



Wolf Creek Public Schools

Creating Success For All Learners

PROTOCOLS

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER /
FAMILY SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM

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School Social Work / Family Liaison Protocols



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1.0 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The *School Social Work/Family School Liaison Program* provides short term supportive assistance to students and their guardians who are experiencing difficulties and require support at school, home and/or in the community.

The *School Social Work/Family School Liaison Program* is available free of charge to students 0-19 years of age who are living within Wolf Creek School Division No. 72 and attending Wolf Creek Public Schools.

School Social Workers and Family School Liaison Workers do not perform assessments or provide advice regarding custody matters or legal issues nor do they provide services to members of the public outside the restricted categories of persons referred to above.

2.0 INCOMING REFERRALS

Prior to School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers accepting a referral from any of the sources listed below, they will first determine the appropriateness of the incoming referral and if the need(s) of the student and/or their guardian(s) are best met through the mandate of the program.

Referrals to the *School Social Work/Family School Liaison Program* can be made by:

- Parents and/or guardians;
- School educational staff;
- Self-referrals;
- Peers

Referrals originating from school educational staff must be directed to and coordinated through the student's primary teacher or if no teacher is the primary teacher through the school principal or designate.

Referrals stemming from a community agency, a concerned citizen and/or the extended family member of a student, a guardian(s) and/or their family will not be accepted. Such referrals will be re-directed and coordinated through the student's guardian(s) and/or if necessary, directed to and reported to the appropriate service provider.

2.1 Outgoing Referrals

In the event that the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker, their supervisor (Director of Safe and Caring Schools) and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services determine that a student and/or their immediate family's difficulties are beyond their level of comfort and/or practice, the needs of the student and/or their immediate family extend beyond the mandate of the program, or that a conflict of interest exists, the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will recommend alternate community resources and/or supports.

3.0 INFORMED CONSENT

Obtaining informed consent requires disclosure about the limits of service that the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker can provide, as well as the terms on which those services will be provided.

When obtaining informed consent, School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers will provide the following information to the guardian(s) and the student:

- ❖ Purpose of the *School Social Work/Family School Liaison Program*
- ❖ The role of the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker;
- ❖ Limits of confidentiality;
- ❖ Supervision purposes;
- ❖ Reporting requirements under child protection legislation;
- ❖ Legal requirement to disclose;
- ❖ Imminent danger to the child, the guardian(s), the family and/or to anyone else;
- ❖ When the student's behavior (words or actions) engages the implementation of the Threat Assessment Protocol of Wolf Creek Public Schools;
- ❖ When the disclosure is in the best interest of the child;
- ❖ Limitations of the program and the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker;
- ❖ Ability to revoke consent to release information, however; such revocation will not prevent disclosure in accordance with any legal duty or obligation of the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker;
- ❖ Ability to withdraw (in writing) from service at any time;
- ❖ Possible benefits and risks to involvement in the program.

Before providing professional services to the student, it is the professional responsibility of the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker to obtain informed consent from a guardian and/or student in cases where the student can consent himself or herself.

Consent is effective from August to August.

3.1 Students

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are required to obtain written informed consent (Appendix A) from a guardian prior to providing any services to a student under 16 years of age, however; it would not be deemed unreasonable to meet with a student once without informed consent from the guardian, at the request of the student, their guardian(s) and/or school administration, to determine if the student would benefit from the *School Social Work/Family School Liaison Program*.

Students age sixteen and over are permitted to consent to their own involvement in the *School Social Work/Family School Liaison Program*.

Regardless of age, students who are parenting are also permitted to consent to their own involvement with the *School Social Work/Family School Liaison Program*.

3.2 Guardians

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are required to obtain written informed consent from any guardian(s) they directly provide services to.

Services provided to guardian(s) must align with the program mandate and be student centered (ie: parenting strategies, information and referral, etc.).

3.3 Group Work

Prior to a student receiving services, including the participation in group activities (friendship club, peer mediation, leadership group, etc.) and/or group counseling (anger management, social skills, school success skills, etc.) facilitated by the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker, a guardian, in the case of student under 16 years of age, and the student if 16 years of age or older, must first provide informed consent (Appendix A).

3.4 Classroom Work

Classroom programs and presentations facilitated by the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker do not require consent from the student's guardian(s). Teachers, however, should remain in the classroom at all times.

3.5 Termination of Services

The *School Social Work/Family School Liaison Program* is a voluntary service that may be terminated at any time by the student, the guardian, and/or by the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker.

