The Professional Conversations and Mentoring Project in Prince George, BC

A partnership between the B.C. Teachers’ Federation and School District 57

October 2004 to May 2005

by
Saima Fewster
BJ Foulds
Sandra Hunter
1. Purpose of the Project

- To provide support for specialist teachers recently assigned to new or multiple Resource-Teacher roles
- To focus on building and expanding local specialist-teacher skills/knowledge
- To combine resource-teacher mentoring with District Support Teacher activities.

“Seeking to understand and acting on the best we know creates the essence of professional life.”
–Joyce and Calhoun

2. Pre-Planning

a. Proposal to district

In April 2004, representatives from the BCTF, School District #57, and the Prince George District Teachers’ Association met in Prince George to review a project proposal structured to respond to the challenge of teachers in meeting the diverse special learning needs of students. This group agreed to pilot several projects in partnership over the course of the 2004–05 school year. Funding for the projects was shared between partners, and the District Support Teacher co-ordinated all project activities.

One key component of the proposal was the Mentorship project, designed to provide support for specialist teachers (Special Needs support, Learning Assistance) in new single- or multiple-role specialist teaching assignments. Project guidelines were formalized in September of 2004, including procedures for the selection of mentors and participant mentees. The mentor group was comprised of three experienced Resource Teachers offering a range of teacher expertise, with one each from the Elementary, Middle school, and Secondary levels. This provided an opportunity, in conjunction with District Support Teacher activities, to offer ongoing guidance and professional development for all participants throughout the year. Funding was approved for up to ten group participants (mentees) from any grade level.

b. Participant selection

The mentor team developed application forms and informational brochures outlining the project. Applications from potential mentees were solicited in three ways. Teachers who attended an initial orientation session for “novice” Resource Teachers in September, as well as those attending a similar session the previous year, were invited to apply. Personal invitations were sent to teachers identified as recently new to their positions from the district master list. Building administrators were asked to recommend teachers who might be interested. Participation was voluntary and entirely at the discretion of those invited, and the application process resulted in the selection of eight mentees (everyone who applied).

c. Mentor preparation and training

The three mentors were given support through a partnership of the BCTF and the Student Support Services department in SD #57.
Six mentoring sessions over the year were planned, three during school time with release coverage from the district, and three evening meetings with dinner included by the BCTF. The district also approved three mentor planning sessions with school release time. The BCTF approved two additional mentor planning sessions and three writing days for documentation. Mentor training, a mentoring facilitator, and ongoing BCTF staff support were arranged by the BCTF. Planning for the year’s sessions was organized around the mentoring processes and strategies outlined in “Mentoring Matters,” by Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman.

Initial training for the three mentors was provided by BCTF facilitators on November 4, 2004 in Vancouver, with two days of project follow-up activities on May 19 and 20, 2005, also in Vancouver. School District #57 supplied funding for travel for the three mentors.

### 3. Project Description

#### a. Project overview

**Benefits of learning-focused mentoring:**

- Improve instructional performance
  - strengthen practices, support growth of effective teaching
- Transfer the district policy, procedures and educational philosophy
  - understanding the goals, expectations of the system
- Frame the professional learning journey
  - support personal growth and professional development
- Promote norms of learning and collaboration
  - examination of the structures and consistencies that work.


**Goals of the Mentors:**

- To provide a balance of consultation/collaboration/coaching activities
- To identify/explore/discuss information related to resource teaching
- To provide a flexible project framework with whole-group and smaller-group formats in response to participant needs and specific topics
- To be available as consultative contacts for mentorship participants.

**Confidentiality:**

This project involved group work, guided discussions, and self-reflection to support the professional growth of teacher participants. There was no reporting component to administrators. All evaluation was related to the program itself, not to the people involved.

#### b. Participant selection

See Pre-planning – Proposal to district, above.

#### c. Descriptive information of the group

In the mentee group we had five Elementary, one Middle, and two Secondary-school Resource Teachers. All participants were new to the job, or at least one aspect of their job, in the past two years. Teaching experience ranged from none to 25 years. Contracts in the support/resource area ranged from half-time to full-time.
d. **Outline of plan**

We had five mentoring sessions over the year instead of the six planned; three were during school time with district release, and two were evening meetings with dinner provided by the BCTF. Our meetings were held either at a school or at our district’s school-board office.

