

Better Together

A Review of the Inclusive Education Model on PEI

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Department of Education and Early Years

Minister of Education and Early Years,
Joint Committee on Teaching & Learning Conditions

I am pleased to submit *Better Together, A Review of the Inclusive Education Model on PEI*. This report compiles the knowledge and information obtained during the review process. It could not have happened without the commitment, dedication, and contributions of the many stakeholders involved in this project. This report will build on the current initiatives and strengths and provide a way forward to support the diverse needs of all learners in Prince Edward Island.

Respectfully Submitted,
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Inclusive Education Review Consultant

Acknowledgment

“We acknowledge that the land we gather on is the ancestral land of the Mi’kmaq and we respect the Mi’kmaq as the Indigenous people of PEI.”

The Evolution of Special Education to Rights-Based Education

Since the *Report of the Review of Special Education in Prince Edward Island* (1998), and *The Minister's Directive on Special Education in (2001)* were released, there have been seismic shifts in international and national law, social policy, and educational services regarding the provision of Special Education Services. As a result, Inclusive Education, where all children, regardless of religion, culture, gender, and ability, have the right to attend school, has been established on Prince Edward Island. *The United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child* is clear. All children have the right to quality education that supports the development of their personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. (United Nations CRPD, 2008). A rights-based approach to education aims to “ensure that every child has a quality education that respects and prompts their right to dignity and optimum development” (UNESCO, 2007).

The Canadian Context

Today, inclusive education is the normative status quo in Canada and is recognized as a right in various acts and conventions. For example, Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which Canada ratified in 2010, states that it is a right for disabled students to receive the necessary support within the general education system and to be educated on an equal basis as other students in their communities. (United Nations CRPD, 2010)

While there is a wide variety of agreement, research, and evidence to support Inclusive Education, there remain significant challenges internationally, nationally, and across provincial and territorial jurisdictions on how best to deliver services within an Inclusive Education Model. All Canadian provinces and territories have adopted various aspects of inclusive school practices. Although “pockets of excellence of inclusive education exist in Canada, barriers to inclusive education remain.”¹ Education is the responsibility of the provinces/territories, meaning there is no federal ministry of education, and therefore no national policy on inclusive education.

¹ Bota, Sydney K., "Championing Inclusive Education in Canada: Voices of Educators, Advocates, and Researchers" (2023). Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository. 9657. <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/9657>

Throughout many provinces and territories, Universal Design for Learning (CAST-UDL Guidelines, 2022) has received widespread support as a curriculum model to support diverse learning needs. The idea is taken from the field of architecture, where all citizens have equal access to buildings due to their original design. If a building is inclusively designed from the outset and a diverse population's needs are considered, doorway widening, and wheelchair ramp additions are not an afterthought. This idea is used in education to create new curricula that will allow students of all abilities to have flexible access and ensure curriculum objectives like social and emotional learning are reinforced throughout the curriculum. (Now is the Time- The Next Chapter in Education in Newfoundland and Labrador, 2017)

In addition to curriculum development, many provinces use a tiered support model called *Response to Intervention- RTI*. An RTI approach focuses solely on academic assessments, instruction, and interventions. (Buffum, Mattos, Malon, 2018) In PEI, the System of Student Achievement is based on the foundation of RTI. However, the System of Student Achievement, also known as *Progress Monitoring*, has yet to be consistently implemented provincially. In addition to *Progress Monitoring*, various tiered support models are currently used to respond to student needs and deliver service. The Resource Model and the School Counselling Model are some examples.

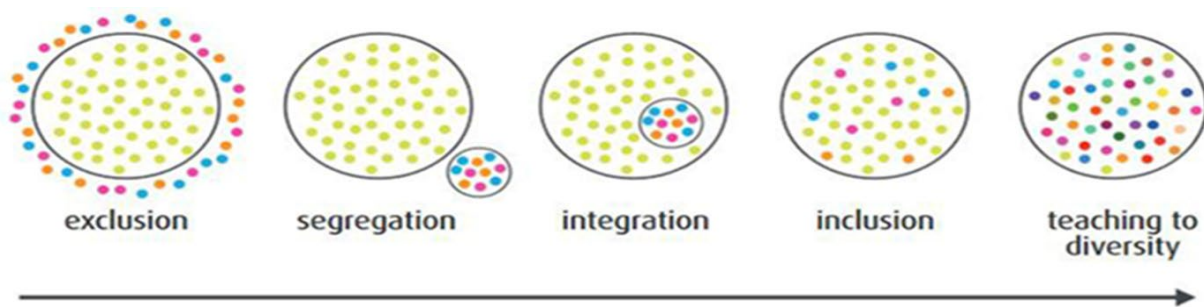
As RTI has been implemented across jurisdictions, there has been a recognition for a more comprehensive model that addresses more than academic needs. Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a term that integrates these various initiatives into a more comprehensive and cohesive framework. MTSS aims to provide a continuum of support that can be adjusted based on students' needs, incorporating both academic and behavioural aspects. This model aims to provide the most effective and efficient support possible by addressing various challenges or issues that students may encounter. (Enriching Students, RTI vs MTSS, 2021)

Successful inclusive education requires system change and school transformation. However, “much of this reform is design-focused and not resource-intensive. It is important to emphasise that inclusive education begins with the assumption that *all* children have a right to be in the

same educational space.”² Inclusive Education teaches students the benefits of diversity, cooperation, and consideration of others. (UNICEF, 2019 Inclusion Canada, 2022) Moreover, inclusive education can allow all children to learn about and accept each other’s abilities, talents, and needs. Social competencies can be established through the cultivation of meaningful relationships and friendships. (Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child, 2022-2027). Inclusive education can boost a person's sense of trust and belonging in a world that is growing more globalised and complex.

Being a leader in creating an inclusive learning environment is something Prince Edward Island should aspire to. In addition to aligning with international human rights norms, inclusivity promotes social and economic well-being. It is not about integrating vulnerable students into existing populations but embracing student diversity and building a continuum to support all learners and teachers.

The image below depicts the Evolution of Inclusion over time and the necessity for the system to become more inclusive.



(<https://blogsomemoore.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/sd39-counsellors-2.pdf>)

Prince Edward Island Context- System Structure

Education Authorities

Currently, the Student Services Divisions in both the La Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF), and the Public Schools Branch (PSB), are responsible for specialised support

²Schuelka, M. J. (2018). Implementing Inclusive Education. <https://core.ac.uk/download/237086824.pdf>

and programming to students across Prince Edward Island. The PSB and CSLF have various positions, including Student Services Director and Manager positions, and specialised divisions employing over one hundred staff among the two education authorities. Divisions include:

- Blind Visually Impaired BVI - (Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority APSEA)
- Autism Services
- Counselling Services
- Deaf Hard Hearing -HEAR Services
- Inclusive Education Services
- French Immersion Inclusive Education Consultant
- Occupational Therapy Services
- Physiotherapy Services(*1 position shared between PSB & CSLF*)
- School Psychology Services
- Speech-Language Pathology Services

There are two additional supports to schools provided through the Student Services Department:

- Community Access Facilitator (*1 position shared between PSB & CSLF*)
- Assistive Technology Facilitator (*PSB only*)

Also, there are a number of PSB Alternative Education sites across the province.

School Level

At the school level, students receive specialized support from various professionals including School Counsellors, Resource Teachers, Behaviour Resource, Educational Assistants, Youth Service Workers, Workplace Attendants, Student Attendants, and School Mental Health Support Workers. Student Well-Being Teams are present in all PEI public schools and provide advice, consultation, and direct service to children and youth who are struggling with mental, social, and physical health issues. The number and composition of these positions differ from school to school based on the staffing requirements.

Department Level

Over the last two decades, reviews have been undertaken with special education recommendations leading to the system currently in place. In 2012, The Education Governance Commission released *Charting the Way*. The Report examined and recommended education governance structures and processes in PEI. Two significant recommendations impacting Inclusive Education Services were as follows:

1. *The Department immediately undertake a comprehensive review of the Province's approach to special needs education, including assessment, identification, methodologies, standards for learning outcomes, and required personnel.*
2. *The Departmental role in special needs education consists of leadership and oversight, and that most of its operational personnel be transferred to the district offices.*³

A Review of the Department of Education and Early Years Annual Report of 2012-2013 indicates that *The Child and Student Services section, and English as an Additional /French as Additional Language Divisions* were transferred from the Department of Early Years and Culture to the English Language School Board and La Commission scolaire de langue française. This transition aimed to ensure services were closer to students and to support schools better. (Annual Report, 2012-2013) A Special Education Policy Advisor remained at the Department of Education for some time.

In 2016, the *Education Act* replaced the *School Act*, and a reorganization with the Department of Education and the English Language School Board was undertaken, At that time, the Minister's Directive on Special Education, No. MD 2001-08 was repealed, leaving the system without a framework outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Education, Education Authorities, and schools with respect to programs and services for students with special educational needs in the province of Prince Edward Island.

Recognizing the authority and responsibility as outlined in the *Education Act*, Part II, Section 3 (1), the Department of Education and Early Years, this review and subsequent recommendations urges the Department to establish policies for the provision of Special Education services,⁴ ensuring a meaningful Inclusive Education system.

Data Collection and Review

Inclusive Education Review Process

³ 2012 Charting the way - gov.pe.ca. (n.d.-k). http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/eecd_RepEduGovC.pdf

⁴ 2016 Education Act. Wordmark of Government of Prince Edward Island. (2023b, June 14). <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/legislation/education-act>

The Inclusive Education Review began in November 2022 and concluded in November 2023. During the early stages of the review, project organization, goals, and timelines were determined and established, along with identifying stakeholders. In addition to stakeholder interviews, an extensive survey process was developed and completed.

The chart below outlines the types of surveys, survey participants, and the number of respondents.

Type of Survey	Survey Participants	Number of Respondents
Baseline Survey on Inclusive Education <i>(Appendix A&B)</i>	Administrators & Resource Teachers	26 PSB Administrators & Resource Teachers 9 CSLF Administrators & Resource Teachers.
System Survey <i>(Appendix C&D)</i>	Administrators, Teachers & Educational Support Staff in the PSB & CSLF	PSB 709 CSLF 67
Student & Parent Survey <i>(Appendix E&F)</i>	Students in grades 4-7 & Parents in PSB	78 Student Responses 28 Parent Responses
Student Services Survey <i>(Appendix G)</i>	Student Service Teams in the PSB	9 Divisional Teams

In addition to the survey process Key Meetings were held with:

- *Directors and Managers of the Education Authority*
- *Directors and Managers of PSB & CSLF Student and Student Services Divisions*
- *Directors, Managers, and Consultants Department of Education & Early Years (French & English Programs)*
- *PSB & CSLF Resource Teachers*
- *Joint Committee on PEITF Teaching & Learning Conditions*
- *PEITF Student Services Committee & Executive*
- *Department of Health Children with Complex Needs Coordinator*
- *Autism Coordination Act Project Lead*
- *Student Well-Being Team Lead*
- *Post Secondary Institutions (Holland College & UPEI)*
- *Office of the Child & Youth Advocate*
- *Child & Youth Advocate Youth Advisory Committee*

(see Appendix H Stakeholder List)

(see Appendix I Child & Youth Advocate Youth Advisory Committee Input)

Throughout the review, opinions were shared regarding what aspects of the current Inclusive Education model is working and what needs improvement. As meetings progressed and expanded, some individuals were interviewed multiple times to clarify and confirm information.

The review also relied on various sources of provincial data and information, including data and information from the Public Schools Branch, La Commission scolaire de langue française, Joint Committee for Teaching and Learning Conditions, PEITF Class Composition Information, PEI Department of Education & Early Years, PEI Department of Health, Student Well-Being Team and PEI Bridge Program.

Pan-Canadian research, scans of other jurisdictions, legislation, policy frameworks, literature research, international research, review of relevant case law, rights-based legislation, and document analyses were also considered.

Data Limitations

There were some issues with data that limited its reliability. The small sample sizes limited the reliability of the Student and Parent Survey results. Still, the results were generally consistent with findings from the other surveys conducted for this review. Also, inconsistencies in yearly incident reporting structures that restricted year-to-year comparisons compromised the Physical Incident Report results. However, the incidents were thoroughly reviewed and categorized to establish an overview of the many types of physical incidents and behavioural issues in PEI schools. Access to reliable data to determine the total number of students requiring Academic Learning Plans (ALPs), Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), Transition Action Plans (TAPs), De-escalation Plans, Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs), Record of Adaptations, Alternative Education Programs, and Threat Assessments was not available. The need to collect this critical data to determine needs and potential program pressures has been identified. The start and end dates of the report necessitated the use of 2022-23 data, but in a few instances, data availability allowed for the use of data from the 2023-24 school year.

System, student and parent survey responses and stakeholder interviews highlighted the challenges of the current system. The class composition challenges, and the lack of professional human resources negatively impact the learning environment. Insufficient resources are spread thin, resulting in the failure of the current model to meet children with diverse needs and those with exceptionalities that require additional challenges and enrichment. Teachers are forced to focus on less curricular outcomes and more on inappropriate challenging behaviours. The role of the teacher as an educator has been greatly diminished due to disruptive behaviour. Teachers are overwhelmed as the current model is servicing significant behavioural needs to the detriment of academic needs.

What was heard is that inclusion requires a team approach whereby Teachers, Resource Teachers, Educational Support Staff, Student Services Consultants, and other specialists have more time to collaborate outside of the current school day. Support staff play a vital role in supporting the teacher in planning for an inclusionary model. Inclusion must consider each child's unique learning needs, and the one-size-fits-all approach isn't working.

Anxiety appears to be more prevalent among teachers and students. Severely dysregulated students heighten hypervigilance amongst those already anxious about the learning environment. Additional school-based mental health supports are a necessity to help address the current mental health issues. Teachers and Educational Support Staff are not mental health professionals. Teachers are teaching in desperation, trying to fulfil the numerous duties and roles that their position entails.

As a result, four distinct themes were identified, including Safe and Supportive Learning Environments, Diverse Learning and Behaviour Needs, Instructional Supports, and System Efficiency.

A Rationale for Change - What Was Heard

Theme	What Was Heard
Safe and Supportive Learning Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="581 1766 1406 1831">• The need for increased support for students requiring intensive interventions beyond the education system's scope.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to address the challenging behaviours of students and their impact on student learning. • The need to develop staff competencies in Social Emotional Learning, Trauma-Informed and Restorative Practice. • The need for all students to feel safe, supported, and included as valued members of the school community.
Diverse Learning & Behaviour Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for kindergarten students requiring support with personal care and readiness skills. • The need for increased services to address the population growth of both internal and international migrants to Prince Edward Island. • The need for service delivery to address the increase in Autism spectrum diagnoses. • The need for additional in-school Counselling, Behaviour and Mental Health Supports. • The need to collaborate with post-secondary institutions to offer specific courses on diverse learning & behaviour challenges. • The need for increased supports for class composition. • The need for students to be involved in their transition planning process. • The need for additional programming support and a competency-based model for Individualized Education, Planning for students on IEPs and the teachers and educational assistants who support them. • The need to build system capacity as there is an overreliance on Educational Assistants.
Instructional Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for additional resources to address changes in the school-based Resource Model. • The need for increased classroom support to meet the unprecedented demands on classroom teachers. • The need for increased support for kindergarten. • The need for staffing to support the Tier 2 Foundations Program. • The need for professional learning for all school personnel regarding Universal Design for Learning, Trauma Informed Care, and Restorative Practices • The need for diversity to be reflected in all aspects of the curriculum and for students to have the opportunity to provide feedback.
System Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for cross-departmental collaboration and support. • The need for role clarification across the departments and within the Education Authority.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for collaboration with the Department of Early Years. • The need to address human resource challenges, including recruitment, retention, trained staff in specialised areas, substitute teachers, and educational support staff. • The need for updated policies and greater policy direction from the Department of Education & Early Years regarding inclusive education . • The need for an Inclusive Education Policy. • The need for greater collaboration and coordination of community sector partnerships. • The need for additional personnel to meet service delivery demands on PSB & CSLF Student Services. • The need to review the Minister’s Directive on Staffing and the development of a new staffing model.
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Path Forward

Proposed Continuum of Inclusion

Developing a well-resourced and well-designed Inclusive Education System on PEI that will support all teachers and students will require establishing a continuum of supports and services supporting inclusion. A Continuum of Inclusion refers to a range of services and supports provided to accommodate people with diverse abilities and needs in various settings, such as education, workplaces, or communities. This concept emphasizes that inclusivity is not a one-size-fits-all approach but rather a spectrum that accommodates the varying needs of individuals.

Research indicates that the inclusion infrastructure should include:

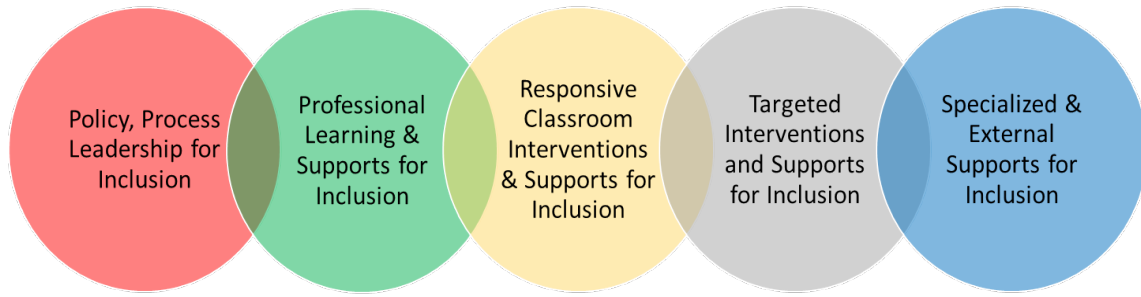
- *Guiding conditions and structures*
- *Opportunities for supportive and collaborative professional development*
- *Research-based planning and design frameworks.* (UNESCO, 2017)

The development of the proposed Continuum of Inclusion will require the collective and collaborative will and determination of all those with a vested interest in Education.

The Key components required to develop the proposed Continuum of Inclusion are as follows:

- *Policy, Process, and Leadership for Inclusion*
- *Professional Learning & Supports for Inclusion*
- *Responsive Classroom Interventions & Supports for Inclusion*

- *Targeted Interventions & Supports for Inclusion*
 - *Specialised & External Supports for Inclusion*
- Proposed Continuum of Inclusion**



It is important to note the intersectionality of all components of the proposed Continuum of Inclusion. This interconnectedness considers intersectionality, comprehensively addresses barriers and builds inclusivity into processes and decision-making mechanisms. It promotes thoughtful inclusivity through design. (Promoting inclusive education for diverse societies: A conceptual framework - OECD Working Paper, 2021)

Establishing the proposed Continuum of Inclusion will:

- Guide the work of the Department of Education & Early Years (K-12) and PSB & CSLF Student Services.
- Guide the implementation of Inclusive practices in all public schools and support the rights of all children & youth.

Proposed Continuum of Inclusion - Development

Each component of the proposed Continuum of Inclusion is developed in further detail with objectives identified, rationale provided, and accountability assigned. The supporting recommendations will develop the necessary continuum to support the Continuum of Inclusion.

A four-phased plan is recommended to ensure a coordinated implementation plan. (see Appendix J Proposed Implementation Plan)

Establishing the Foundation for Inclusion - Policy, Process and Leadership

Objective

To establish a Continuum of Inclusion. The Continuum of Inclusion will define Inclusion and guide Inclusive Education work in the Department of Education & Early Years and PSB & CSLF Student Services. The Continuum will guide the implementation of Inclusive Education practices in all public schools and support the rights of all children & youth.

Rationale:

The absence of a policy direction for Inclusive Education outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Education, Education Authorities, and schools with respect to programs and services has created significant confusion. A lack of policy, processes, and procedures has resulted in an inconsistent service delivery model. The need to establish a Continuum of Inclusion that will provide a policy framework, establish a clear process, and provide leadership to the system is critical to advancing the work of Inclusive Education in PEI.

Resource Required	Recommendations
Policy	<p>In establishing a Continuum of Inclusion, the Department of Education & Early Years will:</p> <p>1.1 Establish a Minister’s Directive on Inclusive Education</p> <p>1.2 Update all documents, policies, regulations, and the Education Act to reflect current Inclusive Language Practices.</p> <p>1.3 Review section 3(5) of the Minister’s Directive MD 2022-01 Education Authority Staffing and Funding Program to determine the most effective model for Staffing Resource Teachers, defining what is considered a “core high need” and what is a “general lower need” and reviewing the current Incidence rate of 7.0% and adjusting it to reflect the current trend.</p> <p>1.4 Review the Home Education Regulation and the PEI Education Act to ensure alignment regarding the date intention to enroll in school.</p> <p>1.5 Establish a responsive staffing model to meet the exceptional needs of students who enroll after the staffing process. Review historical data to</p>

	<p>determine trends and build funding based on previous metrics. Establish quarterly checkpoints with the Education Authorities to receive information regarding staffing to receive information regarding staffing pressures and needs.</p> <p>1.6 Adopt The Department of Education & Early Year Guidelines for respecting, accommodating, and Supporting gender identity, gender expression, and Sexual orientation as part of the Continuum of Inclusion.</p> <p>1.7 Replace the term adaptation with accommodation per current research and practice.</p> <p>1.8 Implement the School to Work Report recommendations as part of establishing a Responsive High School Transition Pathway.</p> <p>1.9 Review and develop policy and guidelines for the Student Needs Assessment Process (SNAP) used by the PSB & CSLF to determine and allocate CUPE 3260 support.</p> <p>1.10 Along with the Education Authorities, adopt the Department of Health's definition of Complex Needs as part of the Continuum of Inclusion.</p> <p>1.11 Update the Teachers and Support Staff Working Together Standards and Guidelines.</p> <p>1.12 Review the research on the age of entry for kindergarten and revise the Education Act if it is determined a change is warranted.</p> <p>The Certification & Standards Board</p> <p>1.13 Consider additional requirements such as (SEL, UDL, Cultural Competency, and Restorative Practices) to be included in teacher certifications.</p> <p>The Education Negotiating Agency, along with PEITF</p> <p>1.14 Review the PEITF Class Composition Funding Agreement to determine if it meets the intended need and negotiate revision.</p>
<p>Process</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>1.15 In collaboration with the Education Authorities establish a student-centered transition process for those identified with exceptionalities/ neurodiverse needs from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years to Kindergarten • School to School • School to Community <p>In addition to the above, a transition process will be established for; Students returning from homeschooling or with no recent educational documentation.</p>

	<p>1.16 Collaborate with the Department of Education & Early Years, Early Childhood Authorities to provide access to the Early Years program for PowerSchool Special Programs. This would benefit the capacity of the K-12 system to forecast and track potential incoming Kindergarten needs and identify additional Supports.</p> <p>1.17 Collaborate with the Education Authorities to standardize the Student Needs Assessment Process (SNAP) form and process as soon as possible. This would include schools completing SNAP forms online and establishing a meeting process for school SNAP meetings.</p> <p>1.18 Establish Planning Guidelines for Educational facilities that outlines accessibility specifications with a focus on universal access and barrier-free design.</p>
<p>Leadership</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>1.19 Establish an Inclusive Education Director/Manager position to lead the work in developing the Continuum of Inclusion for (K-12) French & English Services.</p> <p>1.20 Establish an Inclusive Education Working Group to support the Continuum of Inclusion. The Inclusive Education Working Group would include representation from the Educational Authorities Student Services Division, Department of Education & Early Years, Community stakeholders, Home and Student representation. Adhoc Committee members from PEITF Student Services Committee and Principal Association and representative from CUPE 3260.</p> <p>1.21 Track the implementation of recommendations from the Inclusive Education Review and report annually to Government and broader system on progress.</p> <p>1.22 Review all existing Alternative Education Programs, including Enhanced Learning Placement (ELP), Primary Enhanced Learning Placement, and A+ to determine the effectiveness, best practices, and wrap-around support required for these programs.</p> <p>1.23 Request a review of the roles and responsibilities of PSB & CSLF Student Services Divisions.</p> <p>1.24 Engage in broader consultations and partnerships with community-based agencies (Autism Society, Learning Disability Association, Home and School, PEERS Alliance, Association for Community Living, etc.) regarding the Continuum of Inclusion.</p> <p>1.25 Review Administrator Leadership Program Modules specifically as they apply to Inclusion to establish administrator competencies to support Inclusive Education.</p>

Developing Professional Learning & Support for Inclusion

Objective

To develop teacher and school personnel competencies in Inclusive Education to build a culturally responsive school climate for all children & youth.

Rationale:

To support the development of a Continuum of Inclusion, ongoing professional learning, and support for Inclusion is critical. “While research on inclusive education has traditionally focused on students with special education needs, it has become more evident that inclusive practices can and should benefit all students.”⁵ To create an educational environment that values diversity, promotes equity, and equips students for success in an inclusive society, it is imperative to offer professional learning opportunities and support for inclusion to the entire school community. Studies have consistently demonstrated the benefits of enhancing educators' and school personnel's (*Bus drivers, Custodians, Administrative Assistant's, and Education Support Staff*) *competencies* in inclusive education. Benefits include improved student outcomes, more inclusive and encouraging learning environments, collaboration, cultural competence, and overall job satisfaction.

Historically much of the professional development and training for Inclusive Education has been reserved for Resource Teachers, School Counsellors, and other staff working in “specialised” areas to support students with diverse needs. In the System Survey on Inclusive Education, 85.1 % of teachers and educational support staff in the Public Schools Branch (PSB), and 96.9 % in La Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF) indicated their Human Services Training, University or other training, only somewhat prepared them or did not prepare them at all for the current realities of Inclusive Education. A recent Prince Edward Island Teachers Federation public relations campaign, *Course Correction*, indicates classrooms are filled with diverse learners, including students with academic, behavioural, social, and emotional needs. Teachers

⁵ The social and economic rationale of inclusive education:(2022)

An overview of the outcomes in education for diverse groups of students Cecilia Mezzanotte,OECD Education Working Paper No. 263

are expected to plan and deliver multiple lessons to meet students at their current level. (*Course Correction*, PEITF, 2023) Teachers face unprecedented challenges to meet students where they are in their learning. The need for more training, resources, and professional development for Inclusive Education has never been more necessary.

Developing teacher and student competencies in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is a priority area within the PEI Education System. The Premier's Department of Education and Early Years Mandate Letter highlights the importance of “developing social-emotional learning at all levels through professional development.”⁶ Research indicates that developing social-emotional learning competencies of staff and students is an educational intervention that can create substantial returns on investment. Hundreds of studies indicate a consistent, reliable effect of the development of social-emotional learning competencies on students’ social, emotional, behavioural, and academic outcomes at all grade levels, and across gender, ethnicity, income, and other demographic variables. (Greenburg M., 2023)

While various professional learning opportunities have been provided, it is essential that building educators' and school personnel's competencies become a priority as part of the development of the proposed Continuum of Inclusion. The following are program recommendations to develop teacher and school personnel skills and provide Professional Learning and Support for Inclusion.

Recommendations: Develop and Provide Professional Learning and Support for Inclusion

Resource Required	Recommendations
Programs	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years 2.1 Continue to develop teacher and staff competencies in social-emotional learning (SEL) and well-being at all levels through professional learning.</p>

⁶ Hon. Dennis King, Premier of Prince Edward Island (April 2023) Education & Early Years Mandate Letter <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/education-and-early-years/education-and-and-early-years-mandate-letter>

- 2.2** English as an Additional Language Division continues providing Professional Development regarding EAL Learners through online training modules.
- 2.3** In collaboration with the SEL Initiative, continue to provide professional learning to develop teacher and Staff competencies in Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction, Trauma Informed Practice, Cultural Competence, and Restorative Practices.
- 2.4** Continue to support APSEA Autism in Education Partnership and offer *Autism Spectrum Disorder & Behavioral Interventions* Online Course for all school personnel in PSB & CSLF.
- 2.5** English Programs continue to support the UPEI Research project on developing Kindergarten Play Continuum and Professional Development modules.
- 2.6** Continue to establish a collaborative partnership with UPEI to offer courses in positive behavior management and support SEL, UDL Differentiated Instruction, Trauma Informed Care, Mental Health, and Restorative Practice to build teacher capacity across the system.
- 2.7** Collaborate with Holland College on developing a *Behavior Assistant Certificate*.
- 2.8** Establish Bus Driver training for all new and substitute bus drivers to promote a positive bus climate.
- 2.9** The Department of Education & Early Years Learning established the Inclusive Schools Initiative. The Inclusive Schools Initiative will provide an Annual Inclusive Education Grant up to a maximum of \$1000, depending on the initiative's scope. The grant will be available to all schools and provides leadership in developing and sustaining inclusive environments. Projects and initiatives will be showcased on the Department of Education & Early Years website and the Learning Platform. An application process and specific criteria must be met to qualify for the grant.

Building Responsive Classroom Interventions & Supports for Inclusion

Objective-

To build responsive classrooms with safe and engaging learning environments. The emphasis is on building a continuum of support for children & youth to develop their academic, social, and emotional skills in a learning environment rich in instructional practice and developmentally responsive to their strengths and needs.

Rationale:

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment in schools and classrooms is crucial for students' overall well-being and academic success. A safe workplace is also a right for administrators, teachers, and educational support personnel. Positive relationships, emotional and social growth, and a sense of belonging are all enhanced in a safe setting. In Prince Edward Island, various acts, legislation, and agreements support the right to safe work and learning environments.

