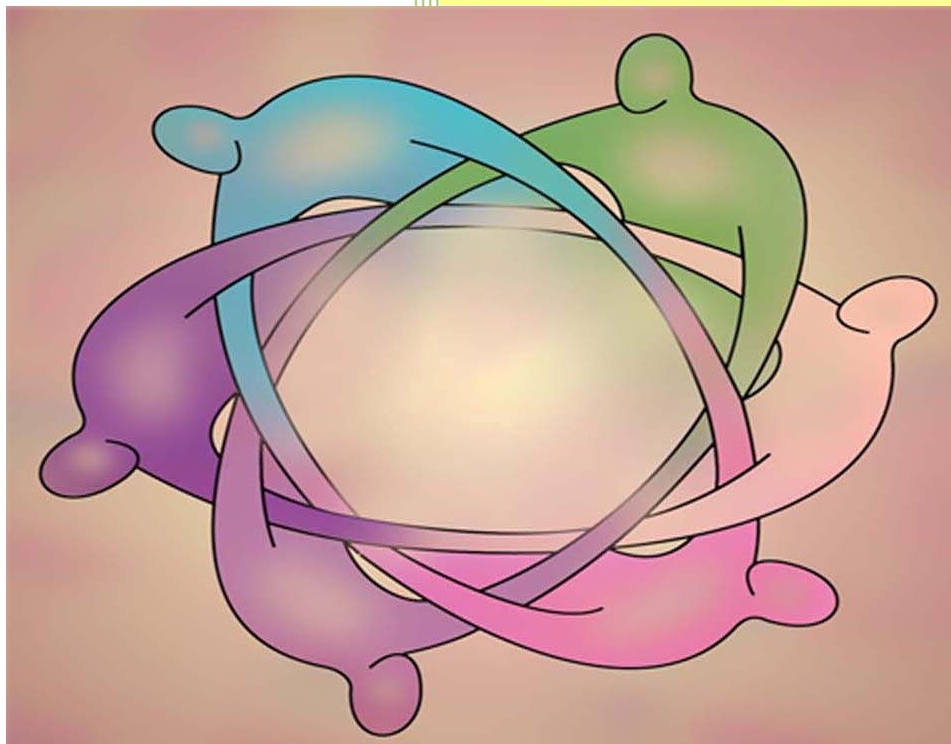


2007



# Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative Evaluation

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**SickKids**

# Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative Evaluation Report 2007

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## Executive Summary

### **Grade 8 to 9 Transition Project: Evaluation of Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative**

As part of Phase Three of the Student Success strategy, the Ontario Ministry of Education developed and introduced the Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative to improve the success of students as they make the transition from grade eight to grade nine. Training for this initiative was delivered by Ministry staff to Student Success Leaders (SSLs) and supervisory officers of school boards in the spring of 2006. These board leaders in turn delivered the same training to the Student Success Teachers (SSTs) and transition team members in their respective boards. In the fall of 2006, a role-specific questionnaire was circulated electronically to all SSLs and SSTs to evaluate the Ministry training sessions for leaders, and to provide an early assessment of the implementation of the transition planning components at board and school levels. The transition planning components to be implemented include: designation of a caring adult; strength-based timetabling; strategies and interventions for grade 8 students at risk as they move into grade 9; creation of a grade 8 student profile; operationalization of a school-based Student Success Team; and the role of the family of schools in cross-panel planning. This document reports the findings of an independent analysis of the questionnaire data conducted by a research team from the Community Health Systems Resource Group at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

The evaluation took place during the 2006-07 school year and was designed to evaluate transition planning processes and activities at the Ministry, board and school levels. The Transition Project evaluated 1) the effectiveness of the *Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Training Sessions* delivered to all school boards by the Ministry in May 2006, and 2) transition planning implementation by Student Success Teams in secondary schools.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used for collecting data for the following fundamental evaluation questions:

- How effective were the *Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Training Sessions* delivered by the Ministry in May 2006?
- Have the transition planning deliverables made a difference to students moving from grade 8 to 9?
- What were the problems with implementation of the transition planning deliverables?
- How do the definitions of ‘at-risk’ students influence the transition planning and the outcomes of the transition planning deliverables?
- How does board/school organizational readiness influence the outcomes of the transition planning deliverables?
- How does the culture of elementary and secondary panels influence the outcomes of the transition planning deliverables?
- How do the organizational processes influence the outcomes of the transition planning deliverables?

The results indicated that 80 % of SSLs participated “to a great extent” in the Ministry’s Transition Planning Training Sessions and 75 % in the delivery of the board training sessions. SSLs reported a high degree of satisfaction with the Ministry’s training sessions. The vast majority of SSLs (83 %) reported that the Ministry’s sessions clearly outlined the expectations for board-wide grade 9 transition plans. Almost 70 % of SSLs indicated that the sessions provided resources and supports for board-wide transition planning. Finally, most of the SSLs reported that the Ministry’s training adequately addressed the need for the various components of the program. Generally, SSLs were very satisfied with the training sessions and their delivery. Responses to open-ended questions revealed that SSLs experienced the least difficulty implementing “at-risk” identification, followed by assignment of a caring adult. Some components which could be improved are: the need (rationale) for individual timetabling based on student strengths, the necessity of board-wide interventions for “at risk” students, preparing board leaders for their roles, and allowing input that could inform future planning.

Seventy-five percent of SSTs attended board Transition training sessions. Questionnaire results indicated that 59% of schools had implemented most components of the program. Areas that might benefit most from future attention were “assigning a caring adult” and providing “transition related professional development.” Several factors influenced the extent of implementation. The participation of SSLs in board training had a strong effect on implementation of the components at the school level. The involvement

of supervisory officers also had a positive impact. Organizational processes such as “sharing information between partner schools”<sup>1</sup> and “offering staff development activities” were related to one another and both were associated with higher levels of implementation. These findings highlight the importance of board leadership in the success of such initiatives. Interestingly, the existence of transition planning activities prior to the program had no influence on implementation at the board or school levels. The analyses revealed some complex relationships between geographic and socio-demographic variables and organizational processes and implementation outcomes.

While SSLs indicated that definitions of “families of schools” varied across boards, SSTs indicated that between partner schools definitions of “at risk” students were shared. However, definitions of “at risk” varied across schools with differing emphasis being given to academic and behavioural variables. How schools defined “at risk” students had an impact on the nature of implementation of program components.

SSTs responses to open-ended questions indicated that they were struggling with the variability of roles (school administrative as well as student focused), complexity of tasks, and the part-time nature of the work. They are looking for more support and direction from boards and the opportunity to increase cross-panel collaboration.

Overall, the training sessions and implementation of the Grade 8 to 9 Transition Project were an unqualified success. The findings from these questionnaires provide a number of suggestions for improving implementation in future years. More research and discussion will be needed to understand the impact of the geographic and socio-demographic variables. Finally, future tracking of student retention and credit accumulation will allow the determination of whether the level of implementation of the program impacted these variables.

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘partner schools’ in this report is used to refer to the relationship between elementary and secondary schools as students move from grade 8 to grade 9.

## **Main Findings from SSL and SST Evaluation Surveys**

1. Both SSLs and SSTs reported high levels of diffusion and implementation of the components of the transition planning program.
2. SSL's found the Ministry's training sessions positive and that they provided clear guidance and training with regard to both deliverables and expectations regarding components.
3. There was excellent participation of SSLs in Ministry training sessions and of SSTs in Board training sessions.
4. Participation of SSLs and Supervisory Officers in Board training has important positive impacts on levels of implementation.
5. There is variability across the Boards in defining "families of schools."
6. There was variability across Boards in defining "at risk."
7. The majority of SSTs are "part-time." Given the school/administrative and student-focused roles of SSTs, they may be over-burdened.
8. Most components of the Transition Planning Initiative were reported to be implemented. More attention may be needed for assigning a caring adult and transition-related professional development and Board use of resources provided by the Ministry.
9. There were some interesting findings relating to demographic and geographic factors impacting on process variables and implementation outcomes. These findings are complex and their utility can only be determined in discussion with Ministry personnel.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Highly encourage Supervisory Officers and Student Success Leaders to be involved in training due to the positive results on implementation.
- Clearly address the need for “consistent access to individual timetabling” based on the student’s strengths, the necessity of having a clear process for “board-wide interventions” for ‘at-risk’ students, “outlining the 5 deliverables related to student transitions” and “preparing SSLs and Superintendents for their role” to increase implementation.
- Make the rationale more explicit for the less implemented components. Also, the importance of implementing all of these components should be emphasized and reiterated.
- Emphasize to school boards the importance of “sharing information between partner schools” and “offering staff professional development opportunities” due to their effect size on levels of implementation.
- School boards should take into account other factors such as number of residents speaking the non-official languages, immigrants, residents who belong to a visible minority and low-income families as these have shown to impact implementation.
- The dialog with schools and school boards should be intensified with regards to how the initiative can address the needs and challenges of aboriginal students.
- The issue of student mobility (transfers between schools for various reasons) should receive additional attention. High mobility rates in a neighborhood (residents moving in and out of a neighborhood) were related to lower implementation levels. Also, it is known from the literature that switching schools (for various reasons) is related to higher rates of early school leaving. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education addresses the needs of these schools and students and develops an action strategy (e.g., specific training, communication channels between schools, accountability issues).

- The results revealed a substantial degree of diversity between schools and between school boards. The future development of the Student Success Strategy should take this diversity of needs, challenges, and practices into account.
- Measures should be implemented that aim at maintaining the current level of momentum. That includes that stakeholders should have a clear understanding of the next concrete goal(s) and how to get there.
- Within the continuum of implementation, the initiative has moved from a level of initiation to implementation. However, it has not yet reached the level of deep institutionalization. At this level, personal communication with stakeholders is still crucial, particularly with senior board staff, principals (“gate-keepers”), and opinion leaders within the teaching profession. The emphasis should be put on the compatibility of the initiative with other initiatives and general policies and pointing out tangible results. Also, getting and keeping a variety of stakeholders involved deepens the level of implementation.
- The available data do not allow judging the level of depth of implementation. Beliefs and attitudes change at a slower pace than organizational measures are implemented. Also, Berman and McLaughlin (1979) have pointed to the danger that “pressures for change seem to subside with the act of adoption followed by the appearance of implementation”<sup>2</sup>. The Ministry of Education should take this issue into consideration when planning next steps.
- Further research should be conducted in order to monitor the progress of the initiative and to address open questions. Lasting implementation depends on tangible results, as perceived by the various stakeholders.

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<sup>2</sup> Berman, P., & McLaughlin, M.W. (1979). An exploratory study of school district adaptations. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

A crucial next step is to understand why certain components were less implemented than others and why certain schools have lower levels of implementation. The available data provide some hints, but do not allow conclusions. In order to find the answers, several levels have to be considered, such as individual characteristics of a school (policies, pedagogical approach, staff, etc.), demographic/socio-economical characteristics of the student population, and school board policies. Overall, the results from the analyses of the contextual variables (such as board size and characteristics of the student population) highlight the fact that schools have different needs and challenges and that their responses to them differ depending on their individual backgrounds. This diversity is reflected in the finding of distinct clusters of schools with regards to their risk definitions and other characteristics. These results imply that there are most likely different rationales for schools as to why they do or don't adopt components of the Student Success Strategy. Future studies should evaluate these issues.

The results have shown that the consistency of previous transition planning practices (as a measure of organizational readiness) had little impact on levels of implementation. This is of interest because research on knowledge transfer and innovation diffusion has consistently shown that levels of readiness and the degree of innovation adoption are closely related<sup>3</sup>. This surprising result might be accounted for by three different (but not mutually exclusive) explanations: 1) the question in the questionnaire might have been not sensitive enough or not an appropriate indicator to capture the activities related to the concept, 2) schools found the Student Success Strategy so convincing that they adopted irrespectively of their previous practices, and/or 3) a possible reflection of the fact that schools perceived the initiative as a top-down implemented initiative. The latter explanation is certainly the most concerning one, since this could imply only superficial levels of implementation. In order to understand this

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<sup>3</sup> See for instance: Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations*. (5th ed.). New York: Free Press; Hall, G., & Hord, S. (1987). *Change in schools: Facilitating the process*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

issue better it would be helpful to have additional data, for instance on how schools (i.e. their staff) perceive the Student Success Strategy. This piece of information was not part of the questionnaire, but is of interest because innovation adoption depends crucially on perception of the quality, complexity, and usability of the innovation. Compatibility with previous practices is another crucial factor. Since many boards had already some transition planning in place, the Ministry's initiative might have been perceived as fitting nicely into previous practices. Also, the perception of non-SST teachers would be an influential factor since they impact the implementation process. Of particular interest is the perception of the initiative by principals. Further data are required to address these issues.

Due to the early implementation phase of the Transition Planning initiative this evaluation did not address the question of whether the implementation of the components has had a positive impact on students' academic pathways and their success. This is a crucial next step for documenting and understanding the effectiveness of the Transition Planning initiative, but more importantly for very practical consequences. For instance, it could be the case that small schools implement certain components less frequently because they assume that due to the size of their schools they adequately know the students do not implement certain components. However, if an outcome analysis would reveal that these schools have in fact less favorable results this would provide a very strong argument for changing their practices.

A first step in evaluating the effectiveness of the Student Success Strategy in regards to decreasing early school leaver rates, would be to determine early leaver rates on a school level and link them to the information from the SST questionnaire. Schools matched on organizational and socio-demographic variables but with different levels of implementation could then be compared in terms of student success. This study approach would not require any additional data collection since the necessary data is available in existing data bases. However, this study design would only be a first step. It should be followed by a more rigorous and thorough study, preferably employing a longitudinal design and combining quantitative and qualitative methodology.

## Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative Evaluation

### **Introduction**

In 2003, the Ontario Ministry of Education launched its Student Success strategy in order to address concerns around credit accumulation and early school leaving. As a part of this strategy, the Ministry developed and rolled out an initiative in May 2006 to improve the success of the transition for students as they move from grade eight to grade nine – the Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning initiative. Presentations and training materials with specific transition planning components were provided to the Student Success Leaders (SSL) of the 72 school boards across Ontario. These board leaders in turn conducted the same training to the Student Success Teachers (SSTs) and transition team members in their respective boards.

In the fall of 2006, Ministry staff met again with SSLs at a provincial symposium and followed the meeting with a questionnaire to gain information about SSLs and their role, board structure, and to evaluate the effectiveness of Ministry training and the extent of the early implementation of transition planning by boards.

The evaluation component of the Transition Project was designed to evaluate 1) the effectiveness of the *Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Training Sessions* delivered to all school boards by the Ministry in May 2006, and 2) transition planning implemented by Student Success Teams in secondary schools. It was based on the objectives and issues the transition planning sessions were meant to address, as well as, the deliverables the school boards were to achieve for 2006-07. Part of the board-level evaluation was how school boards and their schools realized the following transition planning items:

- designation of a caring adult;
- strength-based timetabling;
- strategies and interventions for grade 8 students at risk as they move into grade 9;
- grade 8 student profile;
- operationalization of Student Success Team; and
- role of the family of schools for cross panel planning.

This reports discusses the findings of an independent evaluation conducted by a research and evaluation team from the Community Health Systems Resource Group at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. Two questionnaires were designed; one for

the Student Success Leaders and one for the Student Success Teachers. The purpose of this part of the evaluation was to investigate the various components of the Ministry's Transition Training sessions from the perspective of administrative staff at the school board level as well as the level of implementation of components of the transition planning program in their district school boards.

The evaluation took place during the 2006-2007 school year and was designed to evaluate transition planning processes and activities at the Ministry, board and school levels. The Transition project evaluated the effectiveness of the Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Training Sessions delivered to all school boards by the Ministry in May 2006. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used for collecting data for the following fundamental evaluation questions:

- How effective were the *Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Training Sessions* delivered by the Ministry in May 2006?
- Have the transition planning deliverables made a difference to students moving from grade 8 to 9?
- What were the problems with implementation of the transition planning deliverables?
- How do the definitions of 'at-risk' students influence the transition planning and the outcomes of the transition planning deliverables?
- How does board/school organizational readiness influence the outcomes of the transition planning deliverables?
- How does the culture of elementary and secondary panels influence the outcomes of the transition planning deliverables?
- How do the organizational processes influence the outcomes of the transition planning deliverables?

## **Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative Evaluation:** **Student Success Leader Questionnaire**

The Student Success Leaders (SSLs) Questionnaire was developed by the Student Success/Learning to 18 Implementation, Training and Evaluation Branch and the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch at the Ontario Ministry of Education and a research and evaluation team from the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto (see Appendix III). The purpose of the questionnaire was to collect feedback on 1) the *Ministry Transition Planning Training Sessions*, and 2) board-level transition planning and implementation. The information provides the Ministry with an understanding of the effectiveness of the Ministry delivered *Transition Planning Training Sessions*, and also provides a province-wide view of the progress on transition planning. The questionnaire was available in both English and French (see section on methodology).

The Ministry's Transition Planning Training sessions were evaluated regarding the overall satisfaction of SSLs according to the four key components of the program: population, program, issues, and processes. The level of implementation was also evaluated by using four indicators specific to transition planning. The second part of the evaluation examined the influence of the school board's organizational readiness and processes on the outcomes of transitional planning deliverables.

### Methodology

The questionnaire and an introductory text – explaining the background and the official status of the initiative – was emailed by the research and evaluation team at The Hospital for Sick Children to all Student Success Leaders (SSLs) from all public and separate school boards in Ontario. The questionnaire was available in both English and French; however, there were slight variations in the French-language questionnaire to reflect the elements of the French-language training sessions.

The questionnaire had 24 closed-ended questions and 16 open-ended questions and covered both background information and different components of the Transition Planning Initiative. The background information was collected about school boards regarding their middle schools and definition of “family of schools” and also about the SSLs; their roles, attendance at training and length of duty. Questions about the different

components of the program evaluated the extent to which the training sessions covered the need for: 1) Information sharing board-wide regarding specific student needs between elementary and secondary schools in your board, 2) Clear process board-wide for intervening on behalf of students at-risk, 3) Consistent access board-wide to individual timetabling based on student strengths, 4) Consistent assignment for a caring adult for at-risk students at each secondary school and 5) An opportunity for board-wide training and planning to occur.

