

*School District 47 (Powell River)*

**SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES:**

**Guidelines, Policies, Procedures**

*1997-98*

# Introduction

This document supplements the 1995 Ministry of Education publication, *Special Education: A Manual of Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines*. To some degree, it restates provincial guidelines, policies or procedures that require emphasis, but mainly it describes special education in Powell River, specifically programs and services where the Director of Instruction (Special Services) has some measure of responsibility. It is intended to help inform employees of the Powell River school district and citizens of Powell River about the nature of available special education programs and services and ways to access them.

It includes:

- a description of services and special program options available in the district;
- procedures used to identify, assess, and plan for students with special needs;
- procedures used to make special placements when they are needed;
- reporting and record-keeping procedures used to track Individual Education Plans;
- procedures used to include parents and other service providers in identification, assessment, and planning;
- procedures for evaluating and reporting the progress of special needs students;
- procedures for evaluating special education services and programs;
- internal appeal procedures available to parents or guardians;
- specialist staff assignments, job descriptions that include specialist qualifications, and procedures for evaluating personnel in specialist assignments.

Powell River school district's policies and procedures for special education are intended to be consistent with practices in its regular education programs, but make special accommodation as required to meet special needs.

Since special education services in Powell River will continue to change, this document will be updated periodically. If you have questions or comments, please direct them to:

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# Using This Document

As district special education services evolve, periodic updates to this document will be issued. Please check that the document you are using is up-to-date.

It is divided into six main sections.

*Section A: Policy Directions:* describes the policy framework for the delivery of special education services and programs in Powell River.

- A-1: Meeting the Educational Needs of All Children
- A-2: Planning Appropriate Educational Programs
- A-4: Education is a Shared Responsibility
- A-6: Access to an Appropriate Education
- A-7: Quality Programs and Resources

*Section B: Roles and Responsibilities:* outlines the roles and responsibilities of district and school-based special education personnel, parents, and students in the development and implementation of special education services in Powell River.

- B-1: School District Program Development and Delivery B-1
- B-1: Organizational Considerations B-1
- Schools*
- B-2: Administration
- B-2: Teachers
- B-3: Teacher Assistants
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*Section C: Developing an Individual Education Program:* describes the process of identifying students who have special needs, planning and implementing individual programs for them, and evaluating and reporting their progress.

- C-1: Overview of the Process
- C-2: Identification
- C-3: Assessment
- C-6: Planning
- C-7: The Individual Education Plan
- C-10: Program Support/Implementation
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*Section D: Services:* describes Learning Assistance, Elementary School Counselling, School Psychology, Speech and Language, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy, Hospital/Homebound, and Work Experience/Job Training services available in Powell River.

- D-1: Learning Assistance Services
- D-5: Counselling: Elementary and Middle Schools
- D-11: School Psychology Services
- D-14: Speech-Language Pathology
- D-18: Physiotherapy/Occupational Therapy
- D-24: Hospital Education Services
- D-26: Homebound Education Services
- D-29: School Family Services
- D-32: Work Experience/Job Training

*Section E: Special Considerations for Individual Planning:* defines the essential elements included in programs developed around funding categories for students with special needs (including Gifted).

- E-1: Funding Categories
- E-5: Moderately Disabled*
- E-6: Students with Behaviour Disorders
- E-12: Students with Learning Disabilities
- E-17: Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities
- E-21: Severely Disabled*
- E-22: Students with Autism
- E-25: Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- E-31: Students with Moderate to Severe/Profound Intellectual Disabilities
- E-36: Students with Physical Disabilities or Chronic Health Impairments
- E-40: Students with Visual Impairment
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*Section F: References*

- F-1: Access to Technology Support
- F-2: Appeals/District Review Committee
- F-2: Child Abuse Prevention
- F-3: Community Case Management
- F-3: Distance Learning for Students with Special Needs
- F-3: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy
- F-4: Full Day Kindergarten
- F-4: Learning Resources
- F-5: Removal for Health and Safety
- F-5: Student Records: Use and Management
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*Section G: Appendices*

*Appendix 1: Protocols*

G-1: Inter-Ministerial Protocols for the Provision of Support Services to Schools

G-3: Local Protocol Agreements

G-5: Appendix 2: Assessment Guidelines

*Appendix 3: Technology and SET-BC*

G-8: Technology for Students with Special Needs: Policy Guidelines

G-10: Special Education Technology-British Columbia (SET-BC)

G-12: Appendix 4: Facilities Planning

G-13: Appendix 5: Board Policy Related to Special Education

Cross-references have been included to make the manual easier to use.

# Glossary

1. **Adapted program:** the program keeps the learning outcomes of the prescribed curriculum, but provides adaptations to enable the student to participate. The adaptations can include alternate formats (e.g., Braille, books-on-tape), instructional strategies (e.g., using interpreters, visual cues, and aids), and assessment procedures (e.g., oral exams, additional time). Students on adapted programs are assessed using the standards for the course/program and can receive credit toward a Dogwood certificate for their work (see definition for modified program below).
2. **Assessment:** a systematic process of gathering information from many people in order to make appropriate educational decisions for a student. A collaborative and progressive process designed to identify the student's strengths and needs, it results in the identification and implementation of selected educational strategies.
3. **Case Management:** the process of planning, directing, and coordinating services on behalf of a child or youth. It may occur at a school or community level.
4. **Inclusion:** the value system holding 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 transcends the idea of physical location and incorporates basic values that promote participation, friendship, and interaction.
5. **Individual Education Plan (IEP):** a written plan developed for a student with special needs. It describes the educational program modifications and/or adaptations for the student and the services to be provided. An IEP team develops, documents, implements and reviews the IEP for a particular student.
6. **Integrating:** the process of achieving inclusive educational programming for students with special needs by balancing incorporation and differentiation. Incorporation involves educational programming that maximizes elements in common with students who do not have special needs. Differentiation involves elements that must be unique in order to meet individual needs. Integration is the proper balance between incorporation and differentiation.
7. **Modified Program:** the program has learning outcomes substantially different from those in the prescribed curriculum, specifically selected to meet the student's special needs. For example, a Grade 9 student in a modified math program might focus on functional computational skills in the context of handling money and personal budgeting. Or, in language arts, a Grade 5 student might work on recognizing common signs and using the phone. In these examples, the learning outcomes are substantially different from those of the curriculum for most other students. A student's program may include a mix of modified and adapted courses (see definition for adapted program above).
8. **Neighborhood School:** the school within students' catchment area, which they would normally attend.
9. **School-Based Team:** an on-going team of school-based personnel that serves as a formal problem-solving unit. It helps classroom teachers develop and implement instructional

and/or management strategies and coordinates support resources for students with special needs within the school.

10. **Student with Special Needs:** a student who has a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, a learning disability, or exceptional gifts or talents.

# Section A

## Policy Directions

**School District No. 47 (Powell River) Policy**  
**Special Education Services**

*Item No. 7161 (P), Approved: Dec. 9, 1987, Revisions: Aug. 26, 1997*

*Cross Reference: 2342.2*

Policy pertaining to the provision of special education services are those expressed in  
*Special Education Services: Guidelines, Policies, Procedures*, School District 47  
(Powell River)

<b>Meeting the Educational Needs of All Children .....</b>	<b>A-1</b>
<b>Planning Appropriate Educational Programs .....</b>	<b>A-2</b>
<b>Education is a Shared Responsibility .....</b>	<b>A-4</b>
<b>Access to an Appropriate Education .....</b>	<b>A-6</b>
<b>Quality Programs and Resources .....</b>	<b>A-7</b>

## **Section A: Policy Directions**

### **Meeting the Educational Needs of All Children**

Powell River citizens want an education system reflecting the belief that all students are unique, all students are to be valued, and all students can learn. Based on this belief, Powell River has been moving toward an inclusive education system where students with special needs are fully participating members of a community of learners.

This vision is reflected in the policy for special education. This policy framework and the guidelines that support it provide some practical planning and delivery tools to help make the vision a reality.

Students with special needs have disabilities of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, a learning disability, or exceptional gifts or talents.

Such diversity poses challenges and opportunities for students, parents, and teachers. It demands that we examine what we do and how we do it, keeping in mind the best interests of all students in our schools. This document establishes an overall framework for providing special education programs and services in Powell River.

### ***Goals for Education***

The primary goal of the Powell River school system is to foster the intellectual development of students, with the support of families and the Powell River community. Enabling students to achieve social/emotional development and career goals is a responsibility shared by our schools, our families, and our community. These goals apply to all students, including students with special needs.

To help realize these goals for students with special needs, the education system in Powell River works to remove barriers and provide appropriate services and programs to ensure it is:

- equitable;
- of high quality;
- relevant;
- accessible; and
- accountable.

### ***Creating an Equitable Education System***

The School Act requires the Powell River School Board to make educational programs available to all school-age residents in the district. This requirement forms a necessary first step to the inclusion of students with special needs. A Ministerial Order requires the integration of students who have special needs with students who do not have special needs, except in unusual circumstances.

## ***Inclusion and Integration***

The principle of inclusion adopted in British Columbia schools supports equitable access to learning and the opportunity for all students to pursue their goals in all aspects of their education. The practice of inclusion transcends the idea of physical location and incorporates basic values that promote participation, friendship, and interaction.

This principle does not mean that students with special needs must spend 100 per cent of every day in neighborhood school classrooms with their age and grade peers. The goal is to meet the educational needs of all students. Although the emphasis is on educating students with special needs in neighborhood school classrooms with their age and grade peers, meeting needs may also mean using resource rooms, self-contained classes, community-based training, or other specialized settings. The principle of “placement in the most enabling learning environment” applies to decisions made about the extent to which a student is placed in classrooms or assigned to an alternate setting.

## ***Alternatives to the Integrated Classroom***

Students with special needs are placed in settings other than a neighborhood school classroom with age and grade peers when:

- the Powell River school district has made all reasonable efforts to integrate them, and it is clear that a combination of education in such classes and supplementary support cannot meet their educational or social needs;
- after considering their educational needs and those of others, there is clear evidence that partial or full placement in another setting is the only option. Evidence might include frequent and significant disruption of the learning environment despite appropriate classroom interventions or the probability that the student or others will come to physical harm.

The process for consideration of such alternatives in Powell River is accomplished through school-based and district collaboration with parents. Parents or students may appeal decisions made by administrators to the District Review Committee (see Section F: Appeals/District Review Committee).

If it is determined that alternatives to neighborhood school classes are necessary for some students with special needs, they will be placed in alternate settings as part of a plan regularly reviewed and updated in consultation with parents and school-based teams (if applicable). The aim is to return these students to neighborhood school classrooms as soon as it is feasible.

## **Planning Appropriate Educational Programs**

### ***Integrated Planning***

Some students with special needs may require programs and services not usually provided to other students. Powell River school district is organized to provide educational programs and services to students with special needs. This includes planning with other ministries and community agencies where necessary. Many of the services required to support students with

special needs are available from community-based agencies or other ministries through inter-ministerial protocol agreements. (Protocol agreements are included in Section G, Appendix 1.)

When Powell River's size or location makes it impossible to provide the needed range of services, the school board will explore contracting services with other districts.

At the school level, teachers whose classrooms include students with special needs have timely access to support. All schools have school-based teams to coordinate school-based support services for the students and help teachers develop effective strategies. As required, these teams recommend case managers to oversee planning activities for individual students and initiate referrals for district services.

### ***Identification and Assessment***

Early identification is an essential first step in successful program planning for students with special needs. Identification begins before children enter school, when parents and health or other community personnel identify the students' special needs and begin planning to meet them. In such instances, schools make use of available information by incorporating it into educational planning activities (see Section F: Transition).

Students whose special needs are less readily evident often are not identified until they enter the school system. A thorough assessment of students' strengths and needs is essential for developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Assessment practices ensure timely identification by personnel trained in the assessment of specific special needs.

Planning educational programs for students with special needs begins in neighborhood school classrooms. Classroom teachers, in consultation with parents, assess children by comparing their performance with expected learning outcomes for their age or grade.

In many cases, classroom teachers will meet students' special needs with no additional assistance. But when, in consultation with parents and the school-based team or school administration, classroom teachers believe that students require more intensive individual assessment of how they learn and the best ways to teach them, the assessment is made at the school level, using expertise within the school-based team.

A few learners with more complex special needs require more specialized assessment. At this level, school psychologists, trained to make psycho-educational assessments, or specialist staff (e.g., Speech-Language Pathologists or physiotherapists), trained to make assessments in their particular field of expertise, are available to support schools in the assessment and planning process.

Where assessments indicate that students need additional assistance, the district will provide such assistance, based on their needs and the availability of resources.

### ***Individual Education Plans (IEPs)***

After collaboration with parents and outside agencies, school personnel are responsible to establish goals for students that take into account the students' special needs and strengths. Individual Education Plans document the planning results. Except in rare circumstances, each student identified as having special needs must have an IEP.

