
SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN



**COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH
OTHER MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES**

COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The District School Board of Niagara has strong working relationships with a variety of community partners representing agencies and ministries beyond the education sector. These relationships support students by assisting school staff members, the staff of the Special Education Services Department, and parents plan for smooth transitions for students entering the school system for the first time, returning to the school system, or for students within the school system that require additional supports and resources.

A. Links with Service Agencies/Ministries within the Community

The District School Board of Niagara has a variety of community partners. The Special Education Department enjoys active relationships with the following agencies and ministries:

The Niagara Regional Liaison Committee

This committee is an inter-ministerial committee comprised of members from Health, Community and Social Services, and Education. This partnership allows for the flow of information from ministry to ministry, and from each of the School Boards in the Niagara Region. Through this committee, inter-agency protocols are developed, and procedures are put into place to provide as seamless a transition as possible for children and their families.

Family and Children Services

FACS provides a wide range of services to support children, adolescents and families. Nursery School/Early Learning Centres and Parenting Centres, as well as the Family Counselling Centre are some of the services offered.

FACS is mandated by the child and Family Services Act in investigate the abuse and neglect of children and to provide protection, foster care and adoption services.

The Child Abuse Review Team (CART) reviews and approves supervision plans for children who require protection. A variety of Niagara agencies from health, service support and education meet monthly to review selected cases. The Administrator-Special Education and designated Principals from the DSBN participate in CART meetings.

The DSBN partners with Family and Children Services and other Children's Aid Societies to provide Section 23 classrooms for students who are in Care and Treatment Facilities. These Section 23 classrooms are listed below:

Family and Children Services - On site at Welland Residence

Hatts Off - Grimsby

Little House - Smithville

Mutual Support Systems - Port Colborne

Port's End Youth Home - Port Colborne

Youth Connections - St. Catharines

The Administrator - Special Education and the Principal of Section 23 Classrooms work collaboratively to facilitate the transition of students into the DSBN.

Since the partnership of the DSBN and FACS is central to the personal welfare and growth of the children they serve, a protocol to enable caring professionals to work together effectively is included in the Appendices.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES

Speech Services Niagara, Pre-school Speech & Language Service System of Niagara

Children who are 5 years of age and under and experiencing speech and language difficulties may be referred by their parents, physicians or professionals directly to Speech Services Niagara (SS Niagara). The DSBN and SS Niagara work diligently to enhance transition procedures. A DSBN Speech-Language Pathologist sits on the Advisory Board of SS Niagara, as well as various other adhoc committees, such as the Transition to School Committees. Each year in early September, a transition meeting is scheduled with the public and catholic school board. The purpose of this meeting is to share information about students whose service will be transferred from S.S. Niagara to Community Care Access Centre (CCAC), School Health Support Services and/or the DSBN. A copy of this Transition Protocol is included in this section of the plan.

Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre - Pre-school Program

The DSBN and the Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre (NPCC) have a well-developed relationship that is focused on providing a smooth transition from pre-school programs to formal programs within the school board. The Centre provides child and family - centered programs and services to children who require physiotherapy, occupational therapy or speech language therapy. Transition procedures for students moving from NPCC Preschool programs to the DSBN are included in the document entitled *Transition to the District School Board of Niagara from Preschool Programs* included in this section of the plan.

Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre - School Age Program

The Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre (NPCC) operates under Section 68 of the Education Act and serves children from the two local school boards focusing on the education of student with physical and/or communicative disabilities from ages four through twenty one. The Centre offers specialized programming and equipment in low enrolment classes designed to meet the special needs of students. Potential students are referred for admission consideration to the Principal, by the in-Centre staff, local Boards of Education and other community professionals. The DSBN works closely with the NPCC as students enter and exit these highly specialized programs.

Niagara Rehabilitation Centre

This centre performs audiological evaluations for students in the Niagara Region. Students suspected of having hearing problems should be referred for a test by the family doctor. Parents must be responsible for requesting a referral to the service from their doctor. The school role is to support the parent and to follow-up on recommendations made. Audiological assessments which indicate the necessity for an FM system are forwarded to the Resource Teacher - Hearing.