A total of 59 SSLs from 59 school boards across Ontario completed and returned the questionnaire. The distribution of SSLs comprised of 50 from English-language and 9 from French-language district school boards, as well as 28 from Catholic and 31 from Public school boards. As there are only a few French-language school boards in Ontario only a small sample could be collected from French-language SSLs.

In order to obtain further background data about the schools, the questionnaire data were linked with information about schools and school boards from the Ontario Ministry of Education's web page (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>). Information was also linked via postal codes with the most current census data available from Statistics Canada (Census 2001)<sup>4</sup>.

Statistical analyzes were completed on the training issues by grouping the variables into "poorly addressed" or "adequately addressed". No SSLs responded that an issue was "not addressed at all" and as a result, the "poorly addressed" category comprised of the responses "very little" and "somewhat", and the "adequately addressed" category comprised of "quite a bit" and "to a great extent". Consistency of Transition

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<sup>4</sup> For each participating school, a frequency distribution of the student population's postal codes was available (e.g., 49 students had the postal code X9Y 3Z8, 23 had X9Y 3Z2, etc.). The students' postal codes were linked to the 2001 Census data from Statistics Canada and weighted arithmetic means (based on the frequency distribution) and other descriptive statistics (e.g., measures of variation) were computed for relevant variables such as incidence of low income, proportion of movers, etc. This method provides a good approximate description of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the schools' student population. The data from the schools were then summarized at the board level (they were not weighted by school size because the level of analysis was here "school"). One limitation of this method is that the board data do not include the schools that did not participate in the evaluation.

Planning before the Ministry’s initiative was also grouped due to the small level of response to the lowest indicator. “Not at all” and “Very little” were grouped into one response category.

Confidence Intervals (CI) are reported for the mean ratings of the Ministry’s questions. CI are a statistical measure used to state the probability that a value lies within the range with 95%. Odds ratios (OR) are used in the issues section of this report. OR are a statistical measure used to test the association of two dichotomous variables. The further away the OR is from 1, the higher the association is between the two variables. The OR is also a measure of effect size.

There are potential sources of bias due to the methodology of the survey however; there is no accurate method to assess if they exist and if so, the impact. Potential areas of biases include the response rate, the representation of schools, misinterpretation of questions, and level of implementation the program by the time the survey was conducted.

## **Results**

The Ministry’s Transition Planning Training sessions were evaluated regarding the overall satisfaction of SSLs according to the five key components of the initiative: population, program, issues, processes and indicators. The second part of the evaluation examined the influence of the school board’s organizational readiness and processes on the outcomes of transitional planning deliverables. All responses were compared for SSLs from Public and Catholic school boards; differences between them are reported when the results were significant.

### ***A) Overall satisfaction***

Overall, almost two-thirds of the SSLs rated the Ministry’s Transition Planning Training Sessions positively (28 % “somewhat useful”, 45 % “quite useful”, and 28 % “very useful”).

In an open-ended question SSLs indicated which aspects of transition planning they found least difficult and the common

**Almost two-thirds of the  
SSLs rated the Ministry’s  
Transition Planning  
Training Sessions positively**

themes were: a) at-risk identification, b) caring adult implementation, c) Ministry resources and training, d) interest in Student Success, e) good dialogue/gap filling across panels (teachers, parents and students).

***B) Population (SSL Background and Level of Involvement)***

**The target population was supervisory officers and Student Success Leaders.**

The majority of the SSLs were either superintendents (36 %) or principals (34 %). Others roles were consultant, teacher, and associate director (unfortunately, there was missing data from 18 SSLs).

Approximately 80 % of SSLs participated “to a great extent” in the Ministry’s Transition Planning Training Sessions and 75 % in the delivery of the board training sessions. However, only 48 % of those who participated “to a great extent” in the Ministry’s training sessions were the school boards’ supervisory officers and 31 % of those who participated in the delivery of the board training sessions were the supervisory officers.

**SSLs were very involved in the Ministry’s Transition Planning Training Sessions and the delivery of the board training sessions. However, other board supervisory officers were significantly less involved.**

SSLs reported in an open-ended question, the main group of people who were responsible for transition planning in their board were the: a) Student Success Team (leader, teacher etc), b) Family of Schools Transition Team, c) Guidance counselors, d) Elementary counselor/teachers, e) Curriculum coordinators, f) Administrator, g) Steering committee, h) Special Education teacher, i) Consultants, and j) Student services.

**Table 1. Distribution of roles of student success leaders (SSLs)**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Number of SSLs who assumed role</b>	<b>Total Respondents</b>
Superintendent	20 (36%)	41
Consultant	3 (5%)	41
Teacher	1 (2%)	41
Principal	20 (34%)	41
Associate Director	1 (2%)	41

\* Responses do not add up to 41, due to the selection of multiple roles

### C) Program

The objectives of the *Ministry Transition Planning Training Sessions* were the following:

- To detail the expectations of board-wide grade 9 transition plans
- To provide resources and supports for board-wide transition planning training sessions

The vast majority of SSLs (83 %) reported that the Ministry’s training sessions clearly outlined the expectations of board-wide grade 9 transition plans (see Table 2). Almost 70 % of all SSLs indicated that the sessions provided resources and supports for board-wide transition planning (see Table 3).

**The Ministry’s Transition Planning Training Sessions clearly outlined the expectations of board-wide grade 9 transition plans and provided resources and supports.**

**Table 2. Distribution of Responses for Expectations of Transition Plans**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very little	2	3%
Somewhat	8	14%
Quite a bit	31	53%
To a great extent	18	31%
Total	59	100%

**Table 3. Distribution of Responses for Provision of Resources and Supports**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very little	5	9%
Somewhat	13	22%
Quite a bit	24	41%
To a great extent	17	29%
Total	59	100%

### D) Addressing the Issues

The issues that the Ministry sessions meant to address are:

- The need for information sharing board-wide regarding specific student needs between elementary and secondary schools in your board
- The need for a clear process board-wide for intervening on behalf of students at-risk
- The need for consistent access board-wide to individual timetabling based on student strengths
- The need for consistent assignment of a caring adult for at-risk students at each secondary school
- The need for an opportunity for board-wide training and planning to occur

In the following we report the extent to which the Ministry’s training sessions addressed the above needs as perceived by the SSLs. Figure 1 illustrates the subgroup analysis for Public vs. Catholic SSLs.

## I) DESIGNATION OF A CARING ADULT

**Table 4. Ministry's presentation on Designation of a Caring Adult**

	School Board		Total
	Public	Catholic	
Poorly Addressed	10 (33%)	5 (18%)	15 (26%)
Adequately Addressed	20 (67%)	23 (82%)	43 (74%)
Total	30	28	58

Most of the SSLs (74 %) reported that the Ministry's training adequately addressed the need for consistent assignment of a "caring adult" for an "at-risk" student. There was no evidence of an association between perception of training between Catholic/Public boards ( $\chi^2 = 1.8$ , 1df,  $p=0.18$ ).

**The need for consistent assignment of a "caring adult" was adequately addressed.**

## II) STRENGTH-BASED TIMETABLING

**Table 5. Ministry's presentation on Strength-Based Timetabling**

	School Board		Total
	Public	Catholic	
Poorly Addressed	14 (47%)	9 (32%)	23 (40%)
Adequately Addressed	16 (53%)	19 (68%)	35 (60%)
Total	30	28	58

The SSL questionnaire indicated that overall, 60 % of SSLs perceived the Ministry's training to adequately address the need for "consistent access to individual timetabling" based on the student's strengths. There was no evidence of an association between Catholic/Public boards ( $\chi^2 = 1.3$ , 1df,  $p=0.26$ ).

**Almost two-thirds of the SSLs considered the need for "consistent access to individual timetabling" to be adequately addressed.**

### III) STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS

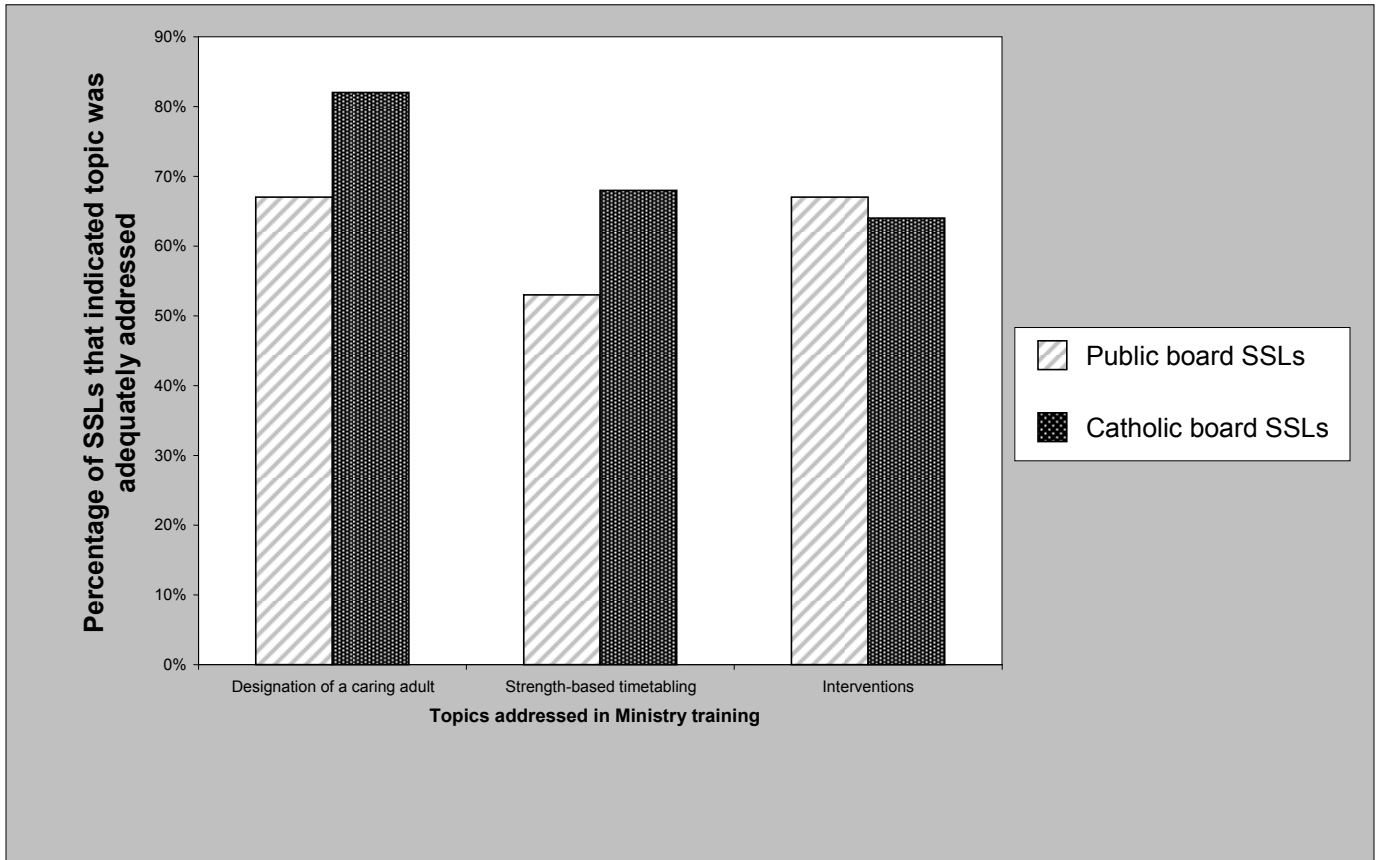
**Table 6. Ministry's presentation on Intervention Strategies**

	School Board		Total
	Public	Catholic	
Poorly Addressed	10 (33%)	10 (36%)	20 (35%)
Adequately Addressed	20 (67%)	18 (64%)	38 (66%)
Total	30	28	58

Overall, 66 % of SSLs thought that the Ministry's training regarding the necessity of having a clear process for "board-wide interventions" for "at-risk" students was adequately addressed.

**Two-thirds of the SSLs considered the necessity of having a clear process for "board-wide interventions" to be adequately addressed.**

**Fig 1. Distribution of SSL responses to components of transition planning training questions by Public/Catholic board**



#### IV) THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY/CROSS PANEL PLANNING

**Table 7. Ministry’s presentation of Information Sharing**

	School Board		Total
	Public	Catholic	
Poorly addressed	9 (30%)	5 (18%)	14 (24%)
Adequately addressed	21 (70%)	23 (82%)	44 (76%)
Total	30	28	58

76 % of all SSLs reported that the Ministry’s training regarding the need for “board-wide information sharing” (specifically between elementary and secondary schools) was adequately addressed.

**The need for “board-wide information sharing” was adequately addressed.**

**Table 8. Ministry’s presentation of board-wide training**

	School Board		Total
	Public	Catholic	
Poorly Addressed	10 (33%)	10 (36%)	20 (35%)
Adequately Addressed	20 (67%)	18 (64%)	38 (66%)
Total	30	28	58

The Ministry’s discussion of the opportunity for “board-wide training and planning” was perceived by 66 % of all SSLs to be adequately addressed.

**Two-thirds of the SSLs considered the need for “consistent access to individual timetabling” to be adequately addressed.**

#### *E) Processes*

**The Ministry Transition Planning sessions were selected as a key focus area for Phase Three of the Student Success strategy with 5 explicit deliverables related to student transitions from grade eight to grade nine. Superintendents and/or Student Success Leaders were selected as the target audience because of their key leadership role in transition planning.**

**Superintendents and/or Student Success Leaders are to apply the transition planning resources and supports in order to deliver board-wide training sessions. The results and findings concerning the effectiveness of the Ministry Transition Planning sessions will be shared in communications and symposia; will inform**

**direction and planning for supports; and will provide data for the Transition Project.**

The percentage of SSLs that indicated the processes were addressed in the training session “to a great extent” were 42 % for “outlining the 5 deliverables related to student transitions”, 25 % for “addressing SSLs and Superintendents directly”, 31 % for “preparing SSLs and Superintendents for their role”, 19 % for “providing opportunities for input to be used immediately”, and 10 % for “providing opportunities for input that could inform future direction and planning”. No differences were found for Public versus Catholic school boards.

**Overall, processes were addressed adequately. However, “providing opportunities for input” was rated less favourable.**

**Table 9. Mean response scores for the Ministry’s Processes**

	Overall Mean
Outlining the 5 deliverables related to student transitions	4.2 (CI: 4.0 – 4.4)
Preparing SSLs and Superintendents for their role	4.0 (CI: 3.8 – 4.2)
Providing opportunities for input to be used immediately	3.7 (CI: 3.4 – 3.9)
Providing opportunities for input that could inform future direction and planning	3.6 (CI: 3.4 – 3.8)

***F) Indicators of Success***

- The indicators of a successful program are:**
- **That every board has delivered board-wide transition planning training sessions**
  - **That every board is using the resources and supports provided**
  - **That the board *Annual Action Plan* includes transition planning components**
  - **That all secondary schools in your board have implemented transition planning**

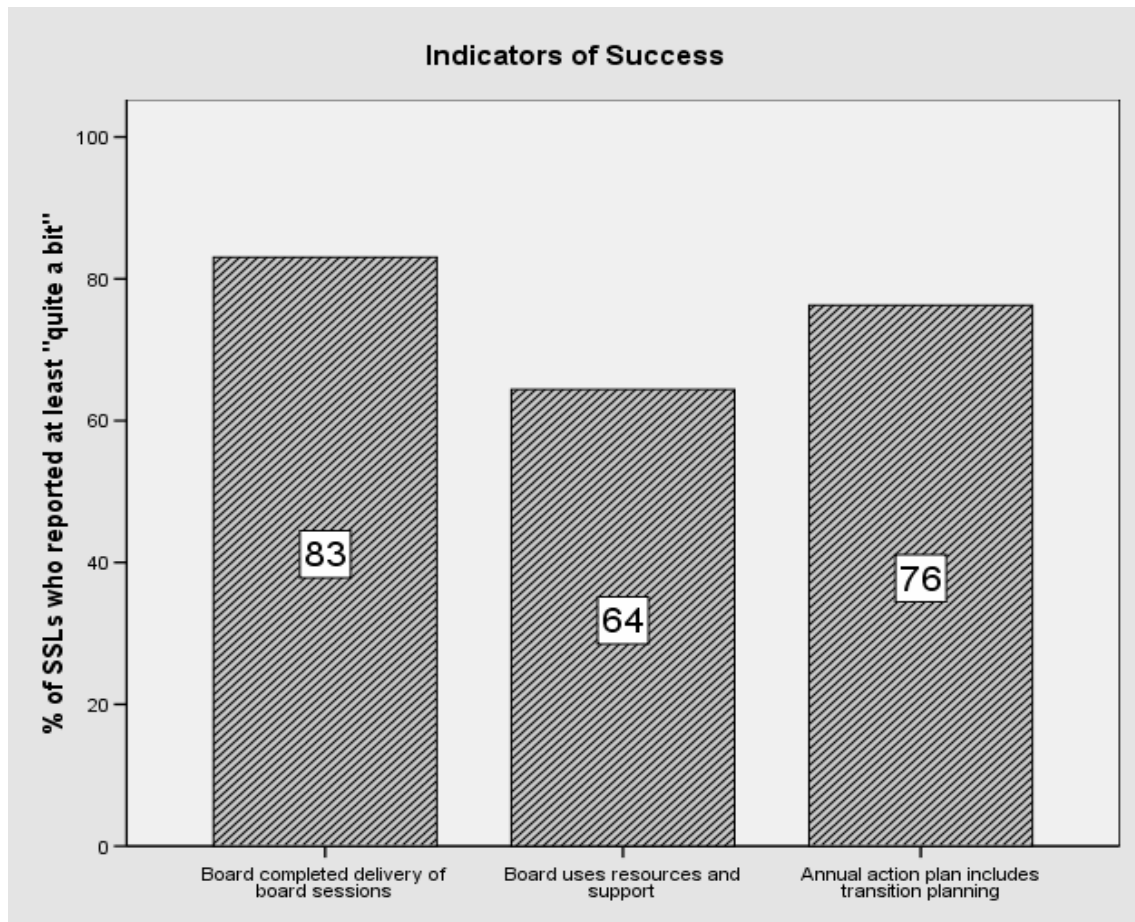
Overall, the SSLs reported high levels of diffusion and implementation of the program after the training program, as measured by the above indicators. Fig. 2 shows the percentage of SSLs who reported that their board had implemented the particular

component at least “quite a bit”. A difference was found for “the inclusion of transition planning in board’s *Annual Action Plan*” ( $F_{1,57} = 4.20, p = 0.05$ ) between Public and Catholic board SSLs. The mean rating for Public board SSLs was 4.1 (CI: 3.9 to 4.3) compared to 3.6 (CI: 3.2 to 4.1) for SSLs from Catholic boards.