In Powell River, IEPs are reviewed at least once during the school year. Although planning is collaborative, principals, in consultation with the Director of Instruction (Special Services), ensure that each student with special needs has a case manager to coordinate the development, documentation, and implementation of his or her IEP.

Parents have the opportunity to participate in the planning process. Principals ensure that they are invited to attend school-based team meetings about their child. The aim is to make teachers and parents partners in IEP development and involve students as much as possible. Everyone who helps develop the plans has access to them, within the provisions of the School Act and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. (See Section F: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy)

## **Education is a Shared Responsibility**

### ***Students***

Students are entitled to consult with their teacher or administrative officer concerning their educational program. For students with special needs, this may include participation in developing their IEPs. Students are also expected to take part in an educational program provided by the school board.

### ***Parents***

Parents play a vital role in the education of their children by working in partnership with educators and other service personnel. They help identify and inform school personnel about their children's special needs. They also participate in developing IEPs, planning, establishing goals for their children, and helping teachers implement strategies to meet those goals. Through these activities, parents and teachers communicate about children's progress and help children meet educational goals.

Teachers respect parents' role and knowledge of their children, but also need to be able to manage their classrooms. If there are disagreements, a review of the IEP to determine how classroom activities can best relate to IEP goals may resolve them. In current practice, the district makes every attempt to resolve differences at the school or district level. Powell River's appeal process is set out as a bylaw in the board *Policy Manual*.

### ***Teachers and Other Service Providers***

Powell River classroom teachers, school-based special education and counselling staff, and teacher assistants are the first line of support for students with special needs. Under the School Act, teachers are responsible for designing, supervising, and assessing education programs and providing instruction to individual students and groups of students.

Working with other service providers, teachers provide a vital service by being among the first to identify and refer students with special needs for further assessment. Together with parents and others, they plan to meet those needs, implement students' IEPs, and report on the effectiveness of special education programs and student progress.

## ***Principals***

Responsible for the overall operation of their schools, Powell River principals have a number of important functions in the education of students with special needs. They:

- are available to consult with students or their parents/guardians about the students' educational programs;
- ensure that students with special needs receive individualized programming and that the programs are implemented;
- oversee the placement of students; and
- ensure that parents/guardians regularly receive reports on their children's school progress.

## ***School District***

The Powell River School Board is responsible to ensure that, within available resources, the school district delivers special education programs and services to students who require them. These programs and services are an integral part of the total school system. In an effort to ensure opportunities for students with special needs, the Board adapts Ministry of Education curriculum and learning resources and adopts appropriate assessment practices to meet the needs of individual students.

## ***The Ministry of Education***

The Ministry of Education provides funding for special education programs and services and works with the Powell River School Board to achieve an education system that provides opportunities for a quality education in a cost-effective manner.

## ***Community Agencies***

In Powell River, community-based agencies provide many services for students with special needs. A spectrum of support services, such as child care, school health, and specialized counselling, is available to students with special needs. Several local agreements have been developed to clarify student and parent access to these services (see Section G: Appendix 1, Local Protocol Agreements).

Community agencies also assist the school district by providing consultative services and engaging in joint projects, such as developing curriculum support materials.\*

## **Access to an Appropriate Education**

### ***Accessibility***

All students deserve equitable access to learning, opportunities for achievement, and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education.

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\* New Life Counselling and the school district collaborated to produce *Getting it Straight, A Drug and Alcohol Information Kit for Teens*, for example.

The Powell River school system encourages students to get the most from their school experiences by giving them the opportunities and support they need to learn. All new education facilities and transportation systems are free of physical barriers that may hinder some students. Wherever possible, barriers in existing facilities will be eliminated as these buildings are made more accessible through an on-going program of capital improvements funded by the Ministry of Education.

### ***A Continuum of Services***

As much as possible, students with special needs are integrated into classrooms with other students. Classroom teachers adapt instruction and evaluation methods as necessary to meet their needs. They may receive support from school-based resource teachers, itinerant teachers, or other specialists, such as a Speech-Language Pathologist or physiotherapist.

The emphasis on educating students with special needs in neighborhood school classrooms with their age and grade peers does not rule out the appropriate use of resource rooms, home-based instruction, community-based services, or specialized settings.

When required services are so specialized that it is impossible to offer them in every school, they are usually available at the district level. A few students require specialized services only available in the Powell River community at large. For very exceptional needs, specialized services must be accessed through regional or provincial resources. The Special Services Division of the Powell River school district is responsible for facilitating access to community, regional, or provincial services.

Provincial Ministry of Education Resource Programs include those designated under the School Act (such as education programs for children in hospitals, treatment centres, and containment and attendance centres), the Special Education Technology-British Columbia (SET-BC) Program (see Section G, Appendix 3), the Provincial Centre for the Visually Impaired, and other provincial programs designated by the minister. The Ministry of Education also provides:

- an Integration Support Line providing information and advice for teachers and administrators (1-800-876-8542 province-wide); and
- a link to the Special Education Branch and other schools and districts through the Community Learning Network and Internet.

### ***Training, Professional Standards, and Staff Development***

To provide appropriate educational programs and work effectively with students who have special needs, teachers, teacher assistants, and administrators need an understanding of special education. Through its Special Services Division, the Powell River school district provides in-service training to ensure that all staff can develop the skills and understanding they need to work in an inclusive environment.

Powell River school district will also ensure that:

- all personnel working with students who have special needs have access to relevant in-service training opportunities to foster professionalism and currency;

- specialized personnel can focus on opportunities within their area of specialty and the specific roles they play in the Powell River service delivery system.

## **Quality Programs and Resources**

### ***K-12 Education and Special Education***

Among other things, the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education policy describes the educational programs and expectations for student performance. To succeed in the K-12 program, some students may require:

- adaptations in methodology, materials or assessment techniques, or
- modifications or enhancements of programs, or
- compensatory skill development.

With appropriate support, most students with special needs will be successful.

K-12 program policies include dual credit, course challenge, and equivalency. These options may be particularly appropriate for students with exceptional gifts or talents. They enable students to:

- demonstrate previously acquired learning;
- receive credit for learning acquired outside of the classroom;
- receive credit for post-secondary classes in specialized fields of study.

Exceptionally gifted students may also have options for independent guided study, mentorships, or expanding and/or accelerating some or all of their educational programs.

### ***Curricula***

Provincial curricula are written for all students, with the understanding that individuals have different levels of pace and achievement. IEPs define the goals and standards students are expected to achieve, and the supports, adaptations, or modifications required to enable them to meet those goals. With appropriate support, students with special educational needs are expected to achieve some, most, or all provincial curriculum outcomes.

### ***Standards***

Standards for all students, including students with special needs, are developed with appropriate expectations for student achievement. Students with special needs may be expected to meet grade or course standards described in provincial curricula and reference sets, perhaps with appropriate adaptations to classroom materials or evaluation methods. Or they may require individually set outcomes and standards as part of the IEP planning process. In either case, the goals and standards for the students need to be at high but attainable levels. For gifted students, goals established in IEPs will often exceed those for the grade or age level.

### ***Learning Resources***

Through the District Resource Centre, Special Services Division, and individual school staffs, Powell River school district selects a range of learning resources with all students in mind.

Teachers then choose appropriate resources to meet the needs of their particular students. IEPs identify the resources that best support the learning needs of children. Braille and taped-book versions of selected materials and technological supports needed to fulfill IEP goals (e.g., Brailers, adapted keyboards, special hearing devices) are available from a variety of provincial sources through the Special Services Division.

### ***Funding***

The government has increased accountability by targeting the expenditure of special education funds. It audits school districts to ensure that funding dedicated to special education is spent on special education.

As well as auditing special education program enrolments to ensure that students with special needs receive appropriate special education services, the ministry will periodically review the Powell River school district through the accreditation process.

### ***Student Progress Reports***

Like all parents, the parents of students with special needs have a right to regular information about their children's progress. For students with special needs who are expected to achieve or surpass the learning standards in the provincial curriculum, teachers will follow regular letter-grading and reporting procedures, although they may need to use adapted assessment methods.

Ministerial Order 191/94, Student Progress Report Order, sets out the requirements for student progress reports. Where students with special needs are not capable of achieving the learning outcomes in the provincial curriculum and need course or program modification, IEP planning will establish specific individual goals and objectives. Using letter grades and percentages to report the progress of these students is not appropriate. Structured written comments will report the level of students' success in achieving their modified goals and objectives. When students meet the learning outcomes reflected in their IEPs, it is important to recognize their efforts.

Where specialist support personnel other than classroom teachers are responsible for providing some portion of students' educational programs (e.g., speech-language pathologists, orientation and mobility instructors), these specialists provide written reports on the students' progress to include with the reports from classroom teachers.

### ***Appeals***

Under section 11 of the School Act, students or their parents/guardians may appeal to the school board decisions made by school board employees that significantly affect the education, health, or safety of the students. Section 11(1) states that "decision" also includes failure to make a decision. (See Section F: Appeals/District Review Committee)

Since 1992, the Ombudsman has had the mandate to investigate complaints about public schools and school boards.

# Section B

## Roles and Responsibilities

School District Program Development and Delivery..... B-1

Organizational Considerations ..... B-1

### Schools

Administration ..... B-2

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Teacher Assistants ..... B-3

Parents ..... B-3

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## **Section B: Roles and Responsibilities**

### **School District Program Development and Delivery**

In Powell River, the development and delivery of special education programs and services involves meaningful consultation with the parents or guardians of special needs students. They know their children and can contribute substantially to the design of appropriate programs and services for them.

Services reflect the diversity of students' special needs and the prevalence of various special needs in the school population. The district does not organize or deliver services and programs along categorical lines: it matches the identified special needs of the student with service provisions to address them.

### **Organizational Considerations**

#### ***Clearly defined responsibility***

Overall responsibility for delivering educational programs and related services for students with special learning needs lies with the Director of Instruction (Special Services), whose responsibilities are to:

- establish and maintain effective ways to identify and assess students with special needs consistently among all schools in the district;
- determine, plan, and organize the kinds of services and programs required in the district to meet these needs;
- obtain and coordinate the fiscal and human resources needed to deliver a full range of programs and services reflecting the special needs of identified students, and facilitate equitable allocation of these resources among the schools in the district;
- provide technical advice and assistance to help school-based administrative officers and teachers meet their obligations to students with a full range of special needs;
- participate in local inter-ministerial committees designed to provide coordinated services for children and youth;
- provide advice and assistance in the development of district policies and procedures related to students with special needs;
- maintain information systems necessary for planning and reporting data on students with special needs registered in the school district;
- plan and coordinate staff development programs for personnel working with students who have special needs;
- involve representatives of community groups concerned with students who have exceptional learning needs in program planning and evaluation;
- monitor program quality for students with special needs across the district;

- establish liaison with community preschool and post-secondary services that provide programs for students with special needs; and
- participate in community-level planning with other agencies and ministries to set service priorities.

The district has differentiated program responsibilities and line and staff relationships to ensure accountability and enhance coordination in the delivery of the educational program.

Job descriptions that define areas of responsibility for professional personnel assigned to positions other than classroom instruction are available.

The Powell River School Board ensures that its staff recruitment, selection, and assignment procedures encourage the availability of personnel with the training and skills necessary to provide educational programs for a broad range of exceptional students.

### ***Levels of Support***

As much as possible, special education services in Powell River are organized for delivery at the school level. A district-level support system ensures that schools have access to expertise and services too specialized to be provided in each school.

## **Schools**

### ***Administrative Considerations - School-Based***

The powers and duties of a school principal are set out in regulations under the School Act. They include the implementation of educational programs and the placing and programming of students in the school.

To accommodate students with special needs, schools are organized to allow flexibility in their response. School-based administrators ensure that:

- teachers receive the information they need to work with students with special needs assigned to them;
- the school is organized to provide some first-line resource support on site;
- a school-based team operates in the school. School administrators facilitate the collaborative efforts of the team members to meet the special needs of students.

### ***Teachers***

The teacher of a student with special needs is responsible for designing, supervising and assessing the educational program for that student. Where the student requires specialized instruction, the teacher, in consultation with resource personnel, parents and, as appropriate, the student, makes sure it is provided. When the student's program involves specialized instruction by someone other than the classroom teacher, collaborative processes are required to make best use of the expertise of the specialist and ensure a coordinated approach.

### ***Teacher Assistants***

Section 18 of the School Act specifies that:

- (1) A board may employ persons other than teachers to assist teachers in carrying out their responsibilities and duties under this Act and the regulations.
- (2) Persons employed under subsection (1) shall work under the general supervision of a teacher or administrative officer.

