

**Report to Committee of the Whole
December 9, 2013**



**Waterloo Region
District School Board**

 **Director of Education**

SUBJECT: **Section 23 – Care, Custody and Treatment Programs Update**

ORIGINATOR: This report was prepared by Mary Lou Mackie, Executive Superintendent of Education, Mark Harper, Superintendent of Learning Services, and Peter Rubenschuh, Assistant (to) Superintendent, Learning Services – Equity and Inclusion, in consultation with Executive Committee.

PURPOSE:

This report provides an overview of current Section 23 (Care, Custody and Treatment) programs offered in collaboration with a variety of community agencies. This report also describes recent changes in the delivery of three Section 23 programs and related school-based supports.

BACKGROUND

In most circumstances, the placement of a student in a regular classroom, within their home school, is the preferred option. In addition, the expansion of services, programs, staffing and site-based intervention strategies has enhanced the ability of schools to respond to students exhibiting inconsistent attendance and/or disengagement. In some instances, the complexity and intensity of issues underlying a students' inability to attend a home school program may warrant consideration for placement within an Alternative or Section 23 program. Prior to students being placed in a Section 23 or an Alternative program, a direct referral or comprehensive assessment is required.

The Section 23 Care, Custody and Treatment programs help students continue their education while receiving the care, treatment, custody or corrections necessary to address barriers to academic achievement, personal growth and well-being. Students in Section 23 settings are not considered "students" in the traditional sense under the Education Act, nor are they registered within the Waterloo Region District School Board. Students enrolled in Section 23 programs are clients of the agency providing the care, treatment or custody programs. In Section 23 programs, the care, treatment, custodial or correctional facility provide the targeted supports and set the overall goals and objectives for their services. Facility staff, funded by an appropriate agency, must be in place to carry out the comprehensive program on site. The Waterloo Region District School Board works with the Agency to provide the educational programming for students. As part of the approach in supporting the needs of students in Section 23 programs, a teacher is included in the multi-disciplinary team and partnered fully with facility staff who work directly, providing clinical interventions, with the children/youth.

Student Success strategies introduced across the Waterloo Region District School Board during the last eight years have enhanced the ability of schools to respond to majority of students experiencing barriers to learning, social/emotional challenges or issues related to inconsistent attendance. The introduction and expansion of programs such as Specialist High Skills Majors, Cooperative Education, E-Learning, Dual Credits and Supervised Alternative Learning have provided site-based programming options that offer students engaging and relevant learning options. Intervention strategies such as Credit Recovery or Credit Rescue programs support students by providing early and ongoing support to students' encountering academic and/or social challenges. The introduction of formalized transition meetings and strategies has helped students succeed in high school. School Student Success Teams have been introduced and have provided comprehensive support through the sharing of individual student profiles, creating customized timetables, identifying and monitoring students at-risk, engaging in timely communication with parents/guardians and connecting students with a caring adult. In every high school, Student Success Teams (principal, student success teacher, guidance counsellors, special education teachers and paraprofessionals) provide extra attention and support to students who need it.

STATUS:

The Waterloo Region District School Board currently co-sponsors twelve Section 23 (Care, Custody and Treatment) Programs in collaboration with nine distinct community agencies. A revised list of Section 23 programs, partner agencies and related student profiles are summarized within the Waterloo Region District School Board - Section 23 Program Summary. (see attached: Appendix A)

Changes within Section 23 program offerings were required when Family and Children's Services announced withdrawal from three Section 23 programs in April, 2013. This announcement prompted a system wide review of alternative learning options and the identification of potential service gaps for students requiring intensive support. Managing this change in short timelines required both sensitivity and confidentiality as these program changes had a direct impact on students, families and program staff.

The review of existing Section 23 programs identified gaps in services for specific age groups and behavioural profiles. The revised New Dawn / Z by the Y programs address service and treatment gaps for students with extreme internalizing behaviours, in the intermediate division (Grades 8-10). The introduction of the Jean Steckle program addresses concerns for student placement and supports for students with internalizing behaviours within the junior division (Grades 3-7). The FASD (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder) program co-sponsored by Carizon (KidsLink) and Front Door (Lutherwood – KidsLink Joint Initiatives) supports students with severe brain trauma and the inability to self-regulate. The FASD program provides the opportunity for our community, Carizon and the Waterloo Region District School Board to demonstrate local and provincial leadership in the development of this unique program offering.

