North Haven Public School

LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES
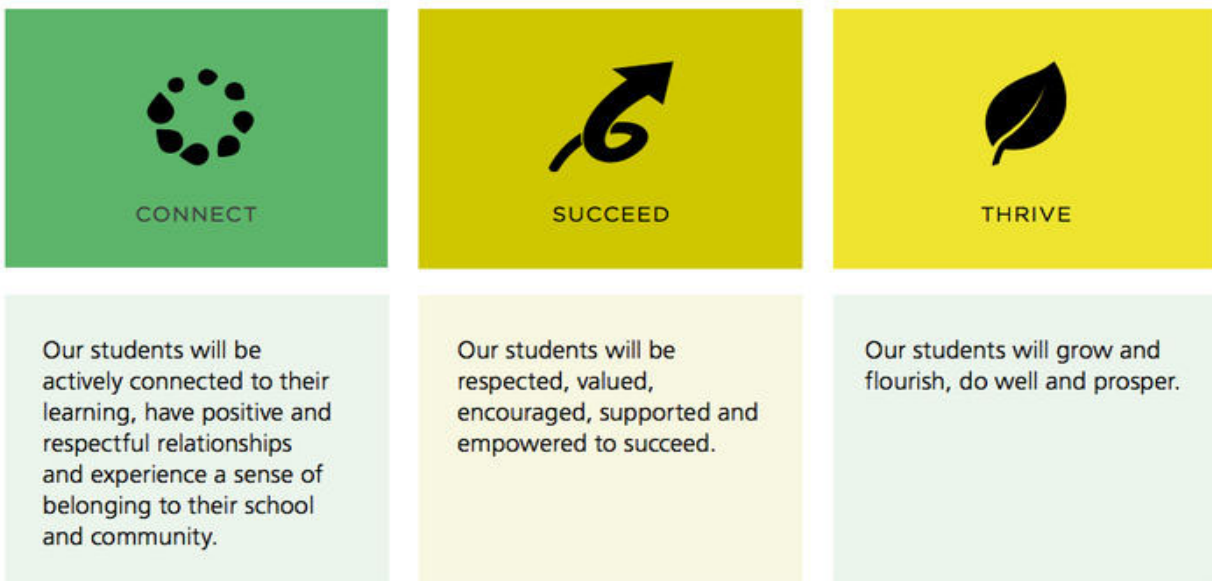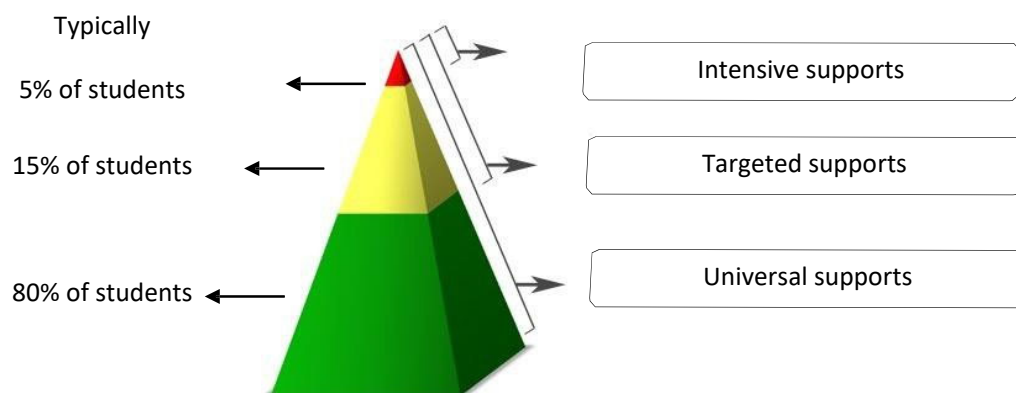
What is a Learning Support Team?

A learning support team (LST) is a school planning and support mechanism. It is formed with the purpose of addressing the learning support needs of students through the coordination, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of educational programs.

The Wellbeing Framework directs schools to build on the individual strengths of students and position them to connect, succeed and thrive.

CONNECT	SUCCEED	THRIVE
Our students will be actively connected to their learning, have positive and respectful relationships and experience a sense of belonging to their school and community.	Our students will be respected, valued, encouraged, supported and empowered to succeed.	Our students will grow and flourish, do well and prosper.

