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**MEMORANDUM TO:** Directors of Education

**FROM:** Ben Levin  
Deputy Minister

**DATE:** June 30, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Student Success Commission Report on Student Success  
Teachers

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On behalf of the Minister and the Student Success Commission, I am very pleased to provide you with the second in a series of Memos from me as the Commission explores, advises and endorses the government's implementation of student success initiatives.

The Commission, in consultation with the Ministry, identified Student Success Teachers as its second task. While there are many existing good practices in the sector, each initiative requires continued support and direction in order to ensure that regardless of the school or Board, each student receives a quality learning experience. The Commission has endorsed Guiding Principles and operational constructs intended to provide a consistent framework for all Student Success Teacher initiatives in the province. This will require balancing centralized direction with local autonomy and also balancing a Board's human resource capacity within the parameters of collective agreements.

All school boards will need to review their current Student Success Teacher programming to ensure alignment with the direction stated in this memo. It is understood that staffing allocations and timetabling for next year are well under way. The timelines for the Guiding Principles and many of the process pieces take this into consideration.

Full implementation of the attached endorsements is expected to occur no later than September 2007.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact Tony Di Lena, Education Officer, Student Success/Learning to 18 Implementation, Training and Evaluation Branch at 416-314-0347 or email [tony.dilena@edu.gov.on.ca](mailto:tony.dilena@edu.gov.on.ca)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Levin".

Ben Levin  
Deputy Minister

Attachment

- c. Student Success Leaders  
General Secretaries  
Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)

# **STUDENT SUCCESS COMMISSION REPORT ON STUDENT SUCCESS TEACHERS**

## **Preamble**

The fundamental premise of the Student Success initiatives is that all teachers, regardless of their role in the school or board, are student success teachers. One of the main thrusts of the Student Success initiative is to change the very micro-interaction, that is, the relationship, between students and teachers so that students have the best possible opportunities to learn. It is important to ensure that there is a collective ownership of all students.

To assist in achieving this, the Student Success Commission is focusing specifically on endorsement and advice for those staff designated as “Student Success Teachers” (SSTs), and this report is intended to reflect and further delineate the direction to District School Boards as articulated in PPM 137:

“...Student Success teachers who know and track the progress of students at risk of not graduating; who support school-wide efforts to improve outcomes for students struggling with the secondary curriculum; who re-engage early school leavers; who provide direct support/instruction to these students in order to improve student achievement, retention, and transitions; and who work with parents and the community to support student success.”

## **Guiding Principles**

1. The Student Success Teacher, as a member of the School Student Success Team, provides a critical leadership role in supporting and advocating for students at risk and contributing to the advancement of a systemic reshaping of education in the increasingly diverse Province of Ontario.
2. The Student Success Teacher is an essential part of an integrated service and team approach to support students at risk through links to in-school, board, community and other resources.
3. The Guidance and Special Education staff will work together with the Student Success Teacher and the School Student Success Team to establish communication strategies with feeder schools and the identification of incoming at risk students.
4. The Student Success Teacher, on behalf of students at risk, is a key facilitator and provider for
  - Direct student advocacy and mentoring
  - Student monitoring
  - School-wide professional learning focused on students
  - Student instruction i.e., Credit Recovery and other forms of intervention

5. School Boards and school administration must ensure that the Student Success Teacher's role has real and significant value.
6. The Student Success Teacher reports directly to the Principal.
7. There must be a close working relationship between the Student Success Teacher and the Student Success Leader. This should include regularly scheduled meetings for such elements as:
  - Mentoring the Student Success Teacher
  - Providing the Student Success Teacher with relevant training
  - Sharing of best practices
  - Data collection, sharing and analysis
8. In-service training of a Student Success Teacher must be provided by the Ministry of Education and School Boards.
9. The Student Success Teacher will work with Administration, Guidance and Special Education to promote and ensure the alignment of services for students at risk.
10. The School Board allocation of Student Success Teacher's must be based on a school profile, criteria-based model. The Ministry will provide exemplars to be used as templates by February 2007 to assist Boards in this staffing process for 2007-2008.
11. Boards will allocate to schools all of its Student Success Teacher sections based on school need in accordance with the school profiles.
12. For 2006-2007, Boards should have achieved or should be demonstrating movement towards achieving an allocation of at least 1.0 FTE Student Success Teacher position, on average, in each school with an increasing trend towards direct student engagement.
13. For 2007-2008, all Boards must have an allocation of 1.0 FTE Student Success Teacher position, on average, in each school with a continued trend to increase dedicated time for direct student engagement. In very small schools, Boards may allocate a proportional level of resources.
14. The Student Success Teacher allocation may be assigned to one teacher or to more than one teacher. Caution should be exercised that if the assignment is to more than one teacher, it should not be spread so thinly that the alignment and delivery of services is jeopardized.

