

INFORMATION LETTER

 **Partnering for Change**

Dear Parents / Guardians:

We want you to know about the model of service delivery that our school is receiving in partnership with the Central West Local Health Integration Network (CW LHIN). This model was developed and studied by CanChild, a research centre at McMaster University. This model provides educational opportunities for our teachers. Teachers will learn more about how children develop motor skills and how they can help promote motor development using activities in the classroom. An occupational therapist (OT) will work in our school to help teachers learn more about motor development in all children and about how to help children who may be having difficulty with some motor skills.

OTs are health professionals who work with children in many different settings and have expertise in the areas of fine motor (e.g. printing and writing, cutting with scissors, opening juice boxes, and doing up zippers, assistive technology for written productivity, organizational skills in the classroom), gross motor (e.g. jumping, climbing stairs, running), and sensory regulation (calming/alerting strategies, self-regulation, and sensory processing skills to help with classroom participation, etc.) skill development.

Starting in September, the OT will be in our school one day every two weeks. The OT will be a part of our school team and will spend time in our classrooms, gym, and playground. The OT will collaborate with teachers to provide support to groups of students in the classroom setting and develop general goals such as sensory processing skills, fine motor development (like printing,) or gross motor development (like ball skills). Group supports do not require informed consent as these groups will work on general goals and provide general recommendations.

If a student requires more individualized support, the school OT may work with students on an individual basis. In this case, you will be contacted by a member of the school team. The school OT will contact you afterward, as informed consent from parents/guardians is required for one-on-one services. Educational sessions will be offered for parents as well – watch our school newsletter for details

We hope that you will introduce yourself to the OT when you are in the school to attend a parent function or to visit your child's classroom. If you have concerns about your child’s ability to do motor-based activities at home, feel free to let her know. If you have any questions about this service, please feel free to talk with your child’s principal.