An open-ended question on the questionnaire inquired as to how SSLs believed the Ministry’s training had changed programming. Certain themes were evident in their answers: a) more coherent Board plans, b) cross-panel dialogue and enhancement, c) student tracking and identification, d) culture shifts (need for teachers, more formal and consistent planning, focus on program rather than personnel, build on student strengths, include SSTs in programming), e) provided examples, awareness, ideas, discussion of issues, f) provided funds, g) implemented a caring adult, and h) no changes.

**SSLs reported high levels of diffusion and implementation of the initiative.**

**Fig 2. Distribution of responses by SSLs for Indicators of Success**



Most SSLs reported that the percentage of schools that implemented Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative had been very high (see Table 10).

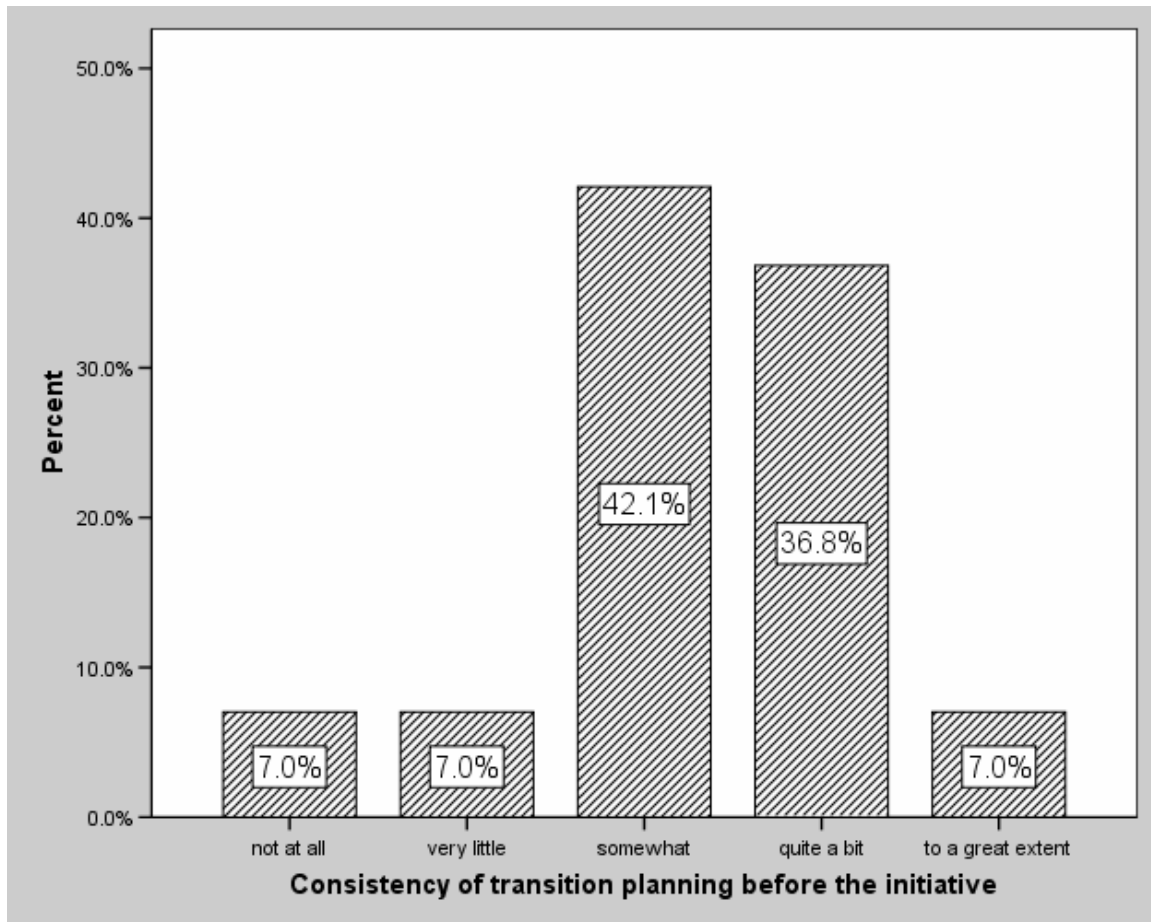
**Table 10. Percentage of schools in a board that implemented Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative**

	Frequency	Percent
41-60 % of schools	2	3 %
61-80 % of schools	4	7 %
81-90 % of schools	8	14 %
>90 % of schools	45	76 %
Total	59	100 %

*G) Influence of Organizational Readiness*

The consistency of transition planning across a school board before the Ministry's Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative was examined to determine the board's organizational readiness (see Figure 3 below and Table 11, Appendix I).

**Fig 3. Consistency of Transition planning before the Ministry’s Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative**



Consistency of transition planning prior to the ministry’s Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative showed little association with completion of “board-wide delivery training and planning”, “use of a selection of board-wide resources and supports”, “inclusion of transition planning in *Annual Action Plan*” and “percentage of secondary schools that have implemented transition planning”. It should be noted that the lack of association may be a misinterpretation of the question and not a representation of what happened at the board / school level. There was a tendency for an association between consistency before the ministry’s Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative and “inclusion of transition planning in *Annual Action Plan*” ( $\chi^2 = 16.33, 9 \text{ df}, p=0.06$ ). 57 % of SSLs that indicated transition planning across their board was “quite a bit” consistently reported transition planning was part of their board’s *Annual Action Plan* “quite a bit”. (See Table 12, Appendix I)

**Organizational readiness showed little association with completion of deliverables. This might be related to methodological issues of the survey.**

#### *H) Influence of Organizational Processes*

The influence of organizational processes on transition planning was analyzed taking two different approaches. First, organizational factors such as participation of supervisory officers in the Ministry's training sessions as reported by the SSLs were related to other information provided by the SSLs (e.g., level of transition planning implementation in schools as perceived by the SSLs). In a second step, information from the SSLs was related to information provided by the Student Success Teachers (SSTs) in their evaluation questionnaire about their schools. The following methods were used for this purpose: 1) Each SST was linked to a particular SSL via school board number. 2) For each group of SSTs linked in this way to a particular SSL, several summary descriptive statistics (such as arithmetic mean, median, and standard deviation) were computed for the variables available from the analyses of the SST questionnaires. These summary statistics represent the average responses of SSTs for a particular SSL. One problem of this approach is that the number of SSTs that could be linked to a particular SSL differ significantly (depending on response rate and board size). In order to minimize the effect of this sampling problem, a number of inclusion criteria were developed and compared. Three criteria were finally used: 1) all available cases were included, 2) only SSLs with a) SST response rates  $\geq 50\%$  or b) more than 9 SSTs responses were included, 3) only SSLs with more than 9 SSTs responses were included. Analyses were conducted using all three criteria and results were compared. The overall results using the three different criteria were quite similar. However, only results that showed similar patterns across the three criteria are reported here. These results should be confirmed in further analyses using hierarchical modeling (HLM, mixed models).

#### *i) Impact of organizational processes as reported by SSLs on transition planning*

The extent to which board Supervisory Officers and Student Success Leaders participated in the Ministry's training sessions and the delivery of them, influenced transition planning deliverables.

There was a significant association between the extent to which Supervisory Officers participated in the Ministry's training sessions and the percentage of secondary schools that had implemented transition planning ( $\chi^2 = 24.21$ , 12 df,  $p=0.02$ ). 93 % of all

respondents that indicated their Supervisory Officers participated in the training sessions “to a great extent” were from school boards with transition planning in more than 90 % of their secondary schools (See Table 13, Appendix I).

There was also a significant association between the participation level of SSLs in the Ministry’s training and the extent to which the board’s *Annual Action Plan* included transition planning components ( $\chi^2 = 15.76$ , 8 df,  $p=0.05$ ). 57 % of SSLs that participated in the Ministry’s training sessions “to a great extent” indicated that their board’s *Annual Action Plan* included transition planning “quite a bit” and 57 % of SSLs that participated in the Ministry’s training sessions “quite a bit” indicated that their board’s *Annual Action Plan* included transition planning “quite a bit” (See Table 14, Appendix I). There was a tendency for an association between the level of participation between SSLs in the Ministry’s training sessions and percentage of secondary schools in the school board that had implemented transition planning ( $\chi^2 = 10.86$ , 6 df,  $p=0.09$ ). 82 % of SSLs that participated in training “to a great extent” were part of a school board that had more than 90 % of their secondary schools with implementation of transition planning (See Table 15, Appendix I).

The level at which SSLs participated in the delivery of the Ministry’s training sessions was significantly associated with implementation of transition planning in the board’s *Annual Action Plan* ( $\chi^2 = 67.39$ , 16 df,  $p<0.005$ ). 61 % of SSLs that indicated they participated in the delivery of the Ministry’s transition training sessions “to a great extent” reported that transition planning was “quite a bit” part of their board’s *Annual Action Plan*. (See Table 16, Appendix I) Level of participation in the delivery of board training sessions was also significantly associated with the percentage of secondary schools that implemented transition planning ( $\chi^2 = 27.42$ , 12 df,  $p=0.007$ ). 80 % of SSLs that reported they participated in delivery “to a great extent” were part of school board’s with transition planning in more than 90 % of their secondary schools (See Table 17, Appendix I).

**The extent to which board Supervisory Officers and Student Success Leaders participated in the ministry training sessions and the delivery of them, influenced transition planning deliverables.**

*ii) Impact of organizational processes as reported by SSLs on transition planning as reported by SSTs*

Overall, organizational processes at the board level had a clear impact on transition planning at the school level (as reported by SSTs). Because of the nature of the methodological challenge, only summative results are reported here.

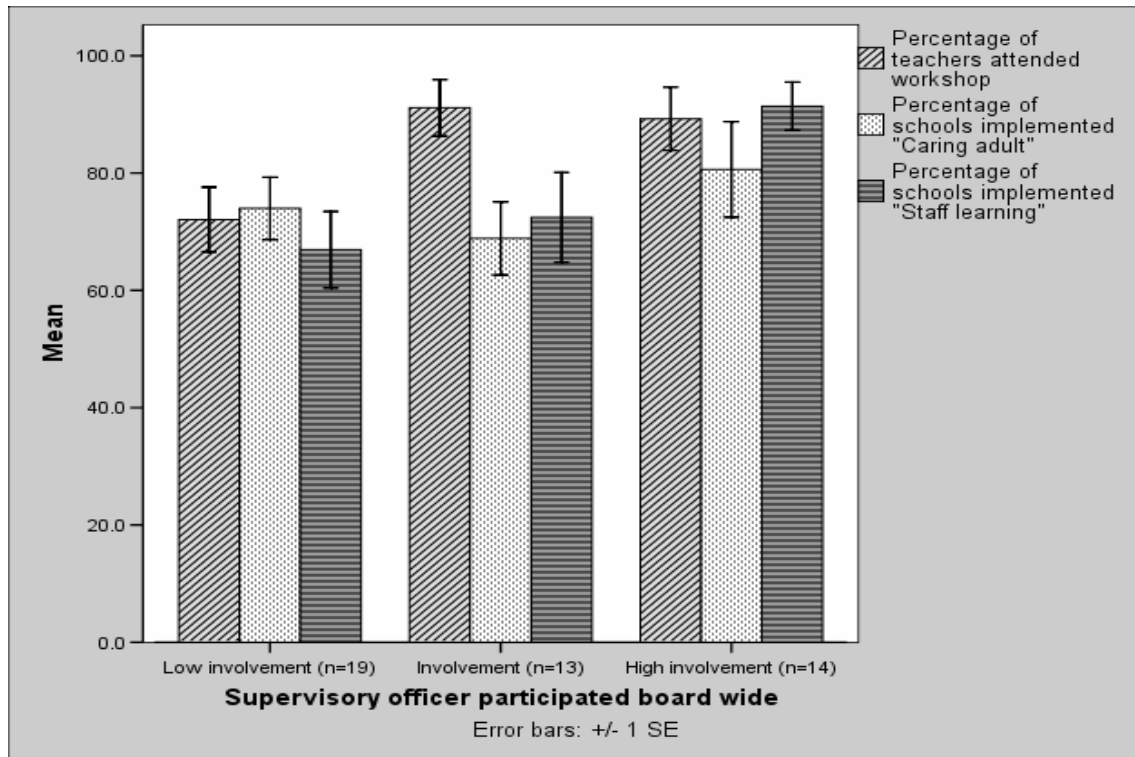
The involvement of supervisory officers mainly affected the participation of SSTs in the board training sessions, the implementation of professional development that specifically addresses transition planning, and “grade 9 orientation activities”. For instance, 67 % of SSTs associated with supervisory officers who were less involved (between “not at all” and “somewhat”) in the board wide delivery of training session attended training sessions, compared to 83 % of SSTs associated with very involved supervisory officers.

**Organizational processes at the board level had a clear impact on transition planning at the school level as reported by SSTs.**

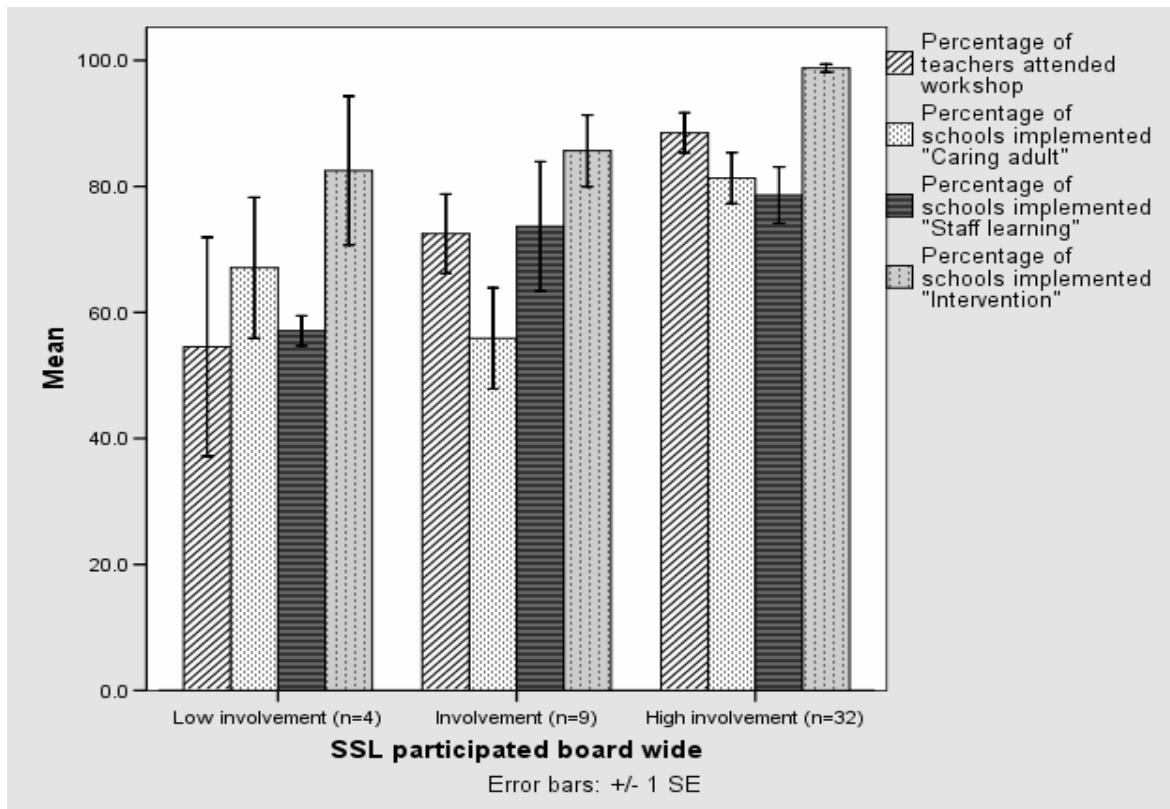
The degree of involvement of SSLs had both a stronger effect and impacted more components of transition planning than the involvement of supervisory officers. The participation of the SSL specifically in the delivery of the board- wide training sessions had an effect on implementation at the school level. Higher levels of SSL involvement were generally related to higher levels of implementation at the school level (as perceived by the SST).

Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 show examples of the overall patterns. Although single results should not be given an overdue importance in this context, the overall pattern of results clearly shows how involvement at the board level and implementation at schools was related. Figure 6 and Figure 7 summarize the major relationships.

