

Policy 323 – Partial School Days

1. Purpose

This policy establishes the requirements governing the use, implementation and monitoring of partial school day plans for students who, due to exceptional circumstances, are unable to attend school full-time.

2. Application

This policy applies to students in the anglophone public school system whose school attendance has been reduced from that of their peers by school personnel as part of their Personalized Learning Plan – Partial School Day (PLP-Partial School Day). This policy is intended to be used by school teams, parents or guardians, and relevant professionals and partners supporting a student.

3. Definitions

Common Learning Environment, as defined by the *Education Act*, refers to an inclusive learning environment in which a) instruction is designed to be delivered to students in similar age groups and of various abilities at their neighborhood school for the majority of regular instruction hours, and (b) that is responsive to the student's individual needs as a learner.

Exceptional circumstances refer to situations in which a student's behavioural issues, such as self-harm or harm to others, significant property damage, mental health concerns, or physical health conditions compromises their ability to effectively participate in a regular school day.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) refers to a proactive and preventative framework that integrates data and instruction to maximize student success from a strengths-based perspective. MTSS offers a framework for educators to engage in data-based decision making related to program improvement, high-quality instruction and intervention, and student engagement to ensure positive outcomes for districts, schools, teachers, and students.

Partial school day refers to a student being present for a reduced duration of the regular school day or schedule, either in the common learning environment or in a personalized learning environment. A partial school day plan is an exceptional and temporary tier 3 strategy, implemented as a last resort, for a maximum period of 90 days. A partial school day plan is documented in the student's PLP-Partial School Day.

Personalized learning environment refers to any situation consisting of a variation of the common learning environment of a student where the student receives individualized instruction in the neighbourhood school but not in the common learning environment.

Personalized Learning Plan (PLP): as defined by the *Education Act*, refers to a personalized plan for a student that specifically and individually identifies practical strategies, goals, outcomes, targets and educational supports and designed to ensure the student experiences success in learning that is meaningful and appropriate, considering the student's individual needs.

Variation of the common learning environment: a situation where, as per the Personalized Learning Plan, a student's learning is varied for more than 25% of the regular instructional time outside the common learning environment.

4. Legal Considerations and Authority

EDUCATION ACT, SECTION 6

The Minister...

(b.2) may establish, within the scope of this Act, provincial policies and guidelines related to public education, ...

5. Goals/Principles

5.1.

1. The New Brunswick Human Right's Commission's "Guideline on Accommodating Students with a Disability (K-12)" state: "Accommodation of students with a disability involves making adjustments to their educational environment or providing alternative arrangements, to eliminate any discriminatory effect they would otherwise have on their students because of their disability."
2. **Right to education:** Any decision regarding a partial school day plan must be based on the student's right to equitable access to education. The school must ensure continuity of learning for the student, in accordance with the objectives outlined in their PLP-Partial School Day.
3. **Collaboration with the family:** Parents or legal guardians must be consulted and informed of any decisions related to partial school day plans.
4. **Provision of integrated support:** According to the student's needs, the school involves, consults, and collaborates with relevant professionals to ensure the necessary support for the student's well-being and learning.
5. **Student participation:** To the extent possible, the student should be encouraged to actively participate in the decision-making process regarding their partial school day plan, with consideration given to their age, maturity, abilities, and best interests.
6. **Individualized approach:** A partial school day plan is to be tailored to the student's needs, based on data, and reassessed regularly.
7. **Planning and monitoring:** Any implementation of a partial school day plan must be documented within ESS Connect and include clear objectives. The plan is to be regularly progress monitored and adapted as needed for student success.
8. **Continuous reassessment:** The duration and frequency of partial school day plans are to be continuously assessed by the school-based Education Support Services Team (ESST) and with the support of district-based Education Support Services Team (DESS).

6. Requirements/Standards

6.1. PARTIAL SCHOOL DAY PLANS

To ensure every student's right to education, school teams—working in collaboration with the student, their family, and, when appropriate, health professionals, mental health specialists, educators, and other experts—are responsible for implementing individualized accommodations. In some cases, this may include temporary partial school day plans, designed to support students who are unable to attend a full day due to their specific needs.