- *The Prince Edward Island Teachers Memorandum of Agreement*
- *CUPE 3260 Collective Agreement*
- *The PEI Education Act*
- *Safe & Caring Learning Policy (PSB)*
- *Politique milieu scolaire accueillant et sécuritaire (CSLF)*
- *Prince Edward Island Occupational Health & Safety Act*
- *Guidelines for Respecting, Accommodating and Supporting Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexual Orientation in our Schools*

Throughout the review, teachers, administrators, educational support staff, and many stakeholders expressed concerns about the impact of challenging behaviours in classrooms and schools. Below are common concerns expressed by Survey Respondents.

“Behaviours and students without self-regulation seem to be taking up more time and energy from all staff. This often detracts from other’s learning” - System Survey Respondent.

“The classroom needs are getting bigger. Our time is being pulled from academics to controlling behaviours. We don't have the support we need to adequately support our students with the biggest needs, and we are grasping at straws trying to get materials appropriate for our students with special programming needs. “ - System Survey Respondent

“The growing needs (environmental, physical, mental) along with large class sizes, is making it extremely difficult for classroom teachers to meet all the needs and curriculum demands. It is also taking a huge toll on the mental health of teachers. Many passionate, dedicated teachers are nearing burnout too early in their careers.”- System Survey Respondent

When asked to identify the most pressing concern as it relates to class composition in a System Survey on Inclusive Education, 78.2 % of respondents in the Public Schools Branch (PSB), and 79.7 % in La Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF), identified disruptive student behaviour in schools and classes as their primary concern. Interviewees identified the increase in exceptional needs, mental health, trauma, undiagnosed needs, socioeconomic issues and family environment as significant factors contributing to behaviour. Managing behaviour in schools and

classrooms is crucial to creating a positive, effective, safe learning environment for all teachers, education support staff, and students.

Building Responsive Classroom Interventions and Supports for Inclusion has never been more important. According to independent research, a responsive classroom correlates to better teacher-student interactions, increased academic achievement, and higher-quality instruction. (Responsive Classroom, 2020). However, classroom teachers cannot do this alone and be “experts in everything,” all the while having reduced supports to meet the growing demands. It is essential to equip classroom teachers with the necessary interventions and supports to respond to the diverse learning and behaviour needs within their classrooms.

To support the proposed Continuum of Inclusion, a system of tiered supports using *Collaborative Response* (Hewson & Hewson, 2022) is recommended. *Collaborative Response* focuses on “how to support students by engaging the capacity of the collective school team to identify and respond to student needs in a purposeful, solution-focused manner. It also supports the ongoing building of organizational capacity throughout the school. (Collaborative Response, 2022). Developed by Canadian Educators Kutis and Lorna Hewson, *Collaborative Response* is utilized in several jurisdictions across Canada with accessible materials available in French and English. *Collaborative Response* consists of three foundational components *Collaborative Structures and Processes*, *Data and Evidence*, and *Continuum of Supports*.(Collaborative Response, 2022)

Collaborative Structures and Processes

Forming a collaborative network of teams linked by a systematic process is the heart of *Collaborative Structures and Processes*. The goal is to ensure that all students receive the necessary support, whether that is differentiated support in the classroom or intensive support from outside sources. (Jigsaw Learning, 2023).

Data and Evidence

Collecting and analyzing data helps to identify strengths and challenges and utilize that information to target areas of instruction and to provide information regarding the effectiveness of supports put in place for students. The three main types of assessments used in *Collaborative*

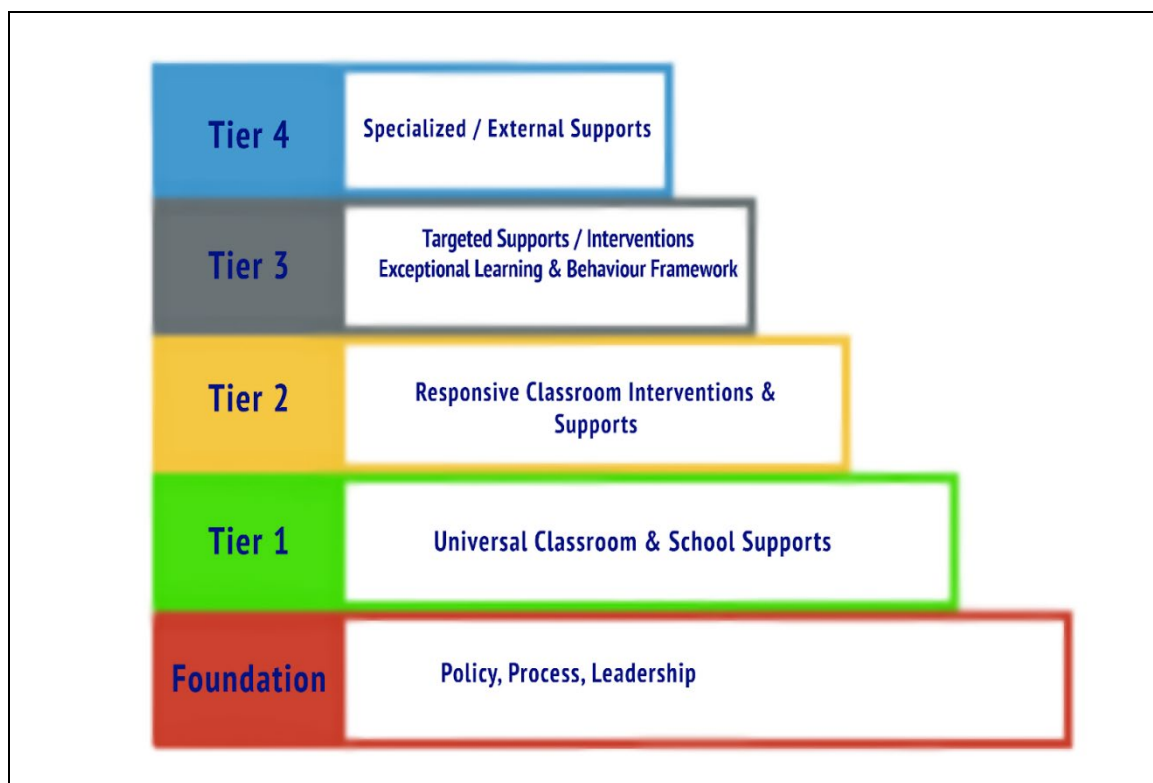
Response are Universal Screens, Diagnostic Assessments, and Progress Monitoring. (Jigsaw Learning, 2023)

Continuum of Supports

The goal of implementing the proposed Continuum of Inclusion recommendations is to establish a *Continuum of Supports*. (Hewson & Hewson, 2022). Creating and utilizing a *Continuum of Supports* will attempt to establish common, consistent research-based practices that will exist in every classroom and school. By establishing a *Continuum of Supports*, schools and systems can ensure *Collaborative Response* to support inclusive practices.

The proposed Continuum of Inclusion recommendations align with four tiers to build a *Continuum of Supports*.

- Tier #1 Universal Classroom & School Supports
- Tier #2 Responsive Classroom Interventions & Supports
- Tier #3 Targeted Interventions & Supports
- Tier #4 Specialised/ External Interventions & Supports.



(see Appendix K for Proposed Collaborative Response)

It is important to highlight that in *Collaborative Response* student support may flow between tiers depending on student needs and as school staff identify and respond to student needs. As a result, it is the supports that are tiered, not the students. (Jigsaw Learning, 2023).

As the proposed Continuum of Inclusion using *Collaborative Response* is developed, human resources such as literacy and numeracy coaches, resource specialists, consultants, and specialised educational personnel will be required. Included in the recommendations provided in this report are two proposed Pilot Programs as part of developing the proposed *Continuum of Supports*. The proposed Classroom Assistant Pilot Program is explained below while the proposed Learning Center Pilot is explained in the Targeted /Supports and Interventions section.

Proposed Classroom Assistant Pilot (Tier #2 Responsive Classroom Interventions & Supports)

There have been significant changes in classroom composition since the last Minister's Directive on Special Education. Reasons for these changes include international, national, legal, and rights-based laws and legislation, socio-economic issues, and population growth. In a recent survey of teachers in the PSB & CSLF, approximately 79% of teachers indicated that disruptive student behaviour was the most significant class composition concern. Many teachers expressed frustration that behaviours of students and diverse needs are taking more time and energy and impacting student learning. Establishing classroom assistants to support students in developing their academic, social, and emotional skills will help teachers provide a more responsive classroom environment and support an optimal learning environment.

Classroom Assistants will be assigned to classrooms. They will work at the classroom teacher's direction to support students in developing their academic, social, and emotional skills in a learning environment that is developmentally responsive to their strengths and needs. Classroom Assistants will **not support** students requiring Educational Assistant Support as identified through the SNAP process. The Classroom Assistant is an “in-class support model” and not a “pull-out of class model.”

(see Appendix L Proposed Classroom Assistant Pilot- Details)

Recommendations to Build Responsive Classroom Interventions and Supports for Inclusion

Resources Required	Recommendations
<p>Programs</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>3.1 Pilot Enhanced Kindergarten Orientation. Enhanced Kindergarten Orientation will provide an opportunity to transition all Kindergarten students into kindergarten gradually. During the first days/weeks, Kindergarten students attend one full day of school in a small group environment. Kindergarten teachers work with a small group of students each day to teach rituals and routines and ensure students are comfortable with their environment. This will allow teachers time to observe students' social, physical, and emotional development.</p> <p>3.2 Establish a Universal Screening program (Literacy, Numeracy & Developmental) for the K-9 System to support teachers in monitoring the process of all Learners.</p> <p>3.3 PSB/CSFL Student Services adopt <i>Collaborative Response</i> (K-12) as a structure to support student learning as part of the Continuum of Inclusion. <i>Collaborative Response</i> is a school-wide framework that places inclusion at the core and ensures a collaborative response concerning the individual needs of students.</p>
<p>Process</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>3.4 Include the principles of Universal Design for Learning in all curriculum, assessment, and instruction.</p> <p>3.5 French Programs review the Science of Reading research and align curriculum, assessment and instruction.</p> <p>3.6 The Inclusive Education Working Group reviews Academic Learning plans to determine if they are meeting the intended purpose of supporting and documenting learning and interventions for students who are working on foundational learnings that are primarily below grade level and make necessary changes.</p> <p>3.7 English Programs continue to implement and expand current initiatives such as Foundations and Curriculum amendments to align with the Science of Reading.</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>3.8 Collaborate with the Education Authorities and CUPE</p>

3260 to develop a model and a plan to establish a Classroom Assistant pilot project. Classroom Assistants would be current CUPE 3260 employees and would support teachers in building a responsive classroom. Classroom Assistants would be assigned to classrooms. They would work at the direction of the classroom teacher to support students in developing their academic, social, and emotional skills in a learning environment developmentally responsive to their strengths and needs. Classroom Assistant would **not support** students requiring Educational Assistant Support as identified through SNAP process. The Classroom Assistant would be a classroom “in-class support model” and not a “pull-out of class model”.

3.9 Establish a system-wide data system to support the monitoring of progress of all students as part of the Continuum of Inclusion. Collaboration with the Department, PSB, CFSL, and Powerschool team will be critical in selecting the appropriate system (Powerschool MTSS Unified Insights Platform or Collaborative Response - WECollab).

3.10 Make adjustments to the Foundations Funding Formula to align the percentage of the number of students not meeting 80% to provide Tier #2 Intervention.

Implementing Targeted Interventions and Supports for Inclusion (Exceptional Learning & Behaviour Framework)

Objective-

To implement evidence-based targeted interventions and develop an Exceptional Learning & Behaviour Framework of supports for children & youth who require interventions in & beyond the classroom. This may include one-to-one /small-group interventions in a learning environment that is developmentally responsive to their strengths and needs.

Rationale:

Exceptional learning and behavioural needs span various individual differences in learning and behaviour. The reasons for these differences are varied and may include social, cultural, emotional, cognitive, and environmental conditions. Learning and behavioural needs must be acknowledged and accommodated to establish inclusive and productive learning environments. A predominant comment heard was:

“The current Inclusive Education Model “is not working, the learning & behaviour needs are too diverse, and more resources are required.”- System Survey Respondent

The need to implement targeted interventions and build a continuum of supports for children & youth who require interventions and support within or beyond the classroom is critical to

successfully implementing The Continuum of Inclusion. The following key components were identified and require further attention as part of an Exceptional Learning & Behaviour Framework.

Exceptional Learning and Behaviour Framework - Additional Components

Kindergarten

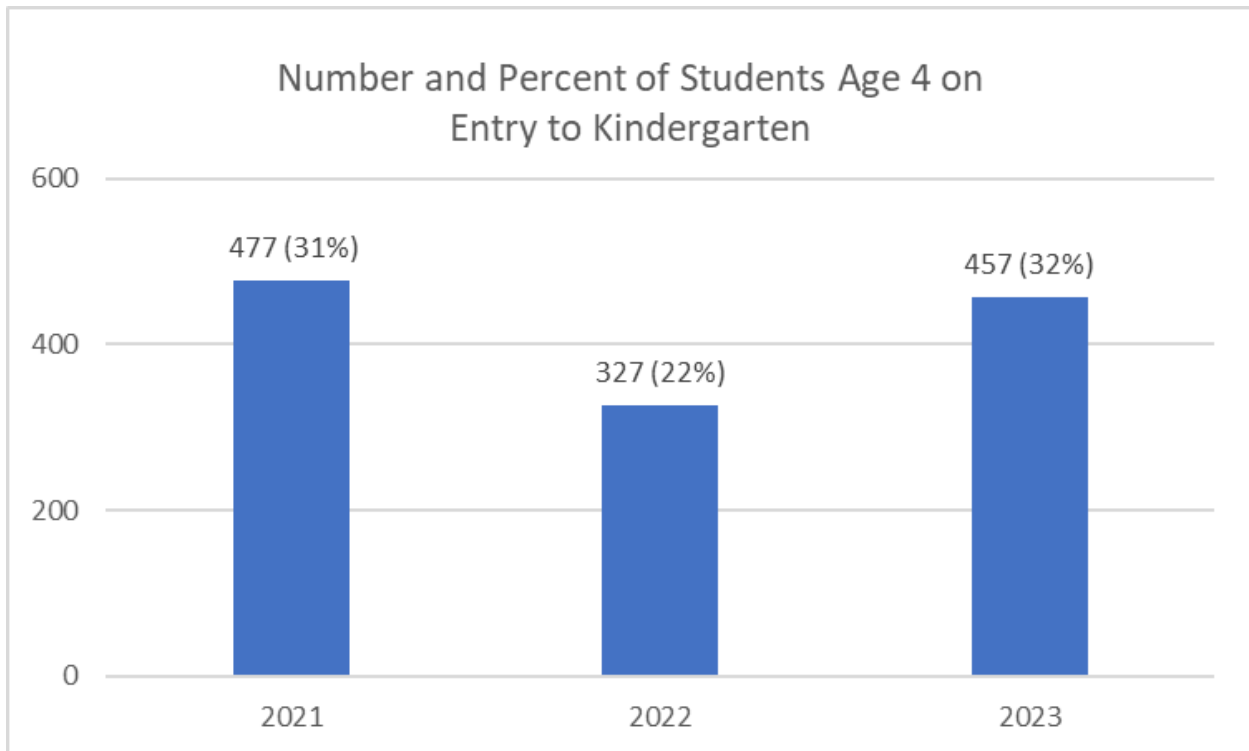
In 2010, the PEI Government implemented a full-day universally funded kindergarten program into the public education system. The current Kindergarten program follows an Integrated Framework that recognizes that children are individuals and that every child is unique. The program emphasizes teaching and learning through play using an integrated teaching methodology. This approach accommodates a broad range of children's needs, learning rates, and styles, facilitating continuous learning. This includes a variety of instructional models, strategies, and resources. (Kindergarten Integrated Curriculum Document, 2008)

A review of Kindergarten Case Conference information from (PSB & CSLF) and anecdotal reporting from schools indicates many Kindergarten students entering kindergarten are lacking the necessary readiness skills, despite PEI having one of the highest rates of participation in early years programs, The 2020 Early Childhood Education Report indicates a participation rate of 75%. During the Kindergarten Case Conference process, approximately 81 students entering Kindergarten in 2023-2024 were identified as either not toilet trained or needing significant adult assistance for toileting. Social and play skills, such as participating in small group activities, and getting along with others, were also highlighted.

School readiness is a broad concept that encompasses several domains, including social-emotional, cognitive, language, literacy, and physical development, translated into social competence emotional maturity, general knowledge, cognition, enthusiasm and curiosity to learn. As a result, in addition to the child's own characteristics, family context, and the school environment are critical for the teaching-learning process, resulting in a number of factors that can influence and interfere with a child's school readiness. (Williams, Lerner 2019)

The age of entry to school is often a discussion that occurs when discussing kindergarten readiness skills. "Given that within a 12-month year, older children tend to show more advanced

developmental skills than younger children. Changes in the age of entry can have effects on the percentages of children who meet certain academic or skills standards.”⁷ The chart below shows the number and percentage of students who were 4 years old entering Kindergarten on PEI between 2021-2023.



(Source: Kindergarten Enrollment Figures, Department of Education & Early Years, 2021-2023)

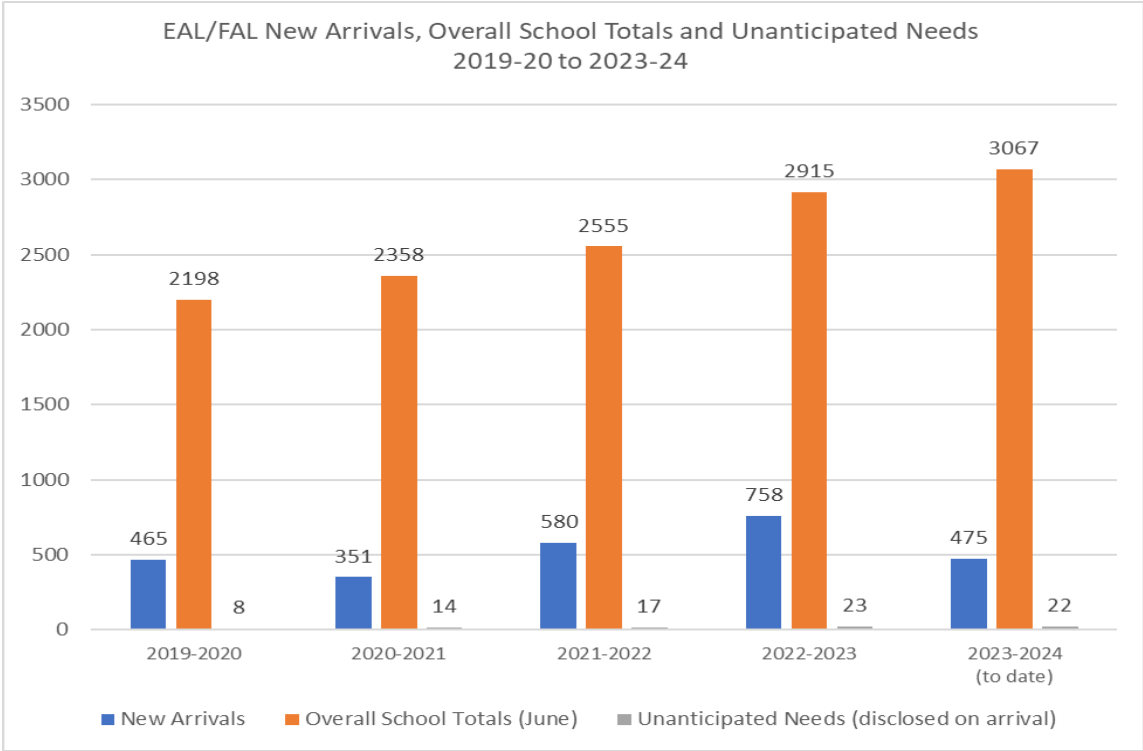
The importance of early childhood education for later academic success has been well documented and research indicating the long-term, reduced need for special educational services is clear. (X. Fan, S Linder et al , 2021). It is important that a collaborative framework with, PEI Public Health, the Early Childhood Development Association, and the Department of Education & Early Years be established. By working towards a Continuum of Inclusion from Early Years to the K-12, a complementary approach to inclusion would support and provide familiarity for parents as their child transitions from early years to the K-12 System.

⁷ NICHD Early Child Care Research Network. (2007). Age of entry to kindergarten and children’s academic achievement and Socioemotional Development. *Early Education and Development*, 18(2), 337–368. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409280701283460>

Kindergarten has been part of the public school system for the past thirteen years and during that time there have been significant changes in the behavioural, social-emotional, and learning needs of children (Haslip, Gullo, 2017). The landscape of early childhood education is changing and establishing a collaborative framework to review various aspects of the kindergarten program has been identified in several recommendations throughout this review.

English as an Additional Language/ French Additional Language

Over the last few years, Prince Edward Island has seen immense population growth due to immigration. As PEI continues to experience population growth from other parts of Canada and the world, our Island schools strive to respond with a deeper understanding of immigration, globalization, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Rapid population growth brings new and cultural diversities, and it also brings new challenges to our Island schools and classrooms. The following chart indicates the overall school population growth due to EAL/FAL arrivals for the last five years.



(Source: EAL/FAL Programs and Services Public Schools Branch, 2023)

Growing the population will increase student needs, thus creating pressure in schools and classrooms. While there are many benefits to increasing the population, there are also unintended consequences. The population is growing without enough educational infrastructure to support diverse student needs. The education system is stretched and will require more resources to support EAL/ FAL Learners, especially if the projected PEI population growth of 200,000 becomes a reality.

Resource Model

The Resource Model used throughout the system is broad and diverse. Resource Programs in both English and French Immersion focus on three key areas: Consultation, Assessment, and Direct Service. Resource teachers support students, teachers, and education support staff, and duties often include the following:

- Assessment
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Development. Transition Action Plans (TAP)
- Managing Referrals
- Collaboration, Communication, and Coordination with staff, parents, and outside agencies
- Monitoring Progress of students
- Behaviour Support (De-escalation Plans, Behaviour Support Plans)
- Transition Planning
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Student Services Meetings
- Observation of students
- Adaptation Sheets
- Red File Review/Learning Profile Sheets
- Resource Credit (High School)
- Case Conferences
- Powerschool Updates
- Intervention Implementation, Tracking and Assessment

In 2018, the PEI Government supported an initiative to increase access to School Psychology Services in Island Schools. This initiative aimed to increase access to assessment services and reduce the School Psychology assessment waitlist. Currently, the waitlist times for assessment in the Public Schools Branch are 1 to 1.5 years. In La Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF), School Psychology services are contracted privately due to difficulty finding a qualified French-speaking psychologist to complete assessments. As a result, many assessments are

conducted annually in CSLF. The results of psychology assessments completed often require follow-up, and frequently, there are recommendations for specific targeted/ intensive interventions. Targeted interventions are for students or groups requiring more intensive support. Students can receive targeted assessments with and without formal diagnosis; however, once a student is identified as requiring specific interventions, accommodations, and specialised services, students are entitled to receive recommended intervention. In 2012 The Supreme Court of Canada, in Moore v. British Columbia (Education), 2012 SCC 61 (CanLII), affirmed the legal rights of students with learning disabilities to receive an education that allows them to develop their full potential. The Supreme Court of Canada validated the position for: “the right of all students with learning disabilities to adequate special education programs and services, including intensive, evidence-based interventions for those who need them.”⁸

An increase in School Psychology Assessments, private assessments, and academic disruptions due to COVID-19 has resulted in students requiring more targeted and intensive interventions. This, coupled with an increased number of students presenting with behavioural challenges, students requiring Individualized Education Plans, and the variety of roles and responsibilities previously listed, has resulted in considerable stress and strain on the Resource Teachers' workload, and a negative impact on the overall effectiveness of the current Resource Model. The response to this has been administrators where possible trying to create positions from their staffing allotment to support various resource programs; thus, causing a patchwork of supports and services across the province.

In the current MINISTER'S DIRECTIVE NO. MD 2022-01 Education Authority Staffing and Funding Program for the 2022-2023 Section 3.5 outlines the following:

Special Education / Resource Instructional staff for special education and/or resource shall be allocated to Education Authorities as follows:

- To address core (high) needs Incidence rate of 7.0% of enrollment.1 instructional position shall be assigned to Education Authorities for every 14 students as determined by the incidence rate.

⁸ Philpott, D.F. & Fiedorowicz, C.A.M. (2012) The Supreme Court of Canada Ruling on Learning Disabilities Learning Disabilities Association of Canada.

- To address general (lower) needs 1 instructional position shall be assigned to Education Authorities for every 500 students. This category shall include such consultant and coordinator positions as are approved by the Minister, including the applicable allowances under section 6(1)(c).⁹

Many Stakeholders identified the need to review the current staffing model overall, particularly section 3(5). After relevant stakeholder interviews and reviewing several documents, including Gar Andrew Staffing Reports, PSB & CSLF Budget Letters, and Department of Education documents, there appears to be no established definition of what constitutes a core high need or general lower need, nor is there an established process to review the incidence rate to determine if the established percentage rate is reflective of the current trend. While many stakeholders reported increased Special Education Resource Teacher Staffing, it is also difficult to determine the implementation of the funding formula. The Department of Education & Early Years determines staffing distribution to the Education Authority, who determines distribution to schools; administrators determine within-school distribution.

Across many jurisdictions, various Special Education /Resource Teacher Staffing models exist. One exemplar model proposed is Special Educator School Density (Giangreco et al, 2015) This model is based on elementary schools using a Multi-Tiered System of Support Framework. It considers the ratio of full-time Equivalent Special Education Teachers to total school enrollment. The study identified this variable as highly correlated with the percentage of students identified with disabilities, individual special educator caseload size, and self-efficacy ratings of special educators (Giangreco, Suter & Hurley). The study found a significant relationship between special educator school density ratio and special educator absence. In schools with a low special educator density ratio of 1:72 (one special educator FTE for every 72 students in the school), special educators were absent for 10.4 days. As the special educator school density rose to a ratio of 1.110 (one special educator FTE for every 110 students in the school), the special educators were absent on an average of 20.3 days per year. The study emphasizes the potential for understanding how special educator school density may be related to other aspects of consistent

⁹Minister's directive no. MD 2022-01 Education Authority staffing and ... (n.d.-ab).
https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/md_2022-01_education_authority_staffing_and_funding_program_for_the_2022-2023_school_year.pdf

service delivery, consistent implementation of interventions, and overall job satisfaction (Giangreco et al, 2015). In applying the Special Educator School Density Ratio to schools in the Public Schools Branch, the overall Special Educator School Density ratio was 1:153 (1 special educator FTE for every 153 students in the school), with the Special Educator School Density ratio for Elementary Schools ranging from 1:65 to 1:219. (*see Appendix M Special Education Density Ratio Model*). Throughout this review, Resource Teachers and Teachers strongly articulated the need for more supports. The need to review the current Special Education/Resource Teacher Staffing Model using creative solutions that apply to the local context will be required to implement the proposed Continuum of Inclusion. As part of providing additional Targeted Interventions and Supports a proposed Learning Center Pilot Program is recommended.

Proposed Learning Center Pilot (Tier #3 Targeted Interventions & Supports)

Academic interventions support academic needs beyond general instruction. Students may be pulled out of the general classroom for a specific time. An intervention block typically lasts six to eight weeks. With the increase in students being assessed, the current demand for academic interventions has impacted the ability of Resource Teachers to support programming for students who have Individualized Education Plans or students who are significantly below grade level. Establishing a Learning Center Model will relieve pressures on the current Resource Model, and provide programming support to students who have Individualized Education Plans or to students who are significantly below grade level.

The Learning Center is a classroom that will be established in a school and staffed by a full-time trained Resource Teacher. The Learning Center Teacher will have an understanding and commitment to inclusive education in the delivery of instruction and evaluation of all students within their teaching assignment. Learning Center Teachers will collaborate with teachers, EAs, and parents/ guardians, in the development and implementation of individualized programs or Individualized Education Plans. Students identified for learning center support may access the Learning Center to work on targeted goals as identified in the program planning process. The Learning Center will look different at each school site, depending on student needs. Students may be grouped by instructional need. Some students may require only one grouping each day,

but some may require more. Collaborative Case Planning and scheduling at each school to prioritize students who attend the Learning Center will be necessary.

The Learning Center is not a self-contained classroom and does not replace the regular classroom for a student.

With the appropriate support provided within a Responsive classroom, students' academic, social, and emotional needs are identified at the classroom level. This allows for earlier intervention, increased academic success, and improved student outcomes. The following recommendations identify the necessary programs, processes, and resources to support the building of Responsive Classrooms Interventions and Supports for Inclusion.

(see Appendix N Proposed Learning Center Pilot- Details)

French Immersion Resource Support

A French Immersion Inclusive Education Consultant is assigned to the Public Schools Branch to support the French Immersion Resource Model. The role of this consultant is as follows:

- Research evidenced-based French immersion resource interventions to support students with differing needs.
- Provide assistive technology support.
- Provide consulting services to schools for children experiencing academic and/or behavioral challenges.

The French Immersion Inclusive Education Consultant also works collaboratively with the Department of Education & Early Years French Programs and Services on numerous initiatives for Student Success Strategy in French Immersion: This initiative supports principals, resource/special education teachers, and classroom teachers providing services to French Immersion students needing additional academic support. It enables the provision of programs, the evaluation of materials and resources, and the development of formal and informal assessments of students in French Immersion. (Focus on primary grades)

The Funding for the Student Success Strategy in French Immersion and the position of a French Immersion Inclusive Education Consultant is supported through Federal government funding. This funding ends in June 2024. The need for ongoing funding support for the Student Success Strategy in French Immersion and establishing a permanent French Immersion Inclusive Education Consultant position at the Public Schools Branch is recommended.

