

LEARNING SERVICES – PHILOSOPHY & AIMS

Background

The District acknowledges that it has a responsibility to establish direction for Learning Services which is consistent with provincial legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines. School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) policies and procedures are intended to direct present programs and services, as well as to guide future developments, for all students.

The District recognizes that all students are unique and, as such, have needs which may be different. We welcome diversity and recognize that some students require more support than others. All students are entitled to appropriate programs, learning materials and methods of teaching. The District believes it must seek to ensure that equity is established so that all students have the opportunity to reach their individual potential.

Furthermore, the District believes that:

- Learning Services is an integral part of the education program within our District;
- services and programs in Learning Services are clearly defined to enhance accountability;
- supportive and accepting learning environments enhance students' abilities and self-concept so that students are able to be successful academically and socially;
- teaching methodologies are developed by professional staff to best implement broad-based recommendations for a student's educational program;
- ongoing working relationships with parents and community agencies are essential to ensure a cooperative and coordinated approach to services and programs for students; and
- the education community is responsible for promoting awareness of the diversity of students and the need to accommodate their wide range of individual differences.

Learning Services includes staff development, counselling, English Language Learners (ELL) and inclusive education.

Procedures

1. General

- 1.1 The District will follow the guidelines of the interministerial protocols by participating in:
 - 1.1.1 local interministerial committees designed to provide coordinated services for children and youth; and
 - 1.1.2 community-level planning with other agencies.
- 1.2 Schools
 - 1.2.1 All schools shall have a school-based team. This team has a formal role and supports classroom teachers in developing and implementing instructional and/or management strategies. Examples of school-based team functions include:
 - sharing information
 - monitoring progress, regularly

- problem-solving
- planning
- providing learning materials
- maintaining accurate records
- making recommendations
- assigning a case manager

1.2.2 Depending on the student's needs, the core members of the school based team usually include:

- classroom teacher(s)
- learning support teacher(s)
- counsellor(s)
- Principal and/or Vice-Principal

1.2.3 Prior to a student's referral to the School Based Team, teachers will meet and discuss concerns with relevant professional staff. All significant classroom interventions are to be recorded and form the basis of referral.

1.2.4 Parents/guardians will be informed and may choose to participate at school-based team meetings at which decisions regarding their child's educational program may be made. Students may be invited as appropriate. District learning services teachers, school-based support staff, community or interministerial personnel are invited to attend when required and as needed.

1.3 The District will provide a coordinated system of record keeping pertaining to students with adequate safeguards for confidentiality. These records will be consistent with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Parent/guardian consent is required for release of information to third parties, except as required by law.

1.4 The District will provide professional development opportunities for all classroom teachers and learning support staff through in-district courses, in-services, consultations, visitations by appropriate District personnel, professional literature and resource libraries.

2. Counselling

2.1 School counselling services for students are available in all schools in areas which facilitate the educational process and progress of students.

2.2 The focus of counsellors' time will be one-to-one or small group counselling, career and educational planning, teaching or facilitating preventative programs, and consultation with teachers and parents.

3. English Language Learners

3.1 English Language Learners support services are provided to students whose first language is not English. The English Language Learners program is provided for students who require formal English Language Learners instruction in order to participate and progress within the regular educational program.

3.2 The English Language Learners program provides an awareness and understanding of Canadian culture within our multicultural mosaic.

3.3 An annual instructional plan shall be developed for each student receiving direct service.

4. Inclusive Education

4.1 The District provides a full range of services and programs which accommodate the strengths and needs of all students with disabilities and diverse abilities, including:

4.1.1 services to students which reflect the Ministry and District commitment to the philosophy of inclusion and the practice of integration; and

4.1.2 a continuum of programs and services in a variety of settings.

4.2 District screening committees will review referrals for District programs to determine appropriateness of the program for the student and to ensure a degree of consistency.

- 4.3 Students who demonstrate learning difficulties and/or acceleration in their learning, as determined by classroom teachers and parents, will have access to assessment and intervention.
- 4.4 Individual Education Plans
 - 4.4.1 An Individual Education Plan must be developed for each student with disabilities and diverse abilities who requires adaptations and/or modifications.
 - 4.4.2 Parents/guardians will be consulted in planning their child's Individual Education Plan. School personnel must inform parents/guardians and explain the implications of curriculum changes as they affect graduation requirements.
 - 4.4.3 Students who have been identified as requiring an Individual Education Plan shall have a plan developed. All Individual Education Plans shall be reviewed on an ongoing basis with teachers and parents, and students, as appropriate.
- 4.5 The District will facilitate the resources and time to support appropriate transition planning for students with disabilities and diverse abilities within the District. For students entering and exiting the District every effort will be made to ensure transition planning.
- 4.6 The District will support the development of specialized materials and provide technologies, within available resources, for students with disabilities and diverse abilities according to the individual education plan.

