

## COMMITMENTS FOR HAVING A NURTURING SUPPORT CENTER (NSC) IN YOUR SCHOOL

HUMAN RESOURCE DEDICATION	REQUIREMENTS	ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER	EXAMPLE OF TIME COMMITMENT
<p><b>Administration</b></p> <p>Vice-Principal or Staff Assistant must be informed and updated on practices and communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stable administration (has been in position at least 1 year)</li> <li>▪ Be on board with the mandate and philosophy of an NSC</li> <li>▪ Be committed to leading and supporting the school team with the implementation and sustainability of the NSC (e.g. into presentation to staff, intro presentation to parents, including NSC items in staff meeting)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regular and ongoing communication with NSC Tech. At least brief check-ins on a daily basis (or every other day)</li> <li>▪ Regular touchpoints (ideally every week) with the different individuals who are part of the NSC Core Team</li> <li>▪ Regular touchpoints with the parents of the students who attend the NSC (frequency will depend on the student). This role can be shared in part with the other members of the NSC Core Team, as well as the student's teacher.</li> <li>▪ Scheduling and participating in NSC Core Team meetings</li> <li>▪ Attending scheduled board-wide NSC meetings with the support of CEBM (PD, troubleshooting, student cases, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Periodic consults with Board Consultant(s)/Professional(s) through Complementary Services Interdisciplinary Team meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ 2-10 min/day</li> <li>⊕ 10-30 min/week</li> <li>⊕ variable/week</li> <li>⊕ 30-60 min/2-3weeks</li> <li>⊕ 2hr 5x/year</li> <li>⊕ 3x/year (30-45min)</li> </ul>
<p><b>At least 1 Full-Time NSC Technician</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 1 Technician dedicated to the NSC room everyday (this role could be a shared between 2 Technicians who rotate)</li> <li>▪ Additional adults should be regularly involved in use of room, or coordinating with NSC tech</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tech must be available for regular meetings (NSC Core Team meetings, Special Needs Committee meetings, staff meetings)</li> <li>▪ NSC must be open at critical times of day (recesses and lunches)</li> <li>▪ Tech must have daily breaks/lunch periods</li> <li>▪ Tech should not operate in isolation all the time - consider additional staff to use room or check in regularly with tech (e.g. Resource Teacher; other support staff), for breaks, additional support, otherwise room is closed</li> <li>▪ Release-plan for Tech to participate in Special Needs Committee meetings, NSC Core Team meetings, staff meetings</li> <li>▪ Release-plan for Tech to participate in Professional Development, scheduled board-wide NSC meetings with the support of CEBM (along with self-paced training on CEBM websites)</li> </ul>	<p>(during Ped Days or release-plan)</p> <p>(compensation required)</p>
<p><b>NSC Core Team</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NSC Core team required for regular communications and meetings (ideally: Principal, NSC Tech, Resource Teacher, Board Consultant(s)/Professional(s) assigned to NSC, and possibly other relevant staff, such as teachers and support staff)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regular weekly check-ins (e.g. Monday a.m. or Friday pm)</li> <li>▪ Meeting every 2-3 weeks (may need to meet more often at first) with NSC Core Team (reviewing NSC scheduling; NSC troubleshooting; intakes for new students; creating student Action Plans; following up on current student progress; staff issues; etc.), or scheduled Special Needs Committee meetings for regular NSC users</li> <li>▪ Attending scheduled board-wide NSC meetings with the support of CEBM (PD, troubleshooting, student cases, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Periodic exchanges and consults with Board Consultant(s)/Professional(s) through Interdisciplinary Team meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ 15-30 min/week</li> <li>⊕ 30-60 min/2-3weeks</li> <li>⊕ 2hr 5x/year</li> <li>⊕ 3x/year (30-45min)</li> </ul>
<p><b>All Staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Be on board with the mandate and philosophy of an NSC</li> <li>▪ Understand how the NSC fits into the Pyramid of Interventions</li> <li>▪ Available for Professional Development from Complimentary Services, from Centers of Excellence (2-3 occasions throughout year), or from other external trainings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff must periodically attend Special Needs Committee meetings and NSC Core Team meetings that involve their student(s)</li> <li>▪ Open to reviewing the CEBM Pyramid of Interventions (checklists, considerations, etc.) and receiving accompaniment in classroom for Tier 1 and Tier 2 practices</li> <li>▪ Open to staff-wide exchanges and workshops for specific topics (1-3 times per year)</li> <li>▪ Attending online training offered by CEBM or viewing webinars, resources, and materials on the CEBM websites.</li> </ul>	<p>(during staff meetings or designated times, such as Ped Days)</p>