Persons receiving services wishing to terminate services must do so in writing and deliver it to the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker.

In the event that services have been terminated by the student or the guardian(s), the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will obtain a new informed consent prior to the provision of further services.

4.0 CASE MANAGEMENT

School Social Workers and Family School Liaison Workers have a professional responsibility to maintain concise and accurate records of the students and their guardian who they are working with. Language should be straightforward and differentiate between opinion and informed judgments.

The purpose of this documentation is to:

- ❖ Assist in continuity of services;
- ❖ To record referrals and contacts with other individuals;
- ❖ Provide a tool for supervision;
- ❖ Provide evidence for investigations and enquiries;
- ❖ Provide a basis for statistical work.

4.1 File Requirements

Student and their guardian(s) files are required to contain the following information:

- ❖ Consent to receive services (Appendix A);
- ❖ Release of Information, if applicable (Appendix B);
- ❖ Any correspondence or reports generated and/or received;
- ❖ Contact Notes;
- ❖ Identifying information of the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers have the professional responsibility for ensuring their documentation practices are kept current on a daily basis.

4.2 File Storage

All student and/or guardian(s) files must be stored and managed using WCPS digital file storage. All original consent to receive service forms, as well as consent to release information forms must be kept in their original form and stored in the School Social Worker's or Family School Liaison Worker's office in their school in a locked filing cabinet.

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are responsible for ensuring that all information (aside from consents, as noted above) being scanned into WCPS digital file storage is accounted for prior to destroying any hard copies.

Student files will be kept in accordance with Wolf Creek Public School policy for a period of 26 years after the student's date of birth. After this period, the student's file will be destroyed.

Guardian files will be kept for ten years upon the termination of services. After this period, the files will be destroyed.

Student and/or guardian files are the property of Wolf Creek Public Schools. School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are responsible for the security of individual files.

4.3. File Access

Only School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers, their supervisor (Director of Safe and Caring Schools), and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services are authorized to access a student or guardian file. School Administration and school staff are not permitted to access this information.

Student files will be reviewed randomly by the supervisor (Director of Safe and Caring Schools) and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services.

Any information collected in regard to a student, guardian or immediate family member is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP).

5.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are permitted to consult with other professionals within Wolf Creek Public Schools (ie: principals, teachers, educational assistants, or other School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers, etc.) about a student, a guardian and/or family's situation, only on a need-to-know basis, and only when in the best interest of the student, the guardian and/or their family.

5.1 Limits of Confidentiality

Students and/or their guardians who are receiving services may seek to put additional limits on the limits of confidentiality, but such limits must be done in writing and delivered to the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker.

In the event that the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker is of the opinion that such limitations adversely affect his or her ability to provide services, the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker may choose to discontinue service after consulting with their supervisor (Director of Safe and Caring Schools) and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services.

6.0 RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Subject to any legal duty to disclose, prior to sharing information outside of Wolf Creek Public Schools, the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker must first obtain a signed "Release of Information (ROI)" form (**Appendix B**) from the guardian and/or the student if age 16 and over or if parenting themselves.

7.0 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 Guardian

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers may be requested by the guardian(s) of a student to provide a detailed account of their involvement with their child(ren). Prior to releasing such information to a guardian(s), the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker must first consult with their supervisor (Director of Safe and Caring Schools) and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services.

Upon consulting with the Director of Safe and Caring Schools and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services, and with the agreement of the Director of Safe and Caring Schools and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services, the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will provide the following information:

- ❖ Dates of consultations;
- ❖ General focus of meetings.

Should the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker be approached by a guardian(s) in regard to a custody matter, the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will clearly indicate to the guardian(s) that this is not the role of the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker.

7.2 Requests for Letters of Supports

On occasion, School Social Workers and Family School Wellness Workers are asked to write a letter of support on behalf of a guardian or student for a variety of reasons. School Social Workers and Family School Liaison Workers shall not provide opinions or letters of support. Should a request for a letter of support be made of a School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker, he/she will inform those requesting the letter that this is not the role of the School Social Worker or the Family School Liaison Worker. The School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will refer such requests to the Director of Safe and Caring Schools or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services.

7.3 Lawyer

Any correspondence with a lawyer acting on behalf of a student, a guardian and/or an immediate family member request information, the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will not release any information. The School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will direct these calls to their supervisor (Director of Safe and Caring Schools) or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services.

