

Special Education

The Board of Education is committed to providing an educational program for all school age students in the district and recognizes that many students have special learning needs. The Board is also committed to equitable access to educational programs for all students and believes in the inclusion of all learners.

Accordingly, all students will be offered opportunities appropriate to their individual needs, consistent with the *Ministry of Education's Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for Special Education*.

Meeting the Educational Needs of All Children

British Columbians want an education system which reflects their belief that all students are unique, all students are to be valued, and all students can learn. Based on this belief, and the growing recognition that we cannot afford, either socially or economically, to leave untapped the potential of anyone, British Columbia has been moving toward an inclusive education system in which students with special needs are fully participating members of a community of learners.

Guiding Principles

- Student needs are best met when there is open and collaborative consultation between home and school. Parents are valued partners and their participation in their child's education is necessary to provide optimum conditions for success.
- The inclusion of all learners refers to their participation in the broader school community. For individual students this may take a variety of education forms or locations.

Planning

- Planning education programs for students with special needs should begin in school classrooms. Planning is conducted by teachers, parents, school-based teams or school administration, and/or students.
- Assessment practices should be designed to ensure timely identification by personnel trained in the assessment of specific special needs. Assessment results should be used in educational planning activities.
- Teachers whose classrooms include students with special need should have timely access to support, such as school-based teams.
- Students identified as having special needs must have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) which will outline specific goals appropriate for the student and their diagnosed disability.
- The IEPs should be implemented, reviewed and updated at least annually.
- IEPs:
 - Are written records of planning conducted by students, parents/guardians, school personnel and other service providers.
 - Provide coherent, short-term and long-range plans for student learning and service needs.
 - Provide administrators with evidence of individualized planning.
 - Are useful tools in planning the transition of students with special needs from one setting to another.
 - Help in determining how well students are meeting their goals, and form the basis of reporting students' progress.
- IEPs must outline:
 - The present levels of educational performance of the student.

- The learning outcomes set for that student for that school year where the learning outcomes are different from the learning outcomes set out in the applicable educational program guide.
 - All the required adaptations to educational materials, and instructional and assessment methods.
 - The support services to be provided.
 - The names of all personnel who will be providing the educational program and the support services for the student during the school year; and
 - The period of time and process for review of the IEP.
- Teachers and parents should be partners in their development for IEPs to be effective. Parents must be given the opportunity to participate in the planning process. To the extent that they are able, students should also participate. All of the participants who develop the plans should have access to them, within the provisions of the School Act and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Accountability

- The school district is accountable for expenditures in special education. The school district will monitor and periodically review services and identification practices to ensure best practice and in order to comply with the Ministry of Education's expectations for financial and program accountability.
- In reporting to parents, the report for all students with special needs will indicate that their progress is measured against the goals of their IEP.

Date Adopted: June 2000

Definition:

- *Students with Special Learning Needs have disabilities of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, or have a learning disability or have exceptional gifts or talents learners.*¹

¹ Special Education Policy #95-09, K-12 Policy Manual for B.C. Schools