Individualized Education Program and Planning

In 2005, the PEI Department of Education Student Services Division released *Individualized Educational Planning (IEP) Standards and Guidelines*. The purpose of this handbook was to provide educators, parents, and other related Professionals with a process to follow when identifying students for an Individualized Educational Plan. In PEI, an IEP is initiated for a student whose program varies significantly from the prescribed curriculum. Recent research indicates that the expectations for IEPs are changing from the historically deficit-based model focusing on what a student could not do to a strength-based competency-based model. This model involves strength-based planning, identifying, and working on core competencies, and putting the student at the center, and actively engaged in the process (Moore, 2021). Supporting students to be part of the development of the IEP process builds their skills toward independence and self-advocacy and helps them take ownership of their learning. As one student stated:

“Teachers and Education Support Staff often accommodate and see things from their perspective. It would be good if they could be aware of the student's perspective.” - Student

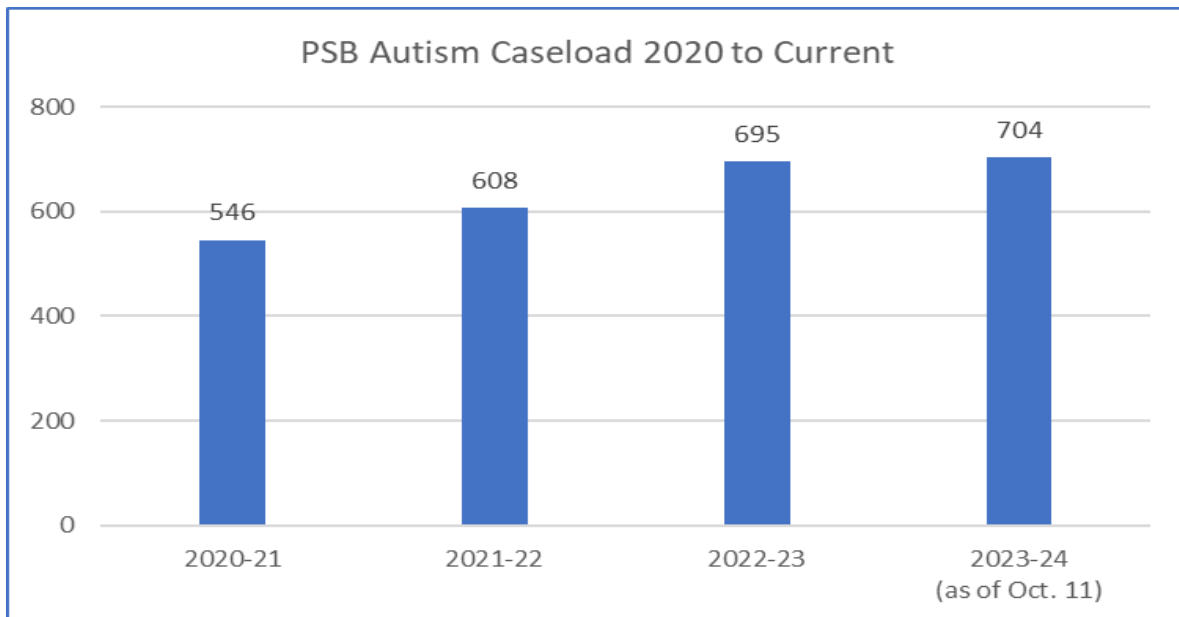
Adopting a Competency-Based IEP model and providing programming support for students on IEPs, and the teachers and education support staff who support them, will significantly enhance the long-term outcomes for students requiring IEPs

Autism Services

Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition that impacts individuals across the lifespan; currently, approximately 1 in every 50 Canadian children and adolescents are diagnosed with autism. (Autism in Canada, 2022) Prince Edward Island is Canada's only province with an *Autism Coordination Act*. Under the Act, the Autism Coordinating Committee is responsible for developing, coordinating, and planning for the delivery of programs and services for individuals with autism across their lifespan. (Autism Coordination Act, 2018)

School-Aged Autism Services are provided by the Education Authorities to support students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. There are nine Autism Consultants in the Public Schools Branch and one Autism Consultant in the La Commission scolaire de langue française. School-Aged Autism Consultant service is only available to students who have a confirmed diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Autism diagnosis continues to increase across the country and PEI is no exception.

The chart below illustrates the 4-year average trend for Public Schools Branch Autism Caseload.



(Source: Autism Caseload Data (K-12) Public School Branch, 2023)

Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder have a wide range of strengths and weaknesses that require specialised services and the need for evidence-based approaches. As school-aged autism diagnosis continues to increase, and as evidence-based programs and practices continue to evolve, a Provincial Autism Protocol must be established. This protocol should be established in coordination with the Autism Coordination Project Lead and include collaboration from the Department of Education & Early Years Pre-School Autism Program. Coordination will include identifying evidence-based practices, and programs, and determining service delivery requirements for school-aged children & youth diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Transition Planning

Transition is defined as a process of changing from one state or condition to another (Oxford Languages, 2023). It is ongoing and occurs throughout the lifespan. For students with exceptionalities/neurodiverse needs, effective transition planning helps to improve the development of academic and behavioural skills, social-emotional learning, and activities of daily living. Each time a student transitions, whether from Early Years to Kindergarten, grade to grade, school to school, or school to the community, it is important to involve both students and families in the process. This helps foster a greater understanding of the needs and supports

required, promotes student advocacy, supports families, and helps engage in action-orientated planning for the future.

“I would like to have a say in what support and my plan looks like. “You think you know what is best for me. But, it may not be the best way for me to get there.” - Student

Transition planning requires careful and deliberate planning. It prioritizes student agency and addresses potential barriers to a preferred pathway. (Youth Transitions Report, 2021). Currently, a Community Access Facilitator position is shared between the Education Authorities. This position supports schools, students in grades 8-12 and their families with establishing a transition action plan. The Community Access Facilitator helps facilitate the transition from school to community. The need to support schools, students, and families connect with essential outside resources as a student transition from school to post-secondary, employment or community-based options is essential. With the increased needs of schools, students, and families requiring transition support the current Community Access Facilitator position is beyond capacity. Sharing this position between the two Education Authorities is no longer feasible, therefore a dedicated Community Access Facilitator allocated to CSLF to support schools, students, and their families with Transition Planning is recommended.

Various transition processes are used by the Education Authorities to support transition planning for students with exceptionalities/neurodiverse needs (K-12). In early 2000, the Department of Education released the following Transition Frameworks:

Elementary Transition Planning: A Framework For Successful Transition Planning for Young People with Special Needs (2003)

Secondary Transition Planning: A Framework for Successful Transition Planning for Young People with Special Needs (2007)

There are components of these frameworks still being used to support Transition Planning however there is a need for these Frameworks to be reviewed and updated. As a result a new standardized, student-centered Transition Planning Process should be established for those identified with exceptionalities/ neurodiverse needs from:

- Early Years to Kindergarten
- School to School
- School to Community

In addition to the above, a transition process should be established for those returning from home-schooling or students who have no recent documentation.

Data Collection - PowerSchool Special Programs

PowerSchool Special Programs is a module that integrates into PowerSchool Admin and PowerSchool Teacher Pro and enables data collection pertaining to a student's academic and behavioural profile. Within PowerSchool Special Programs, PEI schools can document a student's diagnosis relevant to their educational needs and document any services the student is receiving to support their educational needs. In addition to the documentation of pertinent academic and behavioural data, Special Programs enables the completion of required Student Services forms that aid in the implementation of critical support strategies to ensure a student is successful. The ability to collaborate on and share these documents amongst all the staff involved in a student's academic experience is made much easier with PowerSchool Special Programs. The program's security features enable all the necessary staff to access pertinent documents and data about students with whom they are involved. This digital information facilitates access for school staff and ensures a higher level of confidentiality than traditional paper documentation. Over time, the ability to document this information in PowerSchool Special Programs will create a more complete profile of a student's needs and the response schools have implemented to support the student. It also ensures that pertinent information will follow a student as they move through the PEI School System and facilitates immediate access to this information by those who need it. PowerSchool Special Programs has significant potential, and the opportunity to expand its use needs to be a priority.

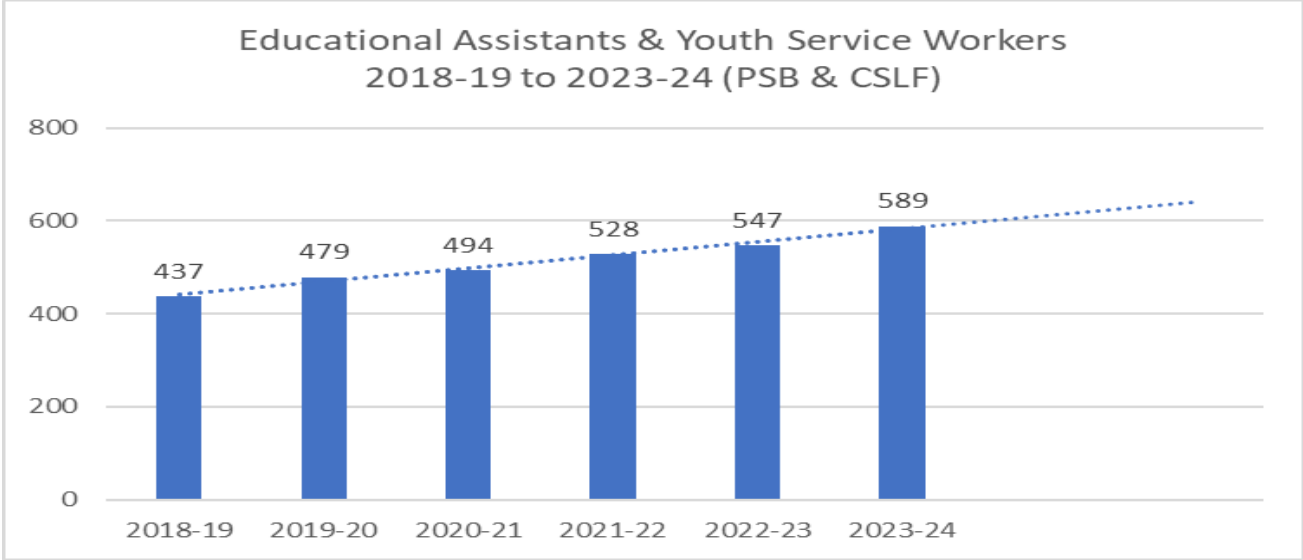
Student Needs Assessment Process (SNAP)

Educational Support Staff (*Educational Assistants, Youth Service Workers, Student Attendants, Workplace Assistants, and School Mental Health Workers*) provide valuable service in supporting learners with diverse learning and behaviour needs. These individuals work under the direction of the designated school staff (certified teachers, school principals, and school counsellors) to support student needs as identified through the Student Needs Assessment Process (SNAP). The annual SNAP process used by the Education Authorities is an extensive process that involves the gathering of information on Student Needs from Early Years Centers for incoming Kindergarten Students to all schools in the Public Schools Branch & La Commission scolaire de langue française. This process begins in January and continues through

to May. It is a labour-intensive process and requires the attention of several Board-Based Student Services Consultants and Management. Schools provide information in the SNAP process. This information is reviewed, and the nature and severity of student needs in all schools are carefully considered. The information contributes to the decision regarding the amount of Educational Support Staff allocated to each school. Once an overall number is provided to the school to address student needs, school administrators have the flexibility to adjust support depending on the changing needs of students in their buildings. However, given the current challenges, this is increasingly difficult. School administrators are encouraged to vary the levels of support provided as needs dictate.

The task of allocating support to schools and making decisions about which students will and will not be identified as requiring support is arduous. While there have been many attempts to improve the SNAP process, the overall process has remained relatively the same since it was established by the former Western and Eastern School Districts. Given the vast, complex and diverse needs in the school system, this process and model is unsustainable.

The chart below demonstrates the increase in EAs and YSWs from 2018-19 to 2023-24 (PSB & CSLF combined)



(Source: Department of Education & Early Years - Base Budget FTE Increases PSB/CSLF, 2023)

*** An additional 50 EA and YSW positions were added in September 2023.**

The percentage of EAs and YSWs increased by 25.6% from 2018-19 to 2023-24. If the rate of increase continues at the current rate, 75 additional EAs and YSWs would have to be added over the next 2 years.

The challenge of increasing demands for Educational Support Staff to support diverse learning needs is common in many jurisdictions both internationally and nationally. Many staffing models are being ‘tinkered with’ using twin, differential, block and ratio funding. Despite this tinkering the reality remains a “unified, systematic, inclusive education service delivery model with good policy that is well-designed and appropriately resourced is the only way to address the longstanding challenge to the education of students in inclusive schools and classrooms.”¹⁰

(see Appendix O Increase in EAs in YSWs 2018-19 to 2023-24)

The following recommendations support the development of Targeted Interventions and Supports for Inclusion and the development of an Exceptional Learning and Behavior Framework.

Recommendations to Implement Targeted Interventions and Supports for Inclusion

(Exceptional Learning & Behaviour Framework)

Programs	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>4.1 Establish an expanded classification system for Educational Assistant Positions to be more responsive to the diverse and complex needs in the system. This would include a mechanism for recognition of additional education and training to encourage specialized trained and skilled support staff.</p> <p>4.2 Provide the necessary funding to the PSB & CSLF to Develop the ‘Special Programs data tracking system Within Powerschool to access and track Students Services data such as (the number of students on EPs, Accommodations, Critical Incident Form, Referrals and manage student services caseload, etc.)</p> <p>4.3 Pilot a Learning Center Model to provide targeted support/instruction to students with Individualized Education programming and students significantly below grade level.</p>
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¹⁰ Giangreco, M. F., & Suter, J. C. (2015). Precarious or purposeful? proactively building inclusive special education service delivery on solid ground. *Inclusion*, 3(3), 112–131. <https://doi.org/10.1352/2326-6988-3.3.112>

	<p>4.4 Provide a permanent FTE French Immersion Inclusive Education Consultant to the Public-School Branch. To support Student Success Strategy in French Immersion.</p> <p>4.5 Provide an FTE Community Access Facilitator to the CSLF to support Transition Planning for students with exceptionalities/ Neurodiverse needs.</p> <p>English Additional Language & French Additional Language (EAL/FAL)</p> <p>4.6 Establish an EAL Teaching and Learning Center to support families, students, and educators.</p> <p>4.7 Allocate FTE to support EAL services with specialized support (Inclusive Education, Counseling, & Autism Spectrum Disorder). These services would provide initial support for assessment, program planning, and transition support for EAL students. After some time, the students would transition to Student Services Support if necessary.</p> <p>4.8 Provide 1.0 FTE Itinerant EAL Teacher to support FAL students in CSLF who require English Language Support. Currently, there are approximately 40 students across the province who would require this support.</p>
<p>Policy & Process</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>4.9 Develop a Transition to Kindergarten Readiness Program in schools with large kindergarten populations. This would support kindergarten students who require readiness skills to practice these skills to be successful. The Kindergarten readiness program would not be a self-contained classroom model but a skills-based development model.</p> <p>English Additional Language & French Additional Language (EAL/FAL)</p> <p>4.10 EAL/FAL Division and the Department of Education & Early Years continue the implementation of STEPP (School Transition EAL Pilot Program).</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>4.11 Update the Standards and Guidelines for IEPs and adopt a Competency-Based Model of Individualized Education Planning for all students requiring IEPs.</p> <p>4.12 Collaborate with the Education Authorities, the Department of Health, and the Autism Coordination Act Lead to establish a Provincial Autism Protocol to guide and support service delivery for school-aged children & youth diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This would include establishing a Provincial Autism Monitoring System to track diagnosis from early years into school and school to community to determine service requirements.</p>

4.13 Partner with Public Health to educate parents/caregivers at 4-year Public Health assessment about the readiness skills required for kindergarten.

4.14 The Department of Education & Early Years Inclusive Education Standing Working Group review and update the following:

- *Behavioral Resource Teacher Model*
- *Behavioral Support Planning*
- *Guidelines for Resource Teachers*
- *Resource Model*
- *School Counselling Guidelines*

Part of this work would include clarifying Roles and Responsibilities.

The Education Authorities of PSB & CSLF

4.15 Align the Student Services Delivery model with the Continuum of Inclusion. Prioritization of Student Services Service Delivery will be for those who require support from *Tier #3 Exceptional Learning & Behavior Framework* or *Tier #4 Enhanced Specialized/External Supports on the Continuum*. While these are the prioritized areas for Student Services Service Delivery, it is essential to engage in Collaborative Practice when possible, to support the full implementation of the Continuum of Inclusion.

Providing Enhanced Specialised and External Supports for Inclusion

Objective-

To provide enhanced specialised and external supports through collaborative partnerships to support children & youth requiring the most intensive services and supports.

Rationale

Many stakeholders expressed significant concerns about an increase in students who require ‘intensive support’ beyond the school system's scope. Complex behaviours, mental health, and medical needs were identified along with the need for more specialised and external support. Currently, there are various specialised services and external supports available for children & youth.

Student Well-Being Teams

Student Well-Being Teams (SWBT) are comprised of Outreach Workers, Registered Nurses, Social Workers, and Family Support Workers (Bluefield and Montague Family of Schools

only). The student well-being team's mandate is to support school-aged students' and families' mental health and well-being. Data indicates that in 2022-2023 there were 1,024 new student referrals for Student Well Being Team Services. (see Appendix P SWBT Infographic) Student Well Being teams offer a wide range of services and recently have focused on increasing their service by reaching more students through group work and presentations. Drop-in clinics are provided in some families of schools with 1:1 service provided in all families of schools. Student Well-Being Teams focus on prevention and early intervention to help support children and youth and their families.

For students requiring crisis support, brief interventions can be provided. However, children- & youth presenting with more complex behaviors and complex mental health needs requiring more specialized and external support are referred to Community Mental Health Services. Often the wait list for Community Mental Health services is lengthy.

The purpose of the Inclusive Education Review was not to review Student Well Being Teams; however, it is important to note their role in supporting schools, students, and families. Also, it is important to note that at the time of this review, there are hard-to-fill SWBT vacant positions in some families of schools. In addition, staff retention appears to be an ongoing issue in some families of schools, impacting the current SWBT Service Delivery.

Insight & Strength Programs

The Insight and Strength Programs were identified as programs available to support youth. However, several stakeholders identified lengthy wait times to access these programs and the geographical location of the programs as a barrier for potential program participants and their families.

- The Insight Program is a youth mental health day treatment program that is delivered by a team of health and education professionals who work with youth aged 13-18, their families, and schools to reduce the day-to-day impact of mental health problems or illnesses on their lives. (Insight Program, 2023)
- Strength Program offers a range of programming (residential and day treatment) and supports for youth 15-24 years of age who require more intensive support for substance misuse and mental health issues. (Strength Program, 2023)

Bridge Program

The Prince Edward Island Bridge model brings service providers together to provide programs and support to Islanders who are in imminent danger of harm. The service providers are drawn from a variety of government and non-government organizations. They gather around a Situation Table to brainstorm ways to assist individuals or families who are in danger. This could include homelessness, mental health problems, violence, or abuse.

The Situation Table group employs a Filter Four Process to determine whether there is a very high risk of harm. In the event of an emergency, the group will organize a response within 24 to 48hrs. The fourth step of the process involves either a “door-knock” visit to the home of those at risk or finding another direct way to offer assistance (PEI Bridge Program, 2023).

Representatives from the Education Authorities participate in the PEI Bridge Model. Bridge Secretariat Statistics indicate that for the period of January 2023 to February 2023 the majority of referrals to Bridge were from Education, Public Health, and the RCMP. The only other agency that had the greater number of referrals was Probation Services. While Education referrals would vary depending on the month and need it is important to note that Education has an active role in Bridge and the continued need for this program to support youth, children, and families who are in immediate danger or harm. *(see Appendix Q Bridge Secretariat Update, March 2023)*

Student Well-Being Teams. Insight, Strength, and the PEI Bridge programs are valuable and essential in supporting communities, schools, families, children, and youth. These supports all provide or connect families with programs, services, and supports. Some of these programs have staffing challenges that are impacting service delivery. The demand for these programs and services is high and many have wait times for services and support.

The following key components have been identified and require further attention as part of Enhanced Specialised & Supports for Inclusion.

Alternative Education Programs

Alternative Education programs were established in the 1990s in response to a shift toward educational inclusion of students with challenging behaviour. In the mid to late 1990 reports indicate there were 4 Alternative Education sites. The primary goal of Alternative Education in PEI at that time was to allow students who had dropped out to return to the school system and graduate or develop skills to find meaningful employment.(Thorne C, 2017). Currently, there are 13 Alternative Education Sites and an Online Virtual Alternative Education Program in the PSB. These alternative education programs are available to students from K-12 throughout the Public Schools Branch.

The PSB 2023-2024 Student Services Handbook describes alternative education as an “option for students who are not meeting success in the regular school setting.”¹¹ The staffing model for these Alternative Education Programs is specific to the needs of students. Often students attending these programs have complex behavioural challenges as well as significant gaps in learning. These students often require specialised support. The growth of these programs in an inclusionary model reflects the demands and challenges within the system. As a result of the increased demands and continued growth for alternative education programs, and the need to determine appropriate wrap-around supports required, a review of PSB K-12 Alternative Education programs is recommended.

Child & Youth Intensive Case Management Team - Complex Needs

The Department of Health in PEI defines children with complex needs as children and youth up to 18 years old (and their families). Children with complex needs have or are at risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioural, or emotional conditions. Multiple services are required to address these interrelated needs, which have a functional impact beyond that experienced by children generally. (Children with Complex Needs Survey, 2023)

To qualify as children with complex needs, the following two criteria must be met:

1. Children experience a functional limitation due to a physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional condition, and the condition has lasted or is expected to last for at least 12 months **and**;

¹¹ PSB Student Services Handbook 2023-2024

2. Children have at least two of the three health consequences due to a physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition, and the condition has lasted or is expected to last for at least 12 months. - (Children with Complex Needs Survey 2023)

A recent *Children with Complex Needs Survey* on PEI identified that 5173 children and youth are considered at risk for complex needs with 17.3% meeting the definition of complex needs. Multiple services are often required to meet the needs of children & youth with complex needs, which includes extra educational support. (Children with Complex Needs Survey, 2023)

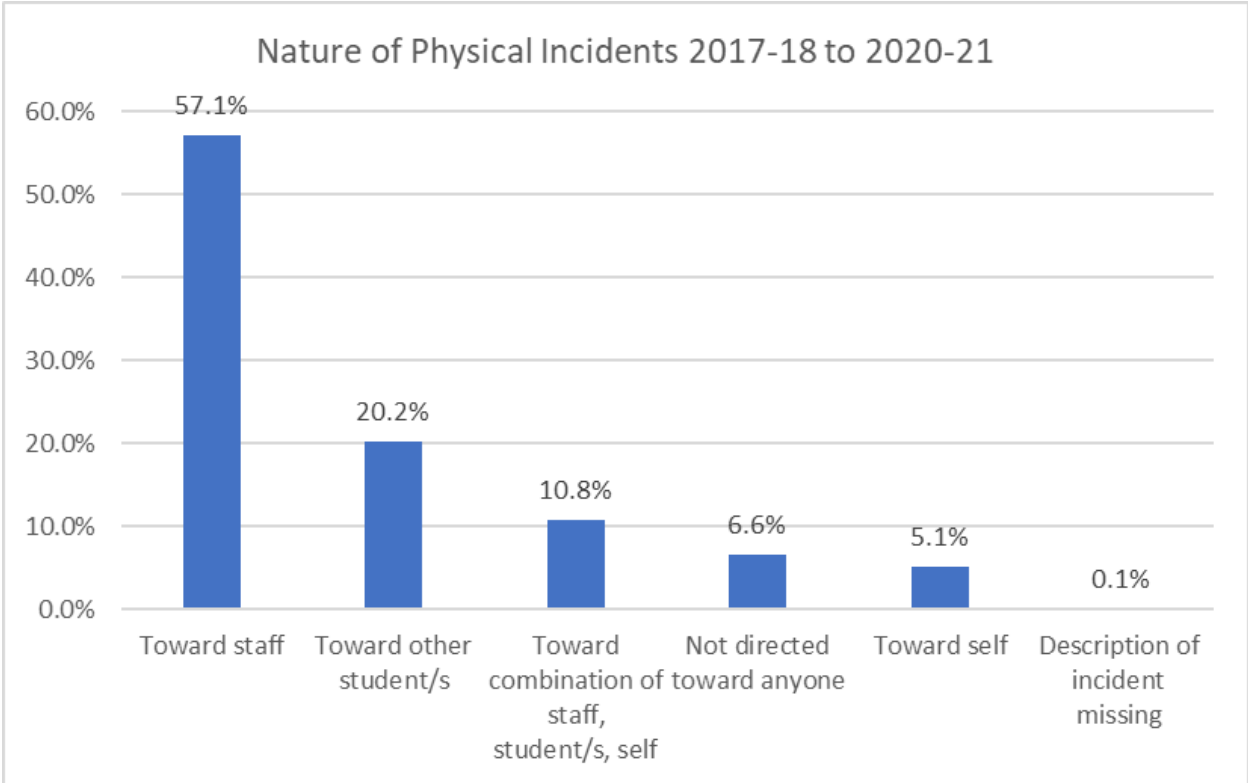
Schools, Teachers, and Educational Support Staff often require additional training, guidance, consultation, and support for children & youth with these particular needs. Accessing and navigating this support can be challenging. Several stakeholders expressed frustration regarding the lack of coordination, including information-sharing barriers and confusion with complicated referral processes and waitlists. Lack of follow-up, communication, and direction were also identified as concerns. Case Management is often recommended for children & youth with complex needs typically necessitating multiple interventions, which then must be provided in a coordinated organized way. This involves a case management team. (Burns Eric et al, 2014).

The need for further collaboration and coordination with The Children with Complex Needs Advisory Committee through the Department of Health, and the establishment of Child & Youth Intensive Case Management Team- Complex Needs is necessary to support the increased numbers of children & youth with complex needs currently in the PEI school system.

Threat Assessment

Across many jurisdictions Teacher Unions, Administrators, Teachers, Educational Support Staff and Parents are expressing concern about children and youth engaging in dangerous, violent high-risk behaviors. Throughout the review, teachers, administrators, educational support staff, and many stakeholders expressed fear and concerns about the increase in challenging behaviors and violence in schools.

A recent study in Nova Scotia reported that 92% of teachers had witnessed violence at school, while 53% had been victims of violent acts or threats at work.”¹² A summary of Physical Incidents documented in the PSB between 2017-2018 and 2021-2022 indicates that 57.1% of physical incidents were directed towards staff. A significant portion of these incidents were directed toward CUPE 3260 staff (Educational Assistants, Youth Workers, etc.)



(Source Physical Incident Report Data PSB, 2017-2021)

(see Appendix R Physical Incident Summary 2017-18 to 2021-22- Detailed)

When potentially dangerous, violent, high -risk or threatening behaviour occurs, The Education Authorities currently use a Threat Assessment process to assess risk and create an Intervention Plan to support the student and school. While this is a collaborative process with schools and families, the role of outside agencies and supports is not clearly defined. Frequently, these external supports would only be present if they were involved with the child or consulted. Even

¹² Teachers across Canada are reporting a rise in student violence ... (n.d.-ap). <https://nationalpost.com/news/teachers-across-canada-are-reporting-a-rise-in-student-violence-and-harassment> Teachers across Canada are reporting a rise in student violence and harassment,

so, communication and follow-up can cause potential gaps increasing risk. This often leaves the sole responsibility for assessing and managing risk to Student Services Staff and Schools.

“Trying to assess and manage risk is a precarious pocket to sit in, It is the one thing that keeps me up at night.” - Stakeholder Interview

Evidence suggests that warning signs are usually visible before a student commits an act of violence at school. According to research and best practice guidelines, a collaborative multidisciplinary approach to threat assessment and management can identify effective interventions and supports, mitigate a potential threat, and assist the person in moving toward a more positive path. (National Association of School Psychologists- NASP, 2021).

For more than two decades, the Center for Trauma-Informed Practices (CTIP) has collaborated with leaders in government, education, social work, mental health, law enforcement, business, and the community to better prevent, intervene, and respond to violence (CTIP, 2023). Violence Risk Threat Assessment Training (VRTA) has been implemented across many jurisdictions, including New Brunswick, for the past twelve years. Recently, Regional Centers of Education in Nova Scotia have started to train multidisciplinary teams in Level 1 VTRA training as well. This model is a Canadian model with resources readily available in French and English

Threat assessment is most effective when embedded in a comprehensive model that includes interdisciplinary, collaborative partnerships centered on prevention. Establishing a new Threat Assessment process and transitioning to a collaborative multidisciplinary process will assist in identifying students who need additional support before they enter a path to high-risk behaviour or violence. As a result, these individuals, students, schools, and communities will receive better support. (NASP, 2021)

Crises Response

As part of developing an effective Crises Response the Education Authorities have adopted the the PREPaRE curriculum for school crisis prevention and response. (NASP, 2023). This program is an evidence-based program developed by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). PREPaRE training is ideal for schools that want to improve and strengthen their school

safety, crisis management, and emergency trauma response plans. It has proven to be effective in crises response situations that have occurred in PEI schools. The need to continue to support the PREPaRE Model through ongoing training requirements will be required.