The conversion of the New Dawn and Z by the Y programs to a Section 23 delivery model has reduced student capacity from 20 to 12 per site. Section 23 programs are positioned to serve students with higher threshold needs, while students with moderate needs are served by their home school programs and resources. The home school supports have evolved over the past eight years to become far more comprehensive and in consultation with itinerant system supports (i.e. Consultant, Social Worker, Psychologist, Behaviour Resource Team, Attendance Counsellor, etc.) have improved to meet student needs that in the past involved students leaving their home school to attend an alternative program.

Enrolment gaps created by the reduction of pupil spaces within the New Dawn and Z by the Y programs may be addressed for some students through a recently revised U-turn program model. U-turn Alternative programs previously served students ages 16 to 18. The revised model creates opportunities for students ages 15-17 to be referred via School Student Success Teams as an early intervention strategy. Recent Ministry changes to Supervised Alternative Learning enrolment requirements, expand opportunities for students ages 16 and 17 to participate in experiential and work-based learning options, while being enrolled and supported by staff within the home school.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Regular program updates have been provided to students, parents/guardians, staff (teachers, paraprofessionals support staff), unions, Administration and Trustees, as information is available and appropriate for disclosure. Staff will continue to provide regular updates to all stakeholders as funding, assessment and programming modifications are incorporated and added to Section 23 contracts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

No financial implications.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The six strategic directions that are used to guide the work of the Board are:

- Engaging students, families, staff and communities
- Fostering wellness and well-being
- Pursuing student achievement and success for all
- Embracing diversity and inclusion
- Championing quality public education
- Promoting forward-thinking.

This report relates to the following strategic directions:

- Engaging students, families, staff and communities
- Fostering wellness and well-being
- Pursuing student achievement and success for all
- Embracing diversity and inclusion
- Championing quality public education
- Promoting forward-thinking.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation. For information only.

Waterloo Region District School Board - Section 23 Program Summary

(Appendix A)

	Section 23 Program	Location of Agency	Focus of Program
1 (New)	New Dawn -Care & Treatment 90 Fairfield Road, Kitchener Z by the Y - Care & Treatment 256 Hespeler, Cambridge	Lutherwood -285 Benjamin Rd, Waterloo KidsLink - 1855 Notre Dame Dr., St. Agatha	Alternative Secondary School transition program for students with attendance problems. Treatment for students identified with severe social, emotional and learning needs.
2 (New)	Jean Steckle -Care & Treatment 130 Woodbine Avenue, Kitchener	Family and Children’s Services of the Waterloo Region – 200 Ardelt Ave, Kitchener	Treatment for students identified with more than one category of exceptionality and demonstrating severe social, emotional and learning needs.
3 (New)	FASD – Care & Treatment KidsLink - 1855 Notre Dame Dr., St. Agatha	KidsLink - 1855 Notre Dame Dr., St. Agatha Lutherwood -285 Benjamin Rd, Waterloo	Treatment for students formally identified with the FASD diagnosis.
4	St Monica House – Care & Treatment	231 Herbert St., Waterloo	Treatment for students with severe emotional and behavioural problems, who are also young mothers or mothers to be.
5	Adonai - Sunbeam Lodge Care & Treatment	389 Pinnacle Drive, Kitchener	Treatment for students identified with more than one category of exceptionality and demonstrating severe social, emotional and learning needs.
6	Ray of Hope - Alternative Education Centre Open Custody 851 King St E, Kitchener	Ray of Hope 230-659 King St E, Kitchener	Treatment and support for students with severe emotional and behavioural problems
7A	Hope Manor Secure Custody RR2 Petersburg	Ray of Hope 230-659 King St E, Kitchener	Custody
7B	Hope Manor Secure Custody	Ray of Hope 230-659 King St E, Kitchener	Summer School
8	Pinegrove - Care & Treatment 80 Burlington Dr. Kitchener	Pioneer Youth Services 26 Dorset St, Waterloo	Treatment for students identified with more than one category of exceptionality and demonstrating severe social, emotional and learning needs.
9	Lutherwood Care & Treatment	285 Benjamin Rd, Waterloo	Treatment for students who have a diagnosed need for mental health services.
10A	Lutherwood Open Custody	285 Benjamin Rd, Waterloo	Custody
10B	Lutherwood Open Custody	285 Benjamin Rd, Waterloo	Summer School
11	Hatts Off - Care & Treatment 20 Haddington St Cambridge	Hatts Off Specialized Services 153 King St. W. Dundas	Treatment for students identified with more than one category of exceptionality and demonstrating severe social, emotional and learning needs.
12	7 th Inning – Care and Treatment 581E Langs Dr, Cambridge	Langs Farm Village Association, 1145 Concession Road, Cambridge	Treatment for students who have a diagnosed need for mental health services