel.
- ongoing in-service.
- crisis intervention (TERT), Suicide Risk Assessments, Violent Risk Threat Assessments)

3.2 Psychoeducational Clinician

Psychoeducational Clinicians provide assessment, counselling, mental health consultation services, crisis intervention and in-servicing. The psychological assessment provides information regarding students' learning abilities and emotional or social development. The data gathered through assessment is valuable data for schools and parents when planning student programs.

4.0 SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS/COMMUNICATIVE DISORDER ASSISTANTS

Speech-Language Pathologists meet qualification standards as established by the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO). Communicative Disorder Assistants work under the supervision of the Speech-Language Pathologists. They are assigned on an itinerant basis to provide support programs to pupils with speech and/or language impairments. The Speech-Language Pathologists and Communicative Disorder Assistants maintain ongoing interaction and consultation with school teams, and community agencies.

5.0 ABA SPECIALISTS

The Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Specialists provide and co-ordinate training on ABA instructional methods which supports implementation of Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 140: Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Duties of these itinerant positions include providing supports to principals, teachers and other school board staff as required, coaching regarding ABA-based teaching strategies as well as student skill development and how these relate to IEP creation, coordinating ABA training and resources, and to act as a liaison to facilitate collaboration between community partners. The ABA Specialists also play an important role in the Connections for Students model for transitioning students with ASD to school.

6.0 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS

Educational Assistants are paraprofessionals who may be assigned either to assist in a special education classroom or regular classroom to support the programming for a particular pupil or group of pupils. Educational Assistants are assigned based on the needs of a particular school with the principal responsible for assigning specific duties. Criteria for assigning Educational Assistants are based on the documented needs of the exceptional students in the school and the program needs of the system. Ministry funding along with the individual need of a student for additional support assists in the determination of the allocation of Educational Assistants throughout the district.

The qualifications of Educational Assistants include individuals with one or more of the following: Social Service Worker Diploma (S.S.W.), Child and Youth Worker Diploma (C.Y.W.), Developmental Service Worker Diploma (D.S.W.), Registered Nurse (R.N.), Registered Nurse's Assistant (R.N.A.), B.A. (in related field) or equivalent.

7.0 MENTAL HEALTH/SOCIAL WORK

Mental Health Leader/Supervisor of Social Workers

The Mental Health Leader/Supervisor of Social Workers is a regulated health professional (Social Worker) who works at the system level to provide mental health leadership, resources, and coaching to schools in the board. The Mental Health Leader, and the Superintendent with responsibility for mental health, is the board liaison to the provincial school mental health strategy, led by School Mental Health Ontario. This individual also provides clinical supervision to the Social Work staff within the LKDSB as it relates to student mental health services.

Social Workers

Social Workers support secondary school staff to implement proactive interventions and strategies and build capacity of mental health awareness through education. The Social Workers work collaboratively with community agencies and partners to ensure seamless and integrated service delivery for youth and their families. The Social Worker is a member of our system LKDSB Multi-Disciplinary Team and liaises with school administration and staff. The Social Workers also provides one-to-one mental health counseling to students identified as requiring this support, provides crisis intervention, as well as runs groups, as deemed necessary and appropriate.