Niagara Training and Employment Centre (NTEC)

This agency serves young people and adults from the Niagara Region who have disabilities to secure competitive employment or supported work placements. Clients with developmental disabilities access this agency through Contact Niagara. All other may contact this agency directly. The DSBN partners with NTEC and provides two Section 23 classrooms, one of which provides programs for individuals with Autism. The programs support and train students who are moving towards transition to employment or community living. Hands-on work experiences in a variety of employment fields, counselling, job search and placement services are available. A copy of the agreement between NTEC and the DSBN is available at the DSBN Special Education Services Department.

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CONTACT NIAGARA

Contact Niagara was created in 1999 in order to provide parents with a single point access to a wide variety of services within the Niagara Region. Contact Niagara provides information and connects people to services for children experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and people of all ages who have developmental disability. Contact Niagara is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Resource coordinators at Contact Niagara help individuals to understand the services available and guides them through an interview process to identify and connect them with the services they want or need. The following agencies are accessed through Contact Niagara (905-684-6289, 1-800-993-3617). The DSBN works closely the following individual agencies, as well as with Contact Niagara.

Bethesda

Within this agency there are various services that address specific areas of need for children and adolescents with special developmental needs. Child and Adolescent Services may receive referrals from the Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre, as well as Contact Niagara.

Children's Development Assessment Services (CDAS) provides assessment of children 18 years and under who display a developmental delay or developmental handicap. Parents make the referral through Contact Niagara. The purpose of the assessment is to identify the nature, type, extent and cause of developmental problems, to prescribe the appropriate intervention plan, and to assist with the implementation of the plan by offering training, support etc. Assessments are conducted by a multi-disciplinary team with a trans-disciplinary focus and orientation and may take place within the school setting. CDAS provides assessment services for students requiring a differentiated diagnosis and/or for students with highly complex needs that can not be addressed through educational assessments. With parental/guardian consent these assessments are shared with DSBN and used by DSBN staff to plan effective programs.

Autism Consultation Service (ACS) provides formal consultation and mediator training to community support agencies (e.g., Child Care/Early Childhood Education, Family Support services, Boards of Education, Mental Health Agencies) who deal directly with individuals 18 and under diagnosed with Autism or Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD). The DSBN school staff may access the ACS through the In-School Team process and the Consultant-Special Education facilitates the referral process. The representative from ACS provides assistance by offering programming suggestions for the development of the Individual Education Plan (IEP), specialized lesson development, strategies for behavioural management, and classroom observation if required.

Hamilton-Niagara Regional Early Autism Initiative Program is part of the initiative under taken by the Ministry of Community and Social Services to provide early intervention for children 5 and under with a diagnosis of Autism or PDD. The DSBN is a partner in this initiative, with members participating on the Education sub-committee and local initiative planning committees. The Early Autism Initiative staff provides programming for students enrolled in the Early Autism Initiative who are being discharged from the program into the school setting and for up to one year after discharge. During enrolment in the program, the Senior Therapist or Instruction Therapist may be involved in meetings to share Intensive Behaviour Intervention (IBI) program goals and to discuss school related issues. Three months prior to discharge the Transition Coordinator will contact the school to discuss the transition process. After discharge, the parent may contact the Transition Coordinator directly to discuss school related matters. If further consultation with the school is required, the parents will be directed to contact the principal of their child's school to discuss school related matters. The Transition Coordinator may be accessed through the In-School Team process and the Consultant-Special Education facilitates the referral process.

Association for Community Living / Niagara Support Services

These agencies provide a variety of services for individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. Child Care (centre and home based) and Nursery School programs for pre-school aged children (2.5 to 6 years of age) are provided for children with special needs in an inclusive setting. The Association for Community Living and Niagara Support Services provide parent-directed services that support the child with special needs and his or her family. The DSBN has developed an effective framework to transition students supported by these agencies from various pre-school settings to schools within DSBN.

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Niagara Child and Youth Services (NCYS)

This community based children's mental health service provides a continuum of social and mental health services to children and youth (from birth to 18 years of age) and their families. NCYS is a non-profit charitable agency operating under the Child and Family Services Act. Services include Day Treatment, Residential Services, Assessment Services, Counselling Services, Outreach Services, Child and Adolescent Crisis Services, Pre-School Services, and Youth Justice Services. The mission statement of NCYS is to provide an accessible continuum of mental health services to Niagara's children, youth and families through treatment, training and research in partnership with the community.