4. **Project Implementation**

**The first meeting: December**

Prior to the first meeting with the participants, the mentors met to review applications and plan an agenda for the first meeting. It was anticipated that the agenda items from our first meeting would flow naturally into subsequent meetings to meet the needs of the participants.

The following agenda and notes from our first meeting with the group on December 1, 2004, will show how we got from the first to the fifth meeting.

1. **Introductions**

   We asked the participants to identify themselves, and to include their current teaching assignment and a comment about their participation in the project. Participant binders were provided for storing project information, handouts, homework, and personal reflections on meetings and school-related experiences.

   As mentors, we shared the following items with the group:
   a. Benefits of learning-focused mentoring
   b. Our goals
   c. Our commitment to confidentiality.

2. **Building Relationships**

   This segment of the meeting was to help the participants get to know each other. We asked four questions. The mentees answered each question individually and then discussed with a partner – a new partner for each question and preferably someone they did not know. (Our group members came from very diverse backgrounds and teaching experiences. The one major thing in common was that the role of resource teaching has rendered everyone to feel like a beginning teacher, with all the uncertainties that entails.)

3. **Roles and Responsibilities of Resource Teachers**

   What are the key duties and challenges of your job? From your individual responses, can we identify some general, common topic areas?

   Our purpose with this section was to have the group identify key duties, challenges, and supports needed as Resource Teachers. Individually they listed the items on post-it notes. Then in groups of three they sorted notes and classified their groupings.

   This activity allowed teachers to reflect, discuss, compare, and share the complexities of fulfilling the teaching duties related to Resource Teacher roles. Our group sorting of individual post-it-note thoughts helped to outline the range of job responsibilities and assisted with the development of future group conversations and learning activities. Some common categories were collapsed and renamed. Here are the general areas identified. A complete listing, with the activity specifics, is included in the appendix on page 13:
   a. Program administrative duties/Paperwork
b. Communication  
c. Program planning/Scheduling  
d. Assessment  
e. Teaching  
f. Professional Development

The grouping of ideas led to some thoughts for further consideration:

- Are there similarities or differences between teaching roles or between Elementary and Secondary programs that need addressing?
- Do we use different language or terminology to mean the same thing? Or do we have common terms that mean something different?

4. Future Directions for the Mentorship group

- We reviewed several ways that mentors would try to provide support:
  - Provide emotional support and encouragement
  - Provide information about school workings
  - Promote cultural proficiency (what factors can impact on communication and student/parent understandings?)
  - Cognitive teaching (individualized teaching support by peers).
- Topics discussion

From the work done during the meeting, everyone then identified their top priorities for topics to address, and personal hopes/goals for upcoming group sessions.

Key topic priorities:
1. Resources: access to what we need  
2. Program management: timeline, scope and sequence, when and how to do what?  
3. Assessment: learning what and how  
4. What do the kids “look” like?: overview of categories of disabilities, special needs of students we service and strategies to support them  
5. Communication: working together with all partners (administrators, classroom teachers, parents, specialists, students) and scheduling  
6. Wearing multiple teaching hats: how to balance time in a fair and reasonable manner to fulfill all job requirements.

Personal hopes/goals:
In particular, it was stressed that there must be a practical learning component each time. Regardless of what else was covered, the assurance that specific, practical supports will be provided was given. Specific comments included:

- Glad to know I’m not alone; hoped for and got confirmation  
- Need and want support, build connections  
- Want to recognize and celebrate what’s going well  
- Need defining of the role; clarification of components  
- Want “Cole’s Notes” on how to manage Resource teaching and maximize the limited time allotted, how to balance the administration and teaching job aspects  
- Want to come back.

Our next item was to establish meeting times. We then assigned homework for the group.

Homework:
1. Please complete a “personal reflections” sheet (see appendix, page 15) for this session in your binder and record new discoveries/questions that you will bring back next time. [This would become first agenda item after the welcome at the next meeting.]
2. Read the BCTF discussion paper provided, to get some of the background about specialist teacher challenges in the province. [This would become the next agenda item at our second meeting.]

3. Visit the Teaching to Diversity web site (bctf.ca/TeachingToDiversity/)
   Begin to explore the site for information, perhaps with a specific student in mind. Look for resources that will support you in your teaching. (The plan was to then do an online walkthrough at the next meeting.)

5. Meeting Content

a. Meetings 2 through 5 followed a similar basic outline.