7.4 Police

Any correspondence with police for any information in regards to a student, a guardian and/or an immediate family member, the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will not release any information. The School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will direct these calls to the School Administrator, the Director of Safe and Caring Schools or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services. The School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will notify the Director of Safe and Caring Schools of these requests.

7.5 Subpoena

Upon being subpoenaed, the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will immediately notify the Director of Safe and Caring Schools and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services, as well as his or her school administrator.

If a student's file and/or the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker is subpoenaed to court, the School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker will comply with this request subject to confirmation to do so from the Director of Safe and Caring Schools and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services. Any information released will be provided only to the court and only after consultation with the Director of Safe and Caring Schools and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services.

7.6 Child Protection

Child protection workers (Children's Services - CS) may wish to interview school personnel who have regular contact with a student and/or have specific information pertinent to an investigation. School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are obligated to cooperate with the child protection workers in the course of an investigation and to act in the best interests of the student.

A written record of any correspondence with CS, including the identity of the child protection worker, should be kept and scanned into the SSW/FSLW files in docushare or recorded directly into SSW/FSLW casenotes.

8.0 CHILD PROTECTION

It is mandatory for all school personnel, School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers included, to report every situation where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a student has been, or there is substantial risk that he or she will be abused or neglected and is in need of intervention.

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers will notify their school administrator when a report has been made to Children's Services (CS).

A disclosure made by a student that may cause a report to CS will be recorded in the student's own words. The information recorded in the file will include observed facts, such as the student's behavior, actions, comments, as well as any additional individuals present at the time. School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers will not interview the student after receiving the initial disclosure and/or report.

When reporting concerns of abuse and/or neglect, the School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Worker shall provide as much of the following information as has been provided to him or her:

- ❖ The student's name;
- ❖ The student's date of birth;
- ❖ The student's address and phone number;
- ❖ Name and address of alleged perpetrator(s);
- ❖ When/where the alleged incident or disclosure took place;
- ❖ Description of indicators;
- ❖ Additional concerns or information.

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers will not notify the guardian(s) about the referral to Children's Services and/or the pending investigation. They can, however, clarify with the Children's Services investigator when contact with the parents may be made.

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers will, whenever possible, encourage the person bringing forth the concern of a student, their guardian(s) and/or their immediate family members to be the one ensuring that the proper authorities are notified. The obligation to report is not discharged until the individual has reported directly to Children's Services.

9.0 PRACTICUM STUDENTS

Should a School Social Worker or Family School Liaison Worker choose to have a practicum student, he or she must first receive approval from the Director of Safe and Caring Schools and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services, as well as his or her school administrator.

Practicum students must provide a satisfactory Police and Child Intervention Criminal Welfare Check, as well as sign an Oath of Confidentiality (Appendix D) before their practicum commences. Copies of these documents are to be forwarded to the Director of Safe and Caring Schools.

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are responsible for the direct supervision of the practicum student and must be in the same room as the practicum student at all times when he or she is working directly with students and/or guardian(s).

10.0 SSW/FSLW REQUIREMENTS

10.1 Code of Ethics

The School Social Worker and the Family School Liaison Worker is required to follow the professional code of ethics, as outlined by the professional regulatory body of which he or she is a member.

School Social Workers are to be a registered social worker with the Alberta College of Social Workers. Family School Liaison Workers who are not registered with a professional regulatory body are required to register with the Alberta Association of Family School Liaison Workers and adhere to their code of ethics.

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are required to submit proof of their registration to the Director of Safe and Caring Schools at the beginning of each school year or upon renewal if different then the beginning of the school year.

10.2 Training

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are required to have the following training:

- ❖ Level 1 Threat and Risk Assessment;
- ❖ Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

10.3 Required Documentation

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are required to submit the following documentation upon hiring:

- ❖ Child Intervention Welfare Check
- ❖ Criminal Record Check
- ❖ Professional Registration

10.4 Supervision

School Social Workers and Family School Liaison Workers will have ongoing administrative and clinical supervision with the Director of Safe and Caring Schools. School Social Workers and Family School Liaison Workers are to consult with the Director of Safe and Caring Schools on a regular basis and as needed.

11.0 TRANSPORTING CLIENTS

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers who transport students, guardians and/or their families are required to have a minimum of two million dollars liability insurance.

Proof of above is to be submitted to the School Administration prior to transporting students, guardians and/or their families. This proof is to be submitted on a regular basis when insurance renews to ensure up-to-date information is on file.

12.0 HOME VISITS

School Social Workers and Family School Liaison Workers will meet with students and/or their families in the school setting or a public setting where others are present. School Social Workers and Family School Liaison Workers will not visit students and/or their families in private homes.