The Day Treatment programs offered by NCYS are in partnership with the DSBN. A copy of this agreement is available at the DSBN Special Education Services Department. In these Section 23 classrooms, the DSBN provides the teacher and NCYS provides the Child & Youth Worker to support students. The following is a list of Day Treatment /Section 23 classrooms offered by NCYS in partnership with the DSBN:

NCYS Day Treatment Programs

- Merrittville Site
- A.N. Myer Secondary School
- Centennial Secondary School
- Kernahan Park Secondary School
- St. Catharines Collegiate
- Thorold Secondary School

Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI)

In developing a Service Plan for an individual /family, a Service Provider may feel that residential services through CPRI would best meet the needs of the student and would be the most appropriate resource for this situation. In such a case, the Service Provider will call Contact Niagara and request a referral to CPRI for residential treatment. The DSBN, with parental/guardian consent, provides documentation (school reports, psycho-educational assessment reports, etc.) to the Service Provider who is making the referral for residential placement. CPRI also offers a Consultative service accessed through Contact Niagara.

Niagara Health System

The DSBN has partnered with the St. Catharines General Hospital to provide a Section 23 classroom for school aged students who are clients of the Child and Adolescent (Mental Health) Clinic offered at this hospital and who benefit from instruction in a therapeutic setting. A copy of this agreement is available at the DSBN Special Education Services Department.

Detention and Correction Facilities

The DSBN provides Section 23 classrooms for students in the following detention and correction facilities.

- Niagara Detention Centre
- Peninsula Youth Centre

Copies of these agreements are available at the DSBN Special Education Services Department.

B. Transition Planning within the District School Board of Niagara

The District School Board of Niagara has a transition process in place for students new to the Board and for students being educated within the Board.

The guiding principals for the transition planning process are stated below:

- The student and his/her strengths and needs are central to the focus of transition planning;
- The planning of transitions is a collaborative process, involving parents, outside agencies and other professionals involved with the student; and
- Each transition planning process is unique to the student.

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Transition Planning Activities in the District School Board of Niagara

Grade/Division	Timing	Activities
SK-Grade 1	May-June of school year preceding entry	<p>In-School meetings to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities for full-day visits will be discussed and provided where possible • picture books and picture sequence schedules are created and given to the student to illustrate upcoming changes to routine and schedule • gradual time spent with upcoming teacher (where staffing arrangements are complete) • visits to new classroom environment • tests trials if needed for full day instruction • staggered schedule may be suggested if transition is expected to be difficult
Grades 1-8	May-June of school year preceding entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare student for transition by visiting new classroom, meeting teacher where possible • prepare classroom teacher through case conference, attendance at IPRC review • potential for time to be spent in new class room prior to the end of school year
Grade 8	January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up visits for parents to high school setting
Grade 8	February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrange for a meeting of receiving special class staff where applicable • students attend open house visits as arranged by high school and participate in Grade 8 days at local high school
Grade 8	March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents make final selection for high school placement, as appropriate • parents may visit high school with Resource Teacher(s) • for students in special class placements, some transition visits may be scheduled to the high school program
Grade 8	April/May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LRT of elementary school and SERT for secondary complete transition form, which highlights necessary information for secondary school with regards to the student

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C. Transitioning Practices for Students entering the District School Board of Niagara from other Programs, Ministries, or Boards

The DSBN is committed to ensuring as smooth a transition as possible for students entering the school system from other ministry programs and services.

When the family of a student with exceptional needs indicates their intent to register with the Board, staff gathers the pertinent data from the family through information meetings. With the family's written consent, information is gathered from the agencies/ministries that are involved with the student.

Assessments conducted by the agency/ministry are reviewed, and where possible, the recommendations are acted upon. Psychological staff or Consultant - Special Education review the assessment to interpret the recommendations and will advise staff on how to incorporate such recommendations into the students' program using the service delivery model of the District School Board of Niagara.

In many cases, reassessment is not necessary, nor is it a practice of the board to do so. However, it is common practice to examine a student in their home school setting for a period of time before any new recommendations are made for the student.

