

# EA Staffing Update

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## A New Model for EA Staffing Allocations

- Many of the key directions in the EA Study centred around the development of a *planning tool* to aid decision-making with respect to EA allocations
- *Planning Tool* must
  - Be needs-based
  - Focus on developing student independence
  - Be part of a broader EA staffing process that is transparent and collaborative

# Needs Assessment Tool

- Developed to meet the needs of our system specifically, with input and feedback from
  - Learning Services Staff
  - School-Based Staff at Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Levels
  - EA Study Advisory Committee
- Adapted elements of tools developed in Surrey, Delta, and Maple Ridge School Districts
- Piloted the tool in the fall to ensure validity and ease of use

# Inclusive Contextual Framework

- Development of the tool created an opportunity to create a contextual framework that
  - Supports the Needs Assessment Tool
  - Is rooted in inclusive practice, and that
  - Focuses on student independence

## Meaningful Inclusion of ALL Students



## Inclusive Framework

- Clear link between inclusion and student independence – the more independent students become, the more easily they can be included meaningfully
- Independence is fostered through
  - Ongoing collaboration and planning across team members, including parents
  - Ensuring key personnel (classroom teacher, case manager, EA) focus on implementing supports rather than being the support
  - Adjusting the intensity of supports based on need using a tiered approach – universal, targeted, intensive
- The intent behind focusing on student independence is NOT to reduce EA support to schools, but rather, to create opportunities for EAs to
  - Act as a facilitator of learning in a classroom environment
  - Provide more comprehensive support in classrooms
  - Function more effectively as an integral member of a school and classroom community
  - Place more of an emphasis on developing tools to support students

# EA Staffing Allocation Process – Ensuring Collaboration and Transparency

- Needs assessment meetings scheduled at each school site
  - a total of 70 school visits
  - inclusive of administration and teaching staff/case managers
- Focus of meetings included
  - An overview of how the outcomes of the EA Study led to the change in the EA Staffing Process
  - An overview of the inclusive framework
  - A collaborative needs assessment of all students in Low Incidence Categories (A, B, C, D, and G) using the Needs Assessment Tool
  - A discussion of the broader school context of each school site with respect to overall Learning Needs, Social Emotional Needs, and Challenging School and Family Structures
  - An overview of the steps going forward in terms of the staffing process

## Next Steps

- Currently, data collected from the Needs Assessment Meetings is being collated
- Allocation meeting will be collaborative and factor in all data obtained (April 6-7)
- Allocations will continue to be global, to give school teams autonomy in deployment of staffing
- Data collected will also assist the team in making recommendations for teacher staffing based on the needs of students

# Reflections on the Implementation of a Needs-Based Model

- Significant investment of time required from VP of Learning Services and North, East, and South Zone Coordinators – all school sites visited
- Significant investment of time by school teams – approximately 2 hours per school team
- We now have data on the needs of all low incidence students in the district that is in a consistent format, easy to interpret, and informative
- We have key visuals and key language that articulates our vision and direction
- We feel we have data to make informed decisions regarding staffing

## Feedback from School Teams

- The tool was well-received by teams
  - Quick and easy to use
  - Accurately represented the needs of their students
  - Recognized multiple applications of the tool for their own school-based needs
- Schools appreciated the discussions about the framework
  - Felt the framework outlining the vision and direction really resonated with their own practice in schools
  - Appreciated the visuals and common language and saw the opportunity to use these resources in supporting conversations with teaching staff, EAs, and parents
  - Some schools arranged for follow-up presentations by LS Staff at a subsequent staff meeting

## Feedback from School Teams, Cont'd

- Teams appreciated that teachers were invited to be part of the process
- Schools valued the opportunity to speak about their students and their school context, both their challenges as a community and their strengths
- Schools were interested in learning about the process and appreciated the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the data collection process and, in turn, the staffing process
- Schools saw value in the guidelines provided for making effective deployment decisions at the school level
- Schools felt the tiered intervention model allowed them the flexibility to adjust supports according to student needs

Questions?