Learning for All K-12
2010-11 Lead Boards Regional Report Form

Title of the Project:
(e.g., video, brochure, on-line tool, PA day module, resource guide)

Program Evaluation: Implementation Science Research Project
“GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE: PROGRAM SELECTION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND ASSESSMENT”

Brief Description of the Project:
(In approximately 200 words outline the purpose, goals and implementation of the project; Who, what, why, when, where and how has the product been used? How can the product be adapted by other boards? How has the product supported sustainable professional learning? How has the project aligned with other board and Ministry initiatives? How has the project aligned and/or supported /BIPSA process at your board?)

Project Context
Implementation Science is the systematic practice for acquiring and disseminating research-based knowledge regarding implementation endeavors. Learning For All K-12 (Draft 2009) references the Breakthrough concept (page 7), which is an implementation science practice. Knowledge mobilization is essentially the same concept. It includes the study of influences on professional and organizational behavior. All the Boards in the London Region are implementing many aspects of Learning For All (Draft 2009). As a result, we are all expanding or introducing new practices or programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Names of Lead Boards with the address</th>
<th>Lead Board Contact Person Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
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<td>Vicki Corcoran, Superintendent 905-527-5092 x2368 <a href="mailto:vicki.corcoran@hwdsb.on.ca">vicki.corcoran@hwdsb.on.ca</a></td>
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<td>John McGivney Children’s Centre School Authority 3945 Matchette Road Windsor, ON N9C 4C2</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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Title of the Project:
("GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE: PROGRAM SELECTION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND ASSESSMENT")
Project Learning Goals
Through this project, the London Regional Special Education Council is working collaboratively to examine three questions that we hope will assist us in program selection and implementation methodology, and ultimately assessing the effectiveness of the selected programs:

1. Are the programs/practices research-based?
2. How do we know that the programs/practices are having the effect that we want them to have in our local context?
3. Are we able to measure the validity of the implementation? Are we using the best strategies for implementation? How do we measure implementation success or failure?

Project Success Criteria
The project involves the development of a framework to enable all boards in the region to evaluate the effectiveness of special education programs no matter the specifics of a board’s project.

A method of measuring the success or failure of a special education program which looks at implementation effectiveness in context may be a better evaluation method than relying on trailing indicators alone, particularly as the specific project may involve the betterment of a program for students for whom the usual trailing indicator measurements (e.g., grade level achievement, Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) scores) may not be appropriate measures of progress.

Project Framework
The tool/framework that is in development will assist with measuring the impact of special education interventions and programs. This tool/framework will be used by the educators in the Regional Special Education Council (RSEC) to:

- determine if programs are evidence-based (likely including some key questions about the quality of evidence associated with the interventions);
- the success of the implementation (for example, measures of fidelity of implementation); and
- explore how outcomes of special education interventions / programs could be measured.

Traditional measures may be inappropriate for special education students. The lead researcher, in collaboration with SURE members, is continuing to explore whether there are other things that educators should be looking at when measuring outcomes of special education interventions/programs.

Regional Sharing:
(How has the project and/or product been shared and facilitated knowledge dissemination in your regional PLC? How have you involved local partners, other boards and Ministry staff?)

RSEC is partnering with the London Region School Board University Research Exchange (SURE) funded through London Region Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA) Professional Network Centre. In collaboration with SURE, RSEC has used the funds received to date to hire a lead researcher to work with the boards and SURE to develop this framework. A draft framework was presented to the May RSEC meeting. It will be finalized over the next few months.

RSEC prepared and submitted a proposal to Knowledge Networks for Applied Education Research (KNAER) to expand on the project into the next school year. This will allow for a phase two and three of the project, whereby member boards of RSEC will use the framework developed in phase one to implement a special education project/program undertaken in their board (Phase 2). Phase 3 will be to assess each project/program and thus also assess the effectiveness of the framework. The project will be a standing item on RSEC agendas until its completion. A final report will be developed at the end of the project.
Self-Assessment:
(Describe how you have assessed the outcome of the project? What further adjustments will need to be made?)

Phase 3 of the project described above will include an assessment component, to look at how the framework was employed in each participating board to assess the effectiveness of the framework. The project will continue to be a standing item on RSEC agendas until its completion. A final report will be developed at the end of the project.

Next Steps:
(How will you sustain professional development in upcoming years in your school board and in your region? What is the “tipping point” for changes in future years in your region?)

The London Regional Special Education Council has been involved, and continues to be involved, collaborative professional development activities. Some of these regional collaborative projects include:

- Connections Project
- Assessing Achievement in Alternative Areas (A4) Project
- Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) Learning 4 All Project
- CODE JK-1 Project
- Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Consortium
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) Mapping Tool for School Boards
- Regional Website
- Logic Model process
- On-line Survey – collaborative data collection on agreed performance indicators

The current project is a continuation of the London RSEC’S commitment to our professional learning as a regional group.

Other Comment:

The RSEC regional project involves a focus on implementation monitoring, in addition to usual measures of outcome (e.g., student performance indicators).

Implementation monitoring is a relatively new area of focus in education and the social sciences, and has been informed by an emerging scientific literature called Implementation Science. This field of research provides evidence of a relationship between the successful implementation of an intervention and positive (health or educational) outcomes (e.g., Durlak & Dupre, 2008; Mihalic, 2004; Forgatch, Patterson, & DeGarmo, 2005). Specifically, it has been determined that when staff demonstrate commitment to using identified strategies, and implement these with attention to the intended program design (e.g., adherence to content, frequency of use, duration of use), then better outcomes are achieved.

The RSEC project’s framework may be able to demonstrate that measuring the implementation of a program is as effective an indicator of a program’s success as assessing via outcomes. It may prove an effective accountability tool for programs involving students with special education needs, where standard measures are not appropriate.