The following recommendations support the development of Enhanced Specialised & External Supports for Inclusion.

Recommendations for Enhanced Specialised & External Supports for Inclusion

<p>Programs</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>5.1 The Department of Education & Early Years, in collaboration with Justice and Health, along with the Education Authorities provide training and funding for a cross-departmental comprehensive threat assessment process Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA Model), and the development of a Provincial Protocol.</p> <p>5.2 The Department of Education & Early Years, Health & Justice expand Student Well-being Team Family Support Workers to all Students Well-being Teams.</p>
<p>Process</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>5.3 The PSB and CSLF be supported in ongoing training in the PREPaRE Model for Crises Management.</p> <p>5.4 The Department of Education & Early Years in collaboration with the Department of Health, Justice and Social Development and Seniors and Community Partners provide evidence-based education, promotion, and prevention approaches for youth mental health and substance issues.</p> <p>5.5 The Department of Education & Early Years collaborate with the Department of Health, Justice and Social Development and Seniors to establish specialised training opportunities for Group Homes, Foster Families, and Respite Providers.</p> <p>5.6 Department of Education & Early Years, Education Authorities, the Student Well-being Team, and the Early Childhood Association will collaborate to increase access to parenting programs such as Triple P Parenting Program, Handle with Care, Coping Power Program, and The Incredible Years.</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>5.7 The Department of Education & Early Years as Lead collaborate with the Education Authorities Student Services Division, Departments of Health, Justice and Social Development and Seniors, to establish a Child & Youth Intensive Case Management Team- Complex Needs</p>

for children and youth who require significant extraordinary services and support.

5.8 The Department of Education & Early Years partner with the Department of Health Complex Needs Navigator to identify children & youth with complex medical needs before school entry.

5.9 The Department of Education & Early Years collaborate with the Department of Health and Justice to increase provincial access for children & youth to the Behavior Support Team, Insight and Strength Programs.

Conclusion

The PEI public school system is strongly committed to inclusion, and many resources have been dedicated to supporting students with educational needs. However, class composition and classroom needs have changed. This change is echoed across national and international jurisdictions. As a result, the resources required to support diverse learning needs within classrooms must also be enhanced and changed. Throughout this review, I have been struck by the courage, determination, and frustration of many stakeholders; despite this level of concern, educational stakeholders strive to provide high-quality education in safe and inclusive learning environments. Students and parents expect a great deal from the education system and instill a high degree of trust and hope in educators and education support personnel. Individuals who work in schools are committed to assisting students in growing and learning. Parents who raise their children want to ensure their children's development and well-being. When school is going well, most school personnel and parents do not request additional support. So, when resourceful and dedicated people keep asking for additional supports, that is a good indicator that something is wrong. (Giangreco et al, 2011)

The need for policy, process, and leadership for Inclusive Education in PEI has been an overarching theme throughout this review. The Department of Education & Early Years, Education Authorities, Teachers, Education Support Personnel, Parents, Students, and External Stakeholders must all be involved in developing the proposed Continuum of Inclusion with coordination and collaboration at the heart of its development.

Inclusion does not belong to a single department, board-based team, teacher, educational support person, parent, or student. When we come together to share ideas and listen to each other's thoughts, we build strength through different perspectives and experiences. By respecting each other's differences, we pave the way for the inclusion of all people. Only by working together will we better serve the needs of *ALL* in advancing inclusive education on PEI. The fundamental principles of inclusion are to be present, to participate, to achieve, and to be supported. (UNESCO, 2023)

It is time to be Better Together.

Table Of Recommendations

Resource Required	Recommendations
Policy	<p>In establishing a Continuum of Inclusion, the Department of Education & Early Years will:</p> <p>1.1 Establish a Minister’s Directive on Inclusive Education</p> <p>1.2 Update all documents, policies, regulations, and the Education Act to reflect current Inclusive Language Practices.</p> <p>1.3 Review section 3(5) of the Minister’s Directive MD 2022-01 Education Authority Staffing and Funding Program to determine the most effective model for Staffing Resource Teachers, defining what is considered a “core high need” and what is a “general lower need” and reviewing the current Incidence rate of 7.0% and adjusting it to reflect the current trend.</p> <p>1.4 Review the Home Education Regulation and the PEI Education Act to ensure alignment regarding the date intention to enroll in school.</p> <p>1.5 Establish a responsive staffing model to meet the exceptional needs of students who enroll after the staffing process. Review historical data to determine trends and build funding based on previous metrics. Establish quarterly checkpoints with the Education Authorities to receive information regarding staffing to receive information regarding staffing pressures and needs.</p> <p>1.6 Adopt The Department of Education & Early Year Guidelines for respecting, accommodating, and Supporting gender identity, gender expression, and Sexual orientation as part of the Continuum of Inclusion.</p> <p>1.7 Replace the term adaptation with accommodation per current research and practice.</p> <p>1.8 Implement the School to Work Report recommendations as part of establishing a Responsive High School Transition Pathway.</p> <p>1.9 Review and develop policy and guidelines for the Student Needs Assessment Process (SNAP) used by the PSB & CSLF to determine and allocate CUPE 3260 support.</p> <p>1.10 Along with the Education Authorities, adopt the Department of Health’s definition of Complex Needs as part of the Continuum of Inclusion.</p>

	<p>1.11 Update the Teachers and Support Staff Working Together Standards and Guidelines.</p> <p>1.12 Review the research on the age of entry for kindergarten and revise the Education Act if it is determined a change is warranted.</p> <p>The Certification & Standards Board</p> <p>1.13 Consider additional requirements such as (SEL, UDL, Cultural Competency, and Restorative Practices) to be included in teacher certifications.</p> <p>The Education Negotiating Agency, along with PEITF</p> <p>1.14 Review the PEITF Class Composition Funding Agreement to determine if it meets the intended need and negotiate revision.</p>
<p>Process</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>1.15 In collaboration with the Education Authorities establish a student-centered transition process for those identified with exceptionalities/ neurodiverse needs from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years to Kindergarten • School to School • School to Community <p>In addition to the above, a transition process will be established for; Students returning from homeschooling or with no recent educational documentation.</p> <p>1.16 Collaborate with the Department of Education & Early Years, Early Childhood Authorities to provide access to the Early Years program for PowerSchool Special Programs. This would benefit the capacity of the K-12 system to forecast and track potential incoming Kindergarten needs and identify additional Supports.</p> <p>1.17 Collaborate with the Education Authorities to standardize the Student Needs Assessment Process (SNAP) form and process as soon as possible. This would include schools completing SNAP forms online and establishing a meeting process for school SNAP meetings.</p> <p>1.18 Establish Planning Guidelines for Educational facilities that outlines accessibility specifications with a focus on universal access and barrier-free design.</p>
<p>Leadership</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>1.19 Establish an Inclusive Education Director/Manager position to lead the work in developing the Continuum of Inclusion for (K-12) French & English Services.</p>

	<p>1.20 Establish an Inclusive Education Working group to support the Continuum of Inclusion. The Inclusive Education Working Group would include representation from the Educational Authorities Student Services Division, Department of Education & Early Years, Community stakeholders, Home and Student representation. Adhoc Committee members from PEITF Student Services Committee and Principal Association and representative from CUPE 3260.</p> <p>1.21 Track the implementation of recommendations from the Inclusive Education Review and report annually to Government and broader system on progress.</p> <p>1.22 Review all existing Alternative Education Programs, including Enhanced Learning Placement (ELP), Primary Enhanced Learning Placement, and A+ to determine the effectiveness, best practices, and wrap-around support required for these programs.</p> <p>1.23 Request a review of the roles and responsibilities of PSB & CSLF Student Services Divisions.</p> <p>1.24 Engage in broader consultations and partnerships with community-based agencies (Autism Society, Learning Disability Association, Home and School, PEERS Alliance, Association for Community Living, etc.) regarding the Continuum of Inclusion.</p> <p>1.25 Review Administrator Leadership Program Modules specifically as they apply to Inclusion to establish administrator competencies to support Inclusive Education.</p>
Resource Required	Recommendations
Programs	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>2.1 Continue to develop teacher and staff competencies in social-emotional learning (SEL) and well-being at all levels through professional learning.</p> <p>2.2 English as an Additional Language Division continues providing Professional Development regarding EAL Learners through online training modules.</p> <p>2.3 In collaboration with the SEL Initiative, continue to provide professional learning to develop teacher and Staff competencies in Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction, Trauma Informed Practice, Cultural Competence, and Restorative Practices.</p>

	<p>2.4 Continue to support APSEA Autism in Education Partnership and offer <i>Autism Spectrum Disorder & Behavioral Interventions</i> Online Course for all school personnel in PSB & CSLF.</p> <p>2.5 English Programs continue to support the UPEI Research project on developing Kindergarten Play Continuum and Professional Development modules.</p> <p>2.6 Continue to establish a collaborative partnership with UPEI to offer courses in positive behaviour management and support SEL, UDL Differentiated Instruction, Trauma Informed Care, Mental Health, and Restorative Practice to build teacher capacity across the system.</p> <p>2.7 Collaborate with Holland College on developing a <i>Behavior Assistant Certificate</i>.</p> <p>2.8 Establish Bus Driver training for all new and substitute bus drivers to promote a positive bus climate.</p> <p>2.9 The Department of Education & Early Years Learning established the Inclusive Schools Initiative. The Inclusive Schools Initiative will provide an Annual Inclusive Education Grant up to a maximum of \$1000, depending on the initiative’s scope. The grant will be available to all schools and provide leadership in developing and sustaining inclusive environments. Projects and initiatives will be showcased on the Department of Education & Early Years website and the Learning Platform. An application process and specific criteria must be met to qualify for the grant.</p>
Resources Required	Recommendations
Programs	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>3.1 Pilot Enhanced Kindergarten Orientation. Enhanced Kindergarten Orientation will provide an opportunity to transition all Kindergarten students into kindergarten gradually. During the first days/weeks, Kindergarten students attend one full day of school in a small group environment. Kindergarten teachers work with a small group of students each day to teach rituals and routines and ensure students are comfortable with their environment. This will allow teachers time to observe students’ social, physical, and emotional development.</p> <p>3.2 Establish a Universal Screening program (Literacy, Numeracy & Developmental) for the K-9 System to support teachers in monitoring the process of all Learners.</p>

	<p>3.3 PSB/CSFL Student Services adopt <i>Collaborative Response</i> (K-12) as a structure to support student learning as part of the Continuum of Inclusion. <i>Collaborative Response</i> is a school-wide framework that places inclusion at the core and ensures a collaborative response concerning the individual needs of students.</p>
<p>Process</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>3.4 Include the principles of Universal Design for Learning in all curriculum, assessment, and instruction.</p> <p>3.5 French Programs review the Science of Reading research and align curriculum, assessment and instruction.</p> <p>3.6 The Inclusive Education Working Group reviews Academic Learning plans to determine if they are meeting the intended purpose of supporting and documenting learning and interventions for students who are working on foundational learnings that are primarily below grade level and make necessary changes.</p> <p>3.7 English Programs continue to implement and expand current initiatives such as Foundations and Curriculum amendments to align with the Science of Reading.</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>3.8 Collaborate with the Education Authorities and CUPE 3260 to develop a model and a plan to establish a Classroom Assistant pilot project. Classroom Assistants would be current CUPE 3260 employees and would support teachers in building a responsive classroom. Classroom Assistants would be assigned to classrooms. They would work at the direction of the classroom teacher to support students in developing their academic, social, and emotional skills in a learning environment developmentally responsive to their strengths and needs. Classroom Assistant would not support students requiring Educational Assistant Support as identified through SNAP process. The Classroom Assistant would be a classroom “in-class support model” and not a “pull-out of class model”.</p> <p>3.9 Establish a system-wide data system to support the monitoring of progress of all students as part of the Continuum of Inclusion. Collaboration with the Department, PSB, CFSL, and Powerschool team will be critical in selecting the appropriate system(Powerschool MTSS Unified Insights Platform or Collaborative Response - WECollab).</p> <p>3.10 Make adjustments to the Foundations Funding Formula to align the percentage of the number of students not meeting 80% to provide Tier #2 Intervention.</p>

Resources Required	Recommendations
<p>Programs</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>4.1 Establish an expanded classification system for Educational Assistant Positions to be more responsive to the diverse and complex needs in the system. This would include a mechanism for recognition of additional education and training to encourage specialized trained and skilled support staff.</p> <p>4.2 Provide the necessary funding to the PSB & CSLF to Develop the ‘Special Programs data tracking system Within Powerschool to access and track Students Services data such as (the number of students on EPs, Accommodations, Critical Incident Form, Referrals and manage student services caseload, etc.)</p> <p>4.3 Pilot a Learning Center Model to provide targeted support/instruction to students with Individualized Education programming and students significantly below grade level.</p> <p>4.4 Provide a permanent FTE French Immersion Inclusive Education Consultant to the Public-School Branch. To support Student Success Strategy in French Immersion.</p> <p>4.5 Provide an FTE Community Access Facilitator to the CSLF to support Transition Planning for students with exceptionalities/Neurodiverse needs.</p> <p>English Additional Language & French Additional Language (EAL/FAL)</p> <p>4.6 Establish an EAL Teaching and Learning Center to support families, students, and educators.</p> <p>4.7 Allocate FTE to support EAL services with specialized support (Inclusive Education, Counseling, & Autism Spectrum Disorder). These services would provide initial support for assessment, program planning, and transition support for EAL students. After some time, the students would transition to Student Services Support if necessary.</p> <p>4.8 Provide 1.0 FTE Itinerant EAL Teacher to support FAL students in CSLF who require English Language Support. Currently, there are approximately 40 students across the province who would require this support.</p>
<p>Policy & Process</p>	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>4.9 Develop a Transition to Kindergarten Readiness Program in schools with large kindergarten populations. This would support kindergarten students who require readiness skills to practice these skills to be successful.</p>

	<p>The Kindergarten readiness program would not be a self-contained classroom model but a skills-based development model.</p> <p>English Additional Language & French Additional Language (EAL/FAL) 4.10 EAL/FAL Division and the Department of Education & Early Years continue the implementation of STEPP (School Transition EAL Pilot Program).</p>
Resources	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>4.11 Update the Standards and Guidelines for IEPs and adopt a Competency-Based Model of Individualized Education Planning for all students requiring IEPs.</p> <p>4.12 Collaborate with the Education Authorities, the Department of Health, and the Autism Coordination Act Lead to establish a Provincial Autism Protocol to guide and support service delivery for school-aged children & youth diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This would include establishing a Provincial Autism Monitoring System to track diagnosis from early years into school and school to community to determine service requirements.</p> <p>4.13 Partner with Public Health to educate parents/caregivers at 4-year Public Health assessment about the readiness skills required for kindergarten.</p> <p>4.14 The Department of Education & Early Years Inclusive Education Standing Working Group review and update the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Behavioral Resource Teacher Model</i> • <i>Behavioral Support Planning</i> • <i>Guidelines for Resource Teachers</i> • <i>Resource Model</i> • <i>School Counselling Guidelines</i> <p><i>Part of this work would include clarifying Roles and Responsibilities.</i></p> <p>The Education Authorities of PSB & CSLF</p> <p>4.15 Align the Student Services Delivery model with the Continuum of Inclusion. Prioritization of Student Services Service Delivery will be for those who require support from <i>Tier #3 Exceptional Learning & Behavior Framework</i> or <i>Tier #4 Enhanced Specialized/External Supports on the Continuum</i>. While these are the prioritized areas for Student Services Service Delivery, it is essential to engage in Collaborative Practice when possible, to support the full implementation of the Continuum of Inclusion.</p>

Resources Required	Recommendations
Programs	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>5.1 The Department of Education & Early Years, in collaboration with Justice and Health, along with the Education Authorities provide training and funding for a cross-departmental comprehensive threat assessment process Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA Model), and the development of a Provincial Protocol.</p> <p>5.2 The Department of Education & Early Years, Health & Justice expand Student Well-being Team Family Support Workers to all Students Well-being Teams.</p>
Process	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>5.3 The PSB and CSLF be supported in ongoing training in the PREPaRE Model for Crises Management.</p> <p>5.4 The Department of Education & Early Years in collaboration with the Department of Health, Justice and Social Development and Seniors and Community Partners provide evidence-based education, promotion, and prevention approaches for youth mental health and substance issues.</p> <p>5.5 The Department of Education & Early Years collaborate with the Department of Health, Justice and Social Development and Seniors to establish specialized training opportunities for Group Homes, Foster Families, and Respite Providers.</p> <p>5.6 The Department of Education & Early Years, Education Authorities, the Student Well-being Team, and the Early Childhood Association will collaborate to increase access to parenting programs such as Triple P Parenting Program, Handle with Care, Coping Power Program, and The Incredible Years.</p>
Resources	<p>The Department of Education & Early Years</p> <p>5.7 The Department of Education & Early Years as Lead collaborate with the Education Authorities Student Services Division, Departments of Health, Justice and Social Development and Seniors, to establish a Child & Youth Intensive Case Management Team- Complex Needs for children and youth who require significant extraordinary services and support.</p> <p>5.8 The Department of Education & Early Years partner with the Department of Health Complex Needs Navigator to identify children & youth with complex medical needs before school entry.</p> <p>5.9 The Department of Education & Early Years collaborate with the Department of Health and Justice to increase provincial access for children & youth to the Behavior Support Team, Insight and Strength Programs.</p>

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Appendix

Appendix A

Survey Review of Questions Related to Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Education

Public Schools Branch

In January, individuals working with the Public Schools Branch were asked to answer eight questions regarding PEI's inclusive education model. Because a review of inclusive education has not been conducted for many years, and considering the educational, social, and cultural changes that have occurred since that time, it was important to receive feedback from individuals working within the education system.

Of the 30 people contacted to complete the survey, 26 responded, however, some participants did not answer all eight questions. The responses to each question were subjected to a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a type of qualitative research that involves searching across a data set to identify, analyze, and report repeated or consistent patterns. This approach was believed to provide insight into the most predominant concerns related to our inclusive education model. However, for Question 5, each response was summarized to try to get a clearer picture of the issues facing different schools across PEI.

Question 1: What is inclusive education?

There was quite a lot of consistency in the responses to this question. All responses could be categorized into four (4) predominant themes.

1. All respondents agreed that inclusive education entailed individualized programming with the provision of appropriate support people and materials to enable students to achieve success irrespective of their level of ability.
2. Most respondents included the importance of the opportunity to learn with same-age peers in a setting that provided a sense of community and belonging.
3. A smaller number believed that inclusive education encompassed the opportunity to learn without fear of ridicule and/or the assumption of limitations.
4. A few respondents commented on the importance of students being able to attend an inclusive education program at their home school, presumably to feel a part of their community.

Question 2: What is our current model of inclusion on PEI?

Similar to Question 1, the responses to Question 2 were quite consistent across the group. All responses could be categorized into six (6) predominant themes.

1. There was consensus that the current model of inclusive education on PEI is integrated, versatile, individualistic and variable.

2. Most participants commented that the PEI model incorporates working in classrooms with same-age peers, in addition to pull-out-sessions with various support workers.
3. Perceived hallmarks of the model included improved values and attitudes related to human diversity (gender, race, abilities), and enhanced self-confidence, self-esteem, and well-being.
4. Most indicated that the model is human resource (HR) dependent but generally, under-supported from an HR perspective.
5. Concern was expressed that the PEI model is more reactive than preventative, as a small sample of the school population consumes most of the time and effort available to school teams. Therefore, it was believed that some students, who would benefit from supports, do not meet the criteria based on staffing allocations.
6. It was also expressed that the theory of inclusive education and the practice of inclusive education do not always go hand in hand.

Question 3: What are the benefits and challenges of inclusive education for students with special needs?

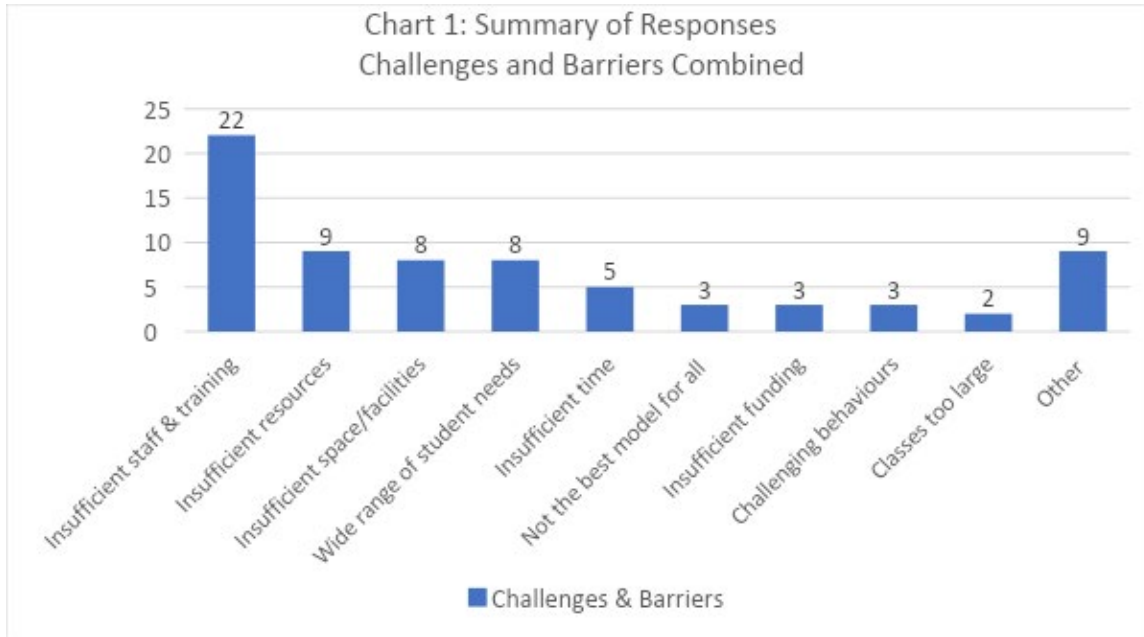
Table 1: Summary of Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Education for Students with Special Needs
<i>Benefits</i>
Support for learning enables all students to achieve at their unique level of ability
Life preparation helps students become productive members of society
Time with same-age-peers helps special needs' students become part of their school community (removes stigma, fosters social inclusion, provides sense of well-being)
Time with same-age-peers helps special needs' students learn appropriate behaviours and social skills
Social, emotional and academic growth occurs among peers
<i>Challenges Related to Insufficient Human Resources</i>
Inability to meet academic, functional and social/emotional needs
Leads to inconsistencies in services across the learning spectrum
Unable to ensure the school environment is safe
<i>Challenges Related to the Learning Environment</i>
Inclusive education results in over-stimulation for some children

Being in the classroom with same-age-peers is not the best model for all students with special needs, sometimes needs are best met outside the classroom
Inadequate opportunities for individualized learning
<i>Challenges Related to the Facilities</i>
Physical space not adequate to meet student needs (elevators, ramps, one-on-one learning spaces)

Question 4: What are the benefits and challenges of inclusive education for students who do not have special needs?

Table 2: Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Education for Students without Special Needs
<i>Benefits</i>
Fosters a school culture of tolerance, patience, respect, empathy, kindness, and inclusion
Peer helping and mentoring can be self-affirming and lead to increased confidence
Encourages more flexible and inclusive thinking
Encourages a greater variety of friendships and relationships
<i>Challenges Related to Learning</i>
Repetition of learning concepts can lead to boredom
Students requiring enrichment supports may be overlooked
Trying to provide education to meet the abilities of each student can lead to teacher burnout
<i>Challenges Related to Behaviours</i>
Issues of fear, safety, and anxiety when witnessing language and behaviours of some students
Peer relationships when peers witness emotional and/or behavioural dysregulation
behaviours and language lead to evacuation of classrooms that results in learning disruptions (sometimes many times a day)

Question 5. Identify the number one challenge and two or three barriers of the current inclusion model. Summary of results below



Question 6: What actions need to be taken to improve the current Inclusion model?

Table 4: Actions to Improve Current Inclusion Model
<i>Actions Related to Staffing</i>
Increased staff, training and resources
Skills of EAs too variable - greater effort required to recruit and retain skilled EAs
More full-time counsellors, behavioural resource teachers and youth service workers
More education and professional development on the current inclusion model for teachers and staff
<i>Actions Related to Teaching</i>
Decrease class sizes
More time should be spent in small group settings
Supports for students with significant behavioural needs
More safe and sound proof work spaces to work on individual needs
Separate courses where students can work on individual program goals (e.g., life skills)

Table 4: Actions to Improve Current Inclusion Model
Increased resources for students who cannot function academically and/or with acceptable behaviours in the classroom
<i>Other</i>
Commitment from government (increased funding)
Transparency in decision making
Willingness to try new approaches
Move to a learning center model, where students come and go depending on their needs

Question 7: What is currently working in your school to support inclusive education?

While the responses to Question 7 could be considered quite individualistic (refer to Table 5 below), they can generally be classified under the following categories:

- support for students (15),
- the importance of collaboration (working as a team) (9),
- the importance of communication (9),
- respect for diversity (6),
- community and/or parental support (6),
- support for staff (5),
- transitions from working with peers to working one-on-one (4), and
- effective in dealing with challenging situations (3).

Table 5: Successful Practices
1. Doing a good job of supporting some of our students with the most challenges
2. Flexible and understanding staff; Staff willing to do extra support when they can; Social-emotional learning initiative (SEL) is helpful;
3. Making sure staff feel supported; Adaptations to support student needs
4. Team approach; Open and ongoing communication; Commitment to de-escalation plans; Point people to diffuse or consult with in difficult situations

Table 5: Successful Practices
5. A learning center where students feel safe and work on individual functional programming for part of the day; All students attend phys ed, specialists, library and some core subjects with same age peers
6. Created a second learning center so more children can receive help from YSWs, EAs, etc.; Expanded co-op skills opportunities
7. Working as a team to communicate and collaborate on student supports and programming
8. SURF character education – Safety, Unity, Respect and Fair Play is studied, celebrated and accepted as the school motto
9. Strong resource team; Skilled EA leaders; Strong teachers who really understand inclusion
10. Strong Student Service team who work in collaboration with EAs, teachers, parents, administration and outside groups to provide rich and meaningful learning experiences for all students with special needs; Regular meetings to discuss what is working well and what adjustments must be made; Students in class with peers for most of the day
11. Strong consultants in some areas; Student Well-being Team very helpful
12. Collaboration, documentation and commitment
13. Well trained and skilled staff; Regular meetings; Small class sizes allow staff to know every student; Students accepting of peers with different abilities; solid communication with parents
14. Consultants, teachers and support staff work as a team; Staff value diversity and make students feel safe and included
15. Skilled staff; Collaborative team approach; Students are ‘ours’ (the whole team)
16. Skilled, collaborative student services team; Regularly scheduled meetings; Attempt to find positive solutions to challenging problems; Effective and accessible Student Well-being Team
17. Supportive administration; Involvement and support from resource teacher; Good communication with parents
18. High focus on inclusion; Staff and students given information to foster understanding
19. Supportive staff and teamwork
20. Transition between working as an entire class and in small group settings
21. Innovative and energetic staff; community support for work placements; financial support; and appreciation for students and staff

Table 5: Successful Practices
22. Strong, professional, collaborative student services team; triage needs to manage crises; regularly scheduled meetings; effective Student Well-being Team; parents very receptive to Well-being Team
23. Supportive administration; support for students; good communication with parents
24. Inclusion is kept at the forefront when planning for student success

Question 8: List any external resources that help support inclusive education in your school.

Table 6: External Resources that Support Inclusive Education	
External Resources	Number of Times Mentioned
Occupational Therapist	9
Autism Consultant	5
Inclusive Education Consultant	5
Speech Language Pathologist	5
Counselling Consultant	4
Student Well-being Team	4
Behaviour Consultant	3
PSB Student Services Team	3
APSEA	2
Community Service Groups (e.g., Rotary)	2
English as Additional Language Itinerant	2
Family and Specialist Physicians	2
HEAR	2
Physiotherapist	2
Psychologists	2
Special Olympics PEI	2
ASD	1

Table 6: External Resources that Support Inclusive Education	
External Resources	Number of Times Mentioned
Child and Family Services	1
Community Access Facilitator	1
Community Connections	1
Community Volunteers	1
Educational Assistants	1
ELP (Extended Learning Program)	1
Hardy Medical	1
IWK Hospital	1
Jordan's Principle (First Nations)	1
Mental Health Therapist	1
Prince County Hospital	1
Resource Special Education Consultant	1
Transitions Coordinator	1
UPEI Department of Education	1
Youth Service Workers	1

Appendix B

Review of Questions Related to Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Education

La Commission scolaire de langue française

In January, individuals working with La Commission scolaire de langue française were asked to respond to eight questions regarding PEI's model of inclusive education. Because a review of inclusive education had not been conducted for many years, and considering the educational, social and cultural changes that have occurred since that time, it was important to receive feedback from individuals working within the education system.

Thirteen staff responded to the questions with four (4) respondents replying as a group. Therefore, there were, generally, ten (10) responses per question. The responses to each question were subjected to a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a type of qualitative research that involves searching across a data set to identify, analyze, and report repeated patterns. It was believed that this approach would provide insight into the most predominant concerns related to our inclusive education model. However, a sample with ten (10) responses per question is too small to result in consistent patterns. Therefore, it was considered important to convey the content of the messages accurately and succinctly. For Question 5, each response was summarized to try to get a clearer picture of the issues facing different schools.

