



Transitions

Moving from an Early Years School to a Middle Years School

Moving from a Middle Years School to High School

Administrative Procedure 1.B.200

Board Governance Policy Cross Reference:

Legal Reference:

Date Adopted: March 2018

Date Amended: June 2019

Evergreen School Division recognizes that making the transition to a new class or a new school can include changes in school climate, class size, school size, peer relationships, academic expectations, types of academic groupings, rules, policies, procedures and more.

Evergreen School Division also recognizes that making the transition from Middle Years to Senior Years usually comes while adolescents are experiencing changes in physical, social and emotional development, the development of higher order thinking skills and a growing importance of peer relationships.

We can better prepare students for these transitions by becoming aware of students' needs and responding to them in a proactive manner.

Research has shown that the expectations students have when arriving to a new school will have a large influence on their academic success. Often it is among the first few weeks that students build the relationships and networks that collectively form these expectations. When schools meet students' basic needs (independence, self-esteem, safety, relationships), they are more likely to persevere.

Since every student is affected, however minimally, by transitioning from one school environment to another, they would all benefit from a smooth transition.

A smooth, well – planned transition allows students to:

- recognize their strengths and challenges quickly,
- form quality interpersonal relationships in their new environment,
- feel comfortable and safe in their new environment,
- develop or maintain positive attitudes toward school and learning, and
- develop or maintain confidence in their ability to succeed in school.

What does a Smooth Transition Look Like?

IN THE SCHOOL YEAR PRIOR TO TRANSITION:

FALL (September, October):

- principals from receiving school and feeder school(s) will meet to discuss transition plan for that year
- they will also decide on template to communicate information about students; template design to be reviewed annually
- template may or may not include information on academics, peer relations, learning behaviours, emotional needs, medical needs, etc.

SPRING (April, May, June):

- Student Services School team(s) (Principal, Resource Teacher, Counsellor) from the feeder school(s) and receiving school will meet to share about students using template to guide their conversations
- parents and students will be invited to an *Information Meeting* at receiving school to discuss such things as expectations, how things work, etc.
- school(s) are to consider ways to involve parents in sharing their children's strengths and challenges with the receiving school (examples: questionnaire, phone call, meeting, etc.)
- school(s) are to consider ways to involve students in sharing about themselves with the receiving school (examples: surveys, video introductions, letters, questionnaires, etc.)
- receiving school principal will visit feeder school(s) to meet students and answer questions
- extra opportunities will be set up for students with special needs to visit receiving school / school staff
- receiving school will be asked to participate in year - end IEP meetings for students with special needs
- additional meetings will be set up as needed

OVER THE YEAR:

- parents are to be kept informed about all that is being done to make their child's upcoming transition smooth
- ***If more than 1 feeder school:***
- schools should look for opportunities for students from different schools to start the process of integration
- examples: attending / participating in common events (ex. speaker, concert, festival)
- NOTE: although important, integration activities that happen prior to transition are still somewhat artificial and research has shown that integration activities post transition have a much greater impact on student success

POST TRANSITION:

The receiver school will:

- consider using a buddy / peer mentoring program to support new students over the first few months
- consider using teacher advisors (TA); *All* teachers in the building are assigned a group of students to check – in with at scheduled TA times and to provide support to as needed
- consider contacting parents by phone within the first few weeks (decide who calls whom)
- regularly apprise parents of their children’s progress and school activities (emails, Edsby, website, etc.)
- Late September: identify any students showing signs of school disengagement (e.g. late arrivals, absences, late with assignments, level of involvement or results below the student’s capacity level, negative attitude toward school and teachers); look for ways to intervene and be sure to involve parents in the conversation
- ***If more than 1 feeder school:***
- meet with the whole group often; help them build their identity as a group
- use vocabulary that is inclusive (Group A is not joining Group B, nor is Group B joining Group A; they are joining together as Group C)
- offer multiple opportunities for students to establish new social ties (clubs, lunch sports, etc.)
- consider a “camp” type overnight activity in early September (off site or on site)
- create stable groups that allow for new relationships to develop

Note: Some of these procedures are designed more with the move from Middle Years to High School in mind as this tends to be the transition that needs greater attention.

Resource for Parents:

Manitoba Education online: Transitioning Through School

- My child will be attending a new school - how can I ease the transition?
- How can I help my child make the transition from high school to adult life?
- What is involved in the transition process?