SPACE, FUNDING AND TIME	ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER
<b>SPACE NEEDED:</b> parameters and fundamentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ideally, an NSC has its own dedicated space rather than being shared with daycare, library, resource, etc.</li> <li>▪ Space needs to be intentionally designed and divided into clear sections with each their own specific purpose (respite/cocooning, movement, emotions, sensory, individual and groupwork, academic support, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Academic is a big part of the NSC, especially for those students who spend regular blocs of time in the space and those on reverse integration where the NSC is their homebase (will require the support of the Resource Teacher for those students)</li> <li>▪ Can accommodate several students with a variety of needs (not just ‘trauma’ profiles) – this will depend on the size of the school and the number of needs. Other Support Staff with their students are welcome to join (ideally scheduled)</li> <li>▪ Can be temporarily closed to have Tech on floor, or deal with crisis (ideally, a school would count on a second adult to replace the main Technician during these times, or have 2 par-time Techs on rotation)</li> <li>▪ Space is NOT meant for meltdown/crisis interventions (ideally, a school would have an Emotions Room to operate in tandem with the NSC) – students should be mostly scheduled to attend the NSC on a preventative basis (being proactive in fulfilling needs and discovering what support measures work, rather than waiting for the problems to arise to address them)</li> <li>▪ Should NOT be used as a dumping ground, as a reflection room, as a consequence, as a reward (school staff and parents must be informed on the mandate and philosophy of an NSC, including that the NSC does not replace general classroom management, but it is meant as an additional support measure to practices in Tiers 1-2-3 – see details in the CEBM Pyramid of Interventions)</li> <li>▪ If a school has more than one alternative space in their building with different mandates, the roles and responsibilities of the different adults involved must clearly defined and differentiated. Also, the approach in these multiple spaces must be aligned/coherent and reflect the overall philosophy of the school to not confuse the staff, students, and parents.</li> <li>▪ Materials and activities in the NSC are designed as tools and strategies with a specific purpose in mind (NOT as random toys and games), which have been intentionally selected to answer a need that has been identified in the student’s Action Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>BUDGET NEEDED:</b> Minimum funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Additional staff to run the NSC (1 full time Tech, or 2 part-time Techs)</li> <li>▪ Ideally, allocate a percentage of a Resource Teacher to support the academic portion of the NSC</li> <li>▪ Funds for the furniture, materials, books, supplies, food (breakfast club, snacks), etc.</li> <li>▪ Release funds (or compensation) for Professional Development</li> <li>▪ Training literature for the staff (books <i>Reclaiming Our Students</i>, by Hannah Beach, and <i>Beyond Behaviors</i>, by Mona Delahooke)</li> </ul>
<b>TIME NEEDED:</b> On an everyday basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communication between Principal and NSC Tech</li> <li>▪ NSC room open daily – especially for recesses and lunches</li> <li>▪ Additional staff to check-in/support/work with NSC Tech</li> <li>▪ Flexibility in schedule of day (availability of NSC Tech to assist with crisis management; daily triage according to needs)</li> </ul>
Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set time for check-in with school NSC team (review schedule; cases; teacher issues; personal issues, etc.)</li> </ul>
Every Two Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NSC Core Team meeting; Intervention Planning/ Special Needs Committee meetings for NSC students</li> </ul>
At Regular Intervals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NSC Core Team consults with Consultants/Professionals assigned to NSC (with the support of CEBM)</li> <li>▪ Discussing NSC items during staff meetings</li> </ul>
Periodically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tech may spend some time outside of the NSC room (in the schoolyard for supported recess, in the classroom to help an NSC student re-integrate, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Tech may attend staff meetings (especially when NSC items are on the agenda)</li> <li>▪ Tech may attend Special Needs Committee meetings (especially involving NSC students)</li> <li>▪ Consults with Complementary Services Interdisciplinary Team (for brainstorming)</li> </ul>