13.0 THREAT ASSESSMENTS

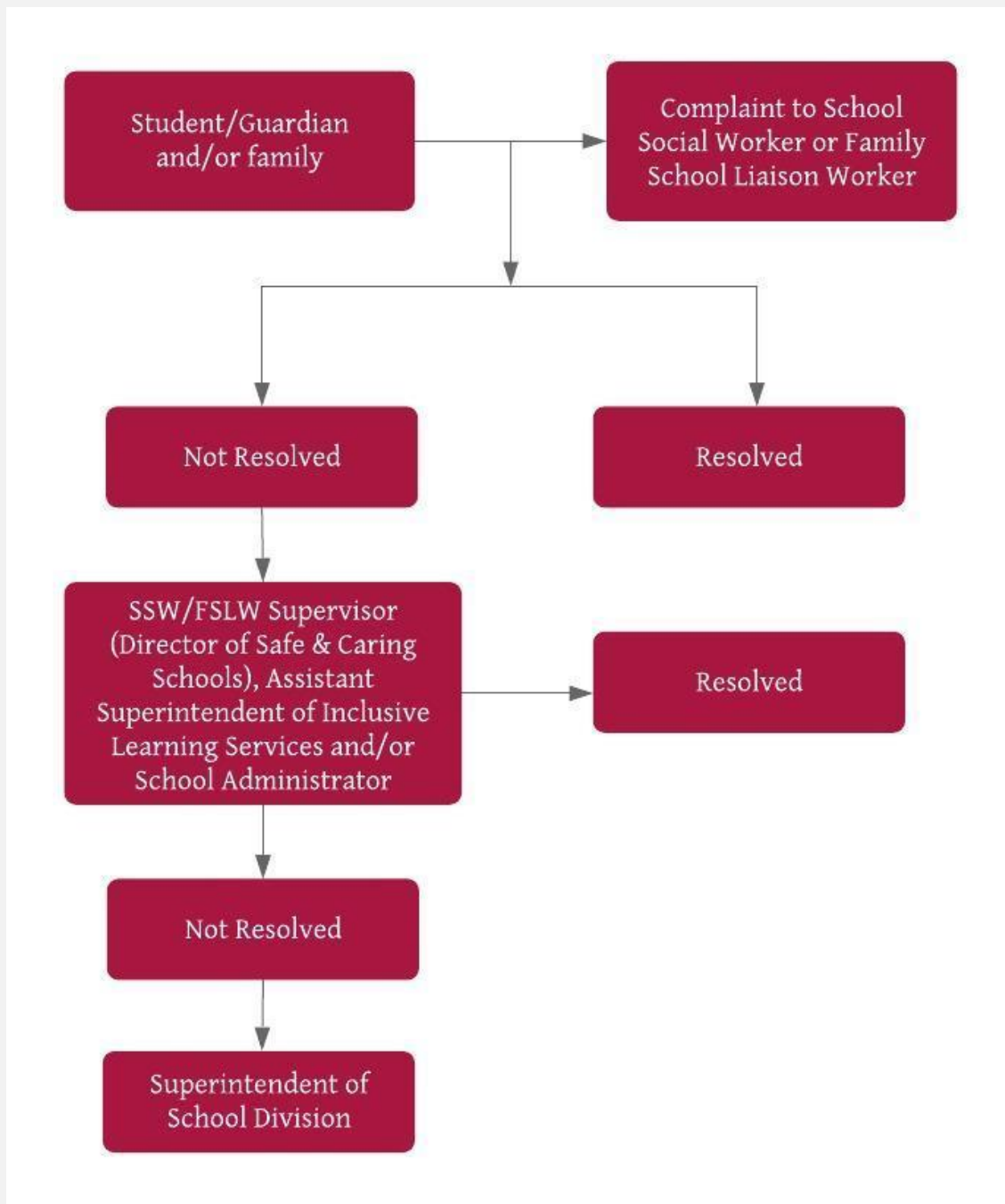
School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers who become aware of a crisis situation (eg. death of a student) will notify the Director of Safe and Caring Schools and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services, upon immediate notification of the incident.

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers who are involved in consulting about and/or conducting a threat and risk assessment will notify the Director of Safe and Caring Schools and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning Services upon immediate notification of the incident.

14.0 SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers are strongly discouraged from engaging with past and present students, guardians and/or their immediate families using such social connections as Facebook, Twitter, Nexopia, etc. School Social Workers or Family School Liaison Workers shall not post any Division photographs or information on any social media.

