



Enhancing Services: Enhancing Success

A research report commissioned by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
by Yvette DeBeer and Jawara D. Gairey



Improved Outcomes for All
Students: Enhancing the Role of
Professional and Paraprofessional
Student Support Service
Practitioners



Background

This qualitative research undertaken by independent researchers Yvette DeBeer and Jawara Gairey uses an adapted focus group methodology to collect *practice based evidence* from front line practitioners. It represents more than a year of work beginning with a thorough literature review with an emphasis on Canadian sources.

What did the research find?

From the data gathered in Phase 1, it became clear that very little research of this type existed and participants commented on the urgent need to expand this field of study. A basic set of assumptions emerged about service delivery:

- The school should be the point of access for services for students.
- Student needs determine the range of services that Boards must provide.
- Professional and Paraprofessional Support Services (PPSS) should be delivered by board employed professionals, complemented by the services of community agencies.
- PPSS practitioners possess a knowledge of school and board based services, understand the unique problems of a school environment and they can provide a broad range of services that are strategic and effective.
- Services should not be limited to students identified as exceptional within special education.
- Minimal delays should be experienced by students/parents in accessing services.
- Student *success* must be defined more broadly than academic achievement.

What does the research recommend?

Phase 2 of the research report outlines the critical elements of a best practice model for the delivery of professional and paraprofessional support services in Ontario schools. Allowing for regional differences, the ten principles established may be applied in both urban and rural settings—in both English and French school boards. Each principle is supported by existing evidence and related literature.

Ten Principles

1. PPSS services are essential for student education, success and well being.
2. Every student across the province has access to PPSS services in the school on an ongoing basis, all year, every year in a timely fashion.
3. A school based service delivery model includes preventative, consultative, intervention, and assessment services for all PPSS practitioners.
4. A quality school based service delivery model rests on a consultative multidisciplinary team structure and process that is collaborative and flexible.
5. Planned protocols and procedures at the school level are managed and honoured by appropriate personnel.
6. PPSS practitioners must be actively involved in developing and managing the protocols that outline the services that may be provided in schools by outside agencies.
7. The full range of students' non academic needs is met by board employed practitioners.
8. Progress oriented measures of service effectiveness must include the perspectives of students, teachers, administrators and parents.
9. A school based service delivery model promotes the centrality of the PPSS practitioner's liaison with the community, the school board, the school, the class, and the individual student.
10. Funding of a school based service delivery model must be dedicated, predictable, stable and sufficient to support board employed PPSS practitioners.

The full 100 page report can be found on the
OSSTF/FEESO website at osstf.on.ca



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