TRANSITION PROTOCOL

PRE-SCHOOL SECTOR

**NIAGARA PENINSULA CHILDREN'S CENTRE,
ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING, NIAGARA
SUPPORT SERVICES PRE-SCHOOL SERVICES:
REGION OF NIAGARA**

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Transition to

The District School Board of Niagara

From

Preschool Programs

The transition from a pre-school setting to Junior Kindergarten or Senior Kindergarten is one of the first important steps in the life of any child. The professionals who work with young children understand the importance of a smooth, well-planned transition. As providers of Pre-school Programs, we have worked together with educators to develop guidelines that can be used across the entire Niagara Region.

Parents are key to the transition process and can assist their child by full participation. Schools need time to put necessary plans in place to ensure safe, supported entry for all students.

* When the family does not have a Resource Consultant/Teacher, the Social Work Department at Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre (NPCC) or personnel from Speech Service Niagara (SSN), Family and Children's Services Niagara (FACS), Niagara Child & Youth Services (NCYS) or the Autism Initiative will assist with the transition of children to the School Board.

TRANSITION COORDINATION

Resource Consultants/Teachers will take responsibility for transition coordination when the Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre's Infant and Preschool Program are part of the multi-disciplinary team with families.

(Registration eligibility for the following September is based on ages relevant to JK,K, or Grade 1. Any family interested in NPCC School Board will participate in the transition process)

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NOVEMBER

Resource Consultant's/Teacher's Role:

- To inform parents that if their child is under the age of five (S.K. ages) they can have the choice of remaining with NPCC for therapies or transfer to CCAC for therapies. If children are over the age of five transfers to CCAC will need to be coordinated.
- To ensure that Release of Information forms are signed by a family prior to forwarding information about their child to the appropriate School Board.
- To facilitate the sharing information with parents at an Information Session held at NPCC.

DECEMBER

Resource Consultant's/Teacher's Role:

- Resource Consultants/Teachers will coordinate two lists providing information about students, one for the Public Board and one for the Catholic Board. The lists will be forwarded to the appropriate personnel.

Information Required: (Recent photograph of the child is optional)

Child's Name	Resource Consultant's Name/Phone #
Child's Date of Birth	Home School
Health Card Number	Current Assistant in Place
Grade Level (JK, SK, Grade 1)	School (days of week)
Parent's Name, Address and Phone #	Preschool Program Name, address phone # and Contact, Child's Attendance at

JANUARY

Resource Consultant's/Teacher's Role:

- Assist family to identify and gather all pertinent information to be transferred to the Board at the Transition Meeting in February.
- Forward the lists of children currently receiving therapies from NPCC's Infant and Preschool Program to the Manager and request updated assignments for all children involved in the February Transition meetings. Coordinate February dates for the Transition Meetings with each family and the appropriate School Board Personnel.
- Invite CCAC to attend all scheduled Transition Meetings, if the child will be transitioning from NPCC to CCAC for therapies.

Family's Role:

- The family will choose, from current service providers, who will attend the meeting. Meetings usually take place at the Resource Consultant/Teacher's office. Other arrangements can be made under unique circumstances.

Transition Meetings usually include the following people:

- Parents, Resource Consultant, CCAC representative (if applicable), Childcare Teacher/Assistant and/or Special Needs Resource Teacher (School Boards). Parental choice is respected.

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Schools Board's Role:

- Set the meeting time and date.

NPCC's Infant and Preschool Team Manager's Role:

- To forward a list to each School Board identifying children transitioning from NPCC to CCAC.
- Therapists will forward reports directly to the family.

Transition Meeting Information/School Registration Information:

(Parents may choose to sign Releases to have information forwarded to the Board of Education or may choose to photocopy their own copies of reports.)

DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBILITY		
	Parent	Child Care Teacher	Resource Consultant
Updated Assessment/Reports	Input Approval	Input	Input Record & Copy
Updated Therapy Reports (NCPP)	Receive and copy		Request
Diagnostic Assessment(s)	Provide Photocopy or sign Release		Photocopy if approved by Family
Goal Plans	Approval		Update and Copy
Latest Team Service Plan or Case	Approval		Copy
Transition Report	Input and final approval	Input	Input, record and Copy
Releases of Information for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Board to access information • NPCC School Board (if applicable) 	Signature		Forms provided to families
CCAC Application (if applicable)	Completed at Transition Meeting with CCAC representative and or School Board representative and parents for OT and PT. Applications for speech therapy will be made directly between NPCC Speech Therapist and CCAC when the child is in the last block of therapy.		
*Note: Eligibility for CCAC: (School Health Support Services) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child is over the age of five or • The child is four and parents have requested transfer of service from NPCC to CCAC. 			

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FEBRUARY

Resource Consultant's/Teacher's Role

- Assist parents to prepare for the Transition Meeting by addressing considerations and collecting the above-mentioned information.

Parental Considerations:

- What do I want for my child?
- What resources and supports will be needed?
- Questions and concerns?
- What options are available?

Family's Role:

- Register their child in their home school as per the advertisement in local newspapers.

Transition Meeting

This is an introductory meeting for the family to identify for the Boards what is it they want for their child. The Board has an opportunity to gain information related to the strengths, needs, supports and resources required by the child in an educational setting. Parents and School Board personnel can share concerns and ask questions related to placement in School Board settings.

Resource Consultant's/Teacher's Roles:

- Resource Consultant will ensure all participants receive a copy of the Transition Meeting minutes within 2 weeks of the meeting.

School Board's Role:

- Make the referral to CCAC services. If the school is not known at this time, a referral can be made to the home school.
- Set date to visit and observe at the preschool setting in March/April.

MARCH & APRIL

School Board's Role:

- With parental permission, School Board personnel will visit the child transitioning at his/her Preschool Program. Parents and the Resource Consultant can choose to be in attendance. (May include one or more of the following: Resource Teachers and/or Educational Assistants, Principal, Receiving Teacher)
- School Boards will contact the Child Care Program directly to set up the visit.

MAY/JUNE

School Placement Meeting

The purpose of this meeting is to introduce parents to Principals, Learning Resource Teachers and receiving Teachers. Sharing of information takes place similar to the Transition Meeting.

School Board Personnel

- set a date with the receiving
- invite the parents
- ensure that a copy of the information from the Transition Meeting and observations is provided to the school.

Family's Role

- to provide any updated assessments/reports to the school
- to invite the Preschool Resource Consultants/Teachers if they wish them to attend.

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TRANSITION REPORT

CHILD'S NAME: _____ D.O.B. _____

PARENT'S NAME: _____ (mother) _____ (father)

TELEPHONE: () _____ B _____
(home) (business)

ADDRESS: _____ Date of Report: _____

HEALTH CARD # _____

HOME SCHOOL: _____

CONSULTANT (Preschool): _____ PHONE: _____

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM: _____ PHONE: _____

RESOURCE TEACHER (Board): _____ PHONE: _____

HOME SCHOOL: _____ GRADE: _____

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL HEALTH SUPPORTS Yes No

HAS REGISTRATION TAKEN PLACE: Yes No

AGENCIES INVOLVED:

AGENCY	SPECIFIC SERVICES	CONTACT/THERAPIST

Identify parental expectations for the child attending school. What would you like your child to get out of the school placement?

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Complete this information by identifying what supports the child will require for participation in the following areas of the curriculum. Be specific in identifying when and where the child will require a one-to-one support or specialized resources or equipment in order to fulfill the IEP expectation.

INDICATE HOW YOUR CHILD PARTICIPATES IN THE FOLLOWING ROUTINES...

ROUTINE	CHILD IS ABLE TO...	SUPPORTS NEEDED	EQUIPMENT/RESOURCES
Arrival/Departure			
Dressing/Undressing			
Toiletting			
Snack			
Sensory Table			
Dramatic Centre			

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ROUTINE	CHILD IS ABLE TO...	SUPPORTS NEEDED	EQUIPMENT/RESOURCES
Story/Circle			
Gross Motor/Gym			
Social Skills			
Mobility/Transition			
Language/ Communication			
Choices/ Decision Making			

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ROUTINE	CHILD IS ABLE TO...	SUPPORTS NEEDED	EQUIPMENT/RESOURCES
Puzzle/ Table Activities			
Emotional (Behaviour)			

Additional Information

Preference of Program? A.M., P.M., Small group, Large group, accessible, etc. (explanation)

Additional information/Comments

Signatures: Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Resource Consultant (Preschool): _____ Date: _____

Child Care Teacher: _____ Date: _____

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D. Information Sharing with Other Boards and Care, Treatment, and Correctional Facilities

In cases where the student is leaving the DSBN to attend programs in a Care, Treatment, or Correctional Facility, and the Board has recommended such placement, the Resource Teacher-Special Education will participate in the intake and planning sessions required for successful entry in the program.

