

## Working Together for Student Success

### Community Service Partners in Our Schools

Cowichan Valley School District understands that some students will require services and supports provided by agencies in the community. It is essential that community services be coordinated to ensure consistency in interventions and an integrated approach to service delivery. The Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN) Framework for Action, provides a foundation for coordinated, collaborative action among people working in the health, education and social service sectors in B.C. As such, the Cowichan Valley School District is committed to working with community partners in the most positive way possible. Collaboration with service providers can result in a helpful dialogue about student needs and can enhance positive and cooperative partnerships between home and school.

This document is intended to clarify the role of School District staff in relationship to the role of community partners and to clarify processes that will support a collaborative working relationship between all parties.

#### DEFINITIONS:

**Outside Agency** personnel are employees of government agencies who have a mandate to support school age children and families. The school district has a duty to collaborate with these ministries, for example, MCFD (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous), CYSN, CYMH, Lalumutul Smu'neem (LS) and Kwu'mut Lelum (KL), Island Health and various Ministry of Education Outreach Programs (i.e., POPARD, POPFASD, Inclusion Outreach).

**Private Practitioners** are typically individuals contracted by families or agencies to support individual students. Funding may come from parents and/or government sources, such as the MCFD's At Home Program, Autism Funding, and Community Brain Injury Programs. These supplemental MCFD funds are intended to assist families with the extra cost of purchasing out-of-school direct (one to one) therapy and/or autism supports. Private practitioners will not perform work duties on school sites during the school day.

**Advocates** in public education typically support family members who require assistance to advocate for the needs of their child(ren) in school. Advocates may be family members, friends, or any adult who is able to speak on behalf of, or in support of a student or a family member.

**Teachers including Associated Professionals** are members of the bargaining unit of the Cowichan Valley Teachers' Federation.

**Collaboration** means to work together in ways which combine the unique perspectives, understandings and skills of two or more people to accomplish a goal which could not be accomplished independently.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

1. Families can expect service partners to have appropriate opportunities to consult and collaborate with school team members provided that the proper authorization and forms have been completed where necessary.
2. Principals shall not request or authorize service partners to independently assume any instructional processes or activities that are regular duties and responsibilities of teachers or associated professionals in the district during the school day.

### **PROCESSES:**

#### **School Observations**

- Service partners must contact the principal and get approval before observing a student in a school setting.
- Authorization forms must be completed by family/guardian(s) and Principal and school staff prior to the observation (*Family Authorization* and *Request for Observations by Community Service Partners*).
- Purpose of the observation is to focus on that student while protecting the privacy of the other students.
- Principal will inform the teacher(s) to ensure that the classroom visit does not disrupt the educational program in the classroom.

#### **Home/Community Observation by School District Staff**

- Requests of school district staff to participate in meetings or observations outside of school must be approved (*Family Authorization*).
- Participation in these observations is at the discretion of the staff member.
- Staff members should inform their supervisor or designate when working off site.

#### **Private Practitioners attending student school-based meetings**

- Private practitioners must sign and follow the Private Practitioner Attending Meeting agreement.
- Principals/Vice-Principals are responsible for ensuring meetings are child-centred and solution-focused.

#### **Forms:**

1. Family Authorization: to be completed by family before any observation (school or in community)
2. Request for Observation: to be completed by Principal or Designate before any school observation
3. Private Practitioner Attending Meetings Guidelines: - to be completed by Principal or Designate and signed by family and private practitioner at school meetings.