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Choices Into Action:

Guidance and Career Education Policy Grades 1 to 12 (1998)

Detailed Discussion Document

Ministry of Education and Training

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1. Preface

Choices Into Action: Guidance and Career Education Policy, Grades 1 to 12 (1998) Detailed Discussion Document outlines what schools in Ontario are expected to do to help students from Grades 1 to 12 prepare for their adult and working life. This document will replace sections 1.8 and 2.3 of *The Transition Years, Grades 7, 8 and 9: Policies and Program Requirements, 1992* and *Guidance 1984: Curriculum Guideline for the Intermediate and Senior Divisions*.

The policy described in this document supplements *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes, Grades 1-9, 1995*, and reflects the proposed options for secondary school organization in Ontario as defined in *Ontario Secondary Schools (1998), Detailed Discussion Document*.

The guidance and career education program outlined in this document is for all students from Grades 1 to 12. The document describes curriculum, support services, and procedures for involving community partners, all of which are central to the delivery of a comprehensive guidance and career education program.

In order to allow school boards and schools sufficient time to plan and implement this policy effectively, a phased-in approach to implementation is outlined in Appendix 1, for consideration and comment. The final implementation timelines will be included as part of the final policy document.

2. Introduction: Guidance and Career Education in a Changing World

2.1 Why Change is Necessary

The nature and pace of change today means that students must live in a society which is less constant, and less predictable than ever. Public opinion, workplace realities and educational research in Ontario and elsewhere all emphasize the need for young people to be well-informed, skilled and confident, and to be able to work cooperatively and productively with a wide range of people. The purpose of a reformed guidance and career education program within the total school program is to prepare students for these realities.

Research in Ontario and elsewhere indicates that young people, from the beginning of their schooling, are concerned with developing their abilities, interests and understanding of the community and the world in which they live. As well, both employability and health-related research demonstrate the necessity of enabling students to deal with personal issues and to build positive interpersonal relationships. Parents and students want more and better programming which is designed to assist students in career planning and preparation. Research at the secondary school level has also highlighted the need for guidance staff to be more accessible and to play a more clearly defined role in assisting both students and other school staff.

As the pace of change in the labour market accelerates, it is increasingly important for schools to help students develop basic and transferable skills and connect their learning in school to conditions in the wider world, including the world of work.

In brief, in order to prepare students adequately for the future, research and public opinion demand that schools:

- teach career awareness early and throughout students' education;
- ensure that students have the skills they need to set and achieve their learning goals now and in the future;
- teach students the skills to make transitions throughout their lives, to work and/or further education and training;
- prepare students to live in an increasingly diverse society by helping them develop the ability to interact positively and work effectively in a range of settings.

Because the Guidance and Career Education Program is designed to accomplish these ends, it is part of the

essential curriculum for all students.

2.2 Key Features of the Policy

Building on the good practices currently in place in many Ontario schools and classrooms, a strong Guidance and Career Education Program would be delivered through classroom instruction, enhanced/additional learning opportunities, community-based learning and individual assistance and short-term counselling.

The policy proposes the following key features:

1. All students from Grades 1 to Grade 12 would participate.
2. All teachers would be involved in the program by integrating guidance and career education outcomes with their academic curriculum.
3. The role of the teacher-counsellor ¹ would be primarily to provide direct instruction of guidance and career education.
4. Community partnerships would be established for collaborative program planning and delivery.
5. The program would focus on three areas of student learning:
 - learner development;
 - interpersonal development;
 - career development.
6. Instruction would be an essential part of the guidance and career education program. This policy proposes connections among the following curriculum components ²:
 - For Grades 1 to 9, the curriculum developed would be based on specific outcomes in *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes, Grade 1 – 9, 1995* particularly those related to learner, interpersonal, and career development.
 - For Grades 10 to 12, courses would be developed based upon outcomes in the same three areas. Depending upon the option selected for compulsory and optional courses, guidance and career education courses could be required for all students. (For a discussion relating to compulsory courses refer to Section 4.3 Graduation Requirements: Options in the *Ontario Secondary Schools (1998) Detailed Discussion Document*.)
 - In Grades 10, 11 or 12, co-operative education/work experience would play a significant role in the guidance and career education program. Depending upon the option selected, co-operative education/ work experience could be a compulsory requirement for all students. (For a discussion relating to co-operative education/ work experience options, refer to Section 3.5.1: Co-operative Education/ Work Experience in this document or Section 3.6 : Co-operative Education/Work Experience in the *Ontario Secondary Schools (1998) Detailed Discussion Document*.)

- In every grade, students would be expected to learn through a range of community experiences.
7. Beginning in Grade 7 and continuing in each grade to the end of secondary school, each student with their parents would prepare an annual education plan.
 8. Schools would be responsible for organizing a teacher-advisor system to give all students regular access to a teacher-advisor.
 9. Each student from Grades 1 to 12 would create and maintain a portfolio that demonstrates achievement related to the learner, interpersonal and career development areas of the guidance and career education program.
 10. A program-effectiveness survey based on a sample of students, parents and teachers would be conducted every three years to evaluate the program.

These and other components of the program are described in more detail in the remainder of the document.

3. The Guidance and Career Education Program

3.1 The Purpose of the Program

A well implemented guidance and career education program would focus on learner, interpersonal, and career development. More specifically, it would help students to:

Learner Development

- set and achieve learning goals both in and out of school, monitor their own learning and become self-directed as learners

Interpersonal Development

- understand and take control of their behaviour, and be able to choose ways of interacting positively with others in a variety of roles and contexts

Career Development

- make informed and appropriate choices and implement successful transitions from school to educational, work, and life roles.

