

Research / Inquiry: Integrated Service Delivery Model

- A. Newfoundland / Labrador**
- B. Nova Scotia**
- C. Saskatchewan**
- D. Manitoba**

Includes:

- Synopsis of Discussions with Provincial Contacts
- Summary Responses to Pre-Designed Questions
- Chart of Pros / Cons Regarding Integrated Service Delivery Models
- Recommendations Pertinent to New Brunswick
- Relevant Documents

*Submitted by:
Catherine Thorburn
September 30, 2005*

Newfoundland / Labrador

September 16, 2005 – Met at Department of Education, St. John's, Newfoundland

Provincial Director of Student Support Services

Other Contacts:

Cornerbrook / Deer Lake – Student Support Services

Avalon – Student Support Services

Synopsis of Discussion:

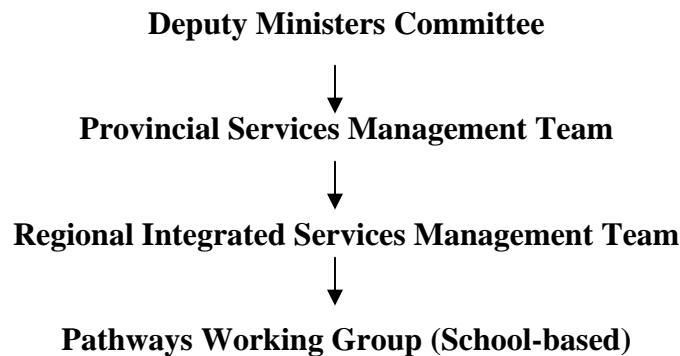
- Background on their provincial review of 1997 – “**Review of Classroom Issues**”
Some major issues from that review remain ongoing provincial concerns, specifically workload of resource and special education teachers, class composition, numbers of student assistants, service delivery versus quality of education.
- In 1997, the then Departments of Education, Health, Justice and Social Services (names of government departments have since changed) signed protocols stating their respective commitments to providing service delivery to children / youth with special needs throughout Newfoundland / Labrador. These students may be identified as having special needs by a professional or as judged by a parent or teacher.
- The identification of special needs ensures the needs of children / youth with cognitive delay, developmental delay, emotional behaviour disorders, physical disabilities, hearing impairments, learning disabilities, speech and/or language delays / disorders and visual impairments are met via a coordinated collaborative approach within existing resources.

Protocols and policy direction surrounding special needs students are noted in document **Inter-Ministerial Sub-Protocols for the Provision of Support Services to Children / Youth** (included).

- The process currently being utilized as a service delivery model was discussed at length. The service provided for identified special needs children / youth is driven by the severity of the needs of the child. This service and coordination of responsibilities of aforementioned government departments and their respective agencies is outlined in a service plan document entitled **Individual Support Services Plans (1997)** (included).
- The coordinated and collaborative approach to the ISSP model was evaluated in 2003 by an external review team. This review identified recommendations for change specific to emerging trends and increasing numbers of special needs students and their service delivery model. Note tabbed sections of “**Formative Evaluation – Individual Support Services Planning Process – Final Report**” (included).

Newfoundland / Labrador

- Each of the five school regions have in their jurisdiction a Regional Integrated Services Management Team (comprised of aforementioned government departments and partner agencies). This team is mandated by the inter-ministerial protocols to have a coordinated community approach that serves the needs of special needs children / youth and their families in each region. This regional team also identified barriers to the integrated service delivery and is required to problem solve around these issues; to represent the needs of the region to the regional school boards and provincial government departments; to identify the enhancers and facilitators of good professional practice (i.e. in Education, Health, Community Services, Justice, etc.) and finally to evaluate the efficacy of current policies and practices.
- These regional teams are accountable to a provincial management team who in turn presents to a team of deputy ministers for the pertinent government departments. *Due to changing roles in senior management positions and constant flux of job descriptions, these committees have been difficult to sustain.*
- Regional teams lack the power to make financial decisions; lack the power to get “buy-in” from all agencies involved; lack power to provide equitable resources between urban and rural regions. The onus of decision making rests with education to move forward with the delivery of service and sustaining such service.
- Provincially, the school-based special education teams (Pathways Working Group) are responsible for implementing “small picture” relevant services within existing resources but require inter-agency support for students in “categorical funded” classification.



- Consultants – each of the five boards have one or more consultants specifically trained and qualified in Special Education. The Department of Education has 10 consultants, consisting of 5 as specialists (1 specific to learning disabilities, 3 specific to autism, 1 specific to FAS/FAE), 5 who focus on severe cognitive delays, behaviour, visual, physical disabilities, etc.

Newfoundland / Labrador

SUMMARY RESPONSES TO PRE-DESIGNED QUESTIONS

1. Communication

Expected to be open at all levels and not seen as an issue. Usually reverts to school / home communication and often rests with Pathways Working Group. Communication with parents is the first level of problem solving. Professionals communicate to other professionals readily to expedite implementation of required service delivery.

2 & 3. Parental Input / Student Input

Parents and students (where age is appropriate) are invited to be part of ISSP planning and implementation. Parents are invited to be case managers of the school-based planning team. ISSP goals can be implemented without parental support but must be supported by majority of stakeholders in order for service delivery to be facilitated.

4. Student Needs

Needs of students may be presented to the school (i.e. resource or special education teachers) by the parent, teacher(s), medical professionals / private practitioners for further assessment, planning around integrated service and follow-up. Plans are evaluated yearly.

5. Inter-Departmental Cooperation

Please refer to notes and flow chart.

6. Integrated Services – Professional Development

Professional Development funding is a departmental responsibility who allocates professional development funds to the five regional school boards who in turn prioritize professional development needs. When training workshops are designed regionally or provincially, invitation is extended to other government agencies such as Health, Justice, etc. This occurs in order to emphasize a “common front” approach to support service to special needs children / youth.

Such invitations are not necessarily reciprocal.

7. School-Based Services

School-based services in Newfoundland / Labrador are driven by the needs of the child/youth. It is considered a “resource-rich” special needs program by other provincial jurisdictions (in this case by New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan).

Provincial Overview of Staff Assigned to Special Needs Students:

- 7 Resource Teachers per 1000 students
- 550 Resource teachers are funded under the non-categorical funding allotment (teach students with less severe needs)
- 650 Student Assistants

Newfoundland / Labrador

Provincial Overview of Staff Assigned to Special Needs Students (Cont'd):

- 1000 Special Education Teachers (teacher population total is approximately 6000)
300 - Special Education teachers are funded under the categorical funding allotment to work with students identified with the most severe needs. They also perform some critical health procedures.
- 45 Speech Language Pathologists assigned to schools or families of schools (funded by Department of Education)
- 41 Educational Psychologists (funded by Department of Education)
- 160 Guidance Counsellors (funded by Department of Education) – ratio one counselor per 500 students
- 28 APSEA Itinerant Teachers (now funded by Department of Education) but they are assigned to 130 visually impaired students, not hearing impaired students.

The segregated school (currently not an APSEA affiliate) for severely hearing impaired houses 44 students with 15 full-time teachers and 44 student assistants.

An overall declining school population allows for facilities to have available space for treatment rooms, privacy rooms, time-out rooms to support service delivery.

Whereas class composition is considered a priority, students with severe needs are placed in “low-ratio” classes allocating fewer students per teacher. More specifically, 50-60% of autistic students are placed with low-ratio teachers. Students with conduct disorders and behavioural challenges have behaviour plans coordinated and managed by special education teachers. Students with this identification are often allocated to “low-ratio” classes.

Access to services such as occupational therapy or physiotherapy are health funded services and may be accessed via the regional integrated service teams.

Currently, the Association of Occupational Therapists of Newfoundland is requesting to have some therapists school-based and funded by education. The Department of Education believes it has no validation that this is a service of priority at this time, due to limited numbers of referrals.

8. Accountability

Yearly evaluation of ISSP’s and the inherent required delivery of service initiatives with school-based teams, board consultants and individual regional integrated service teams.

If issues are “big-picture” from the individual cases they are referred to the provincial integrated service team.

Consistent monitoring of students included under categorical and non-categorical funding rests with individual school-based special education teams.

9. Funding

Non-categorical funding applies to the students in regular “low-ratio” classes so that support services can be allocated to identified students as required by coordinated inter-agency or school-based collaborative plans. Teachers of these classes receive support from resource teachers in the school.