   1. Introductions and Welcome
   2. Reflections (touch back to previous meetings and encounters at school)
   3. Burning questions: Ideas and questions from here led to immediate discussion, new topics, or handouts for the next meeting
   4. Guided professional conversation related to homework activities/articles
   5. Mini workshop: Topics covered here were decided at the brainstorming session from our first meeting
   6. Closure: Handouts (topic and homework for next meeting), reflections sheet

Topics and Handouts

January
- Challenge and research BCTF article
- Teaching to Diversity web site
- Program management (Year at a Glance for Elementary and Secondary levels); see appendix, pages 20–26
- Handouts on assessment and articles on the pros/cons of Intelligence (IQ) testing

March
- Guided conversation: Uses and misuses of Intelligence Testing
- Assessment practices
- Group Achievement Tests
- Individual Performance Tests
- Discussion: What do you do with the data and information?
- Handouts: Retention articles

April
- Guided conversation: Retention
- Specific assessment tools
- Transitions within Elementary, to Middle school, to high school, to college to the community
- New reflections sheet: see appendix for “Final Reflections,” page 16

May
- “Short snappers”:

6. The BCTF/SD57 Professional Conversations and Mentoring Project in Prince George, BC 2004–05
• Resources sharing
• Evaluation Feedback: see appendix for “Mentorship: A Learning-Focused Relationship,” page 17

b) Processes/mentoring strategies used

The following strategies were implemented in order to facilitate the movement through the three mentorship stances of consultation, collaboration, and coaching: professional conversations, large and small guided group discussions, mini-information sessions, collaborative activities, take-away handouts, homework (research articles) and response feedback, reflections (to “touch back,” to wrap up), 3-2-1 feedback, stem completions, small group work, brainstorming, and clustering.

6. Reflecting on the Experience

As mentors, we grew professionally and personally. We found the experience to be energizing, and it allowed us to pass on the enthusiasm that we continue to have for our jobs as seasoned educators working with students who require additional support.

After the first meeting it was evident that the group melded well, allowing an openness where people could share concerns and discuss issues without restriction.

A highlight for us was the commitment of the group; no one missed a meeting, and participants stated how they looked forward to future meetings. Their enthusiasm, hunger for more, and keenness on all topics presented spurred us on even more in our efforts to accommodate their needs.

Participant feedback

During our last meeting we asked the group to complete a mentorship evaluation that would help us as mentors to plan for further mentoring experiences. Following are some of the comments:

For me, this mentoring experience was…
• invaluable, practical, insightful, and learning
• gave me confidence and more understanding of my diverse position
• experts all around us
• new ideas that I shared and tried to implement in my school
• a strong base/foundation that will help support me in this “new” career

Our meeting format was…
• relaxed but with structure that was well-organized
• non-judgmental
• flexible: we drove the agenda that facilitated discussion and input from all members

• good – a balance of sharing, reflecting comments; periods of small group discussions/dinner and social interaction
• a safe place to be able to have a “voice” and a safe place to ask/share difficult questions.

Mentoring relationships should offer opportunities for growth and learning. Was this goal met? How?
• Yes, met by the conscientious effort of our three leaders. They listened to our needs and questions and responded with practical help. They offered growth through research readings and handouts.
• Yes, is determined by each individual and what they choose to take away from the experience. It is our responsibility to implement, utilize, and recognize our current and future growth and learning opportunities.
• Yes, enabled me to reflect on a subject after the meetings had taken place and thus making me form opinions related to the previous subjects.
• Yes, I don’t feel as though I’m alone. I know there is a support network on which I may rely.

I appreciated…
• the time and effort that went in to preparing our sessions
• the numerous opportunities I was given to ask questions/share
• the fact that the environment was comfortable (unconditional)
• the fantastic and positive way information was delivered
• the openness of fellow teachers with experiences
• being made to feel welcome and important (ideas, experiences, etc.)
• your empathy, respect, sense of humour, and commitment
• the willingness to adapt to our needs/insecurities.

I wish…
• I could be involved again next year
• we had more time
• that ALL teachers of “struggling learners” had this opportunity to feel supported, and connected
• that we could have a “session” at the beginning of next school year
• a tentative schedule could be set for future informal get-togethers and/or through e-mail for a continued support system.