These are essential skills for academic, interpersonal, and career success.

In order to move toward these goals, students would systematically examine and apply what they are studying in terms of the real choices and decisions they face, now and in the future. Whether choosing a course, a work experience opportunity or a co-curricular activity such as editing the school newspaper, a wise choice depends on a good understanding of oneself and a thoughtful examination of the options available.

A major purpose of the guidance and career education program would be to help students, from the beginning, develop habits of thinking which would contribute to effective decision-making and action. It would do so by requiring students to routinely ask themselves what opportunities any particular learning situation offers them and how these opportunities can help them reach their goals, whether that goal is academic, interpersonal or career related. This structured approach would lead students to take responsibility for discovering the relevance of the curriculum to their own lives. It also implies that teachers have the responsibility to nurture and support students' ability to critically examine what they are learning for its application to their development as educated and productive citizens.

This structured approach to student learning, which would be applied in all modes of program delivery, would ensure that students would be able to:

assess their own needs and goals, analyse the opportunities for learning in the classroom and other settings, make appropriate choices from among those opportunities, and use the opportunities provided to move closer to personal and career goals.

Because the purposes of the program – learner, interpersonal, and career development, and the application of critical analytic skills – are important and relevant goals in all subject areas, the guidance and career education program would be part of the total program from grades 1 to grade 12.

3.2 Program Content

The guidance and career education program is intended to be developmental and would assume that learner, interpersonal and career development goals can be achieved by students at every age and stage of learning. The program is part of every year of schooling, and is cumulative in its content and impact. As students mature, they begin to make decisions about course selection and postsecondary goals which will have an impact on their future. The ability to make wise decisions depends on exposure and practice in age-appropriate activities.

The proposed guidance and career education program in Grades 1 to 9 is based on four of the Essential Outcomes in *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes, Grades 1-9, 1995* :

- Essential Outcome No. 2: solve problems and make responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking
- Essential Outcome No. 5: apply the skills needed to work and get along with other people
- Essential Outcome No. 7: explore educational and career opportunities
- Essential Outcome No. 10: use the skills of learning to learn more effectively.

New provincial curriculum for all secondary school subjects would similarly emphasize the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are fundamental to guidance and career education. A *Curriculum Guideline: Guidance and Career Education* would be developed to outline the outcomes for credit courses as well as strategies for integration in subject areas. Course profiles would be developed so that applications to learner, interpersonal and career development would be integrated throughout the curriculum.

3.2.1 Grades 1 to 6

The Outcomes of *The Common Curriculum* for Grades 3 and 6 require careful attention to students' ability to learn and to think about what and how they are learning, to establish effective relationships, and to

make connections with the world of work. Teachers would need to ensure that classroom learning across the grades provides ample opportunity to achieve these Outcomes. For example, by the end of Grade 3, students will demonstrate the ability to work with others on projects, to express their own views, to listen to others and to offer and accept help and encouragement. By the end of Grade 6, they will be able to describe and evaluate a variety of group-work skills, such as offering constructive criticism and assessing their own skill development.

3.2.2 Grades 7 to 9

In early adolescence, students begin to express personal preferences for skill and knowledge acquisition, and to consider choices among real alternatives that will affect their lives and careers. The Outcomes of *The Common Curriculum* recognize the need of students at this age to take increased responsibility for their learning, work at getting along well with others and gain insight into the changing world of work. For example, by the end of Grade 9, students will relate their own interests, aptitudes, and abilities in mathematics, science, and technology to a variety of career and educational opportunities.

The ministry would provide support for teachers in further detailed documents. *Foundation Requirements and Curriculum Units* would include materials required in guidance and career education, to help teachers implement guidance and career education policy.

3.2.3 Grades 10 to 12

In the final years of secondary school, students are making important decisions which affect their future. The curriculum would help them to extend and refine their knowledge of themselves, and assist them to target career options. The program would increase students' information about and willingness to consider alternatives; and to make choices without losing the flexibility to respond to changing circumstances.

As a result of this program in Grades 10 to 12, students would:

- develop an action plan with specific educational and career goals
- assess and describe their interests, aspirations and needs relating to a variety of fields of work and postsecondary opportunities;
- demonstrate well developed planning, problem-solving and decision-making skills;
- practice self management and organizational skills such as time-management and study skills;
- identify and demonstrate how their other secondary courses contribute to their interests and goals;
- learn and practise employment acquisition skills such as résumé writing, interviewing, self-marketing, occupational research and job search;
- use new and emerging technology to further personal, educational and career goals;
- analyse the challenges related to the changing nature of work and the workplace and learn how to prepare for them;
- practise interpersonal skills which demonstrate effective communication, teamwork and conflict management;
- develop enterprising skills and attitudes such as self-reliance, network-building, informed risk taking and flexibility;
- learn how to access information and support services relevant to work such as labour market trends, entrepreneurship opportunities and health and safety information;

- learn how to find and create prospects related to paid work, apprenticeship, volunteer work, college and university programs, international studies, training programs and other potential opportunities;
- prepare for a possible work experience/co-operative education placement, analyse the learning experience, make connections between community experience and their program of study and identify areas for further learning;
- prepare for transitions to work and/or postsecondary education and training activities.

3.3 Program Delivery Modes

Many partners within the total school community have an integral role to play in the delivery of a comprehensive guidance and career education program. Teachers and teacher-counsellors, where available, would contribute in a vital way by providing instruction in learner, interpersonal and career development. Community partners which might include employers, community agencies, and private sector organizations, would contribute with visits to the classroom and co-operative education/work experience placements. The school community is an important resource and would play a key role in the delivery of the program.

