

NSSBA

Nova Scotia
School Boards Association



A Call for Greater Interdepartmental Delivery of Services to Youth and Families in Nova Scotia



**A Call for Greater Interdepartmental Delivery of
Services to Youth and Families in Nova Scotia**

NSSBA
Nova Scotia
School Boards Association
www.nssba.ca

Submitted by:
G. Henry
Chair, NSSBA Education Committee
March, 2010

NSSBA

Nova Scotia
School Boards Association





Regional School Board
NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

1. All of the students – all the time.
2. Schools have add-ons – not integrated services
3. Death by initiatives and pilots – no province-wide integration
4. Some areas – very limited services
5. Education is at the table ready to collaborate.

Schools are not the same...



Skilled Trades Programs

STEP is a full high school program for anyone who wants to explore future careers in the skilled trades NSCC every Friday while working with skilled teachers.

Skilled Trades Centres

Options and Opportunities



Regional School Board
NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA



Advanced Placement

Connect Centre - Services



- In school suspension
- A place to go to cool off
- Counseling Service
- Sexual Health Centre,
- Addictions Services, etc.

Breakfast Program - Services



- Support of cafeteria staff, student and staff volunteers.
- Youth group from a local church, students council, and other students volunteer to help.

Food Bank - Services



Students and staff
collect food bank
donations
throughout the year
and give back to the
community!

Community Police – Partnership Services



Education, investigation, law enforcement, counseling, crime prevention and community relations.

Family Services, Restorative Justice and Parent/Teacher Advisory Groups.

Community Police (Where available)

Restorative justice program



Assistive Technology – PSP + Services



Training and support
to parents, support
staff, teachers,
instructors,
administration and
community college
system.

Cost & Expertise

Assistive Technology PSP + Services



Parenting Support - Services

Schools support parents of students, and students who are parents through various programs and services.



Gay Straight Alliance Conference - Services



First of its kind in Nova Scotia!

This conference was supported by both Schools Plus and the Social Justice group at Forest Heights Community School

Behaviour Support – Services

Social skill development

Safe and positive
learning environment

Seeking refuge

ADHD, ODD,
depression, and others





Our Kids Are Worth It



Strategy for Children and Youth





ESSENTIAL PRACTICES for IMPROVED OUTCOMES



- Early support with minimum disruption for students in need
- Effective engagement of the broader community

Ben Levin, How to Change 5000 Schools (2010)

- Adequate resources
- All students healthy and ready to learn
- Address all priorities together, at once, starting now



DEFINITIONS



Full Service Schools, Community Schools,
Integrated Service Delivery, Extended
Schools, Schools Plus

*The school serves as the central point of
coordinated delivery of quality education,
health, and social services.*



SCHOOLS PLUS CHARACTERISTICS



- Interagency collaboration – working together
- School is the centre of service delivery – professionals on-site
- Sharing of information and resources between agencies
- A comprehensive and seamless delivery of service
- Timely and effective services, reduction in wait times
- Accountability and use of evidence-based best practices
- Service beyond the school day - accessible
- Capacity building



Regional School Board
NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

Youth Health Centres – Services (where available)



- Over 400 schools but only 53 Youth Health Centres
- Majority are part-time service
- Issues – sexual health, health screening for female students, limited counselling services, SADD, GSA

Not just program add-ons. Goal is fully integrated and comprehensive service.



MODEL DESCRIPTION



LOCATIONS

- Halifax Regional School Board
- Strait Regional School Board
- South Shore Regional School Board
- Chignecto-Central Regional School Board

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Representatives from education, health, justice, community services, NGOs
- Meets monthly
- Plans and problem-solves

SCHOOLS PLUS FACILITATOR

- Link between school, community and agencies
- Job is to advocate, coordinate and expand services for children and families
- Help families navigate the system and get service



HOW DOES IT WORK?



- A student is referred primarily from school program planning teams, but may also come from service providers
- Facilitator opens file and determines intensity of response – connect families with service or create and monitor a service plan
- Co-ordinates services and navigates bureaucratic barriers
- Develop creative solutions



FINDINGS 09/10



- 372 referrals
- 147 open cases
- 85 new programs and services developed
- Services decrease further from Halifax
- Transportation barrier
- Some gaps in service are resolved locally, many require systemic change
- 75% + service providers say SP helps them provide better service



RECOMMENDATIONS



- Develop an integrated service delivery model
- There needs to be better information sharing and communication between departments.
- Locally, programs are working despite bureaucratic barriers
- Community Outreach Workers are required
- Support co-location of services
- Expand Schools Plus, widely



- Structural change at senior levels around shared budgets, policies, mandates and scopes of practice.
- Long term commitment is required for this to work ... cultural shift.
- Communication at the senior level of government about commitment to a shared vision of integrated service
- Different jurisdictional boundaries makes collaboration difficult



EVIDENCE of SUCCESS



Research has repeatedly shown a coordinated and accessible approach to public services is the best way to serve children and families.

Research shows an array of positive outcomes:

- Improved grades and academic assessments
- Improvements in personal and family situations, abuse, or neglect
- Reduced dropout rate
- Reduced behaviour and discipline problems
- Fewer youth involved in crime
- Reduced rates of youth homelessness
- Decrease in self destructive behaviours, including irresponsible sexual activity and drug use.



- The PSP is our responsibility – all of the students all of the time. Increased funding per pupil is a help. Minister's Report – PSP focus.
- Services that are the responsibility of other agencies are increasingly expected of schools – the systems need to be restructured for effectiveness and efficiency – Health, Justice, Community Services, etc.
- Demands from other Departments need to be the responsibility of/supported by those Departments – fire, garbage, playgrounds, etc.



NSSBA RECOMMENDATIONS

1: Establishment of a ministerial committee to lead and oversee the various agencies and programs for children, youth and families.

2: Conduct an inventory, by region, of services and programs currently offered so that overlap and redundancy can be reduced.

3: Establish provincially, service delivery for children and youth by government agencies and departments in community schools.

4: Convene a symposium for professionals working in the field on youth and family issues to generate discussion and ideas on how best to integrate those services.



6: Investigate privacy issues and other existing roadblocks with the aim of making inter-agency cooperation and coordination more tenable.

7: Ensure long-term stability of inter-agency cooperation through adequate budget and resource allocations.

8: Review and study Healthy Child Manitoba and other delivery models for ensuring inter-agency collaboration throughout Nova Scotia.

Establish, through policy and action, effective interdepartmental delivery of integrated services to children, youth and families in Nova Scotia.