



# PROCEDURE

# SO-034

## COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES IN SCHOOLS

<b>Superintendent Responsible:</b> Superintendent of Education, Specialized Services	<b>Initial Effective Date:</b> 2020/04/27
<b>Last Updated:</b> 2025/10/02	<b>Next Review Date:</b> 2029/10/02

### Purpose

To provide a process when forming collaboration agreements Grand Erie District School Board (Grand Erie) and external agencies for the provision of services in schools by regulated health professionals, regulated social service professionals, and paraprofessionals.

### Guiding Principles

Grand Erie supports the implementation of community-based collaboration agreements with agencies that enhance the learning experiences of students.

### 1.0 Overview

- 1.1 A collaboration agreement with an external agency may not duplicate the work of the Grand Erie Professional Support Services Personnel (PSSP), educators or other paraprofessionals employed by Grand Erie.
- 1.2 Collaboration agreements will respect the rights, responsibilities, and interests of students and employees.
- 1.3 Service provision should not occur during instructional time. If this cannot be avoided, service provision should not occur during the literacy or math instructional blocks.
- 1.4 A written, signed collaboration agreement between the parties will clarify expectations, roles and responsibilities, referral and consent process, integration and/or coordination of service provision, and a dispute resolution process. Other factors such as timelines for service provision, service quality, and compliance with professional standards will also be considered when entering into a collaboration agreement with an external agency.
- 1.5 All collaboration agreements will be reviewed annually by the Collaboration Agreement Working Committee

### 2.0 Expectations

- 2.1 This Procedure applies to situations in which there is a request for an external agency to provide a service to individual students, or to provide small group and/or whole class programs/services in schools within Grand Erie.

### 3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Grand Erie employs individuals that provide direct service to students with the following backgrounds and expertise:
  - Classroom educators
  - Educational Assistants
  - Designated Early Childhood Educators
  - Psychoeducational Consultants
  - Speech and Language Pathologists
  - Educational Assistants

- Communicative Disorders Assistants
  - Behaviour Analysts
  - Behaviour Counsellors
  - Social Workers
  - Child and Youth Workers
  - Attendance Counsellors
- 3.2 External agencies may employ individuals with the following backgrounds and expertise:
- Medical professionals such as, but not limited to, audiologists, nurses/nurse practitioners, occupational therapists, ophthalmologists, otolaryngologists, pediatricians, physicians, physiotherapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, and speech-language pathologists
  - Social service professionals such as child and youth workers, social service workers and social workers
  - Paraprofessionals such as behaviour analysts, behaviour therapists, communication disorders assistants and special services at home workers
- 3.3 Collaboration agreements may be supported for services that supplement, but do not duplicate, the services of Grand Erie PSSP and paraprofessionals.

#### 4.0 **Referral and Consent Process**

- 4.1 Parent(s)/caregiver(s) consent to access community services at a Grand Erie school is required for students up to the age of 18 to participate in any external agency services taking place at any Grand Erie site. Student consent should also be obtained for students over the age of 11. In cases where a student has requested not to have parent(s)/caregiver(s) consent or if there is a perceived risk to the well-being of the student should parent(s)/caregiver(s) consent be sought, the school will contact Child and Family Services and the School Social Worker. The Administrator will work in collaboration with Child and Family Services.

#### 5.0 **Integration and/or Coordination of Service Provision**

Regulated health and social service professionals and paraprofessionals may either be employed by a publicly funded government organization, such as a hospital or a social service agency, or they may operate an independent private practice.

- 5.1 **Publicly Funded Service Providers**  
Publicly funded regulated health and social services providers may be accessed, at no cost to parent(s)/caregiver(s), by any student who meets the eligibility criteria. These services are accessed in one of two ways, either through Grand Erie with informed written consent from a parent(s)/caregiver(s) or directly by the parent(s)/caregiver(s).
- 5.2 **Privately Funded Service Providers**  
Privately funded service providers are services purchased by parent(s)/caregiver(s) on a private basis or funded by insurance carriers. These services are not normally carried out in schools, but instead in the professional's or paraprofessional's office/clinic or the student's home, including but not limited to services such as behaviour therapy, psychological assessment and therapy, social work counselling and therapy, speech- language assessment and therapy.
- 5.3 **Direct Therapy**  
Grand Erie is obligated to provide access to schools for publicly funded School Based Rehabilitation Services to provide direct therapy for students. Otherwise, direct therapy is not provided to students by external agencies in schools. The external agency provides direct therapy or treatment for a student either in their office/clinic, in another community space, or in the student's home.

