

CONNECTIONS PROGRAM – SD No.22

June 2021

CONNECTIONS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This Connections Program will be located within the mainstream school building. The purpose of this program is to try to give students a course alternative as a supportive step prior to looking at the option of an off-site alternate school. This Connections program will value and incorporate outside agency and community partners and will work closely with partnerships to offer appropriate supports for the youth that will be working within this program. Students will enter this program by a referral from the School Based Team to determine suitability for this program.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

PHILOSOPHY

The Connections Program philosophy includes:

- Creating a safe place where students will stay in school
- Maintaining high expectations for all students.
- Preparing students for a transition back into the regular programming within the high school or participation in select electives as appropriate.
- Positive modelling including academic skills and active participation in all activities.
- Building relationships with the community to help re-engage students in their learning and community (as well as personal and social competencies).

ATTENDANCE

The goal for this program is to have 80% attendance; however, flexibility will be given on a case by case basis. Strategies to help increase attendance include:

- building strong connections with each student
- supporting each student's individual academic progress so they are not concerned about falling behind
- Utilizing a points reward system to be earned through attendance

STUDENT FILES AND REPORTING

The SBRT for this program will be the case managers for these students. The SBRT will be supporting Ministry Designation documentation or working towards a Ministry designation and for writing an IEP that addresses student needs and areas of strength.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

- This Connections Program is a fluid program, thus allowing a student to enter the program at any time throughout the school year.
- Intake meetings for the Connections program include doing a complete file review to understand students background, support planning around behavior or safety needs and IEP development. The successful transition of students back into the regular school schedule is a focus for this program.
- Most students within this program will have existing IEPs. Generally, this program will be accepting students with behaviors, or students with severe mental health or anxiety that is affecting their attendance and academic performance within a regular school schedule.
- Steps to bring students forward for the Connections Program:
 1. Students that are being brought forward for this program need to be first brought up at the School Based Team Meeting. The SBT should consult and collaborate with the parent or guardian prior to the SBT Meeting
 2. If there is agreement from the SBT, the Connections teacher will complete a file review of the student and fill out an application form for the student
 3. The Connections teacher will then put the student forward for a District Committee Meeting to make sure the appropriate district supports are put in place for the student ex. Psychologist, OT etc.

TEACHING APPROACH

This Connections Program will be available for both Junior and Senior Students. It will offer paper-based courses that are focused on the new core competencies, therefore being very individual based. The students within this program are also able to continue with their mainstream courses or electives but can use this Connections Program as a home base or check in. This program offers different teaching approaches and organization to reflect the increased independence of different aged students.

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY

Many programs develop a sense of community and belonging by incorporating group activities, celebrating students and their successes. This Connections Program will include many opportunities for group/community activities. These include:

- Group discussions and goal setting
- Community giving back activities, such as helping at the Upper Room Mission, Salvation Army etc.
- Incorporating community programs to help students' overall abilities and learning opportunities ex. Community Futures, OKIB connections, AXIS program etc.

Students and their successes will be celebrated by:

- Displaying class portraits in school.
- Framing and displaying student artwork.
- Announcing student awards (student of the month, supportive student, spirit, academic and athletic). Awarding points for good attendance, behavior, goal setting, and academic progress. Points can be used to trade for rewards or additional options that can be discussed

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Enrichment programs are fundamental to student success. This Connection Program will have a huge diversity of activities incorporated into schedules but will be specific to each student.

These may include:

- Physical activities – walks, runs, day hikes, lifestyle activities, etc.
- Field trips – Not limited to Upper Room Mission, OKIB Learning of the Land, Salvation Army, Rock Climbing, Hiking
- Inclusion in mainstream Secondary Elective Programs, such as Foods, Powertech, Woodwork, Drama, Cafeteria etc.
- Work experience and ‘work mentorship’ – including Community Futures to help with resume etc.

STAFFING

In the Connections Program, a qualified SBRT will be the teacher/case manager of this program. The District Behaviour Specialist will work in conjunction with the SBRT/Case Manager. District EA’s will be utilized as required. There will also be additional SD No.22 staff that may be involved within this program, NOYFSS worker, Educational Assistant, Psychologists, Occupational or Physiotherapist for consultations, if necessary. The amount of involvement from these staff will be on a student by student need. In addition, there may be involvement from outside agency or community members. Their involvement may be utilized as a whole group learning opportunity or case by case, depending on the needs.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Each student will be working on their own programs, which will have a flexible schedule

Disclaimer:

Secured site-based license: for connections program only.

The Proactive courses will not be used for Distant Learning courses.