The Choices Into Action: Guidance and Career Education program in Grades 1 to 12 would be delivered in the following four ways:

- Classroom Instruction
- Enhanced Learning Opportunities
- Community-based Learning
- Individual Assistance and Short-term Counselling.

3.3.1 Classroom Instruction

A program of instruction which focuses on the foundation knowledge, skills and attitudes related to learner, interpersonal, and career development would begin in Grade 1 and continue to the end of Grade 12. This program would be taught both by integrating its concepts through other subject/program areas and as discrete courses.

Specific Outcomes from *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes, Grades 1 – 9, 1995*, require instruction which is explicitly designed to develop knowledge and skills in learner, interpersonal and career development. Although these Outcomes may be addressed in various Subject/Program Areas, the guidance and career education program would ensure that every student has the opportunity to achieve these outcomes.

Integrated curriculum which enables students to "relate their learning to real-life situations" would be an important feature of the Grade 1 to 9 program. In designing integrated programs, teachers would need to make sure that these programs address the three areas of the guidance and career education program and the structured approach to student learning – assessment of self, analysis of opportunities, choice among alternatives and action.

Teachers and teacher-counsellors would have many opportunities to explore the links between the classroom and the world beyond the school. Beyond Grade 9, the focus on integrated programming would continue to be important. Course profiles would be developed so that academic subjects clearly include

connections to learner, interpersonal, and career development. Curriculum integration helps students reflect on the relevance of school subjects to their lives at present and to their future.

In addition, there would be specific guidance and career education courses in Grades 10 to 12. Depending on the option selected for compulsory and optional courses, guidance and career education courses could be required for all students. (For a discussion relating to compulsory courses refer to Section 4.3: Graduation Requirements: Options in the [Ontario Secondary Schools \(1998\), Detailed Discussion Document](#).)

3.3.2 Enhanced Learning Opportunities

In order to meet the varying needs of their students, schools would offer additional learning opportunities by developing courses or units based upon learner, interpersonal and career development. These courses or units would be designed to offer additional opportunities to students who wish to improve and enhance their personal knowledge, skills and attitudes in guidance and career education. Enhanced learning opportunities would be offered in addition to the classroom instruction mode of delivery.

Units in the form of seminars, workshops and small groups could be developed in such areas as:

- job search strategies
- résumé writing
- interview skills
- conflict resolution skills
- personal and interpersonal skills
- assertiveness training
- study skills
- time management skills

Courses could be developed in such areas as:

- peer helping
- leadership
- life skills
- personal life management

3.3.3 Community-based Learning

Community-based learning draws on the opportunities that exist throughout the local community. It recognizes the diversity of the community and the variety of workplaces in it.

Many types of experiences are available in the community. Examples include:

- field trips
- work-site tours
- job shadowing
- career mentoring
- community service

- work experience
- co-operative education
- youth apprenticeship, internship, and school-to-work programs.

Therefore, school personnel would regularly invite partners from the community to contribute to all aspects of the guidance and career education program.

See [Appendix 2](#) for the Sample Program: Career Awareness Partnerships Program (CAPs)

3.3.4 Individual Assistance and Short-term Counselling

From time to time, students will request and require individual assistance and encouragement in their learner, interpersonal and career development. Examples of occasions where such assistance might be needed include difficulties in a work experience placement, conflict with another student, non-acceptance into university or college. This assistance should continue to come first from those closest to the student (i.e., classroom teachers, the teacher-advisor, parents/guardian, the student's peers). The teacher-advisor [3](#), through an established relationship with the student, would be well-positioned to identify any additional assistance the student requires and, where appropriate, consult with the student's teacher(s), parents/guardian and teacher-counsellor.

When additional assistance is required, a referral would be made to a teacher-counsellor for short-term counselling. Where a teacher-counsellor is not available, an appropriate school or board staff member could be available to carry out this role. This brief intervention would involve an assessment, individual problem solving and planning, and may include a referral to another school-based, board-based or community program or other types of professional counsellors (e.g., a social worker, a psychologist, a welfare worker, a youth counselling agency), as appropriate.

3.4 Assessment Strategies in Guidance and Career Education

Assessment of student learning would be carried out as a regular and ongoing part of curriculum, support services and community partnership activities. All students are expected to be regularly assessed, and to receive feedback on the quality and standard of their work. Student assessment for classroom instruction would be based on the relevant outcomes in *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes, Grades 1-9, 1995*, and in curriculum guidelines and course profiles that the ministry proposes to develop from grades 10 to 12.

Assessment applies to all program delivery modes: classroom instruction, enhanced learning opportunities, community-based learning, and short-term counselling. For short-term counselling, the outcomes will be specific and unique to the individual student, and should be assessed regularly against the student's identified needs and individual progress in learner, interpersonal and career development. This assessment would lead to the development of individual learning outcomes that would assist students (and where appropriate their parents/guardian) in developing plans to meet their identified needs, challenges and personal goals.

3.5 Program Elements

3.5.1 Co-operative Education/Work Experience

There is considerable public interest in increasing the relevance of the secondary school curriculum, providing students with practical applications of classroom experiences, and ensuring more opportunities for students to make connections between what happens in school and outside of school.

Parents and students want a better understanding of what is available in the world of work. National and provincial research and surveys have shown that parents want schools to increase their efforts in preparing students for their futures. Students have indicated that they want schools to pay more attention to their career planning needs. To meet these challenges, schools have developed a variety of programs in such areas as job exploration, job shadowing, workplace visits, and cooperative education. Currently, the availability of these programs and opportunities varies considerably from school to school.

