

Students First

BACKGROUNDER

MARCH 26, 2018

Ultimately, inclusive education empowers our children and youth to be happy, healthy, and accomplished members of their communities. Quality inclusive education guarantees the best future for all Nova Scotians. Nova Scotians want these opportunities for their children. Educators need the means and systems to succeed in their critically important work. Nova Scotia can become a leader in inclusive education. This is a time to come together in creating an inclusive public education system that is second to none. This is our blueprint for how we will get there.

Blueprint for Change

TARGETED FUNDING



- Core funding for inclusive education
- Needs-based funding formula
- Rural schools
- Complex classrooms
- School psychology and speech-language pathology assessments
- Incentives to recruit and retain specialists
- Incentives for teachers to complete specialist training
- High school transition programs

ACCESS TO SPECIALISTS



- Behaviour support teachers
- Learning support teachers
- School psychologists
- Autism specialists
- Speech-language pathologists
- Guidance counsellors
- Assistive technology specialists
- Transition/parent support specialists
- Regional school health nurses

BETTER SUPPORTS



- Nova Scotia Institute for Inclusive Education
- Behaviour strategy
- Mental-health strategy
- Autism strategy
- Alternative programs
- Intensive treatment programs
- Interagency programs/services
- Parent supports
- Staff education
- Teacher assistant training/guidelines
- Communication disorder assistants
- Policies, guidelines, and procedures

Implementation Timeline

To build on successes, break down barriers, and implement the new model of inclusive education in a timely and evidence-based manner, multiple actions must be taken in a coordinated and sequential way over the next five years. The timeline presented below provides a schedule for key steps in each of the five stages of implementation.

STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION	TIMELINE	KEY ACTIONS
STAGE ONE EXPLORATION AND ADOPTION	April – August 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Establish Nova Scotia Institute for Inclusive Education (NSEII) ✓ Strike interagency Professional Development Committee in NSIIE ✓ Appoint Executive Director of Inclusive Education in the DEECD ✓ Establish provincial and regional MTSS lead teams ✓ Appoint parents of students with special needs to Provincial Advisory Council, Regional Advisory Councils, School Advisory Councils, and NSIIE governing body ✓ Appoint representative of the disability community to Provincial Advisory Committee ✓ Develop Inclusive Education Policy Framework, including new behaviour, mental-health, and autism strategies and guidelines ✓ Develop Cape Breton and Halifax Intensive Treatment Programs ✓ Recruit additional education specialists for September 2018 ✓ Improve TIENET and reduce teachers' paperwork and clerical work ✓ Further align major change initiatives in public education with MTSS ✓ Department of Health and Wellness allocates funding and resources for health-care services in schools ✓ Enact funding agreements with other government departments Incorporate inclusive education in teaching and leadership standards ✓ Commence research into evidence-based practices for MTSS in Nova Scotia

Implementation Timeline

STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION	TIMELINE	KEY ACTIONS
STAGE TWO EXPLORATION AND ADOPTION	September 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Begin expansion of Tiers 2 and 3 supports for students✓ Hire more specialists through the phased-in implementation of the revised staffing ratios, including 30 behaviour support teachers; 12 school psychologists, 12 regional school health nurses✓ Add 12 alternative programs in middle/junior high schools and high schools✓ Fund 400 school psychology and 200 speech-language pathology student assessments✓ Add \$5 million to address complex classroom needs✓ Fund and launch a behaviour intervention training program for teachers✓ Fill specialist positions with qualified personnel only, including learning support teachers and guidance counselling positions✓ Maintain class caps as per Bill 75 and the 2017 recommendations of the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions✓ Maintain the Tuition Support Program✓ Launch Cape Breton and Halifax Intensive Treatment Programs

Implementation Timeline

STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION	TIMELINE	KEY ACTIONS
<p>STAGE TWO INSTALLATION</p>	<p>September 2018 – February 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Complete development of the Inclusive Education Policy Framework, including all of the components ✓ Complete internal realignment with MTSS model within DEECD ✓ Explore alignment of the fiscal and school budget years ✓ Streamline funding procedures and paperwork for inclusive education ✓ Consolidate targeted grants with core special education funding ✓ Explore the addition of educational audiologists for Nova Scotia schools ✓ Professional Development Committee to develop paraprofessional and professional development activities and leadership modules for inclusive education ✓ Senior Partnership Committee to finalize Interministerial Service Model Policy including all components ✓ Senior Partnership Committee to develop programs for students with extraordinary care needs ✓ Increase supports for partnership between home and school and parent participation in educational programming
	<p>February 2019 – August 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide staff with intensive professional development in the new policy framework and MTSS to support September 2019 launch ✓ Implement leadership modules for inclusive education/MTSS ✓ Align MTSS and the revised Public School Program ✓ Strengthen Tier 1 supports

Implementation Timeline

STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION	TIMELINE	KEY ACTIONS
STAGE TWO INSTALLATION	February 2019 – August 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Align SchoolsPlus model with inclusive education/MTSS✓ NSIIE to develop tracking, reporting, and accountability procedures✓ NSIIE to provide first annual report to the public

Implementation Timeline

STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION	TIMELINE	KEY ACTIONS
STAGE THREE IMPLEMENTATION	September 2019 – August 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Begin implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy Framework and MTSS, including new behaviour, mental-health, and autism strategies, and interagency programs and services✓ Continue to expand Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports✓ Hire additional specialists through the phased-in implementation of the revised staffing ratios✓ Continue to develop and implement paraprofessional and professional development✓ B.Ed. programs to provide all students with enhanced coursework and practicums in inclusive education✓ NSCC to launch new program for preparing communication disorder assistants to work in Nova Scotia schools✓ NSCC to launch new teacher assistant education and continuing education programs✓ Professional Development Committee expands professional and paraprofessional learning options✓ Fund financial incentives for the recruitment and retention of education specialists✓ Department of Community Services and DEECD jointly fund enhanced high school transition supports

Implementation Timeline

STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION	TIMELINE	KEY ACTIONS
STAGE FOUR EXPANDED IMPLEMENTATION	September 2020 – August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Continue implementation of Inclusive Education Policy Framework, MTSS, and all related initiatives✓ Hire additional specialists through the phased-in implementation of the revised staffing ratios✓ Launch new specialized professional programs in Nova Scotia universities✓ Continue expansion of Tiers 1, 2, and 3 supports✓ Conduct audit of inclusive education costs to revise funding model✓ Continue to develop and implement paraprofessional and professional development✓ Review class caps✓ Review the Tuition Support Program✓ Review inclusive education infrastructure as described in this report✓ NSIIE to provide third annual report to the public✓ NSIIE to conduct formal evaluation of the implementation of inclusive education/MTSS, including the student results achieved✓ Evaluate and report on SchoolsPlus pilot programs for complex needs✓ NSIIE to provide fourth annual report to the public on implementation

Implementation Timeline

STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION	TIMELINE	KEY ACTIONS
STAGE FIVE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY	September 2022+	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Adjust implementation of the new model of inclusive education/MTSS in accordance with the findings of the formal review✓ Continue implementation of Inclusive Education Policy Framework, MTSS, and all related initiatives✓ Hire additional specialists through the phased-in implementation of the revised staffing ratios✓ Continue to develop and implement professional development✓ Conduct ongoing research into the implementation of inclusive education/MTSS in Nova Scotia schools and use the research findings to guide long-term implementation