

5.20

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Definitions

“Students with special needs:” A student who has a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, has a learning disability or has special gifts or talents, as defined in the Manual of Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines of the Special Education Services document from BC Ministry of Education.

“Individual education plan (IEP):” An individual education plan is a documented plan developed for a student with special needs that describes their goals and includes one of more of the following:

- learning outcomes that are different from, or in addition to, expected learning outcomes set out in the applicable educational program guide
- a list of support services
- a list of adapted materials, instruction or assessment methods
- evidence of evaluation or review

Admissions

The Living and Learning School is an independent school and because of our limited provincial funding and limited access to resources, we have admission restrictions in place for students with special needs. The following limitations may apply:

- if the student is not eligible for Inclusive Education Funding but their former teachers or parents recommend that the child has an aid we may not be able to accommodate them
- if there are already 3 students with IEPs in the class that a new student wishes to register in, we may not be able to accommodate them

Identification and Assessment

With evidence through assessments and observations, a teacher may address a student's academic/behaviour needs with both the principal and the child's parents. With approval and support of the parent, if all members agree on the concerns regarding the child's academic/behavioural needs, a discussion of assessing the child will occur. Because of the lack of funding available, the school will not be responsible for paying the fees associated with Psych-Ed assessments, but their role will be to support the parent in acquiring the contacts for and helping set up appointments with the appropriate professionals. The school may contact someone to come in to do a pre-assessment of the child at no cost to better inform the teacher/principal/parents of the possible issues.

Individualized Education Plans

The school is responsible for maintaining and delivering the program set out in an IEP for a student who is registered. The Principal, Teacher and parents of the child will meet a minimum of one time a year to review the goals set out in the IEP and make sure they continue to be relevant. It will be the responsibility of the Principal and Teacher to ensure that services required for the student are met to the best of their abilities. IEP goals will be updated and assessed each year.

Any student who is eligible for special education funding must have a working IEP in progress by September 30 each year. It is the responsibility of the Principal and Teacher to create an IEP for newly registered students who have been assessed or who are eligible for special education funding, that did not previously have one in place.

A student who has not been officially assessed or diagnosed as having a special need may have an IEP created for them, with permission of their parents, if Teachers and Principals (through evidence and assessment) can prove that the student is 2 grade levels behind in their academic progress. It is the responsibility of the Principal and Teacher to create an IEP for the student in this circumstance.

The only instances in which an IEP is not required are when:

- the student with special needs requires little or no adaptations to materials, instruction or assessment methods
- the expected learning outcomes have not been modified
- the student requires 25 or few hours of remedial instruction by someone other than the classroom teacher in a school year

Services

If a student is eligible for inclusive education funding, the school may use that funding in a variety of ways to support the students needs and help meet the goals set out in their IEP. Services may include but are not limited to:

- hiring a Teaching Assistant to provide aid for the student
- providing extra adults for supervision of the child in need
- providing individualized programming that may include accommodations, adaptations, or modifications to the grade level curriculum for the student
- purchasing or making available specialty tools or technology that will assist the student
- placement in smaller student work groups to increase support from teachers/adults
- helping families connect with community organizations to support the needs of the student

Placement

Our inclusive education program will integrate into all class activities whenever possible. Students with special needs will be encouraged to participate in regular class activities, and rather than remove students from the class for extra support, the goal will be to bring the extra support into the classroom so the student feels involved in regular class activities and is not segregated from their peers. If a teacher feels it would be in the best interest of the student to be placed in a special classroom to receive additional support where they will be away from their regular class for any period of time, the parents of the child must be in agreement and support the decision.

Funding

It is the Board's responsibility to ensure that inclusive education funding is being allocated towards resources that are supporting the needs of students with special needs. They must ensure that our total inclusive education funding income is not greater than our total inclusive education expenses. All of the inclusive education funding must be spent each year. Otherwise, excess amounts must be returned.

If a student is eligible for inclusive education funding, their parent/guardian must complete the inclusive education funding: parent/guardian confirmation form. This form must be signed annually and attached to the student's IEP.