In the majority of cases, Grand Erie PSSP staff provide direct therapy to students in schools. Requests for private practitioners to provide the same service will not be granted. In some cases, the request for private service providers may arise from a gap in service provision that Grand Erie and publicly funded service providers cannot address. In such instances, requests for private service provision must include a clear statement about the gap in existing service provision that will be addressed. Intensity of service provision is not considered a gap in service provision.

If a student requires ongoing therapy/treatment from a publicly funded or privately funded external agency, that student may be excused from school to attend the therapy session as is permitted under the *Education Act*.

When a collaboration agreement between a privately funded service provider and Grand Erie is being considered for services other than direct therapy, the external agency and Grand Erie must establish a Collaboration Agreement. All steps outlined in the Guidelines for Forming a Collaboration Agreement must be followed.

#### 6.0 **Criteria for approval of Collaboration Agreements:**

- Enhancements and supplemental services to improve the quality and effectiveness of education for students
- Interventions that involve groups of students, classroom programs or school-wide initiatives, in areas that could not be provided by Grand Erie PSSP staff
- Not a duplication or replacement of services provided by Grand Erie PSSP staff and/or paraprofessional staff
- Not in violation of collective agreements
- Ability to provide space, equipment or other resources of the external agency without infringing on the ability of Grand Erie staff to complete their duties

#### 7.0 **Criminal Background Checks - Vulnerable Sector Screening**

7.1 Criminal Record Checks and Vulnerable Sector Screening must be in place before any service is provided. In accordance with the *Education Act* and Regulation 521/01 "Collection of Personal Information", Grand Erie shall collect a criminal background check in respect of an individual before the individual becomes a service provider at a school site of the board and an offence declaration from the individual each year. Proof of satisfactory criminal background and vulnerable sector screen check will be provided by the external agency staff members to the school upon arrival at their first visit.

7.2 Provincial organizations that provide services to schools and have standards and practices in place which meet the requirements of Regulation 521/01 may present a valid photo identification card from the provincial organization in lieu of providing a copy of the criminal background and vulnerable sector screening check. The following organizations are in this category:

- Public Health Departments
- Victorian Order of Nurses
- Community Care Access Centres
- Children's Mental Health Ontario
- Provincial Schools Authority
- Day Nurseries
- Children's Aid Societies
- St. John's Ambulance
- Big Brothers
- Big Sisters

7.3 Under the terms of the Agreement, Grand Erie has sole and unfettered discretion to prohibit external agency staff members from entering the schools

and to terminate the Agreement if the external agency fails to obtain or renew criminal background and vulnerable sector screening checks.

- 7.4 All costs associated with obtaining criminal background checks are paid by the external agency

## 8.0 **Proof of Insurance**

- 8.1 External agencies must provide a certificate of insurance to Grand Erie on an annual basis, naming the Grand Erie District School Board as an additional insured, evidencing General Liability as well as Professional Liability. Liability coverage must be in the amount of five million (\$5,000,000.00) per occurrence and to include cross-liability and severability of interest as well as 30-day cancellation notice clause. External agencies must provide assurances to Grand Erie that their staff is covered while working on Grand Erie District School Board property.

## 9.0 **Qualifications/Supervisory Relationships**

- 9.1 External agency staff who are members of a regulated professional college must include: current qualifications as relevant to the services to be provided, current membership in the relevant regulated college and declaration of delivery of services in accordance with professional standards of practice.
- 9.2 Paraprofessionals must provide evidence of work under the clinical supervision of staff who currently holds membership in the relevant regulated college and details of the paraprofessional's role, responsibilities, name of immediate supervisor, supervision plan with time and supervisor's qualifications.

## 10.0 **Dispute Resolution Process**

- 10.1 Student achievement and well-being, through a collaborative approach to service provision for students and families, is the goal of a successful collaboration agreement. Collaborative relationships are characterized by mutual respect, coordination of services, clear communication, and consistent collaboration with a common goal of working towards the best interests of the student.
- 10.2 Periodically, disagreements may arise between community service providers from external agencies and Grand Erie employees. The following dispute resolution process will be used to identify solutions for individual cases and at the system level.

This process is not intended to be an appeal or a legal process.

1. The professional/paraprofessional from the external agency and the school Administrator will be the first level of dispute resolution authority.
2. If the dispute is not satisfactorily resolved, the matter will be referred to the Manager of the external agency and the Specialized Services Supervisor within Grand Erie.
3. If the dispute continues to be unresolved, the matter will be referred to the Senior Manager/Supervisor of the external agency and the Superintendent of Education-Specialized Services.
4. If the dispute cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the matter will be referred to the Grand Erie District School Board for final determination.