To meet the concerns of parents, students and employing organizations, the ministry is committed to ensuring that all students are provided with a career education program. One of the features of such a program would be to provide all students with opportunities to experience the workplace firsthand.

Co-operative education/work experience is valuable for all students, whether they plan to go to work, college or university after secondary school. This experience must complement and not jeopardize students' academic programs. These planned career education experiences in the community would enhance the school program through real-life applications, and expose students and teachers to up-to-date workplace practices. Co-operative education/work experience increases students' awareness of career opportunities, provides first hand experience of employer expectations and concrete applications of curriculum.

Co-operative education/work experience also strengthens links with postsecondary destinations. For those students whose first postsecondary destination is the workplace, co-operative education/work experience would provide personal contacts with potential employers. For those students whose first postsecondary destination is college or university, co-operative education/work experience would provide opportunities for students to make better informed decisions about education and career choices.

The current co-operative education policy requires a significant commitment of time, in the range of 220 to 550 hours in a year, by students who choose to participate. This practice will continue to be encouraged. The options described below do not affect current co-operative education practice but rather describe ways for more students to participate in co-operative education/work experience through an expansion that includes short term experiences. Short term experiences would include community service, volunteer work and simulations. Co-operative education/work experience in Option 1 is optional. Participation in current co-operative education programs would fulfil the compulsory requirement as described in Options 2 and 3.

All three options provide for the co-operative education/work experience to be fulfilled in the following two ways:

- **current co-operative education** as described in *Co-operative Education: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Secondary Schools, 1989*, or participation in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and other structured school-to-work transition programs such as Bridges;
- **other school-arranged experiences** tied to the curriculum, for example, structured extra-curricular activities, community service, in-school work simulations.

Options 2 and 3 will also require recognition of a broader array of experiences than in Option 1 to provide school boards, schools and students within a range of communities with the means to satisfy a compulsory

requirement. This additional category of work experience would include:

- **student-arranged experiences** tied to the curriculum, for example, community service, volunteer work and paid part-time or summer employment.

In all cases, ways of offering co-operative education/work experience, including both school and student-arranged, would incorporate the following components:

- pre-placement instruction (e.g. related to interviews, résumés, safety, legal and harassment issues)
- development of a learning plan based on provincial curriculum guidelines
- monitoring students in school-arranged experiences or obtaining documentation as evidence for student-arranged experiences
- opportunities for students to analyse their experiences and integrate their learning
- evaluation of students' learning to determine whether or not to grant credit.

There are two issues to consider in the following options:

- optional (Option 1) versus compulsory (Options 2, 3) co-operative education/work experience
- a credit (Option 2) versus a non-credit graduation requirement (Option 3) within compulsory co-operative education/work experience

Option 1: Expand co-operative education/ work experience to include short term experiences that are optional and for which students receive full or partial credit

This option would allow students to choose a current co-operative education experience or a short term, work experience.

In this option, students would choose to participate in co-operative education/work experience according to their interests, abilities and available time. Schools and school boards would choose the extent to which they wish to devote resources to developing these opportunities through business and community partnerships.

Option 2: Expand co-operative education/ work experience to include short term experiences that are compulsory for all students and for which students receive credit

This option would ensure that all students receive an experience in a community or work placement or an in-school work simulation. Students would receive credit for this experience related to in-school curriculum.

Under this option, you will be asked to indicate whether students should be required to earn a half-credit (45 hours) or one credit (90 hours).

Option 3: Expand co-operative education/ work experience to include short term experiences that are a compulsory graduation requirement for all students but for which students do not receive credit

This option would ensure that all students receive an experience in a community or work placement, or in-school work simulation. This option differs from Options 1 and 2 in that students do not receive credit for this planned short-term, curriculum-based co-operative education/work experience.

Satisfactory completion of this experience would be noted on the Ontario Student Transcript.

Under this option, you will be asked to indicate whether students should be required to complete the equivalent time required for a half-credit (45 hours) or one credit (90 hours).

3.5.2 The Teacher-Advisor System

Parents and students appreciate and benefit from an ongoing personal relationship with a teacher at the school. Many teachers recognize the importance of being available to their students, through for example, acting as mentors and advocates for their students. The establishment of a teacher-advisor system, Grades 1 to 12, would support teachers in creating and sustaining relationships with students and their parents and would ensure that opportunities to build such important and supporting relationships are available to all students.

Each school would be responsible for organizing a system that provides all students with regular access to a teacher-advisor. Schools could organize their teacher-advisor systems in a variety of ways such as house systems, enhanced homerooms or "schools within schools".

Each teacher-advisor, with the support of teacher-counsellors, would be responsible for a group of students for a minimum of one year. The teacher-advisor would monitor students' overall progress, provide personal encouragement, and help students make connections between and among subjects in school and learning which takes place in the community. During the time set aside for students to meet with their advisors, group reflection, discussion and activities would focus on areas related to learner, interpersonal and career development.

The teacher-advisor would co-ordinate the overall review of the education and career portfolio for the student and his/her parents or guardian. The teacher-advisor could meet annually with the student and parents/guardian to review this portfolio and the student's educational progress. Starting in Grade 7, the student's annual education plan would become part of this discussion; and starting in Grade 9 or 10, the student's plans for postsecondary activities would also be discussed. When necessary, the teacher-advisor would refer students who need additional assistance to the teacher-counsellor, administration and/or other appropriate personnel.

Teacher-counsellors would support teacher-advisors by providing resources and information about students' programs, teaching specific content, leading discussions on selected topics, linking to the community and postsecondary institutions, and providing assistance in completing student portfolios.

