



The Brant Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic District School Board

Policy Number: **200.15**
Subject: **Entering School-An Inclusive Approach**

Policy Statement:

The Brant Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic District School Board Supports the inclusion of students with special needs into the regular classroom. The Board is committed to the principle that the integration of exceptional pupils at his/her neighbourhood school will be the usual practice.

It is recognized by the Board that a successful transition to the school for children with special needs requires community partnerships.

Reference: Education Act, 2000

Links: ➤ Administrative Procedures for the Transition Plan

Approved by The Board of Trustees April 24, 2001

Proposed Review Date: September 2004

Administrative Procedures for the Transition Plan

The Board recognizes that organizing and planning for the integration of students with Special needs remains a challenge for Administrators and school staff - Creating and implementing a transition plan involves meetings, visits, ordering of special equipment, arranging for support staff and providing staff development to promote understanding, support and sensitivity.

Our plan takes a family centered approach. The plan is intended to be used by all members of the transition team, both parents and professionals. The plan outlines and describes steps to follow as well as a time line for the completion of tasks.

The plan has been developed for students from pre-school to our school system but is flexible to be adjusted to any grade level.

Content Summary

The purpose of this package is to facilitate the transition of children with special needs from early childhood settings to the elementary school system. It is a time to start planning for the entry into the world of school and what lies beyond. Change can be full of excitement and anxiety for everyone involved in the process. The road to success is enhanced with careful planning and consideration of childrens' strengths and needs.

This package is intended to help all team members with the organization and planning required for successful transition from one program to another. The following components are covered in this package:

Transition Timetable:

These worksheets outline and provide space to record the steps, time frames and individual responsibilities in coordinating each facet of the transition process.

Transition Timetable Explanation:

This section provides an in-depth interpretation of each transition step in the timetable.

Parent Questions:

This is a worksheet parents may choose to use when considering an educational setting for their child. It consists of questions parents can ask themselves as they examine various programs.

School Questions:

This is a worksheet the school team may choose to use to assist in the preparation for receiving the child into the classroom. It includes questions about mobility, accessibility, support staff, etc.

Transition Timetable - Explanations of Steps in the Process

1.0 Early Discussion of Transition Process

It is advantageous to begin looking at school options early and to become acquainted with the Principal and teachers of the home school before the child is enrolled.

During the course of a child's stay in preschool the Preschool Resource Teacher or designated staff will meet with the family to discuss and encourage looking at future educational objectives for their child. Some of the issues may include the number of years the child will attend preschool, when the transition to school will take place, additional services required for the child to participate fully in the program and identification of the family's personal skills to facilitate a smooth transition.

2.0 Inform Parents of School Choices

The Preschool Resource Teacher or designated staff should become familiar with program options offered by the various school boards and should direct parents to the appropriate Board personnel.

The Preschool Resource Teacher or designated staff may also help the family determine the strengths and needs of the child as well as those of the program in offer to assist in making an appropriate match.

3.0 Determine Which School System the Family Supports

Families should consider and make a decision regarding which school board they will direct tax support (separate or public).

4.0 Generate Tentative Target Dates for Transition Steps

The Preschool Resource Teacher and family will meet at the beginning of the transition process and chart out tentative dates for the steps in the transition timetable.

5.0 Contact Home School and Discuss Educational Options with Appropriate School Board Personnel

Early contact with the home school principal and/or other appropriate school board personnel will begin the preparation for a smooth and successful transition to school. Parents should be encouraged to contact the home school principal early in the school year prior to entry to advise the principal of the child and child's needs. These needs may include support personnel and specialized equipment. The principal and family should discuss educational options and expectations as well as the needs of the school and class. The principal or family will contact other school board personnel to advise them of the child's needs. **The principal should remain the family's primary contact throughout this process.**

The role of the Preschool Resource Teacher during this period will be to support the family and provide the school with information concerning the child.

6.0 Applications for Resources Made by Appropriate School Board Personnel

Once the needs have been identified, the appropriate school board personnel will consider the request for additional resources. It is important at this point to ensure that the family has given written consent to obtain information from other agencies.

The following list contains examples of steps taken to address equipment and staffing needs:

- Obtain necessary information from outside agencies for specialized equipment (seating, standing frames, computers, toileting needs, augmentative communication equipment, etc.)
- Determine suppliers and complete purchase orders
- Inform Superintendent of Support Services of possible human resource needs
- Apply to School Health Services (Community Care Access Centre) for required services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy or nursing if child is attending a full day program.
- Ensure all medical issues have been identified for medically fragile students and prepare an emergency plan
- Identify transportation needs and make arrangements
- Identify school support staff who are likely to be involved with the child (Speech-Language Pathologist, Psychologist, Learning Support Teacher, etc.)
- Make request for building modifications if necessary and where feasible or determine an alternative school that meets the needs of child

7.0 Family to visit Suggested Educational Settings

The parents and principal (and/or board designate) jointly discuss educational options. Visits to the suggested educational settings will be arranged by the home school. These visits should allow families sufficient time to make informed decisions.