## 11.0 **Collaborative Relationships that do not Require a Collaboration Agreement**

Collaborative relationships may occur between schools and external agencies that do not require a formal collaborative agreement and can be operationalized in three different ways:

- Consultation: Assessment information and remedial strategies are shared with Grand Erie employees by the community service provider from the external agency through a written report or a face-to-face meeting, usually at the student's school,

to determine if the remedial strategies could be adopted and utilized in the school setting.

- Observation: The community service provider from the external agency observes the student in the school setting to obtain information to assist with the assessment process. Observations ideally occur in a space when other students are not present, however if other students are present, the privacy of students is maintained at all times.
- Demonstration: The community service provider from the external agency demonstrates for the Grand Erie employee(s) a strategy or technique that they are providing for the student to determine if the same strategy or technique could be adopted and utilized in the school setting. The Administrator, in consultation with educators, makes the final determination concerning the utilization of the strategy/technique in the school setting and, if appropriate, the inclusion of the strategy/technique in the student's Individual Education Plan. Since the Individual Education Plan is reviewed once each term in elementary school and once each semester in secondary school, demonstration would need to occur with the same frequency. No more than two (2) demonstration sessions should occur per term/semester.

## 12.0 **Process for Forming a Collaboration Agreement**

1. Student needs are identified by the school team or parent(s)/caregiver(s) that are impacting educational and well-being outcomes that currently cannot be addressed by Grand Erie PSSP staff. Wait lists and intensity, frequency and duration of service are not considered gaps in service provision.
2. A request for service provision from an external agency is made. In most cases, requests come from parent(s)/caregiver(s), however requests can come from Grand Erie staff.
3. Involve appropriate Grand Erie staff, including PSSP staff, in initial and on-going discussions that consider how proposed services will address student needs that are having an impact on their educational and well-being outcomes.
4. Discuss the service delivery plan including roles, frequency, measuring and monitoring of desired outcomes, documentation, and supervision.
5. Grand Erie and the external agency complete the Community Collaboration Application Form (Appendix A).
6. The Collaboration Agreement Working Committee will call a meeting to review the proposed service provision.
7. If approved, the process to gain consent from parent(s)/caregiver(s) or adult student for the service to be provided will be implemented.

12.1 Each new collaboration agreement will be reviewed and either approved or not approved by the Collaboration Agreement Working Committee. All existing collaboration agreements will be reviewed by the Working Committee and either approved or not approved at least once per year.

12.2 Membership on the Collaboration Agreement Working Committee includes:

- Superintendent of Education – Specialized Services (Chair)
- Specialized Services Supervisor (Co-Chair)
- Superintendent of Education – School Culture and Well-Being
- Mental Health Lead
- Principal Leader – Specialized Services
- Elementary Principal
- Secondary Principal
- President, OSSTF-PSSP
- Up to three (3) PSSP Bargaining Unit Members
- Community Member

**Reference(s)**

- Code of Conduct Policy (SO-12)
- Code of Conduct Procedure (SO-012)
- Community Partnerships Policy (SO-34)
- Volunteers Procedure (SO-046)
- Third-Party Speakers in Schools Procedure (SO-047)
- PPM81 – Provision of Health Support Services in Schools
- PPM149 - Protocol for partnerships with external agencies for provision of services by regulated health professionals, regulated social service professionals, and paraprofessionals

**Grand Erie District School Board**

**Community Collaboration Application Form**  
*For Privately and Publicly Funded Service Providers Seeking Collaboration Agreements with Grand Erie Schools*

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**Section 1: Organization Information**

- **Agency Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Primary Contact Name & Title:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Type of Services Offered:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Regulatory Body Affiliation (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Section 2: Program or Service Description**

- **Date Submitted:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Name of School(s) Involved:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Program/Service Title:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Rationale for Program/Service in School:**
- 

- **Program/Service Description:**
- 

- **Program Details & Delivery Model:**
- 

- **Space or Material Requirements (if any):**
- 

- **Anticipated Outcomes & Evaluation Plan:**
- 

**Name and Qualifications of Program/Service Provider(s):**

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- **Schedule and Timelines:**

- Day(s) of the Week: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Time of Day: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Month(s) of the School Year: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **Section 3: Approval Criteria Checklist**

Confirm all criteria are met:

- Enhances/supplements student education
  - Targets individual/group/classroom/school-wide needs
  - Does not duplicate Grand Erie services
  - Respects collective agreements
  - No disruption to Grand Erie resources/staff
- 

### **Section 4: Criminal Record Check & Vulnerable Sector Screening**

Will staff have direct contact with students?  Yes  No

- Background + vulnerable sector checks submitted
  - OR valid photo ID from approved provincial organization
- 

### **Section 5: Insurance Documentation**

Attach certificate of insurance meeting these requirements:

- Grand Erie named as additional insured
  - \$5M General + Professional Liability
  - Cross-liability, severability of interest
  - 30-day cancellation clause
- 