15.0 CONFLICT RESOLUTION



16.0 CRISIS RESPONSE

Wolf Creek Public Schools acknowledges schools may become profoundly affected when a tragic death occurs to a student or staff member. To offset the initial reaction of shock, a concrete plan of action is essential. The major guiding principle is to return to normal routines as soon as possible within the school. The WCPS Crisis and Trauma Response Manual sets out the guiding process for such cases and events and should be followed unless circumstances make it impossible or unreasonable.

APPENDICES

Appendix A



SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK/ FAMILY SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM

CONSENT TO RECEIVE SERVICES

From the School Social Worker (SSW) or the Family School Liaison Worker (FSLW)

Student Name

Date of Birth

DD

MM

YY

I, _____, hereby consent to
Name of Legal Guardian (or student aged 16 and over)

- My Child (student legal name stated above)
- Myself (student legal name stated above)

To receive services:

- Individual
- Group *Note: I understand that my child (or myself if student age 16 and over) will participate with peers who may also be experiencing difficulties of a similar nature. Although the importance of confidentiality amongst participants will be expected, the nature of the group work does not guarantee this.*
- Electronically *Note: This is **only available** in the event schools are closed due to an emergency or pandemic where remote service is required. This would consist of Google Meets; phone conversations and WCPS emails.*

I am aware that there are certain limitations to confidentiality, and they include:

- ❖ Supervision purposes
- ❖ Reporting requirements under child protection legislations;
- ❖ Legal requirement to disclose
- ❖ Imminent danger to the child, the guardian(s), the family and/or anyone else;
- ❖ When the student's behaviour (words or actions) engages the implementation of the Threat Assessment protocol of Wolf Creek Public Schools;
- ❖ The disclosure is in the best interest of the student

In additions, I also provide consent for the SSW or FSLW to consult with other professionals in the school district regarding myself, my child/or families' situation on a need-to-know basis and only when in the best interest of myself, my child and/or my family. I understand that I may put limitation on this contract and will do so in writing and deliver it to the SSW or FSLW.

Consent is valid from August 31st of one calendar year to August 30th of the next calendar year, unless revoked in writing by the undersigned.

Legal Guardian's Signature

Date

DD

MM

YY

**The person signing this form and consenting to this service must be the legal guardian of the child, as defined in the Family Law Act. In most cases, this will be the parent of the child, but the SSW/FSLW will take reasonable steps to determine who the guardian(s) of the child is/are.*

Appendix B



SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK/ FAMILY SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM

RELEASE OF INFORMATION (ROI) AUTHORIZATION

Student Name

Date of Birth

DD

MM

YY

I, _____, being the legal guardian of the student stated above, hereby give permission for the School Social Worker/Family School Liaison Supervisor (Director), School Social Worker (SSW) or Family School Liaison Worker (FSLW) to release and/or receive information about:

- My Child (student legal name stated above)
- Myself (student legal name stated above)

To:

Name of Agency and/or Individual: _____

for the purpose of: _____

Consent is valid from August 31 of one calendar year to August 30 of the next calendar year, unless revoked in writing by the undersigned.

Legal Guardian's Signature

Date

*The person signing this form and consenting to this service must be the legal guardian of the child, as defined in the Family Law Act. In most cases, this will be the parent of the child, but the SSW/FSLW will take reasonable steps to determine who the guardian(s) of the child is/are.

Appendix C



**SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK/
FAMILY SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM**

OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I, _____, do agree that I will execute, to the best of my ability, my duties as a School Social Worker (SSW) or Family School Liaison Worker (FSLW), and I will not, without due authorization and in accordance with my professional code of ethics, and the policies and procedures of Wolf Creek School Division No. 72 disclose or make known any matter or thing which comes to my knowledge by reason of my involvement with the Wolf Creek School Division.

Signature of Social Worker / Family Liaison Worker

Date

DD

MM

YY

Appendix D



SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK/ FAMILY SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM

PROTOCOL AGREEMENT

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the School Social Work/Family School Liaison Protocols (the Protocols). I agree to fully observe and abide by the Protocols during the course of my employment.

Further, I understand that the Protocols may be amended, altered or replaced from time to time and that I shall make myself familiar with such amendments, alterations or replacements and will fully observe and abide by such amendments, alterations or replacements of the Protocols at all times during my employment. I understand that observing the Protocols and any amendments, alterations or replacements is a fundamental term of my employment.

Signature of Social Worker / Family Liaison Worker

Date

DD

MM

YY