Teachers are expected to design programs for students with special needs. Teacher assistants play an active part in many programs for these students, performing functions that range from personal care to helping the teacher with instructional programs. Under the supervision of a teacher, they may play a key role in implementing the program.

While teacher assistants may help collect data for evaluating student progress, teachers are responsible for evaluating and reporting student progress to parents.

Where teacher assistants need to perform health-related procedures, the inter-ministerial protocol for providing support services requires that they receive child-specific training from a qualified health professional (see Section G: Appendix 1, Local Protocols).

## **Parents**

Under the School Act, section 7(1) and (2), parents are entitled to be informed of a student's school attendance, behaviour and progress and to receive, on request, annual reports on the general effectiveness of educational programs in the school district. Under section 9 of the Act, they are entitled to examine all school board records pertaining to their child.

Ministerial Order 150/89, the Special Needs Students Order, says that parents must be consulted on the placement of their student with special needs. Parents of students with special needs know a great deal about their children that can help school personnel plan educational programs for them. The Powell River school district is committed to involving parents in the planning, development, and implementation of educational programs for their children.

Parents also have a responsibility to support the education of their children. They must enrol their school-age child in an educational program in a school district or independent school or register the child before September 30 in a home schooling or regional correspondence program (School Act, sections 3(1) and 13(1)). At the request of the teacher or administrative officer, a parent must consult on the student's educational program (School Act, section 7(2)).

School staff need to be aware of any special factors that might place a child with special needs or other children at risk. Registration procedures ensure that parents have an opportunity to inform staff about these special factors on a need-to-know basis, without violating the privacy of the individual or the family.

The Powell River school district ensures that guardians of children in care receive relevant information from the school.

## **Students**

School Board policy ensures students opportunities to learn in safe and welcoming environments. Students with special needs will receive timely identification of their needs, comprehensive assessment of those needs, and an appropriate response to their strengths and needs in their educational programs. Many students with special needs can contribute to the

assessment and planning for their educational programs and provide an evaluation of the services available to them.

Students have the responsibility to comply with school rules authorized by the principal and the code of conduct or any other rules and policies established by the Powell River School Board (School Act, section 6).

## **Section C**

### **Developing an Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

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# Section C: Developing an Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Reference: Ministerial Orders 638/95, 639/95, 640/95

## Overview of the Process

For purposes of analysis, the IEP planning process is organized into five phases:

- identification/assessment;
- planning;
- program support/implementation;
- evaluation; and
- reporting.

They are not five separate phases, however. Together, they describe a continuous and flexible process. There is a progressive flow from one phase to another, so that students can obtain needed supports in a timely way from the school, the district, the community and, if required, regional or provincial services.

As much as possible, the IEP planning process is incorporated into the regular routines of planning, evaluation, and reporting for all students.

Powell River school district has found the process works best when:

- 1) there is collaboration and on-going consultation among teachers, administrative and support personnel, parents, students, and representatives of district/community agencies;
- 2) parents/guardians and students are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the process, initiate discussions on learning needs, or request school-based access to support (students should be included in all phases of the process unless they are unable or unwilling to participate);
- 3) staff have support through in-service and other resources (e.g., access to specialist support, help with informal assessment procedures, or suggestions for pre-referral intervention strategies);
- 4) active school-based teams provide support, consultation, planning, and case management, and operate with procedures to:
  - ensure prompt sharing of information;
  - facilitate transitions;
  - ensure consistency in reporting and documenting plans;
  - promote communication and collaborative decision-making between the school and home;
  - communicate planning decisions to parents, students and appropriate staff;
  - resolve differences effectively.
- 5) it is supported with:

- time and space for planning and consultation;
- prompt transfer and sharing of information while protecting privacy;
- qualified personnel; and
- in-service opportunities for staff development.

## **Identification**

### ***Before School Entry***

Early identification is an essential element of successful program planning for students with special needs. If these students have been identified before entering the school system, schools request existing assessment and programming information as soon as possible, so that planning can begin.

For these students with special needs and others who have obvious and severe special needs that have not been identified, the school-based team must respond promptly to a teacher's request for a determination of the need for assessment, planning, and intervention.

### ***Classroom***

For most students, the identification phase of the process begins in the classroom, as the teacher observes exceptions in learning and behaviour. The teacher responds by initiating in-depth, systematic classroom observation and evaluation. While starting a comprehensive assessment of learning needs, the teacher introduces variations in instructional approaches and evaluates the success of using these teaching techniques and instructional materials with the student.

The teacher consults with the parent and, when appropriate, the student on concerns and progress. To ensure there is no medical basis for the concerns, discussion topics may include how to obtain vision and hearing screening or whether to refer the student to a physician for a comprehensive medical examination.

If these efforts do not help meet the student's educational needs, the teacher will begin a process of consultation and collaboration with school-based resource personnel. This may involve further classroom observation, additional assessment, other classroom intervention strategies, and implementing those strategies.

Such collaborative planning and the resulting interventions successfully address the needs of many students. If they do not, the teacher approaches the school-based team for further assistance.

### ***Referral to the School-Based Team***

A school-based team is a formal, on-going problem-solving unit made up of school-based personnel. It helps classroom teachers develop and implement instructional and management strategies and coordinates support resources for students with special needs within the school.

Each public school in the Powell River school district has a school-based team comprised of a school administrative officer, a classroom teacher, and one or more school-based support personnel. On a case-by-case basis, the team includes the student's referring teacher and, as

appropriate, the student, district resource staff, and representatives from community services or other ministries. Parents are invited to attend school-based team meetings about their child's educational program.

Powell River school-based teams:

- plan for and coordinate services for the student within the school;
- initiate IEP teams;
- recommend classroom placements;
- help identify different staff members' strengths and skills for meeting student needs and recommend professional development initiatives;
- help classroom teachers address specific learning difficulties in classrooms;
- allocate available school-based resources for individual students;
- apply for district discretionary resources to meet the needs of students who are difficult to teach.

## **Assessment\***

The general *aim* of assessment and evaluation is to help a child learn. To be successful, assessment must be integrated with the planning process. The general *process* of educational assessment involves gathering and analyzing information about what a student can do.

Ideally, educational programs should be able to meet the learning needs of all students. Children with special learning needs are the highest priority for individualized learning plans. Since curriculum and assessment activities are no longer viewed as separate events, children with special learning needs are also the highest priority for individualized assessments.

When the information gathered through the on-going "authentic" (curriculum-based) assessment process is not enough for instructional planning, a wider range of individualized assessment methods (e.g., detailed observations, structured interviews, work-sample analysis, criterion-referenced measures, norm-referenced measures) will be required to develop IEPs.

For a small number of students, an individual psycho-educational assessment may be necessary. Such assessments are subject to available school district resources and made only after there has been considerable involvement at the classroom and school levels or when there is no other way to obtain the information needed for decision-making.

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\* For further information, refer also to School District #47 (Powell River) Special Services *Assessment Reference Manual* (1993), available at district Special Services Division.

## ASSESSMENTS

For Whom	Kind	Level	By Whom
All students	Curriculum-based/authentic	Classroom	Classroom Teacher
Some students	Individualized assessment	School/Classroom	Teacher and/or Special Needs Teacher
A few students	Psycho-educational or service/disability-specific	District/School	School Psychologist or other specialized staff

### ***Classroom-level "Authentic" Assessment***

"Authentic" assessment takes place when the assessment process is embedded within the curriculum. This begins in the classroom, where the teacher makes frequent observations of the learning, behaviour, and social interaction of each student.

As part of the instructional process, classroom teachers use a variety of formal and informal techniques to collect information about the progress of student learning. They may refer to collections of work samples, anecdotal records of daily progress, compilations of students' self assessments, notes from teacher/child conferences, assigned classwork, oral questioning, and teacher-made criterion-referenced tests. The teacher obtains additional information about the student from parents or guardians and school records.

These processes lead to instructional adjustments, which the classroom teacher implements and regularly evaluates as part of the teaching/assessment cycle.

### ***Individualized Assessment***

For some children, more specific and intensive individualized assessments are needed to augment classroom-level assessments. The classroom teacher may conduct these individualized assessments, but needs access to advice and assistance from other staff within the school as required. Current practice and research show the importance of involving the school-based team as a supportive body for classroom teachers.

The purpose of school-level individualized assessments is the same as that for curriculum-embedded assessment; to help teachers adjust the educational program so that it best meets the individual needs of the student in the classroom. Individualized assessments form an essential part of the individual planning process and contribute to the development of IEPs.

School-level individualized assessments call on the services of Learning Assistance personnel and/or other school-based support professionals, such as school counsellors. As required to answer instructional and management questions, they involve criterion-referenced assessment supplemented by norm-referenced assessment, observational data, and information from school records or other sources. At this stage, it is important to rule out vision or hearing losses or disorders as possible causes for learning or management difficulties.

The information gathered, compiled, and analyzed through curriculum-embedded assessment and intensive individualized assessment may still not provide enough detail to design an educational program for some students, including those who show skills beyond those of their

peers. At this point, the school-based team may call on district-level specialists to conduct psycho-educational or service/disability-specific assessments.

## ***District-level Assessments***

### **Psycho-educational**

Schools make a referral to district-level personnel for a psycho-educational assessment when school-based assessments have not yielded enough information to design and implement an educational program for a student. Exceptions occur when students have an identifiable disability that clearly warrants immediate referral to appropriate assessment resources beyond the school or school district. Administrative officers or their representatives are required to consult with parents as part of this referral process.

Individual psycho-educational assessment is the process of gathering information on student performance through individually administered norm-referenced diagnostic instruments (supplemented by interviews, observations and informal assessments) that require specialized training to use.

By providing a functional portrait of the way a student learns, this type of assessment gives additional information to help with the planning for students whose educational programs require major adjustments and/or services. Psycho-educational testing is not a search for cause, but a method of structured behaviour sampling to clarify strengths and needs and identify potential strategies for helping a student learn.

### **Service- or Disability-specific Assessments**

Referral to district-level personnel for service-specific or disability-specific assessments are made following school-based screening procedures. Service-specific assessments include those for speech and language and gifted education. Disability-specific assessments include those for vision, hearing, and motor difficulties. Although they have a more specific focus, their goal is the same as that for psycho-education assessments; to increase understanding of the student's needs in order to plan more effectively for that student.

## ***Implications of Learner-focussed District Level Assessment***

Learner-focussed assessment requires collaboration and consultation between the classroom teacher and the specialists involved. The object of the collaboration is to gain a comprehensive picture of the student in order to implement the best possible educational program for the student.

To enhance and facilitate the collaborative process, specialist staff will need in-service on classroom environments and teaching methodologies and approaches. Classroom teachers will also need in-service on how norm-referenced assessment relates to classroom performance.

The Powell River school district ensures that:

- schools obtain informed written consent for the assessment from the parent and, as appropriate, the student;
- the information gained is usable for planning purposes and can be integrated into the student's Individual Education Plan;

- specialists communicate and interpret assessment findings to the parents, the student, and staff; and
- the written report of the assessment is made available to the parents, the staff, and, when appropriate, the student, in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. (See Section F: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy)

### **Community-level Assessments**

For some children, appropriate assessment services lie outside the community of Powell River. These may be arranged through referral to District Special Services, which will make every effort to coordinate with the external agency providing the assessment.

### **Planning**

At its core, the planning process is the same for all students. It is a collaborative process in which the student, the parents, and educators identify educational goals appropriate to the student and ways to attain them.

For students with special needs, it is important for the planning process to begin at school entry or as soon as their special needs become known. The process results in an IEP that identifies appropriate goals and objectives and describes the commitments made by the educational system to help the student attain them.

As they grow, students with special needs experience a number of significant transitional steps -- from home to kindergarten, elementary school to secondary school, program to program, one school to another, and school to adulthood. Planning for each step needs to be careful and sensitive to address the needs of the student and family members. Examples of transition support include early introduction to the new environment or staff, assignment of a school “buddy”, or early provision of information on timetables and school organization. A protocol to address pre-school to school transition is being developed. Powell River also has a Community Transition Committee to help facilitate transitions from school to the community (see Section F: Transition Planning).

By the late Intermediate years (and no later than Grade 9), all students, including those with special needs, are expected to have a Student Learning Plan (SLP) that sets out their personal goals and objectives for the future. In some cases, students have both a SLP (developed by themselves) and an IEP (developed by a team). The following is a list of similarities and differences between the SLP and the IEP.

<b><i>SIMILARITIES</i></b>	<b><i>DIFFERENCES</i></b>
The SLP and the IEP include statements relating to a student’s personal, educational, and career plans.	The SLP is developed by the student. The IEP is developed by the school and school district, with parent and student participation as appropriate.