Recognizing that duration of these programs is often for a specific period of time, the appropriate Resource Teacher-Special Education will attend IPRC meetings and discharge meetings as requested by the facility.

In cases where the DSBN has not been a participant in the placement of students in programs at Care, Treatment, and Correctional Facilities, information will be shared at the request of the program staff, and with full consent of the parents or adult student.

In cases where an exceptional pupil moves from the DSBN to a school in the jurisdiction of another Board, the DSBN requires written permission from the parent to disclose information collected by the Board.

E. Staff Responsible for Ensuring Successful Admission/Transfer to the DSBN

The District School Board of Niagara is divided into six regions. Each region has a Resource Teacher - Special Education who ensure the successful admission/transfer of a student in conjunction with the local school Principal.

TRANSITION PROTOCOL

SPEECH SERVICES NIAGARA
(SS NIAGARA)

PRE-SCHOOL SPEECH INITIATIVE

COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES

Guidelines for 'Transition to School' from Speech Services Niagara

Partners in the Transition to School Process:

Speech Services Niagara (S.S.Niagara) is involved in on-going collaboration with the following agencies in order to develop seamless transition from preschool speech and language services to community school boards and school health support services:

- District School Board of Niagara (DSBN).
- Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB)
- Le conseil scolaire de district du centre-sud-ouest (CSDCSO)
- Conseil scolaire de district catholique centre-sud (CSDCCS)
- Community Care Access Centre (C.C.A.C.), School Health Support Services

Input into transition plan has originated from the following process:

- speech-language pathologists from DSBN
- speech-language pathologists from NCDSB
- speech-language pathologists from CSDCSO
- speech-language pathologists from CSDCCS
- speech-language pathologists from C.C.A.C./S.H.S.S.
- coordinator PSI (chair)

Elements of the Transition Plan:

**Coordination of services will be necessary for every child who has received, or is receiving services from S.S. Niagara. Transition plans will be flexible to the individual needs of the child and family, with the goal of seamless transition being the primary focus.

The transition to school process will involve the following seven areas of consideration:

1) Preschool Services for Students in Junior Kindergarten

All children from birth until entry in senior kindergarten, in the Niagara Region will fall under the mandate of preschool speech and language services - S.S. Niagara. Referrals to S.S.N. can be initiated by parents or professionals. In order to facilitate this referral process, speech-language pathologists (SLPs) in both the public and catholic boards have created a form letter and speech-language checklist for all junior kindergarten teachers. If classroom teachers have concerns about a student's speech-language development they complete the checklist, discuss the letter recommending referral to S.S. Niagara with the parent or guardian, obtain signed consent and fax the recommendation for referral to S.S. Niagara. S.S. Niagara will then contact the parent/guardian to arrange an initial consultation.

In order to be able to provide therapy for those children who are being referred in their junior kindergarten (J.K.) year, a referral deadline has been established (i.e., December 25th of J.K. year). This date may vary year to year depending upon the length of the waiting list for service. Upon referral, a variety of service delivery options are available at S.S. Niagara including, screening/consultation, assessment, individual and group therapy, parent information and classes. (Note that SLPs employed by S.S. Niagara are not permitted to conduct assessment/treatment sessions within the school setting.)

**Children enrolled in junior kindergarten in the French school boards attend for a full day. As a result, it is often difficult for those students to participate in the speech and language preschool services as sessions often conflict with the school day. Preschool speech-language pathologists are restricted from providing service at schools. Parents of students in the French school board are still given the option of receiving services through S.S. Niagara. However, if a parent declines for any reason, a subsequent referral can then be made to the school board and/or school health support services.