When students enter a school for the first time, they would be assigned a teacher-advisor, participate in an orientation program and receive a school information package. During this process, opportunities for students to build relationships with their peers and the teacher-advisor would be provided. Once enrolled in a school, students would also receive an updated school information package each year. An orientation program would also be available for students who enter the school in the middle of the school year.

See [Appendix 2](#) for the Sample Programs: *Teacher Advisor System and Teacher Advisor Program*

3.5.3 The Portfolio

It is proposed that each student develop and maintain a "Choices into Action" portfolio from Grade 1 to Grade 12. This portfolio could be combined or integrated with other student portfolios where they exist, and maintained in print or electronic format.

The purpose of the portfolio is to keep track of the student's progress in the areas of learner, interpersonal, and career development, and to reflect the student's growing understanding of his/her development and progress. It would be a cumulative record of the student's efforts, progress and achievement, both inside and outside school and of his/her reactions to the meaning of these experiences. It would serve as a valuable tool for helping students participate actively in the learning process and take responsibility for their own learning. By encouraging students to document their own learning through samples of work they select systematically over time, it would also strengthen their awareness of their own interests, abilities and aspirations.

For teacher-advisors, teacher-counsellors, and teachers, the portfolio would serve as a focus of instruction, a focus for reporting and communicating with parents/guardians about student achievement, and as a basis for drawing together learning and future planning.

The portfolio would include:

- evidence of the student's progress towards achieving the learner, interpersonal, and career development goals. Examples of learning would reflect curriculum, support services, and community partnership activities and could include: records of academic achievement, awards, and certificates from courses available in the community; evidence of participation in clubs, teams, choirs, and leadership training. Examples of personal achievement may include an up-to-date résumé, feedback from an interview, an application for a position as library helper, a student produced video of a conflict-resolution simulation, results of an interest inventory;
- student reactions on what they have learned over the year in each area. Students would be encouraged to attach a personal reflection to each sample of evidence of personal achievement and learning, as described above;
- the annual education plan, which students would develop beginning in Grade 7. The plan would include the student's goals for learning both inside and outside school; starting in Grade 8 or 9, the student's course selections; and starting in Grade 9 or 10, the student's tentative postsecondary destination. Plans for participating in co-operative education/work experience would also be included. In making plans for postsecondary activities, the student would consider:
 - continued study at university, college, or a private vocational school
 - industry/sector-based training, such as apprenticeships and internships
 - direct entry into the work force
 - other options, such as community service and preparation for independent living.

Teachers should be aware of students who have been identified as exceptional through the school board's Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process. Components of exceptional students' individual special education plans should correlate with their annual education plans.

Students would update and revise their portfolios regularly with assistance from classroom teachers, teacher-counsellors, teacher-advisors, parents/guardian, and community mentors. To provide parents and students with a co-ordinated overview of the student's progress, the teacher-advisor would be responsible for reviewing the portfolio with the student, his/ her parents/guardian, and when available, a teacher-counsellor.

The portfolio would serve as a resource to review the student's progress in achieving the learner, interpersonal, and career development outcomes. In elementary schools where teacher-counsellors may not be available, schools could consult with teacher-counsellors from a local secondary school regarding students' progress in guidance and career education. Students would have the option to invite other significant persons, such as a community mentor or peer helper, to attend the review of the portfolio. When students reach the age of 16, they have the right to decide whether or not they wish to invite their parents/guardian to the review of the portfolio.

See [Appendix 2](#) for the Sample Program: Career/Life Portfolio

3.5.4 Guidance and Career Information and Technology

An effective program would require the support of a wide range of up-to-date information. This includes information about careers and their related educational requirements, current information about community partners including employers, social and counselling agencies, local labour market conditions and opportunities, learning opportunities beyond the school (e.g., postsecondary institutions, community courses, workplace training).

Increasingly, there is excellent software to support guidance and career education programs. Such materials have a strong supportive role to play, but they are effective only if they meet the needs of the student and the program, and each piece must be previewed and critically examined to assure its usefulness and appropriateness. As well, these resources are most effective when they are woven into a course or unit by the teacher or facilitator and not used in isolation.

The ministry-sponsored "Gateway to Opportunities" web site is available to support students and schools in accessing current guidance and career education information. This computer-based resource can be accessed through the Internet and provides one-start access to information on training and education, job search skills and occupations. Gateway to Opportunities directs the user, through a series of graphical World Wide Web pages, to a variety of sources of information on the Internet.

See [Appendix 2](#) for the Sample Program: Student Services Program

4. Program Planning and Accountability

The proposed Choices Into Action: Guidance and Career Education program would be monitored and continuously improved through:

- communication with parents/guardians
- a school-wide program survey
- collaborative program planning with partners.

4.1 Communication with Parents/Guardians

Each student and his/her parents/guardian would receive, at the beginning of each school year or upon registration at school (mid-year or otherwise), a notice that includes:

- the name of the student's teacher-advisor

- opportunities for communication with the teacher-advisor
- information about the anticipated meetings between the student and the teacher-advisor
- an outline of the "Choices Into Action" program
- availability of services to help parents/guardians who require assistance in participating in their student's education
- opportunities for parents and students to review the students' "Choices into Action" portfolio with school personnel

4.2 A School-Wide Program Survey

Every three years, a survey to determine the effectiveness of the school's guidance and career education program would be conducted with a statistically valid sample of students, teachers, and parents. The survey is intended to gather information for the purposes of planning and delivering the program and may be conducted as part of other school-wide surveys.