The school team is responsible for ensuring that any student on a partial school day plan continues to receive all educational programs and support services to which they are entitled, in alignment with their individual abilities and the recommendations of qualified professionals. When the student is not present in the common or personalized learning environment, these programs and services must be delivered in an alternative setting that enables ongoing progress toward the individualized learning goals outlined in the student's Personalized Learning Plan (PLP). To support this, the school and the school district shall allocate the necessary human and material resources to meet the student's identified needs—academic, behavioural, or otherwise—as specified in their intervention plan.

A partial school day placement is considered a Tier 3, short-term intervention. It should only be used in exceptional circumstances, and only after the school team has implemented and documented, Tier 1 (universal level), Tier 2 (targeted additional instruction) interventions, as well as other Tier 3 (intensive and individualized intervention level) interventions, to address student's needs.

A partial school day plan may be justified in exceptional circumstances such as:

- To meet the physical and/or mental health needs of the student based on the recommendation of a health or mental health professional (including, but not limited to, a family doctor, pediatrician, child psychiatrist, nurse practitioner, or psychologist). This recommendation must be documented in the student's file.
- A short-term response to immediate risk of harm to self or others, including recommendations from an Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO).
- Severely disruptive behaviour that has not responded to individualized interventions outlined in the PLP–Individual Behaviour Support Plan (PLP–IBSP), following a multi-tiered system of support.

In these cases, and while upholding the student's right to an education, a partial school day plan may be used to:

- Allow the student to build the skills, stamina, and capacity needed for successful return to full school day.
- Give the Educational Support Services (ESS) team time to adjust programming, the learning environment, or accessing appropriate resources.
- Develop or revise the PLP–IBSP or a Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) intervention plan, and implement supports (e.g., training, materials) based on updated risk assessments.

A partial school day plan requires consultation with the family and the student (when possible) and is based on the recommendations of the school ESS team, health professionals, mental health providers, expert educators, or other specialists. A partial school day is used on a short-term basis (e.g., 90 days) when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the student who is temporarily unable to receive instruction for a full school day in the common or personalized learning environment.

The partial school day plan must be fully documented within the student's PLP – Partial School Day. The PLP–Partial School Day must specify:

- The frequency, duration, and conditions of the student's attendance for the partial school day;
- The reasons justifying the need for a reduced schedule;
- A clearly outlined plan to support a gradual return to full-time attendance at school;
- The services and supports being provided to facilitate the student's progression; and
- The school team's approach to continuity of learning during periods when the student is not present in the common or personalized learning environment.
- This intervention is planned for a maximum of 90 days. In exceptional situations, this period may be extended following a formal review and reassessment by the school team in consultation with the student's parent or guardian and relevant professionals and partners.

The student's progress must be regularly monitored against individualized goals documented in the PLP. These may include objectives such as:

- Building adaptive behavioural skills (e.g., communication skills, emotional regulation, problem solving, etc.).
- Stabilizing a physical or mental health condition

Progress should inform any updates to the plan and guide the student's transition back to a full school day.

Partial school day plans must:

- Never be used as a punitive measure.
- Be distinct from suspensions, which are disciplinary in nature.
- Be approved in advance by a school district team member.
- Comply with the *Education Act*, the *New Brunswick Human Rights Act*, and Departmental policies, including:
- Policy 322: *Inclusive Education*
- Policy 703: *Positive Learning and Working Environment*

6.2. WHEN A PARTIAL SCHOOL DAY PLAN IS NOT WARRANTED

Partial school day plans do not apply to situations where a reduced school schedule is due to personal, medical, or program-based reasons. For example:

- Students participating in enrichment activities outside school.
- High school students attending part-time due to personal circumstances.
- Newcomer/EAL students gradually transitioning into school.

- Students in Grades 9–12 attending alternative education environments.
- Students receiving home tutoring for medical reasons (e.g., post-surgery, cancer recovery).
- Students whose reduced schedule is part of a medical or mental health treatment plan recommended by a health professional.