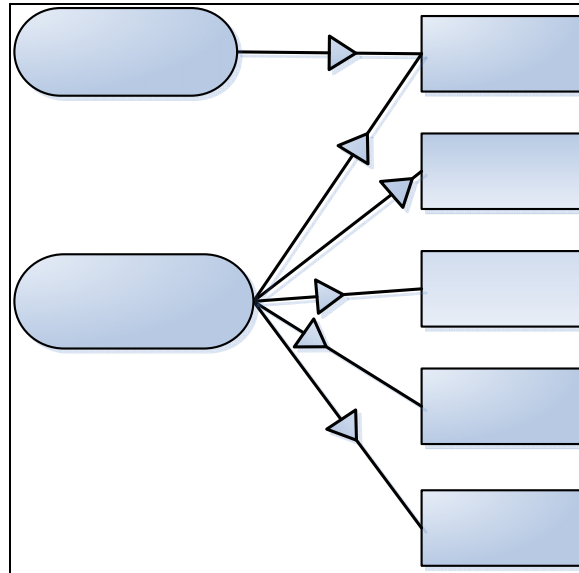
**Fig 4. Distribution of responses of involvement of senior board staff**



**Fig 5. Distribution of responses for SSL involvement in delivery of board sessions**



**Fig 6. Associations between Student Success Leaders and school organizational processes**



**Fig 7. Influence of Supervisory Officers on Student Success Teachers**

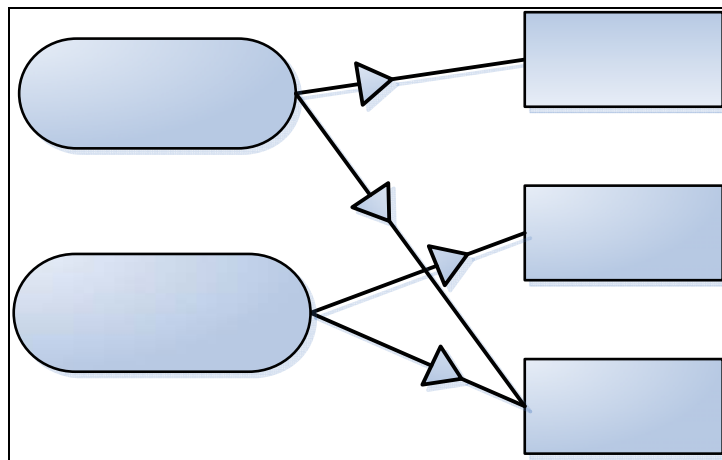
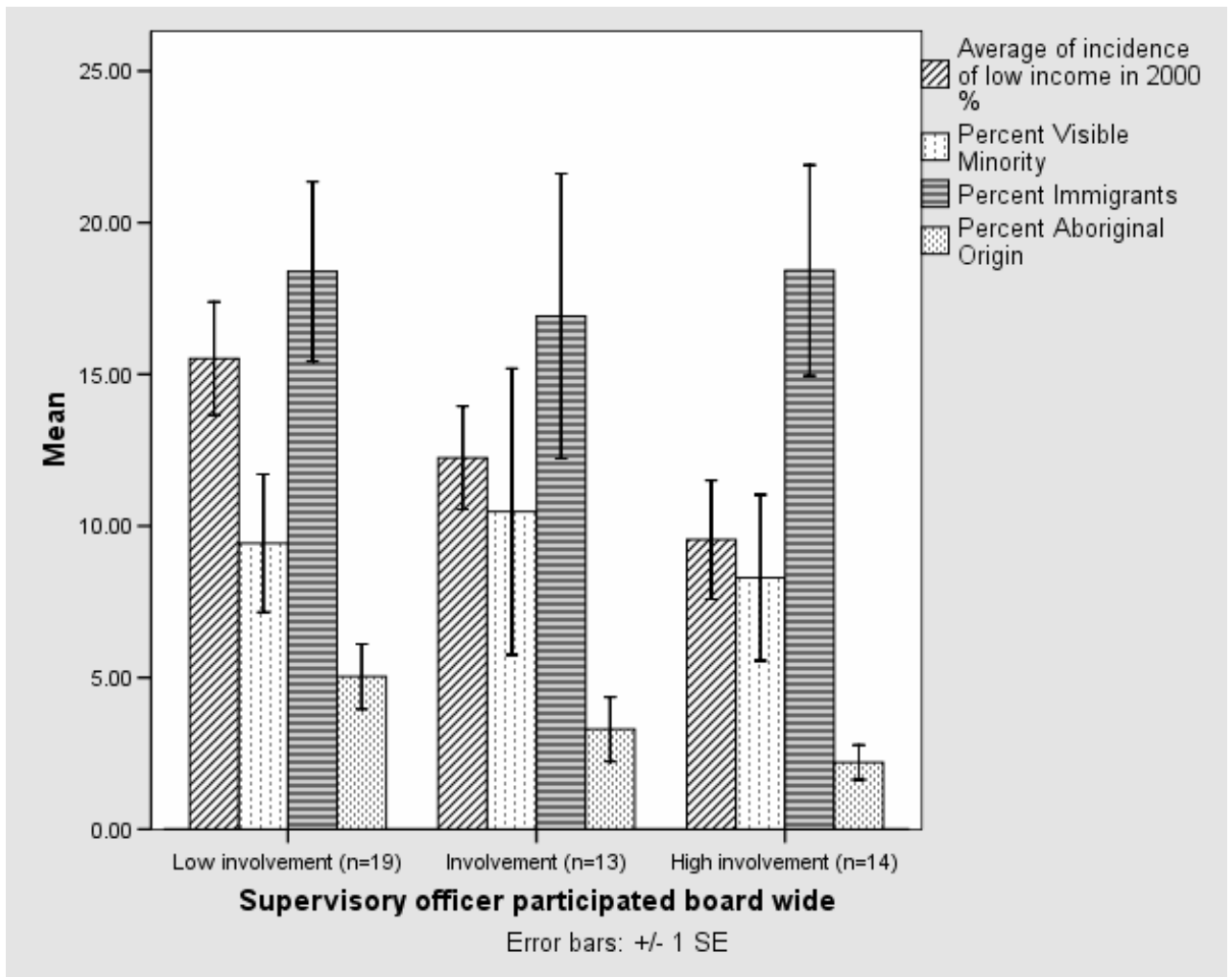


Fig. 8 and Fig. 9 suggest that levels of involvement were also related to demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the school's student population. Interestingly enough, the patterns appear to be distinct for senior board staff and SSLs. For instance, the results suggest that low levels of senior staff involvement were related to higher rates of poverty and aboriginal origin. This picture was different for the SSLs: low involvement of the SSL was rather typical for schools with less poverty, fewer aboriginal students, lower

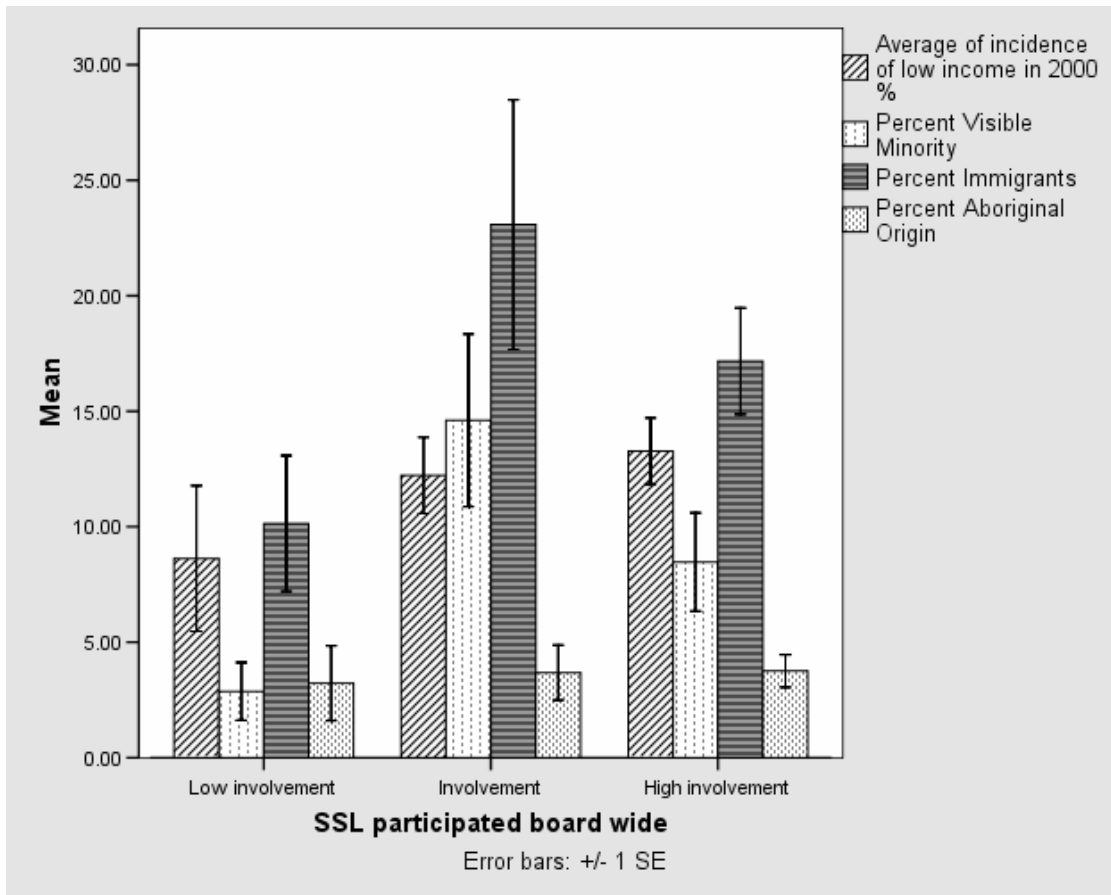
percentage of immigrants, and less students from visible minorities. Fig. 10a shows that geographical and demographic factors also play an important role for the level of involvement of senior board staff. Levels of involvement were particularly low in geographically large boards with smaller student populations. Fig. 10b shows the results for the SSLs. As said before, these preliminary results require further confirmation by methodologies such as hierarchical modeling.

**The extent to which board Supervisory Officers and Student Success Leaders were involved were also related to demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the school's student population.**

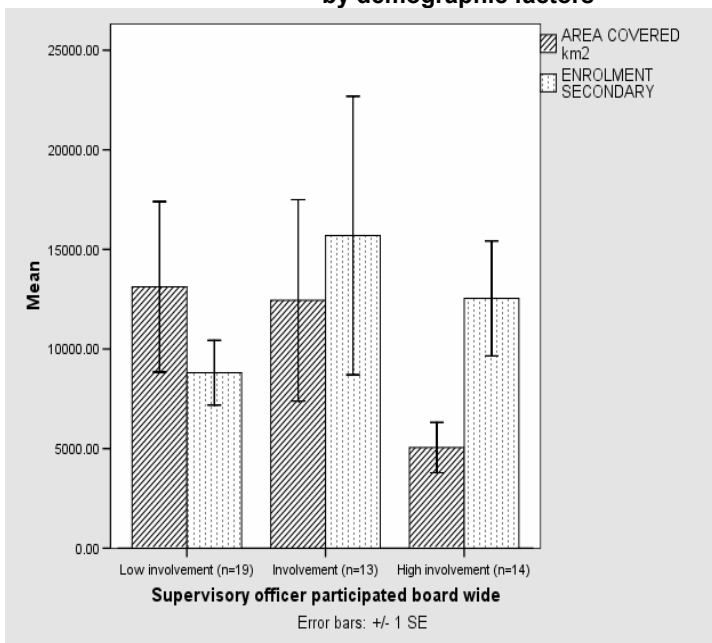
**Fig 8. Distribution of responses for Supervisory Officer's involvement**



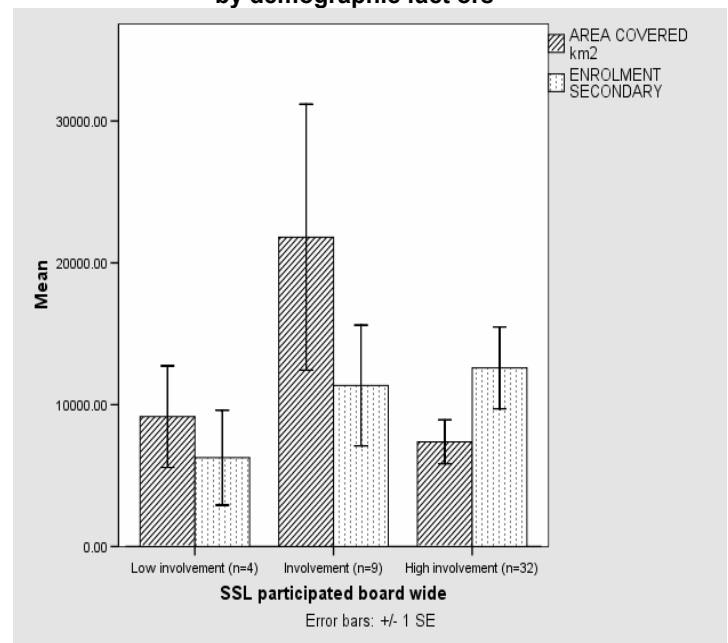
**Fig 9. Distribution of responses for Student Success Leader's involvement**



**Fig 10a. Level of involvement of Senior Board Staff by demographic factors**



**Fig 10b. Level of involvement of SSLs by demographic factors**



## SUMMARY

The Ontario Ministry of Education launched its Student Success Strategy in 2003, in order to address concerns around credit accumulation and early school leaving. As a part of this strategy, the Ministry developed and rolled out an initiative in May 2006 to improve the success of the transition for students as they move from grade eight to grade nine – the Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning initiative. Presentations and training materials with specific transition planning components were provided to the Student Success Leaders (SSL) of the 72 school boards across Ontario. These board leaders in turn conducted the same training to the Student Success Teachers (SSTs) and transition team members in their respective boards.

In the fall of 2006, Ministry staff met again with SSLs at a provincial symposium and followed the meeting with a questionnaire to gain information about SSLs and their role, board structure, and to evaluate the effectiveness of Ministry training and the extent of the early implementation of transition planning by boards. The evaluation component of the Transition Project was designed to evaluate 1) the effectiveness of the *Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Training Sessions* delivered to all school boards by the Ministry in May 2006, and 2) transition planning implemented by Student Success Teams in secondary schools. It was based on the objectives and issues the transition planning sessions were meant to address, as well as, the deliverables the school boards were to achieve for 2006-07 (e.g., designation of a caring adult, strength-based timetabling, operationalization of Student Success Team). The independent evaluation was conducted by a research and evaluation team from the Community Health Systems Resource Group at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

The evaluation took place during the 2006-2007 school year. A Student Success Leaders (SSLs) Questionnaire was developed by the Student Success/Learning to 18 Implementation, Training and Evaluation Branch and the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch at the Ontario Ministry of Education and the research and evaluation team from The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. It was emailed by the research and evaluation team at The Hospital for Sick Children to all Student Success Leaders (SSLs) from all public and separate school boards in Ontario. The questionnaire was available in both English and French. Additional background information was

collected from sources such as Statistics Canada. A total of 59 SSLs from 59 school boards across Ontario completed and returned the questionnaire. The distribution of SSLs comprised of 50 from English-language and 9 from French-language district school boards, as well as 28 from Catholic and 31 from Public school boards.

Overall, the results clearly indicate that the initiative was a major success. Approximately two-thirds of the SSLs rated the Ministry's Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative Training Sessions positively (28 % "somewhat useful", 45 % "quite useful", and 28 % "very useful").

SSLs were very much involved in the board-wide implementation of the transition strategy. Approximately 80 % of SSLs participated "to a great extent" in the Ministry's Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative Training Sessions and 75 % in the delivery of the board training sessions. However, only 48 % of the school boards' supervisory officers participated "to a great extent" in the Ministry's training sessions and 31 % in the delivery of the board training sessions.

The vast majority of SSLs (83 %) reported that the Ministry's training sessions clearly outlined the expectations for board-wide grade 9 transition plans. Almost 70 % of SSLs indicated that the sessions provided resources and supports for board-wide transition planning.

Most of the SSLs reported that the Ministry's training adequately addressed: the need for a consistent assignment of a "caring adult" (74 %), the need for "consistent access to individual timetabling" based on the student's strengths (60 %), the necessity of having a clear process for "board-wide interventions" for 'at-risk' students (66 %), the need for "board-wide information sharing" (76 %), and the opportunity for "board-wide training and planning" (66 %).

The percentage of SSLs who indicated the processes were addressed "to a great extent" were 42 % for "outlining the 5 deliverables related to student transitions", 25 % for "addressing SSLs and Superintendents directly", 31 % for "preparing SSLs and Superintendents for their role", 19 % for "providing opportunities for input to be used immediately", and 10 % for "providing opportunities for input that could inform future direction and planning".

The following four indicators were developed for measuring the success of the implementation of the Transition Planning Initiative: a) every board has delivered board-wide transition planning training sessions, b) every board is using the resources and supports provided, c) the board's *Annual Action Plan* includes transition planning components, and d) all secondary schools in a board have implemented transition planning. Overall, the SSLs reported high levels of diffusion and implementation of the program as measured by the above indicators (at least "quite a bit": 83 % board-wide training sessions, 64 % using resources, 76 % Annual Action Plan). More than two-thirds of the SSLs indicated that at least 90 % of the schools in their board had implemented transition planning.

Consistency of transition planning prior to the Ministry's Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative showed little association with implementation of any component.

The extent to which board Supervisory Officers and Student Success Leaders participated in the Ministry training sessions and the delivery of them had a very positive influence on most transition planning deliverables as perceived by the SSLs. Also, organizational processes at the board level had a clear impact on transition planning at the school level (as reported by Student Success Teachers [SST]). The involvement of both supervisory officers and SSLs had a highly positive effect on levels of implementation at schools. The degree of involvement of SSLs had both a stronger effect and impacted more components of transition planning than the involvement of supervisory officers. The participation of the SSL specifically in the delivery of the board-wide training sessions had an effect on implementation at the school level. Higher levels of SSL involvement were generally related to higher levels of implementation at the school level (as perceived by the SST). The results strongly suggest that levels of involvement were also related to demographic, geographic, and socio-economic characteristics of the schools. The results suggest that low levels of senior staff involvement were related to a more challenging student population. Also, geographical challenges resulted in lower involvement. This picture was different for the SSLs. Higher involvement was related to more challenging characteristics of the school's student population. However, these results require further confirmation by methodologies such as hierarchical modeling.

In summary, the delivery of the Ministry's Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative Training sessions and the perception of them by SSLs were very successful. The expectations were clearly outlined and resources and support were delivered to the SSLs. Some of the key components could be more clearly addressed such as the need for "consistent access to individual timetabling" based on the student's strengths, the necessity of having a clear process for "board-wide interventions" for 'at-risk' students, "outlining the 5 deliverables related to student transitions" and "preparing SSLs and Superintendents for their role". Consulting with SSLs and other senior board staff would be of interest.