Students (i.e. their families / advocates) who are identified as having severe special needs must apply for categorical funding to the Department of Education (Student Support Services Division). The screening of such applications is the decision of the Department of Education and appropriate financial allocations are transferred to the regional school board for the implementation of resources and service delivery upon approval of the Department of Education. This screening process is continuous as not all students receive categorical funding on the first application.

Detailed funding analysis has been deferred to the sub-contract of Grant Thornton, Fredericton, N.B.

10. Rural Schools

The service delivery model is the same for small and rural schools as for urban; however, hiring and sustaining qualified staff is an ongoing challenge. The regional boards are now permitted to hire retired teachers for short-term contracts in rural and isolated areas of Newfoundland / Labrador if qualified staff cannot be acquired. Retired teachers have expertise in supporting integrated service delivery. In small population areas a percentage of time for resource teachers is allocated according to population of individual schools.

11. Pre-School Service Delivery

The integrated service delivery model applies to pre-school children (0-4 years) who have been identified by Health & community Services. The province funds a Kinderstart Program which is an “in-school” 8-week orientation for 4 year olds and their parents. This education-funded program provides a screening process to identify needs and to provide follow-up “in-home” programs to assist in school readiness, where identification warrants.

From the time pre-school students are identified with autism, they receive 30 hours of support service per week funded by Health and Community Services; however, when they are transitioned to public education, they receive 15 hours of service provided by school-based personnel and health services.

12. Health Support Services

A partnership agreement and transfer protocol from the Newfoundland Nurses’ Association supports the position that Public Health Nurses will train Student Assistants in critical health procedures. They also train categorical funded teachers when necessary. All trained school personnel are subject to re-certification by health professionals. Parents are not permitted or responsible for training school personnel in health procedures. Services are monitored yearly by Public Health Nurses.

13. Human Rights

There have been twelve (12) cases presented to Human Rights involving special needs students in the past eight years. Department of Education has been successful in defending all twelve cases. The significant issue was delay in the provision of integrated service delivery via categorical funding.

14. Appeals

Appeals concerning special needs students are taken to the Regional Integrated Services Team for collaborative consultation and resolution of the issues. Appeals center around service delivery and the demands for additional support via categorical funding. However, parents may take their concern to the provincial Child Advocacy Board. This board consists of social workers solely and of the ten cases handled by this board, all have defended the parent's stance. The onus then rests with education to deliver additional support service to the student.

15. Community Partners

Provincially, schools are encouraged to partner with community agencies but demographics in remote and isolated areas of the province pose a challenge to such partnering. Consequently, services are often regional or itinerant, generally involving a cluster of schools for specific blocks of time.

Declining populations in isolated areas pose a challenge for partnering initiatives.

16. French Immersion

French Immersion students generally attend schools in the larger urban areas and numbers of special needs students in French Immersion classes are of a less severe nature (mainly mild learning disabilities) and minimal in number. There are no low-ratio classes in French Immersion settings.

17. Aboriginal Education

Issues surrounding Aboriginal Education students on the mainland follow similar trends to the general population; however, areas of Labrador face many challenges, most notably FAS/FAE (thus the creation of a consultant's position at Department of Education). Retired teachers are being hired in some isolated areas to assist with service delivery to First Nation students.

Band operated schools (self-governing) have inconsistent models of service delivery.

Newfoundland / Labrador

NEWFOUNDLAND INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL		
<u>PROS</u> of integrated service delivery model	<u>CONS</u> of integrated service delivery model	Other Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorical funding provides a multi-layered approach to resourcing special needs students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorical funding leads to a level of funding that should foster inclusion but rather isolates students, allocated teachers and student assistants creating “ownership” of individualized students and their service. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorical funding has led to a “resource rich” component of the education system (i.e. individual needs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant change in staff and school board formation (amalgamations for example) has led to inconsistent memberships in decision-making bodies. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISSP process is a multi-agency approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education regions and health regions are not aligned geographically – make formation of regional teams (inter-agency) a challenge. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education consultants in specific disabilities allow for professional development to be dispersed equitably to board-based consultants and teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association presents ever-mounting demands to reduce responsibility and workload of resource teachers and special education teachers. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition planning for school-entry of special needs students and departure of special needs students (at age 21) is an inter-agency plan – includes parents and students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A facility (Shamrock Farm) for autistic adults (post high school) has been approved (August 2005) for construction in St. John’s where integrated service including residential support will be provided.

Newfoundland / Labrador

NEWFOUNDLAND INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL		
<u>PROS</u> of integrated service delivery model	<u>CONS</u> of integrated service delivery model	Other Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing professional development for classroom teachers in best practices for inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTA and school boards believe integrated service delivery could be facilitated more readily if each district had a lead special education manager (qualified teacher) to manage the number of people required for service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech language pathologists are employed by school boards and are school-based (or based in clusters of schools) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural and isolated areas have chronic challenges with hiring and sustaining staff of qualified teachers, specialists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilization of retired teachers provides a level of expertise that often cannot be acquired in rural isolated areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour plans are the responsibility of resource teachers and facilitated by them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referral process for health services (mental health, occupational therapy, physiotherapy) in rural / isolated areas can be lengthy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISSP teams are powerful within existing resources; maintain strong partnerships with parents and community agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application process for categorical funding can allow for service delivery that supports the “whole child”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application process does not guarantee service under categorical funding – often a “wait” time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding model provides for large numbers of well-trained TA’s. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing demands for Student Assistants is creating a system that supports service delivery but not necessarily quality education by professional staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

September 19, 2005 – Met at Department of Education, Halifax, N.S.

Provincial Director of Student Support Services

Provincial Director of CAYAC

Other contacts

Halifax Regional School Board

Cape Breton Regional School Board

Synopsis of Discussion:

- Review of Student Support Services (2000) led to a change in funding blocks where most of the budget for Student Support Services would henceforth be allocated to acquisition and training of professional special education staff at individual board level, with hope of diminishing demands for teacher assistants.
- Review of Student Support Services (2000) led to the development of 14 documents that present the framework of policies and protocols for Student Support Services in Nova Scotia (some available documents included). The province utilizes a global funding model that allocates a Student Services Support budget to individual boards to provide integrated service delivery. (This portion of the budget is the Innovation Challenge Fund.)
- Targeted funding is allocated for students identified with severe learning. Addressing service delivery for students with severe learning disabilities is a provincial priority.
- Priority professional development requirements that the department supports: training staff in every elementary school in Reading Recovery; training one lead team in every school board region in working with autistic children and addressing issues surrounding learning disabilities. Training will continue in both areas due to increasing needs of students.
- Department of Education Consultants specializing in Student Support Services: two consultants who are generalists in the area of special education, addressing most disabilities except visual and hearing impairments, and one specializes in Autism.
- Tracking is monitored by the Department of Education to determine the yearly numbers of Educational Program Assistants (EPA's, also referred to as TA's) and resource teachers hired by individual boards. The 2005-06 ratio is predicted to be 1 resource teacher per 25 identified special needs students (caseload). (Grid, "**Gap Analysis**", included)
- Each school board is allocated funds to hire and sustain (for families of schools in each region):
 - 1 Speech Language Pathologist
 - 1 School Psychologist
 - 1 Student Services Coordinator and regional facilitators to assist in facilitation of integrated service delivery

The above positions are funded via the Core Professional Services Funding that is a component of the overall budget for Special Education.

It should be noted that Student Services Coordinators replaced former Supervisors of Student Services (since 2000). Coordinators are not necessarily specialists in Special Education.

Research has been conducted by the Department of Education which supports the allocation of board-based social workers. This is being considered for the 2006-07 budget year.

- Autistic children – the ever mounting demands for service for autistic children has led to the hiring of one provincial consultant and the infusion of six million dollars (inter-departmental funding) to focus on early identification and service delivery for autistic children (0 to 6 years)
- Pre-school transition – a provincial transition committee (inter-agency) and regional transition facilitators (board-assigned) who work in collaboration with Health & Community Service agencies in each region are responsible for the decision-making around service delivery requirements for pre-schoolers.
- A multi-agency plan of service delivery including educational goals for all students identified with needs is a coordinated and collaborative plan for all stakeholders. (Individual Program Plan – IPP). The plan is driven by the needs of the student. The plan provides for a continuum of service and is monitored regularly and re-evaluated yearly. The IPP indicates what type of academic program will be delivered and secondly where the program will be delivered, that is a fully inclusionary class, partial inclusion or on an individual basis.

Externally funded schools (i.e. specializing in learning disabilities for example), require IPP's coordinated by the public system prior to acceptance.