The survey would ask students, their parents, and teachers to evaluate:

- the teacher-advisor system;
- the delivery of the guidance and career education program;
- where appropriate, an entry/exit and/or exit/re-entry system;
- the impact of the program on the students it serves by identifying areas where improvement is needed.

Each survey's results would be reported to the staff and would directly influence the collaborative planning and future delivery of the guidance and career education program. A revised plan of the program, incorporating any necessary improvements indicated by the survey responses, would be communicated to parents/guardians, staff and students.

4.3 Collaborative Program Planning

Each school would develop annually a plan for the Choices Into Action: Guidance and Career Education program.

The school plan would need to address the program expectations of the guidance and career education policy and the program needs identified by the school survey. It should identify the personnel (inside and outside the school) who are responsible for implementing and evaluating each part of the program, the time of the school year when the implementation will occur and the projected date for the next school-wide survey. This plan could be part of the school's overall program plan, where such a plan exists. The planning would involve members of the school staff and the broader community. Schools would be encouraged to include students in the program planning.

5. Program Implementation

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

The proposed policy would shift the guidance and career education program from its current intervention and crisis orientation to a prevention and education orientation. This change in emphasis will require a significant change in the way guidance and career education tasks have traditionally been carried out. The change would affect teacher-counsellors, principals, and classroom teachers. The definitions that follow are intended to clarify the required changes in roles and responsibilities for personnel involved in the proposed program delivery.

5.1.1 The Principal

The success of the proposed "Choices Into Action" program will depend on the principal's informed and active leadership. S/he would need to understand the three areas of development (learner, interpersonal and career development) and the structure of the program, what an exemplary program looks like, and the way it fits into the overall school curriculum. This understanding is needed to hire suitable staff, to communicate effectively with parents and the larger community about the program, and to obtain the resources necessary to maintain the program.

To ensure effective implementation, principals would need information about the program's purposes, structure, planning and implementation, appropriate roles and responsibilities, and the training and hiring of staff. A school and a school board's guidance and career education implementation plan would need to address the in-service needs of practising principals.

Specific responsibilities would include:

- the supervision of the school's guidance and career education program;
- the administration of the school survey and analysing and reporting the results;
- the co-ordination of partnerships in the school's community and the broader local community and
- the organization of community partners' involvement in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the school guidance and career education program.

5.1.2 Classroom Teachers

Classroom teachers are essential to the effective delivery of the proposed "Choices into Action" program. With a variety of support personnel and programs, they would have the responsibility to assist students in learner, interpersonal, and career development through the various subjects or subject areas which they teach. Support to enhance the classroom program would need to be obtained from personnel where available, from within the school (e.g., teacher-counsellors, teachers on staff trained in guidance and career education, co-operative education teachers, special education teachers, custodians, secretaries), the school board (e.g., curriculum consultants, career centre staff, social workers, psychologists) and the larger community (e.g., the private sector, youth employment centres, community support agencies).

All teachers, supported by appropriate training and resources, would have a key role in implementing the school's teacher-advisor system. (See Section 3.5.2 "The Teacher-Advisor System" for details.)

5.1.3 Teacher-Counsellors

Teacher-counsellors are teachers who have additional qualifications in guidance and have been assigned

the role of teacher-counsellor. They teach guidance and career education curriculum. They provide short-term counselling and consult with other school staff, parents/guardian, community partners, and administrators.

In schools they would also co-ordinate the "Choices into Action" program, working collaboratively with other staff to plan, implement, and review it. They would also play a leadership, co-ordination, and consulting role for the teacher-advisor system, provision of enhanced learning opportunities, and the entry/exit/re-entry program.

Teacher counsellors would allocate their time as follows:

- 50 to 60 percent (i.e., a minimum of two and a half days per week or the equivalent) on teaching in a variety of ways. These include: providing instruction, teaching optional courses/units, supervising small group learning and assisting students in the completion of their portfolios.
- 20 to 25 percent on individual assistance and short-term counselling.
- 20 to 25 percent on co-ordinating and consulting responsibilities. Teacher-counsellors would take a leadership role on the program implementation team by:
 - supporting and consulting classroom teachers and teacher-advisors
 - consulting regularly with community personnel to review the effectiveness of the "Choices into Action" program
 - assisting with the school-wide program survey
 - facilitating the collaborative planning and implementation of the annual "Choices into Action" program plan
 - assisting with the development and implementation of the school's orientation program for students new to the school and the exit/re-entry program
 - co-ordinating the involvement of appropriate community partners.

In large schools, teacher-counsellors might have more specialized tasks. For example, one staff member might spend all of her/his time on one area – e.g., learner, career, or interpersonal development.

Administrative tasks closely linked to the guidance and career education program, such as working on the school timetable, student record keeping, the processing of summer school applications, registration procedures, and the like, could be carried out by administrative assistants, technicians and other professionals making full use of the technology available to schools.

5.1.4 Implementation Team

Implementation of the proposed Choices Into Action: Guidance and Career Education policy would require the collaborative effort of many professionals inside and outside the school. It is suggested that a team with both community and school representatives be formed to ensure that effective implementation occurs. The team would be composed of individuals with a knowledge of the wide range of learning opportunities within the broader community as well as in the school.

5.2 Peer Helpers

Students, who are interested, are a valuable asset in assisting other students with their learning. Students trained as peer helpers could act as reading buddies, peer tutors, peer counsellors, peer mediators, student guides, career mentors, student mentors, student volunteers and the many other roles in which students can help each other.

Students would have to be trained for the peer helping roles they are to fulfil. Instruction for peer-helping roles would be available to students as an enhanced learning opportunity provided by the school. The training would be carried out or co-ordinated by teachers or teacher-counsellors trained in peer-helping and peer-mediation.