The results have shown that the consistency of previous transition planning practices (as a measure of organizational readiness) had little impact on other variables. Interestingly, the same result was found for the School Success Teachers and the same suggested interpretation applies here: 1) the question in the questionnaire might not have been sensitive enough or not an appropriate indicator for the concept, 2) school boards may have indicated that they were highly consistent but at not implementing the strategy, 3) SSLs / school boards adopted the Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning initiative irrespectively of their previous practices, and/or 4) SSLs / school boards perceived the initiative as a top-down implemented initiative. Further research is required to clarify the issue.

One of the most crucial results is the finding that systemic factors at the school board level (such as involvement of senior staff) were related to levels of implementation of the Transition Initiative at the school level. This result very clearly highlights the importance of addressing and involving senior board staff by the Ministry of Education. At the school board level, senior staff should get highly involved board-wide to make transition planning a success. The results from the analyses of the contextual variables (e.g., characteristics of the student population) suggest that there might be a need to develop individual and specific strategies depending on the specific needs and challenges of school boards (e.g. rural, certain demographic and socio-economic characteristics).

## **Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative Evaluation:** **Student Success Teacher Questionnaire**

The Student Success Teacher (SST) questionnaire was developed (see Appendix IV) in both English and French by the Student Success/Learning to 18 Implementation, Training and Evaluation Branch and the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch at the Ontario Ministry of Education and a research and evaluation team from the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. The goal of the questionnaire was to collect SST perceptions of board-delivered Transition Planning training and to evaluate the extent of school-level implementation of the Ministry's transition planning components. As a member of the Student Success Team, the SST plays an integral role in activating supports and interventions for the transition from grade 8 to grade 9.

The questionnaire included questions relevant to background information (school info, SST info and Student Success Team info) and both closed-end and open-ended questions about the Transition planning requirements. The transition planning requirements examined to what extent SSTs indicated their school had implemented transition components and in what capacity. Open-ended questions were included to allow SSTs to provide examples of how the Transition initiative was implemented at ground level.

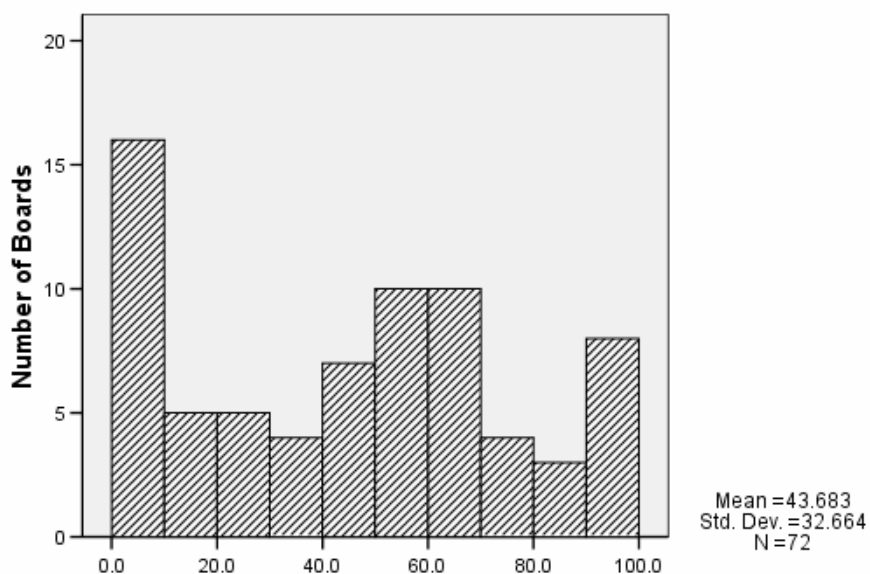
### **Methodology**

The questionnaire was developed by the Student Success/Learning to 18 Implementation, Training, and Evaluation Branch and the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch at the Ontario Ministry of Education and a research and evaluation team from The Community Health Systems Resource Group at The Hospital for Sick Children. It had 19 closed-ended questions and 21 open-ended questions and covered – besides some background information – different aspects of the Transition Program Initiative including i) designation of a caring adult; ii) strength-based timetabling; iii) strategies and interventions for grade 8 students at risk as they move into grade 9; iv) grade 8 student profile; v) operationalization of Student Success Team; and vi) role of the family of schools for cross panel planning. The questionnaire and an

introductory text – explaining the background and the official status of the project – was emailed by the research team at The Hospital for Sick Children to all Student Success Leaders (SSL) to all 72 public and separate school boards in Ontario with the request to forward it to all of their Student Success Teachers (SST). The questionnaire was available in both English and French.

A total of 358 student success teachers from 56 school boards and 342 schools across Ontario completed and returned the questionnaire. The vast majority of these schools were secondary schools with grades 9 through 12 (88 %, see Table 9, Appendix II). The distribution of student success teachers comprised of 311 teachers from English-language and 47 teachers from French-language schools, 297 from urban and 52 from rural schools (following the official 2004/2005 classification of a rural school by the Ontario Ministry of Education), as well as 127 from Catholic and 230 from Public schools. Based on the total number of secondary schools in Ontario (n=869), the overall response rate was almost 40 % and varied between school boards between 0 and 100 % (average 44 %). Fig. 1 shows the distribution of response rates across school boards. The administrative regions “London” (52 %), “Thunder Bay” (48 %), and “North Bay/Sudbury” (42 %) had the highest response rates; “Ottawa” (27 %) and “Toronto” (36 %) the lowest and “Barrie” had 38 %. The overall response rates were slightly higher in urban areas (40 % versus 36 % in rural areas) and higher for Catholic boards (44 % versus 37% for Public).

**Response Rates by School Boards**



**Fig. 1: Response Rate for Board in Percent**

In order to obtain further background data about the schools, the questionnaire data were linked with information about schools and school boards from the Ontario Ministry of Education’s web page (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>). Information was also linked with the most current census data available from Statistics Canada (Census 2001) using the postal codes of the schools’ students<sup>5</sup>.

There are, however, potential sources of bias due to the methodology of the survey which include the response rate of SSTs completing the survey (not all SSTs completed the survey), the representation of schools, misinterpretation of questions, and level of implementation the initiative by the time the survey was conducted. There is no

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<sup>5</sup> For each participating school, a frequency distribution of the student population’s postal codes was available (e.g., 49 students had the postal code X9Y 3Z8, 23 had X9Y 3Z2, etc.). The students’ postal codes were linked to the 2001 Census data from Statistics Canada and weighted arithmetic means (based on the frequency distribution) and other descriptive statistics (e.g., measures of variation) were computed for relevant variables such as incidence of low income, proportion of movers, etc.. This method provides a good approximate description of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the schools’ student population. The data from the schools were then summarized at the board level (they were not weighted by school size because the level of analysis was here “school”). One limitation of this method is that the board data do not include the schools that did not participate in the evaluation.

accurate method to detect and assess if these sources of bias exist and if so, the impact they have on the data that has been collected.

## **Results**

Part one of the evaluation examined the implementation of various components of the student success strategy such as “designation of a caring adult”, “strength-based timetabling”, “processes for intervening”, and “creating student profiles”. Subgroup analyzes were completed for Catholic vs. Public and urban vs. rural schools. For the main analysis of geographic location (urban vs. rural) the definition according to the Ministry of Education was used (the Ministry provided a file containing this information for each school). The second part of the evaluation examined the effect of these components on the transition planning implementation and trends within these associations.

### *A) The schools and their Student Success Teams*

The majority of schools had between 0-5 (56 %) or 6-10 (32 %) partner schools<sup>6</sup>; however, some schools had a significantly larger number (see Table 10, Appendix II). Half of the schools reported having rural partner schools and almost one-third of the schools had both urban and rural partner schools.

Almost 75 % of the respondents had attended their school board’s Transition Planning Training Sessions; however, there was a major variability in attendance between boards (ranging from 0 and 100 %). No significant differences were found between Public versus Catholic and urban versus rural schools.

**Almost 75 % of all SSTs had attended their board’s training sessions.**

The vast majority of Student Success Teams had between 3 and 5 members (see Table 1). Typical team members (see Table 2) were guidance counselors, special education teachers, principals, and vice principals (55 % of all teams had at least these four core members). One SST commented, “*our school has been quite successful in that we have always had a very caring community with the Guidance, Special Ed and*

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<sup>6</sup> The term ‘partner schools’ in this report is used to refer to the relationship between elementary and secondary schools as students move from grade 8 to grade 9.

Administration being the main sources for support for students ‘at-risk’. Our failure stats are quite low...”.

**Table 1. Number of members on Student Success Teams**

Number of members	Number of SST teams of this size
0	2 (1%)
1	13 (4%)
2	35 (10%)
3	84 (24%)
4	96 (27%)
5	74 (21%)
6	47 (13%)
Total	351 (100%)

**Table 2. Roles of Student Success Team members**

Position	Number of SST teams with position
Principal	276 (79%)
Vice principal	238 (68%)
Guidance	313 (89%)
Special Education	287 (82%)
Classroom teachers	186 (53%)
Social Worker	71 (20%)
Other	200 (57%)
Total Respondents	358 (100%)

*B) Implementation of the components of the Student Success Strategy*

In the following we report the extent to which the components of the Student Success Strategy were implemented and the differences between Catholic vs. Public and urban vs. rural schools.

Overall, the reported implementation of various components was very high. Fifty-nine per cent (59%) of the SSTs reported that their schools have all of the following eight components implemented: “information sharing”, “consistent at-risk definition with partner schools”, “grade 8 and 9 information sessions”, “support systems in place”, “process for intervention”, “strength-based timetabling”, and “assignment of a caring adult”. Less than 1 % had fewer than 5 components implemented however, for 18 % of the respondents data were missing for at least one component. One SST noted, *“The transition planning has definitely been successful. We are able to track students right away because we already know who will most likely need a little extra help with the transition. We do not have to wait till they fail after the midterm report card to identify them.”*

**Overall implementation was very high. Almost two-third had most components implemented.**

## I) DESIGNATION OF A CARING ADULT

**Table 3: Process for designation of a caring adult**

	School		School		Total
	Public	Catholic	Rural	Urban	
No Process of Designation	62 (27%)	32 (25%)	10 (20%)	79 (27%)	94 (27%)
Process of Designation	165 (73%)	95 (75%)	41 (80%)	216 (73%)	261 (74%)
Total	227	127	51	295	355

Overall, 74 % of all SSTs reported that their school has an established process for “designating a caring adult”. No differences were found between Public vs. Catholic and Rural vs. Urban. 56 % of SSTs indicated that their school implemented the component “Student Success Team assignment of a caring adult”, 48% reported use of “student profiles”, 46 % used “consideration with the match between caring adult and student”, and 58 % used “periodic checkpoints and communications”.

**“Caring adult”: 74 % implementation.**

One SST indicated that their role in assisting with the designation of a caring adult included, *“Identifying with the School Student Success Team potential ‘at-risk’ students base(d) on a variety of sources including the data provided by Guidance and Special Education Departments and classroom teachers at both the elementary and secondary level.”* Another SST responded that their role in identifying ‘at-risk’ students entailed, *“Liaising with teachers about potential additions to our ‘at-risk’ list and discussing/implanting joint efforts to work with those kids.”*

## II) STRENGTH-BASED TIMETABLING

**Table 4. Strength-based individual timetabling**

	School		School		Total
	Public	Catholic	Rural	Urban	
No Process for Timetabling	33 (14%)	13 (10%)	10 (19%)	32 (11%)	46 (13%)
Process for Timetabling	196 (86%)	113 (90%)	42 (81%)	263 (89%)	310 (87%)
Total	229	126	52	295	356

Overall, 87% of SSTs reported that their school had a process for providing a “strength-based timetable” for grade 9 students “at-risk”. There was a tendency for an association between rural/urban schools and “strength-based timetabling” ( $\chi^2 = 2.9, 1df, p=0.09$ ). Urban school SSTs were 2.0 times more likely to report “strength-based timetabling” than rural school SSTs however, the true value could have ranged anywhere from 0.9 to 4.3 with 95% confidence. Overall, 70% of SSTs used “individual meetings”, 74% used “student profiles” and 79% used “consideration of student strengths for timetabling”. Timetables were reviewed after the start of the year by 77% of all SSTs.

**“Strength-based timetabling”: 87 % implementation.**

In regards to direct student support one SST commented their role entailed, *“individualized support to student learning Gr. 9 & 10, tracking, advocating and advising/schedule changes for level and pathways.”*

### III) STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS

**Table 5. Intervention processes**

	School		School		Total
	Public	Catholic	Rural	Urban	
No Process for Intervention	8 (4%)	5 (4%)	6 (12%)	6 (2%)	13 (4%)
Process for Intervention	222 (97%)	121 (96%)	46 (89%)	290 (98%)	344 (96%)
Total	230	126	52	296	357

With respect to “intervention strategies” within schools, 96% of SSTs indicated having a process for when and how to intervene on behalf of grade 9 students “at-risk”.

There was also strong evidence of an association between rural/urban schools and having a process for “intervention” ( $\chi^2 = 12.02, 1df, p=0.0005$ ). Urban school SSTs were 6.3 times more likely to indicate their school had an “intervention” strategy however, the true value could have ranged anywhere from 2.0 to 20.4 with 95% confidence. 79% of SSTs indicated “advocacy for a student” occurred at their school and 87% reported they used “referrals to outside support and services”. “Internal structures to

**“Strategies and interventions”: 96 % implementation.**

support students” and “assessment information about a student” were accounted by 92% and 87% of all SSTs respectively.

In an open-end question, a SST provided the following response for their intervention strategy: *“Creating, initiating, and/or supporting school wide efforts to improve student outcomes. Collaborating with educators from the elementary panel to assist students in the transition to high school, determining the direction of school success team meetings, working with the other school Student Success Team members to facilitate communication in the areas of literacy, numeracy, post secondary pathways and community, culture and caring..”*

#### IV) STUDENT PROFILE

We investigated “creating student profiles” by examining the different methods used by schools to define a student “at-risk”. The responses included “persistent truancy”, “failure in Math/English”, “behavioral concerns”, “suspensions”, “late attendances”, “recommendations from elementary school” and “other factors”. The results are illustrated in Figures 2 and 3 and the analyses of these factors are detailed below.

**Persistent truancy, academic failure, and behavioral concerns were the most commonly used criteria for considering a student as to be “at-risk”.**

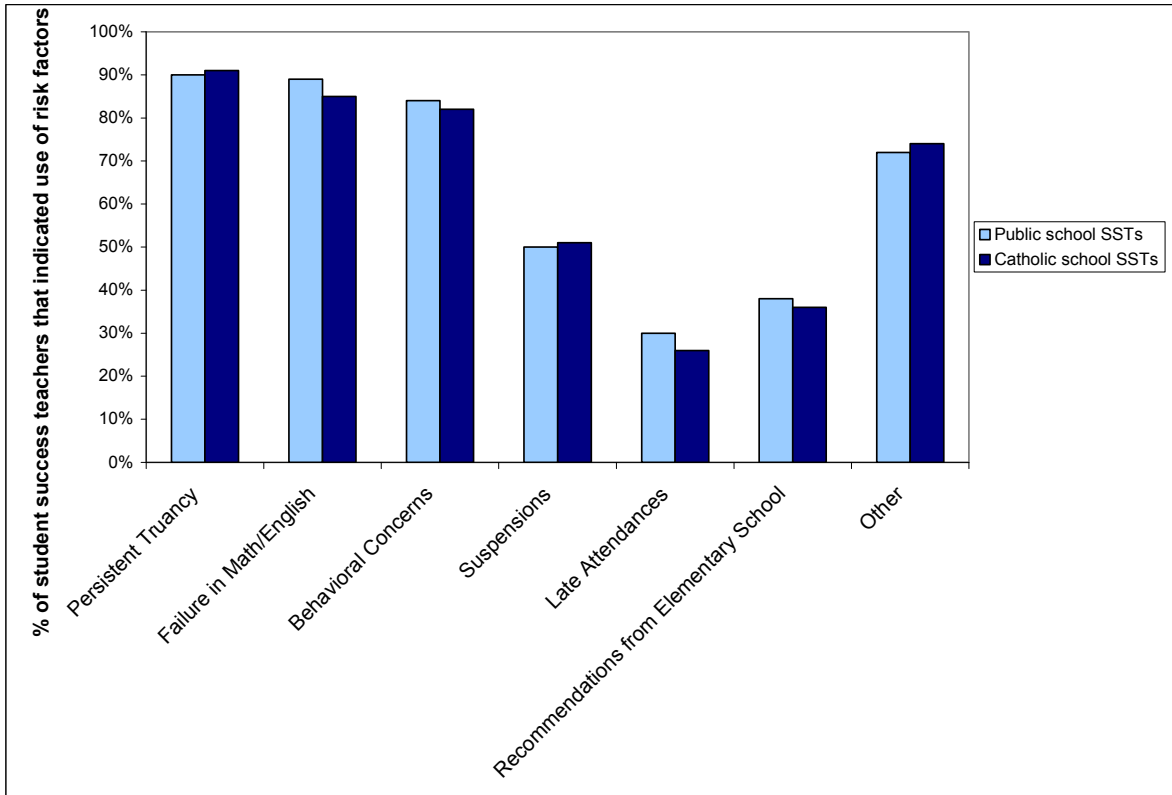
SSTs listed the following roles around “at-risk” students:

*“Identifying ‘at-risk’ students based on information from partner schools, poor results from last school year i.e. poor grades, poor attendance, poor social interactions.”*