- CAYAC – Child and Youth Action Committee

Provincial CAYAC group and regional CAYAC committees address inter-departmental protocols and it focuses on required services for children and youth. The provincial coordinator noted CAYAC has little power or budget unless supported by upper management interdepartmentally.

The coordinator was unfamiliar with the CAYAC model of British Columbia.

SUMMARY RESPONSES TO PRE-DESIGNED QUESTIONS

1. Communication

Due to concerns raised by parents of various regions about communication in general, the Department of Education issues “Fact Sheets” at school registration. These are regularly made available to all parents on a continuing basis and cover topics such as enrichment, adaptations, inclusion, and transition planning (**samples included**). Communication between schools and communities and other agencies is an element required by each board to support the integrated service delivery required by students with diverse needs.

2 & 3. Parental Input / Student Input

Students with special needs, as well as parents, are considered an integral part of planning and follow-up required to deliver service and meet the needs of the students. It is expected that parents share an understanding of the child’s needs by being involved in a multi-agency plan.

4. Student Needs

A process of identification, assessment, planning and continuous evaluation for students with special needs is implemented in every region / board. The identification can be initiated by the child’s school, health agency, parent or practitioner.

The onus is on the school to ensure ongoing evaluation of the required service delivery model.

5. Inter-Departmental Cooperation

Such groups as CAYAC foster interdepartmental cooperation as do the requirements for continuum of service delivery for students with special needs. In order to provide integrated service delivery, cooperation has been required by departments of health, education, community services, justice. Please refer to “**Guidelines for the Delegation or Transfer of Function of Specialized Health Care for Students in an Educational Setting**” (included). This document includes “**Identification of Care Providers for Students with Health Care Needs**”.

6. Professional Development

Provincial funding and budget allocations directed to individual boards are intended to address professional developments that support integrated service delivery. School leadership is expected to support and align training and inservice to meet diverse needs of students – in particular differentiated instruction, Reading Recovery, support for addressing needs associated with autism and to provide creative supports for teachers of students with special needs.

7. **School-Based Services**

Most health services within the integrated service delivery model are required at the school level. Care providers as designated in the protocol “**Identification of Care Providers for Students With Health Care Needs**” provide such health services. When service is more intense, then medical settings are designated (local hospitals within board regions or IWK as a provincial setting). If a nurse is designated to a school, the Department of Health funds the service. Itinerant teachers employed by APSEA provide service delivery to visually and hearing impaired. APSEA teachers are assigned to individual boards.

8. **Accountability**

Nova Scotia’s accountability is basically a “top-down” format where boards are dependent on the Department of Education for funding support and accountable to the Department for proper allocation of individual funds. Tracking for each fund is done by the Department of Education.

9. **Funding**

Global funding model – *details have been deferred to sub-contract of Grant Thornton, Fredericton, NB*

10. **Small / Rural Schools**

Concerted efforts by interdepartmental committees have ensured that equitable service delivery supports are available in rural schools aligned with the same model as more urban areas. Individual boards within school regions are staffed with equitable human resources who work in families of schools in smaller areas, i.e. speech-language, pathologists, psychologists, itinerant APSEA teachers, provide delivery of service. Recruitment and retention of staff poses the greatest challenge in small areas.

11. **Pre-School Service Delivery**

The integrated service delivery for pre-schools comes into play once identification by health personnel occurs. A regional transition facilitator is responsible for facilitating the transition process so the continuum of integrated services moves forward.

A pre-school pilot is currently operating in 20 school sites throughout the province as an initiative for early screening of pre-schoolers in order to identify diverse needs that might exist academically and environmentally. This allows for follow-up for school entry and in the home environment.

12. **Training for Health Procedures**

Refer to “**Guidelines for the Delegation or Transfer of Function of Specialized Health Care for Students in an Educational Setting**” (included).

13. **Human Rights**

There has been one case presented in the past “several” years but settled before being formalized.

14. Appeals

Appeals can be handled by individual boards if student placement is being challenged by the parent. The common appeal process is seldom utilized but is a vehicle to respond to the needs of a special needs student.

15. Community Partners

The leadership of each board is obliged to facilitate strong links between the school and outside agencies. Partnering as service delivery agencies occurs to meet the identified needs of students. The link between school boards and regional or provincial rehabilitation centres (health) enhance the availability of assistive technology when required for special needs students. The Department of Education contributes \$600,000 toward assistive technology from its “Learning for Life” fund.

16. French Immersion

Although there are no restrictions for students with special needs entering French Immersion settings, they are predominantly housed in English classes. When in Immersion, research supports that services are not required in French Reading Recovery which is now available in French.

17. Aboriginal Education

The province has initiated a program called “BEST” that is a multi-disciplinary approach to serving First Nation students who experience difficulty in Nova Scotia public schools. They also attend First Nations band-operated schools that are administered through a self-governing body. A tuition agreement is in place for First Nation students attending public schools.

NOVA SCOTIA INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL		
<u>PROS</u> of integrated service delivery model	<u>CONS</u> of integrated service delivery model	Other Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global funding model allows individual boards to be creative in setting up programs to meet diverse needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA's, SLP's, itinerant teachers shared amongst schools in some areas. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial behavioural initiative "Positive Effective Behavioural Supports" provides common approach to a safe learning environment for all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nova Scotia Teachers' Union (NSTU) continues to rally against inclusion blaming it on increased teacher workload and stress. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer of function protocols in effect between Education and Health Departments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased demands for EPA's (TA's) supported by other agencies (i.e. Health) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking of professional and paraprofessional staffing yearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-agency approach to IPP's but deliverables on the shoulders of Education and Health Departments. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who are not successful on provincial literacy assessment receive additional support and literacy plan for grades 6-9 inclusive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some special needs students moved from peers in order to be in a physically accessible facility. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on boards to bolster professional staff as opposed to paraprofessionals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA's (TA's) not meeting the need of quality education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolation of both cultural groups has led to little multi-agency support. Staff difficult to sustain. Community focus is in infusion of culture in schools as opposed to quality of education.

Nova Scotia

NOVA SCOTIA INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL		
<u>PROS</u> of integrated service delivery model	<u>CONS</u> of integrated service delivery model	Other Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inservice delivery to Aboriginal students and Afro-Nova Scotians receiving some extra funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Afro-Nova Scotians and Aboriginal Education students perform below average on provincial assessments.	

Saskatchewan

September 2005 – Telephone Interview

Provincial Director of Student Services

Other contacts:

Director of Schools Plus

Student Services

Synopsis of Discussion:

- The 2000 Task Force Review of Student Services was the catalyst to enforce change in the delivery of service for special needs students.
- Provision of appropriate programming and integrated service delivery is within the jurisdiction of locally elected boards of education so in a large province there is predictably a “mixed front” of how service is ultimately delivered.
- Interdepartmental cooperation is evident in the service delivery model and delivery of service is usually school based decision making or school-linked (shared service in some areas).
- The task force review of 2000 promotes the multi-agency approach so accountability of integrated service delivery is not solely a response from education. Other stakeholders are: Health, Social Services, Culture, Recreation and Youth, Justice and Aboriginal Affairs. All ministers of the aforementioned departments have signed an agreement to support inter-departmental cooperation.
- Professional development surrounding special education and diverse needs is funded by Department of Education as allocated in school board budgets. Priority professional development needs must be tracked and delivered at the board level.
- Consultants at department level (4) provide support to individual board consultants. The number of board consultants varies according to population.
- Costs surrounding the model for delivery of service is a combination of formats:
 - Categorical funding for visual and hearing impaired as well as severe learning needs
 - Schools Plus – shared service funding (majority of special education students)
 - Individual funding supports 2.8% of students with profound needs
 - Block funding is allocated to 15% of students identified with other diverse needs
- The special education review of 1999 promotes the need for inclusivity province-wide; however, some segregated special education classes still exist in this province, typically in larger jurisdictions.
- Educational assistants (TA’s) are employed and trained by local boards.

Saskatchewan

- Students with special needs may remain in public system until 22 years of age. Transition planning is part of their continuum of service in their Personal Program Plan (PPP) in collaboration with the division of Adult Services.
- The terms “learning assistant teachers” and “resource teachers” are used synonymously. Special education teachers are classified separately by the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Union due to their managerial role with educational assistants (TA) and resource teachers.
- Schools Plus – an all encompassing philosophy of educating the whole child where school leadership is a key factor. The School Plus document is a comprehensive overview of an education model that resulted from the Task Force Study (2000) after listening to the perceptions, beliefs and feelings of people across Saskatchewan that focused on children and youth in public schools. Its recommendations indicated a need for change that aligns with the growing awareness of the changing role of schools in society and the expectations therein. (**School Plus – A Vision for Children and Youth 2001** included)

Saskatchewan

SUMMARY RESPONSES TO PRE-DESIGNED QUESTIONS

1. Communication

Communication and the shape it takes, rests with school leadership. It is encouraged to be open with all stakeholders but since it is a board managed system, communication varies from urban to rural communities and large to small schools.