The SLP and the IEP reflect and take into account the student’s particular aptitudes, strengths, and accomplishments.	The IEP is a document written to support a student with special needs. The SLP is a document written to support all students in grades 9 - 12.
The SLP and the IEP are developed with reference to the same kinds of focus questions (e.g., What are the goals/aspirations? What steps need to be taken to realize them?).	The IEP contains information not found in the SLP (e.g., instructional adaptations, adaptations to evaluation procedures, specialist support to be provided).
Both the SLP and the IEP are reviewed and updated regularly.	

### ***IEP Teams***

The school principal, in consultation with the school-based team, names a case manager to establish an IEP team for a particular student. The team’s function is to develop, document, implement, and review the student’s IEP. Team members usually include parents, the student, teachers, and other service providers.

As much as their developmental level and ability permit, it is important for students with special needs to take an active role in the design of their IEPs. Factors affecting student participation in the development of an IEP or SLP include age, level of maturity, and capacity for sustained, considered deliberation based on an awareness of possibilities and consequences.

For students with special needs moving into adulthood, transition planning is a key element of their Individual Education Plan. The transition planning includes a statement of transition needs and recommended services.

The school is in a key position to provide a variety of coordinated activities that lead to employment and/or further education for students with special needs. It must make an early commitment to collaborative well-planned transitions from school to further training, supported work, or other environments. A student’s success in accessing post-secondary options and necessary supports for the future depends, in part, on consistent information flow and advanced planning, as well as on establishing firm links with other agencies and community partners. Where appropriate, the IEP team can refer to the Powell River Transition Committee, which will help identify and establish the links that should be made before the student leaves school. (See Section F: Transition Planning)

## **The Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

### ***What is an IEP?***

An IEP is a concise functional document that describes the program modifications and/or adaptations for the student and the services to be provided. Powell River school district has developed a standard IEP document.

Some students require small adaptations and minimum levels of support. Those with more complex needs may require detailed planning for educational modifications, adaptive

technologies, or health care needs. The IEP will be brief or more detailed, depending on the complexity of the student's needs.

For example, the IEP for a student who needs adapted examinations and support with note-taking can be relatively simple. For a student with multiple disabilities who requires the involvement of a variety of professionals, adaptive technologies, and major curricular modifications, the IEP will be much more extensive.

### ***What is an IEP for?***

The IEP serves a number of purposes.

- It formalizes planning decisions and processes, linking assessment with programming.
- It provides teachers, parents, and students a record of the educational program for a student with special needs and serves as the basis for reporting the student's progress.
- It serves as a tool for tracking individual student learning in terms of agreed-upon goals and objectives.
- It documents the relationships between support services being provided and the student's educational program.
- It provides administrators evidence of individualized planning.
- It provides parents and students a mechanism to make input into the individualized planning process.

### ***What Must an IEP Contain?***

The IEP document does not describe every aspect of the student's program. It makes reference only to modified or adapted aspects of the education program and identifies the support services to be provided. The IEP must detail:

- the learning outcomes established for the student for the school year, when these learning outcomes are different from those in the applicable educational program guide;
- a list of the support services required to enable the student to achieve those learning outcomes, whether they are provincially prescribed or individualized;
- a list of the adaptations to educational materials or instructional or assessment methods required to enable the student to achieve those learning outcomes, whether they are provincially prescribed or individualized.

Powell River IEPs also include:

- present levels of the student's educational performance;
- the names of all people who will provide the educational program and support services for the student during the school year;
- a description of the place where the educational program is to be provided;
- the period of time and process for review of the IEP;
- when applicable, plans for the next transition point in the student's education (including transitions beyond school completion).

When goals established for the student are different from the expected learning outcomes for age or grade, these goals need to be:

- set at a highest attainable level
- accompanied by measurable objectives developed for each goal to enable IEP review and evaluation.

### ***Who Develops the IEP?***

An IEP team that functions under the direction of a case manager develops IEPs. Powell River school principals, through the school-based team, ensure the appointment of a case manager to coordinate each IEP team.

Schools must give parents the opportunity to participate in the planning process and ensure they receive a copy of the IEP. As much as possible, the student should also participate in the process.

As necessary, other school district personnel or staff from community agencies may be involved in the IEP's development and play a role in its implementation.

### ***Who must have an IEP?***

All students with special needs must have an IEP. Exceptions can be made if:

- the student with special needs requires minor adaptations to educational materials or instructional or assessment methods;
- the expected learning outcomes in the applicable educational program guide have not been modified for the student with special needs; and
- in a school year, the student with special needs will receive 15 or fewer hours of remedial instruction from someone other than the classroom teacher in order to meet the expected learning outcomes.

These exceptions might apply to some students who receive Learning Assistance or Gifted Education services.

The IEP should document instances where the school offers services but the parent or student refuses them.

### ***Planning and Coordinating Powell River Community Services***

Students may require services and supports provided by agencies in the community. For example, some may need medical or therapeutic services offered through child development centres or clinics. Others may need support from a mental health worker or drug rehabilitation counsellor or services from a social worker or probation officer.

Community services are coordinated to avoid duplication and ensure consensus on goals, consistency in interventions, and an integrated approach to service delivery. School counsellors and Special Needs Teachers are responsible for cooperation with community services at the elementary level; the Community Child Care Coordinator and Special Needs Teachers are responsible at the secondary level. These staff members have key roles to:

- keep school staff informed of services available in the community;

- act as referral sources for community supports;
- through the case manager, help plan service delivery with community partners;
- ensure school-based services are coordinated with community services;
- communicate with school staff about the community services provided and those responsible for delivering them;
- assist in the review and evaluation of service delivery;
- facilitate and plan student transition from the school to the community;
- document the need for services; and
- facilitate the continuity of coordinated supports when students transfer between schools or districts.

For the most part, planning and service delivery works best when parents and students are active participants in the process. With older students who live independently, however, parent participation may not be appropriate.

## **Program Support/Implementation**

Program support/implementation means putting into practice the IEP plans, strategies, and supports agreed upon by the IEP team.

Before implementing the program/supports:

- everyone involved, including the student, needs to understand and support the plans;
- every effort must be made to ensure resources are in place, including necessary in-service (on recommended teaching strategies, for example).

Program support/implementation includes one or more of the following:

- adaptations to make the learning environment more accessible;
- alternate approaches to instruction and/or evaluation;
- use of adaptive technologies;
- provision of intensive instructional intervention (e.g., remedial, compensatory);
- modifications to curriculum content;
- provision of support services (e.g., speech and language therapy, occupational therapy or physiotherapy, counselling, teacher assistants);
- provision of specialized training (e.g., Braille, orientation and mobility, speech reading and sign language instruction).

Program implementation is always based on the IEP. It works best when everyone:

- sees the student with special needs as another student, not as a student defined exclusively by those special needs;
- uses observation, assessment and evaluation to refine and/or validate goals, strategies, etc.; and
- uses a collaborative team process.

# Evaluation of Student Learning

## ***Evaluation Standards***

Wherever possible, student evaluations use standards established for all students on both the modified and unmodified components of their program. Evaluation and reporting procedures accommodate the range of adaptations and modifications to recognize that students with special needs may:

- take part in the regular program with some adaptations (i.e., the student follows the same curriculum, but aspects of the program require adaptation);
- take part in the regular program, but with some modified components (i.e., in some areas, the student's expected learning outcomes are substantially different from those in the prescribed curriculum. For example, math may be totally individualized to have a life-skills orientation); and/or
- participate in a program that is completely modified (e.g., the program for a student with profound intellectual disabilities may focus on independence and self-care skills).

Many students have learning outcomes identical to those of their classmates, but the teacher may use adapted evaluation procedures, such as an oral rather than a written exam. The use of adapted evaluation procedures is noted in the student's IEP. Evaluation is based on whether these students meet learning outcomes for the course or program. The methods for evaluating and reporting progress are consistent with ministry grading and reporting policies for the K-12 program.

Some students require extensive modifications to their program. Some or all of their learning outcomes will be substantially different from those in the prescribed curriculum. Evaluation is based on the degree to which the students achieve these outcomes. In this case, evaluation is referenced to individually established standards.

Parents can help the school achieve and evaluate progress toward learning outcomes, particularly in the areas of social goals, life skills acquisition, and career exploration.

## ***Reporting Progress***

Ministerial Order 191/94, **Student Progress Report Order**

*Ministerial Order 397/94, Student progress reports for students with IEPs*

6. (1) In this section,

“IEP” means an individual education plan designed for a student that modifies or replaces the expected learning outcomes of a course or subject and grade set out in the curriculum and contains specific, individual goals and objectives and the expected learning outcomes for the student;

“Student with special needs” means a student who is enrolled in an educational program specified by the Minister for students with special needs.

(2) Sections 2 to 4 do not apply to student progress reports described in subsections (3) ...

(3) Unless a student with special needs is able to demonstrate his or her learning in relation to the expected learning outcomes set out in the curriculum for the course or subject and grade, a student progress report for that student must contain written comments describing

- (a) what the student is able to do,
- (b) the areas in which the student requires further attention or development, and
- (c) ways of supporting the student in his or her learning in relation to the expected learning outcomes set out in that student's IEP...

(5) Student progress reports referred to in sub-sections (3) ... must contain

- (a) a statement that the progress of the student is in relation to the expected learning outcomes for that student in his or her IEP and is not in relation to the expected learning outcomes set out in the curriculum for the course or subject and grade, and
- (b) where appropriate, written comments describing
  - (i) ways to enable the student to demonstrate his or her learning in relation to expected learning outcomes set out in the curriculum for the course or subject and grade, and
  - (ii) the time period required to enable the student to demonstrate his or her learning under subparagraph (i).

(6) A letter grade may only be assigned for a student with special needs... where that student is able to demonstrate his or her learning in relation to the expected learning outcomes set out in the curriculum for the course or subject and grade.

Powell River schools provide student progress reports for students with special needs in the same format and on the same schedule used for all students in the school. When necessary, additional informal reporting includes other procedures, such as daily logs and IEP updates.

When a student with special needs is expected to surpass or achieve the learning outcomes in the provincial curriculum, teachers follow regular letter-grading practices and reporting procedures. Instructional and assessment methods for some students with special needs may differ; these are reflected in their Individual Education Plan.

When professional support people other than the classroom teacher are responsible for providing some portion of the student's educational program (e.g., Speech-Language Pathologist, Physiotherapist), these specialists provide written reports on the student's progress as report card inserts.

Official transcripts of courses/marks identify modified courses, but not adaptations (e.g., oral exam). With written consent and in ways consistent with legislation on freedom of information and protection of privacy, schools communicate such information to post-secondary institutions or community agencies that provide adult services. (See Section F: Student Records, Use and Management)

# Section D

## Services

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<b>School Psychology Services.....</b>	<b>D-11</b>
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## **Section D: Services**

### **Learning Assistance Services**

#### ***Purpose***

Learning assistance is a non-categorical helping service to support classroom teachers who enrol students with special learning needs. This service, provided in each school in Powell River, is collaborative, varied, and innovative in order to address the needs of the whole child.\*\*

#### ***Description of Services***

In Powell River, learning assistance is combined with other special education services. Teachers who provide these services are called **Special Needs Teachers**. The Special Needs Teacher works with a number of classroom teachers to provide support for all students in their classrooms -- those classified in the Moderately Disabled and Severely Disabled categories; those with mild learning difficulties; and, in some cases, those learning English as a second language.

Learning assistance services are coordinated and integrated. They include:

- school-based consultation,
- collaborative planning and coordination with the school-based team,
- assessment and evaluation to Level B (see Section G: Appendix 2), and
- instruction.

#### ***Collaborative Planning and Coordination***

The Special Needs Teacher plays an active role in the identification, assessment, planning, implementation, reporting, and evaluation process. He or she is a member of the school-based team, provides collaborative consultation, assists with pre-referral interventions, and works closely with teachers and the school-based team to plan for, organize, and obtain support services for students with special needs.

#### ***Instruction***

Instructional services include:

- teaching students to develop learning strategies for classroom settings or independent learning;
- skill development or remediation; and

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\*\* In 1995-96, JC Hill school tested an electronic schooling program in a pilot project, for example. The system enabled parents and Special Needs Teachers to communicate and collaborate electronically on an individual student's program.

- development of compensatory skills to minimize the effect of a disabling condition on learning.

Students who receive ongoing learning assistance have an Individual Education Plan.

The setting for direct instruction provided by Special Needs Teachers (classroom, learning assistance centre, or some combination of both) is based on student needs and instructional goals.

### ***Consultation***

Services include:

- collaboration with classroom teachers to design or implement instructional strategies or adapt instructional content or materials;
- advising teachers on adjustments to curriculum, instruction, or classroom environmental factors that might make learning easier for a student or group of students;
- consulting with parents and students about learning strategies and organizational skills; and
- consulting with district and community resource personnel.