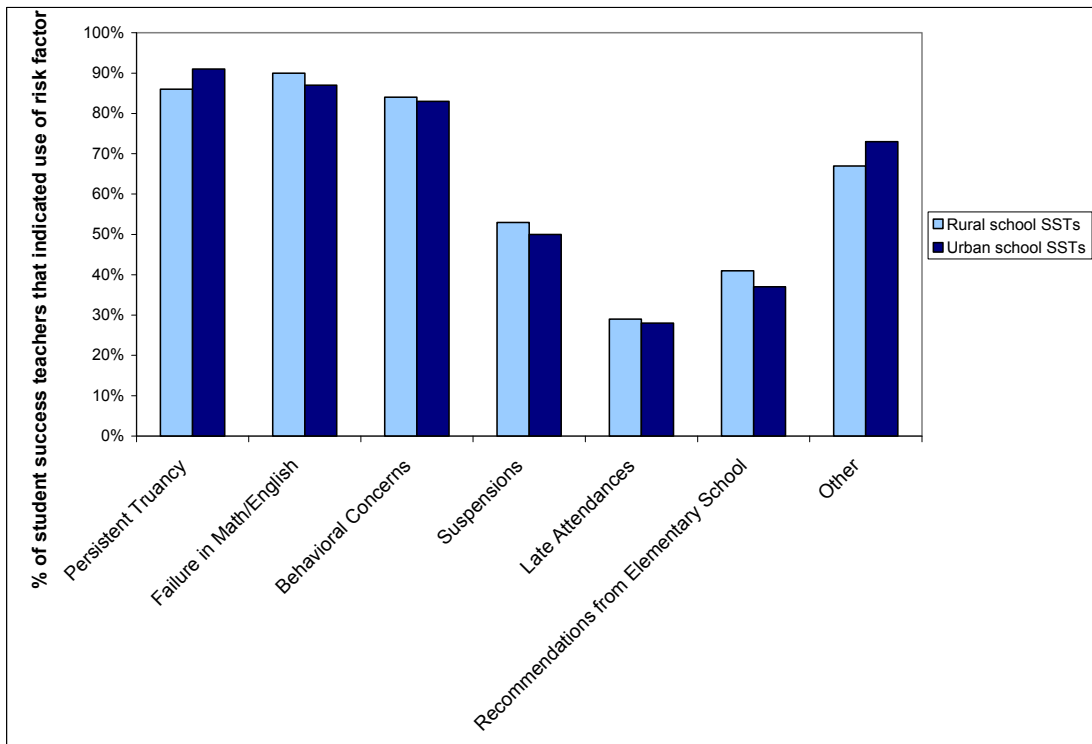
*“Identify with the School Student Success Team potential ‘at-risk’ students based on a variety of sources including the data provided by Guidance and Special Education Departments and classroom teachers at both the elementary and secondary level.”*

*“Determining the students who are placed in credit recovery classes-monitoring their progress, creating new initiatives to support their success.”*

**Fig 2: Risk factors used to define 'at-risk' grade 9 students by Public/Catholic school SSTs**



**Fig 3: Risk factors used to define 'at-risk' grade 9 students by urban/rural school SSTs**



**Table 6. Factors used by Student Success Teams in defining ‘at-risk’ students**

	School		School		Total
	Public	Catholic	Rural	Urban	
Persistent Truancy	198 (90%)	113 (91%)	42 (86%)	262 (91%)	312 (90%)
Academic failure in Math/English	196 (89%)	105 (85%)	44 (90%)	250 (87%)	302 (88%)
Behavioral concerns	184 (84%)	101 (82%)	41 (84%)	238 (83%)	286 (83%)
Suspensions	110 (50%)	63 (51%)	26 (53%)	144 (50%)	174 (50%)
Late attendances	65 (30%)	32 (26%)	14 (29%)	81 (28%)	97 (28%)
Recommendations from partner school(s)	83 (38%)	45 (36%)	20 (41%)	107 (37%)	128 (37%)
Other factors used to define ‘at-risk’	158 (72%)	92 (74%)	33 (67%)	211 (73%)	250 (73%)

The SST questionnaire indicated that 90% of all SSTs were part of Student Success Teams that used “persistent truancy” as a method of defining students as “at-risk”. “Failure in Math/English” was used by 88% and “behavioral concerns” were reported by 83% of all SSTs and their Student Success Teams to define “at-risk” students. Only 50% of all SSTs identified using “suspensions” as a method for labeling students as “at-risk” and “late attendances” were only used by 28% of all SSTs. Overall, 37% of SSTs reported “recommendations from elementary schools” and 73% of SSTs reported “other factors” were used to define “at-risk” students.

In order to find distinct clusters of schools characterized by similar “at-risk” definitions, a hierarchical cluster analysis (WARD method) was performed. The results suggest the existence of either five or four distinct clusters of SSTs/schools. The largest group (Group 1) relied on persistent truancy, academic failure, and behavioral concerns for their “at-risk” definition. A second group (Group 2) can be described as a “maximum-group” since they relied in their definition on all criteria. Groups 3 and 4 (they are very similar) are between the first and second group (they also consider suspensions, but not late attendance and recommendations from

**Schools formed distinct clusters in regard how they defined an “at-risk” student. These clusters also differed with regard to level of implementation and other background variables.**

elementary school). The last group (Group 5) can be described as a “minimum-group”, since they rely mostly on academic failure only. Table 7 summarizes the results.

**Table 7. Cluster analysis of SST/schools by risk definitions**

Criteria	Group 1 (n=117)	Group 2 (n=95)	Group 3 (n=54)	Group 4 (n=46)	Group 5 (n=33)
Truancy	+	+	+	+	-
Failure math/English	+	+	+	+	+
Behavioral concerns	+	+	+	+	~
Suspensions	-	+	+	~	-
Late	-	+	-	-	-
Recommendation elementary school	-	+	-	-	-

“-“ = less than 1/3 of respondents use criterion; “~” = between 1/3 and 2/3 of respondents use criterion; “+” = more than 2/3 of respondents use criterion

There were no significant differences between the groups with regard to Urban/Rural and Public/Catholic. The groups also differed regarding levels of implementation of the Student Success Strategy. For instance, Group 5 implemented less “timetabling” and “caring adult”. Although Groups 3 and 4 were quite similar in their “at-risk” definition, they showed a number of differences in level of implementation (e.g., “caring adult”, “staff professional development”, and “individual timetabling”).

#### V) THE ROLE OF CROSS PANEL PLANNING

**Table 8. Cross Panel Planning of ‘at-risk’ definition with partner school(s)**

	School		School		Total
	Public	Catholic	Rural	Urban	
Different definition as partner school(s)	20 (10%)	7 (7%)	4 (10%)	22 (9%)	27 (9%)
Similar definition as partner school(s)	177 (90%)	92 (93%)	37 (90%)	227 (91%)	270 (91%)
Total	197	99	41	249	297

“Cross panel planning” was examined by evaluating whether similar definitions of “at-risk” were used by partner schools. The results of the SST questionnaire indicated that 91% of all respondents confirmed having the same definition of ‘at-risk’ as their partner school(s).

**“Cross panel planning”:  
Most schools share the same  
“at-risk” definition with  
their partner schools.**

There were no associations between types of schools and cross panel planning.

One SST indicated in an open-ended question, *“I believe the board needs to make every effort to continue the cross-panel elementary/secondary meetings. These are very important to keep the momentum of transition going strong”* and another SST discussed the success of cross-panel planning, *“The gap between the elementary and secondary panel is closing, allowing for greater dialogue, interaction, and understanding between the two groups of professionals who share the common goal of student success.”*

### *C) Risk definition and implementation of the components of the Student Success Strategy*

One of the evaluation questions was whether the kind of risk definition adopted by a school is related to the implementation level of components of the Student Success Strategy. Addressing this issue is complicated by the fact that many components have a very high level of implementation, making any attempt to identify correlated factors difficult.

First, it was important to look at the interactions between the individual implementation components. There was an association between almost all of the implementation components indicating that if a Student Success Team was likely to implement one component they were likely to implement most of the other components.

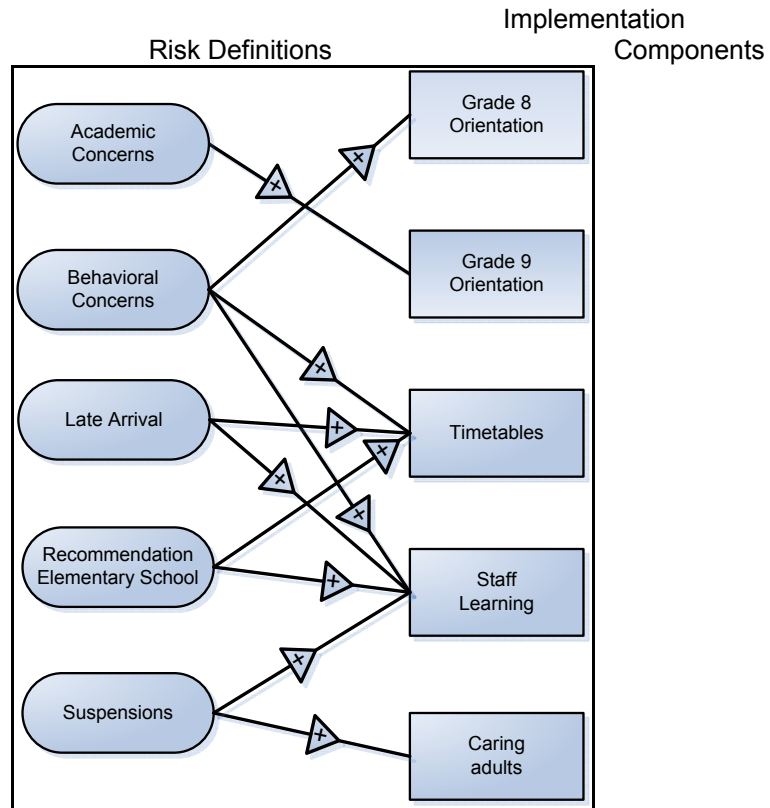
For the statistical results of the associations see Table 11, Appendix II.

Fig. 4 summarizes the major bivariate relationships between aspects of the risk definition and Student Success Strategy components. The risks “academic concerns”, “behavioral concerns”, “late attendance”, “recommendation from elementary school”, and “suspensions” were related to the levels of implementation of the following components: “grade 8 and 9 information sessions”, “strength-based timetabling”, and “assignment of a caring adult”. Also related was the variable whether the school offers transition related professional development for their teachers. Fig. 5 shows the important impact that professional development has on implementation of transition planning components. All of the associations were positive, indicating that including a certain risk

**Aspects of the “at-risk” definition and the implementation of components of the Student Success Strategy were associated.**

into the definition was related to an increased likelihood of implementing certain Transition Planning components. Table 12 in Appendix II provides further details of the results.

**Fig.4: Associations between risk factors and implementation components**



*D) Impact of previous practices*

The influence of the school’s organizational readiness was evaluated to determine whether the degree of consistency of previous transition planning is related to the implementation level of components of the Student Success Strategy. Only one significant result was found, namely that a higher degree of consistent previous planning was positively related to the implementation of “grade 8 orientation activities” ( $\chi^2 = 27.4, 3df, p < 0.005$ ).

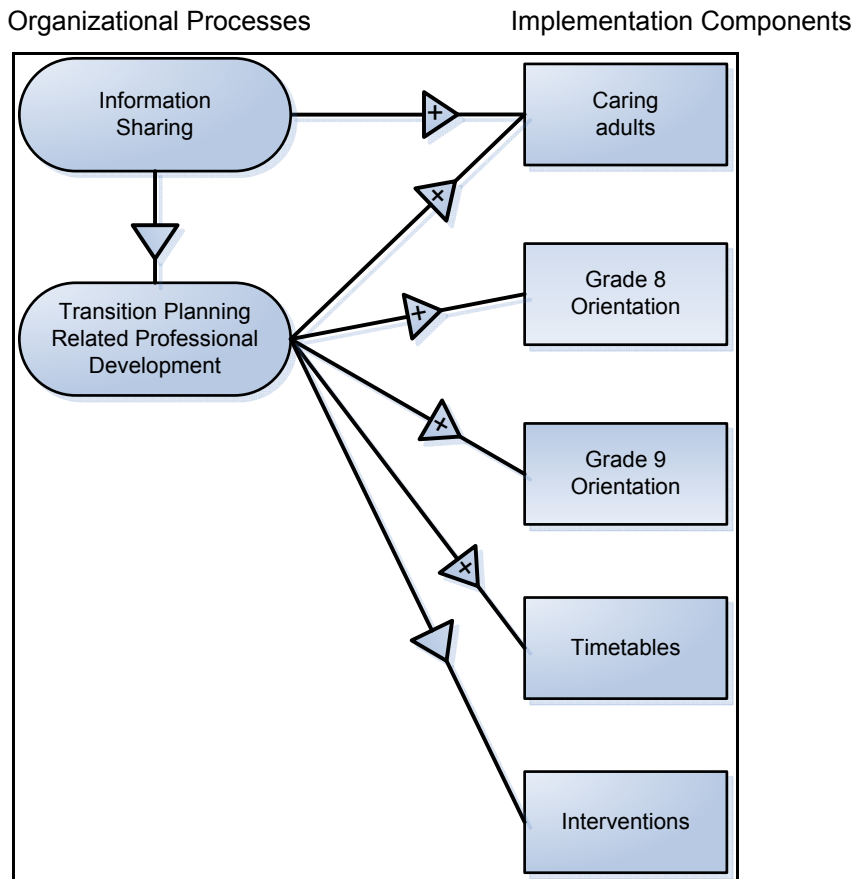
**The consistency of previous transition planning had very little impact on the implementation process.**

*E) Impact of organizational processes*

Sharing information between partner schools and offering staff professional development opportunities related to transition planning are two important organizational processes within the Student Success Strategy. Both processes are related to each other. Schools that share information were 9.5 times more likely to offer professional development. In terms of implementation, “information sharing” is positively related to “caring adults” and “professional development” which is positively related to “caring adults”, “grade 8 and 9 orientation”, “strength-based timetabling”, and “interventions”. Table 13 in Appendix II provides further details of the results.

**Organizational processes were positively related to each other and both were associated with levels of implementation.**

**Figure 5. Associations between organizational processes and implementation components**



*F) Organizational-institutional and demographic factors*

Data publicly available from the Ontario Ministry of Education (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>) about school boards and their schools was used for analyzing the impact of organizational factors. There is strong evidence that institutional size is related to at-risk definitions and level of implementation of components of the Student Success Strategy. For example, schools from smaller boards used significantly less often “suspensions” as part of their at-risk definition (see Table 14, Appendix II) and reported significantly less the strategy “assignment of caring adult” (see Table 15, Appendix II). The same pattern is found for schools from school boards that have on average low student / teacher ratios ( $\leq 15$  students per 1 FTE teacher), low professional staff / student ratios ( $\leq 100$  students per 1 professional staff), and of small school size (see Table 16, Appendix II). Analysis of the results, further confirmed this association by considering school size, a variable that affects both the “at-risk” definition and the implementation. The results suggest a curvilinear relationship between these variables. One exception was the opportunity for transition planning related professional development, which showed a straight linear relationship, with significantly fewer opportunities for smaller schools.

**Contextual variables such as institutional size and demographic / socio-economic characteristics of a school’s student population had an impact on several outcomes.**

An interaction effect was also observable between school size and rurality. Schools of different sizes were more similar in urban areas compared to rural areas (using the school’s postal code linked to Statistics Canada Urban Area Codes, see Appendix II).

A number of demographic and socio-economic variables of the student population were associated with level of implementation of various components of the Student Success Strategy (see details in methodology section).

Level of implementation for the transition planning components such as “same risk definition as partner school”, “information sharing with partner schools”, and grade 8 and 9 orientation activities were lower for schools with a student population from neighborhoods that had on average a higher proportion of 1) residents speaking non-official languages, 2) immigrants, 3) residents who belong to a visible minority, 4)

aboriginal residents and 5) low-income families. High mobility rates in a neighborhood were another variable negatively related to levels of implementation for most components. However, other key-components such as “support system”, “process for intervention”, and “timetabling” were mostly not related to demographic and socio-economic variables<sup>7</sup>. Given the complexity of the results, they require a further follow-up.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Ontario Ministry of Education developed and rolled out the Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning initiative in the spring of 2006. Presentations and materials were provided to the Student Success Leaders (SSL) of the 72 school boards across Ontario. Following this, the SSLs used the Ministry materials and resources to conduct training in their own school boards to Student Success Teachers (SST) informing them of the components and expectations for school-level implementation of the Transition Planning initiative.

The evaluation component of the Transition Project evaluated 1) the effectiveness of the *Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Training Sessions* delivered to all school boards by the Ministry in May 2006, and 2) transition planning implemented by Student Success Teams in secondary schools. The evaluation was based on the objectives and issues the transition planning sessions were meant to address, as well as, the deliverables the school boards were to achieve for 2006-07, for instance designation of a caring adult, strength-

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<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, additional analyses revealed that the nature of the existing relationships is rather complex. For instance, schools that did not implement the component “caring adult” are more likely from affluent neighborhoods (and vice versa). However, taking into consideration the geographic location of the school (based on Statistics Canada’s Statistical Classification Area, a variable that classifies areas as more or less urban/rural, taking into account how connected an area is with an urban core), the results become more complex. The reported result – lower level of implementation in more affluent neighborhoods – still held true for metropolitan areas (examples for metropolitan areas are Toronto, St. Catharine’s-Niagara, Windsor and London), but not for Census Agglomeration Areas (examples for this category are Sarnia, North Bay and Peterborough). For the latter, the relationship was reversed with lower levels of implementation related to lower income. The same result was found for rural areas that are rather connected with urban cores (examples for this category are Essex, Aylmer, Renfrew). Interestingly, no differences were found for rural areas that are disconnected from urban cores (examples for this category are Espanola, Fort Frances, Kirkland Lake, Sioux Lookout).

based timetabling, strategies and interventions for grade 8 students at risk as they move into grade 9, and grade 8 student profiles.