15. Where the Student Success Teacher allocation is assigned to more than one teacher, the assignments must be aligned with the four key areas of a Student Success Teacher referenced in Guiding Principle # 4.
16. By 2007-2008, no less than half of the Student Success Teacher's time in each school must be used for any combination of direct student advocacy/mentoring, student monitoring and school-wide staff development.
17. Boards will submit annually to the Ministry reports that accurately reflect the allocations of Student Success Teachers and their specific functions and responsibilities. The Ministry will provide copies of these reports to the SSC.
18. Where current practice is consistent with the spirit and intent of the Guiding Principles and the implementation components upon which these are built, School Boards are encouraged to continue and to further refine those practices.
19. The Guiding Principles and the implementation components upon which these are built must adhere to the terms and conditions of Elementary and Secondary collective agreements.

### **Student Success Teacher and the School Student Success Team**

Every school shall have a Student Success Team. As a minimum requirement, the Student Success Team must be comprised of the Principal or designate, the Student Success Teacher, the Guidance Department Head or designate where there is no provision for a Guidance Department Head and the Special Education Department Head or designate where there is no provision for a Special Education Department Head.

In instances where Guidance and Special Education Departments are combined into a "Student Services Department", for example, the Principal shall determine whether one or two members from the combined organizational unit are needed on the Student Success Team. If the Principal determines that a second member is required, and if this person does not hold a position of responsibility, it shall be on a voluntary basis.

The Student Success Team is responsible for two primary functions:

- To develop school procedures and models for the effective delivery of all students success initiatives
- To track, coordinate and assume responsibility for at-risk students through the Student Success Teacher.

**Student Success Teacher and the Credit Recovery Team (Excerpted from the Student Success Commission's submission to the Minister of Education)**

1. The Credit Recovery team is a sub-set of the School Student Success Team.
2. As a minimum requirement, when considering the placement of a student into Credit Recovery programs, the Credit Recovery Team must be comprised of the Principal or designate, the Student Success Teacher and, the Guidance Head or designate where there is no collective agreement provision for a Guidance Head.
3. Where appropriate, other staff, including, for example, professional support staff personnel, subject specific secondary teachers, Credit Recovery teachers, a Special Education Head or designate and elementary feeder school staff, may be utilized on the Credit Recovery Team when discussing individual student placement in Credit Recovery programs.
4. The Credit Recovery Team will convene periodically as required to determine the Credit Recovery placement of a student who has failed a course.

**Student Success Teacher and the Guidance and the Special Education Departments**

The Guidance and Special Education Departments play a critical role in furthering the support mechanisms for at-risk students. These students may or may not already be receiving special education programs and services. There are several specific areas where the Student Success Teacher and the Guidance and Special Education Departments must ensure that services are aligned and not duplicated:

- While the Guidance Department and Special Education Department may refer students to the Student Success Teacher, the Student Success Teacher is responsible for the overall alignment of services to students at risk as a member of the School Student Success Team.
- When the Guidance Department and Special Education Department engage an at-risk student in, for example, crisis intervention or timetabling, the Student Success Teacher must be informed at all times.
- Unless a Board or a school employs a specific person to contact students who have dropped out in order to re-engage them, the Guidance Department and/or a Vice-Principal ought to perform this function.
- The Guidance and Special Education Departments and the Student Success Teacher must work closely with specific reference to the engagement of professional student services support staff employed by the Board and/or external agencies.

- The Guidance Department and/or the Principal or designate should be responsible for gathering data that is essential to
  - Assist Boards in developing school profiles used for Student Success Teacher allocations
  - Assist schools in developing and refining support for at-risk students
  - Track the progress of student success initiatives.

This data must be shared with the Student Success Teacher and the School Student Success Team. The data should include:

- Individual mid-term student marks for any student who is failing one or more courses
- Individual final student marks for any student who has failed one or more courses
- At the end of each semester, credit accumulation by
  - Grade
  - Course
  - Level
  - Day school
  - Summer school
  - Night school
  - Correspondence
  - Credit Recovery

### **Student Success Teacher: Desirable Qualities**

There are specific attributes a Student Success Teacher should possess due to the critical and unique nature of this role. Among these, are:

- Sufficient years of teaching experience to have:
  - Demonstrated competence in teaching
  - Developed professional credibility within the school
  - Developed professional credibility within the broader school community
  - Acquired understanding of and commitment to the goals of student success initiatives
  - Developed demonstrated ability to form meaningful, productive relationships with students, staff and parents.