### ***Assessment***

The purpose of assessment and evaluation is to plan and implement an educational program to help the student learn. The assessment support may include:

- criterion-referenced or norm-referenced assessment to Level B (see Section G, Appendix 2) as required to answer specific instructional questions;
- systematic observation and collection of behavioural information to establish baseline/progress data or describe functional behaviours;
- synthesis of information from parents, student records, and other service providers with health-related information to aid the assessment process; and
- in-depth interviews with students to determine their knowledge of the learning process and/or thinking strategies.

### ***Access to Learning Assistance Services***

Learning assistance services are responsive, learner-focused, and equitable. Requests to support students may come from a variety of people (teachers, counsellors, parents, students, and community agency personnel). The school-based team receives the requests, prioritizes the needs of the students, and equitably allocates available resources.

### ***Evaluation***

Responsibility for evaluating learning assistance services and individual staff who provide the services rests with the school principal.

## **Personnel**

### **Qualifications**

Special Needs Teachers providing learning assistance services in Powell River possess:

- strong interpersonal, communication, and collaborative skills;
- expertise in a wide range of teaching and management strategies;
- knowledge of methods to evaluate and select instructional materials suitable for students with a variety of special needs;
- the ability to carry out a variety of assessments, including classroom observation, administration and interpretation of norm-referenced assessment instruments to Level B (see Section G, Appendix 2), curriculum-based assessment, and diagnostic teaching methods; and
- the ability to contribute to the development, implementation, and evaluation of an IEP in consultation with classroom teacher(s), parents, students, and district and community resource personnel.

Powell River Special Needs Teachers meet the following qualifications:

- A Bachelor of Education degree or equivalent
- A minimum two years of successful classroom teaching experience
- University-level courses in the following areas:
  - \* teaching students with special needs;
  - \* assessment/testing theory and practice;
  - \* strategies for teaching, modifying, and adapting the curriculum to meet the diverse individual needs of students; and
  - \* collaborative consultation.

They also have training to provide services to specific categories of special needs.

### **Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Anita Adams, Max Cameron Secondary School  
Gertrude Buchanan, Grief Point Elementary School  
Josilynn Delile, Kelly Creek Community School  
Sandra Fahey, James Thomson Elementary School  
Owen Gaskell, JP Dallos Middle School  
Nadya Hocking, Brooks Secondary School  
Diane Lawn, Max Cameron Secondary School  
Lois Montgomery, JP Dallos Middle School  
Faye Perry, Edgehill Elementary School  
Janice Rayson, Brooks Secondary School  
Nadia Schultz, Texada School  
Sharon Scott, Henderson Elementary School

Veronica Soloman, Westview Learning Centre  
Hanna Verkerk-English, Kelly Creek Community School  
Sandra Whitehouse, Oceanview Middle School

**Service Level, 1997-98**

6.9 Full Time Equivalent Special Needs Teachers

## **Counselling: Elementary and Middle Schools**

Counselling is a focused and purposeful process designed to:

- help students grow intellectually, socially and emotionally;
- support career development;
- avoid or resolve problems; and
- meet crises.

In Powell River's elementary and middle schools, various personnel undertake different aspects of counselling. Classroom teachers are asked to adopt a learner focus with educational goals that include:

- joining with parents to foster personal and career development,
- helping students make smooth educational transitions, and
- conducting class meetings and individual conferences to facilitate interpersonal problem solving.

Local elementary and middle school students also benefit from general and specific professional counselling services provided by trained teacher counsellors and, as appropriate, other trained professional personnel. School counsellors have a close working relationship with community agencies to provide individual students coordinated planning and service responses.

### ***Programs and Services***

Elementary and middle school counselling programs and services are school-based, non-categorical, and designed to support students, their families, and educators. School principals and the Director of Instruction (Special Services) provide program direction.

Because these programs and services support and enhance the intellectual, human, social and career goals of education, they form an integral part of education in schools. Specific services delivered to individual students by school district, contracted, or agency personnel may complement them.

School counsellors provide a continuum of preventative, developmental, remedial, and intervention programs and services. The school counsellor's role includes direct student counselling, school and community-based consultation, coordination, and education.

### ***Programs***

The following are examples of some programs currently offered by elementary and middle school counsellors.

#### **Small Group Process**

Structured learning groups under the direction of the school counsellor are designed to facilitate a particular concept or skill.

**Social Skills:** Improve students' self-esteem and social interaction skills. Counsellors typically use a combination of psycho-educational and behavioural approaches, including modeling, role playing, performance training, and transfer of training.

**Self-concept:** Encourage a better understanding of individual strengths and weaknesses.

**Communication:** Strengthen listening and communication skills.

**Divorce:** Help students deal with family situations involving divorce and separations.

**Self-control:** Help students develop responsibility and an understanding of their own behaviour. The sessions include anti-violence workshops (bullying prevention), conflict resolution, and stress management.

### **Substance Abuse**

### **Classroom or Larger Group Guidance**

Counsellors help teachers implement the Personal Planning (elementary) and Career and Personal Planning (middle school) curricula. These include areas such as:

- study skills
- school success skills
- abuse (physical/sexual)
- sex education
- drug education
- safety
- transitions: school entry, grade to grade, school leaving
- career study/guidance

### **School-Wide Helping Programs**

Some schools have adopted programs such as *Second Step* or *Lion's Quest*. School counsellors play a key role in planning and facilitating the programs and supporting staff in the process.

### **Crisis Intervention/Grief Counselling**

Counsellors are often involved in identifying children who may be neglected, abused, involved with alcohol or other drugs, or suicidal, and in referring them to other ministries.

The sudden loss of a peer, family member, or close friend is difficult for anyone, particularly a child or adolescent who may be experiencing such a tragedy for the first time. Over the last few years, our schools have been traumatized by tragic events such as suicide or sudden death. These incidents are always difficult and may affect the total student population and staff.

Counsellors make themselves available to serve on Crisis Intervention Teams (CITs), which are designed to respond to the needs of a school experiencing loss. (See Section F, Appendix 1, Protocols)

### **School-Wide Initiatives**

Counsellors seek to improve the school climate and enhance the life of the school by organizing or helping with:

- peer helping/tutoring programs
- orientation programs
- healthy school programs
- school publicity through newsletters and newspapers

- coordination of special events or school activities, such as Drug Awareness Week, Career Awareness, Leadership Functions.

## **Services**

### **Counselling**

School counsellors provide school-based, holistic, multifaceted counselling services equally accessible to all students. School counselling focuses on enhancing students' development, helping to establish an enabling school culture, and empowering students toward constructive decision-making and positive change.

Elementary and middle school counselling functions include individual, group, and class work to provide both intervention and prevention services. School counsellors:

- promote and help foster personal and social development appropriate to developmental stages;
- counsel students and consult with their families to foster growth in the students' self esteem, individual responsibility, and decision-making and social skills;
- improve factors that may precipitate problems for students;
- conduct student learning and behavioural assessments;
- guide students' educational achievement through goal setting, helping to develop IEPs, and activities such as promotion of effective work and study habits;
- provide appropriate interventions to help students with school-related problems and issues; and
- facilitate the goals of career education.

### **School and District-based Consultation and Planning**

School counsellors consult and plan collaboratively with students, other educators, the school-based team, parents, community agency personnel, and other professionals in planning goals and strategies to promote students' educational, social, emotional and career development. Consultation may focus on students' individual needs or on school, district, or community programs or services. School counsellors are active participants in the development of IEPs and Student Learning Plans (SLPs).

### **Coordination**

Elementary and middle school counsellors are standing members of the school-based team. They help facilitate coordination of and access to school, district, and other community services for students. Coordination includes information gathering, case management, referral, and liaison among home, school, and community. School counsellors help students with transitions between elementary schools, from elementary to middle school, and from middle to secondary school.

### **Education**

School counsellors often directly instruct students in areas such as peer helping, conflict resolution, social skills, and life skills. They also provide support to help other educators

implement career and personal planning and promote healthy school environments and comprehensive student health services. Their educational role includes staff and curriculum development and district committee work in areas such as child abuse, drug and alcohol prevention, gender equity<sup>\*</sup>, and suicide prevention.

### ***Access to School Counselling Services***

Each school has established referral procedures for educators, students and their families, and community personnel who wish to use the services of school counsellors. The school-based team is usually involved in accessing school counselling services.

### ***Access to Community Counselling Services***

A number of agencies and ministries (e.g., Youth and Family Services, Powell River Mental Health Centre, Ministry of Children and Families, Corrections Branch, New Life Counselling, Sliammon Native Indian Drug and Alcohol Program) offer counselling and mental health related services. In most cases, these services are offered in community facilities outside the school. (See Section G: Appendix 1, Local Protocol Agreements)

In some cases, agency or ministry personnel provide mental health/counselling services in schools (e.g., substance abuse counsellors). These outside services are coordinated with school-based services through a community case management process developed by the Powell River Child and Youth Committee. (See Section F: Community Case Management)

For some counselling and mental health related services provided in the community, the Powell River school district and the respective agency or ministry have developed inter-agency agreements (see Section G, Appendix 1).

### ***Evaluation***

Responsibility for evaluating elementary and middle school counselling programs and services and individual staff providing those services rests with the school principal, in consultation with the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

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<sup>\*</sup> The final report of the School District #47 (Powell River) Gender Equity Project (Oct. 1994) is available through the Special Services Division.

## ***Personnel***

### **Qualifications**

In Powell River, each elementary and middle school counsellor meets the following qualifications:

- a professional teaching certificate;
- a Master's degree recognized by the College of Teachers in counselling, psychology, or post-graduate work with a focus in counselling.

### **Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Gerald Brach, Elementary Counsellor, Grief Point

Owen Gaskell, Elementary Counsellor, Edgehill, Kelly Creek Community School, and École Côte Sol

Richard Hughes, Middle School Counsellor, Oceanview

Iris Kramer-Clarke, Middle School Counsellor, JP Dallos

Russ Macdonald, Elementary Counsellor, Henderson and Texada

Toni Marciniak, Elementary Counsellor, James Thomson and Lund

Michelle Tom, Middle School Counsellor, Oceanview

### **Service Level, 1997-98**

1.5 Full Time Equivalent Elementary Counsellors

1.4 Full Time Equivalent Middle School Counsellors

# **School Psychology Services**

## ***Purpose***

School psychology services are district-based and non-categorical. They include educational assessment and mental health services. They support students, school personnel, and parents in enhancing students' academic, adaptive, and social skills.

## ***Description of Services***

School psychology services play a supportive role in the identification, assessment, planning, implementation, reporting, and evaluation process for IEPs.

School psychologists

- provide collaborative consultation,
- help with pre-referral interventions,
- provide psycho-educational assessments for students referred by the school-based team,
- participate in ongoing collaborative planning for individual students,
- provide advice, supervision, or management for normative testing activities within the school district,
- may contribute to the design and evaluation of the IEP,
- may provide in-service training in the area of assessment.

## ***Consultation and Collaboration***

Services include:

- consultation with teachers, parents, students, and community agencies on the nature of students' strengths and needs, their educational implications, and ways to enhance learning and interpersonal relations; and
- collaboration with school-based and/or district personnel to gather classroom-based data, design or implement instructional strategies, and design and implement behaviour management interventions.

## ***Informal/Formal Assessment and Evaluation***

When the school-based team decides it is necessary to gather additional information in order to provide appropriate instruction, they may refer a student for psycho-educational assessment. The team takes this step only after considerable pre-referral assessment and intervention.

Informal/formal assessment services may include systematic observation, file review, interdisciplinary consultation, interviews, and/or administration of norm-referenced diagnostic instruments (see Section G: Appendix 2). The goal is to determine academic skill development, intellectual functioning, and strengths and weaknesses in cognitive/learning processes and social/adaptive functioning.

Psycho-educational assessments serve diagnostic and planning functions for students with special needs. The assessments help teachers and parents better understand the nature of the special need, developmental factors, and educational, social, emotional, and career

implications. Assessment information is used for planning, goal setting, and selecting teaching, behavioural, and evaluation interventions and strategies.

Psychologists summarize assessment findings in a written report shared with the parent/guardian, school-based personnel and, when appropriate, the student. They are required to tell parents how the report will be shared with others working with the student.

### ***Other Services***

Psychologists also help school and district staff by:

- providing in-service training for professional and teacher assistant staff (e.g., assessment processes, behaviour management, observational techniques/data gathering, and crisis intervention);
- participating or assisting in program evaluation and research activities;
- coordinating district-wide achievement testing;
- providing counselling services and case management for students with mental health needs;
- organizing professional development activities;
- developing protocols on assessment, mental health, or crisis response issues.

### ***Access to School Psychology Services***

Powell River school district has established procedures designed to give teachers, students, and parents equitable access to psychology services. It has also established a protocol for informed, written consent in the case of interventions and assessments, and for protecting the confidentiality of reports.