Question 1: What is inclusive education?

There was some consistency in the responses to this question. All responses could be categorized into five (5) themes.

1. Respect for all students
2. Diversity seen as positive and enriching
3. All students seen as full and unique members of their school communities
4. Individualized/differentiated instruction and supports to enable students to learn to the best of their ability and to build on their strengths
5. Inclusion of all students with their peers and within their community

Question 2: What is our current model of inclusion on PEI?

Considering that there were only 13 respondents, the responses to Question 2 were not as consistent as one might expect and illustrate a lack of clarity about the current model of inclusion.

1. Response to Intervention (RTI) model that includes three levels:
 - a. Teachers provide quality instruction and differentiate the instruction to meet the diverse needs of students in their class.

- b. School provides more specialised group services to meet specific needs of some children.
- c. Specialists work one-on-one with students on individualized goals outside the classroom.
- 2. Access to education for all students, regardless of ability, in the least restrictive setting possible
- 3. Totally inclusive
- 4. Targeted to students with needs
- 5. Social model of disability
- 6. Uncertain what the model is

Question 3: What are the benefits and challenges of inclusive education for students with special needs?

Table 1: Summary of Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Education for <i>Students with Special Needs</i>
<i>Benefits</i>
With accommodations, special needs students can participate in learning activities with their peers (social justice)
Diversity is accepted and valued
All students are accepted without judgement
Students can work on their own goals at their own pace
Emphasis is on individual strengths
Time with same-age-peers helps special needs' students become part of their school community (fosters social inclusion, positive self-esteem)
Time with same-age-peers helps special needs' students learn appropriate behaviours and social skills
<i>Challenges Related to Insufficient Resources</i>
Teachers and school teams cannot meet all the accommodation needs
Insufficient material resources
Schools are not adequately equipped to deal with students with violent behaviours
<i>Challenges Related to the Learning Environment</i>
Not all teachers take an inclusive approach

Class work that is too difficult for students with special needs leads to anxiety, low self-esteem and lack of motivation
Students who cannot fit the ‘mould’ are seen for their weaknesses, not their strengths
Inclusive education results in over-stimulation for some children
Too much emphasis on intervention and not enough on integration
specialised classes such as music, gym, etc. are more suited to inclusion than some academic subjects
<i>Challenges Related to the Facilities</i>
Classrooms are not suitable for some types of learning; facilities lack spaces for different needs

Generally, the benefits of inclusive education for students with special needs in the CSLF are related to the acceptance of diversity, the ability to work on individual strengths, and the positive effects of social inclusion. The challenges are mainly associated with the learning environment and the problems that arise when differences are perceived negatively.

Question 4: What are the benefits and challenges of inclusive education for students who do not have special needs?

Table 2: Benefits and Challenges of Inclusive Education for <i>Students without Special Needs</i>
<i>Benefits</i>
Students learn to accept, respect, appreciate and enjoy diversity
As peer helpers, students learn to develop patience, communication and social skills
Students develop a more realistic view of their environment
<i>Challenges Related to the Learning Environment</i>
Some students must learn to develop empathy for others
When inclusion is ‘pushed’ on students, it can lead to discomfort and negative feelings
Students think they should all have access to the same resources
Lack of resources for students who are gifted
Students with significant intellectual disabilities can be very taxing on teachers’ time, and can divert attention from the learning needs and success of other students

<i>Challenges Related to Behaviours</i>
One student in a crisis/distress situation can disrupt an entire class
<i>Other</i>
All students have special needs

The benefits of inclusive education for students who do not have special needs (similar to those who have special needs) are related to the social impact of inclusivity. The students without special needs learn to work in an environment that embraces differences. As well, most of the challenges are related to the learning environment, where allocation of resources is frequently seen to favour the students with special needs.

Question 5: Identify your number one challenge and two or three barriers about the current inclusion model.

Note: In the following table comments are colour coded by similarity - comments with white fill are one of a kind

Table 3: Number 1 Challenge and Barriers of Current Inclusion Model (comments from all respondents)	
<i>Number 1 Challenge</i>	<i>Barriers</i>
1. Classes too large and/or complex for differentiated programming	1. Too few EAs; lack of training; lack of time to assist with accommodations or targeted interventions
2. Convincing staff that inclusion is necessary and doable	2. Teachers' ability to individualize teaching; identifying student needs
3. Some students do not embrace the concept of inclusive education, and prefer to exclude themselves	3. Insufficient professional resources; lack of student leadership; lack of parental engagement
4. Insufficient human resources to ensure accommodations are implemented	4. Complex class composition results in teacher burnout; lack of time for collaboration
5. Philosophy of inclusion at all costs, should consider combining integration and inclusion	5. Lack of training about inclusion
6. Including special needs students in all regular classes	6. Lack of human resources; lack of material resources

Table 3: Number 1 Challenge and Barriers of Current Inclusion Model (comments from all respondents)	
<i>Number 1 Challenge</i>	<i>Barriers</i>
7. Adapting lessons for students who are in regular programming and those students with special needs	7. Students who do not accept that they are different from their peers; lack of human resources; financially undervalued EAs and YSWs
8. Students in Faculties of Education do not receive enough training in inclusion, differentiation and special education	8. Resource teachers should be trained and have several years of teaching experience; pay should reflect training
9. Insufficient human resources	9. Lack of time for team meetings
10. Inclusion in the classroom is not always the best option, some students need to be away from peers so they can concentrate and learn	10. Not enough time for communication and collaboration

The above comments could be further categorized into four main themes:

1. Insufficient human resources to meet the challenges of inclusive education;
2. The current model of inclusive education is not embraced by all teachers and students;
3. More training needs to be provided for and about inclusive education; and
4. More time is required for communication and collaboration.

Question 6: What actions need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?

Table 4: Actions to Improve Current Inclusion Model
<i>Actions Related to Staffing</i>
Increase number of EAs with proper training
Increase number of resource teachers and professional staff
Offer student leadership development activities
Develop ability of parents to support their children

Table 4: Actions to Improve Current Inclusion Model
Follow psycho-educational and psychological testing recommendations (requires increased human and monetary resources)
<i>Actions Related to Teaching</i>
No combined classes and a limit on number of students per class
Merge grades (decompartmentalize)
Reasonable workload for resource teachers so they can provide quality interventions and assistance
Project/strength-based learning; learning that is meaningful to the student
No students ‘have’ to leave the classroom
Balance of classroom and out-of-class sessions where students can work on specific skills
Difference between promotion practices (social promotion) in K-9 and high school (credit courses) leads to lack of success (failure) for some students
<i>Other</i>
More training on inclusion
More time for collaboration
Better organization of resources
Allow for specialization
<i>Other (continued)</i>
Socioemotional learning for all students
Survey to determine students’ perceptions of inclusion
Increase material resources
Review of curricula

The above illustrates that there are many opinions about how to improve the inclusion model. It also illustrates that there are conflicting opinions. For example, some individuals do not want combined classes (more than one grade) and others would prefer to merge several grades. Also, some staff believe that “no students have to leave the classroom” and others would prefer a “balance between classroom and out-of-classroom sessions”. However, most respondents agree that, to work effectively, the inclusion model of education requires more human resources.

Question 7: What is currently working in your school to support inclusive education?

The responses to Question 7 indicate that there is a strong commitment to teamwork, communication and collaboration within the CSLF and with their school communities. Generally, there seems to be a shared vision of inclusion and working together to do what is best for their students. Also, there is a feeling that all staff are truly valued for their commitment to the CSLF students.

Table 5: Successful Practices at Your School
1. Teamwork, communication and a shared vision of inclusion
2. Communication, transparency, and acceptance and normalization of inclusion
3. Open and encouraging meetings with parents that make them feel their children are being supported
4. Teamwork, communication, collaboration with community, co-teaching and commitment to an action plan
5. Shared vision of inclusion vision, assistance from resource teachers and EAs
6. Dedication of all staff, team work to find solutions to challenges
7. Access to many resource personnel
8. Collaboration of all within the CSLF
9. Teamwork, assistance from resource teachers and EAs
10. Open-minded teachers who believe in inclusion

Question 8: List any external resources that help support inclusive education in your school.

Table 6: External Resources to Support Inclusive Education	
External Resources	Number of Times Mentioned
3P & Mentoring Program	1
Behavioural Support Team	1
Bilingual Autism Specialist	6
Community Clubs	1
Occupational Therapist	3
Parents / Guardians of Students	2

Physician	1
RCMP	1
School Counsellor	1
School Psychologist	3
Speech Language Pathologist	5
Sport Clubs	1
Student Service Consultant	1
Student Well-being Team	7
<i>Total</i>	<i>34</i>

Appendix C

Inclusive Education Review 2023 - System Survey - Public Schools Branch

The following contains information from a survey conducted with 676 personnel within the PEI education system to determine their opinions and concerns regarding the inclusive education model in PEI. Table 1 illustrates participation by occupation.

Table 1: Occupations of Participants		
Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Principals	14	2.0
Vice-principals	25	3.5
Classroom Teachers	367	51.8
Resource Teachers	82	11.6
School Counsellors	20	2.8
Educational Assistants, Workplace Assistants, Student Attendants	149	21.0
Youth Service Workers	16	2.3
Other	36	5.1
<i>Total Occupations</i>	<i>709</i>	<i>100.0</i>

While 676 individuals participated in the survey (Table 1), a number of the participants listed more than one occupation. For example, some resource teachers also identified as classroom teachers. Therefore, the total number of occupations is greater than the total number of participants. 51.8% of the participants were classroom teachers, 11.6% were resource teachers, and 21.0% were in the category of Educational Assistants, Workplace Assistants and Student Attendants. Therefore, the responses illustrate the perceptions of individuals who spend most of their time interacting with students.

Table 2 indicates the school level in which the participants work. The majority of the participants (54.6%) work in the Elementary System and 39.4% work in Junior and Senior High Schools.

Table 2: School Level

School Level	Frequency	Percent
Elementary	369	54.6
Consolidated / Junior High	164	24.3
High Schools	102	15.1
K-12 Schools	36	5.3
Alternative Education	5	.7
Total	676	100.0

Table 3 (below) illustrates the number of years the participants have been working in the education system in PEI. The percentages indicate that 82.1% have more than 5 years of experience, and 48.5% have more than 15 years of experience. This result suggests that the majority of the participants are very familiar with the model of inclusion in the PEI school system and are a reliable source of information.

Table 3: Number of Years Working in Education in PEI

Number of Years	Frequency	Percent
Less than or equal to 5 years	121	17.9
6 to 15 years	227	33.6
More than 15 years	328	48.5
Total	676	100.0

Participants were given five definitions of inclusive education and asked to indicate the definition that they agreed with the most. Table 4 illustrates that 52.2% ‘agreed the most’ with number 5. Number 5 is the most all-encompassing definition that moves beyond learning to the development and celebration of the child regardless of differences or ability. It might be considered that this is the most altruistic definition and may be the most time consuming, resource dependent and expensive model to implement.

Table 4: Definition of Inclusive Education

Definitions	Frequency	Percent
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1. Inclusive Education is schools, classrooms, programs, and activities designed for all students to participate in and learn together.	51	7.5
2. Inclusive Education allows all students of all backgrounds to learn and grow to benefit all.	26	3.8
3. Inclusive Education provides meaningful learning experiences for all learners, regardless of ability, race, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.	147	21.7
4. Inclusive Education is a learning environment where all students learn together regardless of academic, physical, or cognitive differences.	99	14.6
5. Inclusive Education is where individual differences are celebrated and built upon in the least restrictive environment including the availability of alternative learning environments to meet diverse learning & behavioral needs.	353	52.2
Total	676	100.0

Participants were asked to rate five (5) statements about the learning environments in schools in PEI on a five-point scale from 1 to 5, in which 1 represented *most important* and 5 represented *least important*. In the following Table responses 1 and 2 were combined to develop a ‘very important rating’ and responses 4 and 5 were combined to develop a ‘not particularly important rating’. Responses are illustrated In Table 5 below.

Item	Very Important	Not Particularly Important
Classrooms and schools that are safe spaces for students and staff	78.6%	11.1%
Learning centers in schools staffed with specialised professionals for students who require more individualized specialised programming	34.7%	38.9%
Physical space that is accessible for students and staff	18.5%	59.2%
Welcoming school and classroom environments where diversity is celebrated and encouraged	43.0%	37.3%
Alternative programs, classes, and schools for students who require them	27.2%	53.5%

The above table indicates that in this set of items “classrooms and schools that are safe spaces for students and staff” was considered the most important concern and “physical space that is accessible for students and staff” was the least important concern.

Because the above does not include respondents who rated items in the middle of the scale, i.e., using the 3 rating, this set of items was further subjected to a means analysis in which all ratings were included. *It is important to note that because ‘most important’ was rated as 1 and ‘least important’ was rated as 5, the lower the mean, the more important the item.* Table 6 indicates that, just as in Table 5, “classrooms and schools that are safe spaces for students and staff” was considered the most important issue in this set of items and “physical space that is accessible for students and staff” was considered the least important issue in this set.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1. Classrooms and schools that are safe spaces for students and staff.	676	1	5	1.74
2. Welcoming school and classroom environments where student diversity is celebrated and encouraged.	676	1	5	3.00
3. Learning Centers in schools are staffed with specialised professionals for students who require more individual specialised programming.	676	1	5	3.07
4. Alternative programs, classes, and schools for students who require them.	676	1	5	3.50
5. Physical space that is accessible for students and staff.	676	1	5	3.70

The participants were then asked to rate items related to class composition. The rating scale progressed from 1 (most challenging) to 7 (least challenging). Ratings 1 and 2 were combined to develop a very challenging rating and responses 6 and 7 were combined to develop a not particularly challenging rating. The results are illustrated in Tables 7.

Item	Most Challenging	Not Particularly Challenging
Disruptive student behaviour in schools/classes	78.2%	5.0%
Number of students with mental health challenges	49.6%	9.0%
Number of students with medical conditions requiring health care at school	3.6%	60.0%
Number of students requiring specialised support (EAL, FAL, Autism, Speech Language Problems, etc.)	31.7%	6.8%
Number of students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	10.1%	16.1%
Number of students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs)	15.4%	23.3%

The above table indicates that in this set of items related to class composition “disruptive student behaviour in schools/classes” was considered the most challenging issue and “the number of students with medical conditions requiring health care at school” was considered the least challenging issue. However, in most instances in this set of items the majority of the responses were in the ‘middle’ of the scale (ratings 3,4 and 5) suggesting that: (1) participants do not have particularly strong opinions about the issue, (2) that there is uncertainty surrounding the issue, or (3) there are no reasonable alternatives that can be implemented.

To bring more clarity to the responses, the items were further subjected to a means analysis in which all ratings were included. *It is important to note that because ‘most challenging’ was rated as 1 and ‘least challenging’ was rated as 7, the lower the mean, the more important the item.* Table 8 indicates that, just as in Table 7, “disruptive student behaviour in schools/classes” was considered the most challenging issue in this set of items, and “the number of students with medical conditions requiring healthcare at school” was considered the least challenging issue in this set.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1. Disruptive student behaviour in schools/classes.	675	1	7	1.92
2. The number of students with mental health challenges.	675	1	7	2.99

3. The number of students requiring specialised support (Example: EAL, FAL, Autism, Speech Language, etc.)	675	1	7	3.28
4. The number of students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs)	675	1	7	4.18
5. The number of students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	674	1	7	4.23
6. The number of students with medical conditions requiring healthcare at school.	672	1	7	5.36

Following the items included in Table 7, the respondents were asked to write a dynamic comment about ‘other’ thoughts they had about the learning environment. 253 participants provided comments. A thematic analysis was conducted on the comments to determine patterns of meaning. Of the comments, 12 could not be classified under a theme as they were unique concerns. Table 9 illustrates the results of the analysis.

Table 9: Thematic analysis of dynamic statements about learning environments in K-12 in PEI		
Theme	Frequency	Percent
Require more EAs and qualified staff to support learning, special needs, and behavioral challenges of students	56	22.1
Class size	44	17.4
Parent/Guardian expectations, lack of involvement, not attending to student needs	27	10.7
Student behaviours (disrespectful, disruptive, violent)	20	7.9
Attendance	16	6.3
Class composition (too many ability levels in a class)	14	5.5
Undiagnosed learning needs and health conditions	13	5.1
Inclusion not working as it should (does not meet needs of many)	10	4.0
Lack of student engagement and accountability	10	4.0
Should not be asked to rate issues, they are all equally important	9	3.6
Too many demands on teachers	8	3.2
Lack of planning/preparation time	8	3.2
Lack of space for individualized programming	6	2.4

Table 9: Thematic analysis of dynamic statements about learning environments in K-12 in PEI		
Theme	Frequency	Percent
Other	12	4.7
Total	253	100.0

The participants were then asked to rate on a scale of 1 (most challenging) to 7 (least challenging) items related to the most significant challenges of Inclusive Education. Again, ratings 1 and 2 were combined to develop a very challenging rating and responses 6 and 7 were combined to develop a not particularly challenging rating. The results are illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10: Responses to Items Related to Most Significant Challenges of Inclusive Education		
Item	Most Challenging	Not Particularly Challenging
Unclear policies and procedures for Inclusive Education	19.8%	35.1%
Student access to specialised programs and services across the province	35.6%	8.4%
The need for staff training and resources	37.8%	9.8%
The need for alternative workspaces for some students	39.3%	12.4%
Access to specialised professionals/consultants	23.1%	17.2%
Class size	35.3%	29.3%

The above table indicates that in this set of items related to the most significant challenges of inclusive education “the need for alternative workspaces for some students” was considered the most challenging issue and “unclear policies and procedures for Inclusive Education” was considered the least challenging issue. Interestingly, the items in this set did not create particularly strong responses. However, in most instances the majority of the responses were in the ‘middle’ of the scale (ratings 3,4 and 5).

Once again, the items were further subjected to a means analysis in which all ratings were included. *It is important to note that because ‘most challenging’ was rated as 1 and ‘least challenging’ was rated as 7, the lower the mean, the more important the item.* The means in Table 11 indicate that “the need for staff training and resources” was the most challenging issue

rather than “the need for alternate workspaces for some students”. “Unclear policies and procedures for Inclusive Education” remained the least challenging issue based on this analysis. However, the first 3 items in Table 11 had very similar means suggesting that these items are similar in the challenges they present.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1. The need for staff training and resources	673	1	7	3.20
2. Student access to specialised programs and services across the province	674	1	7	3.22
3. The need for alternate workspaces for some students	675	1	7	3.31
4. Class size	675	1	7	3.74
5. Access to specialised professionals/consultants	673	1	7	3.88
6. Unclear policies and procedures for Inclusive Education	670	1	7	4.30

Tables 12 includes responses to items about frequency of participation in various Support Services meetings during the past two years. The responses included weekly, several times a month, once a month, several times a year, once a year, and never. It is important to note that in all instances ‘never’ is the most frequently occurring response. However, considering the demands on many staff, it may be unreasonable to expect attendance at meetings weekly, monthly or even several times a month. If we look at the number of participants who attended meetings several times a year and once a year, the percentages range from 8.6 for Bridge Referral meetings to 53.2% for meetings related to IEPs. Those numbers may represent a realistic amount of time that is available to attend meetings.

	Weekly	Several times a month	Once a month	Several times a year	Once a year	Never
Student Services Team Meetings	13.1	4.3	9.8	13.4	11.6	47.9
Educational Assistant Meetings	3.9	1.8	15.8	13.6	8.2	56.7

	Weekly	Several times a month	Once a month	Several times a year	Once a year	Never
Grade Level Meetings	12.6	4.6	18.4	15.9	5.8	42.6
Academic Case Management Meetings	1.9	2.8	5.5	25.9	14.2	49.7
Individual Education Planning (IEP)	1.0	2.2	3.0	37.2	16.0	40.6
Behaviour Support Planning (ILI/BSP)	1.8	4.6	3.3	33.0	19.3	38.0
Transition Action Plan Meetings (TAP)	0.2	0.9	0.9	9.7	16.5	71.9
Bridge Referral	0.2	0.2	0.2	2.5	6.1	90.9
Student Wellbeing Team Referral (SWT)	1.8	3.0	4.5	21.4	10.6	58.7
Alternative Education Referral	0.6	0.9	0.5	10.3	12.6	75.2

The above information includes all occupations in the same analysis, but not all occupations would be expected to attend all types of meetings. In Table 13, responses from teachers and resource teachers are combined in Group 1, and responses from EAs, WAs, SAs and YSWs are combined in Group 2. It was considered that individuals in those occupations would have the most contact with students on a daily basis, but in quite different capacities. The table illustrates the differences in attendance at different types of meetings. For example, 56.8% of teachers and resource teachers (Group 1) attended Student Services Team Meetings at least once a year, whereas, only 28.6% of EAs, WAs, SAs & YSWs (Group 2) attended those meetings at least once a year. Conversely, only 29.1% of Group 1 attended Educational Assistant Meetings at least once a year, whereas, 81.6% of EAs, WAs, SAs and YSWs (Group 2) attended those meetings at least once a year. These outcomes suggest that individuals more frequently attend meetings that are pertinent to their roles within the school.

Table 13: Attendance at Meetings by Group 1 and Group 2 Participants

Group 1: Teachers and Resource Teachers		
Student Services Team Meetings		
Level of Attendance	Frequency	Percent
Weekly	51	11.8
Several times a month	22	5.1
Once a month	49	11.4
Several times a year	63	14.6
Once a year	60	13.9
Never	186	43.2
Total	431	100.0

Group 2: EAs, WAs, SAs and YSWs		
Student Services Team Meetings		
Level of Attendance	Frequency	Percent
Weekly	6	3.6
Several times a month	4	2.4
Once a month	7	4.2
Several times a year	17	10.1
Once a year	14	8.3
Never	120	71.4
Total	168	100.0

Group 1: Educational Assistant Meetings		
Level of Attendance	Frequency	Percent
Weekly	21	4.9
Several times a month	8	1.9
Once a month	40	9.3
Several times a year	35	8.1
Once a year	21	4.9
Never	305	70.9
Total	430	100.0

Group 2: Educational Assistant Meetings		
Level of Attendance	Frequency	Percent
Weekly	5	3.0
Several times a month	3	1.8
Once a month	48	29.1
Several times a year	46	27.9
Once a year	31	18.8
Never	32	19.4
Total	165	100.0

In the next item, participants were asked “how easy it is to access classroom resources”. Responses are illustrated in Table 14 when 55.8% of the 676 respondents indicated that it is not easy to access classroom resources.

Table 14: How easy is it to access classroom resources to support students with diverse learning needs?		
Ability to access classroom resources	Frequency	Percent
Very easy to access classroom resources to support students with diverse learning needs	24	3.6
Somewhat easy to access classroom resources to support students with diverse learning needs	275	40.7
Not easy to access classroom resources to support students with diverse learning needs	377	55.8
Total	676	100.0

Participants were also asked “how well their education prepared them for the realities of inclusive education”. Table 15 indicates that 85.1% indicated that they were somewhat or not prepared for the realities of inclusive education.

Table 15: Did your Human Services Training, University (B.Ed.), or other training prepare you for the realities of Inclusive Education?		
Level of preparedness	Frequency	Percent
Exceptionally prepared for the realities of Inclusive Education	23	3.4
Very prepared for the realities of Inclusive Education	78	11.5
Somewhat prepared for the realities of Inclusive Education	285	42.2
Not prepared for the realities of Inclusive Education	290	42.9
Total	676	100.0

Participants were asked to rank the following items about education and training for inclusive education from most important (1) to least important (6). As in similar types of items, responses 1 and 2 were combined to develop a ‘very important rating’ and responses 5 and 6 were combined to develop a ‘not particularly important rating’. Responses are illustrated below.

Table 16: Responses to Items Related to the Importance of Education and Training for Inclusive Education		
Item	Very Important	Not Particularly Important
Education and training on managing challenging behaviour	49.2%	15.7%
Practical, hands-on education on how to teach students with diverse educational needs	43.5%	18.5%
Mental health and trauma informed care	35.6%	35.8%
Ongoing education for school personnel (teachers, EAs, YSWs, administrators, etc.) in best practices for inclusive education	32.4%	36.6%
Education and training in how to identify students' needs and how to access support	23.0%	31.5%
Training to support students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs) and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	16.3%	62.0%

The above table indicates that in this set of items related to the importance of education and training for inclusive education “education and training on managing challenging behaviour” was considered the most important issue in this set and “training to support students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs) and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)” was considered the least important issue.

Once again to add increased validity, mean ratings were calculated for each item including all 6 ratings. *It is important to note that because ‘most important’ was rated as 1 and ‘least important’ was rated as 6, the lower the mean, the more important the item.* Table 17 verifies the results illustrated in Table 16, i.e., that “education and training on managing challenging behaviour” was considered the most important of this set of items and “training to support students on ALPs and IEPs” was considered the least important of this set of items.

Table 17: Mean ranking of statements related to the importance of education and training				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1. Education and training on managing challenging behavior	676	1	6	2.79
2. Practical, hands-on education in how to teach students with diverse educational needs	676	1	6	2.92

3. Mental Health & Trauma Informed Care	676	1	6	3.52
4. Ongoing education for school personnel (Teachers, EAs, YSW, Administrators, etc.) in best practices for Inclusive Education	676	1	6	3.53
5. Education and training in how to identify students' needs and how to access support	676	1	6	3.71
6. Training to support students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs), and Individualized Education Plan's (IEPs)	676	1	6	4.53

At the end of the System Survey participants were given the opportunity to provide additional comments. Of the 676 participants, 246 (37%) provided remarks related to Inclusive Education on PEI. Of the respondents, there were 141 Classroom Teachers, 36 Resource Teachers, 42 in the category of Educational Assistants/Workplace Assistant/Student Attendant, 6 Principals, 10 Vice-principals, 4 Youth Service Workers and 10 School Counsellors. The comments resulted in over 40 pages of text. The information was subjected to a thematic analysis to determine the main opinions/concerns of the participants. The comments of many participants included more than one theme; therefore, the total number of comments was greater than the number of participants that provided comments. As well, the themes were not mutually exclusive but, frequently, were co-dependent. For example, the diversity within the student population resulted in children in one classroom at many different grade levels (class composition) which further resulted in stress related to time and effort on teachers and other staff (too many demands). The themes could also be categorized under one over-arching theme, i.e., with the current level of funding, it is challenging to effectively meet all the needs of all the students in this type of inclusive environment.

Appendix D

Inclusive Education Review 2023 - System Survey - CSLF

The following contains information from a survey conducted with 64 personnel within the PEI education system to determine their opinions and concerns regarding the inclusive education model in PEI.

Table 1: Occupations of Participants		
Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Principals	1	1.5
Vice-principals	2	3.0
Classroom Teachers	43	64.2
Resource Teachers	8	11.9
School Counsellors	1	1.5
Educational Assistants, Workplace Assistants, Student Attendants	3	4.5
Youth Service Workers	1	1.5
Other	8	11.9
<i>Total Occupations</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>100.0</i>

While 64 individuals participated in the survey (Table 1), a number of the participants listed more than one occupation. Therefore, the total number of occupations is greater than the total number of participants. 64.2% of the participants were classroom teachers, 11.9% were resource teachers, and 4.5% were in the category of Educational Assistants, Workplace Assistants and Student Attendants. Therefore, the responses generally portray the perceptions of individuals who spend most of their time interacting with students.

Table 2 indicates the school levels in which the participants worked; 45.3% worked in K to 12 schools, and 39.1% worked in elementary schools.

Table 2: School Level		
School Level	Frequency	Percent
Elementary (K-6)	25	39.1

Consolidated / Junior High (7-9)	3	4.7
High School (10-12)	7	10.9
K-12 Schools	29	45.3
Alternative Education	0	0.0
Total	64	100.0

Table 3 (below) illustrates the number of years the participants have worked in the education system in PEI. The percentages indicate that 78.1% have more than 5 years of experience, and 28.1% have more than 15 years of experience. This result suggests that the majority of the participants are very familiar with the model of inclusion in the PEI system and are a reliable source of information.

Table 3: Number of Years Working in Education in PEI		
Number of Years	Frequency	Percent
Less than or equal to 5 years	14	21.9
6 to 15 years	32	50.0
More than 15 years	18	28.1
Total	64	100.0

Participants were given five definitions of inclusive education and asked to indicate the definition that they “agreed with the most”. Table 4 illustrates that the highest number (39.1%) “agreed the most” with number 3. Number 3 is the definition in which the main emphasis is on learning and meaningful learning experiences for all students. Definition number 5 was supported by 28.1% of the respondents. Number 5 is the most all-encompassing definition that moves beyond learning to the development and celebration of the child regardless of differences or ability.

