

Chapter 46

South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209— Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

1.0 MAIN POINTS

Student behavior influences the extent and quality of education received by students. Promoting positive student behaviour and addressing problem behaviour is paramount in encouraging student success and providing a safe learning environment at schools.

This chapter sets out the status of nine recommendations we first made in 2014 to improve South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209's (Division, South East Cornerstone) processes for promoting positive student behaviour.

By September 15, 2016, the Division had implemented all nine recommendations. Its schools have developed Safe and Caring School Charters. Complete documentation of decisions and steps taken to support positive student behaviour is required in all student files. Also, it has developed an escalation process to address continuing problem student behaviour. In addition, it has set clear expectations for training staff on student behaviour initiatives, and keeps records of who received such training easily accessible at schools. The Division tracks student behaviour, analyzes this information and reports results of its student-behaviour initiatives to its Board.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Education Act, 1995 (Act) sets expectations regarding student attendance and behaviours, and gives school boards powers relating to student discipline.

South East Cornerstone has 38 schools in 27 communities and an approximate enrolment of 8,200 students.¹ In our *2014 Report – Volume 2*, we concluded that, for the period of February 1, 2013 to August 31, 2014, South East Cornerstone had effective processes for promoting positive student behaviour at school except in a few identified areas.² We made nine recommendations.

To conduct this review engagement, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance*. To evaluate the Division's progress towards meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. The Division's management agreed with the criteria in the original audit. We interviewed staff, reviewed relevant documents, and visited three schools.

¹ www.cornerstonesd.ca/DivisionInformation/Pages/default.aspx (15 September 2016).

² *2014 Report – Volume 2*, Chapter 39.



3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out each recommendation including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at September 15, 2016, and the Division's actions up to that date. We found the Division had implemented all nine recommendations.

3.1 Requirements for Acceptable Student Behaviour Established

We recommended that South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209 check that its schools follow established policy requiring each school to develop a charter and communicate expectations for student behaviour. (2014 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 13, 2016)

Status – Implemented

We expected that South East Cornerstone would have processes to help schools develop and communicate school charters—school charters would outline expectations for student behaviour.

In 2015, the Division established a Safe School Committee comprised of both Division staff and school administrators. Also, it developed a template to assist schools in developing a Safe and Caring School Charter (Charter). The template sets out the required elements of a Charter. Some of the required elements include a belief statement, teaching skills for positive student behaviour intervention strategies, assessment of school climate, roles and responsibilities, and discipline procedures.

The Division expects each school:

- › To develop a Charter using the template in conjunction with its School Community Council (SCC)³
- › To review and update its Charter annually—it documented this expectation in its Continuous Improvement Plan and on its annual schedule for monthly superintendent and administrators meetings.

All eight of the schools we tested had established a Charter. Each of those Charters aligned with the Division requirements, and was approved by both the Chairperson of the school's SCC and the school administrator (Principal). Each school had posted its Charter on its website.

³ School Community Councils are comprised of elected individuals from the community and school administrators who help advance the educational objectives of their school.

3.2 Training Requirements Identified

We recommended that South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209 set training expectations for initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour (e.g., number of staff in each school required to be trained or guidance to assist in determining the appropriate number of staff to train). (2014 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 13, 2016)

Status – Implemented

We recommended that South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209 maintain records listing staff trained in initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour and make such records readily available at schools. (2014 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 13, 2016)

Status – Implemented

We expected that South East Cornerstone would set training expectations for initiatives that promote and support positive student behaviour. We also expected it would provide the training information to its schools and clearly identify which school staff were trained and in what initiatives.

We found the Division had identified training needs for teachers and administrators based on each individual's role and school needs. For example, it identified training in Quality Behavioural Solutions as key for student services counsellors; it made Violent Threat Risk Assessment training mandatory for all superintendents, administrators (i.e., principals and vice-principals) and student services counsellors and for an additional two teachers per school per year.

We saw evidence of its identification and tracking of the training. We found it gave school administrators a record of school-specific training which listed the training that teachers and administrators had received. The Division indicated it planned to provide an updated record each year.