### ***Evaluation***

Responsibility for evaluating school psychology services and individual staff rests with the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

## ***Personnel***

### **Qualifications**

Powell River school psychologists have the following qualifications:

- a Master's degree in school/educational psychology or a related field with a focus on school psychology
- a professional teaching certificate and/or extensive experience with public school students.

Educational and psychological tests are generally categorized according to the levels of training required of the test administrators (see Section G: Appendix 2, Assessment Guidelines). Powell River school district ensures that personnel who administer these tests have appropriate levels of training or are supervised by school psychologists with appropriate levels of training.

### **Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Joan Duckett, BA, MSc, member, BC Association of School Psychologists; member, BC Association of Clinical Counsellors

### **Service Level, 1997-98**

1.0 Full Time Equivalent School Psychologists

# Speech-Language Pathology

**Reference: Ministerial Order 149/89, Support Services for Schools Order**, requires that:  
(3) A board of school trustees shall provide speech and language therapy services for students of school age who attend a school in the district and whose education is adversely affected by oral communication difficulties.

## **Purpose**

Speech-language pathology is a professional discipline primarily directed to support students whose educational and/or social progress is adversely affected by communication difficulties. In Powell River, the school district speech-language pathologist functions as part of a student's educational team. Educators and the school district speech-language pathologist collaborate to optimize students' communication skills and implement their programs within all of their educational routines.

## **Objectives**

- Support speech development by:
  - a) improving articulation skills
  - b) increasing voice skills in the areas of pitch, loudness, or quality
  - c) improving fluency
- Support language development by:
  - d) improving form
  - e) improving content
  - f) improving use
  - g) increasing verbal and non-verbal communication skills through increased motivation to acquire vocabulary and express needs
- Support educational goals by:
  - h) increasing cognitive skills through learning to follow instructions, categorize information, and conceptualize
  - i) increasing attention span, self-control, and concentration
  - j) improving self-confidence
- Support the social/emotional goals of education by:
  - k) increasing self-esteem
  - l) helping students develop a sense of responsibility
  - m) increasing opportunity for social interaction
  - n) increasing independence and self-discipline

## **Services**

The school district speech-language pathologist provides services to any student with delayed, disordered, or atypical speech and/or language skills. Speech and/or language difficulties can start at any age and in any segment of the school population. Although they may arise in isolation from any other special education considerations, they are often associated with intellectual disabilities, autism, physical disabilities, sensory impairments, severe emotional/behaviour problems, learning disabilities, or other learning difficulties.

Not all children with these disorders will require direct intervention by a speech-language pathologist, but information sharing and monitoring of needs through collaboration among professionals and team management ensures that appropriate and coordinated services are provided. Services by the school district speech-language pathologist include:

- screening and assessment
- consultation and staff training
- planning and development
- implementation of goals for students individually, in classroom settings, or in small groups, as appropriate
- assistance in diagnosis
- assistance in equipment selection/adaptation for alternative and augmentative communication
- information sharing with families and other community-based services.

The advice provided by the school district speech-language pathologist and the goals and expectations established for students are included in an Individual Education Plan, which is monitored in a manner consistent with other aspects of the student's program.

### ***Access to Speech-Language Pathology Services***

The School district Special Services Division receives referral for service through the school-based team. Students referred to the speech-language pathologist are first screened at the school level to determine their specific communication needs.

Students who require direct intervention are seen on a schedule of sufficient frequency and duration to help them progress toward established communication goals. Direct intervention is sometimes provided after school hours in the therapy and observation room at Edgehill Elementary School. This specialized work space is equipped with an observation window that enables parents to observe speech sessions unobtrusively so that they can follow up with carry-over activities at home where appropriate.

Where a student's needs are addressed through collaborative consultation with other educators, our speech-language pathologists clearly and concisely document needs, goals, intervention strategies, and outcomes.

### ***Parent-Child Evening Program***

Twice a year, the school district provides a parent-child evening course for students with mild articulation difficulties who, because of extended waiting lists, may never receive direct services. The program provides intensive practice for the child and training to enable the parent to reinforce correct sounds at home.

The program uses the conference room at the Special Services office. It is equipped with the Speech Viewer III for "visual and auditory feedback to analyze and improve the speech skills of people who have speech, language, or hearing disorders".

***Evaluation***

Responsibility for evaluating speech-language pathology staff rests with the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

## ***Personnel***

### **Qualifications**

Standards of training and practice for speech-language pathologists in British Columbia are documented by the British Columbia and Canadian Associations of Speech-language Pathologists and Audiologists. The speech-language pathologists who provide services to students in the Powell River school district meet the standards for membership in these associations.

### **Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Stephanie Keane, School District Speech-Language Pathologist, BA, MSc., S-LP(C)

Almut S. Vogel, School District Speech-Language Pathologist, BSc, MSc, S-LP

### **Service Level, 1997-98**

2.0 Full Time Equivalent Speech-Language Pathologists

# Physiotherapy/Occupational\* Therapy

## ***Purpose***

Physiotherapy is a professional discipline primarily directed toward the promotion, maintenance, and restoration of the skills necessary for optimal physical functioning. In Powell River, the school district physiotherapist is part of a student's educational team, whose major role is to enhance functional and educational performance of school-aged children. Educators and the school district physiotherapist collaborate to optimize the student's physical functioning and implement the student's therapeutic goals within all of the student's educational routines.

## ***Programs***

The Adapted Aquatics Program and the Therapeutic Horse Riding Program are resources for a target population of students with special needs from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The programs usually supplement a school-based PE program; for some students, they replace the regular PE curriculum.

Supervised by the physiotherapist, the programs use community facilities and a combination of school district and community support staff. Signed parent permission is required to include a student in these programs.

Students with physical disabilities are first referred to the physiotherapist for assessment to determine their levels of gross and fine motor skills. If there are no medical contraindications, students may be eligible for the program. Under certain circumstances, elementary school counsellors or rehabilitation resource program teachers may refer students with severe behaviour disorders to the programs.

Goals, objectives, and strategies discussed and established at the student's school team meeting are included in the student's IEP (Individual Education Plan). Because therapeutic riding and adapted aquatics are incorporated into many different goal areas, including gross motor, fine motor, speech, cognitive, and behavioural, a team approach is essential. Programs are discussed with the student's parents and, if appropriate, the student.

## **Therapeutic Horse Riding Program**

This program uses the facilities of the Powell River Therapeutic Riding Association, a non-profit organization set up to enable children with physical or mental disabilities to ride horses. The school district provides support staff and contracts with the Association for a riding instructor.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the program is to provide therapy on horseback and teach riding skills to children with disabilities. Therapeutic riding enables students to experience the joy and freedom of riding, builds self-esteem, confidence, and independence, and provides therapeutic

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\* Occupational therapy is a professional health discipline that uses the analysis and application of specific activities. Although School District 47 currently does not employ a registered Occupational Therapist, it will contract services when required.

benefits such as improved balance, posture, and coordination. The warmth and movement of the horse also helps relax and strengthen muscles and joints.

Before an individualized program is set up, the student's strengths and needs are assessed and contraindications documented. The first step of the program is to make students familiar and comfortable with the horse. When students feel relaxed on the horse's back and enjoy the experience of the horse's motion, the program introduces horseback exercises, group activities and games, riding skills, and trail rides.

Some students progress to independent riding without any direct assistance, while others will always need a horse-leader and sidewalkers while riding. In many cases, senior students learn to serve as volunteer sidewalkers or meet work experience requirements through their participation in the riding program.

### **Objectives**

- Support gross motor development by:
  - a) decreasing abnormal tone and facilitating normal posture and automatic reactions;
  - b) aiding muscle strengthening, stretching, and relaxation;
  - c) improving balance, coordination, and normal movement patterns;
  - d) improving sensori-motor integration by providing proprioceptive and vestibular input.
- Support educational goals by:
  - e) increasing verbal and non-verbal communication skills through increased motivation to acquire vocabulary and express needs;
  - f) increasing cognitive skills through learning to follow directional instructions, categorize information, and conceptualize;
  - g) increasing attention span, self-control, and concentration;
  - h) improving body awareness, self-discipline, and self-confidence.
- Support the social/emotional goals of education by:
  - i) increasing self-esteem through skill mastery;
  - j) helping develop a sense of responsibility;
  - k) increasing opportunity for social interaction;
  - l) increasing independence, self-discipline, and self-confidence.

### **Adapted Aquatics Program**

Adapted aquatics can provide physiological, psychological, social, and recreational gains for students with special needs. It is increasingly recognized as a valuable part of an educational and therapeutic program for children with developmental disabilities.

The program permits aquatic access to a group of students unable to take regular swimming lessons. It helps them overcome fears and become comfortable in the water and provides opportunity to experience new movement and acquire new motor skills. For students who are non-ambulatory or have limited ambulation, adapted aquatics provides a rare opportunity to enjoy freedom of movement and the accompanying sense of achievement and well-being.

For students at a pre-beginner level, the immediate goal may simply be to become comfortable and confident in the water, learn to relax and move in the water, and enjoy the experience.

**Purpose**

The Adapted Aquatics Program is designed to support gross motor development and educational and behavioural goals.

**Program Access**

Written referrals are accepted for school-aged children with significant physical disabilities, whose levels of gross and fine motor skills have been assessed by the physiotherapist. In some cases, consultation with the child's physician may be advisable.

The physiotherapist sets up goals, objectives and strategies, which are discussed at the student's school team meeting and become part of the student's IEP. Because adapted aquatics will be incorporated into many different goals (fine and gross motor, speech, cognitive, and behavioural), a team approach is essential.

The physiotherapist discusses the program with the student's parents and the student, if appropriate.

**Program Description**

The district adapted aquatics program is held for 60 minutes once a week during school hours at the Complex swimming pool.

A lifeguard on the Complex staff is on duty during the swimming program to ensure the safety of participants in the water and oversee safe practices on the pool deck and in the water. Lifeguards are not responsible for assisting individual children outside of this role.

Support Service Assistants (SSAs) or Health Care Assistants (HCAs) accompany children to the pool. They oversee and assist with dressing and undressing, showering, and safe passage into and out of the pool. Assistants must be in the pool with their assigned students at all times to help implement the program.

On the first visit to the pool, the school district physiotherapist assesses the student's current level of functioning, using the Developmental Aquatic Assessment (DAA). The assessment looks at six progressive skill areas:

1. mental and physical adjustment to water
2. entering and exiting the pool safely
3. range of motion in the water
4. balance and flotation
5. breath control and respiratory function
6. active movement through the water.

In compliance with DAA scores, the physiotherapist establishes an individual swimming program for each student. The physiotherapist provides SSAs and HCAs in service as part of the individualized program for their assigned students.

**Evaluation**

Using the DAA as a continuous assessment tool, the physiotherapist regularly checks student progress and modifies the program to meet changing needs. Recommendations are carried over into the student's school team or IEP meetings.

**School-based Activities**

Using school-based resources, some schools have established swimming activities for individual students or small groups of students with special needs. The physiotherapist is available to these schools for consultation on matters of programming or safety.

## **Services**

The school district physiotherapist provides services to students with a special needs, focusing on students with physical disabilities and health problems. Physical disabilities and developmental delays may be noted in students who have other special needs, but they can also occur in isolation.

Although not all students with physical disabilities or delays require physical/occupational therapies or consultation, all students who have these conditions are drawn to the attention of the school district physiotherapist. To determine a student's needs for physiotherapy or occupational therapy services, the physiotherapist reviews reports, interviews parents or guardians, observes and assesses the student's needs, and consults with education staff and/or appropriate medical personnel.

The school-based team handles information sharing, monitoring of needs, and requests for health assessments and subsequent referral to ensure that appropriate services are considered for every child.

The school district physiotherapist provides:

- assistance in physical positioning to promote optimal physical access
- assistance in maximizing independence for students and prevention and alleviation of movement dysfunction
- screening and assessment
- consultation and staff training
- program planning, development, and implementation
- assistance in diagnosis
- assistance in equipment selection/adaptation
- specialized transportation arrangements and schedules

The advice provided by the school district physiotherapist and the routines established for students are included in an Individual Education Plan, which is monitored in a manner consistent with other aspects of the student's program.

Students with physical disabilities may require adaptations in facilities or provision of specialized equipment or technologies. The physiotherapist will often be able to provide useful advice to school personnel in these matters.

## **Access to School District Physiotherapy Services**

The district Special Services Division receives referrals for service through the school-based team. Students referred to the physiotherapist are first screened to determine their specific physical problems and needs.

## ***Access to Community Physiotherapy Services***

When “direct” service (i.e. direct treatment) is required, either temporarily or long-term, the school district physiotherapist or a student’s physician makes a referral to a community-based physiotherapist. This kind of service, considered a matter between health professionals and the family, is beyond the realm of the school district’s responsibility. When students are enrolled in ongoing therapy programs, efforts are made to establish and maintain communication between health personnel, the student’s home, and school staff. This helps ensure consistency among environments and mutually supportive case management practices.