FUNDAMENTALS	ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER
<p><b>Philosophy</b> Some key points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The best approaches are systemic, not piecemeal. There must be general buy-in where all the stakeholders share a common vision and language. It has to become an everyday thing that is integrated into every part of a school.</li> <li>▪ The best efforts are proactive, not reactive, which means that we don't wait for a problem to arise to deal with them. Interventions have a greater impact/benefit when done preventively rather than in crisis management.</li> <li>▪ Adults must adjust their expectations of the student, depending on their maturity level, individual differences, degree of emotional defendedness, ability to cope with stress, etc.</li> <li>▪ All designed spaces and selected tools/strategies are intentional with a specific purpose in mind (nothing is left up to chance).</li> <li>▪ Safety and connection are the starting point (must consider the student's stress response, emotional/cognitive availability in the moment, openness to connect and orient towards the adult, readiness to learn, etc.)</li> <li>▪ It's not about changing and controlling the behaviour, but relying on the structures/routines and compensating/scaffolding for the student's challenge(s) to help them become more successful (with the support of these favorable conditions)</li> <li>▪ Many students have not yet developed the ability to self-regulate and arrive at school already activated in their stress response. They need us to anchor them, act as a co-regulator, and be mindful to not trigger them further.</li> <li>▪ If stress and emotions are not expressed/released, they will not dissipate on their own, but rather accumulate until they overflow. Adults must create times and spaces in the day to acknowledge them and make room for their expression.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Professional Development to open and run an NSC</b> Core themes to cover</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to the developmental approach (maturation, emotion, vulnerability, attachment)</li> <li>▪ CEBM Pyramid of Interventions (Tier 1 universal practices, Tier 2 targeted practices, Tier 3 individualized practices)</li> <li>▪ NSC mandate and philosophy; NSC Tech roles and responsibilities; maximizing the NSC space; procedures; documentation; tools, resources and materials; etc.</li> <li>▪ Nature of emotions; nurturing emotional health and growth; role of play and emotional playgrounds; etc.</li> <li>▪ Frustration/Aggression</li> <li>▪ Trauma/Stress/Anxiety</li> <li>▪ Counterwill Instinct (opposition/resistance)</li> <li>▪ Alpha Instinct (dominance)/Bullying</li> </ul>
<p><b>Towards success and viability of an NSC</b> Fundamental elements to a sustainable a flourishing NSC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stable administration that has a clear vision and a strong leadership to help bring the core staff on board. Buy-in and consistent involvement of the members of the NSC Core Team.</li> <li>▪ Working towards staff buy-in and creating a culture of change on a macro level (e.g. CEBM Pyramid of Interventions) before imposing a space/service that staff don't understand or believe in. Having staff on board with reallocating space, personnel, and financial resources to create an NSC.</li> <li>▪ Being clear and explicit with all the school staff and the parents about the mandate and philosophy of an NSC. Ongoing two-way communication among staff who are involved with students who attend the NSC (through a One-Note, a shared drive, or a Teams folder). Creating Action Plans that include the tools, strategies, and goals within the NSC, so people understand concretely the 'why-when-what-how' of the involvement of a student in an NSC. Having the students and their parents involved in the Action Plan process to increase engagement.</li> <li>▪ Regular and consistent involvement of a Consultant/Professional that accompanies the NSC Core Team (who can also act as a connector between the school-board-CEBM) – Ideally, each school has their own assigned individual rather than assigning one person to hold this dossier board-wide (the more people speaking the same language and are on the same page, the greater the promotion and sustainability)</li> <li>▪ Ongoing training of the staff (practices that are developmentally appropriate based in the neurosciences, trauma informed, attachment friendly, and honours neurodiversity)</li> <li>▪ Shared commitment/responsibility towards the NSC (teamwork and collaboration; sharing the weight; increasing the chances of viability if staff leave/retire)</li> <li>▪ Networking and collaboration between the different NSCs within the same school board</li> </ul>