5. Appeal Process

- 5.1 All parents/guardians and students have the right to appeal, through the District appeal process, any decision which significantly affects the education of a student.

6. Glossary of Terms for – Learning Services

This Glossary of Terms is intended to provide a common language and a specific understanding of terms facilitate clear, open and considered communication between our education partners:

- 1. **Adaptations** are teaching and assessment strategies especially designed to accommodate a student's needs so they can achieve the learning outcomes of the subject or course and to demonstrate mastery of concepts. Essentially, adaptations are "best practice" in teaching. A student working on learning outcomes of any grade or course level may be supported through use of adaptations.

Adaptations do not represent unfair advantages to students. In fact, the opposite could be true. If appropriate adaptations are not used, students could be unfairly penalized for having learning differences, creating serious negative impacts to their achievement and self-concept.

- 2. **Assessment** is a systematic process of gathering information in order to make appropriate educational decisions for a student. It is a collaborative and progressive process designed to identify the student's strengths and needs, set goals, and results in the identification and implementation of selected educational strategies.
- 3. **Collaborative consultation** is a process in which people work together to solve a common problem or address a common concern. A successful collaborative process is characterized by the following features: it is voluntary; there is mutual trust and open communication among the people involved; identification/clarification of the problem to be addressed is a shared task; the goal is shared by all participants; each participant's contribution is valued equally; all participants' skills are employed in identifying and selecting problem-solving strategies; and there is shared responsibility for the program or strategy initiated.
- 4. **A guardian** of a person (in the wording of the School Act) "...when used in reference to a student or child, means guardian of the person of the student or child within the meaning of the *Family Relations Act*".

5. **Inclusion** describes the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education. The practice of inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with integration and goes beyond placement to include meaningful participation and the promotion of interaction with others.
6. **An Individual Education Plan (IEP)** is a documented plan developed for a student with disabilities or diverse abilities that describes individualized goals, adaptations, modifications, the services to be provided, and includes measures for tracking achievement.
7. **Integration** is one of the major strategies used to achieve inclusion. With integration, students with disabilities or diverse abilities are included in educational settings with their peers who do not have disabilities or diverse abilities, and provided with the necessary accommodations determined on an individual basis, to enable them to be successful there. The principle of “placement in the most enabling learning environment” applies when decisions are made about the extent to which an individual student is placed in regular classrooms, or assigned to an alternate placement.
8. **Mainstreaming** is a term which was in use during the early years of the movement toward integration of students with disabilities or diverse abilities, but which has been replaced by the term “integration” (See definition for integration above).
9. **Modifications** are instructional and assessment-related decisions made to accommodate a student’s educational needs that consist of individualized learning goals and outcomes which are different than learning outcomes of a course or subject. Modifications should be considered for those students whose disabilities or diverse abilities are such that they are unable to access the curriculum (i.e., students with limited awareness of their surroundings, students with fragile mental/physical health, students medically and cognitively/multiply challenged.) Using the strategy of modifications for students not identified as disabilities or diverse abilities should be a rare practice.
10. **A neighbourhood school** is the school that students would normally attend if they did not have disabilities or diverse abilities.
11. **Parent** (in the wording of the School Act) “...means, in respect of a student or of a child registered under section 13, a) the guardian of the person of the student or child; b) the person legally entitled to custody of the student or child; or c) the person who usually has the care and control of the student or child”.
(https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96412_00)
12. **A school-based team** is an on-going team of school-based personnel which has a formal role to play as a problem- solving unit in assisting classroom teachers to develop and implement instructional and/or management strategies and to co- ordinate support resources for students with disabilities or diverse abilities within the school.
13. **Inclusive educational needs** are those characteristics which make it necessary to provide a student undertaking an educational program with resources different from those which are needed by most students. Inclusive educational needs are identified during assessment of a student; they are the basis for determining an appropriate educational program (including necessary resources) for that student.

14. **Transition** is the passage of a student from one environment to another at key points in his or her development from childhood to adulthood.
15. **Transition planning** is the preparation, implementation and evaluation required to enable students to make major transitions during their lives - from home or pre- school to school; from class to class; from school to school; from school district to school district; and from school to post-secondary, community or work situations.

Reference: Part 1, Section 13, School Act
[Inclusive Education Services – A Manual of Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines 2024](#)

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