



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

(For the purposes of this survey alternative education is defined as any program/approach that supports students who are not successfully engaged in school and require an alternate delivery model)

School Board: York Region District School Board, (Sutton District High School)

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Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy: Exploring Opportunities Program (EOP) / Initiative – to provide a focus to students who can't focus in a classroom environment – Alternative atmosphere (as close to real world work scenarios as possible)

Description of Program/Initiative/Strategy

The focus is on programs/initiatives/strategies that increase student engagement, confidence, achievement and well-being. In the brief description please provide answers to the following questions: Where the program/initiative/strategy is delivered (school/board locations)? Who is responsible for delivering and monitoring the program/initiative/strategy? Who is the target audience? Are there any community partnerships involved? Are there any staffing or budget implications? Are there any special resources required? What are your indicators of success, etc.?

EOP's focus is to engage students in a relatable pathway, to them, of employment and the educational requirements to achieve this goal. Focusing on, but not all, hands on experiences. Examples being of the trades, automotive, carpentry, landscaping, and most recently arboristry – with a focus on re-purposing the product into reusable pieces. Initiatives for the students are the available certifications that the student can take away with them and apply to their developing resume. Certifications include but are not limited to – first-aid, CPR, AED, forklift, working at heights, chainsaw safety awareness, confined spaces, WHMIS, young workers awareness and tag out lock out.

The EOP program is delivered at an offsite location with a community partner The Georgina Trades Training Center (GTTI). This gives the students a sense, feeling of going to work as opposed to attending school, perfect for the student who needs to “move” around the classroom.

Our target audience are at-risk students who have in the past not found success within the traditional classroom setting.

Thus far we have partnered with The Georgina Trades Training Center, The Chippewa's of

Georgina Island and The Salvation Army Camp in Jackson's Point as well as the camp in Apsdin (Huntsville). Which we will continue with into the future.

Current staffing ratios are very appropriate allowing for rich student- teacher engagement.

Funding is always an issue.....could always use more. The program sometimes runs short of funding with the consumables used in the program.

Special resources required to continue this program would be to have dedicated transportation in the form of a vehicle and work trailer. As this would be the most cost effective way to transport our program (teachers/students/equipment) to the various community partner locations.

Indicators of success are the reflections from former students who have benefited from the program in their obtained certifications and hands on activities. Students who have completed the program and moved into a related field of study through the program are the greatest success stories thus far. Most of our students will and have remained residing within the local community and thus are productive contributing members of the community.

What has been the impact on Student Learning?

The impact on Student Learning has been one that has allowed students the opportunity to choose a career path that will allow them to stay within their home community as well as contribute to future endeavours. This program often provides and has provided a means of student re-engagement and success allowing them to complete an OSSD.