### **Section 6: Professional Qualifications**

For regulated professionals:

- Current qualifications
- Active regulated college membership
- Delivery in accordance with professional standards

For professionals requiring supervision:

- Name of clinical supervisor
- Supervisor's qualifications
- Details of supervision plan

**Section 7: Dispute Resolution Process**

Outlined escalation pathway:

1. External provider + School Administrator
2. External Manager + Grand Erie Specialized Services Supervisor
3. Senior Manager + Superintendent of Education
4. Final determination by Grand Erie District School Board

**Section 8: Non-Agreement Collaborations**

We have reviewed and agree to parameters for:

- Consultation
- Observation
- Demonstration (max two per term/semester)

**Section 9: Declaration & Signatures**

*We certify the above information is accurate and complete. We agree to follow Grand Erie's collaboration standards, review timelines, and compliance responsibilities.*

**External Agency Representative**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Qualifications:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grand Erie School Administrator**

**Name**                      **&**                      **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Specialized Services Supervisor**

**Name**                      **&**                      **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Superintendent of Education – Specialized Services**

**Name**                      **&**                      **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Section 10: Follow-Up Review Timeline**

- **Initial Review Date (within 6–12 months):** \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Designated Reviewer(s):** \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Board Use Only**

- Request Approved
- Request Denied
- **Superintendent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Retention Note:**  
Filed in OSR; Parent copy available upon request  
Retention: E + 1 year (*E = consent valid until date or end of current school year*)

Appendix B

COLLABORATION AGREEMENT

Between:

GRAND ERIE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD Herein after called "the School" Herein after called "Grand Erie"

And

Herein after called "the External Agency"

This collaboration agreement is a mutually supportive reciprocal agreement between the School/Grand Erie and the External Agency to provide the following program/service during the school year XXXX-XXXX:

[Empty rectangular box for program/service details]

Both parties acknowledge and agree that the External Agency is not an agent of Grand Erie and none of the program/service providers are employees or agents of Grand Erie.

The External Agency agrees that no fees are payable to it by Grand Erie and neither Grand Erie, students/parent(s)/caregiver(s) nor staff of Grand Erie are responsible for any expenses of the External Agency in connection with this provision of program/service.

The program/service will be provided by the External Agency effective from: \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_

however, either the School or the External Agency may terminate this agreement for any reason with reasonable notice to the other. Reasonable notice shall be 30 days. An Administrator has the authority to limit access to the school or discontinue the collaboration agreement, under the Education Act and policies of Grand Erie.

The External Agency acknowledges that they have read, understood and complied with Grand Erie Procedure SO-034 regarding the provision of Criminal Background Checks, Proof of Insurance and Qualifications / Supervisory Relationships.

Any concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the School Administrator and the program/ service provider. Ongoing concerns should be discussed with the agency supervisor and the school superintendent. Disputes will be addressed in accordance with the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Grand Erie Procedure SO-034

Both Grand Erie and the External Agency agree to ensure measures are in place that protect the confidentiality of client information.

Superintendent of Education: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

External Agency Program Manager/Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- cc: Superintendent of Education – Specialized Services
External Agency
Specialized Services Supervisor
Review Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Appendix C

Parent(s)/Caregiver(s) Consent to access External Agency Services within the  
Grand Erie District School Board

The Grand Erie District School Board facilitates access for students to select community External Agency services for the purposes of supporting student well-being and academic success.

I/we, \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Caregiver Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_, agree to  
\_\_\_\_\_ Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

accessing service from the following agency during the school day:

Please check selections

Brantford and Brant County Services:

- CONTACT Brant
- St. Leonard’s Community Services
- Young Women’s Program through the Sexual Assault Centre of Brant
- Woodview Mental Health & Autism Services
- Other:

Haldimand and Norfolk County Services:

- CONTACT Haldimand –Norfolk REACH
- Community Addiction and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) of Haldimand and Norfolk
- Haldimand-Norfolk REACH
- Haldimand and Norfolk Women’s Services
- Other:

Indigenous – Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk:

- Six Nations of the Grand River Child and Family Services, Child and Youth Mental Health Program
- Other:

My child may participate in services during: (Please check selections)

- Instructional time
- Lunchtime \*please note, selecting lunchtime only may reduce the availability of the service.
- Before or After School \*please note, selecting before or after school only may reduce the availability of the service.

Consent Process:

Informed consent for the student to participate in and receive services is completed by the external agency delivering the service. The agency will maintain the record of service and will deliver services confidentially to the student in accordance with legal requirements. Questions may be directed to the agency for further clarification.

Parent/Caregiver  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Caregiver  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Consent Valid Until \_\_\_\_\_

If no date indicated,  
until the end of the  
school year.