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II) School-Based Service for Students for Students in Junior Kindergarten

a) English-Speaking School Boards

As per the agreement with S.S. Niagara, most referrals for students in junior kindergarten are parent or teacher initiated. School board speech-language pathologists, in conjunction with S.S. Niagara developed a checklist and parent letter to facilitate the referral process at the school level (see previous **Preschool School Services** section for additional information about school board involvement in the J.K. referral process to S.S. Niagara). In most cases, speech-language pathologists across the school boards in Niagara are typically not directly involved in the referral of junior kindergarten students for preschool speech-language services. However, SLPs are available to provide support and consultation around referral considerations for teachers and parents, as needed.

Board speech-language pathologists will be responsible for providing speech-language services for children in their junior kindergarten year (who have not been referred to S.S. Niagara prior to the deadline), as requested through the in-school team process at individual schools.

b) French-Speaking School Boards

Speech-language pathologists will provide assessment and treatment for students in junior kindergarten who have not been referred to S.S. Niagara prior to the established deadline.

**The inclusion of school board SLPs from all community boards (i.e., public, catholic and french-speaking) and representation from school health support services on the 'Transition to School' and 'Advisory Board' committees for S.S. Niagara helps to facilitate the transition to school process.

III) Notification Procedures for Transition to Schools

Notification of involvement with S.S. Niagara will be provided to the school in writing, for all students (providing parental consent has been given) at the start of each school year. A form letter has been developed by the school boards and S.S. Niagara to serve this purpose. This letter of notification is sent to schools, care of the Educational/Learning Resource teachers (ERT/LRT). Information about assessment, progress or recommendations from S.S. Niagara is then shared with the classroom teachers, and written correspondence is then filed in the student's Ontario Student Record (O.S.R.).

Throughout a student's junior kindergarten year, S.S. Niagara will also provide (with parental consent) assessment reports, progress/summary notes and discharge from service reports, as notification of involvement with the agency.

When a child is discharged from S.S. Niagara to a school board or school health support services, a copy of the discharge report accompanies the transfer/discharge form. (Note that the report will not prescribe any treatment, or service delivery from the receiving agency.)

Board speech-language pathologists can use information from the discharge report and transfer of services form to provide programming once the student is in senior kindergarten (often without the need for re-assessment, since most, if not all students transferring from preschool to school-based services will have received an assessment within the past year). School board SLPs may be asked to provide input based on the information from the discharge report, in the form of classroom-based strategies or programming, as requested through the in-school team process.

**In general, the above transition to school processes are also followed in the French-speaking school boards.

IV) Information to Parents

At the time of discharge from preschool speech and language services, S.S. Niagara personnel may share one or all of the following information pieces with parents:

- i) information from discharge report,
- ii) home programming for continued support of speech-language needs in the home environment;
- iii) a copy of the Special Education services and School Health Support services - C.C.A.C. brochures; and,
- iv) a verbal and written outline of the types of service delivery available through the various school boards/school health support services.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES

V) Information Sharing between school board SLPs, C.C.A.C. and S.S. Niagara

On an annual basis, in September, the school board SLPs, preschool SLPs and C.C.A.C. case managers will meet to discuss children that will be transitioning to school-based services. Information sharing will involve both verbal and written communication.

VI) Information at School Registration

In conjunction with school board representatives, S.S. Niagara has developed flyers and information that will be included in all junior kindergarten registration packages that are distributed to parents in February. Additional information is also shared at various times throughout the school year, and information sharing posters about the referral process have been made available for every junior kindergarten classroom, in every school across the public, catholic and french-speaking boards.

VII) Education for Junior Kindergarten teachers and LRTs/ERTs

In-service sessions and presentations will be provided for various groups of school staff, as required, in conjunction with school board SLPs and S.S. Niagara personnel. Topics covered may include information about typical speech and language development, classroom-based strategies and explanation of preschool services and processes.

****The above stated information is a general outline but may change, as required, in order to maintain 'best practice' in service delivery to children who have speech and language concerns, and their families. Concerns are shared and change is facilitated regularly through sub-committee meetings composed of representatives from school boards, preschool services and school health support services. Meetings involve brainstorming ideas, evaluating the efficacy of referral/transition processes, and making changes to existing protocol and procedures in an effort to best serve the children and families in our community.**