The evaluation took place during the 2006-2007 school year. A questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions was developed for SSTs in both English and French by the Student Success/Learning to 18 Implementation, Training and Evaluation Branch and the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch at the Ontario Ministry of Education and a research and evaluation team from The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. The goal of the questionnaire was to collect SST perceptions of board-delivered Transition Planning training and to evaluate the extent of school-level implementation of the Ministry's transition planning components. The questionnaire included questions relevant to background information (school info, SST info and Student Success Team info) and the Transition planning requirements. The transition planning requirements examined to what extent SSTs indicated their school had implemented transition components. Open-ended questions were included to allow SSTs to provide examples of how the Transition initiative was implemented at ground level. The questionnaire was emailed to all Student Success Leaders (SSL) from all 72 public and separate school boards in Ontario with the request to forward it to all of their Student Success Teachers (SST).

A total of 358 student success teachers (SSTs) from 56 school boards across Ontario completed and returned the questionnaire. The response rates were approximately 40 % based on the total number of secondary schools in Ontario. The overall response rates were slightly higher in urban areas (40 % versus 36 % in rural areas) and for Catholic boards (44 % versus 37% for Public)

Approximately 75 % of the respondents had attended their school board's Transition Planning Training Sessions; however, there was major variability in attendance between boards (ranging from 0 and 100 %).

Overall, the reported implementation of various components was very high. Approximately two-thirds of the SSTs (59 %) reported that their schools have most components implemented. Less than 1 % of SSTs reported their schools had only a few components implemented. "Information sharing with partner schools", "support systems", "process for interventions", "same 'at-risk' definition as partner schools", and

“orientation activities for grades 8 and 9” were the most commonly implemented components (at least 90 % implementation), followed by “individual timetabling” (87 %). “Assigning a caring adult” (74 %) and “transition related professional development” (72 %) had the lowest levels of implementation.

Schools used a number of criteria for classifying a student as to be “at-risk”. The most common were “persistent truancy” (90 %), “failure in Math/English” (88 %), “behavioral concerns” (83 %), “suspensions” (50 %), “recommendations from elementary school” (37 %) and “late attendances” (28 %). Schools formed distinct clusters in regard to how they define an “at-risk” student. For example, some schools were similar in their reliance on a large number of risk criteria, where others relied on very few. These clusters of schools also had distinct profiles in terms of levels of implementation and organizational and demographic/socio-economic variables.

“Cross panel planning” was examined by evaluating whether similar definitions of “at-risk” were used by partner schools. The vast majority of schools did share the same definition.

Aspects of the “at-risk” definition (e.g., “academic concerns”, “behavioral concerns”, “late attendance”) and the implementation of components of the Student Success Strategy (e.g., “strength-based timetabling” and “assignment of a caring adult”) were associated. All of the associations were positive, indicating that including a certain risk into the definition was related to an increased likelihood of implementing a certain Students Success Strategy component.

A school’s organizational readiness (measured as previous consistency in transition planning) had almost no effect on levels of implementation.

Organizational processes such as “sharing information between partner schools” and “offering staff professional development opportunities” were positively related to each other and both were associated with levels of implementation. For instance, schools that “share information” were 9.5 times (odds ratio) more likely to offer “professional development” and schools that practiced “information sharing” were 7.5 times (odds ratio) more likely to have “caring adults” implemented.

There was strong evidence that “at-risk” definitions and level of implementation of components of the Student Success Strategy are related to contextual variables such as

institutional size and demographic / socio-economic characteristics of a school's neighborhood. For example, schools from smaller boards used significantly less "suspensions" as part of their "at-risk" definition and reported significantly less the strategy "assignment of caring adult". However, it needs to be taken into consideration that institutional size and board language are highly confounded.

Some components of the Student Success Strategy were negatively related to demographic/socio-economic variables such as the proportion of 1) residents speaking non-official languages, 2) immigrants, 3) residents who belong to a visible minority, and 4) low-income families in a neighborhood. This suggests that some groups of students potentially face disadvantages because of their background. However, the overall picture is more complicated. First, a number of key-components such as "support system", "process for intervention", and "timetabling" were mostly not related to demographic and socio-economic variables. Secondly, some implementation rates were higher in more challenging neighborhoods, most likely reflecting a response of schools to their more challenging student population. Furthermore, additional analyses revealed that the nature of the existing relationships is rather complex; for instance, socio-economic variables clearly interact with the geographic location of a school.

Implementation of the Student Success Strategy overall can be considered a major success. Very few components of the strategy (such as "caring adult") had low levels of implementation. A caveat one has to keep in mind when interpreting the results is the possibility that schools had already implemented certain transition planning components before the Student Success Strategy was initiated by the Ministry of Education. The implementation rate would be overestimated if this is the case. However, given the fact that the survey was conducted in fall it might be that a number of schools would not have had the opportunity to implement all components of the initiative. In this case, the implementation rate would be underestimated.

## APPENDIX I: Student Success Leader Evaluation Tables

**Table 11. Distribution of Consistency of Transition Planning before the Ministry's Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Initiative**

	Frequency	Percent
Not at All	4	7%
Very Little	4	7%
Somewhat	24	42%
Quite a Bit	21	37%
To a Great Extent	4	7%
Total	57	100%

**Table 12. Consistency of Transition planning before initiative and Annual Action Plan**

	Not at All/ Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a Bit	To a Great Extent	Total
Not at All/Very Little	1 (13%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)
Somewhat	4 (50%)	5 (21%)	1 (5%)	1 (25%)	11 (19%)
Quite a Bit	1 (13%)	17 (71%)	12 (57%)	2 (50%)	32 (56%)
To a Great Extent	2 (25%)	2 (8%)	7 (33%)	1 (25%)	12 (21%)
Total	8 (100%)	24 (100%)	21 (100%)	4 (100%)	57 (100%)

**Table 13. Association between Supervisory Officer's participation and Secondary schools with transition planning**

		Supervisory Officer's participation in Ministry's Training Sessions					
		Not at All	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a Bit	To a Great Extent	Total
Percentage of secondary schools with transition planning implemented	41-60%	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	2 (3%)
	61-80%	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	3 (21%)	0 (0%)	4 (7%)
	81-90%	2 (40%)	0 (0%)	1 (13%)	3 (21%)	2 (7%)	8 (14%)
	>90%	3 (60%)	2 (50%)	7 (88%)	7 (50%)	26 (93%)	45 (76%)
	Total	5 (100%)	4 (100%)	8 (100%)	14 (100%)	28 (100%)	59 (100%)

## APPENDIX I: Student Success Leader Evaluation Tables

**Table 14. Association between SSL's participation in Training and *Annual Action Plan***

		SSL participation in Ministry's Training Sessions			
		Not at All	Quite a Bit	To a Great Extent	Total
Transition Planning a Component of <i>Annual Action Plan</i>	Not at all	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	2 (3%)
	Very little	1 (20%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)
	Somewhat	1 (20%)	3 (43%)	7 (15%)	11 (19%)
	Quite a bit	2 (40%)	4 (57%)	27 (57%)	33 (56%)
	To a great extent	1 (20%)	0 (0%)	11 (23%)	12 (20%)
	Total	5 (100%)	7 (100%)	47 (100%)	59 (100%)

**Table 15. Association between SSL's participation in Training and Secondary Schools with Transition Planning**

		SSL participation in Ministry's Training Sessions			
		Not at All	Quite a Bit	To a Great Extent	Total
Percentage of secondary schools with transition planning implemented	41-60%	1 (20%)	1 (14%)	0 (0%)	2 (3%)
	61-80%	1 (20%)	0 (0%)	3 (6%)	4 (7%)
	81-90%	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	7 (15%)	8 (14%)
	>90%	3 (60%)	5 (71%)	37 (79%)	45 (76%)
	Total	5 (100%)	7 (100%)	47 (100%)	59 (100%)

**Table 16. Association between SSL Delivery of Training and *Annual Action Plan***

		SSL participation in Delivery of Ministry's Training Sessions					
		Not at All	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a Bit	To a Great Extent	Total
Transition Planning a Component of <i>Annual Action Plan</i>	Not at all	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	2 (3%)
	Very little	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)
	Somewhat	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	1 (100%)	3 (30%)	6 (14%)	11 (19%)
	Quite a bit	0 (0%)	2 (67%)	0 (0%)	4 (40%)	27 (61%)	33 (56%)
	To a great extent	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (30%)	9 (21%)	12 (20%)
	Total	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	1 (100%)	10 (100%)	44 (100%)	59 (100%)

## APPENDIX I: Student Success Leader Evaluation Tables

**Table 17. Association between SSL Delivery of Training and Secondary schools with transition planning**

		SSL participation in Delivery of Ministry's Training Sessions					
		Not at All	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a Bit	To a Great Extent	Total
Percentage of secondary schools with transition planning implemented	41-60%	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	2 (3%)
	61-80%	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (7%)	4 (7%)
	81-90%	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)	6 (14%)	8 (14%)
	>90%	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	1 (100%)	8 (80%)	35 (80%)	45 (76%)
	Total	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	1 (100%)	10 (100%)	44 (100%)	59 (100%)

**APPENDIX II: Student Success Teacher Evaluation Tables**

**Table 9. Distribution of grades at SST schools**

Grades at school	Frequency	Percent
Grades 9-12	297	88%
Other	42	12%
Total	339	100%

**Table 10. Number of partner schools**

Number of Partner Schools	Frequency	Percent
0	4	1%
1	23	7%
2	25	8%
3	52	16%
4	39	12%
5	42	13%
6	35	11%
7	26	8%
8	21	6%
9	8	2%
10	15	5%
11-20	18	5%
21-30	8	2%
31-40	8	2%
45 +	5	2%
Total	329	100%

## APPENDIX II: Student Success Teacher Evaluation Tables

**Table 11. Associations between Implementation Components**

	Grade 8 Orientation	Grade 9 Orientation	Support Systems	Intervention	Individual Timetables	Caring Adult	Staff Learning
Grade 8 Orientation	-						$\chi^2 = 7.00$ $p = 0.008$ OR = 5.50 CI: (1.35 to 22.43)
Grade 9 Orientation		-		$\chi^2 = 9.05$ $p = 0.003$ OR = 6.52 CI: (1.62 to 26.18)	$\chi^2 = 3.64$ $p = 0.06$ OR = 2.76 CI: (0.94 to 8.14) *		$\chi^2 = 4.93$ $p = 0.03$ OR = 2.84 CI: (1.09 to 7.38)
Support Systems			-	$\chi^2 = 10.60$ $p = 0.001$ OR = 10.21 CI: (1.85 to 56.42)	$\chi^2 = 27.93$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 23.03 CI: (4.50 to 117.97)	$\chi^2 = 5.55$ $p = 0.02$ OR = 4.89 CI: (1.14 to 20.87)	
Intervention		$\chi^2 = 9.05$ $p = 0.003$ OR = 6.52 CI: (1.62 to 26.18)	$\chi^2 = 10.60$ $p = 0.001$ OR = 0.21 CI: (1.85 to 56.42)	-	$\chi^2 = 20.08$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 9.09 CI: (2.91 to 28.44)	$\chi^2 = 5.15$ $p = 0.02$ OR = 3.41 CI: (1.11 to 10.41)	$\chi^2 = 7.71$ $p = 0.005$ OR = 4.46 CI: (1.42 to 13.99)
Individual Timetables		$\chi^2 = 3.64$ $p = 0.06$ OR = 2.76 CI: (0.94 to 8.14) *	$\chi^2 = 27.93$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 3.03 CI: (4.50 to 117.97)	$\chi^2 = 20.08$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 9.09 CI: (2.91 to 28.44)	-	$\chi^2 = 15.94$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 3.50 CI: (1.85 to 6.66)	$\chi^2 = 16.17$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 3.50 CI: (1.85 to 6.32)
Caring Adult			$\chi^2 = 5.55$ $p = 0.02$ OR = 4.89 CI: (1.14 to 20.87)	$\chi^2 = 5.15$ $p = 0.02$ OR = 3.41 CI: (1.11 to 10.41)	$\chi^2 = 15.94$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 3.50 CI: (1.85 to 6.66)	-	$\chi^2 = 27.52$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 3.78 CI: (2.26 to 6.32)
Staff Learning	$\chi^2 = 7.00$ $p = 0.008$ OR = 5.50 CI: (1.35 to 22.43)	$\chi^2 = 4.93$ $p = 0.03$ OR = 2.84 CI: (1.09 to 7.38)		$\chi^2 = 7.71$ $p = 0.005$ OR = 4.46 CI: (1.42 to 13.99)	$\chi^2 = 16.17$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 3.50 CI: (1.85 to 6.32)	$\chi^2 = 27.52$ $p < 0.005$ OR = 3.78 CI: (2.26 to 6.32)	-

†All values are reported with one degree of freedom, \* The association is a tendency

**Table 12. Associations between risk definitions and implementation components**

Risk Definitions	Implementation Components	$\chi^2$	p-value <sup>†</sup>	Odds Ratio (95% Confidence Intervals)
Academic Concerns	Grade 9 Orientation	4.6	0.03	3.1 (1.1 to 9.4)
Behavioral Concerns	Grade 8 Orientation	4.8	0.03	4.1 (1.1 to 15.7)
	Grade 9 Orientation			
	Timetables	8.7	0.003	2.8 (1.4 to 5.8)
	Staff Learning	11.7	0.001	2.7 (1.5 to 4.9)
Late Arrivals	Timetables	4.6	0.03	2.6 (1.1 to 6.4)
	Staff Learning	4.6	0.03	1.9 (1.0 to 3.4)
Recommendation Elementary School	Timetables	3.7	0.05	2.1 (1.0 to 4.4)
	Staff Learning	6.8	0.009	2.0 (1.2 to 3.4)
Suspensions	Staff Learning	8.3	0.004	2.0 (1.3 to 3.3)
	Caring Adults	5.1	0.02	1.8 (1.1 to 2.9)

†All values are reported with 1 degree of freedom

## APPENDIX II: Student Success Teacher Evaluation Tables

**Table 13. Associations between Transitional planning processes and Implementation components**

Organizational Processes	Implementation Components	$\chi^2$	p-value <sup>†</sup>	Odds Ratio (95% Confidence Intervals)
Information sharing	Transition planning professional related development	9.5	0.002	13.8 (1.6 to 120.1)
	Caring Adult	7.5	0.006	7.3 (1.4 to 38.5)
Transition planning related professional development	Caring Adult	27.5	<0.005	3.8 (2.3 to 6.3)
	Grade 8 Orientation	7.0	0.008	5.5 (1.3 to 22.4)
	Grade 9 Orientation	4.9	0.03	2.8 (1.1 to 7.4)
	Timetables	16.2	<0.005	3.5 (1.9 to 6.6)
	Interventions	7.7	0.005	4.5 (1.4 to 14.0)

<sup>†</sup>All values are reported with 1 degree of freedom

**Table 14. Distribution of “suspension” as a risk factor by Board size**

	Board size (EDU)			Total
	Small	Medium	Large	
<b>Suspensions not a defining risk factor</b>	32	39	97	168
% within suspensions	(19%)	(23%)	(58%)	(100%)
% within Board size (EDU)	(63%)	(56%)	(44%)	(49%)
<b>Suspensions a defining risk factor</b>	19	31	122	172
% within suspensions	(11%)	(18%)	(71%)	(100%)
% within Board size (EDU)	(37%)	(44%)	(56%)	(51%)
<b>Total</b>	51	70	219	340
% within suspensions	(15%)	(21%)	(64%)	(100%)
% within Board size (EDU)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)

**Table 15. Distribution of “Caring Adult” by Board size (EDU)**

	Board size (EDU)			Total
	Small	Medium	Large	
<b>No Process for Designation of a Caring Adult</b>	22	14	58	94
% within CaringAdult	(23%)	(15%)	(62%)	(100%)
% within Board size (EDU)	(40%)	(20%)	(26%)	(27%)
<b>Process of Designation of a Caring Adult</b>	33	57	167	257
% within CaringAdult	(13%)	(22%)	(65%)	(100%)
% within Board size (EDU)	(60%)	(80%)	(74%)	(73%)
<b>Total</b>	55	71	225	351
% within CaringAdult	(16%)	(20%)	(64%)	(100%)
% within Board size (EDU)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)

## APPENDIX II: Student Success Teacher Evaluation Tables

**Table 16. Distribution of “Caring Adult” by Size of School**

Size of School	Process for assigning a caring adult		Total
	No	Yes	
<b>Small (&lt;= 500)</b>	25	49	74
% within Small Schools	(34%)	(66%)	(100%)
% within Process for assigning a caring adult	(27%)	(19%)	(21%)
<b>Medium (501-800)</b>	12	59	71
% within Medium Schools	(17%)	(83%)	(100%)
% within Process for assigning a caring adult	(13%)	(23%)	(20%)
<b>Large (801-1200)</b>	29	95	124
% within Large Schools	(23%)	(77%)	(100%)
% within Process for assigning a caring adult	(31%)	(36%)	(35%)
<b>Very large (&gt; 1200)</b>	28	58	86
% within Very Large Schools	(33%)	(67%)	(100%)
% within Process for assigning a caring adult	(30%)	(22%)	(24%)
<b>Total</b>	94	261	355
% within Total Size of Schools	(27%)	(74%)	(100%)
% within Process for assigning a caring adult	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)

## APPENDIX II: Student Success Teacher Evaluation Tables

### *Designation of urban/rural status*

The Ministry of Education and Statistics Canada use different measures to identify schools as either urban or rural. Urban and rural labels used in the report are according to the Ministry of Education's criteria. Differences in the results were observed when the data were analyzed using Statistics Canada's three methods for assigning geographic location and are illustrated in Table 17.