A parting comment for the mentors…
• thank you for your time, expertise, understanding, energy, enthusiasm, encouragement, personal assistance and support
• this has been enjoyable as well as valuable for everyday practice
• after our first meeting, I looked forward to the next one
• I found myself wondering, “What would my team do/think in this situation?”
• more mentorship opportunities will need to be set up to help support other new Resource/Support Teachers
• hopefully we can be part of mentoring in the future
• positive connections all around have been built – this should build a strong team within this field.
7. Next Steps

The group indicated that they want to meet informally in the next school year (mentioned at meetings and in written feedback). A written comment was “I’d do it again in a heartbeat.” Participants also generated a list of potential topics for future meetings.

Some of the group members expressed that they will feel more confident in sharing their growing knowledge with other teachers. Teachers moving to a new school or assignment will have support from the original group and feel more comfortable in their new appointment.

Sustainability of the project

We discovered that the following factors must be a part of the dynamics in establishing a mentorship group: trust, time, a relationship between the mentors and mentees, and an emotionally-safe meeting location.

i. District-level initiative

The district is implementing a district-wide mentorship program for the coming year. It will focus on teachers relatively new to the profession or in a new assignment. The district’s guiding principles for the new project will be:

- an investment in retention, integration, and enhanced teacher quality
- provision of a collaborative support-network for all participants
- support for successful induction into the teaching career via instructional, social, emotional, and professional support
- sustainability towards improved student learning
- integral to implementation and maintenance of district initiatives.

ii. School District 57 Resource Mentorship Project continuation

- there is currently a commitment from our district, the BCTF, mentors, and mentees to continue and to expand our resource-teacher mentorship initiative.

iii. BCTF

- considering expansion to other teaching groups, other districts
- considering expansion of mentor numbers province-wide to meet the needs of Resource Teachers.

8. Closing Commentary

It was great fun to get together with our colleagues, whether it was a planning session by the facilitators or a mentor group meeting. It took up personal time, but it was time well spent. There was a feeling of energy and excitement after planning sessions, group meetings, debriefing and writing for documentation purposes. The commitment of the group helped to make the sessions meaningful.

It is important to remember that the structure of the meetings be established by the facilitators to meet the needs of the group. Modeling and trust are important in the development of group dynamics. In our group, there was a sense of relief when they realized that many of the participants had the same questions and that “they were not alone.” Questions and questioning without judgment or evaluation allowed group members to feel validated.
Overall, we felt this project was very worthwhile and beneficial. More professional development projects of this nature should be continued wherever viable.
# Appendices

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You are invited to participate in a Professional Development opportunity, “Teaching to Diversity:” Resource-Teacher Mentorship

In 2003, the BCTF completed an 18-month research study on the impact of the changing roles of Special Education, Learning Assistance, and ESL teachers. In response to the results of this research, a number of projects were initiated in three pilot districts to provide professional support for teachers newly assigned to these teaching positions.

School District No. 57, in partnership with the BCTF, is establishing two Resource Teacher Mentorship groups, designed to enhance and support the work of “novice” Learning-Resource Teachers. The groups will work together with experienced Resource Teachers and a trained BCTF facilitator to examine specific responsibilities and topics of study related to the increasingly diverse learning needs among the student population. The groups will meet for a total of five sessions throughout the school year. Release time will be provided for three of the sessions, and two sessions will take place after school with dinner provided.

Specifics:

- Two groups will be established; one for Elementary-level Resource Teachers, and one for secondary skills-support/pre-employment teachers
- Each group will be led by an experienced Resource Teacher, the District Support Teacher, and a BCTF facilitator
- Group work will be developed in a “professional conversations” format, with facilitation based on trainer Laura Lipton’s learning-focused mentoring model
- It is expected that participants will attend (all) five three-hour sessions during the school year (three with half-day release-time provided, and two after-school sessions with dinner provided)
- The first session is scheduled from 8:30 – 11:30 on December 1, 2004. Both groups will work together to establish project parameters, examine key issues and identify specific topics of study.
- Dates for future sessions will be set with the group (tentatively January, February, April, and May, 2005)
- At the end of the five sessions, group members will provide evaluative feedback about the project in a manner to be determined by the group
- Maximum group size: five teachers in each group.

Please complete the attached application form.

“Teaching to Diversity:” Resource-Teacher Mentorship

APPLICATION

Deadline November 19, 2004

Due to limited space, participants will be selected for each group on a first-come, first-served basis (five Elementary, five Secondary).