3.3 Performance of Behaviour Initiatives Monitored

We recommended that South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209's Director of Education follow established policy that requires development of measures for assessing the performance of initiatives used to promote and support positive student behaviour. (2014 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 13, 2016)

Status – Implemented



We expected that South East Cornerstone would assess the performance of initiatives used to promote and support positive student behaviour.

By September 2015, the Division had fully implemented Review 360, a web-based behaviour management IT system. Review 360 tracks key information about student behavior. Using information entered into Review 360, the Division can identify types of behaviours that are increasing and identify methods to reduce certain incidents. For example, the Division had identified the top four behavioural incidents (e.g., disobedience, disrespect) in schools and are working with schools to reduce those types of incidents. In addition, by using information in Review 360, it assesses the success of its student-behaviour initiatives.

3.4 Action Plans Monitored

We recommended South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209 check that schools follow established policy requiring them to develop action plans, in cooperation with School Community Councils, to respond to issues identified in assessments of school culture and environment. (2014 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 13, 2016)

Status – Implemented

We expected that South East Cornerstone would monitor whether schools are developing action plans in response to the *Tell Them From Me* survey.⁴

We found that the Division superintendents have an annual schedule setting out items they discuss each month with school administrators. The schedule includes discussions about the *Tell Them From Me* survey results and resulting action plans. We found schools were developing action plans in conjunction with their SCCs, and they posted these action plans on school bulletin boards.

3.5 Documentation and Communication Completed

We recommended that South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209 require consistent documentation in the student file (student cumulative record) of the decisions and steps taken to support positive student behaviour. (2014 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 13, 2016)

Status – Implemented

We expected that South East Cornerstone would require consistent student file documentation to support decisions and actions taken to support positive student behavior.

⁴ Students in grades 4-12 complete the *Tell Them From Me* survey; the survey asks questions about how they perceive the school climate (e.g., safety, bullying).

We found that the Division implemented a Cumulative Record Log. The Log, a checklist, lists what to include in each student's file (e.g., report cards, support plans, parent consent forms) and what to keep in a file (e.g., report cards, support plans). The Division expects teachers to complete the checklist at the beginning and end of the school year (i.e., September/June).

We found all 15 of the files we reviewed had completed Cumulative Record Logs as expected.

We recommended that South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209 implement and communicate a consistent escalation process for addressing continuing problem behaviour. (2014 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 13, 2016)

Status – Implemented

We expected that South East Cornerstone would implement and communicate a consistent process for how to correctly address escalating instances of problem behavior.

The Division held a continuous improvement event in the spring of 2015 to review its student intervention cycle. The event resulted in the creation of a Student Success Process (SSP). The SSP outlines steps that classroom teachers can take, and triggers for involving school or Division supports (e.g., counsellors, educational consultants).

We found the Division communicated, through a variety of methods (e.g., its intranet, and administration and board meetings), the SSP and companion documents to administrators, teachers, staff, and others.

3.6 Effectiveness of Student-Behaviour Actions Monitored

We recommended that South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209 follow its established policy to analyze information on student behaviour and monitor related trends. (2014 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 13, 2016)

Status – Implemented

We expected the Division to follow its policy to analyze and monitor student behaviour trends.

As discussed in **Section 3.3**, the Division has implemented Review 360 and is analyzing information on student behavior to identify and monitor trends.



We recommended that South East Cornerstone School Division No. 209 follow its established policy to track and report to its Board of Education on the performance of its initiatives to promote positive student behaviour. (2014 Report – Volume 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 13, 2016)

Status – Implemented

We expected the Division to track and report to the Board on the success of initiatives to promote positive student behaviour.

The Division has implemented a process with its Board to discuss the Division's performance including the performance of its student behaviour initiatives. It posts Division data reports on the walls in the Division office and management discusses this information with its Board at least three times per year.

We noted reports include information about students' sense of belonging, student-teacher relations, and student anxiety levels.