### **Student Success Teacher: Key Areas**

- This section is intended to serve as a guideline to assist Boards and Federations in clarifying the various roles of the Student Success Teachers. It is not intended to dictate a job description.

- The Student Success Teacher has four areas of responsibility. The Commission recommends that in accordance with Guiding Principles # 14 and # 15, if the assigned allocation for the Student Success Teacher is to more than one teacher, it should be apportioned using these following four areas.

**1. Direct student advocacy and mentoring such as:**

- Work directly with at-risk students identified by the School Student Success Team
- Meet regularly with the student as determined by need for support
- Communicate on an as needs basis with the parents/guardians of the students being serviced
- Determine when a student no longer requires or is no longer responsive to individual direct support
- Determine the nature of the follow up required for students who have “graduated” from the direct support or who have not responded to the direct support
- Support transition from Grade 8 to Grade 9 by working with elementary staff to identify incoming at-risk students
- Engage professional student support services personnel employed by the Board and/or external agencies on an as needs basis
- Interact with classroom teachers to form meaningful partnerships in supporting student
- Track student marks, assignments, due dates, attendance, attitudes through regular, standardized written reports and informal conversations with the classroom teacher
- Keep the Principal and the School Student Success Team informed on an as needs basis of the work being done with individual students
- Keep records of the follow up for the purpose of longitudinal data and analysis

**2. Student monitoring such as:**

- Identify with the School Student Success Team potential at-risk students based on a variety of sources including the data provided by the Guidance and Special Education Departments
- Track at-risk students, including those serviced by the Special Education Department, for such areas as:
  - Progress in courses
  - Failures
  - Timetabling
  - Services provided
  - Follow up strategies

**3. School-wide staff development in support of student success initiatives**

- Make available for staff professional growth information provided to the Student Success Teacher by the Ministry of Education and the Board in such areas as:
  - Literacy
  - Mathematical literacy
  - Transition strategies from Grade 8 to Grade 9
  - Research material from a variety of sources
  - Intervention strategies and variable resources for classroom teachers to use prior to a student failing a credit
  - Locally determined needs to enhance the implementation of student success initiatives at the school and Board level.

**4. Student instruction and other interventions**

The Student Success Teacher may deliver instruction to at-risk students through Credit Recovery and/or other interventions. These forms of at-risk student support must be consistent with the amount of time dedicated to any application of the previous three key areas as referenced in Guiding Principle # 16.

Credit Recovery implementation must be in accordance with the Memo from the Deputy Minister which aligns with the recommendations of the SSC.

Other interventions may include a variety of supports in a course in which an at-risk student is currently enrolled and is in significant jeopardy of losing the credit. There are many existing best practices in School Boards, e.g. Credit Rescue, Credit Intervention, Save a Credit. The role of the Student Success Teacher in relation to these interventions should be determined at the local level.

**School Board Allocation of Student Success Teachers**

In allocating Student Success Teachers to schools, board staffing committees should consider school profiles. In consultation with the in-school staffing committee, and after considering the school profile as well as the on-going monitoring of student success initiatives, the Principal will allocate the assignment of Student Success Teacher time.

In accordance with Guiding Principles # 10 and # 11, a School Board's allocation of Student Success Teachers must be grounded in a school profile, criteria-based model based on school need.



The need for Student Success Teachers will vary depending on the nature of the student population. The reference to “on average” in the Guiding Principles # 12 and # 13 is designed to direct a board to use its entire allocation distributed across all secondary schools employing a needs-based rationalized process.

For example, a board with ten secondary schools must allocate at least sixty sections (10 schools x 1.0 FTE @ 6 sections/ FTE = 60 sections) over the ten schools. Using a needs-based rationalized process, of the 60 sections, School “A” may require four sections while School “B” may require ten sections. Regardless of the school-by-school allocation, by 2007-2008, no less than half of each school’s allocation must be used for direct student engagement exclusive of student instruction. In very small schools, Boards may allocate a proportional level of resources.

The Ministry will provide exemplars to be used as templates by February 2007 to assist Boards in this staffing process for 2007-2008. These exemplars should consider whether or not to weight such factors as:

- Socio-economic factors available through Statistics Canada including:
  - Household income
  - Household education
  - Country of origin
  - First household language
  - Household levels of employment
  
- School Population
  - Total number of students
  - Number of identified students at risk
  - Graduation rate
  - Drop out rate
  - OSSLT success
  - EQAO results
  - Credit accumulation rates, particularly for Grades 9 and 10
  - Feeder school transition data
  - Number of students recommended for Credit recovery
  - Student retention if FFL and NL
  - Suspension rates
  - Expulsion rates
  
- Other considerations
  - Proximity to other secondary school
  - Access to community resources