2 & 3. Parental Input / Student Input

Parents and students are encouraged to be an active stakeholder in planning for students with special needs (PPP). This interactive process tends to be positive when service delivery is meeting the expectations of both. Service delivery is managed by the special education teachers and facilitates the multi-agency approach to development and implementation of the student plans.

4. Student Needs

The needs of students may be identified by teachers, parents, private practitioners but the onus is on the school to assess, evaluate and follow-up. The Personal Program Plan of students with needs focuses on goal setting, quantitative data, allocation of specifics of service delivery to Health Education, Aboriginal Affairs, Justice and Culture, Recreation and Youth as well as parents.

5. Inter-Departmental Cooperation

As a result of the Task Force review (2000) all ministers signed on as providers to integrated service delivery. Although it is an interdepartmental agreement, the equitability of commitment is “questionable”.

6. Professional Development

Due to the funding structure and the desire by individual boards to design and deliver professional development, it covers a variety of topics. Priorities set by the department emphasize the ongoing need to support classroom teachers dealing with various academic, social and behavioural needs.

7. School-Based Services

Schools housing special needs students provide on-site treatment rooms in physical plants designed to accommodate a variety of needs. School-based (sometimes shared in smaller areas) occupational therapists and speech language pathologists provide an ongoing delivery of service. These positions as well as board psychologists are funded via education funding. The decision making power around site-based services is shared between the Health and Education Departments. Delivery of service and program delivery is a local board decision.

Saskatchewan

8. **Accountability**

The directors of student services at individual boards are accountable for decisions around service delivery and the tracking of departmental allocated funds that apply to the service delivery model and how it serves special needs students. Each board is audited as to allocation of funds. A provincial indicators report provides results of how students do overall but does not include students with severe exceptionalities.

A 2003-04 pilot has continued into the present school year where eighty (of eighty-one) boards tested “low incidence” special needs students in curriculum outcomes. The positive results of this pilot indicate it will continue as a means of tracking academic achievement of students with diverse needs.

9. **Funding**

Costs associated with integrated service delivery:

- various types of funding allocated to boards from the Department of Education, i.e. block funding, Schools Plus funding, individual funding, etc.
- Details have been deferred to sub-contract of Grant Thornton, Fredericton, NB

10. **Small / Rural Schools**

Schools are managed by local boards. The department recognizes not all service delivery models are managed equitably as community resources vary.

11. **Pre-School Service Delivery**

Early Childhood Intervention and pre-kindergarten programs have been bolstered by an infusion of money from the federal government where Saskatchewan derives \$72 million from 2000-2005. There is no general system of pre-kindergarten programs in the province but early identification of children with special needs rests with public health officials. Contact is then made with school divisions to transition these children to public school and plan for integrated service delivery.

12. **Training in Health Procedures**

Training for Educational Assistants (TA's) in critical health procedures is done by the Province of Saskatchewan, Institute of Applied Science and Technology. Monitoring and recertification in medical procedures is the responsibility of local boards which employ these assistants.

13. **Human Rights**

There are presently two cases “on the books” regarding special needs students with no movement in either case. No specifics were conveyed.

14. **Appeals**

If parents wish to question or appeal a decision about service delivery or placement of a special needs student, it is done through a local board review of decisions. This process is highly criticized as the final decision rests at the board level.

Saskatchewan

15. Community Partners

Each board and school division select partners suited to their locale and situation but it is recognized that, in the face of population decline in rural areas, the development of continuous partnerships is strained. The placement of special needs students (high school age) in local work placements is facilitated by individual schools where opportunity permits.

16. French Immersion

Very low numbers of special needs students enroll in Immersion programs. Delivery of service in French Immersion is equitable in dual track schools or segregated immersion settings.

17. Aboriginal Education

The large population of First Nations students who live “off reserve” attend public schools but those residing in First Nations communities attend their locally managed schools. Service delivery for special needs students in public school is seen as equitable with all other cultures. Service delivery in band-operated schools depends on local band management.

Saskatchewan

SASKATCHEWAN INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL		
<u>PROS</u> of integrated service delivery model	<u>CONS</u> of integrated service delivery model	Other Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various funding blocks for various types of service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some segregated classes exist and receive significant funding. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special education teachers classified differently due to managerial role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing demands on classroom teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education has good working relationships with Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province reimburses boards for all assistive technology requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in health procedures mandated for EA's. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No common approach to professional development initiatives regarding special needs students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making on appeals rests with local boards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents / advocates have minimal voice in appeals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OT's, SLP's are board / school-based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for OT's, SLP's rests with Education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition (pre and post) part of PPP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No provincial pre-school programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdepartmental cooperation supports multi-agency approach to service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of various government departments is varied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most service delivery initiatives are shared by Health and Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program delivery is a board / school decision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service delivery models are varied depending on board decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

September 28, 2005 – Telephone Interview

Coordinator, School Support Unit Program and Student Services Branch

Synopsis of Discussion:

- The Department of Education maintains an “arms-length” involvement with school divisions once budgets for special needs students have been allocated.
- The large / urban areas prefer a model where they are self-sufficient within budgetary resources, thus the Department of Education supports small, rural and northern divisions in a more active and direct manner.
- Protocols surrounding students with special needs and special education are achieved through a transfer function and commitment of service for integrated service delivery by Departments of Education, Health, Family Services, Justice and INAC (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada).
- An integrated service delivery plan is not always a multi-agency plan but is rather student specific, driven by specific needs; i.e.
 - global needs – IEP’s (Individual Education Plan)
 - behavioural specific needs – BIP (Behavioural Intervention Plan)
 - transition program plan – TPP
 - adaptative education plan – AEP (for students requiring accommodation / modification of academics or adaptations of physical setting)
- Funding from Department of Education is directed to school divisions who in turn are accountable for a variety of funding models for diversified needs. A common model for service delivery is not mandated by the Department of Education. Divisions are expected to be creative with planning of services and utilization of staffing units (i.e. 1 unit = 1 FTE – professional or paraprofessional).
- Relations with the Manitoba Teachers’ Society (MTS) and Department of Education have improved dramatically with the evolvement of advisory committees; i.e. Inclusive Education Student Services Advisory Committee is a multi-person collective body (classroom and resource teachers, Education, MTS, community partners, parents, Health, Justice, etc.) that provide input to government on inclusionary issues. This provides a common understanding of issues around service delivery before they become a collective bargaining item. Similar advisory committees (i.e. curriculum) have facilitated building stronger ties with the Teachers’ Society in the past five years.
- Funding to individual divisions (boards) permits them to be creative, prioritize and plan for the long-term. Tracking of budgets is done under the Director of Finance at the Department of Education.

Manitoba

- Consultants / coordinators in special education under the management of the Student Services Director (Department of Education) provide specialty service in most areas of special needs and requirements for service delivery. They have a consultant for Literacy, Numeracy, Behaviour, Autism, Mild-Moderate Learning Disabilities, Multiple Needs, Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired, Profound Learning Needs, Aboriginal Education (at-risk / off-reserve).

Each specialty consultant is responsible for working with divisional consultants in large, urban areas and facilitating service delivery in small rural or northern communities.

SUMMARY RESPONSES TO PRE-DESIGNED QUESTIONS

1. Communication

Communication from Department of Education to divisional boards varies – the department focuses mainly on interacting with small/rural and northern communities. Professional communication within divisions is driven by the particular student plan (i.e. IEP) and the service delivery required to complete the plan.

2 & 3. Parental Input / Student Input

The case manager (usually a resource teacher) for students with special needs is obliged to inform the parent and student that a service delivery plan is in place, but the parent has the option to participate. The student can participate “where appropriate”. The parent signs off only as “informed consent” that the plan exists, but this signature does not necessarily indicate agreement.

4. Student Needs

Addressing student needs is a board responsibility within existing resources. The service providers of pre-schoolers (i.e. daycares, etc.) present those with identified needs to the designated public school where transition is then planned. A transition protocol developed by Early Childhood Development Network provides for entry and long-term planning around service delivery. If needs are multiple, the planning is multi-agency but for others the planning may involve the school division and school staff only. If needs are identified after school entry, the school and professional staff in the school division coordinate a collaborative plan focusing on a continuum of service delivery.