Table 4: Definition of Inclusive Education		
Definitions	Frequency	Percent

1. Inclusive Education is schools, classrooms, programs, and activities designed for all students to participate in and learn together.	7	10.9
2. Inclusive Education allows all students of all backgrounds to learn and grow to benefit all.	4	6.3
3. Inclusive Education provides meaningful learning experiences for all learners, regardless of ability, race, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.	25	39.1
4. Inclusive Education is a learning environment where all students learn together regardless of academic, physical, or cognitive differences.	10	15.6
5. Inclusive Education is where individual differences are celebrated and built upon in the least restrictive environment including the availability of alternative learning environments to meet diverse learning & behavioral needs.	18	28.1
Total	64	100.0

Participants were asked to rate a number of statements about the learning environments in schools in PEI in order of importance from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important). In Table 5, responses 1 and 2 were combined to develop a ‘very important rating’ and responses 4 and 5 were combined to develop a ‘not particularly important rating’. Responses are illustrated below

Item	Very Important	Not Particularly Important
Classrooms and schools that are safe spaces for students and staff	59.4%	25.0%
Learning centers in schools staffed with specialised professionals for students who require more individualized specialised programming	56.2%	28.1%
Physical space that is accessible for students and staff	20.3%	50.0%
Welcoming school and classroom environments where diversity is celebrated and encouraged	17.5%	46.9%
Alternative programs, classes, and schools for students who require them	37.5%	50.0%

Table 5 indicates that the majority of respondents (59.4%) believe that the item “classrooms and schools that are safe spaces for students and staff” is very important with regard to learning environments. Conversely, “welcoming school and classroom environments where diversity is celebrated and encouraged” was considered very important by only 17.5% of the respondents.

One way to bring more clarity to Table 5 was to calculate a mean rating for each item. *It is important to note that because ‘most important’ was rated as 1 and ‘least important’ was rated as 5, the lower the mean, the more important the item.* Table 6 indicates that “classrooms and schools that are safe spaces for students and staff” was considered the most important issue in this set of items and “physical space that is accessible for students and staff” was considered the least important issue in this set. While the results deviate somewhat from Table 5, “welcoming school and classroom environments where diversity is celebrated and encouraged” was still not one of the most important items in the set.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1. Classrooms and schools that are safe spaces for students and staff.	641	1	5	2.33
2. Learning Centers in schools are staffed with specialised professionals for students who require more individual specialised programming.	641	1	5	2.72
3. Alternative programs, classes, and schools for students who require them.	641	1	5	3.20
4. Welcoming school and classroom environments where student diversity is celebrated and encouraged.	641	1	5	3.33
5. Physical space that is accessible for students and staff.	641	1	5	3.42

The participants were then asked to rate items related to class composition. The rating scale progressed from 1 (most challenging) to 7 (least challenging). Ratings 1 and 2 were combined to develop a ‘most challenging’ rating and responses 6 and 7 were combined to develop a ‘not particularly challenging’ rating. The results in Table 7 indicate that 79.7% of the respondents believe that “disruptive student behaviour” is the most challenging issue in this set, and the “number of students with medical conditions requiring health care at school” is the least challenging issue (3.1%).

Item	Most Challenging	Not Particularly Challenging
Disruptive student behaviour in schools/classes	79.7%	1.6%
Number of students with mental health challenges	45.3%	6.2%
Number of students with medical conditions requiring health care at school	3.1%	68.8%
Number of students requiring specialised support (EAL, FAL, Autism, Speech Language Problems, etc.)	37.5%	14.1%
Number of students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	14.1%	3.2%
Number of students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs)	6.3%	34.4%

In many of the items in Table 7, the majority of the responses were in the ‘middle’ of the scale (ratings 3, 4 and 5) suggesting that: (1) participants do not have particularly strong opinions about these issues, (2) that there is uncertainty surrounding the issues, or (3) there are no reasonable alternatives that can be implemented.

To bring more clarity to Table 7, a mean rating for each item was calculated. *It is important to note that because ‘most challenging’ was rated as 1 and ‘least challenging’ was rated as 7, the lower the mean, the more challenging the item.* Table 8 indicates that overall “disruptive student behaviour in schools/classes” was considered the most challenging of this set of items and “the number of students with medical conditions requiring healthcare at school” was considered the least challenging item.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1. Disruptive student behaviour in schools/classes.	641	1	6	1.78
2. The number of students with mental health challenges.	641	1	7	3.14
3. The number of students requiring specialised support (Example: EAL, FAL, Autism, Speech Language, etc.)	641	1	7	3.45

4. The number of students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	641	7	3.58
5. The number of students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs)	642	7	4.75
6. The number of students with medical conditions requiring healthcare at school.	642	7	5.47

Following the items included in Table 7, the respondents were asked to write a comment about their concerns regarding class composition. Only 19 participants (30%) provided comments. Of those, 5 believed that class size was an important concern.

Table 9: Summary of comments related to class composition	
Comments	Frequency
Class size	5
Absenteeism	2
Language barrier (French)	2
Lack of space	2
Parent demands	1
Academic disparity	1
Modified Programs	1
Lack of needs met (student)	1
Lack of socialization (students)	1
Lack of support for students with no diagnoses	1
Giftedness	1
Lack of support staff	1

The participants were then asked to rate on a scale of 1 (most challenging) to 7 (least challenging) items related to the most significant challenges of Inclusive Education. Again, ratings 1 and 2 were combined to develop a very challenging rating and responses 6 and 7 were combined to develop a not particularly challenging rating. The results are illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10: Responses to Items Related to Most Significant Challenges of Inclusive Education		
Item	Most Challenging	Not Particularly Challenging
Unclear policies and procedures for Inclusive Education	19.0%	36.5%
Student access to specialised programs and services across the province	17.2%	10.9%
The need for staff training and resources	57.8%	1.6%
The need for alternative workspaces for some students	29.7%	18.8%
Access to specialised professionals/consultants	26.6%	20.3%
Class size	40.7%	20.4%

Table 10 indicates that “the need for staff training and resources” was the most challenging item in this set and “unclear policies and procedures for inclusive education” was the least challenging item.

As with previous questions, to increase clarity, mean ratings were calculated for each response. *It is important to note that because ‘most challenging’ was rated as 1 and ‘least challenging’ was rated as 7, the lower the mean, the more challenging the item.* Table 11 indicates that overall “the need for staff training and resources” was considered the most challenging of this set of items and “unclear policies and procedures for inclusive education” was considered the least challenging of this set of items. However, the means of items 2, 3, 4, and 5 are within a small range, suggesting that those items have a similar level of challenge.

Table 11: Mean ratings of Items Related to Challenges of Inclusive Education (most challenging to least challenging)				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1. The need for staff training and resources	64	1	7	2.47
2. Class size	64	1	7	3.31
3. The need for alternate workspaces for some students	64	1	7	3.70
4. Student access to specialised programs and services across the province	64	1	7	3.84

5. Access to specialised professionals/consultants	64	1	7	3.87
6. Unclear policies and procedures for Inclusive Education	64	1	7	4.37

Following the items included in Table 10, the respondents were asked to write a dynamic comment about the challenges of Inclusive Education. Table 12 contains a summary of the comments.

Table 12: Summary of comments related to the challenges of Inclusive Education	
Comment	Frequency
Lack of support staff	2
Lack of time	1
Variety of academic levels	1
Lack of consultation with teachers	1
Lack of freedom of expression	1
Lack of departmental effort	1
Language barrier (Newcomers)	1
Multi-age classrooms	1
Inclusion vs Integration	1
Student cooperation	1
Time for diagnoses (too long after referral)	1

Table 13 (below) includes responses to items about frequency of participation in various Support Services meetings during the past two years. The responses included weekly, several times a month, once a month, several times a year, once a year, and never. It is important to note that in 6 of the 10 types of meetings ‘never’ is the most frequently occurring response. However, considering the demands on many staff, it may be unreasonable to expect attendance at meetings on a weekly basis, once a month, or even several times a month. If we look at the number of participants who attended meetings several times a year and once a year the percentages range from 4.7 to 73.4%.

	Weekly	Several times a month	Once a month	Several times a year	Once a year	Never
Student Services Team Meetings	1.6	17.2	21.9	48.4	9.4	6.3
Educational Assistant Meetings	15.6	10.9	7.8	25.0	7.8	35.9
Grade Level Meetings	7.8	10.9	23.4	17.2	4.7	35.9
Academic Case Management Meetings	1.6	12.5	10.9	50.0	10.9	17.2
Individual Education Planning (IEP)	0.0	6.3	7.8	51.6	10.9	25.0
Behaviour Support Planning (ILI/BSP)	0.0	3.1	4.7	39.1	12.5	40.6
Transition Action Plan Meetings (TAP)	0.0	1.6	1.6	15.6	57.8	23.4
Bridge Referral	1.6	0.0	1.6	1.6	3.1	93.8
Student Wellbeing Team Referral (SWT)	1.6	0.0	3.1	14.1	14.1	67.2
Alternative Education Referral	1.6	0.0	3.1	6.3	3.1	87.5

In the next item, participants were asked “how easy it is to access classroom resources to support students”. Responses are illustrated in Table 14. 73.4% of the 64 respondents indicated that it is not easy.

Ability to access classroom resources	Frequency	Percent
Very easy to access classroom resources to support students with diverse learning needs	4	6.3
Somewhat easy to access classroom resources to support students with diverse learning needs	13	20.3

Not easy to access classroom resources to support students with diverse learning needs	47	73.4
Total	64	100.0

Participants were also asked “how well their education prepared them for the realities of inclusive education”. 96.9% indicated that they were somewhat or not prepared.

Table 15: Did your Human Services Training, University (B.Ed.), or other training prepare you for the realities of Inclusive Education?

Level of preparedness	Frequency	Percent
Exceptionally prepared for the realities of Inclusive Education	1	1.6
Very prepared for the realities of Inclusive Education	1	1.6
Somewhat prepared for the realities of Inclusive Education	27	42.2
Not prepared for the realities of Inclusive Education	35	54.7
Total	64	100.0

Participants were asked to rank the following items from most important (1) to least important (5). As in previous similar types of items, responses 1 and 2 were combined to develop a ‘very important rating’ and responses 4 and 5 were combined to develop a ‘not particularly important rating’. Responses are illustrated below.

Table 16: Responses to Items Related to the Importance of Education and Training for Inclusive Education

Item	Very Important	Not Particularly Important
Education and training on managing challenging behaviour	56.2%	18.8%
Practical, hands-on education on how to teach students with diverse educational needs	51.5%	21.9%
Mental health and trauma informed care	32.8%	54.7%

Table 16: Responses to Items Related to the Importance of Education and Training for Inclusive Education		
Item	Very Important	Not Particularly Important
Ongoing education for school personnel (teachers, EAs, YSWs, administrators, etc.) in best practices for inclusive education	39.1%	40.7%
Training to support students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs) and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	20.3%	64.1%

Table 16 indicates that “education and training on managing challenging behaviour” was considered the most important item in this set by 56.2% of the respondents, and “training to support students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs) and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)” was considered the least important item.

Once again to clarify the information in Table 16, mean ratings were calculated for each response. *It is important to note that because ‘most important’ was rated as 1 and ‘least important’ was rated as 5, the lower the mean, the more important the item.* Table 17 indicates that, just as in Table 16, “education and training on managing challenging behavior” was considered the most important of this set of items and “training to support students on ALPs and IEPs” was considered the least important of this set of items.

Table 17: Mean ratings of items related to the importance of education and training for Inclusive Education				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1. Education and training on managing challenging behavior	64	1	5	2.39
2. Practical, hands-on education in how to teach students with diverse educational needs	64	1	5	2.50
3. Mental Health & Trauma Informed Care	64	1	5	3.11
4. Ongoing education for school personnel (Teachers, EAs, YSW, Administrators, etc.) in best practices for Inclusive Education	64	1	5	3.36
5. Training to support students on Academic Learning Plans (ALPs), and Individualized Education Plan’s (IEPs)	64	1	5	3.64

Appendix E

Inclusive Education Student Survey Grades 4-6 and Grades 7-12

In the Spring of 2023, as part of the Inclusive Education Review, students were invited to participate in a survey to determine their experiences and perspectives about inclusive education in PEI. Seventy-eight students (Table 1) from 12 learning sites (Table 2) chose to participate. There were two versions of the survey, one for grades 4 to 6 and another for grades 7 to 12. Of the 78 participants, 23 completed the grades four to six version, and 55 completed the grades 7 to 12 version. Other than the information contained in Tables 1 and 2, the outcomes of the two surveys are reported separately.

Table 1: Number of Participants by Grade		
Grade	Frequency	Percent
4	7	9.0
5	6	7.7
6	10	12.8
7	9	11.5
8	13	16.7
9	5	6.4
10	11	14.1
11	9	11.5
12	8	10.3
Total	78	100.0

Table 2: Number of Participants by Learning Site		
School	Frequency	Percent
Alternative Education 10-12	1	1.3
Alternative Education 7-9	3	3.8
Amherst Cove Consolidated	9	11.5
Charlottetown Rural	12	15.4

East Wiltshire Intermediate School	8	10.3
Enhanced Learning Placement -ELP 4-6	1	1.3
Hernewood Intermediate School	6	7.7
Kensington Intermediate Senior High	6	7.7
Mt Stewart Consolidated School	6	7.7
Souris Regional	5	6.4
Spring Park Elementary School	12	15.4
Three Oaks High School	9	11.5
Total	78	100.0

Survey Responses Grades 4 to 6 (23 respondents)

Table 3: What are some of the things you find hard at school? Check all that apply.	
Response	Number of Responses
Learning (reading, writing, math)	21
Classroom noise	10
Making friends	8
Recess time	6
Taking part in school activities	5
Bullying	1
Communicating my needs at school	5
Ability to physically move throughout the school	2
I do not find anything hard at school	2
Everything	1
I don't know	1

The above indicates that, for the majority of students that participated in the grades 4 to 6 survey, learning was the most challenging aspect of school. Classroom noise was the second most prevalent concern. Considering that Autism Spectrum Disorder and Attention Deficit Disorder are frequently diagnosed for many students with learning challenges, and that auditory sensitivities are common among these people, it is not surprising that classroom noise is a concern for the respondents.

Table 4: Who helps you at school? Check all that apply.	
Response	Number of Responses
Teacher	21
Resource Teacher	14
Other classmates	13
Educational Assistant	8
School Counsellor	6
Principal / Vice-principal	3

Table 5: What would make school better / easier for you?	
Responses	Number of Responses
Don't know, nothing, fine the way it is	10
Arts and crafts	1
Having more help with reading	1
For the teacher to not read out loud cause it's hard to understand	1
If I did not have to read out loud to my class	1
Reading a book	1
Make friends	1
My classmates	1
More recess	1
No homework	1

No math	1
If people don't argue	1
No Bullying	1
Have fun!	1
Total	23

At first glance, responses to the above item appeared to be quite varied and individualistic, but some of the concerns could be classified as: (1) concerns about learning, and (2) getting along with peers. 10 of the 23 responses included don't know, fine the way it is, and don't care.

Table 6: Responses to Yes / No Items			
Item	Yes	No	Total
At my school I get to learn and work with other students in my class.	22	1	23
I feel safe in my school and classroom.	21	2	23
At school I get the support I need.	23	0	23
I have friends that I hang out with at school.	22	1	23
At school I participate in group work with other students.	21	2	23
I feel welcome in my classroom.	19	4	23
I feel welcome in my school.	22	1	23

For the majority of respondents (83-96%), the inclusive school experience seems to be very positive.

Table 7: Responses of Students with Physical / Motor Disorder		
Item	Response	Number of Responses
Are there certain areas of the school that are difficult for you to access?	Playground/Schoolground	1
What is working well to help you move throughout the school?	No screaming for me.	1

Only 2 students responded to this item.

Survey Responses Grades 7 to 12 (55 respondents)

Table 8: Disorders	
Responses	Number of Responses
Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD)	19
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	11
Specific Learning Disability (LD)	9
No diagnosis or difficulty	9
Mental Health	8
Physical Disability / Motor Disorder	5
Giftedness	4
Speech/Language Communication Disorder	4
Vision Loss including Blindness	3
Behaviour Challenges	3
Hearing Loss including Deaf or Hard of Hearing	2
Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)	2
Not sure	2
Down's Syndrome	1
Williams Syndrome	1
Madelung's Deformity	1
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	1

Table 9: Number of Diagnoses per Student	
0 diagnoses	9
1 diagnosis	26

2 diagnoses	9
3 diagnoses	6
4 diagnoses	4
Don't know	1
Total	55

Table 10: Types of Programs	
Program	Number of Responses
Regular Programming	30
Adaptions	18
Registered in courses at the 400-800 level	10
Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	7
Alternative Education	5
Transition Action Plan	5
Academic Learning Plan	4
French Immersion	4
I don't know	2

Table 11: What does Inclusive Education mean to you?	
Response	Number of Responses
Don't know / not sure / never heard of it / don't care	23
Everyone is included in everything (Everyone is treated fairly, regardless of race, gender, religion, belief, nationality, size, age, disability (both mental and physical), and given the opportunity to learn to your potential).	17
Getting extra help / time / resources when you need it / them.	6
To get more education	2

It means feeling safe in school, feeling like I have friends that have my back, and that I don't have to be worried about getting hurt because of my peers.	1
That you are included in the classroom	1
Reading	1
Hard work	1
Disabilities	1
It's cool	1
Total	54

Table 12: What type of classroom environment do you prefer?	Number of Responses
Calm	36
Quiet	32
Supportive	28
Interactive	19
Busy	9
Loud	5
Inventive / Unique	1
Fun	1
Small	1
I don't care	1
Total	133

Of the 133 different responses, 36 (27%) were related to a preference for a calm classroom environment and 32 (24%) indicated preference for a quiet classroom environment. . However, there are some students who thrive in loud and busy environments. This result points to the difficulty in creating classroom situations that are beneficial to all students.

The responses to Table 13 indicated that students took the opportunity to suggest almost anything that they believed would make school easier for them. Many responses indicated that certain types of digital equipment would be helpful.

Table 13: Please list any equipment that makes school easier.	
Equipment to enhance the learning experience	Number of Responses
Chrome book	16
Headphones	5
iPad	3
Fidgets	2
Calculator	2
Audio books	2
Grammarly	2
C-pen	2
Computer for digital work	1
Voice to Text Program	1
Read and Write Program	1
Hemingway Editor	1
Scribbr (APA citation generator)	1
Schooly (an application to help organize schoolwork)	1
Physical calendars / Planners	1
Media Bias Check	1
Signs on the walls for subjects other than math	1
Paper	1
A pencil	1
A guidebook	1
A pen	1
A backpack	1

Table 13: Please list any equipment that makes school easier.	
Equipment for students with physical/motor challenges	Number of Responses

Wheelchair / electric wheelchair	2
Elevator	1
A walker	1
Cane	1
Hearing aids	1
Braille / Braille computer / Braille notes	1
Spaces to enhance learning	Number of Responses
A quiet classroom	1
Hush-ups / breakout rooms	1
Learning Centre	1
Responses related to HR	Number of Responses
More help with work	2
Teachers reading my tests to me	1
Educational Assistant	1
A scribe	1
Other	Number of Responses
I don't know/nothing	14
I would like to write more	1
Make sure all the teachers know I have allergies	1
Draw or read a book	1
Music	1
Working hard work	1
Box breathing (de-stress/reduce anxiety)	1
5 Senses exercise (mindfulness)	1

Table 14: Responses to Yes/No Items			
Item	Yes	No	Total

At my school I get to learn and work with other students in my class.	54	1	55
I feel safe in my school and classroom.	48	7	55
At school I get the support I need.	49	6	55
I have friends that I hang out with at school.	46	9	55
At school I participate in group work with other students.	47	8	55
I feel welcome in my school.	52	3	55
I feel welcome in my classroom.	48	7	55

Generally, students in grades 7-12 are quite positive (85 - 98%) about their school experience.

Table 15: Are there areas of the school that are difficult for you to access? (Answer only if you have a Physical Disability / Motor Disorder)	
Area	Number of Responses
Within the classroom	6
Cafeteria	3
Bathroom	2
School Doors	1
Gym	1
Other	3

Note: 5 students of the 55 who responded to the Grades 7 to 12 Survey indicated that they have a Physical Disability / Motor Disorder. However, in this item, 6 students indicated that they have difficulty with access within the classroom.

Table 16: What is working well to help you move throughout the school? (Answer only if you have a Physical Disability / Motor Disorder)	
	Number of Responses
My friend/s	2
EA helps me get up with my walker.	1
EAs	1

My cane	1
My voice	1
Talking to one of my teachers	1

Table 17: Do you receive help/support from any of the following in school? (Answer only if you have a Physical Disability / Motor Disorder)	Number of Responses
Teachers (EAL Itinerant=1; Alt Ed teacher=1)	34
Resource Teacher	32
Educational Assistant (EA)	19
School Counselor	9
Student Well-Being Team	8
Youth Service Worker	7
Peer Support / Peer Tutors	5
Physiotherapist	2
Occupational Therapist	1
HEAR	1
Speech Language Pathologist	1
Therapist	1

The majority of students received help and support from teachers and EAs.

Table 18: What do you find hard at school?		
Response	Number of responses	Theme
Certain subject areas / learning	44	Learning
Classroom noise	24	School Environment
School busyness	14	School Environment
Ability to move throughout the school	9	School environment
Taking part in school activities	13	Emotional/social

Getting along with others	11	Emotional/social
Following the school routine	7	Emotional/social
Following school rules	5	Emotional/social
Total	127	

Certain subject areas and learning comprised 35% of the responses; school environment comprised 37% of the responses, and 28% of the responses were related to the emotional/social aspects of school life.

Table 19: What would make school easier for you?		
Response	Number of responses	Theme
More help (generally teachers / EAs)	19	More help from HR
Less noise and fewer distractions	6	School environment
Fewer people in the hallways	1	School environment
More space in the classrooms	1	School environment
Elevators	1	School environment
Right equipment at the beginning of the year	1	School environment
Smaller classes	2	Learning
More flexible learning	5	Learning
Shorter days / more breaks	3	Learning
Easier / less work	8	Learning
More time to complete work	3	Learning
Control bullying	2	Emotional/Social
Less judgement (from teachers and students)	4	Emotional/Social
More friends	1	Emotional/Social
More games and activities	1	Emotional/Social
More gym	1	Emotional/Social
Make things easier for my mom so she does not need to stress every day	1	Emotional/Social

Don't know	7	
Total	66	

The 60 responses (not including don't know) could be classified into four themes: more help, school environment, learning, and emotional/social effects and opportunities. These responses were very consistent with those indicated in the previous table (Table 18) and also Table 3 in the grades 4-6 version of the survey.

Appendix F

Review of Inclusive Education – Parent/Guardian Survey Data

Note: The following tables describe the results of the Parent/Guardian Survey. It must be remembered that because of the small number of respondents, the results may not reflect the opinions of the population of parents/guardians.

Table 1: Years Lived on PEI		
	Frequency	Percent
Longer than 10 Years	22	78.6
5-10 Years	3	10.7
1-5 Years	2	7.1
Less than 1 Year	1	3.6
Total	28	100.0%

Table 2: Child's Grade		
	Frequency	Percent
Grade 10-12	11	39.3
Grade 7-9	11	39.3
Grade 4-6	6	21.4
Total	28	100.0

Table 3: Best Definition of Inclusive Education (Parent/Guardian Responses)		
	Frequency	Percent
1. Inclusive Education is where individual differences are celebrated and built upon in the least restrictive environment including the availability of alternative learning environments to meet diverse learning & behavioral needs.	11	39.3

2. Inclusive education is schools, classrooms, programs and activities designed for all students to participate in and learn together.	9	32.1
3. Inclusive Education provides meaningful learning experiences for all learners, regardless of ability, race, gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status.	5	17.9
4. Inclusive Education is a learning environment where all students learn together regardless of academic, physical or cognitive differences.	3	10.7
Total	28	100.0%

In the above, 23 of the respondents chose definitions of inclusive education (1, 2 and 4) that related primarily to the learning environment, i.e., that their children, regardless of different behavioral and academic abilities would learn together. Five individuals chose the definition that highlighted a more varied list of differences including race, gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

	Frequency	Percent
Specific Learning Disability LD	19	38.8%
Intellectual Developmental Disorder	7	14.3%
Mental Health	5	10.2%
Behaviour Challenges	4	8.2%
Giftedness	3	6.1%
Physical Disability Motor Impairment	3	6.1%
Speech Language Communication Disorder	3	6.1%
Other	2	4.1%
Vision Loss Including Blindness	1	2.0%
Hearing Loss, including Deaf or Hard of Hearing	1	2.0%
English Additional Language	1	2.0%

No diagnosis or difficulty	0	0.0%
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Table 5: Number of Diagnoses per Child	
	Frequenc y
0 Diagnoses	1
1 Diagnosis (1 EAL)	14
2 Diagnoses	8
3 Diagnoses	3
4 Diagnoses	3
Total	28

Table 6: Students' Programming	
Type of Programming	Frequen cy
Adaptations	15
Regular Programming	10
Individualized Education Plan	9
Academic Learning Plan	3
Registered in Courses at the 400-800 Level (High School)	3
Alternative Education	3
Transition Action Plan	2
I am not sure what programming my child is in.	2
Behaviour Support Plan	1
Other	0
Total	48

The above indicates that 28 students and enrolled in 48 programs. Table 7 indicates the number of programs per student

Table 7: Number of Programs by Student	
	Frequenc y
1 Program	13
2 Programs	9
3 Programs	2
4 Programs	2
Don't know	2
Total	28

Tables 4,5,6 and 7 illustrated the array of struggles that some students face in their learning process, and the challenges teachers face in developing educational plans for their diverse students.

Table 8: Some of the best opportunities your child has experienced participating in school	
	Frequency
Extracurricular activities (Choir, Art, Phys Ed, Sports Teams etc.)	10
Availability of extra support	8
Inclusion	4
Variety in experiences & learning	4
Extra opportunities outside of classroom	3
Peer support	3
Adapted schedules	2
Understanding and caring staff	2
Healthy living / life skills	2
CO-OP program	1
Participating in some academic classes	1
Quiet environment	1

ELP	1
<i>Total opportunities</i>	<i>42</i>

Table 9: Services involved in supporting your child	
Services	Frequency
Resource Teacher	22
Educational Assistant	13
School Counsellor	8
Autism Consultant	5
Student Wellbeing Team	4
Youth Service Worker	3
Occupational Therapy	3
Speech Language Pathology	2
EAL Itinerant Teacher	1
Peer Tutoring Support	1
Physiotherapy	1
APSEA HEAR Services	1
Workplace Assistant	1
No Support Required	1
Other	1
<i>Total Services</i>	<i>67</i>

Table 10: Strengths of the current Inclusive Education Model.	
Strengths	Frequency
Inclusion	14

Staff support	12
Adaptability	5
Paced learning	4
Communication	3
Life skills	2
Separate/small learning environments	2
Socially positive	2
Flexibility/individualized	2
Grade level curriculum	1
Hands on learning	1
Makes learning fun	1
Inclusion of parents	1
Safe	1
Total	51

Tables 11 to 14 included items involving Level of Agreement / Disagreement. The majority of respondents (60.7%-92.8%) strongly agree or agree with these statements.

Table 11: I am comfortable expressing concerns about my child's program		
	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	16	57.1
Agree	10	35.7
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	7.1
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Not Applicable	0	0
Total	28	100.0

Table 12: I have been invited by my child’s school to contribute to IEP/TAP goals

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	35.7
Agree	7	25.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	10.7
Disagree	1	3.6
Strongly Disagree	1	3.6
Not Applicable	6	21.4
Total	28	100.0

Table 13: My child’s school communicates with me in a variety of ways including face to face conversations, emails, phone

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	17	60.7
Agree	9	32.1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	7.1
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Not Applicable	0	0
Total	28	100.0

Table 14: My child’s school provides information about school and community resources, supports, and services

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	12	42.9
Agree	9	32.1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	10.7
Disagree	2	7.1

Strongly Disagree	0	0
Not Applicable	2	7.1
Total	28	100.0

Table 15: What have been some of the challenges your child has experienced participating in school?

	Frequency
Not fitting in (social)	6
Lack of communication	5
Learning (rate, different ways, resources)	4
Reading	3
Math	2
Academically overwhelmed	2
Loud environments	2
Class sizes	2
Lack of support from teachers	2
Anxiety	2
Low self confidence	1
Lack of teacher awareness	1
Test taking accommodations	1
Assistive technology	1
Classroom pullout	1
Lack of staff training	1
Behavioral approach	1
Resource allocation	1
Lack of EA (academic settings)	1

Self-expression	1
Racism	1
Total	41

Items in Tables 16 to 21 involved making level of importance ratings from 1= Most Important to 6=Least Important. Of the six items it appears that parents/guardians who responded to the survey are particularly concerned about (1) learning center space staffed with specialized professionals for students who require more individual specialized programming (Table 18 [16/26]) and (2) safe inclusive schools (Table 21 [13/26]). Interestingly, only 5 of the 26 respondents considered life skills programs (Table 20) to be a most important issue, the same number that considered it a least important issue.