In these cases, school attendance has not been denied by school personnel, and the student may return to full-time attendance at any time without restriction. However, schools are encouraged to document a Short-Term Intervention Plan (STIP) to support the student's successful transition back to full-time learning.

6.3. STEPS TO COMPLETE BEFORE CONSIDERING A PARTIAL SCHOOL DAY PLAN

Ensure all appropriate and less restrictive supports have been implemented first, school teams must have taken all the following steps before considering a partial school day plan:

6.3.1. Needs Assessment

Assess the safety risk level using Appendix A: *Mild, Moderate, or Severe*.

The school team analyzes the student's needs in consultation with the family, the student (when possible), the district-based Education Support Services Team, and other relevant professionals and partners.

6.3.2. Interventions to implement before a partial school day plan

A PLP (e.g., PLP- IND, PLP-IBSP, etc.) is developed and entered into ESS Connect.

The school team plans the necessary services and supports to meet the student's needs, including any training required to enable school staff to implement them effectively. The type of training and guidance provided to staff varies according to the student's specific needs.

PLP is regularly reviewed and updated. The parents or guardian is involved and informed of the student's progress as well as any persistent challenges.

Expected outcomes, strategies, and interventions, as well as services and resources, are adjusted based on the student's progress.

Common Plan: When the school education support team identifies needs requiring services beyond what the school can provide, they will collaborate with district staff, the parent or guardian, and partners to determine the best approach at a common plan meeting

Integrated Clinical Team (ICT): In exceptional situations, the allocation of additional resources may be necessary. In such cases, the school district must follow regional protocols through the ICT.

Any additional support deemed necessary beyond what the school can offer will be documented in the PLP-IBSP.

If the interventions in place do not lead to the expected progress and the student continues to struggle to make progress despite these efforts, the school team, working in collaboration with the parents or guardian, the student (when possible), and relevant professionals and partners, may explore the option of a personalized learning environment. This refers to a variation of the common learning environment as detailed in section 6.4 of Policy 322.

If a personalized learning environment is still insufficient to meet the student's needs, a reduction in instructional hours (partial school day) within the personalized learning environment may be considered. Once the partial school day plan is implemented, the school team must maintain regular follow-up with the parents or legal guardians on a weekly basis or more often as needed. These discussions focus on the student's progress toward established educational goals and allow for necessary adjustments to the plan, including services and supports. Whenever possible, the student participates in these discussions.

The criteria listed above is outlined in Appendix B: *School ESS Team Decision-Making for Partial School Days*. The Appendix serves as a checklist to support informed, collaborative decision-making and helps confirm that all necessary steps have been taken before considering a partial school day plan.

6.4. DEVELOPMENT OF A PARTIAL SCHOOL DAY PLAN

The school team will meet to discuss if a partial school day plan may be a required next step of support for a student. If the school team deems a partial school day plan is required, a case conference will be held with the family, student (when possible), and their supports, such as: health professionals, mental health providers, or other specialists, to develop a plan of support.

The student's plan of support will be developed within a PLP- Partial School Day in ESS Connect and submitted to a district team member for approval.

A partial school day plan may involve a reduction in the number of hours per school day or the number of school days per week.

A partial school day plan must be temporary measure and must include continued educational services and resources to meet the student's needs.

A partial school day plan must include a plan for the student's return into the classroom with their peers, and/or a personalized learning environment, within a reasonable timeframe, even if the return occurs gradually.

The district team will review the proposed partial school day plan and may approve it as submitted, suggest modifications, or reject it if necessary. In all cases, the district team is responsible for working with the school team to establish a review process, including clear timelines to monitor the student's progress and make timely adjustments to interventions and planning as needed.

Unless otherwise advised by an expert or other professional, a partial school day schedule does not automatically extend from one school year to the next. Each student must begin the school year with a regular schedule, including the interventions, supports, and resources necessary to meet their needs and support the goals outlined in their PLP.

The school team must end the partial school day plan as soon as data shows that this accommodation is no longer necessary.

