

## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### **Background:**

All children can learn and reach their full potential given opportunity, effective teaching and appropriate resources. The goal of inclusive education programming is to provide students with the most appropriate learning environments and opportunities to best achieve their potential. Each student belongs and is to receive a quality education no matter their ability, disability, language, cultural background, gender or age. The success of inclusive education programming relies on the engagement, collaboration and involvement of students, parents, staff and community.

The Division offers a range of programs and instructional options to accommodate the differing needs and interests of children/students and believes they must have equitable opportunity to be included in the typical learning environment or program of choice. An inclusive system is supported through a continuum of specialized supports and services. Accessing the expertise and skill sets of staff to meet the identified needs of learners maximizes competency achievement through a range of intentional actions and strategies.

### **Definitions:**

#### **Child/Student in need of Specialized Supports and Services:**

is, by virtue of the child's/student's behavioural, intellectual, communication, learning or physical characteristics, or a combination of those characteristics, in need of specialized supports and services. It is a mandatory requirement for any child/student in need of specialized supports and services to have an Individualized Program Plan (IPP) or Instructional Support Plan (ISP).

#### **Consultation:**

is a process that gives parents/guardians of a child/student with special education needs the opportunity to participate in decisions about all aspects of placement and programming. Consultation includes conferencing and meetings with school staff.

#### **Designated School:**

is the school to which a child/student is assigned as indicated by the Division's current [boundary maps](#).

#### **Inclusive Education:**

is a values-based approach to accepting responsibility for all children and students. It is an attitude and approach that embraces diversity and learner differences and promotes equal opportunities for all learners.

**Individualized Program Plan (IPP) or Instructional Support Plan (ISP):**

is a statement of intentions developed to address the child's/student's learning needs and is based on individual assessments that help identify the level and types of instructional strategies and supports the child/student requires. An IPP or ISP is mandatory for all children/students identified as requiring specialized supports and services, including mild, moderate and severe disabilities/delays, and those who are gifted and require enrichment.

**Special Education Coding Criteria:**

outlines criteria within specific categories to help teachers and administrators identify children/students who require specialized supports and services. This includes a diagnosis of a disability or disorder by a qualified professional and a clear indication of how the disability or disorder affects the child's/student's learning in an educational environment.

**Specialized System Program:**

is a specialized program with smaller classes offering specialized supports and services to meet the needs of students with diverse learning needs. Flexible and responsive instruction is guided by an Instructional Support Plan (ISP) and follows the Alberta Education Programs of Study, with adaptations and accommodations as necessary.

**Procedures:**

1. Educational Placement of Students with Diverse Learning Needs
  - 1.1. Universal, targeted and individualized supports are in place to meet the identified needs of learners and maximize competency achievement through a range of intended actions and strategies.
  - 1.2. Students with diverse learning needs are provided with services in the most enabling environment. Educating students with diverse learning needs in regular classrooms in designated schools shall be the first placement option considered by the Division, in consultation with parents/guardians, school staff and, when appropriate, the student.
2. A range of placement options may be provided to meet the diverse and unique needs of students. Options may include:
  - 2.1. instruction and support with program adaptation and/or modification in a grade-level classroom with same-aged peers;
  - 2.2. individualized instruction in smaller group settings;
  - 2.3. a specialized classroom or setting in a specialized system program;
  - 2.4. one-on-one instruction; and
  - 2.5. a residential program in a hospital facility or other provincial institution.
3. The Division shall invite meaningful involvement of parents/guardians in the learning team for planning and problem-solving relating to programming for the student in need of specialized supports and services. Parents/guardians and students, when applicable, must be informed about the options available, and be actively involved in discussions with teachers and administrators about placements and programs.
4. Placement in a specialized system program is implemented only if the parents/guardians provide informed consent.

5. The Division is ultimately responsible for making the most appropriate placement decisions in the best interests of the individual student and in a manner consistent for all students.
6. Parents/guardians wishing a review of the student's placement shall make a written request to the Associate Superintendent of Supports for Students.
7. The Associate Superintendent of Supports for Students shall review the matter with the school administration and staff involved.
8. The Associate Superintendent of Supports for Students shall convene a case conference of involved persons and the parents/guardians.
9. If program or placement recommendations are not acceptable, the parents/guardians may appeal to the Superintendent.
10. Appeals to the Superintendent
  - 10.1. The Superintendent shall hear appeals within 30 days of the appeal date.
  - 10.2. Parents/guardians have the right to appeal a program or placement decision in accordance with [Board Policy 13: Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters](#).
11. The Division may provide special education programming and services to non-resident students through tuition agreements that cover program costs in excess of the Division funding rates.

**Reference:**

Section 11, 12, 33(1)(d), 196(1)(f), 45(8) *Education Act*

Student Record Regulation 97/2019

Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12

Standards for Special Education

Standards for the Provision of Early Childhood Special Education

[Appendix 213-A: Individualized Program Plan and Instructional Support Plan](#)