

Toronto District School Board

Operational Procedure PR575

Title: **ACCESS TO SCHOOLS BY THIRD PARTY PROFESSIONALS**

Adopted: June 3, 2008

Revised:

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Authorization: Executive Planning and Priorities

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To provide a process by which approval may be obtained to allow a third party professional in a parent's employ (or engaged on their behalf) to gain access to their child's classroom.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Deputy Director, Academic Services

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Parent the natural or adoptive parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of a child

Child a student enrolled in a Board school

Classroom a room in a school in which a child receives instruction

Third party professionals professionals who are not employees of the Board and who are in the fields of medical, mental health and/or social service and may include but are not limited to psychologists, occupational therapists, Intensive Behaviour Intervention (I. B. I.) therapists, child and youth workers, physiotherapists, social workers, speech and language pathologists, nurses, family service workers

Observation observation of a student in a school setting by a third party service provider for the sole purpose of assisting Board staff to provide a supportive learning environment for a student

Demonstration demonstration of a suggested strategy or technique by a third party service provider that staff may be able to adapt and utilize in a school setting as determined by the school principal and in accordance with the Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Direct therapy the treatment of disease or of any physical or mental disorder by medical or physical means, usually excluding surgery

PPM Ministry of Education Policy/Procedure Memorandum

4.0 PROCEDURES

- 4.1. Observation of students in the classroom instruction setting is often deemed to be a key component of assessment.
- 4.2. Such third party observations and the assessments and reports that follow are potentially of great benefit to both the school and the child.
- 4.3. The Board is committed to the education and well-being of its students. This, on occasion, indicates the desirability of co-operation with outside agencies and third party professionals (as defined).
- 4.4. Staff will at all times comply with responsibilities under the *Education Act* to ensure that anyone coming into direct contact with students at any school holds the appropriate professional qualifications and satisfies the police reference check requirements of the Board's policy which states that any visitor to a classroom or school on a regular, ongoing basis must have a police reference check. (Not applicable in most situations involving demonstration or observation by third party professionals since visits are to be limited and not regular and ongoing. For more information about police reference checks contact (416-393-0759)
- 4.5. The presence of a third party professional will not be permitted to interfere with the Board's obligation to comply with the minimum instructional day requirements of Ontario Regulation 298, s. 3(1).
- 4.6. The Board will protect the confidentiality of personal information of students and staff as required by the *Education Act*, the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) and Board policies. There will be no video- or audio-taping of students or staff.
- 4.7. The main purpose of classrooms/instructional settings is to serve the best educational interests of all students, and therefore the presence of a third party professional will not be allowed to detrimentally affect the provision of education to other students in the instructional setting.
- 4.8. There is obligation under various collective agreements to which the Board is party to not allow third party professionals to engage in the work of any bargaining unit where that would contravene a collective agreement.
- 4.9. Direct therapy to students will not be provided, except as provided by CCAC (see Appendix A) as per PPM 81.
- 4.10. Board property is publicly funded teaching/learning venues for the use of students and staff. Accordingly, Board properties are not appropriate locations for the regular

or routine conduct of private professional practice or for the transacting of business by private professionals.

4.11. The Board recognizes that students transitioning into the Board from accredited Toronto Partnership for Autism Services (see Appendix A) providers are under the auspices of the Toronto Partnership for Autism Services protocol.

4.12. Process for Making a Request for Third Party Professional Access to the School

(a) The parent shall provide a written request to the principal at least one week prior to the proposed visit to allow a third party professional into the school for the purpose of observing their child and/or making recommendations to the principal for the purpose of supporting the educational needs of the child.

The written request shall include an outline from the third party professional which outlines the purpose of the proposed visit(s), the nature of activities to be observed, the timing and frequency of visits.

(b) Visits should be limited in number and duration to avoid disruption while still allowing for required information to be acquired and/or shared. (Guidelines for this requirement can be accessed by administrators on the Special Education Website)

(c) the third party professional will also provide a current police reference check (if required) and documentation of appropriate professional liability insurance.

(d) The third party professional will confirm on the Agreement to Allow Access to a Third Party (Form 575A) that he or she is a member in good standing of the college or other organization governing his or her profession (e.g. Psychologist, Sociologist, Physician).

(e) The principal will consult in advance with the affected teacher to determine the advisability and potential timing of the visit

(f) The principal will consult with the superintendent of education (or designate) before granting, denying or revoking a request made under section 4.12. Advice and/or clarification can also be sought from the quadrant supervising principals of Special Education or the chiefs of the Professional Support Services. Factors to consider when deciding to grant or deny any such request may include but are not limited to:

- number of third party professionals requested
- proposed frequency of visits
- disruption of other students/programs
- perceived value to student in question
- student and staff safety
- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or *Education Act* considerations
- presence or lack of required Informed Consents and/or signed releases

- purpose of the visit
- 4.13. Should the principal, after consultation with the teacher and the appropriate supervisory officer, decide to grant the request, an Agreement to Allow Access to a Third Party Professional (Form 575) will be completed and signed by all parties. Signatories to the Agreement will be the principal for the Board, the parent(s) and the third party professional.
- 4.14. Should a meeting be deemed appropriate by the principal between school and/or central staff and the third party professional, it will be conducted in the presence of the principal or vice-principal.
- 4.15. Recommendations given by the third party professionals will be considered (by the principal) for inclusion in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

5.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Community Services and Agencies

6.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Form 575A: Agreement to Allow Access to a Third Party Professional

Employee Services Protocol SR23, Police Reference Checks

Guidelines for Community Professionals/Paraprofessionals in Schools – TDSB Draft Proposal, February 9, 2005

TPAS protocol

Child and Family Services Act

Education Act

Ontario Regulation 298

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Community Services and Agencies

Toronto Partnership for Autism Services (TPAS) provides Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) for children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), who live in the Toronto Area. TPAS falls under the umbrella of the **Autism Intervention Program** funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS). (For a copy of the protocol and direction regarding how protocol is implemented, administrators are directed to the Special Education Intranet website under Procedures).

Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) is a not-for-profit corporation that provides health and social support services to individuals of all ages in their home and school.

They offer services fully funded by the Ontario Government through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to eligible clients to maintain an individual's health, independence and quality of life.

School Health Support Service is a subset of the CCAC Child and Family Services:

- that focuses on children and youth with special needs in the schools
- that provides them with professional health care and case management services, health-related education, teaching and consultation to school personnel and parents related to the school setting