Appendix:  
Connections for Students  
Provincial Advisory Team’s Best Practices

Connections for Students model proved to be an effective joint strategy to support children transitioning from intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) therapy services provided through the MCYS funded Autism Intervention Program (AIP) to applied behaviour analysis (ABA) instructional methods in schools:

- Parents’ and partners’ satisfaction with the transition process has increased.
- Positive student outcomes were reported and continue to be reported by partnerships.
- Transition process became better structured and customized to address child’s strengths and needs.
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Individual Service Plans (ISP) and transition plans achieved better alignment and are improving.

There are some challenges that partners faced in implementing the model. PAT recommends using the following strategies to support effective model implementation:

- The ministries need to continue to work collaboratively in supporting the partnerships and in monitoring the ongoing implementation of the Connections for Students model.
- Connections for Students model has to be reviewed and regularly refined by partners to meet local level needs and reflect existing successful practices and structures.
- The possibility of applying key principles and processes of Connections for Students model to support transition to school of other groups of children with special education needs should be explored.
- Policies and practices of both school boards and Autism Intervention Program (AIP) providers should continue to be adjusted to better support transitions of students with ASD. Transition protocols, memoranda of understanding and other supporting documentation should be continuously improved.
- Regional networks of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) expertise professionals should continue to be supported.
- Knowledge mobilization and dissemination practices, including joint training opportunities for both AIP and school board staff should continue to be implemented.
- The IEP development process should be continuously enhanced. IEPs should be collaboratively developed and contain educational goals that are data informed, meaningful and achievable. They should be regularly monitored.
- Partners should share common assessment tools to measure successes of children supported by the model.
- The activities of the transition team should be guided by the child’s individual transition experience and his/her strengths and needs. Flexibility should be
promoted to ensure that every child’s individual strengths and needs as well as every situation’s specific circumstances are addressed.

- Ongoing communication with all partners should be always maintained.
- Communications with parents should be continuously improved and strategies supporting active parent engagement implemented. Flexibility and sensitivity to multiple staff and parents’ constraints should be maintained.
- Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs) and stakeholders should continue to be informed and involved in the Connections for Students model implementation.
- Ongoing evaluation of the model should be implemented with a focus on adapting practices to changing circumstances.
- Successful practices should be regularly identified and shared provincially.
- Teaching faculties should provide training in ABA.