Table 16: Alternative programs, classes and schools		
	Frequency	Percent
1 (Most Important)	6	21.4
2	6	21.4
3	2	7.1
4	4	14.3
5	4	14.3
6 (Least Important)	5	17.9
Total	27	100.0

Table 17: Social and emotional programs and supports		
	Frequency	Percent
1 (Most Important)	7	25.0
2	5	17.9
3	5	17.9
4	4	14.3
5	5	17.9
6 (Least Important)	0	0

Total	26	100.0
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Table 18: Learning Center space staffed with specialized professionals for students who require more individual specialized programming		
	Frequency	Percent
1 (Most Important)	16	57.1
2	2	7.1
3	2	7.1
4	3	10.7
5	2	7.1
6 (Least Important)	1	3.6
Total	26	100.0

Table 19: Transition Support (Grade to grade, school to school, school to adulthood)		
	Frequency	Percent
1 (Most Important)	6	21.4
2	6	21.4
3	5	17.9
4	3	10.7
5	2	7.1
6 (Least Important)	5	17.9
Total	27	100.0

Table 20: Life Skills Programs		
	Frequency	Percent
1 (Most Important)	5	17.9
2	4	14.3

3	4	14.3
4	4	14.3
5	4	14.3
6 (Least Important)	5	17.9
Total	26	100.0

Table 21: Safe, inclusive schools		
	Frequency	Percent
1 (Most Important)	13	46.4
2	8	28.6
3	2	7.1
4	1	3.6
5	3	10.7
6 (Least Important)	0	0
Total	27	100.0

Appendix G

Student Services Survey Results by Group

TEAM #1	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
<p>1. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges with the current inclusion model.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of universal design in the Inclusion Model (specific supports) • Some teachers are not comfortable with adaptations, etc. • Lack of integration (especially beyond Elementary grades) for complex learners • Lack of collaboration (amongst team members) • Lack of time
<p>2. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges you or your division experiences in supporting the schools or students you work with.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex student needs require multiple school teams to support the learner resulting in a time lag in communication with all the teams • Information not shared directly but second-hand
<p>3. <i>What is working well in the current inclusion model?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration among staff • Good time-management • Taking suggestions seriously
<p>4. <i>What steps need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate what is working • School teams that see the value in inclusion and are supported by the administration can work, and grow that model across PEI
<p>5. <i>Reflect upon communication and collaboration in supporting students with special educational needs in the school system. Please identify key areas or ways this could be improved upon.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a team approach to communicate goals together • Support resource teachers to be more involved

TEAM #1	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
6. <i>Think about communication with outside agencies. Please identify key areas this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More dedicated time to connect • Knowing the days when speech-language pathologists/occupational therapists are in schools • Booking visits using PowerSchool
7. <i>List any initiatives, or professional development, participated in or benefitted from within the last 5 years.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Course • Executive Skills Workshop (Peg Dawson) • Gender & Cultural Sensitivity
8. <i>Please list any evidence-based models or programs for further consideration or study.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning • Multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) • Trauma Informed Learning

Team #2	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
1. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges with the current inclusion model.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of resources and training for school staff • Lack of time for collaboration (amongst team members) • Lack of capacity and retention • Resistance to change (among staff) • Limited access to technology • Burnout rates/inconsistency with support staff
2. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges you or your division experiences in supporting the schools or students you work with.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comorbidity of diagnoses not being considered as the primary struggle with students • Lack of current and ongoing staff training and use of evidence-based practices for students with Autism • The size of caseload cannot be managed
3. <i>What is working well in the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration

Team #2	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
4. <i>What steps need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training and resources through reallocation of funding from untrained/unskilled personnel to resources and training for fewer staff • Smaller caseloads • Look at the Learning Centre model
5. <i>Reflect upon communication and collaboration in supporting students with special educational needs in the school system. Please identify key areas or ways this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including everyone in the planning process • More frequent collaborations • Theoretical learning/training from outside agencies/professionals • Being open-minded about the Autism diagnosis (Underlying problems like mental health, home environment, etc., Autism is not always to blame)
6. <i>Think about communication with outside agencies. Please identify key areas this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality hinders the flow of communication • Services provided are not known by other agencies • Inconsistencies with staffing makes for difficult communication • Creation of flow charts of who to contact
7. <i>List any initiatives, professional development, participated in or benefitted from within the last 5 years.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peers Program • Webinars (time/caseload makes attending difficult) • NVC (Non-violent Crisis Intervention) Training • AIE (Advancing Improvement in Education) Conferences • Executive Skills Workshop (Peg Dawson)
8. <i>Please list any evidence-based models or programs for further consideration or study.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma Informed Learning • Learning Center Training • Awareness Training from other specialties (speech language pathologists, occupational therapists) • Pathological demand avoidance

Team #3	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
1. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges with the current inclusion model.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prematurely transitioning students out of programs • Lack of more-intense programming • Online alternative education has had a tremendous demand and a current waitlist (especially for Junior High students) • Class environment too broad (From large class size to one-on-one) • Special Needs Assessment Profile (SNAP) criteria unfair • Dangerous behaviours • Lack of space
2. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges you or your division experiences in supporting the schools or students you work with.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents who do not follow through on services/referrals and expect schools to parent their children. • Not enough community supports (e.g., Family Ties, day treatment programs) • Schools not the best places for students struggling with mental health issues • Not enough trade/work related options during the school day
3. <i>What is working well in the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative site options
4. <i>What steps need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junior high model needs to change as these students need consistent teachers and student/adult relationship is key • Day treatment mental health program • Each school needs full time counselling services • Large schools need better student/counsellor ratio • More English as an additional language (EAL) assessment before integration into classroom

Team #3	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
5. <i>Reflect upon communication and collaboration in supporting students with special educational needs in the school system. Please identify key areas or ways this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defined roles and responsibilities • Less red tape with student wellbeing team referrals
6. <i>Think about communication with outside agencies. Please identify key areas this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More collaboration/screening in discharges from hospitals (there used to be discharge plan meetings) • Need to redefine <i>Multi Agency Support Team (MAST)</i> model and dedicate staff from outside agencies
7. <i>List any initiatives, professional development, participated in or benefitted from within the last 5 years.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PREPaRE crisis preparedness/response • Dialectical behaviour therapy (skills training for emotional problem solving) • Adventure Based Learning • Trauma Informed Care
8. <i>Please list any evidence-based models or programs for further consideration or study.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat Assessment training • Unified protocol training

Team #4	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
1. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges with the current inclusion model.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision process with parents (regarding child) • Reduced French Language exposure (some services are limited to only their first language) • Lack of resource support for French Immersion students (Intermediate and high school levels)

Team #4	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
2. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges you or your division experiences in supporting the schools or students you work with.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of personnel • Not having full-time equivalent resource positions • French Immersion interventions take longer due to need to teach language and academics simultaneously • Students with Learning Disabilities often need interventions in both French and English
3. <i>What is working well in the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French Immersion Information, Education and Communication position • Evidence-based interventions (for French Immersion students) • French Immersion resource model
4. <i>What steps need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More funding for French Immersion inclusion across all grade levels
5. <i>Reflect upon communication and collaboration in supporting students with special educational needs in the school system. Please identify key areas or ways this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaboration with the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning (in terms of tiered practices) • Increased teacher training (about the variety of needs)
6. <i>Think about communication with outside agencies. Please identify key areas this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More emphasis on teaching the Science of Reading in education programs at university • More screening from Health PEI (to help address and support students with interventions regarding entry into Early French Immersion)
7. <i>List any initiatives, or professional development, participated in or benefitted from within the last 5 years.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Learning Disabilities Conference in Montreal (online - latest research and interventions in learning

Team #4	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
8. <i>Please list any evidence-based models for further consideration or study.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMT/EMS Intervention

Team #5	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
1. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges with the current inclusion model.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of quiet space (even in 1-to-1 pullout) • Class composition
2. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges you or your division experiences in supporting the schools or students you work with.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to find qualified sign language support (ASL) staff • Some HEAR students would benefit from Psychoeducational Assessments, but PEI does not have qualified psychologists in deafness • Classroom teachers do not have time to provide daily material review for HEAR students making it is difficult to close the language gap
3. <i>What is working well in the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration • Students developing relationships with peers (which helps with communication) • Providing early intervention (babies and preschoolers) • One-on-one with parents

Team #5	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
4. <i>What steps need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational assistants and Resource Teachers allocated to give daily academic support to deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students • Specialized courses should be offered to DHH students (sign language, white cane training) • Provide HEAR staff with more American Sign Language (sign language) training • Psycho-educational Assessments for DHH students.
5. <i>Reflect upon communication and collaboration in supporting students with special educational needs in the school system. Please identify key areas or ways this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with other agencies (APSEA) • Communication with Accessibility Support • Designated Accessibility support person
6. <i>Think about communication with outside agencies. Please identify key areas this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communication with other agencies such as <i>Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority</i> • Lack of communication with Accessibility Supports • Designating an Accessibility support person to deal with needs

Team #5	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
7. <i>List any initiatives, or professional development, participated in or benefitted from within the last 5 years.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development with Certificated Listening and Spoken Language Specialist in Auditory Verbal Therapy. • Bedrock Curriculum Training • Fingerspelling Our Way • New Brunswick Autism Behavioural Interventions Course • Executive Skills Workshop (Peg Dawson) • ASL (American Sign Language) Training • Continued training re hearing aids and DM (digital modulation systems) to remain current with the changing technology
8. <i>Please list any evidence-based models or programs you or your division would for further consideration or study.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fingerspelling our Way Curriculum.

Team #6	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
1. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges with the current inclusion model.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of available support (staff, time, etc.) • The needs are becoming too diverse • Class composition • Systematic Challenges (inconsistencies across schools)

Team #6	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
2. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges you or your division experiences in supporting the schools or students you work with.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing, escalating, complex and unanticipated needs of students • Lack of supports for addressing student needs • 1 Community Access Facilitator and 1 Behavioural Consultant for the entire Island even though the population has expanded • Lack of communication between consultants and schools result in overlapping services
3. <i>What is working well in the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great understanding of needs • Online Intervention training modules • Data-driven response (importance of Data Analytics) • Staff collaboration • The help of agencies and services when students transition
4. <i>What steps need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New approach for providing support to high needs students (skill-based groupings rather than 1 on 1 with educational assistants) • Adaptive Readiness Program for K (re: toileting, etc.) • Adaptive Functioning Building for Intermediate schools to prepare students for life following public school • Opportunity to converse with government about staffing • Cohesion and consistency with School Well-being Teams (SWBT) in schools
5. <i>Reflect upon communication and collaboration in supporting students with special educational needs in the school system. Please identify key areas or ways this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaboration with the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning • Utilizing Power School capabilities for communication • Consultant teams at schools

Team #6	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
6. <i>Think about communication with outside agencies. Please identify key areas this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inviting outside agencies to divisional meetings
7. <i>List any initiatives, or professional development, participated in or benefitted from within the last 5 years.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIE Modules (<i>Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority</i>). • PREPaRE (crisis preparedness/response) • Rage to Reason • Wilson Training • Foundations • Compassion Fatigue Workshop (Francois Matthieu) • Nonviolent crisis intervention (Train the Trainer) • Power School Training • Atlantic Abilities Conference • Lost at School (Ross Greene) • Grief and Loss Workshop • Executive Skills Workshop (Peg Dawson) • UDL (Universal Design for Learning) Conference at UPEI
8. <i>Please list any evidence-based models for further consideration or study.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Science of Reading • Universal Design for Learning

Team #7	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
1. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges with the current inclusion model.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness/transparency of what is the current inclusion model • Guidelines unclear
2. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges you or your division experiences in supporting the schools or students you work with.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough time to communicate, collaborate and access information from other team members in order to coordinate assessment / interventions / recommendations to best support schools and students • Not enough quality time to build understanding and clarity re roles and responsibilities and determine who is the best lead • Teachers and education assistants stretched thin and sometimes too overwhelmed to ensure that accommodations and individual education plan goals are embedded and carried out • Lack of available space in schools that results in lost time trying find a place to work for the day
3. <i>What is working well in the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passionate staff • Collaboration amongst staff • Supported learning programs (English language

Team #7	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
<p>4. <i>What steps need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated inclusion model that moves from deficit/bahavioral model to a strength based Universal Design for Learning • Encourage a safe line of communication between consultants and schools • Connect and collaborate more regularly as a student services/school-based student services team • Special education teachers to support students with individualized programs • Considering the increasing complexity of needs, increase number of educational assistants and add Rehab assistants • Increase occupational therapy resources in grades 7-12 to support transitions following public school • Shift the approach for individual education plan goals toward developing collaborative, relevant, and meaningful goals • Include students' perspectives in developing individual education plan goals
<p>5. <i>Reflect upon communication and collaboration in supporting students with special educational needs in the school system. Please identify key areas or ways this could be improved upon.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively with students, families, school staff and student services to support students with development of skills important to their learning, active participation, autonomy, independence and overall well-being • Joint meetings and visits (to make a plan early, and to visit specific students)

Team #7	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
<p>6. <i>Think about communication with outside agencies. Please identify key areas this could be improved upon.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving reports from the IWK in a timely manner • Fostering relationships with the Student Well-being team • Better communication with Accessibility supports • Build partnerships with community agencies (that support mental health, etc.) • Better communication about who is involved in support the student
<p>7. <i>List any initiatives, professional development, participated in or benefitted from within the last 5 years.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) • Self-Regulation/Co-Regulation • Interoception (mindful self-regulation) • Executive Skills Workshop (Peg Dawson). <p>Individual PD included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensory Profile, Sensory Processing and Self-Regulation • Cognitive Orientation to Occupational Performance • Transfer, Lift, and Repositioning (TLR) training • Technical access webinars • Learn Play Thrive: Strengths-based Approach to Autism • Holland Bloorview Hospital Autism Summit • Trauma Sensitive Practice (Kim Bartell)

Team #7	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
8. <i>Please list any evidence-based models or programs further consideration or study.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation • Centre on the Developing Child • FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) • The Zones of Regulation • FOCUS on Self-Regulation • The Interoception Curriculum • All The Feelzzz (from Autism Level Up)

Team #8	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
1. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges with the current inclusion model.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of framework/guidelines and policies • Too much inconsistency in the current inclusion model (some students receive accommodations while others receive adaptations) • Lack of collaboration with parents and students
2. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges you or your division experiences in supporting the schools or students you work with.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of services hindered because there is not a clearly documented inclusive education framework within the province • Not a common language within province when discussing inclusive education • Wide range of knowledge among school professionals and, therefore, service delivery varies from school to school. • Ethical and legal issues due to family situations and lack of clarity regarding decision-making responsibilities.
3. <i>What is working well in the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional school-based teams • Flexibility in planning • Non-categorical approach (no need for diagnosis)

Team #8	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
4. <i>What steps need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of all professionals within the system • Eliminate service gaps • Commit to implementing evidence-based initiatives and programs • Provide intensive professional development across the province regarding the inclusive education model, including Universal Design for Learning • Provide professional development on the new/proposed inclusion model for all staff and link the model to school goals • Ensure the model supports students with specific exceptionalities (gifted, talented, specific learning disabilities) • Documented plans and access to supports/services consistent with the current evidence in the field
5. <i>Reflect upon communication and collaboration in supporting students with special educational needs in the school system. Please identify key areas or ways this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistency of communication and collaboration across schools • Clearly defined roles and responsibilities • Clearly defined documents that outline the Inclusive Education policies
6. <i>Think about communication with outside agencies. Please identify key areas this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly identifying roles and responsibilities • Documentation that clearly communicates the types of services available • Providing expectations when a student is receiving services. • Providing definitions of commonly used terminology

Team #8	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
7. <i>List any initiatives, professional development, participated in or benefitted from within the last 5 years.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PREPaRE (crisis preparedness/response) training has been particularly helpful to the team and to service delivery within the system • Training on cultural competency, nondiscriminatory practices, and trauma informed practices have been particularly important for the team
8. <i>Please list any evidence-based models or programs you or your division would recommend for further consideration or</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS uses data to guide instructional decision-making)

Team # 9	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
1. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges with the current inclusion model.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of human resource support • Uncertainty of what the inclusion model is • Lack of time for collaboration (amongst team members) • Lack of time for training • Vast diversity of needs
2. <i>Identify the number one challenge and two or three other challenges you or your division experiences in supporting the schools or students you work with.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexity and diversity of needs in school population have increased, but human resources have not • For students with complex communication needs our inclusion model depends on school staff who do not have specialized training
3. <i>What is working well in the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care for students • Versatile Inclusion (respect for all) • Implementation of Inclusive model (some schools)

Team # 9	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
4. <i>What steps need to be taken to improve the current inclusion model?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shared vision of meaningful inclusion with clearly defined objectives, priorities and implementation processes • Student support should be based on need rather than diagnosis • Students requiring specialized interventions should be receiving support from trained professionals • Consider adding Special Education Teachers to case manage and direct the support students are receiving • More neuro-diverse staff to meet demands of changing social climate
5. <i>Reflect upon communication and collaboration in supporting students with special educational needs in the school system. Please identify key areas or ways this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team-based approach (opinions from different professionals) • Standardizing individual education plan writing and implementation • Clearly defined roles and responsibilities • Increased communication with parents
6. <i>Think about communication with outside agencies. Please identify key areas this could be improved upon.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better documentation/communication from medical professionals (in regard to follow-ups on recommendations) • Lack of communication with Accessibility Supports • Difficulty communicating with case workers

Team # 9	
Item	Brief Summary of Responses
7. <i>List any initiatives, professional development, participated in or benefitted from within the last 5 years.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biannual Speech language pathologist Summit • Provincial/national/international conferences such as NBASLPA (New Brunswick Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists Conference) • AAC International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication Conference • Speech language pathology-led working groups within the team (e.g., neurodiversity affirming practice; augmentative and alternative communication) • Pursuing learning experiences that share first-hand experiences of those with communication disorders • Executive Skills Workshop (Peg Dawson) was valued by the Speech language pathologists and is an example of professional development that met the diverse needs of Student Services staff
8. <i>Please list any evidence-based models or programs you or your division would recommend for further consideration or study.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Inclusion Model

Appendix H

List of Stakeholder Meetings & Focus Groups

Engagement Type	Participants	Organization
Information Sharing & Information Gathering	<i>Joint Committee on Teaching & Learning</i>	PEITF
Information Sharing & Information Gathering	<i>Student Services Committee PEITF Executive</i>	PEITF
Information Gathering	<i>Director of PSB</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>Managers of Student Services</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>Student Services Director</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>PSB Director of Human Resources</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>Manager of Policy and Planning and FOIPP Coordinator</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>Director of EAL/FAL Services</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>Administrative Support Leaders</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>Information Technology Facilitator</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>Community Access Facilitator</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>French Immersion Consultant</i>	PSB
Information Sharing	<i>Student Services Divisional Teams</i>	PSB
Information Gathering	<i>Resource Teachers</i>	PSB & CSLF

Information Gathering	<i>Superintendent</i>	CSLF
Information Gathering	<i>Director of Administrative services and finances</i>	CSLF
Information Gathering	<i>Director of Program Services</i>	CSLF
Information Gathering	<i>Student Services Coordinator</i>	CSLF
Information Gathering	<i>Program Lead Student Well Being Team</i>	Department of Education
Information Sharing	<i>CUPE 3260</i>	PSB & CSLF
Information Gathering	<i>Powerschool Team</i>	PSB, CSLF & DEEY
Information Gathering	<i>Director of English Program & Services</i>	DEEY
Information Gathering	<i>Director of French Programs & Services</i>	DEEY
Information Gathering	<i>Director of Finance and Administration</i>	DEEY
Information Gathering	<i>Executive Director Educational Services</i>	DEEY
Information Gathering	<i>Manager of English Programs</i>	DEEY
Information Gathering	<i>Coordinator of English Programs & Services</i>	DEEY
Information Gathering	<i>Director of Early Childhood Development</i>	DEEY
Information Gathering	<i>Early Childhood Resource Coordinator</i>	DEEY

Information Gathering	<i>Children with Complex Needs Coordinator,</i>	Department of Health
Information Gathering	<i>Autism Coordination Act Project Lead</i>	Executive Council
Information Gathering	<i>Accessibility Supports</i>	Department Social Development & Seniors
Focus Group (SNAP Process)	<i>Managers of Student Services</i>	<i>PSB & CSLF</i>
Focus Group (Kindergarten Needs and Kindergarten Transition Process)	<i>Managers of Student Services</i>	<i>PSB & CSLF</i>
Focus Group (External specialised Supports, Threat Assessment Process, Alternative Education)	<i>Counselling Consultants</i>	<i>PSB</i>
Focus Group (School Psychology Services Threat Assessment, Alternative Education)	<i>School Psychologists</i>	<i>PSB</i>
Interview	<i>Program Manager Arts, Media, and Community Studies</i>	Holland College
Interview	<i>Co-coordinator of the Faculty of Education Early Literacy and Numeracy Outreach Project</i>	UPEI
Interview	<i>Assistant Professor of Education</i>	UPEI
Meeting	<i>Office of the Child & Youth Advocate</i>	Child & Youth Advocate Office

Consultation	<i>Office of the Child & Youth Advocate Youth Advisory Committee</i>	Child & Youth Advocate Office
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Appendix I

Child & Youth Advisory Committee

Focus Group

Summary of Discussion

September, 2023

Participants who could not attend the focus group had the opportunity to provide answers to the questions online.

Question #1

Inclusion What does it mean to you?

The word “include” is in Inclusion. It means everyone is involved. People need different things, and “what you need is what you need.” As you get older the expectations change but inclusion should not change. As you go up in grades the support seems to lessen. But sometimes, the need does not change. Inclusion means students should be involved, and support and adaptations are provided for what is needed.

Sometimes you do not see yourself as “included.” The curriculum can be based on Western History, so sometimes connecting or relating to the curriculum is hard. There are programs that can be very exclusionary. While some kids might need programs like Alternative Education, these are exclusionary programs.

Question #2

What is school like for you?

School is a place to learn, it is about activities, peers, connections, and belonging. Some school sports are inclusive, however, depending on how competitive the situation is, the coach may only choose to play the good players. School can have ups and downs, but your mood and mindset determine how your day goes.

Sometimes the school environment can be rushed and pushy and people do not know how to treat people well. Schools can be confusing. It is important to have a designated person to go to. Having an organizational chart to know who to contact with concerns would be helpful.

Bullying can be an issue. If people are bullied, they will not do well in school, this impacts their learning. Schools need to review and watch cameras more to deal with student discipline.

Question #3

What is something that could be different? How could school be better for all students?

Look at ways student councils can reflect more of a Student's voice and place to share concerns so that input is welcome and change might happen. Some student Councils are only about events and activities.

Question #4

What do you hope might come from the Review on Inclusive Education?

Increase the opportunity for student input in overall learning and plans Teachers often see things from their perspective. It would be good if the student perspective could be considered. Students would like to have an opportunity to express what they need and, if they need support, what that support will look like.

Appendix J

Phased In Implementation Plan

Feedback gathered during each phase of the Implementation of the proposed Continuum of Inclusion and refinement as implementation continues.

Phase #1		System Level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and develop policy and guidelines for SNAP process, standardised SNAP process, and forms. • Establish an Inclusive Education Working Group. • Update all policies and guidelines to reflect Inclusive Language • Along with the Education Authorities, adopt the Department of Health’s definition of Complex Needs. • Review section 3(5) of the Minister’s Directive Staffing & Funding Program to determine the most effective model for Resource Teacher Staffing, • Establish a Responsive Staffing Model • Establish an Inclusive Education link on the Learn platform to provide information and documents to support the Continuum. • Adopt the Guidelines for Respecting, Accommodating, and Supporting Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexual Orientation as part of the Continuum. • Replace the word adaptation with accommodation. • Establish a Minister’s Directive on Inclusive Education with annual updates as the Continuum of Inclusion is phased in. • Track the implementation of the Inclusive Education Review recommendations and report annually. 			
School Level			
Professional Learning & Support	Responsive Classroom Interventions & Supports	Targeted Interventions and Supports	Enhanced Specialised & External Supports
<p>In collaboration with Social Emotional Learning (SEL) initiative provide professional learning to develop staff competencies in UDL, Differentiated Instruction.</p> <p>EAL Online Learning Modul</p> <p>Continue APSEA AIE Partnership and offer Autism Spectrum</p>	<p>Adjust Foundations funding formula to align the percentage of the number of students not meeting 80% to provide Tier #2 Interventions</p> <p>Establish a Universal Screening Program for (K-6) to support teachers in monitoring</p>	<p>Funding to PSB & CSLF to develop within ‘Special Programs’ data tracking for Critical Incident Response</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Special Needs Allocation Process (SNAP), Academic Learning Plans within PowerSchool.</p> <p>Pilot Learning Center Model</p>	<p>Provide VTRA (Violence Threat Risk Assessment) Training to High Schools.</p> <p>Expand Student Well Being Team Family Support Workers to more Families of schools.</p> <p>Partner with Dept of Health Complex Needs Navigator to identify children and youth with</p>

<p>Disorder & Behavioural Interventions Online Course</p> <p>Collaborate with Holland College on Behaviour Assistant Certificate.</p>	<p>the progress of all learners.</p> <p>Ongoing Science of Reading research and implementation.</p> <p>Inclusive Education Working Group</p> <p>Review and update Academic Learning Plans (ALPs)</p>	<p>(4 K-6 Schools)</p> <p>Update Standards and guidelines for IEPs and adopt a Competency-Based Model.</p> <p>Review & Update Behavior Resource Teacher & Support Planning</p> <p>Establish a Permanent FI Inclusive Education Consultant to PSB.</p> <p>Provide FTE Community Access Facilitator to CSLF</p> <p>Provide 1.0 FTE EAL Teacher to Support FAL Students to support FAL students in CSLF who require English Language Support.</p> <p>EAL/FAL Division continues the implementation STEPP Pilot Program</p> <p>(School Transition EAL Pilot Program)</p>	<p>complex medical needs before school entry.</p> <p>Collaborate with the Departments of Health & Justice to increase provincial access for children & youth to the Behavior Support Team, Insight and Strength Programs</p>
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Appendix J

Phase #2	System Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the PEITF Class Composition Funding Agreement to determine if it meets the intended need. • Establish a student-centered transition process for those identified with exceptionalities/neurodiverse needs. <p>Early Years to Kindergarten School to School School to Community.</p> <p>Students returning from homeschooling or students who have no recent educational documentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the Department of Education & Early Years, Early Childhood Association, Department of Education & Early Years PowerSchool Team and Education Authorities to provide access to the Early Years Program for PowerSchool Special Programs. This would benefit the capacity of the K-12 system to forecast and track potential incoming Kindergarten needs and identify additional supports. • Review all existing Alternative Education Programs, including Enhanced Learning Placement (ELP), Primary Enhanced Learning Placement, and A+, to determine the effectiveness, best practices, and wrap-around supports required for these programs. • Request a review of the roles and responsibilities of PSB & CSLF Student Services Divisions. • Establish Planning Guidelines for Educational Facilities that outline accessibility specifications with a focus on universal access and barrier-free design. • Engage in broader consultation and partnerships with community-based agencies (Autism Society, Learning Disabilities Association, Home and School, PEERS Alliance, Association for Community Living, etc) regarding the Continuum of Inclusion. 	