5. Inter-Departmental Cooperation

For the integrated service delivery that applies to multiple needs children, interdepartmental responsibility works well – each covering costs for their service component (i.e. if a nurse is required for the medically fragile, that component is paid by health, whereas the speech-language is covered by education as clinicians are employed by the school division. If the service delivery involves behavioural support, Justice Department or Family Services may be involved.

The multi-agency involvement is driven by the service delivery plan.

6. Professional Development

Professional development is aligned to needs identified by individual school divisions. Large urban school divisions prefer a global independence when prioritizing and organizing professional development for those involved in special education. Conversely, small, rural or northern divisions rely more on department support through their specialized consultants as small divisions often do not have their own.

7. School-Based Services

Funding to school divisions provides for hiring of speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, physiotherapists and social workers – all under “clinician” funding. This employment of these is driven by the necessity in each division.

If it is deemed that one or more is not required, they may increase the number of another. They are employees of the school division and are integral part of service delivery.

Some are shared in rural and northern communities and are contracted via cooperative agreements where one community employs an SLP (for example) and trades service with another community for a psychologist (for example).

The number of educational assistants (TA's) hired by each division is based on needs in individual schools and is at the discretion of school principals. If a school is allocated 15 FTE "units", a principal may see the need as 14 FTE professional and 1 FTE paraprofessional, or 13 professionals and 2 paraprofessionals, etc.

The ratio of resource teachers to caseload numbers is also a school-based decision. The numbers of students requiring service delivery indicates how special education staff (TA's, resource teachers) will be allocated.

8. Accountability

The accountability for the funding that provides service delivery is aligned to particular types of funding. The categorical funding which allows for integrated service delivery to individualized students is tracked by the Department of Education. The categorical grants for First Nations students are tracked by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) in order to provide service delivery to at-risk aboriginal students. The criteria for categories of financial support is based on student needs rather than on labels, which assumes all children with a certain label require the same level and type of service delivery. Accountability of the delivery model focuses on needs of the students.

9. Funding

Specifics of Level I, II, III costs for service delivery deferred to sub-contract of Grant Thornton, Fredericton, NB.

10. Small / Rural Schools

Small, rural and northern communities are challenged by isolation issues where partnering with community agencies is limited and often shared. More limited numbers of students requiring integrated service delivery force inclusion to exist most of the time in small areas whereby the large urban schools may have a segregated class if a large number of profound needs are housed in a school. These segregated classes, therefore, receive extensive and intensive models of service delivery (often shared when needs are similar).

11. Pre-School Service Delivery

The Early Childhood Development Network provides facilitation for service delivery for children with needs (0-4 years). The transition and continuing plan for school entry rests with transition workers of this network.

12. Training in Health Procedures

A transfer function protocol between Nurses' Association and Department of Health and Department of Education provides for training of education professionals and educational assistants (when a requirement for health procedures exists) to be done by nurses or physicians, depending on the procedure. Funding for the training is the responsibility of education (each school division).

13. Partnering with Community Groups to Support Integrated Service Delivery

The ongoing development of community partnerships in urban areas is a leadership priority in that part of service delivery for many special needs students is a work placement component in the community at large.

A highly regarded community partner that assists in service delivery is "Open Access Manitoba" which provides assistive technology, particularly for those requiring technology resources for speech, occupational therapy needs, hearing or visual impairments. This "bank" of resources allows the student to try and borrow resources and the financial commitment is avoided. This is available to special needs students province-wide.

14. Human Rights

There have been three cases presented in the past five years, of which two went to tribunal. Each resolved that education met the needs as required in the delivery of service within existing resources.

15. Appeals

Appeals regarding special needs students may be presented to the school division on placement or programming issues. The appeal process is criticized as the decision rests with the board. To address this criticism, the province (education) is now proceeding with the development of a Minister's Review Panel where three independent reviewers will hear the appeal and render a decision as to whether the school division has proceeded with appropriate programming (including service delivery) and placement of the student with special needs.

16. French Immersion

Students with special needs have equitable accessibility to attending immersion programs in immersion (stand alone) schools and immersion classes in dual-track schools. Resource and special education staff in stand alone schools deliver service in French whereas in dual track schools, some of the staff is bilingual, not necessarily all.

Service delivery models in immersion settings follow the same funding models and protocols as English settings.

17. Aboriginal Education

Many aboriginal students attend public schools and eligible for service under the provincial funding categories with some additional support from INAC. These students live off-reserve.

Those aboriginal students residing on-reserve attend self-governing schools (K-12) but receive additional federal dollars that include funding for service within their First Nations communities.

MANITOBA INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL		
<u>PROS</u> of integrated service delivery model	<u>CONS</u> of integrated service delivery model	Other Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialized consultants at department level and larger school divisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small communities depend on department consultants for assistance in service delivery. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinician funding provides for board employed OT's, SSW's, PT's, SLP's, Psychologists, based on divisional needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smaller communities not able to hire clinicians except for contract terms or shared services. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive relationship with MTS allows for a common force for supporting service delivery to special needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special education teachers have the option of taking special education courses beyond a Bachelor of Education. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-departmental involvement is based on level of student needs; therefore "buy-in" occurs more readily for coordinated service and sharing of costs of delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development and training around service delivery is education funded, even when health related. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School division responsible for funding service delivery and is therefore division specific. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing Model – total FTE units to be allocated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength of school leadership is responsible to allocation of FTE units – "squeaky wheel syndrome?" 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local decision making puts onus on divisions for accountability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have / have not schools. 	

Manitoba

MANITOBA INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL		
<u>PROS</u> of integrated service delivery model	<u>CONS</u> of integrated service delivery model	Other Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding allows for fluctuating needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No special education ratios (teacher / caseload).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stable, high affluence schools have lower numbers requiring special needs staff and funding. Low income areas tend to have higher needs, therefore more special education staff and funding for delivery of service.

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

Preface

New Brunswick's Department of Education believes that all children, regardless of their special needs, have the right to receive an appropriate education with their peers. The acquisition of this education and the planning continuum to achieve it is a result of a coordinated collaborative consultation amongst all stakeholders / agencies responsible for the planning.

Each district has the responsibility to adhere to and work within the guidelines as legislated in the New Brunswick Education Act and within budgetary parameters as allocated by the province and as specified for special education.

The implementation of best practices and coordination of such practices (positive learning environment, collaborative planning, administration, social responsibility, curriculum planning and implementation, support services, transition planning [pre- and post], exemplary classroom practices, partnerships with families and community, innovation and accountability) is the responsibility of each school and district.

Special education and services required to move forth with accurate and appropriate delivery of service requires promotion of goals of inclusive education amongst schools and the community at large. It must be acknowledged as a whole system approach (both Anglophone and Francophone sectors) to education. It is one that facilitates membership, participation and learning of all students in school programs and activities that are extensions of such programs. It does not mean 100% inclusion, 100% of the time unless deemed appropriate to address the needs of the student. It is recognized some special needs students require significant accommodation and variation with respect to their learning environment at school and within the community. Every effort should be made by each district to provide equitable resources (including physical accessibility) within each school in its mandate so special needs children can attend their community school and receive an integrated service delivery based on identified needs.

Service Delivery System Framework

Suggestions apply to both language sectors of New Brunswick.

To provide a continuum of service delivery to students with identified needs requires a coordinated approach and collaboration of stakeholders and partner agencies is mandatory. The parent(s) is respected as an integral part of the process and the needs of the child at the focal point of the service delivery model. The model should vary according to the needs, characteristics, learning environment and measurable outcomes defined for the child/youth.

The following includes an external framework for service delivery. Integrated service delivery needs a systemic process of planning and generating solutions to mutually defined problems. The goal of each step of the framework is to provide comprehensive and effective interventions. Levels of intervention and support will increase as the intensity / complexity of the situation

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

changes, recognizing that the amount and type of resources required to meet the needs may increase or decrease.

Each of the four levels below should use these six steps as a format to the problem solving approach:

1. Identify the needs.
2. Analyze the needs.
3. Determine / brainstorm strategies required to meet the needs.
4. Initiate an action plan.
5. Implement the plan / collect data, document the effectiveness of the plan.
6. Evaluate the plan / follow-up required to maintain or change the plan.