**Table 17. Statistically significant analyzes according to urban/rural schools**

	Ministry of Education	Census Subdivisions*	Statistics Canada Urban Areas*	Urban Area Relationships*
Designation of a Caring Adult				<i>Tendency</i> ( $\chi^2 = 10.8$ , 5df, $p=0.06$ )
Strength-based Timetabling	<i>Tendency</i> ( $\chi^2 = 2.9$ , 1df, $p=0.09$ )		( $\chi^2 = 4.23$ , 1df, $p=0.04$ )	
Intervention Strategies	( $\chi^2 = 12.0$ , 1df, $p=0.0005$ )	( $\chi^2 = 12.9$ , 5df, $p=0.02$ )	( $\chi^2 = 5.5$ , 1df, $p=0.02$ )	( $\chi^2 = 12.4$ , 5df, $p=0.03$ )
Creating Student Profiles				
<i>Persistent Truancy</i>		( $\chi^2 = 13.3$ , 5df, $p=0.02$ )	( $\chi^2 = 4.6$ , 1df, $p=0.03$ )	
<i>Academic Failure in Math/English</i>				
<i>Behavioral Concerns</i>				
<i>Suspensions</i>				
<i>Late Attendances</i>				
<i>Recommendations for partner school(s)</i>				
<i>Other Factors</i>				
Operationalization of Student Success Team				
Cross-panel planning				

\* See Statistic Canada's Definitions

## APPENDIX II: Student Success Teacher Evaluation Tables

### Statistics Canada urban/rural definitions

#### **SACtype (Census Subdivisions)**

The Statistical Area Classification (SAC) groups census subdivisions according to whether they are a component of a census metropolitan area (CMA), a census agglomeration (CA), a census metropolitan area and census agglomeration influenced zone (strong MIZ, moderate MIZ, weak MIZ or no MIZ), or the territories (Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon Territory). SACtype identifies the type of statistical area classification (SAC) in which the census subdivision is located.

Values 1 Census metropolitan area, 2 Tracted census agglomeration, 3 Non-tracted census agglomeration, 4 Strongly Influenced (zone), 5 Moderately Influenced (zone), 6 Weakly Influenced (zone), 7 Not Influenced (zone) and 8 Territories

#### **UARA (Urban Areas)**

Urban area codes are unique four-digit codes that are assigned sequentially upon the UA creation. These codes remain constant between censuses. If an urban area is retired due to amalgamation or failure to meet the population or density thresholds, then its code is retired.

#### **UARAtype (Urban Area Relationships)**

For urban areas (UAs) the type code indicates the relationship of the urban area to the census metropolitan area/census agglomeration (CMA/CA) structure.

Values

1 Urban core

2 Urban fringe

3 Rural fringe inside Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations

4 Urban Areas outside Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations

5 Rural fringe outside Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations

6 Secondary urban core

Appendix III: Student Success Leader Evaluation Questionnaire

**Student Success**

*Implementation, Training, and Evaluation Branch*



**Student Success Leader Evaluation Questions: Transition Planning**

The purpose of these evaluation questions is to provide you with an opportunity to give us feedback on 1) the *Ministry Transition Planning Training Sessions*, and 2) *Board-level Transition Planning*. You will notice that we have created the questions based on the Program, Population, Process framework we presented at the Student Success Leader Symposium in June, 2006.

The information you provide will help the SS/L18 Implementation, Training, Evaluation Branch determine the effectiveness of the Ministry Transition Planning Sessions, and give the Ministry an idea of your board's progress for transition planning. Also, your responses will provide data for the Transition Project being conducted by Bruce Ferguson and his team.

**NOTE:** To indicate your response using the response scale, please copy this check mark  $\surd$  and paste it into the appropriate box. For example,

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	$\surd$ 4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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**Background Information:**

01) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

02) Name of school board: \_\_\_\_\_ (BOARD)

03) Does your school board have “middle schools”?

YES  NO  (MIDDLESCHOOLS)

If yes:

How many? \_\_\_\_\_ (MIDDLEMANY)

What grades? \_\_\_\_\_ (MIDDLEGRADES)

04) In your school board, how is “family of schools” defined? (QUEST04)

05) List all your usual roles in your school board (e.g., principal, superintendent, consultant, teacher):

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(ROLE1, ROLE2)

06) When did you assume your SSL role: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (mm/yy) (SSLROLEDATE)

07) Did you attend one of the Ministry’s Transition Planning Training Sessions?

YES  NO\*  (SESSION)

\*If you answered no, please consult with one your board’s representatives who did attend the session in order to complete this questionnaire.

08) How consistent was the transition planning across your board b e f o r e the ministry’s transition planning initiative (i.e. before May 2006)? (CONSISPRE)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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## **Part One – Transition Planning**

Please give us your feedback on the *Ministry Transition Planning Training Sessions* that took place in May of 2006 and the subsequent *Board-level Transition Planning*. If necessary, please refer to the document, *Grade 8 to 9 Transitions: Regional Training Sessions*. Part Two has open-ended questions where you can make additional comments and suggestions.

### **Program**

The objectives of the *Ministry Transition Planning Training Sessions* were the following:

- To detail the expectations of board-wide grade 9 transition plans
- To provide resources and supports for board-wide transition planning training sessions

09) To what extent did the ministry sessions provide details of the expectations of board-wide grade 9 transition plans? (QUEST09)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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10) To what extent did the ministry sessions provide resources and supports for board-wide transition training planning sessions? (QUEST10)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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If you answered 1 or 2 on the response scale for any of the questions 9 or 10, feel free to provide more details or information in the space provided here:

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## Issues

**The issues that the Ministry sessions meant to address are:**

- **The need for information sharing board-wide regarding specific student needs between elementary and secondary schools in your board**
- **The need for a clear process board-wide for intervening on behalf of students at-risk**
- **The need for consistent access board-wide to individual timetabling based on student strengths**
- **The need for consistent assignment of a caring adult for at-risk students at each secondary school**
- **The need for an opportunity for board-wide training and planning to occur**

To what extent did the ministry sessions address the need for:

11) information sharing board-wide regarding specific student needs between elementary and secondary schools? (QUEST11)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
----------------	-----------------	--------------	-----------------	-----------------------

12) a clear process board-wide for intervening on behalf of students at-risk? (QUEST12)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
----------------	-----------------	--------------	-----------------	-----------------------

13) consistent access to individual timetabling based on student strengths? (QUEST13)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
----------------	-----------------	--------------	-----------------	-----------------------

14) consistent assignment of a caring adult for at-risk students at each secondary school? (QUEST14)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
----------------	-----------------	--------------	-----------------	-----------------------

15) an opportunity for board-wide training and planning? (QUEST15)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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If you answered 1 or 2 on the response scale for any of the questions 11 to 15, feel free to provide more details or information in the space provided here:

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## Indicators

The indicators of a successful program are:

- That every board has delivered board-wide transition planning training sessions
- That every board is using the resources and supports provided
- That the board *Annual Action Plan* includes transition planning components
- That all secondary schools in your board have implemented transition planning

16) To what extent has your board completed the board-wide delivery of transition planning training sessions?

(QUEST16)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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17) To what extent is your board using a selection of the resources and supports board-wide? (QUEST17)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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18) To what extent does your board's *Annual Action Plan* include transition planning components? (QUEST18)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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19) In your board, what percentage of secondary schools has implemented transition planning?

0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-90%	> 90%
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20) If you answered 1 or 2 on the response scale for any of the questions 16-19, feel free to provide more details or information in the space provided here:

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## Population

The target population was supervisory officers and Student Success Leaders.

To what extent did your **board's Supervisory Officers:**

21) participate in the ministry training sessions? (QUEST21)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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To what extent did you in your role as **Student Success Leader:**

22) participate in the ministry training sessions? (QUEST22)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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To what extent did your **board's Supervisory Officers:**

23) participate in the **delivery** of board training sessions? (QUEST23)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
----------------	-----------------	--------------	-----------------	-----------------------

To what extent did you in your role as **Student Success Leader**:

24) participate in the **delivery** of board training sessions? (QUEST24)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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25) If you answered 1 or 2 on the response scale for any of the questions from 21 to 24, feel free to provide more details or information in the space provided here:

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### **Process**

**The ministry transition planning sessions were selected as a key focus area for Phase Three of the Student Success Strategy with 5 explicit deliverables related to student transitions from grade eight to grade nine. Superintendents and/or Student Success Leaders were selected as the target audience because of their key leadership role in transition planning.**

**Superintendents and/or Student Success Leaders are to apply the transition planning resources and supports in order to deliver board-wide training sessions. The results and findings concerning the effectiveness of the ministry transition planning sessions will be shared in communications and symposia; will inform direction and planning for supports; and will provide data for the Transition Project.**

26) How well did the ministry sessions outline the 5 deliverables related to student transitions from grade 8 to 9? (QUEST26)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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27) How well did the ministry sessions address Student Success Leaders and Superintendents directly? (QUEST27)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
----------------	-----------------	--------------	-----------------	-----------------------

28) How well did the ministry sessions prepare Student Success Leaders and Superintendents for their role in providing sessions at the board level? (QUEST28)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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29) Did the ministry sessions provide opportunities for input that could be used immediately? (QUEST29)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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30) Did the ministry sessions provide opportunities for input that could inform direction and planning for supports in the future? (QUEST30)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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31) Overall, how do you rate the Ministry Transition Planning Training Sessions? (RATEMTTS)

1 = not useful	2 = not very useful	3 = somewhat useful	4 = quite useful	5 = very useful
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32) If you answered 1 or 2 on the response scale for any of the questions from 26 to 31, feel free to provide more details or information in the space provided here:

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## **Part Two: Open-ended Questions**

**Where appropriate please provide examples to support your response.**

33) What is the *least difficult* aspect of *Transition Planning* to implement board-wide?  
(QUEST33)

34) What is the *most difficult* aspect of *Transition Planning* to implement board-wide?  
(QUEST34)

35) Compared to the transition programming that existed before, how has the implementation of the Ministry's transition training sessions changed your programming?" (QUEST35)

36) Who is responsible for implementing transition planning in your board? (QUEST36)

## Additional Comments and Suggestions:

Please give us specific details on how we can further support you in your role in implementing Transition Planning in your board.

This questionnaire has allowed me to provide an accurate and reliable appreciation of the Ministry Training Sessions.

1 = Strongly disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Undecided	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly agree
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT. WE APPRECIATE YOUR TIME AND EFFORT!  
PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO  
[bruce.ferguson@sickkids.ca](mailto:bruce.ferguson@sickkids.ca) NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 17, 2006.

# Student Success



*Implementation, Training, and Evaluation Branch*

## Student Success Teacher Questionnaire: Transition Planning

The Ministry of Education is working with Dr. Bruce Ferguson of Sick Children’s Hospital in Toronto on the Transition Project which is focussing on the grade 8 to 9 transition planning implementation process. Dr. Ferguson’s study, *Early School Leavers: Understanding the Lived Reality of Student Disengagement from Secondary School* (2005) is serving as an effective foundation for the Transition Project. Please find this report on the Ministry of Education website at [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca) under ‘publications’.

As a Student Success Teacher, and a member of the Student Success Team, you have an integral role in activating supports and interventions for grade 9 students at risk. We would like your feedback on your school’s transition planning for this year’s grade 9 students.

The information you provide will assist Dr. Ferguson with the research and evaluation questions concerning grade 8 to 9 transition planning and the effectiveness of the ministry’s transition planning strategies.

**Please return your completed questionnaire to [bruce.survey@sickkids.ca](mailto:bruce.survey@sickkids.ca) by November 15, 2006**

### Instructions

Some questions have a YES/NO option **OR** a list of possible responses. To indicate your response, please copy this check mark, √ and paste it in the appropriate area.

### Examples

YES √                      NO

student-to-student mentoring	√
teacher-student mentoring	
student drop in centre	√
homework club	

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat √	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
----------------	-----------------	----------------	-----------------	-----------------------

**Background Information:**

01) Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

02) Name of school board: \_\_\_\_\_  
(BOARD)

03) Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_ (SCHOOL)

04) How many students are in your school? \_\_\_\_\_ (STUDENTS)

05) What grades do you have in your school? \_\_\_\_\_  
(SCHOOLGRADES)

06) From how many partner (feeder) schools do you receive grade 9 students?  
\_\_\_\_\_ (FEEDERSCHOOLS)

07) What type of partner schools do you have? (e.g. French Immersion,  
rural/urban, dual track, etc.) (PARTNERSCHOOL1, PARTNERSCHOOL2, etc.)

08) What is your assignment as a Student Success Teacher (SST)?  
\_\_\_\_\_ (SSTASSIGNMENT)

09) List all your usual roles in your school:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(ROLE1, ROLE2, etc.)

10) When did you assume your SST role: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (mm/yy) (SSTROLEDATE)

11) Have you attended your board's Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning Training Sessions?

**YES**

**NO**

(SESSION)

12) Who are the members of the Student Success Team or the team at your school that fulfills a similar role? (e.g. special education resource teacher, principal, guidance, classroom teacher, etc) (MEMBER1, MEMBER2, etc.)

13) Please provide a list of detailed criteria used by your school to define a grade 9 student at-risk (e.g. persistent truancy, failure in Math and English, persistent behavioural concerns and/or suspensions, etc.): (RISK1, RISK2, etc.)

14) Does your partner school(s) use the same definition as in answer 13) for a grade 8 student at-risk?

**Yes**                      **No**                      (PARTNERRISK)

15) How consistent was the transition planning in your school b e f o r e the ministry's transition planning initiative (i.e. before May 2006)? (CONSISPRE)

1 = not at all	2 = very little	3 = somewhat	4 = quite a bit	5 = to a great extent
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**Transition Planning Requirement: information sharing regarding specific needs of at risk students who are making the transition from grade 8 to grade 9**

16) Does the Student Success Team at your school practice information sharing with the elementary school(s) or partner school(s)?

**Yes**                      **No**                      (INFOSHARE)

17) If yes, please identify which of the following your school has in place and add other examples in 18) (SCHOOLINFO1, SCHOOLINFO2, SCHOOLINFO3, SCHOOLINFO4, SCHOOLINFO5)

Use of student profiles for incoming grade 8 students at-risk	
Use of student profiles for all incoming grade 8 students	
Regular communication between schools	
Regular collaboration between school staff	
Cross-panel professional learning opportunities	

18) Other examples of information sharing with your elementary school(s) or partner school(s): (SCHOOLINFO6, etc.)

**Transition Planning Requirement: orientation activities for incoming grade 8 students and their parents**

19) Does your school have orientation activities for incoming grade 8 students and their parents?

**Yes**                      **No**                      (GR8ORIENTACT)

20) If yes, please identify which of the following your school has in place, and add other examples in 21) (GR8ACT1, GR8ACT2, GR8ACT3, GR8ACT4)

School website information on the transition to grade 9	
Invitational activities for incoming grade 8 students (e.g. fun fairs, Terry Fox Run etc.)	
Onsite visits for grade 8 students	
Information sessions for parents of grade 8 students	

21) Other examples of orientation activities for incoming grade 8 students and their parents:  
(GR8ACT5, etc.)

**Transition Planning Requirement: orientation activities for grade 9 students and their parents**

22) Does your school have orientation activities for grade 9 students and their parents?

**Yes**                      **No**                      (GR9ORIENTACT)

23) If yes, please identify which of the following your school has in place, and add other examples in 24): (GR9ACT1, GR9ACT2, GR9ACT3)

Buddy system for students	
Getting connected/introduction activities for grade 9 students (e.g. assemblies, raffles, etc)	
Information sessions for parents of grade 9 students (e.g. reception, open-house, curriculum night, etc.)	

24) Other examples of orientation activities for your school's grade 9 students and their parents: (GR9ACT4, etc.)

25) Does your school have support systems in place for grade 9 students at-risk in the first semester?

**Yes**                      **No**                      (SUPPORTSYSTEM)

26) If yes, please identify which of the following your school has in place, and add other examples in 27):  
(SUPPORT1, SUPPORT2, SUPPORT3, SUPPORT4)

student-to-student mentoring	
teacher-student mentoring	
student drop in centre	
homework club	

27) Other examples of support systems in place for grade 9 students at-risk in the first semester: (SUPPORT5, etc.)

**Transition Planning Requirement: a process for intervening on behalf of grade 9 students at-risk**

28) Does your school have a process for when and how to intervene on behalf of grade 9 students at-risk?

**Yes**                      **No**                      (INTERVENTION)

29) If yes, please identify which of the following your school has in place, and add other examples in 30): (INTERVENE1, INTERVENE2, INTERVENE3, INTERVENE4)

advocacy for a student	
referrals to outside support and services	
internal structures to support students	
assessment information about a student	

30) Other examples of a process for when and how to intervene on behalf of grade 9 students at-risk: (INTERVENE5, etc.)

**Transition Planning Requirement: strength-based individual timetabling for grade 9 students at-risk**

31) Does your school have a process for providing a strength-based individual timetable for grade 9 students at-risk?

**Yes**                      **No**                      (TIMETABLE)

32) If yes, please identify which of the following your school has in place, and add other examples in 33): (TIMET1, TIMET2, TIMET3, TIMET4)

individual meetings	
use of student profile for timetabling	
consideration of student strengths and needs for timetabling	
review of timetable after the start of the year to adjust as necessary	

33) Other examples of a process for providing strength-based individual timetable for grade 9 students at-risk? (TIMET5, etc.)

**Transition Planning Requirement: assignment of a caring adult for each grade 9 at-risk student**

34) Does your school have a process for assigning a caring adult for each grade 9 student at-risk?

**Yes**                      **No**                      (CARINGADULT)

35) If yes, please identify which of the following your school has in place, and add other examples in 36): (CARADULT1, CARADULT2, CARADULT3, CARADULT4)

Student Success Team assignment of the caring adult	
use of student profile	
consideration of match between caring adult and student	
periodic checkpoints and communications	

36) Other examples of a process for assigning a caring adult for each grade 9 student at-risk:  
(CARADULT5, etc.)

37) Does your school offer staff professional learning opportunities specific to transition planning?

**Yes**                      **No**                      (STAFFLEARNING)

38) If yes, please identify which of the following your school has in place, and add other examples in 39): (LEARN1, LEARN2, LEARN3, LEARN4, LEARN5)

professional learning community dedicated to transition planning	
action research opportunities dedicated to transition planning	
cross-panel (elementary/intermediate/secondary)	
assessment and evaluation	
instructional strategies and skills	

39) Other examples staff professional learning opportunities specific to transition planning at your school: (LEARN6, etc.)

40) Please add information regarding your school's transition planning that has not been included in this questionnaire.

Please return your completed questionnaire to  
[bruce.survey@sickkids.ca](mailto:bruce.survey@sickkids.ca) by November 15, 2006

**Thank you for your time and thoughts!**