Name: 

School: 

Contact information:  
phone: __________________ fax: _________________ e-mail: ________________________  

Teaching role: 
Secondary: Position(s) _________________________________________________________  
Elementary: Position(s) _________________________________________________________  

Administrator’s approval for participation in the project:  
Signature: ________________________________ Date: ______________________________  

A brief statement indicating why the group is of interest to you:  

I understand that I am agreeing to:  
• 3 in-school sessions with half-day release time provided (first session – December 1, 2004)  
• 2 after-school sessions with dinner provided  
• Participation in project evaluation at the end of the year.  

Applications (fax or e-mail) should be forwarded to:  

Saima Fewster, District Support Teacher  
Tel: 561-6800, loc. 258  Fax: 561-6820  E-mail: sfewster@sd57.bc.ca  

For more information about the research project, you can also contact:  

Charlie Naylor, BCTF Research  
Tel: 604-871-2254  Fax: 604-871-2294  E-mail: cnaylor@bctf.ca
Roles and Responsibilities of Resource Teachers

Listing of key duties and challenges, sorted by general topic area:

1. Program administrative duties/Paperwork
   - identifying 1701 students, including ESD
   - writing IEPs (including identifying goals/objectives)
   - writing AEPs (Annual Education Plans)
   - ARC (Area Resource Committee applications – Elementary)
   - file procedures, maintenance of student information (red files, green files, buff files, PR files…)
   - data collection: compiling hard copy and computer data
   - applications for $
   - reporting: accountability to all groups
   - making appropriate referrals for additional service
   - finding the balance between admin and teacher
   - accessing administrative support
   - management of TA programs: organizing, planning, training

2. Communication
   - managing effective school-based teams and meetings
   - working with specialists (extended school-based teams)
   - staff collaboration: when/where/how to meet
   - co-operation: working with reluctant partners
   - being a good listener
   - liaison activities: between student, staff, parent, administrators, others
   - ICM (Integrated Case Management), outside agencies
     - developing collaborative behaviour plans
     - reporting student progress and report cards
     - following up on action plans with staff involved
     - regular review of programs/activities with student/TA
   - maintaining and sharing minutes, meeting notes
   - being an advocate for students (with administration, other teachers)

3. Program planning/Scheduling
   - organization of physical space, work areas, groupings
   - case manager/management, developing/maintaining IEPs
   - preparing, monitoring and revising TA schedules
     - teacher timetable, setting allotments for various duties
   - time management
   - completing and following calendars
   - walking down the halls to get the kids
   - preparing for TAs and TOCs
   - balancing TA resources between teachers, students
• prioritizing tasks
  o matching so many needs to too little time
• extra-curricular expectations
• feeding the fish

4. Assessment
• classroom, school, and district assessment requirements
• identifying academic skill levels
• monitoring of student progress
• specific tests; what to use and where to find

5. Teaching
• providing direct service, in class and out of class
• useful teaching strategies for struggling learners
• Learning Assistance, ESL/D
• adapting vs. modifying
• implementation of program plans (IEPs)
• ensuring students get the help they need
• addressing hygiene, drugs, medication, student well-being
• materials to supplement classroom programs

6. Professional Development
• developing/following a personal philosophy
• personal beliefs to help focus and justify my service-delivery choices
• awareness of learner characteristics for specific disabilities
• identifying, locating, accessing useful materials and resources
• providing appropriate resources to TAs
• workshops, in-service opportunities to develop personal skills
# Personal Reflections

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<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>New discoveries/Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What are some things that come to mind/some connections you are making?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What are you taking away that will influence your practice back in your school?</strong></td>
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## Final Reflections

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<td>The most important thing a teacher of struggling students needs is…</td>
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<tr>
<td>A priority for me in my job has been…</td>
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<tr>
<td>One thing we have discussed that has really affected my practice is…</td>
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<tr>
<td>Something I still need to know more about is…</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am confident in my ability to…</td>
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**Mentorship: A Learning-Focused Relationship**

For me, this mentoring experience was…

Our meeting format was…

Mentoring relationships should offer opportunities for growth and learning. Was this goal met? How?

I appreciated …

I wish…

A parting comment for the mentors…

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Start-Up Checklist

This checklist provides an outline of tasks that will assist with support-teacher preparations for a new school year. Although it highlights key activities to be considered with other involved school staff, not all tasks will apply to every situation.