Level I – Teacher and Parent

This step should be initiated when teacher(s) or parent(s) believes that a student's performance (academic or behavioural) is significantly different from that of peers. At this point, the teacher and parents and, where feasible, the student discuss the concern, possible reasons and consideration and selection of possible strategies which will lead to a solution. Documentation of the plan should be facilitated by the teacher. These strategies (with included timelines, if necessary) are then implemented and reviewed by all parties. Based on this review, the parties may agree to alter / modify them, continue the strategies or terminate if deemed unsuccessful.

Level II – School-Based Team

This level would begin when efforts from Level I have been minimally successful or unsuccessful. This is a more formal level but allows the teacher(s) and parents(s) to access the school-based student services team, including an administrator as well as parent and teachers assigned to the student. There should be an in-school referral process for such meetings and documentation of participation, action plan, with timelines and follow-up for re-evaluation.

Level III – Extended Student Services Team

This level would be implemented when interventions at Level II were deemed minimally successful or unsuccessful. This extended team will include the school-based team, a district office Supervisor of Student Services, also other supervisor of curriculum, if desired, parent(s) and/or advocate and student, where feasible. This level provides an opportunity to utilize the expertise of district supervisor or specialist to review the process to date and provide further assistance which leads to intervention planning within existing school resources (i.e. shared TA service, school-based tutoring, funds, etc.).

At this point, clear documentation should include review of prior interventions, reanalysis of efforts to resolve situation, determination of the magnitude and pervasiveness of problem, follow-up timelines.

Level IV

When there has been little or no improvement resulting from Level III interventions, this level will address the specific concerns that will require outside resources.

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

A referral for additional services will be made to District Supervisor of Student Services, with consent granted by the parent and supported by the school. External services may include psychological assessment, behavioural support, occupational therapy, speech-language assessment, intervention / support from Health and Community Services agencies including mental health, therapy support for autistic spectrum disorder, or other disability rehabilitation services, etc., and specific to this province, “Support Services to Education” (SSE).

Documentation needs to describe “*what, when, where, who*” has been utilized in previous interventions, baseline performance data, recommendations for external service and follow-up timelines.

If the child is deemed as having special needs, the subsequent process involves the preparation of a Special Education Plan according to Guidelines and Standards – Educational Planning for Students with Exceptionalities, New Brunswick Department of Education 2002.

It is acknowledged that many of our students enter Kindergarten with already defined needs and would proceed to a collaborative service delivery model.

It is hoped that the previous four-level framework with the common approach to problem-solving at each level will be one of proactivity and intervention that supports parents, the student and classroom teachers before advancing to high cost services for either Education and Health, such as additional Teacher Assistants or speech-language services, ABA Therapy, etc. For Levels I, II and III, the school is accountable for the service delivery within their own resources.

If it is deemed necessary to proceed to Level IV, where external agencies may be required, the following points are extrapolated from the integrated service delivery models of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan and are viewed by this reviewer as critical to a well-rounded and exemplary model for New Brunswick. (Deliverable 3 of sub-contract and in reference to Appendix B).

Specifically:

- It is recommended that qualifications of resource teachers include either a Masters Degree in Special Education or a Bachelor of Education Degree accompanied by 10-12 credit hours of special education courses or five provincially designed modules in special needs education should be offered to potential applicants or for those hired without a Masters Degree.
- It is recommended the New Brunswick Department of Education and District Supervisors should collaborate with universities and be active participants at job fairs to enhance recruitment.

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

- It is recommended that professional development funding for each district be focused on Best Practices for Inclusion which supports classroom teachers, resource teachers and in particular, administrators.
- It is recommended that schools which include immersion settings have a minimum of one bilingual resource teacher who will manage special needs students in immersion settings.
- It is recommended that the professional staff assigned to special needs students as school-based personnel (or shared where school population is less than 300 students) in order to provide comprehensive service delivery include:
 - 1 – Resource Teacher per 30 identified special needs students
(excluding students on accommodated plans)
 - 1 – Speech Language Pathologist per 300 students
(cost shared by Health and Education)
 - 1 – Occupational Therapist per 300 students
(cost shared between Health and Education)
 - 1 – School Psychologist per 2000 students
(funded by Education, housed in District Office)
 - 1 – Social Worker per District
(cost shared by Health and Community Services and Education,
housed in District Office)
- It is recommended that Psychologists and Social Workers presently employed under the Support Services to Education agreement be included with school psychologists and social worker(s) at District Offices and accountable to Education.
- It is recommended that APSEA services of itinerant teachers be continued in New Brunswick.
- It is recommended that Teacher Assistants have as qualifications 1 or 2 year specialized training from New Brunswick Community College, Horizon College or some other recognized training program specific to Teacher Assistants and their involvement in a model of service delivery.
- It is recommended that all Teacher Assistant applicants have current certified training in First Aid / CPR (completed at their own expense) before being interviewed.
- It is recommended the Province of New Brunswick engage in a transfer of function agreement that provides training to TA's in critical health procedures required in service delivery to special needs students identified as medically fragile. This training would be standardized and administered by qualified practitioners (nurses, physiotherapists, respiratory therapists or public health agencies).

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

- It is recommended that each District Office have a minimum of two Supervisors qualified in Special Education (Masters Degree level) to support schools and facilitate multi-agency coordination (as a result of a referral process) and one coordinator to assist classroom teachers with planning behavioural strategies.
- It is recommended that the Ministers of Education, Health and Community Services, Aboriginal Affairs and Public Safety (i.e. formerly Justice) formalize an agreement to support students who require a multi-agency delivery of integrated service. Each department will fund specific areas of service as required and for the time required.
- It is recommended the Departments of Education and Health fund assistive technology, depending on who is recommending the particular technology as a component of the service delivery.
- It is recommended that Aboriginal Affairs fund a social worker position to liaise between school and First Nations communities and band-based agencies.

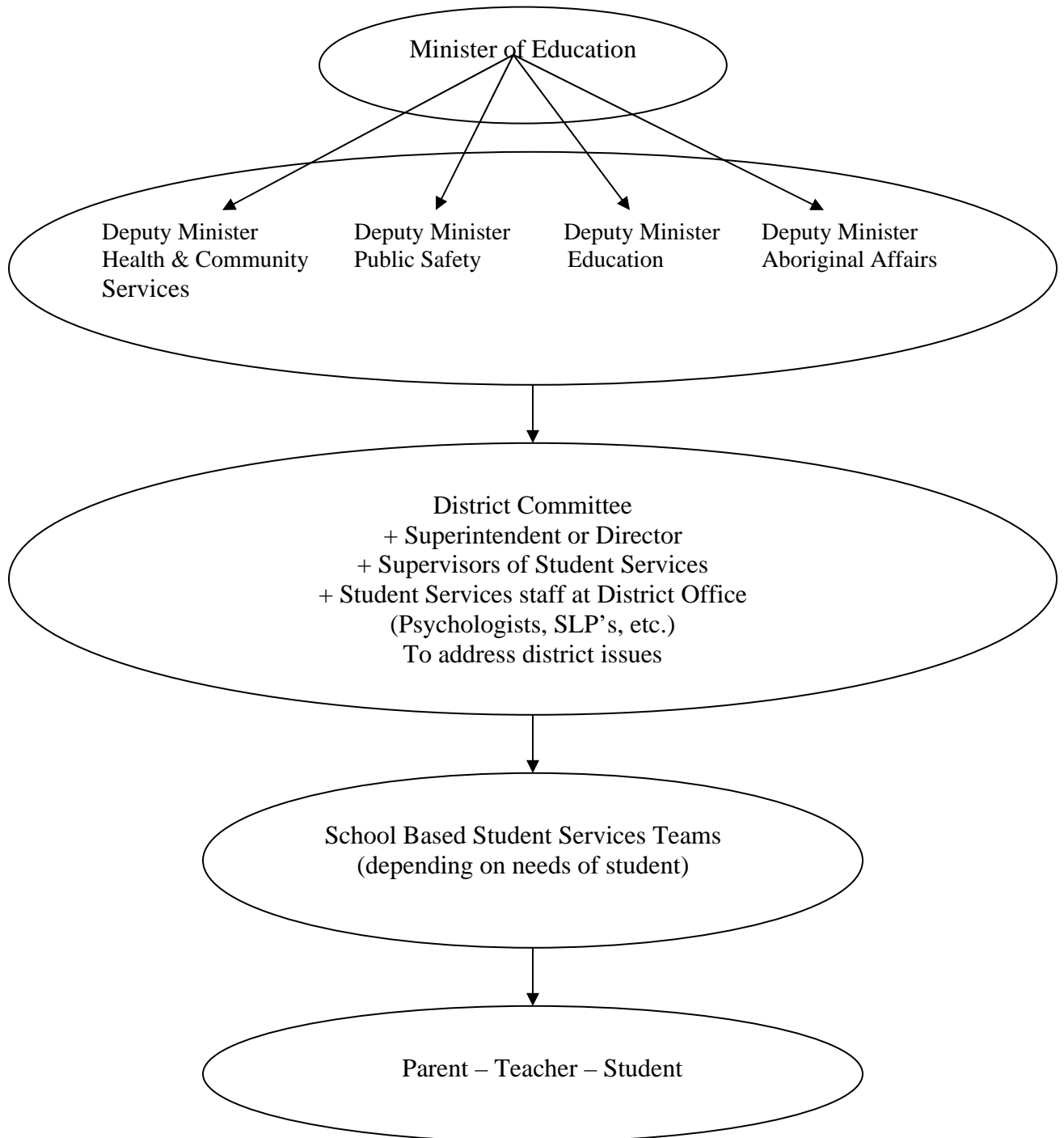
Realizing that several of the previous recommendations are accompanied by a cost factor, it must be emphasized that education is a vital component of society – it cannot “raise” a child alone.