## ***Evaluation***

Responsibility for evaluating physiotherapy program services and individual staff performance rests with the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

## **Personnel**

### **Qualifications**

The College of Physical Therapists of British Columbia determines standards of training for physiotherapists and issues licenses to qualified practitioners. Possession of a current license is a requirement for practising physiotherapy in British Columbia. Those who provide physiotherapy services in schools must meet standards established by the College.

Support Service Assistants who work in the Therapeutic Horse Riding Program and the Adapted Aquatics Program meet requirements established by the Board of School Trustees. The school district physiotherapist provides SSAs in-service training to ensure they have the skills and training for the duties they are assigned, including:

- an understanding of the social, emotional, and educational implications of physical disabilities;
- a comfort level around horses and functional swimming skills; and
- lifting and positioning skills.

### **Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Carmel Behan, Support Service Assistant

Daphne Wilson, *diploma*, Trinity College, Dublin; Member Chartered Society of Physiotherapists; member of the College of Physical Therapists of BC

### **Service Level, 1997-98**

.5 Full Time Equivalent physiotherapist

9 hrs per week Support Service Assistant support

# **Hospital Education Services**

## ***Purpose***

Hospital education services enable students to continue their educational program while hospitalized.

## ***Description of Services***

Depending on their health, it is important for hospitalized students to continue an educational program as similar as possible to the program they would receive in school.

Although the hospital teacher provides classroom assignments and instructional support for students in hospital, the classroom teacher maintains ongoing responsibility for co-ordinating the student's educational program.

Powell River has established procedures to:

- ensure all appropriate school assignments are provided to the student;
- report student progress;
- ensure collaboration, consultation and coordination with all caregivers (e.g., physician, mental health and social work personnel);
- ensure access to facilities appropriate to good learning conditions within the hospital setting;
- delineate relative responsibilities of the parents, principal, classroom teacher, related school district and community personnel, and the hospital education teacher while a student is receiving hospital instruction; and
- maintain records of referrals received and educational services provided to hospitalized students.

The Powell River school district coordinates with other school districts in the province to ensure that students temporarily hospitalized outside Powell River receive instruction.

## ***Access to Hospital Education Services***

Students eligible for education services within the hospital include those with medical conditions including injury, disease, surgery, pregnancy, or psychological disability. The district receives authorization from the attending physician before providing services. Instruction begins as soon as the student's medical condition permits.

## ***Evaluation***

Responsibility for evaluating the hospital education services and individual staff performance rests with the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

## ***Personnel***

Teacher assistants work as required with students on the hospital education teacher's caseload under the direction of the hospital teacher.

## **Qualifications**

The hospital education teacher demonstrates:

- successful teaching experience at the elementary, middle, or secondary level;
- knowledge of health care and Powell River community services;
- the ability to work effectively with parents, public health and hospital personnel, medical staff and, following discharge of students, homebound teachers or other school district personnel;
- knowledge of curricula and instructional resources across a range of school years;
- knowledge of distance education techniques and computer-assisted learning;
- knowledge of human behaviour and the ability to work effectively with students who have medical and/or psychological problems;
- knowledge of child development and an understanding of the educational needs of exceptional children; and
- skills to assess the educational needs of a student and modify learning activities, intended outcomes, teaching techniques, and materials to meet the student's specific needs.

## **Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Gerald Brach, BEd; MEd; Member, BC Association of Clinical Counsellors; BC Council of the Family

## **Service Level, 1997-98**

.1 Full Time Equivalent

# Homebound Education Services

## ***Purpose***

Homebound education services enable students to continue their education program while absent from school for periods during the school year because of illness or related medical/psychiatric reasons.

## ***Program***

Powell River school district offers an electronic schooling program for students with special needs who, for physical, social, or emotional reasons, cannot continue their education in traditional school settings. Electronic schooling is a form of learning that enables students to obtain part or all of an educational program from home through computer technology and telecommunications.

The district loans a computer and modem to each student who qualifies for the electronic school program and facilitates access to the school district's first class server. The homebound program teachers download instructional and other resource material relevant to each student's IEP and send it to the student's confidential folder, located on the server.

The students interact with their teachers, respond to their assignments, and receive feedback from their teachers. Their parents have access to their child's folder and the public folder and may use them to communicate with other students, parents, teachers and administrators.

## ***Services***

Homebound education services provide students an educational program as similar as possible to the program they would receive at school. Teachers contact students regularly and provide sessions long enough to enable students to maintain their educational program to the extent that medical or social/emotional conditions allow. The services ensure regular contact between the homebound program teacher, principal, classroom teacher(s), and parents or guardians, and access to all available school district resources.

Although teachers of homebound students provide direct instruction, in most cases, responsibility for long-term planning of the students' educational program remains with the students' classroom teacher(s), in collaboration with the homebound teacher and the school-based team.

In some instances when a student is experiencing social or emotional difficulties, the team develops alternative educational plans in collaboration with the community mental health team and other service providers as appropriate.

Powell River has established procedures to:

- ensure direct instruction is provided to the student;
- report student progress;
- address issues such as parent or guardian presence in the home, service to students with communicable diseases, and potentially unsafe conditions;
- outline relative responsibilities of the parents, principal, classroom teacher, related school district and community personnel, and homebound teachers while a student is on homebound instruction; and
- ensure collaboration, consultation, and coordination with all caregivers (e.g., physicians, mental health and social work personnel).

### ***Access to Homebound Education Services***

Powell River school district is required to make an educational program available to all school-age residents enrolled in a district school. The district also maintains appropriate educational programs for students who will be absent from school for extended periods of time. Instruction is started as soon as possible. Before providing services to students with medical conditions or medical alerts, the district receives authorization from physicians or public health nurses.

Students eligible for homebound services include:

- students absent from school for medical reasons such as injury, disease, surgery, pregnancy, psychological reasons; and
- students referred by the Powell River School District Review Committee

This program is only one option for students with severe behavioural or emotional problems. Students registered under Section 13 of the School Act (Home Education) are not eligible for homebound education services.

### ***Evaluation***

Responsibility for evaluating the homebound program services and individual staff performance rests with the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

## ***Personnel***

### **Qualifications**

Homebound teachers in Powell River have more than five years elementary, middle, or secondary school teaching experience. They demonstrate:

- knowledge of health care and Powell River community services;
- the ability to work effectively with Powell River parents, school staff, district personnel, medical personnel, and community agencies;
- knowledge of curricula and instructional resources across a range of school years;
- knowledge of human behaviour and the ability to work effectively with students who have emotional or social problems;
- knowledge of child development and an understanding of the educational needs of exceptional children;
- the skills necessary to assess the educational needs of a student and modify curriculum, teaching techniques, and materials to meet the student's specific needs;
- knowledge of distance education techniques and computer-assisted learning.

### **Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Gerald Brach, BEd; MEd; Member, BC Association of Clinical Counsellors; BC Council of the Family

### **Service Level, 1997-98**

.4 Full Time Equivalent teachers

# School Family Services

## ***Purpose***

School Family Services are intended to address physical, behavioural, emotional, and/or social development concerns that may be directly related to home factors.

## ***Services***

School Family Services are available to provide:

- guidance to students in an individual or group setting to address issues that may be interfering with learning or social development. Areas may include social skills (*How to Talk So Kids Will Listen*), anger management, conflict resolution, negotiating areas of conflict, problem-solving skills, improving school performance, drug and alcohol issues, and communication skills.
- family consultations about home/school concerns
- guidance to parents about parenting programs (STEP, Parenting Teens, Conflict Resolution) and increasing parenting skills (positive consequences, consistency, behavioural charting, setting limits, awareness of developmental stages).
- linkages with community services as required for service continuity (e.g. contacting outside agencies for counselling, medical referrals and other support services). This may include connecting students to appropriate services, coordinating student use of those services, and ensuring that students receive necessary services.
- intervention strategies and plans
- discussions with parents to address concerns
- consultation with appropriate school and agency personnel about potential neglect or abuse, protection concerns, and at-risk students
- management strategies for teachers and administrators to ensure child personal safety
- child and parent advocacy to promote maximum inclusion of students with social needs in schools and the community
- enhancing home/school relationships and communication

School family services are documented in the form of progress summaries, social histories, intervention statements, recommendations, and assessment records. This confidential information is shared only on a need-to-know basis. Students and parents have a right to know what information is being collected and how it is being used under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (1992) (see Section F).

## **Access to School Family Services**

Referrals may be generated:

1. at the school or district level by an administrator or an administrator's designate, using the *Request for School and Family Services* form; or
2. at the school level, using the standard district *Request for Special Services*.

An assessment follows the receipt of each referral. It may include all or some of the following:

- Compiling a family social history, gathering information from classroom teachers, community teams, and outside agencies involved with the student, and interviewing teachers, parents, students, and other professionals.
- Conducting level one drug and alcohol assessments
- Assessing family functioning and other factors, such as individual student concerns, family impact (home environment, family system relationships, communication and interaction styles), school system (programming needs, behaviour management issues), and community involvement (community impact on the student).
- Determining the impact of family functioning on student behaviour at school
- Observing students in the school environment and recording observations using anecdotal records or behaviour checklists
- Reporting recommendations for action.

## **Evaluation**

Responsibility for evaluating the School-Family Services Coordinator rests with the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

## ***Personnel***

### **Qualifications**

The School-Family Services Coordinator provides school family services. The position requires a professional degree in Social Work, Child and Youth Care, or a related field, and experience working with students with severe behaviour disorders and their families. The School-Family Services Coordinator demonstrates:

- the knowledge and skills to develop intervention plans and goals at the student level (attention disorders, social skills, study skills, etc.), the system level (peer mentoring, crisis management, social skills), and the family level (home-school collaboration)
- the ability to develop and maintain communication with Powell River parents, school staff, district personnel, social services personnel, and community agencies
- knowledge of social services and Powell River community services
- knowledge of the school system across a range of school years.

### **Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Victoria Bleaney, Child and Youth Care Worker

Sheri Rhodes, BSW, Diploma, Child and Youth Care Counselling

### **Service Level, 1997-98**

1.0 Full Time Equivalent professional staff

11.8 hrs per week Child and Youth Care Support

# **Work Experience/Job Training: Students with Special Needs**

## ***Purpose***

The career paths for students with special needs are as varied as those for other students. While some students will wish to enter a university or community college, others may choose an apprenticeship program. Some students, because of their interests or the challenging nature of their special needs, may require an approach including extensive on-site training and the provision of technical aids. Others may require pre-job preparation and extensive simulation and practice.

Work study/work experience can provide educators a "real world" laboratory where students have the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills and increase their independence and self-esteem. Services for students with special needs form an integral part of the district work experience program.

Students with special needs have access to career education opportunities available to students in the school they attend, including job shadowing, career preparation, co-operative education, and any other career program or activity offered by the school.

Within the context of the regular curriculum, additional accommodations for particular students with special needs may involve:

- specific vocational training
- appropriate on-site supervision and support in the workplace
- specific and direct opportunities to increase work-related skills such as appropriate communication, transportation, hygiene and dress
- general life skills and knowledge about such things as money management, social insurance, and health benefits.

## ***Program Guidelines -- General***

- As in other areas of the curriculum, career activities are individualized for students with special needs. The student's IEP documents the adjustments and support services.
- Plans for work study/work experience activities match students to placements where the type and level of work is appropriate and coordinated resources provide each student the opportunity and support to achieve her or his individual potential.
- Work experiences include pre- and post-contact with the work experience teacher to ensure the application of knowledge and skills to the work placement and the results of the placement to future learning. While some students with special needs may need little or no assistance, others may need technical aids or help in adjusting to the physical environment. Some learners require extensive pre-job preparation, simulations, and practice; others, who do not learn effectively in simulated training, require all of their work-related experiences to take place on real job sites.
- Special transportation to work experience sites may be available for students. Arrangements are made through the Special Services Division (see Section F).
- All career activities are tracked through the Career Education Tracking System.

- Student progress is reported either as part of the student IEP update or by way of a report card insert.
- Powell River provides job training, life skills, and guided work experience for identified students with special needs in the following categories:
  - \* Mild to Moderate Intellectual Disabilities
  - \* Moderate to Severe Behaviour Disorders
  - \* Rehabilitation Programs
  - \* Autism, Physical or Health impairments, where staff recommend they are capable of benefiting from the program..

## ***Programs***

Work Experience/Job Training services for these students are divided into two program areas: Career Skills and Career Projects.

### **Career Skills Program**

Funded by the Ministry of Education, the Career Skills program is available for students with identified intellectual disabilities. It includes life skills, job training, and guided work experiences.