**Scheduling**

- Obtain school organization timetables (P.E., Computer, Prep, Library, etc.)
- Determine available consultation time and how it is to be allocated, in collaboration with administrator
- Set/co-ordinate Teacher Assistants’ schedules (with Business Manager at Secondary)
- Develop Support/Resource Teacher’s schedule; share with staff
- Verify schedules of other support staff (Itinerant Vision/Hearing, OT, S/LP, etc.)
- Set School-Based Team, Extended School-Based Team meeting times

**Staff information**

- Review Roles and Responsibilities of student support team members
- Review confidentiality issues with staff
  * Student information should be shared with appropriate staff on a need-to-know basis in a private setting
- Review information and special procedures for high-risk students
- Review class lists with teachers to identify priorities for additional information needed (file review, testing, observations)
- Provide Teacher Assistant orientation (to school/classrooms/students)

**Student information**

- Confirm the targeted students that are present in the school
- Confirm building accessibility with administrator (Accessibility Checklist, page 27)
- Confirm busing/transportation for students
- Determine/confirm health or safety issues
- Ensure that necessary supports are in place (e.g., changing, feeding, behaviour plan, medication, equipment)
- Determine/confirm other support services required (S/LP, OT, Gateway, SET-BC, Counselor, Itinerant Vision or Hearing)
- Confirm class/course placements; confirm/develop student timetables (involve Counselors at Secondary)
- Establish student’s support team, share appropriate student information, designate responsibilities
- Determine Teacher Assistants’ assignments with administrator and teachers involved
- Ensure that receiving teachers have a copy of previous year’s IEP
- Review goals from previous IEP, prepare/find materials as needed
- Meet with parents/guardians
  - Introduce new members of student’s support team
  - Develop/Review start-up plans
  - Establish IEP planning dates
- Update/review assessments and testing as needed
**New Students**
- Request/review files from previous school, summarize for classroom teacher
  - Check for start-up plans, special materials required
- Determine/confirm if other agencies, ministries are involved
- Familiarize the student with the building and staff

**Materials/Resources**
- Check for needed equipment, technology
  - Check for SET-BC involvement
- Confirm resources budget with administrator
- Gather and/or order materials needed

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**Start-Up Suggestions**

**Staff Communication**

Some start-up items may be appropriate to review at an early staff meeting. In particular, this is an opportunity to discuss the amount and nature of support-time available, priority activities for the first month, Teacher Assistant assignments, and school-wide scheduling details (e.g., testing, consultation time). It is helpful to keep staff updated on program events through regular notices, e-mail, and/or staff meetings.

**Support-Teacher Schedules**

In many schools, Support Teacher time is only one portion of a teaching position. Teachers who are assigned multiple teaching roles within a building should develop schedules that balance the time allocated with the responsibilities of each teaching role. Allow for flexibility to deal with emergent needs and consider shifting time allotments during key time periods when the duties of one teaching role may take priority over another. Discuss scheduling issues and service priorities with the administrator.

**Teacher Assistants**

Confirm the amount of Teacher Assistant time available with the administrator. Meet with classroom/subject teachers or business managers to determine the time to be allocated to specific students, and to set schedules, Teacher Assistant responsibilities, and classroom procedures. In many situations, timetables for Teacher Assistants vary from day to day, so it can be useful to build a weekly schedule. Responsibilities can be shared between Teacher Assistants in a building, and several schedules may need to be co-ordinated. Be sure to factor scheduled breaks into timetables as well as student supervision requirements.
Year at a Glance: Elementary Timeline

This is a general outline for Elementary Resource Teachers (Support, Learning Assistance) to consider when scheduling major activities for the year. The specific timing of tasks may vary between teachers and schools. Add/revise to provide a guide for reference in subsequent years.

September

- Complete “Start-up Checklist” tasks
- Develop start-up plans, provide necessary materials to classroom teachers, TAs
- Develop community access plans
  - Submit funding request to School Services
  - Complete field trip/parent consent forms
- Identify all 1701 students by September 30, review with administrator
- Ensure computer programs (IEP, ARC) are updated versions
- Determine responsibilities for assessment/data collection
- Plan/administer assessments; individual, class, school-wide
- Begin program planning, contact/meet with parents
  - Establish contact information for meetings with other agency personnel
- Develop timetables (student, TA, Resource Teacher, SBT, ESBT)
- Identify priority ARC students, begin interventions and monitoring/data collection
- Establish monthly planning calendar
  - Include key dates for the year as they are set

October

- Continue program planning with classroom teachers
- Complete individual assessments
- Develop IEPs
  - Conduct IEP planning meetings, case conferences
  - Collate information, write drafts and share with team members
  - Write and distribute final IEP copies
- Attend Open House/parent interviews
- Complete and submit initial ARC applications
  - Note dates for submission of summary reports on timeline/calendar
- Determine next ARC priorities; review interventions and data, start applications