To continue service delivery in both language sectors as is presently done, with respect to emerging trends and increasing numbers of special needs students, will present mounting and glaring shortcomings in service delivery. To add funding solely to education increases expectations of education alone, exempting other ministerial departments from accountability.

Without a formalized interdepartmental and multi-agency commitment, an integrated service delivery model will lack integration, service and delivery.

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

Flow Chart for Integrated Service Delivery



Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

APPENDIX TO RESEARCH/INQUIRY:

INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

*Submitted by:
Catherine Thorburn
November 7, 2005*

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

After reviewing the integrated service delivery models of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba this reviewer will note the models in order of preference and provide rationale for said preferences. In doing so, the rationale is extrapolated from conversations and review of documentation provided by each province.

Without question, the perspective of this reviewer is as objective as possible considering that each interviewee (i.e. respective Department of Education directors / consultants) emphatically noted what they believed was positive about their structure, while noting that the concerns or negative components were “no different” than other provinces.

The primary concern in each of the four provinces was the issue of how to share their model of service delivery so that education was a major player, but not the single player responsible for the delivery and outcome of service. As each of the four provinces have undergone provincial student service reviews in the past six years, it is evident that the reviews addressed the issue of service delivery, including shared responsibility with other government agencies / departments, but none came to one that ideally suits each and every school division or the specificity of needs of students. Each province did, however, believe, as a result of the review(s), improvements were made in the provision of better trained professionals and paraprofessionals to address identified needs of students and the awareness was heightened that service delivery must be shared.

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

PREFERENCES / RATIONALE

- 1) This reviewer prefers the model of *Saskatchewan* as a more ideal and substantiated model, in particular the development of SCHOOLS PLUS.

Rationale:

The SCHOOLS PLUS format is a model of shared service funding, albeit specific funds, categorical in nature for the most profound needs. Block funding is identified for students with diverse needs and specific dollars are allocated for students who may require mainly a segregated setting. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (INAC) also provides funding for First Nations students with needs who attend off-reserve schools.

The focus of SCHOOLS PLUS places responsibility on the leadership within schools to ensure that board allocated dollars provide necessary service and programs for special need students. This onus on school leadership potentially makes way for boards to employ the best of leaders / administrators who will advocate for the best of staff who, in turn, will provide the best of collaborative service for the “whole” child. The model enhances the ideal that is school leaders who are well informed of the ever-evolving needs in their school, who are involved in improving the programs and services and thus proving that their particular school is deserving of enhanced funding. The students are at the centre of sound service delivery and everyone needs to be involved at the school level, yet open to support from external agencies.

The leadership for special need students is coordinated by special education teachers who are given a different classification from classroom teachers due to their managerial responsibilities. This in itself gives endorsement to the expanse of the role of the special education staff and to the importance of having a “point” person who coordinates and informs school administration, classroom teachers, health personnel, parents, external agencies, board / department consultants, education assistants, pre and post transition personnel and most importantly, where appropriate, the student. The hierarchy of staffing and responsibility for special needs students is less nebulous.

Having medical support (speech / language, occupational therapists, psychologists) who are school and board based provide regular and on-site service that is school scheduled and continuous rather than a blocked schedule and per the availability of health / social service agencies.

The various funding blocks allow for various types of service delivery rather than a one-type fits all in a single needs category.

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

Keeping the student with needs at the centre of the model is further enhanced by having a PPP (Pupil Program Plan) that begins as soon as the child is identified as a preschooler and plans for transition out of the public system to post-secondary, workplace etc.

SCHOOLS PLUS gives the appearance to this reviewer of a coordinated and collaborative system that is well defined for personnel and is student centred.

- 2) Second in preference is the *Newfoundland* model.

Rationale:

It appears to be resource rich but still struggling with the fact that the onus of integrated service delivery rests with education as the “owner” of such service, coupled with involving other agencies and government departments in name only.

The richness of this system rests with the department being the screener for students requiring categorical funding, which would hopefully provide consistency as to whom receives such funding, but does it create a “squeaky wheel” system? The funding in turn provides for concentrated services for these students and their families.

For greater numbers of teachers and students with lesser needs this model allows better student-teacher ratios in all classes (namely low-ratio classes) as funded by non-categorical funding.

The significantly large numbers of consultants specifically trained in the areas of special needs (such as autism, learning disabilities, fetal alcohol effects/syndrome, etc.) whose expertise is available from the Department of Education give each district / region a resource of professional development as required.

The provision of health personnel and support staff as funded by the Department of Education and readily available to schools allows for on-site coordination of service delivery. The remote areas of Newfoundland suffer in such staffing due to difficulty in hiring and maintaining of health service personnel.

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

- 3) The *Manitoba* model has some similarities to Saskatchewan but the interviewees seemed hesitant to disclose anything but positive details.

Rationale:

This model of service delivery also provides for some categorical funding and as a result maintains some non-inclusive environments for students with severe needs. Block funding allocated to individual boards provides for the majority of identified students, with INAC providing for many First Nations students who attend off-reserve schools. The budgets for this service delivery model is said to be difficult to track once it is allocated to individual boards, as the individual boards then have control over staffing units whether the units are professional, paraprofessional or support staff.

In the Department of Education, Students Services staff is comprised of specialty consultants dealing with a wide gamut of special needs. This staff provides support and professional development to individual boards but the geographic expanse of the province leads to these specialists focusing on the more remote communities, and larger schools are expected to be more self-sufficient.

- 4) Certainly the province that seemed to be the least structured in Student Services is *Nova Scotia*.

Rationale:

Evident to this reviewer is the lack of advocacy for the whole realm of special needs and the service provided at each board level appears to be fragmented and very inconsistent. The interviewees presented a provincial snapshot of boards who are expected to be creative with addressing the issues but many do only what “looks good” and there is little evidence that it is practiced.

Global budgeting, lack of provincial consultants who can provide specialized support, and the generic role of many board consultants (rather than specializing in student services) present a picture of “putting out fires” as they occur and spreading the resources (consultants, TA’s, etc.) as thinly as possible. As extra infusions of money become available at the department level, the two areas being addressed in professional development are learning disabilities and autism.

The role of CAYAC as an inter-agency body appears to be one of discussion with little follow through and no power for making decisions. It seems to be a committee where the issues relevant to necessary service required for students is known but little or nothing evolves unless supported by upper management.

