

A.9 Description of a Collaborative Preschool-to-School Transition Process in Hamilton



HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for the opportunity to highlight the City of Hamilton's process for students with special needs transitioning to school. We have developed a wonderful collaborative partnership here in Hamilton. Representation includes Community Care Access Centre; Hamilton Health Sciences, McMaster Children's Hospital; Early Words; City of Hamilton; Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board; Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board; and Integration Resources Hub. Integration Resources Hub represents those organizations that provide support for special needs children prior to school entry. These agencies include: Early Childhood Integration Support Services, the City of Hamilton, District Council of Co-operative Pre-schools, Community Living Hamilton and McMaster Children's Hospital.

As a partnership, we are working towards a common goal. Our goal is that a positive experience occurs for families and children as they transition from pre-school to school. Our values are that children with special needs and their families be treated with respect and honesty. We understand that the process of transition creates anxiety and questions for parents. Our process was developed to build confidence, empowerment and independence by communicating to parents the programs, supports and services that are available to students in school. It also assists our schools to have available the resources required for September when the child arrives. Our committee begins planning in October prior to the children registering in school. In December we mail out to parents the Child Information Sheet and Invitation to our Parent Information Evening. We hold a Parent Information Evening in January. The first part of the agenda is prepared and presented by our pre-school agencies, and the second part of the agenda allows parents to meet with either the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board or the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board. In the spring, individual meetings are held with the parents, individuals they wish to invite, and the schools. Discussion at these meetings focus on the child's strengths and needs, in order to arrange appropriate support and services to be available in September.

We are very proud of the process we have developed here in Hamilton and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED] Manager
Communication Services

attach.