6.5. DETAILS INCLUDED IN A PLP-PARTIAL SCHOOL DAY PLAN:

- **Start & End Date:** Indicate the **start date** and **targeted end date** for the partial school day plan arrangement.
- **Justification:** Clearly state rationale for implementing partial school day plans, including specific reasons for the decision.
- **parent/guardian involvement:** Ensure families are involved in planning and decision-making from the beginning.
- **Goal for Programming:** Clearly state what the goal is for partial school day plan programming and how it relates to the partial school day plan. Specify the roles and responsibilities of those involved (school team, family, external partners, etc.).
- **Criteria for Time Increases:** Specify the number of hours the student will attend school each day, including whether the time is spent in the common learning environment or a personalized setting.
- **SMART Goals & Criteria:** Identify **expected outcomes for individualized goals**, including clear, measurable goals or skills the student is expected to develop.
- **Review Date:** Define the **frequency of plan reviews**, which should be based on the student's needs and progress.
- **Attachments:** Include any data collected to inform the partial school day plan (i.e., information on behaviour, graphs, etc.). Include any reports from specialists or other professionals.
- **Partial School Day Programming & Supports:** List the **interventions implemented** to support the student's learning, such as academic supports, behavioural strategies, therapeutic services, etc.
- **Additional Supports Outside of School:** Identify the **alternative learning environment** the student will be in during non-attendance hours (e.g., at home, community program).
- **Data Collection & Monitoring Procedures:** Provide a detailed plan for **gradual return** into a full school day, outlining the steps to increase attendance over time. Ensure that the steps are documented, regularly updated, and that a signed copy is kept on file.
- **Signature:** Ensure the plan includes all **required signatures, including the parent/guardian, district designate, and members of the school support team** and is maintained in the student's record.

Once a PLP-Partial school day plan has been approved and established:

- The effectiveness of the partial school day plan needs to be monitored and updated, ensuring the rights of the child are being upheld. The school-based team will monitor the student's progress through ongoing data collection and analysis to determine if the goal of the intervention is being met. This data should be reviewed as part of the school-based ESS Team meetings in compliance with ESS Provincial Guidelines, to discuss the short and long-term results and make any changes to the plan in a timely manner.
- School personnel will connect with the student's family weekly to provide updates.
- A case conference/common plan meeting with the family, school team, and relevant professionals and partners will be held to discuss the student's progress and revisions to the accommodated plan monthly. Progress will be noted in the Progress Report of the partial school day plan.
- When a partial school day plan has been implemented with fidelity and validity, as indicated by data, and the student has not met success the plan may be extended beyond 90 days. A plan that has been extended must be thoroughly revised based on data.
- A partial school day plan will not automatically be extended from one school year to another.
- Each year, a student begins with a full school day; however, if new data indicates a Tier 3 plan of action is needed, schools will use the checklist in Appendix B to determine if a new partial school day plan is warranted.
- When a student no longer requires a partial school day plan, based on individual data, the plan is to be deactivated.

6.6. TRAINING

School administrators are responsible for ensuring that school staff receive the training and support necessary to implement strategies and interventions tailored to the specific needs of the student. It is essential that staff members be adequately equipped to help students maintain or return to a regular school schedule. The training provided must be targeted and tailored to the specific needs of the student concerned.

Depending on the student's profile, this may include, for example, training in non-violent intervention, which aims to equip staff to prevent and defuse crisis situations while promoting safe and respectful interventions.

If necessary, the school will consult with the school district team for support in this process. It may also call on experts or specialists depending on the type of training required. These specialized resources may come from various sources, such as school-based psychosocial services teams, mental health professionals from child and youth teams, school district support staff, or any other relevant partner.

School teams requiring training on the Duty to Accommodate can find additional information on the Provincial PL Hub.

6.7. MONITORING AND REPORTING

6.7.1. Schools will:

- Monitor the effectiveness of a partial school day plan arrangement on an ongoing basis and make timely adjustments based on the student's progress and evolving needs.
- Ensure regular communication with the student's parents or guardian and any involved professionals or partners, to share updates, address concerns, and revise the PLP-Partial School Day as necessary.
- Continuously evaluate the impact and effectiveness of interventions included in the PLP-Partial School Day.
- Organize a formal review meeting with the parent or guardian at least every six weeks to assess whether continuing a reduced schedule remains appropriate. This meeting may take the form of a case conference, joint planning session, or another suitable format.
- Collect and review data on the student's progress toward expected outcomes at school team meetings or another review times.
- Review collected data to evaluate both short-term and long-term outcomes and make necessary changes to supports and services.
- Document progress in the student's PLP-Partial School Day in ESS Connect.