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

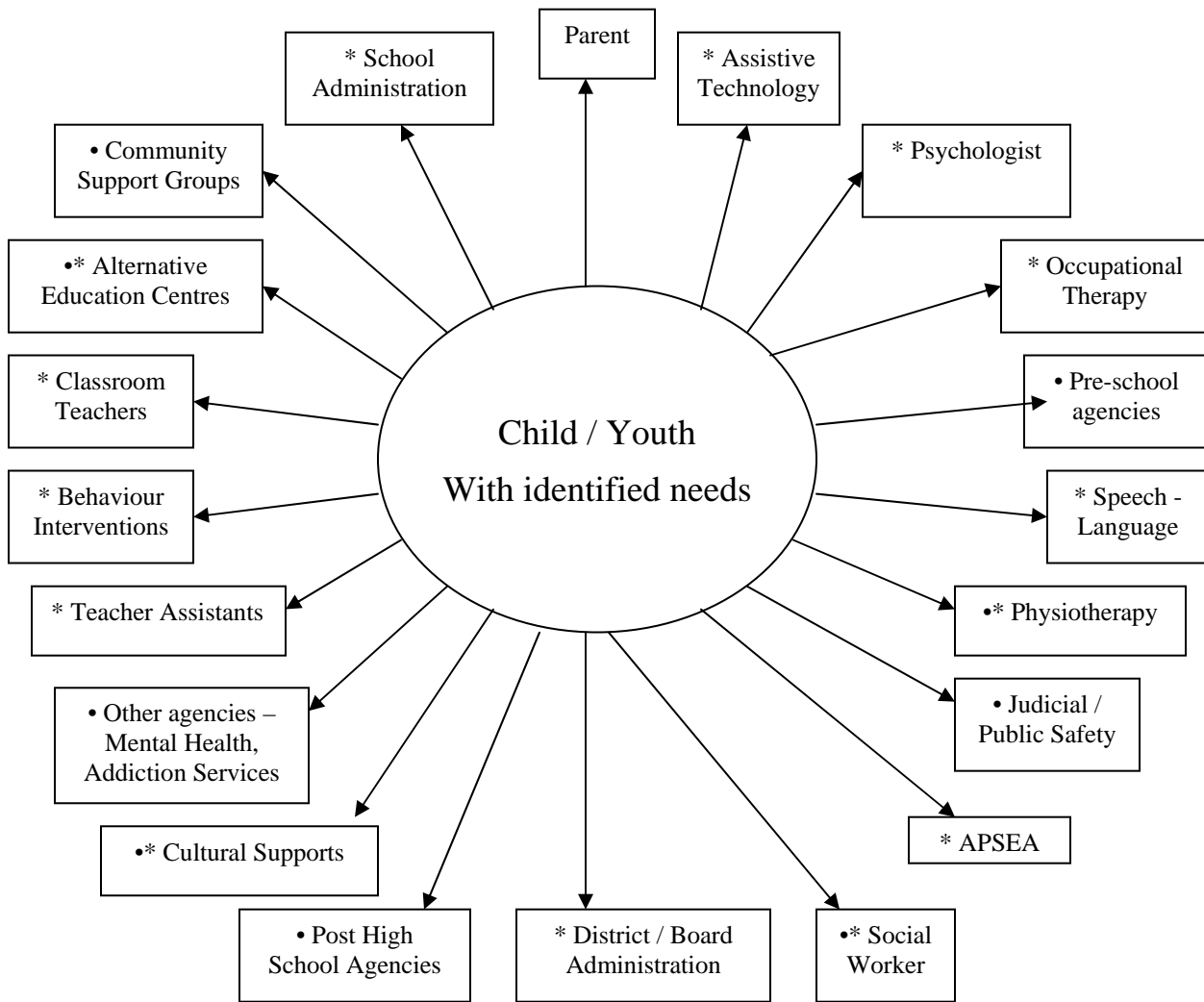
GENERAL OBSERVATIONS REGARDING ORDER OF PREFERENCES

- 1) All four provinces had formal agreements for the transfer of health protocols so that teacher assistants / education assistants were formally trained in health procedures of students where required.
- 2) Inclusivity is the expectation but, due to funding models, there is provision for segregated settings (both short term and long term) for the students with severe needs.
- 3) All who were interviewed made note that they were increasing the number of consultants at department level to address the ever-increasing demands and specificity of identified needs throughout their province.
- 4) A “blame” syndrome was evident in all cases. It is obvious that *some* discrepancies occurred in the delivery of integrated service because other government departments continue to expect education to shoulder most of the delivery.
- 5) A constant complaint reflected that the budgets never could meet the ideals for integrated service delivery.
- 6) Manitoba and Saskatchewan noted that improved relationships with teacher unions has improved the understanding of and the working conditions for special education staff and classroom teachers in public schools. (Both also noted the importance of positive relationships with INAC.)
- 7) Accountability from boards to department level takes various forms. Some issues, such as use of teacher assistants, are well tracked and others, such as parent involvement in program planning, is varied.
- 8) The employment of health personnel, psychologists and social workers by education in these provinces is seen as a *must have* in order to maintain efficient integrated service delivery.
- 9) The efficacy of special plans (names varied by province) is evaluated yearly and is seen as the working document that should identify the responsible parties in service delivery beginning at the earliest identification. This “work in progress” needs to be carried through to post graduation in order to assess the efficacy of the model that was utilized throughout the student’s public school career. It was noted, however, that the same format of planning has little chance of remaining constant through pre-school to post high school.

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

The following chart suggests a model that can be viable in New Brunswick whether all participants are employed by the Department of Education or shared as resources with other agencies.

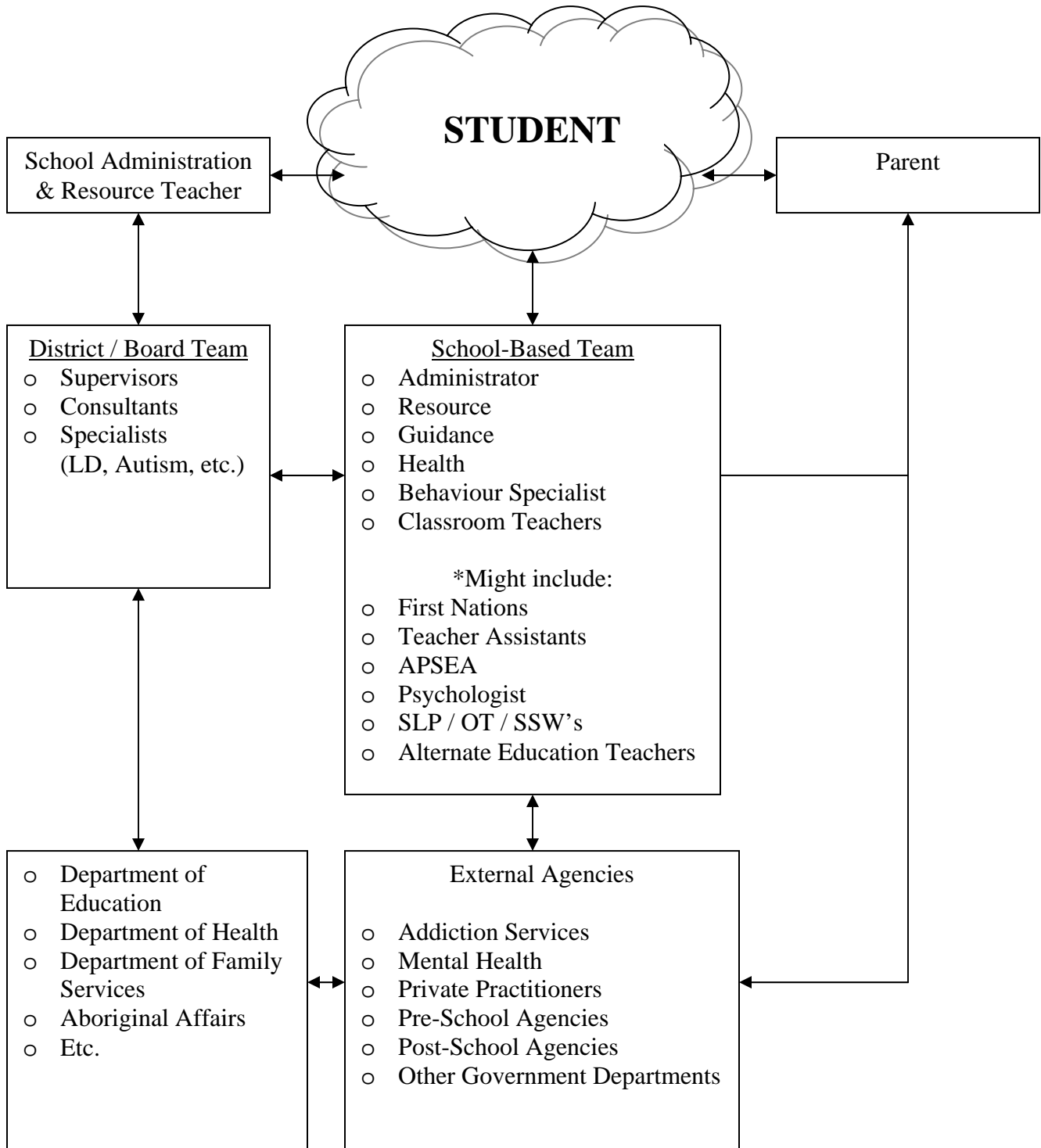
Figure #1



- * indicates employees of education
- indicates employees of outside agencies

Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model

Figure #2



Recommendations for New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model