* ESL/D teachers:
  - Collect writing samples
  - Write AEPs (Annual Education Plans)
November

☐ Complete IEP meetings
☐ Complete and submit ARC applications
☐ Schedule Teacher/TA reviews to discuss progress, plan reporting
☐ Write/contribute to report cards

Owners activities: These tasks repeat every month
☐ Locate/develop/provide resources and materials
☐ Provide instructional activities
☐ IEP program reviews, updates, revisions
☐ ARC data collection and progress monitoring
☐ Consult with student support team; teachers, TAs, parents, others

December

☐ Organize Red file contents in date order, remove old and duplicate IEPs
☐ Update student files, LAT service summaries
☐ Start to prepare final ARC applications; review interventions and data

January

☐ Consultation with teacher/TA
☐ Revise IEPs as necessary
☐ Complete and submit final ARC applications
☐ Note dates for submission of summary reports on timeline/calendar
☐ Continue instructional activities

February

☐ Confirm student designations with administrator for second 1701 count
☐ Begin transition planning for Grades 5/6 to Middle school, Grade 7 to Secondary
☐ establish staff contacts with new school
☐ check reassessment needs with appropriate AST members
☐ assist with course selection

* Remember to review and complete all “Ongoing Activities” as needed.
March

☐ Schedule teacher/TA reviews to discuss progress, plan reporting
☐ Write/contribute to report cards
☐ Arrange formal IEP review meetings
  ☐ revise IEPs as necessary
☐ Update files, LAT service summaries
☐ Continue transition planning for students moving to Middle/Secondary school
  ☐ contact schools receiving students
  ☐ set up orientation visits for parents, students as needed

April

☐ Schedule transition activities for outgoing/incoming students
☐ Ascertain cut-off dates for spending resource-budgets
☐ Begin final budget ordering
☐ Check in-coming K registrations for students with special considerations
☐ Consult AST about students with special needs coming from CDC/other schools
  ☐ Make contact with parents to discuss initial September plans

May

☐ Establish a flexible Support Teacher timetable/schedule for May and June
  ☐ Confirm dates for year-end school activities with staff
  ☐ Plan completion dates for instructional groups/activities
☐ Begin year-end assessments
☐ Complete final ARC summary reports and send to AST office
☐ Arrange formal year-end IEP review meetings
☐ Arrange annual review meetings with AST
  ☐ Ensure red files are updated and organized
☐ Confirm all 1701 designations with AST for new students registered for September
☐ Apply for Special Needs transportation if necessary

* Remember to review and complete all “Ongoing Activities” as needed.
June

- Complete transition plans and transition activities
- Complete year-end assessments, share info with teachers
- Complete year-end IEP review meetings
  - Include review notes in student file with most current IEP copy
- Participate in student placement meetings
- Write/contribute to report cards
- Final update of student files
- Compile student documentation for new schools as needed
  - prepare exit report
  - include start-up recommendations
- Collect loaned materials
- Return borrowed materials to Gateway, AST, SET-BC, etc.
- Prepare summer review packages for appropriate students

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For September

- Create list for anticipated materials to borrow/gather
- Arrange for any environmental adaptations needed
- Confirm transportation arrangements for students as necessary
- Begin preparing student start-up packages for September
- Set tentative SBT & ESBT meeting dates (if possible)

AND…

* Update timeline for next year
* Review September Start-up Checklist
Year at a Glance: Secondary Timeline

This is a general outline for Secondary Support Teachers to consider when scheduling major activities for the year. The specific timing of tasks may vary between teachers and schools. Add/revise to provide a guide for reference in subsequent years.

