

## **Background**

Students within the division have a wide range of skills and abilities and must be provided with educational programs that take these into consideration. The provision of educational services to students with special needs, including gifted and educationally challenged, will be in accordance with these procedures, the *School Act*, the Alberta Education Special Education Policy 1.6.2 and in keeping with Ministerial Order: Standards for Special Education (June 2004).

## **Procedures**

### **1. Access**

- 1.1 Any student suspected of having special education needs must be identified as early as possible using a variety of observations and assessments by classroom teachers, classroom support teachers, counsellors or other divisional personnel.
- 1.2 When required, specialized assessments will be administered in a timely manner by qualified professionals who will interpret the results and provide recommendations for programming to the learning team including parent(s), and where appropriate, the student.
- 1.3 Written informed consent of the parent(s) is required for referral and specialized assessment.
- 1.4 If the parent(s) refuse(s) consent, reason for refusal must be documented and signed by the parent(s).
- 1.5 Persons administering specialized assessments will be qualified to administer Level C tests as outlined in *Standards for Psycho-Educational Assessment*. Results of such assessments should be relayed to the parent(s) and will be used to plan a modified or adapted program.
- 1.6 The parent(s) may access information contained in the Student Record including results of specialized assessments in accordance with the *Student Record Regulation*.



- 1.7 In order to provide the best program, services from other community agencies including health will be coordinated and information exchanged with the written informed consent of the parent(s).
- 1.8 Health-related support services will be administered by staff with the appropriate training.

## **2. Appropriateness**

- 2.1 The first placement option for the student with special education needs shall be in an inclusive regular classroom in consultation with parent(s), school staff and, where appropriate, the student.
- 2.2 Parents have the right and responsibility to collaborate with the school to ensure that their child's education needs are met, subject to limitations of resources and based on reasonableness in accordance with Section 2 of the School Act.
- 2.3 The practice of teachers of students with special education needs will be in keeping with the *Teaching Quality Standard* demonstrating the knowledge, skills and attributes to accommodate individual differences and to adjust practices as necessary.
- 2.4 Teachers of students with special education needs must have access to relevant resources and professional development opportunities.
- 2.5 For each student with special education needs the Principal must ensure that an Individual Program Plan (IPP) is developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated in each school year.
- 2.6 IPP's will be developed using a team approach involving the learning team including parent(s) and, where appropriate, the student.
- 2.7 An Individual Program Plan (IPP) is a plan of actions to address the special education needs of the student based on diagnostic information and must include:
  - 2.7.1 demographic information;
  - 2.7.2 list of the learning team members
  - 2.7.3 current assessment data;
  - 2.7.4 current level of performance and achievement;
  - 2.7.5 identification of strengths and areas of needs;

- 2.7.6 identification of coordinated support services (including health-related) if required;
  - 2.7.7 relevant medical information;
  - 2.7.8 required classroom accommodations – instructional strategies; resources; materials; facilities; equipment;
  - 2.7.9 measurable goals and objectives;
  - 2.7.10 procedures for evaluating progress towards the goals;
  - 2.7.11 transition plans to enable the student to prepare for the next level of education or community involvement;
  - 2.7.12 review dates;
  - 2.7.13 year-end summary;
  - 2.7.14 signatures of the learning team including parent(s) and, where appropriate, the student.
  - 2.7.15 a parental signature.
- 2.8 The IPP is a working document subject to ongoing change and review. Formal review shall be completed mid-year and at year-end with the learning team including parent(s) and, where appropriate, the student.
- 2.9 The IPP is part of the Student Record and must comply with the *Student Record Regulation and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* legislation.

### **3. Accountability**

- 3.1 The parent(s) will regularly receive information regarding the progress of the child with special education needs.
- 3.2 Programs for the student with special education needs will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis for effectiveness and continuous improvement. Appropriate changes will be made to programming as needed to ensure the quality of learning opportunities.
- 3.4 The student with special education needs will be given the opportunity to complete Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams with the appropriate accommodations.

- 3.5 The Superintendent has the responsibility of determining whether the student with special education needs can be excused from writing a Provincial Achievement Test based on the conditions outlined in the *General Information Bulletin – Achievement Test*. The parent(s) must give informed written consent for such exemptions.

#### **4. Appeals**

- 4.1 In the case of a disagreement about the education of a student with special education needs, every effort will be made at the school and jurisdiction levels to resolve the issue collaboratively with the parent(s) in keeping with the *Policy 14 Special Education Placement Appeals*.
- 4.2 The parent(s) will be advised of their right to make a formal appeal regarding the decisions made by division personnel about the education of their child with special education needs to
- 4.2.1 The Local School Board Committee if the committee has accepted the responsibility,
- 4.2.2. The Northland Board, if the Local School Board Committee has not chosen to accept this.
- 4.3 The parent(s) will be advised of their right to request that the Minister of Education review the decision of the Board if they are not satisfied.

#### **References**

Legal Reference: Alberta School Act: Sections 8; 23; 45; 47; 48; 123; 124  
Alberta Education Special Education Policy 1.6.2  
Ministerial Order Standards for Special Education (June 2004)  
Standards for Psycho-Educational Assessment;  
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act – 2004  
FOIPP Regulation - A.R. 200/95