A prime function of our Learning Support Team is to ensure that the needs of all students in the school are being met using a three-tiered model of support addressing universal, targeted and intensive supports for students and teachers.

Typically

5% of students — Intensive supports

15% of students — Targeted supports

80% of students — Universal supports

Our team has a strong focus on **systems** (what we do to support adults), **practices** (what we do to support students), and **data** (to inform our decision making about systems and practices).

A key feature of our learning support team is facilitation of collaborative planning between teachers, support staff, families and students. Our learning support team addresses **whole school need, teacher need** and **student need** (as outlined in the Special Education Handbook).

Why implement a Learning Support Team?

Learning and support teams play a role in leading the school's responses to individual students with disability under the legislation (DDA 1992 & DSE 2005). LST's support teachers and schools to meet these and other obligations to students.

It will:

- Enable facilitation and coordination of a whole school approach to improving the learning outcomes of every student.

- Ensure the coordination of planning processes and resourcing for students with additional learning and support needs.

- Enhance collaboration and the provision of collegial support to school personnel and the wider community.

- Ensure a whole school approach to planning so that the additional learning needs of individual students and groups of students are met. This includes responding to the professional learning needs of staff.

- Establish guidance and support systems for all staff so that they can cater for students with additional learning and support needs.

- Ensure that programs or interventions are based on current research and best practices are implemented for students with additional learning and support needs.

Learning Support Teams work when:

- teachers see the learning support team as a support for their classrooms and are involved in the identification of outcomes for support for students

- processes are inclusive, well organised and understood by all

- support is provided and the teacher is involved in identifying what may be most effective in his/her classroom

- realistic action plans are developed

- the learning support team is seen as a group of professionals who coordinate support for teachers and students rather than a step in the referral process to other services.

- Build the capabilities of staff so they recognise each student's abilities, strengths and needs; respect each student's individual difference; respond to each student's learning and support needs

Who are our team members?

In principle, every teacher is a member of the LST. However their participation will vary according to the function of the team at a particular time e.g. whether the team is focusing in universal, targeted or intensive supports.

The team should include a:

- **Team facilitator/Coordinator** (usually a member(s) of the school executive)
- **School counsellor**
- **Teachers**
- **Specialist personnel,** including the Learning & Support Teacher (LaST)

Other specialist personnel e.g. Itinerant teachers and outside agencies, parents and care givers can be invited to attend as necessary.

Roles of Learning Support Team members:

Team members will have a number of roles determined by the level of support they are working on i.e. universal, targeted and intensive supports. In general, the following roles will apply:

Principal

- ensure recommendations by LST are included in the school's Management Plan

LST Coordinator

- convene regular meetings
- develop meeting agenda
- keep and distribute minutes
- maintain LST documentation

LaST

- identify school needs and establish school priorities
- training and development
- coordinate resources (human and materials)
- assist in development of school Learning Support policy and procedures
- collaboratively plan to develop action plans with strategies to support students
- liaise with students, parents and outside agencies

Classroom Teachers

- refer students to LST when programs are not meeting students' needs (and teacher has tried several strategies first)
- attend LST meetings when required
- implement LST recommendations
- monitor student progress and inform the LST

What does our Learning Support Team do?

When implementing a LST it is important that schools determine a priority order and gradually work through areas of need. The LST may:

- develop school policy for students experiencing difficulties in learning or those requiring extension

- implement school 'identification' procedures so that students experiencing difficulties in learning receive 'early' and 'appropriate' instruction/intervention.

- develop referral systems for classroom teachers to access support services.

- establish mechanisms to coordinate support personnel within the school (e.g. LaST, Counsellor, Reading Recovery, SLSOs).

- develop a plan to coordinate and access 'external' specialist personnel (e.g. APLaS, Specialist teachers or counsellors, Regional curriculum consultants.

- implement school 'levels of support' for classroom teachers so that they can access appropriate personnel and cater for students experiencing difficulties in learning.

- establish support systems for specialist personnel within the school (e.g. policy/model implementation, funding issues).

- implement mechanisms for on-going support services for students (e.g. progressive monitoring and record keeping).

- provide direction for professional learning programs.

- assist the school with the selection, implementation and evaluation of resources for students experiencing difficulties in learning and those requiring extension.