5.3 The Involvement of Community Partners

Community partners would play a critical role in the planning and implementation of a successful guidance and career education program. Building upon existing links with their local communities and creating new partnerships as required, school boards and schools would be expected to involve their community partners in the following ways:

- School boards/sections would establish a process to involve community partners in the development, planning, delivery and evaluation of the "Choices into Action" program.
- Schools would be expected to form partnerships with the community to plan, deliver, and evaluate the program.
- The school's role would be to work with the community to facilitate the following kinds of collaboration:
 - community supports for the integrated curriculum
 - placements for job shadowing, work experience, community service learning, and co-operative education
 - planning and delivery partners for the "Choices into Action" implementation team
 - in-school visits by community representatives
 - establishment of community-based mentorship programs
 - consultation with employers to prepare students for employment.
- The principal would be expected to ensure that school/community partnerships are co-ordinated within the school community and in conjunction with the school board. At the school, contact persons might include the chair of the implementation team, co-operative education teachers, teacher-counsellors classroom teachers, educational assistants, parents, administrators, administrative assistants, school council members, and other adults who can effectively help to link a classroom teacher/ program to a community site or activity.

Examples of community partners include:

- employers and workers within the school's catchment area who participate in

school-based curricular activities and facilitate educational visits

- social and community agencies that might offer skilled staff to lead/support small-group instruction and/or counselling sessions
- staff from local and regional postsecondary educational and training institutions
- parents
- former students
- school council members
- senior citizens
- volunteer agencies
- private sector organizations
- career counselling agencies
- career centres
- chambers of commerce
- government agencies
- service clubs
- faith communities
- ethnocultural organizations
- settlement services
- industry-education councils
- Native organizations.

Among the resource persons who may be available to schools to support this program are centrally assigned school-board personnel, such as guidance consultants and co-ordinators; career centre staff; co-operative education, special education, and other curriculum consultants; social workers; and psychologists.

Other partners would include community-based mentors who could establish a one-to-one relationship with students, to act as role models and advocates, and assist with guidance and network building. A mentorship program would require mutual effort and commitment, and should be co-ordinated jointly by the school and the community.

5.4 The Guidance and Career Education Needs of Students with Exceptionalities

While students identified as exceptional are concerned about the same guidance and career education issues faced by all students, they may also encounter significant additional issues related to their area of exceptionality. Examples of such issues are:

- individual identity and self-image
- vulnerability
- realistic self-assessment of abilities
- strategies for overcoming barriers, e.g., self-advocacy

- strategies to achieve optimum independence
- use of community resources.

There is a need:

- to correlate the student's annual education plan (starting in Grade 7) with his/her individual special education plan
 - for teachers, teacher-counsellors, and special education teachers to work collaboratively to plan for exceptional students
 - for teachers to be aware of and work with community agencies, support groups and others who can assist exceptional students while they are at school and also while in transition to a work/community living situation.
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Appendix 1: Draft Implementation Timeline

To allow school boards/sections and schools sufficient time to effectively plan and implement this policy, the following phased-in approach to implementation is suggested. The final implementation timelines will

be included as part of the final *Choices into Action: Guidance and Career Education Policy, Grades 1 to 12 (1998)*. Your input into decisions about the final implementation timelines is welcome as part of this consultation process. Please submit your comments using the companion document [Consultation Guide for Ontario Secondary Schools \(1998\)](#) and *Choices Into Action: Guidance and Career Education Policy, Grades 1 to 12 (1998)*.

1998: In September 1998, full implementation of the Guidance and Career Education Policy begins for students in Grades 7 to 9, with the exception of the school-wide survey.

1999: In September 1999, full implementation of the Guidance and Career Education Policy extends to include students in Grades 1 to 6 and Grade 10.

2000: In September 2000, full implementation of the Guidance and Career Education Policy extends to include Grade 11.

2001: In September 2001, full implementation of the Guidance and Career Education Policy extends to include Grade 12 students, (thereby applying to all of Grades 1 to 12). At the end of the school year 2001/2002, all schools must have conducted their first school-wide survey, to be conducted on a three-year cycle. Schools may begin their surveys earlier if they so wish.

Appendix 2: Sample Programs in Ontario Schools

The following list of sample programs is not intended to be comprehensive or representative. It is an initial collection of examples that describe possible ways of implementing the policies proposed in this document.

- 2.1 Career Awareness Partnerships Program (CAPs)
- 2.2 Teacher Advisor System
- 2.3 Teacher Advisor Program
- 2.4 A Career/Life Portfolio
- 2.5 Student Services Program

Sample 2.1 Refer to Section 3.3.3-Community-Based learning.

Feature	Career Awareness Partnerships Program (CAPs) Grade 7, 8 and 9 students (ages 12-14)
Location	Eight Schools from Toronto Board of Education are involved.