8.0 Discussion of Educational Options with the Transition Team

A discussion will follow the visit to review the family's perceptions of each program in relation to the strengths and needs of their child. The members of the transition team will vary depending on the needs of the child, family and school involved. The members of the transition team should include the family, Preschool Resource Teacher and the Principal, Special Education Resource Teacher and classroom teacher (if known) from the receiving school.

9.0 Choosing the Educational Setting

The family discusses with the home school principal which setting they feel is most appropriate for their child given the strengths, needs, and options available.

10.0 Receiving School Personnel Visit the Child in the Preschool Setting

Whenever possible the classroom teacher and Special Education Resource Teacher from the receiving school will be invited to visit the child in all settings (home and school). This gives the receiving teacher an opportunity to meet the child and observe how he/she is supported in the present environment.

11.0 Plans and Needs are Established by Receiving School Personnel

The transition team will meet to determine the needs of the child. This may require a meeting with outside agencies as well. Families must be included. Once these meetings have taken place, the parents will meet with the receiving school to review the plans.

12.0 Child Visits New Program

By encouraging the child and family to visit the receiving school there is an opportunity to introduce the child to the new school and the classroom teacher. This is a very important step in preparing both the child and teacher for a smooth transition. It is a time when the child can experience some of the routines of the new program as well as an opportunity for the school personnel to assess the physical set-up of the classroom to determine if changes are necessary prior to the child's entry (accessibility of toys and centres, mobility around classroom, toileting facilities, etc.)

13.0 Inservice for School Staff

The principal (or designate) arranges for the appropriate inservice and training of school staff related to background information, programming issues, strategies, etc.

14.0 Verify all Equipment and Support Needs Have Been Submitted to Appropriate Personnel

The individual(s) responsible for accessing appropriate equipment and resources will be identified by the transition team. As soon as placement and needs have been confirmed, the requests should be submitted.

15.0 Follow-up Visit to Receiving School

This visit is to be made by the teacher and/or resource teacher from the Preschool within a month of school entry. This creates an opportunity to assess how the transition from the early childhood setting to the receiving school has been for the child, family, classmates and teacher. The Preschool teachers may be able to discuss any concerns or issues that have arisen and collaborate or problem solve on goals and objectives for the upcoming year.

16.0 Follow-up Contact with Family and School

This is the time when support for the child and family will be transferred from the preschool setting to the school setting. The purpose of this transfer occurring one to two months after entry allows time for mutual planning and problem solving after the child, family, classmates and teacher. The Preschool teachers may be able to discuss any concerns or issues that have arisen and collaborate or problem solve on goals and objectives for the upcoming year.

17.0 Contact with Outside Agencies

The school team will remain in contact with outside agencies that provide on-going or intermittent support for the child.

A Transition Plan for a Student with Special Needs Questions for Parents to Consider