School Level			
Professional Learning & Support	Responsive Classroom Interventions and Supports	Targeted Interventions and Supports	Enhanced specialised & External Supports
<p>In collaboration with Social Emotional Learning (SEL) initiative provide professional learning to develop staff competencies in trauma-informed, Cultural Competence.</p> <p>Continue to establish a collaborative partnership with UPEI to offer courses in to build teacher</p>	<p>Pilot Enhanced Kindergarten Orientation Program at four schools.</p> <p>Collaborate with the Education Authorities and CUPE 3260 to establish a Classroom</p>	<p>Funding to PSB & CSLF to develop within ‘Special Programs’ online referral access for</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Violence Threat Risk Assessment</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">PSB /CSL Student Services Centralized Referral etc.</p> <p>within PowerSchool.</p>	<p>VTRA (Violence Threat Risk Assessment) Training to Junior High and Elementary.</p> <p>Cross-departmental collaboration to increase access to parenting programs such as Triple P Parenting Program, Handle with Care, Coping Power Program,</p>

<p>capacity across the system.</p> <p>Establish Bus Driver training for all new and substitute bus drivers to promote a positive bus climate.</p>	<p>Assistant pilot project.</p> <p>Department of Education & Early Years, PSB /CSLF Student Services adopt Collaborative Response as a structure to support student learning as part of the Continuum of Inclusion. (K-6 Focus)</p> <p>Include the principles of Universal Design for Learning in all curriculum renewal.</p> <p>Establish a Universal Screening Program for (7-9) to support teachers in monitoring the progress of all learners.</p>	<p>Expand Pilot of Learning Center Model (12 additional K-6) schools</p> <p>Allocate FTE to support EAL services with specialised support (Inclusive Education, Counselling & Autism Spectrum Disorder.)</p> <p>Partner with Public Health to educate parents/caregivers at 4-year Public Health Assessment about the readiness skills required for kindergarten.</p> <p>Collaborate with the Education Authorities, the Department of Health, and the Autism Coordination Act Lead establish a Provincial Autism Protocol to guide and support service delivery for school-aged children & youth diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.</p> <p>Review and update the following: <i>Guidelines for Resource Teachers, Resource Mode, School Counselling Guidelines</i></p> <p>Establish an expanded classification system for Educational Assistant Positions to be more responsive to the diverse and complex needs in the system.</p>	<p>and The Incredible Years.</p> <p>The Department of Education & Early Years as Lead collaborates with the Education Authorities Student Service Division, Departments of Health, Justice and Social Development & Seniors, to establish a Child & Youth Intensive Case Management Team-Complex Needs for children and youth who require significant extraordinary services and support.</p>
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Appendix J

Phase #3 System Level			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Administrator Leadership Program Modules specifically as they apply to Inclusion to establish administrator competencies to support Inclusive Education. • Review research on the age of entry for Kindergarten and revise the Education Act as needed. • Review the Home Education Regulation and the PEI Education Act to ensure alignment regarding the date of intention to enroll in school. • Establish Planning Guidelines for Educational facilities that outline accessibility specifications with a focus on universal access and barrier-free design. • Update the Teachers and Support Staff Working Together Standards and Guidelines. • Consider additional requirements such as (SEL, UDL, Cultural Competency, and Restorative Practices) to be included in teacher certification. 			
School Level			
Professional Learning & Support	Responsive Classroom Interventions and Supports	Targeted Interventions and Supports	Enhanced specialised & External Supports
<p>In collaboration with SEL initiative provide professional learning to develop staff competencies in Restorative Practices</p> <p>Establish Inclusive Schools Initiative</p>	<p>Department of Education & Early Years, PSB /CSLF Student Services adopt Collaborative Response as a structure to support student learning as part of the Continuum of Inclusion. (7-12 Focus)</p> <p>Expansion of Classroom Assistant pilot project.</p>	<p>Expand the Pilot of the Learning Center Model (12 additional K-6 Schools)</p> <p>Develop a Transition to Kindergarten Readiness Program in schools with large kindergarten populations.</p> <p>Establish an EAL Teaching and Learning Center to support families, students, and educators.</p> <p>Align the Student Services Delivery model with the Continuum of Inclusion. Prioritization of Student Services Service Delivery will be for those who require support from Tier</p>	<p>Finish VTRA (Violence Threat Risk Assessment) Training for Elementary and any new staff.</p> <p>Cross-departmental partnership to establish specialised training opportunities for Group Homes, Foster Families, and Respite Providers.</p>

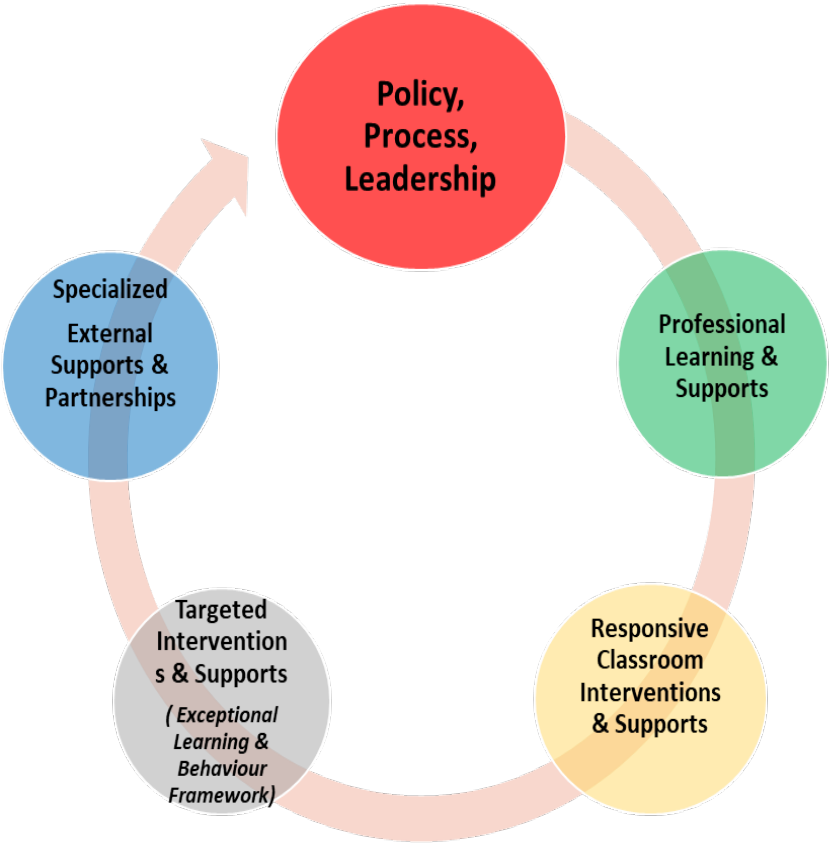
		#3 Exceptional Learning & Behaviour Framework or Tier #4 Enhanced specialised /External Supports on the Continuum.	
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Appendix J

Phase #4 System Level			
Full Implementation of the Continuum of Inclusion			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any further Policy & Process Revisions • Program Evaluation of Pilot Projects 			
School Level			
Professional Learning & Support	Responsive Classroom Interventions and Supports	Targeted Interventions and Supports	Enhanced Specialised & External Supports
Ongoing Professional Learning as identified.	Department of Education & Early Years, PSB /CSLF Student Services adopt Collaborative Response as a structure to support student learning as part of the Continuum of Inclusion. (Ongoing Implementation all grades) Evaluation of Classroom Assistant pilot project followed by revisions and possible expansion. Establish a system-wide data system to support the	Funding to PSB & CSLF to develop within ‘Special Programs’ online storage and protected access for Assessments(Educational, Speech, OT, Psychology, etc.) Case Notes, Transition Plans, etc., within PowerSchool Learning Centers in all Elementary Schools. (Last 12 K-6 Schools)	Establish a provincial protocol for (VRTA) Violence Risk Threat Assessment

	monitoring of all students as part of the Continuum of Inclusion		
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***Phase 4 Continuum of Inclusion
Review, Evaluation & Maintenance***



Appendix K

Continuum of Inclusion- Through Collaborative Response

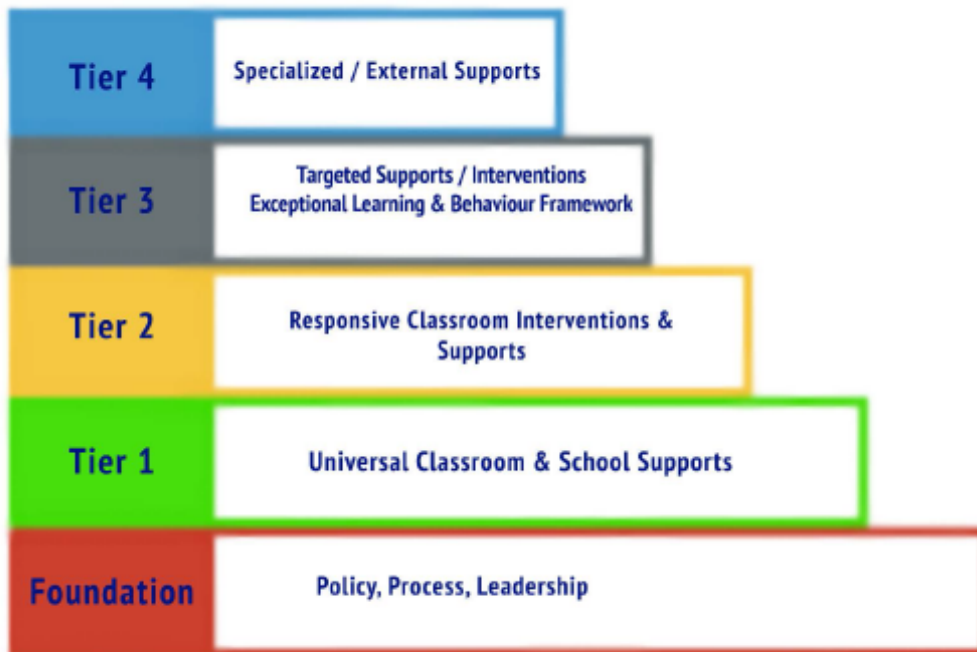
(Concept Model)

Proposed Continuum of Inclusion Through Collaborative Response (Hewson & Hewson)

Within Collaborative Response a continuum of support defines 4 key tiers of support. Each layer provides additional support that a student may need. It is the supports that are tiered not the students.

- Tier 1 Universal Classroom and School Supports - Programs that are received by all students
- Tier 2 Responsive Classroom Interventions and Supports - Needed by some of the students some of the time within the classroom (accommodations, classroom interventions, additional strategies)
- Tier 3 Targeted Supports and Interventions: supports provided outside the classroom (Small Group, 1:1 Interventions)
- Tier 4 Specialized/External Supports are individualized for students with intensive needs (Student Services, outside agencies and external service providers)

All Inclusive Education Review recommendations are aligned with the Continuum of Supports.



Appendix L

Classroom Assistant Pilot Project- Detailed Description Tier #2 Responsive Classroom Interventions & Supports

Rationale

There have been significant changes in classroom composition since the last Minister's Directive on Special Education. Reasons for these changes include international, national, legal, and rights-based laws and legislation, socio-economic issues, and population growth. In a recent survey of teachers in the PSB & CSLF, approximately 79% of teachers indicated that disruptive student behavior was the most significant class composition concern. Many teachers expressed frustration that behaviours of students and diverse needs are taking more time and energy and impacting student learning. Establishing classroom assistants to support students in developing their academic, social, and emotional skills will help teachers provide a more responsive classroom environment and support an optimal learning environment.

Role of Classroom Assistant

Classroom Assistants will be assigned to classrooms. They will work at the classroom teacher's direction to support students in developing their academic, social, and emotional skills in a learning environment that is developmentally responsive to their strengths and needs. Classroom Assistants will not support students requiring Educational Assistant Support as identified through the SNAP process. The Classroom Assistant is an “in-class support model” and not a “pull-out of class model.”

Pilot Details

The Department of Education & Early Years, in collaboration with the Education Authorities and CUPE 3260, collaborate with the Education Authorities and CUPE 3260 will develop a model and a plan to establish a Classroom Assistant pilot project. Classroom Assistants will be current CUPE 3260 employees and will support teachers in building a responsive classroom. The school administration will determine the Classroom Assistant's classroom assignment. Classroom assistants can be moved to various classrooms in their assigned school throughout the school year.

The number of Classroom Assistants assigned would be based on enrollment of May 31st of the current school year. Classroom Assistants would be allocated to schools with K-6 grade levels using the following allocation model:

Between 100 and 249 K-6 students,	1 CA
Between 250 and 399 K-6 students,	2 CA
Between 400 and 549 K-6 students,	3 CA

Greater than 549 K-6 students

4 CA

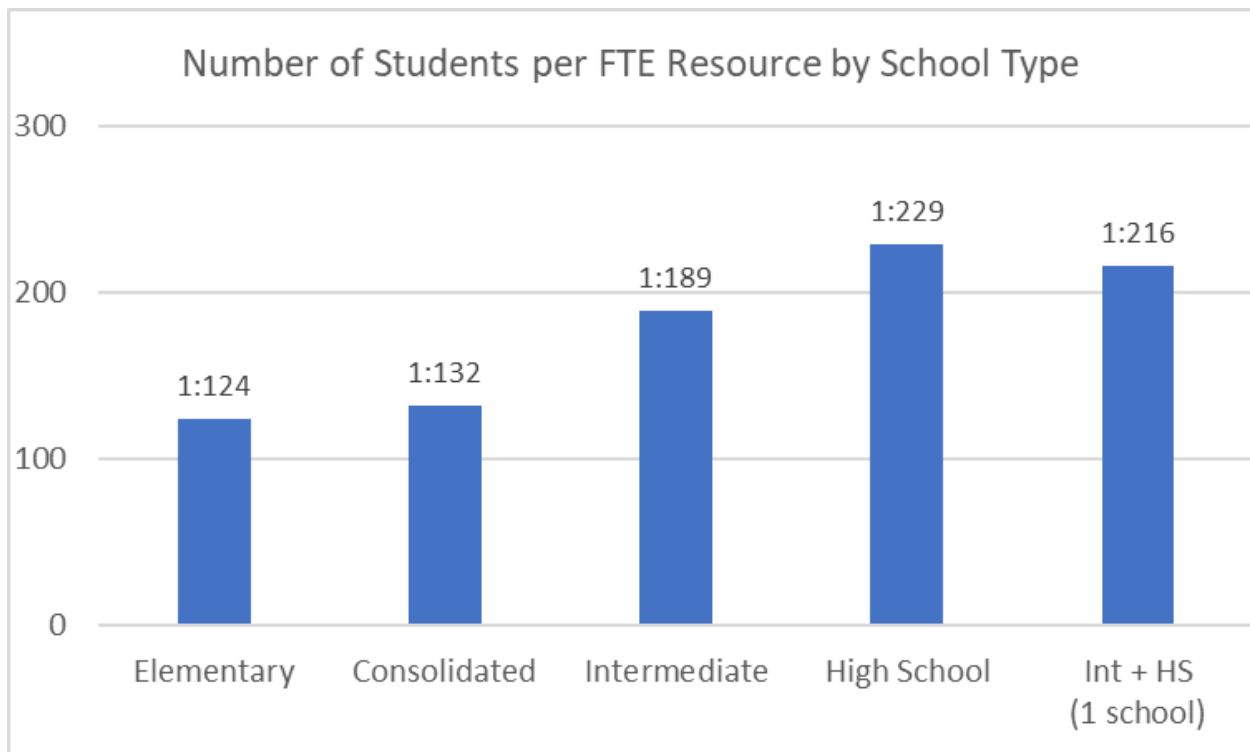
NOTE: The enrollment threshold is based on recommendations from other jurisdictions and may require further assessment and review.

The purpose of this pilot project would be to re-purpose and re-distribute some current EA positions, not to create additional EA positions. The pilot must be reviewed for effectiveness and consideration of expansion into other grades. Listed below are recommendations that are part of the Inclusive Education Review. **These four recommendations must be established before establishing the Classroom Assistant Pilot Project.**

- Develop policy and guidelines for the Special Needs Allocation Process (SNAP) used by the PSB & CSLF to determine and allocate CUPE 3260 support.
- Establish a Learning Center Model to provide targeted support/instruction to students with Individualized Education Programming and students significantly below grade level.
- Review Behaviour Resource Teacher Model & Behaviour Support Planning
- Develop teacher and staff competencies in SEL, Universal Design for Learning, and Differentiated Instruction.

Appendix M

Special Education Density Ratio Model



Number of Students per Full Time Equivalent Resource Teacher by School

Appendix N

Learning Center Pilot (Primary/Elementary)- Detailed Description Tier #3 Exceptional Learning & Behaviour Framework

Goal: The Learning Center will support students with Individualized Education Plans or students who are significantly below grade level and the teachers who support them to achieve educational, adaptive functioning, and social-emotional goals in an inclusive environment.

Rationale for Pilot

In 2018 The School Psychology Action Plan was implemented. An intended outcome of this strategy was to lessen the wait times for assessment and diagnosis and to provide timely access to interventions for students who required them. As a result of this strategy, there have been improvements in assessment wait times. Current wait times for assessment in the Public Schools Branch (PSB) range from 1 to 1.5 years for PSB School Psychologists. La Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF) has had difficulty filling the School Psychologist position. As a result, a psychologist from New Brunswick has been contracted to complete assessments for French first-language students. These assessments are typically completed within a year. Once students are assessed by a psychologist, recommendations are provided, which may include the need for Academic Interventions.

Academic interventions support academic needs beyond general instruction. Students may be pulled out of the general classroom for a specific time. An intervention block typically lasts six to eight weeks. With the increase in students being assessed, the current demand for academic interventions has impacted the ability of Resource Teachers to support programming for students who have Individualized Education Plans or students who are significantly below grade level. Establishing a Learning Center Model will relieve pressures on the current Resource model and provide programming support to students who have Individualized Education Plans or to students who are significantly below grade level and the support staff and teachers who support them.

Who Will Access the Learning Center

- Students on Individualized Programs and or students who are significantly below grade level.
- Other students may be considered for learning center support per a referral process.
- Approximately **15-20** students depending on school size and need may be supported by the Learning Center Teacher throughout the year.

Role of the Learning Center Classroom & Teacher

The Learning Center is a classroom that will be established in a school and staffed by a full-time trained Resource Teacher. The Learning Center Teacher will have an understanding and commitment to inclusive education in the delivery of instruction and evaluation of all students

within their teaching assignment. Learning Center Teachers will collaborate with teachers, EAs, and parents/ guardians, in the development and implementation of individualized programs or Individualized Education Plans. Students identified for learning center support may access the Learning Center to work on targeted goals as identified in the program planning process. The Learning Center will look different at each school site, depending on student needs. Students may be grouped by instructional need. Some students may require only one grouping each day, but some may require more. Collaborative Case Planning and scheduling at each school to prioritize students who attend the Learning Center will be necessary. Learning Center Teachers will have time built into the schedule (**2 periods /blocks in a 6-day cycle**) to collaborate with the classroom teacher to identify programming and strategies that support the student in the classroom environment.

The Learning Center does not replace the regular classroom for a student

<p>The Learning Center Pilot Project will provide increased monitoring for students significantly below grade level and/or require Individualized Education Programming/Plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of a Learning Center Teacher to support these students. • Criteria for Learning Center Teacher Competencies • Monthly data tracking of students supported by the Learning Center
<p>The Learning Center Pilot Project will support targeted interventions for students significantly below grade level and/or require Individualized Education Programming/Plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator Feedback • Teacher Feedback Program Evaluation • Learning Center Teacher Self-Evaluation • Data tracking of referrals to the Learning Center
<p>The Learning Center Pilot Project will build teacher and support staff capacity to support students significantly below grade level and/or who require Individualized Education Programming/Plans in the classroom environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher and Support Staff Feedback and Evaluation of the Learning Center Program. • Administrator Feedback • Tracking of Collaborative Case Planning Meetings

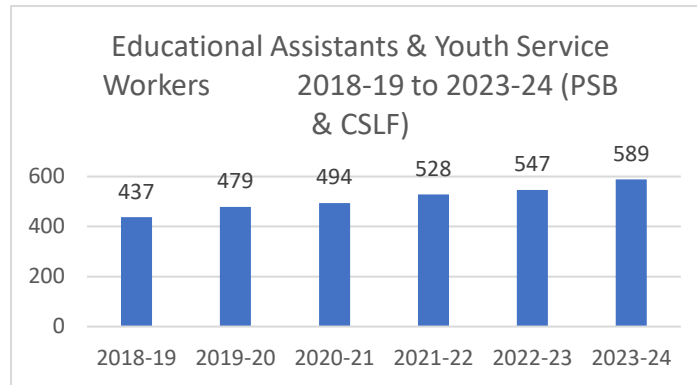
<p>The Learning Center Pilot Project will provide increased direction and oversight of programs for students significantly below grade level and/or who require Individualized Education Programming/Plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based focus groups during the pilot to provide feedback on the Learning Center Model.
<p>The Learning Center Pilot Project will provide opportunities for students to participate in an inclusive learning environment that will support their individual goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Feedback • Administrator • Parent Survey • Teacher Feedback
<p>The Learning Center Pilot Project will provide parents and caregivers with an increased understanding of their children’s Individualized programming.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Survey

School Selection

- Three schools in the PSB and 1 school in CSLF will be chosen to participate in the Learning Center Pilot.
- Consideration will be given to choosing schools from a variety of families of schools. School demographics such as size, programs, enrollment, and capacity will be considered.
- Schools participating in the pilot will be required to provide classroom space for the Learning Center.

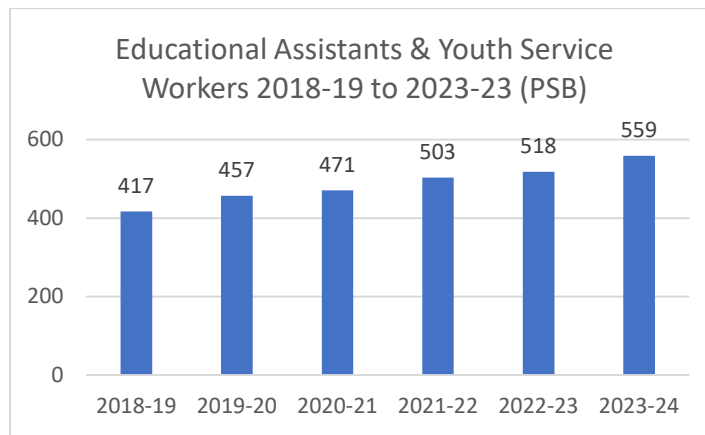
Appendix O

Increase in EAs and YSWs from 2018-19 to 2023-24 (PSB & CSLF combined)



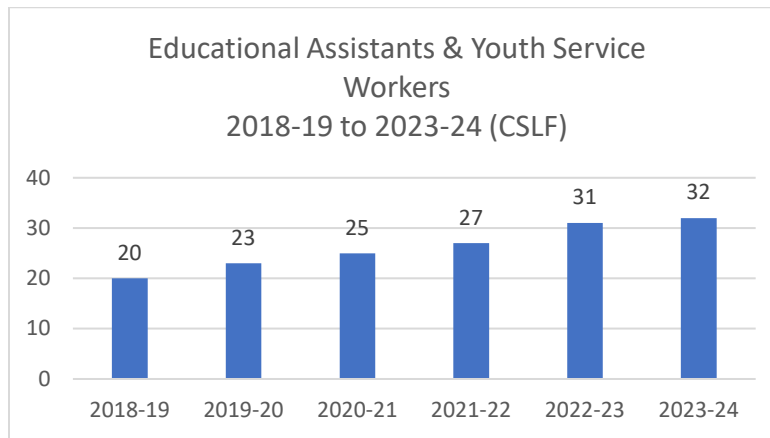
The percentage of EAs and YSWs increased by 25.6% from 2018-19 to 2023-24.

Increase in EAs and YSWs from 2018-19 to 2023-24 (PSB)



In the PSB the percentage of EAs and YSWs increased by 25.5% from 2018-19 to 2023-24.

Increase in EAs and YSWs from 2018-19 to 2023-24 (CSLF)



In the CSLF the percentage of EAs and YSWs increased by 34.4% from 2018-19 to 2023-24.

Appendix P

Student Well Being Team Infographic



(Used with permission from PEI Student Well Being Team)

Appendix Q

Secretariat Update – March 2023



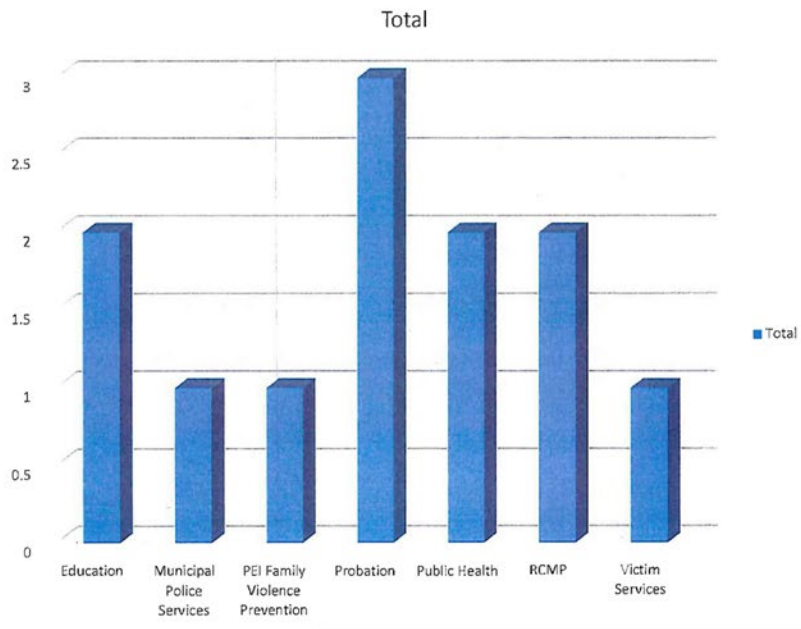
Bridge Stats Jan 1, 2022 – February 28, 2022

Bridge Stats January 1, 2023 – February 28, 2023

Number of referrals:	22	Number of referrals:	12
Number of referrals determined to be in AER*:	20	Number of referrals determined to be in AER*:	10
Number of reopen referrals:	4	Number of reopen referrals:	0
Family Referrals:	5	Family Referrals:	3
Individual Referrals:	17	Individual Referrals:	9
Number of people supported:	22	Number of people supported:	16

*AER = Acutely Elevated Risk

Referrals by agency: January 1, 2023 - February 28, 2023

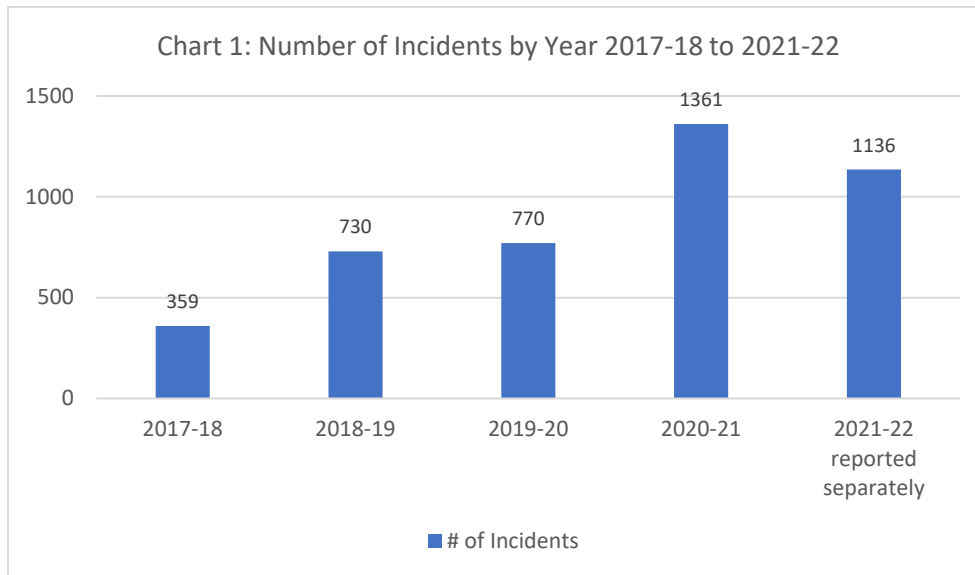


(Used with permission from PEI Bridge Secretariat)

Appendix R

Public Schools Branch Physical Incident Summary 2017-18 to 2021-22

The following is a summary of Physical Incidents that occurred at schools in the PEI Public Schools Branch across the five-year period between 2017-2018 and 2021-2022 (refer to Chart 1). There were a number of issues with the data that limit its reliability. (1) The physical incident reporting structure changed considerably over the five-year period restricting year-to-year comparisons. For example, the grades of students were reported for only one of the five years. It is reasonable to assume that physical incidents committed by older students would be more impactful than those of very young students. (2) The outbreak of COVID-19 beginning in March 2019 limited the number of days children attended school. But there seemed to be a significant spike in incidents in 2020-21 and 2021-22. Could that spike be related to the tension and uncertainty created by COVID-19? The data cannot give any insights into that issue. (3) Incidents that occurred during the 2021-2022 school year were reported using a generic format that did not give a clear indication of the type, seriousness or level of threat of the occurrences. Most incidents during that year were reported as: (a) Aggressive behavior towards CUPE 3260 staff (behavior which could include slapping, kicking, hitting, biting, throwing objects, etc.), and (b) Aggressive behavior toward PEITF, CUPE 3260 staff and/or students (behavior which could include slapping, kicking, hitting, biting, throwing objects, etc.). Because of the generic format, the 2021-2022 incidents have been reported separately. (4) It appeared that some incidents were reported more than once. In the data from 2017-18 to 2020-21, 88 incidents were considered duplicates and were excluded from the analysis, and in 2021-22, 151 incidents were excluded. However, it is likely that the number of duplicate cases was even higher. It appears that if more than one staff person was involved in an incident, each person involved reported it, and because the incident was described in different ways it was difficult to determine if it was the same incident or a duplicate.



During 2017-2018 to 2020-2021, 3,220 physical incidents were reported (not including duplicates). Table 1 (below) indicates toward whom the incidents were directed. In some cases, an incident was directed toward a number of individuals, i.e., some combination of staff, students and self. The majority of incidents were directed toward Educational Assistants (EA) and Youth Service Workers (YSW). This outcome is not surprising considering the amount of time many of these students spend with those individuals. Of the 1,840 incidents directed toward staff, 98 were directed toward teachers and/or principals, again suggesting that for much of their time at school these students are with staff other than their classroom teachers. Of those 98 incidents, 24 also included other staff, such as an EA.

Table 1: To Whom Incidents Were Directed		
	Frequency	Percent
Incidents directed toward staff	1,840	57.1%
Incidents directed toward student/s	651	20.2%
Incidents directed toward self	165	5.1%
Incidents directed toward combination of staff, student/s, self	349	10.8%
Incidents not directed toward anyone	212	6.6%
Description of incident missing	3	0.1%
Total	3,220	100.0%

Table 2 indicates the overall nature of the incidents. Physical aggression accounted for 51.6% of the events and far exceeded any other type of action. The use of the body plus nearby objects accounted for 14.0% of the incidents, and verbal aggression plus physical aggression was displayed in 10.3% of the incidents.

Sometimes situations occur that require the assistance of individuals with Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NVC) training. NVC consists of various intervention techniques for aggressive, threatening, or violent behaviors. The goal of NVC skills is to maintain the safety of everyone involved while being supportive and respectful of the individual. The Physical Incident data indicated that between 2017-18 and 2020-21 NVC was required 255 times.

Table 23: Non-violent Crisis Intervention and Assisted Transport		
	Frequency	Percent
Incidents toward staff	172	67.5
Incidents toward student/s	17	6.7
Incidents toward self	11	4.3
Combination of staff, student/s, self	28	11.0
Incidents not directed toward anyone	27	10.6
Total Number of Incidents	255	100.0

Recommendations for Physical Incident Reporting

1. Create a data entry format that will remain consistent over time to compare the number and type of incidents by year. Without such a mechanism it will be impossible to determine if the number and severity of incidents is increasing or decreasing.
2. To avoid duplication and/or over-reporting, if more than one staff person is involved in or privy to an incident, the incident should be reported in detail by one person only, or if reporting by each person involved is mandatory, a code should be used to indicate it is the same incident.
3. Incidents should be reported as soon as possible following the incident to avoid loss of information.
4. Training should be available regarding reporting of incidents and data entry.
5. A new Critical Incident Reporting Form is being developed to be used within PowerSchool