September
- Complete Start-up Checklist tasks
- Develop community access plans, complete field trip forms
- Identify 1701 students by September 30
- Prepare packages for staff, for first day/week of classes
- Develop, locate materials and resources
- Confirm student timetables and TA coverage
- Check Red files for incoming students
- Update returning students’ IEPs
- Confirm SBT, Area Support Team, “Clearing House” meeting dates and referral processes
- Prepare for annual red-file reviews (check with AST for completion timeline)

October
- Consultation with classroom teachers, elective teachers, and TAs
- Write IEPs for entry student
- Prepare interim reports
- Parent interviews/IEP review meetings
- Assist graduating students to apply for post-secondary programs/services
- Identify students who will require adjudication
  - Make/schedule arrangements with school adjudication team
- Check reassessment requirements with AST (take to SBT for prioritizing)

November
- Review and update all Red files
- Review IEPs and revise as necessary
- Consultation with classroom teachers and TAs
- Write anecdotal reports for report cards
December

- Update student files
- Check IEPs and timetables for second semester
- Order resources/materials for second semester
- For students graduating in June, or students leaving the program:
  - Develop transition plans with parents/students
  - Consult with AST about assessment needs
  - Contact post-secondary institutes to set up entry interviews
  - Contact support agencies (ensure needed programs are in place)
- Start collating transition “package”

January

- Prepare modified final exams in consultation with classroom teachers and TAs
- Report-card writing
- Complete file updates, final IEP reviews for any students leaving program
- Prepare packages for second-semester classroom teachers
- Review TA assignments for second semester
- Review student programs with appropriate AST members

February

- Review IEPs and update for second semester
  - Consult with parents, students
- Consultation with second semester teachers and TAs
- Develop/locate materials and resources

March

- Begin transition planning with feeder schools (this may start earlier)
  - Establish school contacts, identify incoming students
  - Arrange orientation sessions for parents as needed
- Prepare interim reports
- Assist with course selection for September
April
- Consultation with classroom teachers and TAs
- Report-card writing
- Complete IEP reviews
  - Arrange review meetings
- Plan year-end student activities
- Review TA needs for September

May
- Complete transition plans for incoming/outgoing students
- Complete transition “package” for graduating students
  - Compile student documentation for post-secondary programs/services
- Consultation with classroom teachers and TAs
- Do year-end skill assessments, evaluation of IEP objectives
- Prepare modified final exams in consultation with classroom teachers and TAs
- Year-end IEP review meetings
- Arrange annual reviews with appropriate Area Support Team members

June
- Participate in placement and transition meetings
- Write report cards
- Update/organize all students files (Red and school PR files)
- Ensure that files are complete for students leaving the school
- Return borrowed materials to Gateway, Area Support Team, etc.
- Collect loaned materials

For September
- Create materials-list for anticipated September borrowing
- Begin to gather/purchase resources needed for September
- Arrange any special physical environment needs/student schedules
- Confirm transportation arrangements for September
- Prepare start-up packages for September
- Update timeline for next year
- Review September start-up checklist
# ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entrance to the school</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there ramps to facilitate access?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the doorways wide enough for wheelchair entry?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the door easy to open?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the doorway wide enough for wheelchair entry?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there adequate space to turn the wheelchair around?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there tables/desks of appropriate height?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are computers/learning stations accessible?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there adequate space to maneuver around desks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the emergency exit immediately accessible?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to the field/playground</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the curbs cut low to facilitate access?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the ground level enough for a wheelchair?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there signs to indicate accessible entrances?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Washrooms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the sink area (counter, mirrors, etc.) at an appropriate height?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a toilet cubicle wide enough for a wheelchair?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there support railings in the cubicle?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change rooms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there adequate space between the benches and lockers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a private change area available?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there support rails in the shower area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the shower floor non-skid?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a shower chair available?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the fountains at a suitable height?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a wheelchair loading area for vehicles transporting students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a designated parking stall for a staff member or student?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the designated stall clearly marked?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Is there an emergency evacuation plan in place?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there drinking fountains at a suitable height?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Are there other areas in the school that need to be made more accessible? List below.
### STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

**STUDENT:**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN:**

**TEAM MEMBERS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom teacher</th>
<th>Support Teacher</th>
<th>Teacher Assistant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Assistant</td>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Roles and Responsibilities</th>
<th>Who is responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developing IEP</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in Subject</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assigning responsibilities to Teacher Assistants</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- In Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individualizing curriculum</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developing &amp; teaching units/projects/etc.</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monitoring progress &amp; assigning grades</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scheduling/facilitating meetings</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration with parents</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration with other personnel/agencies</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilitating peer supports/friendship development</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- in Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behaviour Management</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transition planning</strong></td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*P = Primary Responsibility (seeks input from others)  S = Secondary Responsibility  E = Equal Responsibility  I = Input in Decision-Making* 
*CT = Classroom Teacher  ST = Support Teacher  TA = Teacher Assistant  LAT = Learning Assistance Teacher  CSLR = Counselor  AO = Administrative Officer  SST = Student Support Team*