Description	<p>A workplace/school partnership program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to develop student awareness of a range of work possibilities ● to provide hands-on workplace experiences ● to show students the relevance of their school subjects <p>Program highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The program is flexible and reflects the needs of the workplace and the classroom. Workplace visit program planning assistance, including tips for successful programs for adolescents, is provided for workplace hosts. ● A person from the workplace may visit the classroom in advance of the program to provide a context for the visit. ● The visit to the workplace takes a variety of forms featuring hands-on experience and is usually a half or full day visit. ● Preparation for workplace visits and follow-up activities are carried out in the classroom.
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Other	The program benefits students, workplaces, schools, teachers and parents.
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Contact Information	<p>Career Education Advisor – Elementary Toronto Centre for Career Action Toronto Board of Education Tel: (416)393-0550</p>
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Sample 2.2 Refer to Section 3.5.2-The Teacher-Advisory System

Feature	Teacher Advisor System
Location	Mary Ward Catholic Secondary School Metro Separate School Board
Description	<p>Each teacher is a Teacher Advisor responsible for 15 – 18 cross-graded students who stay with the same Teacher Advisor throughout their career at Mary Ward.</p> <p>Teacher Advisors are given an hour a day to carry out activities which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● home room responsibilities ● providing unit completion results and test authorization notices to students ● orientation for new students ● reviewing and monitoring student progress ● establishing contact with the home ● assisting students with time management planning for assignments and tests ● checking student plans in their daily agendas

- interviewing each student in their group on a bi-weekly basis and report to the home
- assisting students with course selections
- being an advocate for students with other teachers
- helping students plan and explore their career development activities
- coordinating TA group activities to foster personal growth, spiritual development and community awareness and service

The Teacher Advisors are organized into three teams, each with an administrator and a counsellor, that serve to review issues and plan activities of concern and interest to staff and students.

Other

Under the Teacher Advisor Program students can earn .25 Personal Life Management OSIS credits in each of grades 9 through 12 for their participation personal and career planning activities.

Mary Ward's computer programs enable Teacher Advisors to monitor their students' progress and test results on a daily basis.

Contact Information

Mary Ward Catholic Secondary School
 3200 Kennedy Road Scarborough, ON M1V 3S8
 Tel: (416) 393-5544
 Fax: (416) 393-5768

Sample 2.3 Refer to Section 3-The Teacher-Advisory System

Feature

Teacher Advisor Program

Location

École Secondaire Cochrane High School

Description

The Teacher Advisor (TA) program is operating successfully at Ecole Secondaire Cochrane High School.

The school has produced a teacher handbook which outlines the roles and responsibilities of the TA's in respect to their interaction with students and parents. The following areas are detailed in the handbook:

- Each TA is responsible for guiding 18 multigrade students through their high school career.
- Each student meets with their TA at least every two weeks to discuss: progress, short and long range plans, new goals. They also review study skills, receive counselling, advice on extra-curricular participation, etc.
- Each TA contacts the parents a minimum of 5 times a year to discuss the

student's progress, any home factors which may influence student progress and/or behaviour, short and long range goals.

- The role of professional counsellors to provide guidance is available as necessary.

Other Students are responsible for producing an annual progress plan which is reviewed by TA's bi-monthly

Contact Information École Secondaire Cochrane High School
Box 2070, 611 11th Avenue
Cochrane, ON P0L 1C0
Tel: (705) 272-4372
Fax: (705) 272-4384

Sample 2.4 Refer to Section 3.5.3-The Portfolio

Feature Seeing & Reaching – A Career/Life Portfolio Helping Students Plan for The Future

Location Peel Board of Education

Description As a career planning tool, this portfolio allows students to chronicle their journey through self knowledge, development of life skills and planning for their future in the world of work.

Seeing & Reaching is supported by a curriculum unit adaptable for intermediate and senior students. The program encourages students to focus and spend time reflecting on career/life goals and what they need to do to reach those goals. The program and the portfolio that students develop help them realize that what they do with their lives is their career.

The portfolio allows schools to document their efforts in addressing students' affective, educational and career planning needs. The use of portfolios facilitates discussion between elementary and secondary levels and provides excellent opportunities for integrating the curriculum into career planning .

Other Students acquire written documentation of their career development which they take with them when they graduate. Schools have a valuable tool for meeting students' education and career planning needs; and the community gains future employees better prepared for the world of work.

Contact Information Guidance/Co-op Co-ordinator
Peel Board of Education
5650 Hurontario Street
Mississauga, ON L5R 1C6
Tel: (905) 890-1010 Ext.2347
Fax: (905) 890-3280

Sample 2.5 Refer to Section 3-The Guidance and Career Education Program

Feature **A student services program that coordinates guidance support services, classroom instruction and community partnerships in support of academic success, career exploration and on-the-job training.**

Location Waterdown District High School Wentworth County Board of Education

Description The program has three interdependent components:

1. Support Services – the school provides every student with access to a coordinated and planned academic, personal, social and organizational support system based on a prevention, promotion and intervention strategies model.
2. Class Instruction – enables students to develop knowledge, skills and values they need to understand themselves, relate to others and explore school-work and career opportunities. In grades 11/12, this instructional component is delivered in four optional credit courses:
 - a) Human Relations & Self Awareness
 - b) Leadership Skills
 - c) Career Planning
 - d) Peer Helping – Conflict Resolution
3. Community Partnerships – a shared involvement of community partners, parents and school staff in support of students exploring work, career and life opportunities in the school supervised co-op program.

Other The student services department also provides opportunities for exceptional students that include independent study courses, "complete a credit" courses, resource withdrawal periods and remedial help.

Contact Information Head of Student Services
Waterdown District High School
Waterdown, Ontario L0R 2H0
Tel: (905) 689-6692
Fax: (905) 689-3413

Footnotes

1. A teacher-counsellor is a teacher with additional qualifications in guidance who is assigned the role of teacher-counsellor in a school. (see Section 5.1.3)
2. Curriculum for Guidance and Career Education is and will be developed to be consistent in format with other areas and subjects. Some general directions of the curriculum are indicated in this policy, but details will be provided in related Ministry of Education and Training curriculum documents and classroom materials.
3. A teacher-advisor is a teacher who would be responsible for a group of students for a minimum of one year, as part of the teacher-advisor system (see Section 3.5.2)

ISBN 0-7778-5611-5

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