- establish communication and liaison procedures within the school community (e.g. school based/ home based programs, parent referral procedures).

- implement effective models and programs to improve student outcomes (e.g. early intervention programs, assessment procedures, programs based on current research and best practice in the area of learning difficulties, effective teaching strategies, monitoring and evaluation procedures).

- Analyse available school and individual data to develop whole school programs or adjustments that best support individual students or groups of students with additional learning and support needs

The LST and school resources

Classroom teachers can access a number of resources to support students, including the LST. These resources range from the least intensive support (adaptations to the class program – universal supports) to the most intensive support (support from outside agencies may be included).

School Levels of Support

1. Accommodations and adjustments to the class program.
2. Collaborative professional reflection with colleagues
3. Support from school specialist resources (via the LST)
4. Support from out of school resources.

The Learning Support Team will address needs & allocate resources to support learning. They will:

Identify ➤ Analyse ➤ Prioritise ➤ Allocate ➤ Evaluate

Identify	- Comprehensive gathering of information on enrolment. - Encourage teachers and support staff to investigate concerns and emerging issues - Comprehensive communication processes
Analyse	- Involvement of parents and carers to gain all necessary information and data. - Completion of relevant assessments and gathering of work samples. - Gathering of information from all available sources eg Counsellor reports, Specialist's/Doctor's reports.
Prioritise	- Utilise the information gathered to set goals for the student and make necessary learning and support adjustments. - Demonstrate learning and support adjustments in relevant documentation ie Student Behaviour Support Plan,, Individual Education Plan (IEP) - Determine and plan for any Professional Learning for staff to enable quality learning experiences for the student.
Allocate	- Allocate appropriate resources for the planning and implementation of support plans. - Liaise with the parents /carers to explore all avenues of support and intervention
Evaluate	- Ongoing review - Comprehensive communication between the Classroom Teacher, support personnel, school executive and the parents / carers. - Comprehensive documentation and record keeping.

Individual Student Learning Support Referral Flowchart

1) Pre-Referral Process

• Before making a student referral:

☐ where possible, discuss concerns with previous teacher/staff, identify teaching or learning accommodations/ adjustments previously used/considered. Consider/Implement strategies for the student to access learning.

☐ check student records including assessment and other data sources to ascertain if previous support has been provided eg. LaST /SLSO. Discuss support programs implemented with LaST/RR/SLSO.

☐ develop teaching strategies with your Supervisor and / or raise concerns at Stage meeting.

☐ speak to the student's parents about your concerns and indicate your intent to submit a referral to the LST.

2) Referral Process

• When completing the LST referral:

☐ discuss the referral form with parents/caregivers and check if student has recently had a vision/hearing assessment or any specialist intervention e.g. Speech/Occupational Therapy, Paediatrician reports (ask families to provide copies of this documentation).

☐ send home LST parent referral/acknowledgement form for completion by parent/caregiver.

☐ complete LST referral form, attach assessment and supporting data then discuss/submit to supervisor.

☐ supervisor to check that all required information has been submitted and the forward to the LST coordinator.

3) LST meeting

• Student will be discussed at next LST meeting:

☐ bring all relevant documentation i.e. signed parent referral/acknowledgement form, completed assessments including PLAN data and any additional reports/information provided by the parent/caregiver.

☐ contribute to the development of an LST action plan for the student. (The Action plan is recorded electronically as developed and stored in the LST folder in shared drive).

4) Implementation & Review

• After the LST meeting:

☐ Referring teacher to implement plan with support from supervisor and specialist staff (where applicable)

☐ Other staff notified through appropriate communication method e.g. communication/Stage meetings.

☐ Parent/carer notified by letter, interview or phone call.

☐ Attend an end of term/review meeting. Ongoing review and refinement of the plan is essential. At the end of each term the LST coordinator will review all active action plans and update the LST database in consultation with the LST.

Document Appendix:

A: Student Learning Support Referral Form

B: Student Action Plan

C: Parent referral to School Counsellor form.

D: Letter to parent re: LST referral & information request

E: Parent information to LST form

F: LST new student screening checklist

G: Permission letter to parent/carer re: inclusion in MiniLit Group

H: Permission letter to parent/carer re: inclusion in Reading Tutor (MultiLit) program