12. STAFF DEVELOPMENT  2004-2005

Purpose of the Standard

To provide details of the board's professional development plans for special education staff to the ministry and the public

Goal:
The Peel District School Board through its strategic plan is committed to lifelong learning. To support this commitment a variety of ongoing staff development is available to support professional growth. The two major areas of focus are continuous development of knowledge and skills in all areas of special education and the other is to provide training for staff in regard to legislation, ministry policy and board procedures with regard to special education.

Staff Input and Prioritization:
In Peel the Special Education Regional Co-ordinating Committee represents superintendents, principals and vice-principals at both the elementary and secondary levels, co-ordinators, consultants, professional student services personnel, special education resource teachers and teaching assistants. This committee has a wide perspective on Special Education in the board and is able to provide input and help to determine priorities with regards to staff development needs. In addition teachers are surveyed regularly at professional development activities to gather input and to inform the prioritization process. Special Education Support Services keeps abreast of new research developments and this may determine areas of focus for staff development. Many opportunities exist for new teachers to attend staff training and development sessions in addition to the individual support provided by the special education resource teacher team.

Consultation with SEAC
The comprehensive consultation conducted during 2003-2004 school year included board staff and SEAC members. Professional development was a priority identified by all groups involved in this process. In particular, SEAC members highlighted concerns specific to their organizations. These specific concerns will be addressed in the planning of professional development over the next few years. The outline of professional development which follows will be reviewed by SEAC at the November meeting. This will provide an additional opportunity to provide input.

Professional Development is implemented at three main levels in a continuous support model.

Regional Level - available to all staff
Field Office Level - available to staff within individual field office areas
School Level - available to entire staffs, groups within schools and individual teachers

There exists a diverse range of opportunities for staff development which are organized by or prepared and presented by Peel staff. These opportunities range from major conferences to individual teacher visitations of special education classes. Each area within the Special Education Department plans to provide staff development specific to their areas of expertise.
throughout the school year. In addition summer institutes provide additional professional learning for staff in order to develop their skills and knowledge. Included in this plan is an overview of staff development initiatives.

OVERVIEW OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT 2004-2005

The board focus for professional development includes the following priorities:

- **Development of instructional intelligence**
- **Literacy** - First Steps
  - Stepping Out
- **Schools Attuned**

**Instructional Intelligence:** a 5 year plan is being developed in collaboration with Dr. Barrie Bennett, OISE. The goal is to build capacity within the system in the area of instructional practice.

**Literacy First Steps/Stepping Out:** ongoing teacher training and support for implementation. Early Literacy Teachers support classroom teachers in the elementary panel. The Secondary Program Resource Teachers support cross curricular implementation in the secondary panel.

**Schools Attuned:** in partnership with All Kinds of Minds, The Schools Attuned professional development program for teachers will be offered in July, August and October 2004. Follow-up practicum sessions will be offered throughout the 2004-2005 year.

A sample of professional learning opportunities available in the 2004-2005 year is as follows:

**Teaching Assistants**

- **Enhancing Professionalism**
  - Module I – The Difference We Make
  - Module II - Successful Practices
  - Module III – Dealing With Student Behaviour
  - Module IV – Overview of Special Needs
  - Module V - Back Care & Lifting
  - Module VI - Health & Safety
  - Module VII – Positive Physical Intervention

- **ASD**
  - Best Practices
  - Visual Strategies

- **Technology Workshops**
  - Introduction to the Intranet
  - Boardmaker
  - Writing with Symbols

**Teaching/Administrative and PSSP staff**

- Special Education Institute for In School Support teachers - elementary
• Special education teachers -secondary
• IEP Training
• Training for administrators moderation process regarding the new IEP
• Intranet/assistive software training
• ISRC /IPRC Training
• Annual Review Training for SERTS, IPRC chairs and special education teachers
• Criteria for the Identification Placement & Review of Exceptional Students
• Summer and Fall Institutes for new teachers
• Sound Skills expansion
• First Steps Literacy training
• Stepping Out Literacy training
• Parent Literacy conference
• Psychology Conference
• 3 part series for administrators
  - Legal issues and Peel processes/philosophy of Inclusion
  - PSSP overview
  - Ministry messages
• Transitions Grade 8 to Grade9
• ASIST -Suicide intervention
• When a Child Needs Protection
• Social work Conference -Rain and Rainbows (Promoting Balance and Resiliency for Students Under Pressure)

Gifted
• Institute for Teachers of Gifted
• Think Bowl-training and competition

Behaviour
• Responding to Students with Behavioural Needs (teachers and teaching assistants)
• Classroom Management

Autism Spectrum Disorders
• Topics include:
  - Symptoms and characteristics
  - Learning styles
  - Current research
  - Best practices
  - Functional behaviour assessments
  - Behaviour management plans
  - Communication skills
  - Social skills
  - Environmental and organizational supports
  - Sensory integration and supports
  - Augmentative communications system
  - Software and technology
  - Home and school communication
  - Community resources
• Training for 30 teachers in the TEACCH methodology
Communications
- Speech & Language: Reflect & Renew Series
- Ever Evolving Always Revolving (speech & language)
- Computer Software Training (Dragon speak, Inspiration, Kurzweil, Earobics, Writing with Symbols, Board Maker)
- Articulation workshops-(Parents)
- Teaching the student with Learning Disabilities

Slow Learner
- Picture Exchange Communication System –2 sessions
- Computer software training (Inspiration, Writing with Symbols)
- Institute for teachers of GLD and Special Classes

Developmental Disabilities
- Networking for Teachers
- Positive Pathways
- Programming for Students with Developmental Disabilities
- Early Oral Language Development

The Superintendent of Special Education Support Services ensures appropriate in-service is delivered to all staff with regard to legislation, ministry policy and board procedures on special education. Training around these issues is first planned at the regional level. All staff affected are expected to attend these formal presentations by Special Education Support Services staff. This in-service is supported at the field office level through the Superintendents of Schools and at the school level by the consultants and the special education resource teachers. Particular attention is placed on teachers new to special education.
Projected Budget

Total $205,000
Teaching Assistant staff development $  25,000
Materials and service from outside agencies $  10,000
Conferences fees, supply teachers for release time, honorariums $  60,000
School Attuned $  55,000
Writing Teams $  35,000
Speaker fees and materials $  20,000
Total $205,000

In addition to this dedicated budget, 26 Special Education Resource Teachers / Consultants provide ongoing staff development for teachers on a case by case basis and administrators around all issues connected with Special Education.

Cost Sharing Arrangements

Where feasible the board enters into these arrangements to facilitate staff development. Often the board is able to organize the venue and advertising while agencies such Erinoak, Trillium Health Centre and Peel Children's Centre provide the staff expertise for specific topics. Peel also works with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities to provide a venue for Additional Qualifications offered by both Bock University and York University.

Communication of Professional Development

Professional Development is advertised in a variety of ways depending on the target audience and topic. All information is delivered to the schools through one or more methods. These include advertising on the Board Intranet, hard copy brochures and flyers posted in the schools, faxes and e-mails sent to schools, personal phone calls and invitations. Specific portions of the board Special Education Plan are in-serviced on a regional basis. For example the Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities section was presented to all IPRC members and other special education staff at large scale meetings with representation from all schools.