Board Agenda Item

Topic: **Student Support Rooms**
Presenter: **Chad Erickson**
Meeting Date: **May 8, 2019**

Background

In the last 15 years, our understanding of the factors that affect student behaviour has improved significantly with the explosion of information from neuroscientific research. Coupled with the theoretical framework provided by the attachment-based developmental paradigm of Dr. Gordon Neufeld, it became apparent that alternative approaches had to be developed for dealing with students who are struggling to behave as they should in a school environment. Some students require more support in managing their behaviour than what the classroom teacher alone can provide (Eva de Gosztonyi, Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management)

This year we have had six schools pilot Student Support Rooms in our district.

The Model: A Student Support Room is not a segregated class but rather an in-school resource that provides an environment and an intervention plan to meet student needs so they can continue to attend regular classes. It is designed to provide emotional, behavioural and academic support to help students succeed. Its use is guided and supervised by a Learning Support Team. Shortened class time, options for dealing with challenging situations, organizational support and adult guidance are provided to those students who have a hard time behaving appropriately in class and also during unstructured and transition time. The Student Support Room is conceived for students identified by the administration and staff as needing regular and consistent intervention to help them to meet the behavioural demands of the educational setting.

Purpose: With a deeper understanding of the needs of children, especially those who are immature, it is clear that big emotions must find a way to be expressed (Dr. Gordon Neufeld, Neufeld Institute). The intent of the Student Support Room is that children will seek it out as a safe place in which to express their emotions, no matter how '*ugly or messy*' the emotion is. This might include frustration, which may be expressed by the impulse to attack verbally or physically.   The child will always be accompanied by a caring and supportive adult. The adult will assure the child their emotion is OK to experience and it will not drive the adult away. The adult will be with the child at all times to be sure they are kept safe.

Building Resilience: In the safety and security of a caring adult relationship, the child can respond in a healthy way in response to all they cannot change in their lives. Through the process, the child will experience adaptation and build resilience and resourcefulness. They will be able to move on, with adult support, to experience their emotions. This includes naming the emotion, identifying how it feels in their body, and finding alternate ways to express it and communicate with others about what is taking place for them. Adults who are with the child in the student support room will be trained in the attachment-based developmental approach and how to accompany a child in emotional distress (Dr. Gordon Neufeld, Neufeld Institute).

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Wanda Christensen, Education Consultant
Eva de Gosztonyi, Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management
Dr. Gordon Neufeld, Neufeld Institute

Quality Indicators:

Student Welfare

QI 2.1　　Develops measurements and monitors progress relative to providing a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.

QI 2.2　　Provides analysis of incident reports.

Superintendent/Board Relations ("The First Team")

QI 6.4　　Keeps the Board informed about District operations.

Communications and Community Relations:

QI 9.1　　Facilitates effective home-school relations.

QI 9.2　　Manages conflict effectively.

QI 9.3　　Ensures information is disseminated to inform appropriate publics.

Leadership Practices:

QI 10.1　　Provides clear direction.

QI 10.2　　Provides effective educational leadership.

QI 10.3　　Establishes and maintains positive, professional working relationships with staff.

QI 10.6　　Demonstrates a high commitment to education and to the needs of students.

QI 10.8　　Effectively solves problems.

Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the Board of Trustees accepts the report on Student Support Rooms as information.