

Purpose/Background

The Division supports the concept of providing educational programs for students with special needs in their community school with age appropriate peers when possible, with the required support to enable these students to achieve success. These programs and services must meet the Alberta Education standards in the areas of access, appropriateness, accountability and appeals as outlined in the Standards for Special Education.

While recognizing and respecting the rights of all students, the first programming option considered by Division personnel, in consultation with the parents/guardians of students with special needs, will be the regular classroom. Other programming options shall be considered whenever necessary by taking into consideration the needs of all students. Parents must fulfill their responsibilities and have informed choice and meaningful participation in decisions about programming.

When possible, the Division will establish and maintain programs and support services to address the needs of those who qualify for and receive special education, subject to the limitation of reasonableness in the School Act. When it is not otherwise possible to offer a required special education program or service within the Division, the Superintendent will attempt to make appropriate placements of special education students in programs outside the Division.

Procedures

1. The educational needs of the student are the basis for the determination of program.
2. A regular classroom will be considered as the first programming option for students with special needs.
3. The Principal shall ensure that the program complies with the Standards for Special Education and other Alberta Education policies and requirements as well as procedures outlined in the Division Student Services Handbook. (Learning Support Services)
4. The Principal will ensure special education programming is based on Individualized Program Plans (IPP) that are designed to meet the needs of identified students. The Principal will inform parents about all aspects of special education programs and obtain informed written consent of the parent for referrals, specialized assessments and the IPP. In cases where the parent refuses consent, the Principal will document this action, including any reasons for refusal and/or the actions undertaken by the Principal to obtain consent, and place the documentation in the student record.
5. School personnel will collaborate in the delivery of services to students with other community providers to improve access and efficiency of services for students with special needs.
6. Personnel engaged in assessment will meet the qualification and competency requirements as outlined in the Standards for Psycho-Educational Assessment (Alberta Education).
7. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the parents have been advised and informed of the procedures and processes for special needs programming. This includes their right to appeal administrative decisions that significantly affect the education of their child to the Board under section 123 of the School Act; and their right to request the Minister to review the Board's decision in those areas listed under section 124 of the School Act.

Reference:

- School Act Sections 8, 18, 20, 23, 45, 47, 48, 60, 61, 62, 96, 113, 123, 124, and 125
- Student Record Regulation 225/2006
- Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12
- Standards for Special Education
- Standards for the Provision of Early Childhood Special Education