



**Suggested Strategies to Support Successful Transitions for Consideration
During an Accommodation Review Process
Prepared by Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Members April 3, 2017**

**School/Board/Community Working Together to Support Successful Transitions
For Students with Special Education Needs**

Recommendations for schools:

- Prepare students ahead of time as much as possible (informing them what is known along the way related to the new/renovated facility, personnel – videos, pictures, drawings, etc.).
- Create a video showing various locations around the new/renovated school e.g., gym, learning commons, office, playground, etc. that could be shared with students ahead of time and posted on the school website.
- Arrange for a tour of the new/renovated school and/or schedule an “Open House” event for students and families to view the facility before the start date.
- Develop a welcome package with information about school personnel, timetable, school/classroom expectations, upcoming calendar of events, etc.
- Request that parents complete a questionnaire/survey which would enable them an opportunity to provide information about their child’s strengths, needs, possible triggers and strategies to support as well as an opportunity to ask questions.
- Review all Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Safety Plans, Medical Plans, etc. with staff before the start date.
- Prepare all needed resources and the learning environments ahead of time e.g. visual schedules, sensory rooms, calming spaces, etc.
- Try to maintain similar classroom routines, schedules, learning environment, and personnel.
- Appoint school personnel to be responsible for taking the lead for the transition during the consolidation and to work closely with board personnel responsible for assisting with transitions.
- Work closely with connected community partners to plan for successful transitions as soon as possible.

Recommendations for the board:

- Ensure that an ongoing list of questions and responses are posted on the board/school websites throughout the Accommodation Review Process.
- Consider establishing opportunities when individuals can call in with specific questions for board personnel.
- Appoint system personnel to take the lead for the transition during the consolidation and to work closely with school personnel to plan clear, detailed transition plans with timelines and assist when challenges arise for specific students during the transition.
- Provide detailed information regarding potential changes that will result from the consolidation related to transportation, programs, facilities, personnel, playgrounds, etc. at the beginning and throughout the process.
- Assist with the review of all IEPs, Safety Plans, Medical Plans, etc. by school personnel before the start date.
- Notify community partners connected with students about the upcoming changes and keep them informed about recommendations and timelines e.g. SEAC, Children and Youth Services Network, etc.
- Assist school personnel to arrange meetings with community partners connected with the students in advance of the consolidation to review needs of the students e.g. recommended program, services, equipment, resources, personnel, etc.
- Ensure that all equipment is delivered and in good working condition and that the new learning environment contains necessary accessibility features.
- Ensure adequate personnel are available to assist during the transition, additional trained personnel may be required during the initial days.
- Develop a board policy/procedure and integrate guiding principles into the Strategic Plan related to successful transitions for all students, in particular students with special education needs.
- Immediately following final board approval of the Accommodation Review recommendation for an area, release media communications broadly with specific details e.g. board and school websites, Child and Youth Services Network website, Twitter, radio, newspaper, mailings, etc.

Recommendations for the community partners:

- Engage in opportunities to become informed about Accommodation Review processes in communities e.g. SEAC, Children and Youth Services Network, etc.
- Contact school/board personnel to offer assistance to develop transition plans as far in advance as possible.
- Offer available community supports to assist with transition planning e.g. personnel, resources, etc.