6.7.2. School Districts will:

- Monitor, on a monthly basis, the number of students on a partial school day plan and their progress. Ensuring all instances of partial school day programming, in their district, are uploaded to ESS Connect for review and data collection.
- The district ensures that the student's progress is monitored by the school strategic team to determine whether the objectives are being achieved in a timely manner.
- Provide training and professional learning opportunities through this process as required to school teams.
- Provide to the Minister of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the Department), as per paragraph 40.1(2) of the *Education Act*, three times per year in December, March, and June, or upon request, with a summary of the number of students on partial school day plans, the schools involved, the rationale, and the length of time of the PLP-PD.

6.7.3. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will:

- Review the summaries submitted by the districts to ensure compliance and quality.
- Provide feedback to school districts, as necessary on the implementation and use of partial school day plans.
- Work collaboratively with school districts to develop professional learning that is required to support schools in planning for students who require Tier 3 plans of action.
- Offers training as needed to support districts in their practices and promote consistent application of provincial expectations.

DRAFT

Appendix A: Level of Risk Behaviour

As defined within the New Brunswick Response to Intervention: Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Mild

The behaviour:

- ☐ poses a barrier to inclusion
- ☐ interferes with social interactions and/or adaptive behaviour
- ☐ does not pose any threat to the environment, health, or safety for the learner or others

Examples include inappropriate verbal behaviour (e.g.: crying, swearing, threats, verbal refusal, whining), chronic non-compliance or disengagement, and disruptive behaviour.

Moderate

The behaviour:

- ☐ poses some risk to the environment, health, or safety
- ☐ has not yet resulted in significant property destruction, injury, or a threat to safety requiring emergency intervention

Examples include threats to harm, light pushing, destructive behaviour (e.g. breaking objects or pushing objects towards a person), running away (stays in immediate location), and low intensity self-injurious behaviour (e.g. biting self without causing injury).

Severe

The behaviour has:

- ☐ resulted in significant injury
- ☐ threatened the safety of self or others to the point of requiring emergency intervention such as restraint, protective equipment, one-to-one supervision, or placement in a highly restrictive environment to prevent significant injury or threats to safety

Examples include aggression that has injured others, inappropriate sexual behaviour, running away off school property (based on developmental appropriateness), high intensity self-injurious behaviour, and major property destruction.

Appendix B: School ESS Team Decision-Making for Partial Day

Decision Making Guide	Completed	NA
Identify level of safety risk (appendix A) <i>Mild / Moderate / Severe</i>		
Compliance with the guidelines on <i>Accommodating Students with Physical or Mental Disabilities in New Brunswick</i> (4.1) which states: "accommodating students with disabilities means making adjustments to the school environment or offering other arrangements to eliminate any discriminatory effects that students would otherwise endure because of their disability"		
Consultation has occurred with DESS (i.e., ESS Request for Services)		
Consultation has occurred with health professionals		
Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) has been created and progress monitored over time		
Common Plan / Case Conference meetings have occurred. Place dates of last three meetings: 		
Consultation with DESS Coordinator		
Short-term intervention tried: 1. 2. 3.		
Current collection and analysis of data (FBA). May state location of where data can be found. 		
Inventory of student's strengths and interests. Where is this documented? 		

Attempt to implement a variance to the common learning environment		
Collaboration with parents/guardians and other student stakeholders Dates----- ----- ----- -----		
Universal accommodations and academic/behaviour supports		
Risks of implementing Partial Day		
Risks of <u>not</u> implementing Partial Day		
A plan has been developed to support the student academically while not attending school (i.e. tutoring, short term intervention therapeutic setting). Provide basic details below. Complete plan to be placed in PLP-Partial Day within ESS connect, should that be the next steps. ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- -----		