CHILD'S NAME: _____

CONTACT/PHONE: _____

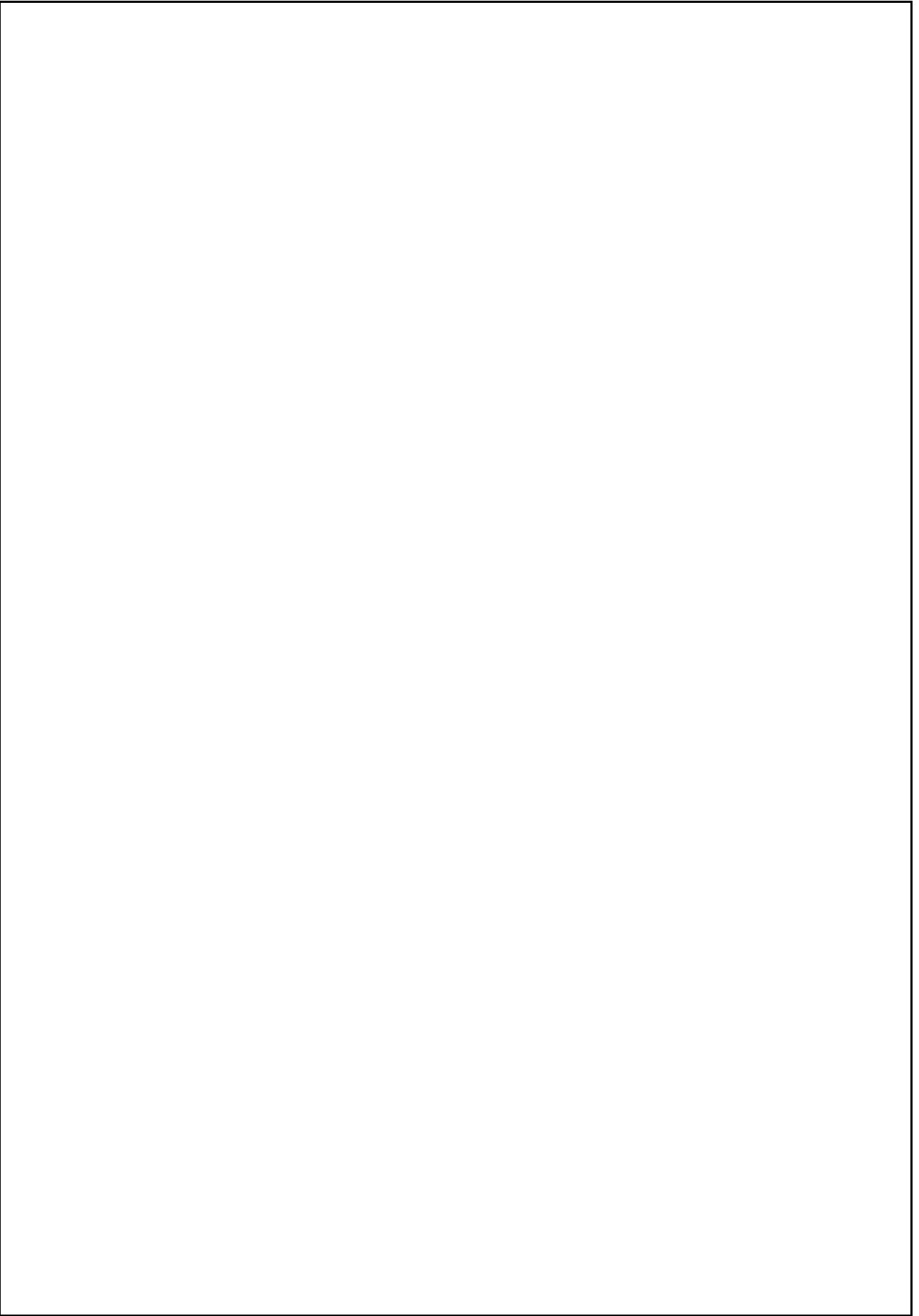
SCHOOL CONTACT/PHONE: _____

These sample questions which are not all-inclusive, have been developed to assist parents in recognizing an appropriate class placement for their child. Not all questions may be necessary, relevant or appropriate. Parents are aware of their child's needs; in many cases they have been contending with these special needs since birth. Early intervention methods are utilized.

		COMMENTS/CONCERNS/QUESTIONS
1	The School Philosophy	
	How does the school see my child with special needs being able to benefit and participate in the school community?	
	Do we (school and family) share the same concept or philosophy on inclusion?	

		COMMENTS/CONCERNS/QUESTIONS
	How will the school support my requests and ideas? How will the school team include me in the decision-making process?	
	Does the school system provide a range of program and placement options?	
	What is the school plan for developing a transition strategy with my family and the preschool program?	

		COMMENTS/CONCERNS/QUESTIONS
	Are transportation arrangements needed?	
	Additional Comments/Information Needed:	
3	The Classroom Environment	
	Is the physical environment save given my child's special needs? Consider allergies, mobility, sensory difficulties, etc.	



		COMMENTS/CONCERNS/QUESTIONS
	Is there adequate space given the number of children and my child's specialized equipment?	
	Can the furniture and equipment be arranged so that my child can have freedom and mobility within the classroom? Will he/she need assistance to move throughout the classroom?	
	Will my child require assistance to access the materials and activity centres in the room?	
	Additional Comments/Information Needed:	

A Transition Plan for a Student with Special Needs

Questions for Parents to Consider

CHILD'S NAME: _____

CONTACT/PHONE: _____

SCHOOL CONTACT/PHONE: _____

In order to develop and provide the appropriate strategies necessary for the student to learn the school must first gain information through observations and discussions with parents and previous school staff.

		COMMENTS/CONCERNS/QUESTIONS
1	Observation of the Child	
	Who does the child prefer to spend time with in this setting? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• self• other children• adults	
	What level of play does the child demonstrate in this setting? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• solitary• parallel• interactive	

	COMMENTS/CONCERNS/QUESTIONS	
	<p>Does this child require specialized equipment? Will the equipment be available? Who will be responsible for training, using and maintaining this equipment?</p>	
	<p>Is A classroom assistant recommended? Is the principal aware of this need?</p>	
	<p>What provisions will be made for the school staff to learn more about the child and his/Her needs? Are inservice training or workshops available?</p>	
	<p>Additional Comments/Information Needed:</p>	

A Team Approach to Inclusion

"Successful integration requires teamwork, careful planning and a common focus on a child's program needs."