#### **Goals (in order of priority)**

The goals of the Career Skills Program are to:

1. further the development of skills and knowledge required for gainful employment
2. develop student talent and energies
3. develop student self confidence and encourage initiative
4. foster and develop entrepreneurship skills
5. demonstrate the advantages of teamwork
6. develop concepts of public relations, pride of work, and profit-loss through pragmatic activity
7. enhance transfer of learning (and attitude) to other areas of each student's academic life
8. develop specific vocational skills
9. help each student meet Ministry of Education work experience requirements.

#### **Life Skills Training**

This area covers basic knowledge and skills that are prerequisites to gainful employment. Life skills training is open to designated students of all ages in the form of small-group instruction.

#### **Job Training**

Available to designated students of all ages, job training activities include mentoring, job shadowing, and work study.

### **Guided Work Experiences**

Students eligible for guided work experience

- are 15 years of age or older
- meet Ministry of Education criteria for students with intellectual disabilities
- have one or more career objectives in their written IEP for the current year;
- receive job training on real work sites in the local community;
- receive training on a variety of work sites throughout their secondary school years;
- receive regular job training rather than isolated experiences.

### **Program Access**

School referrals are submitted on the District Special Services Referral form.

Community referrals are made to the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

### **Career Projects Program**

This program is a locally developed extension of the Ministry of Education Special Education Job Training Program. The Career Projects Program provides job training for students enrolled at the Westview Learning Centre, Brooks, and Max Cameron who are identified according to Ministry of Education criteria as students

- with mild to moderate behaviour disorders
- enrolled in Rehabilitation Programs
- with autism or physical/health impairments, who staff recommend as capable of benefiting from the program.

Students with severe learning disabilities are not eligible for this program. They are provided work experiences as part of the school career education program.

### **Goals**

The goals of the Career Projects Program are to:

1. channel student talent and energies productively
2. develop student self confidence and encourage initiative
3. develop concepts of public relations, pride of work, and profit-loss through pragmatic activity
4. foster and develop entrepreneurship skills
5. demonstrate the advantages of teamwork
6. further academic skill development in core areas through an activity-based, learn-as-you-need teaching and learning style
7. enhance transfer of learning (and attitude) to other areas of each student's academic life
8. develop specific skills in working with wood, metal, glass, etc., using common tools safely and economically
9. provide each student a minimum of 24 hours practical work experience in the project. Senior students are guaranteed 30 hours of work experience in the program to complete graduation requirements.

**Life Skills Training**

This area addresses particular issues that contribute to behaviour problems. The school special education program and counselling services provide training and the Career Projects Program reinforces strategies and techniques.

**Job Training**

Activities include mentoring, job shadowing, and work study. To facilitate grouping and transportation of students to the work-teaching sites, participants have individual timetables.

Work study focuses on group instruction associated and encompassed by teacher-designed projects. Instruction is offered primarily at the project site off-campus at the Malaspina University College industrial shops during the following times:

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>
9:00 am -11:00 am	11:00 am - 1:00 pm	10:40 am - 12:40 pm
11:20 am -1:20 pm	1:00 pm - 3:20 pm	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

To a lesser extent, students engage in work study in other areas within schools and the community. It is anticipated that 45-60 students will participate during the academic year.

**Guided Work Experiences**

Students eligible for guided work experience

- are 15 years of age or older
- meet Ministry of Education criteria for students with moderate to severe behaviour disorders or qualify for Rehabilitation Programs;
- have one or more career objectives in their written IEP for the current year

The prescribed work-experience age range of 15-19 can be modified to include younger students where services are warranted.

## **Personnel**

### **Qualifications**

Teachers who provide a range of career education programs for students with special needs

- hold a masters degree or equivalent in special education
- are able to work with a wide range of mild to severe disabilities
- are able to provide individualized direct work experience services to students, including:
  - \* preparing students for their work experiences
  - \* providing direct supervision of students and/or ensuring appropriate supervision through the use of school and community resources
  - \* debriefing students during and after their work experiences
  - \* assessing student achievements and adjusting assessments as required.
- can evaluate work sites for educational merit and safety and prospective mentors for ability and willingness to provide educational service
- can create and maintain individualized plans

Teachers who provide a specific career education support service , e.g., shop experience for students with special needs

- either have special education training or work as part of a team with a trained special educator.

### **Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Diane Giberson, Support Service Assistant

James Patterson, District Career Education Teacher (Special Services)

Angela Skillbeck, Child and Youth Care Worker

Charles Soroke, Industrial Education and Work Experience Teacher

### **Service Level, 1997-98**

.9 Full Time Equivalent teachers

5.5 hours per day support service

## Section E

### Special Considerations for Individual Planning

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# Section E: Special Considerations for Individual Planning

## Funding Categories

The Ministry of Education establishes funding categories for special needs according to the prevalence of the exceptionality and the funds generated. The categories are:

- 1.17 Moderately Disabled
- 1.18 Severely Disabled
- 1.19 Multiple Handicaps or Physically Dependent
- 1.32 Gifted
- 1.16 Severe Behaviour Disorders.

These categories are intended to focus on the educational needs of students regardless of the original cause(s) of those needs.

The current system does not identify all medically diagnosed conditions and syndromes that may have an impact on the student's educational needs. These conditions and syndromes include but are not limited to: Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD); Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAS/FAE); Asperger's Syndrome; Prader-Willi Syndrome; Tourette's Syndrome; and others. By itself, medical diagnosis does not determine the special education services a student will require.

The designation of students for funding purposes involves careful determination of the nature and extent of educational interventions they require as well as the nature and extent of their disabling condition(s). Powell River school district identifies students with medically diagnosed conditions for funding purposes in the educational category that best reflects the type and intensity of educational interventions documented in the IEP.

## Personnel

### *Teacher Assistants*

### **Child and Youth Care Workers**

Qualifications, staff assignments, and service levels are described under *Moderately Disabled, Behaviour Disorders, including Rehabilitation Programs, and Students with Severe Behaviour Disorders*.

### **Health Care Assistant**

Health Care Assistants are the primary source of para-professional education and health support for students who require Level II health procedures (as determined by the Ministry of Health) and have a medical diagnosis of quadriplegia. Health Care Assistants help teachers and administrators implement the IEP.

They also perform health procedures necessary while the child is in school -- procedures the parent or guardian would normally perform if the child were at home. These routines include but are not limited to:

- gastrostomy feeding and related care,
- administration of pre-established and prescribed routine oxygen,
- administration of pre-measured and prescribed medication,
- seizure management, and
- ostomy care.

Health Care Assistants work under the general direction of a teacher or administrative officer and the supervision of an administrative officer, a contracted professional, or the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

### **Qualifications**

Health Care Assistants hold a Practical Nursing certificate or are Registered Nurses and have training/experience in working with school-aged children with special needs.

### **Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

Rita John, RN

Glen McCallum, LPN

### **Support Service Assistants (SSAs)**

Support Service Assistants are teacher assistants who work with students with special needs. They help teachers and administrators implement IEPs. Since the goals of specific IEPs drive their day-to-day work, their specific roles and responsibilities vary somewhat, according to the needs of the students they support. SSAs work under the general direction of a teacher or administrative officer and the supervision of an administrative officer, a contracted professional, or the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

Support Service Assistants may be school-based or district-based, child specific, or program specific. The school principal assigns school-based SSAs to support students designated by the Director of Instruction, Special Services. District staff assign district SSAs.

Program-specific Support Service Assistants assist students in designated district programs. Their roles and function are described as part of the specific program descriptions.

### **Qualifications**

In Powell River, all Support Service Assistants hired since 1992 have successfully completed a Special Education Teacher Assistant program from a recognized post-secondary institution and/or completed a program in a related field from a post-secondary institution. They also have had prior experience working with children with special needs.

Staff of the district Special Services Division provide SSAs regular in-service training, formal and informal. If the student requires medical procedures in school, staff of the Coast Garibaldi Health Unit provide the Support Service Assistant child-specific training, in accordance with a local agreement (see Section G, Appendix 1, Local Protocols).

A manual of best practice for SSAs was completed in 1994, and a companion document for teachers who work with SSAs followed in 1996.\*

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\* School District #47's *Support Service Assistant Guidelines* and *Working with Support Service Assistants, Guidelines for Teachers* are available through the district Special Services Division.

### **Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

Gaye Adams	Laara Nicols
Carmel Behan	Heather Nuotio
Lorraine Behan	Rosemary O'Neill
Sylvia Bell	Colleen Pagani
Coby DeGraauw	Janis Peterson
Bonnie deJong	Marianne Roos
Sheila Ferrier	Daphne Ross
Diane Giberson	Sharon Stedman
Wendy Goodwin	Virginia Stigings
Dawn Gowans	Jan Swaak
Susan Hill	Shirley Tarnasky
Leona James	Cheryl Thompson
Pat Karis	Carol Ward
Kathy Kirk	Patricia Ward
Kathleen McCausland	

Service levels are described for each funding category.

### **Teachers**

Qualifications and staff assignment are described for each funding category, excluding *Moderately Disabled* and *Severely Disabled*, where they are included within each sub-category. Service levels are also included for funding categories and sub-categories.

## **1.17 Moderately Disabled**

This funding category includes the sub-categories:

- Students with Behaviour Disorders/Rehabilitation Programs;
- Students with Learning Disabilities (Severe);
- Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities.

### **Service Levels, 1997-98**

#### **Teachers**

4.9 Full Time Equivalent teachers.

#### **Support Service Assistants**

27 hours per day

# Students with Behaviour Disorders, including Rehabilitation Programs

## **Definition**

Behaviour disorder is a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders. These disorders reflect dysfunctional interactions between the student and one or more elements of the environment, including the classroom, school, family, peers, and community.

Behaviour disorders vary in their severity and effect on learning, interpersonal relations and personal adjustment. Schools can usually support students with mild behavioural difficulties through counselling and school-based services. Students who have the most severe behavioural difficulties and receive services from other community agencies are included in the *Severe Behaviour Disorder* category.

## **Moderate Behaviour Disorders**

The Ministry of Education recognizes that one to two per cent of students may have a moderate behaviour disorder. Powell River includes students in this category for supplemental funding when an assessment process finds they meet *all* of the following criteria.

- They demonstrate one or more of the following:
  - \* behaviours such as aggression (of a physical, emotional, or sexual nature) and/or hyperactivity;
  - \* negative or undesirable internalized psychological states such as anxiety, stress-related disorders, and depression;
  - \* behaviours related to social problems, such as delinquency;
  - \* substance abuse, child abuse, or neglect; and/or
  - \* behaviours related to other disabling conditions, such as thought disorders or neurological or physiological conditions;
- the frequency or severity of these behaviours has a very disruptive effect on the classroom learning environment, social relations, or personal adjustment;
- they demonstrate these behaviour(s) over an extended period of time, in more than one setting and with more than one person (teachers, peers);
- they have not responded to support/interventions provided through usual classroom management strategies.

To be eligible for supplemental special education funding, students must regularly receive an additional special education service and have a current IEP. Reduction in class size is not by itself a sufficient service to meet the definition.

## **Rehabilitation Programs**

Rehabilitation Resource Programs is a Ministry of Education funding category used when the assessment process has determined that:

- the student meets all of the criteria for students with moderate behaviour disorders;
- there is funding for the program from the Ministry for Children and Families;
- a current IEP is in place.

In Powell River school district, Rehabilitation Resource Programs are also educational programs designed to meet the special needs of students with a range of behaviour disorders. Rehabilitation programs receive funding for child care services from the Ministry for Children and Families (see *Severe Behaviour Disorders*).

### ***Identification and Assessment***

Powell River uses a number of guidelines in identifying students with moderate behaviour disorders. The following conditions must be satisfied in order for such an identification to be made.

- **Chronicity:** the behaviour has occurred frequently over at least the last two years
- **Intensity:** the behaviour is disruptive to her/his learning and that of others
- **Cross Validation:** parents, friends, and/or community agency staff support the identification
- **Assessment:** the school psychologist, compiling appropriate screening and assessment data from the school (e.g., Behaviour Screening Profile, Behavioural Assessments such as SSRS, BRP-2, academic functioning) and administering additional testing as required, determines the student may be classified as moderate behaviour disordered.

*A student may not be classified as moderate behaviour disordered for more than two years without a formal re-assessment by the school psychologist.*

The process of identification and assessment focuses on behaviours clearly beyond common disciplinary problems or the result of ineffectual classroom management practices. They are not transitory, but generalize to other settings and individuals.

Identification and assessment of students with behaviour disorders often begins at the classroom level, although these students are sometimes identified in the home or community. The teacher's observations and the assessments of other staff are incorporated into an identification and assessment process for educational purposes.

The teacher first consults with the parents and colleagues and attempts alternate strategies to manage the behaviour in the classroom. If unsuccessful, the teacher may seek assistance from other school-based services through the school-based team.

The school-based team may provide further consultation, call on other school or district support services, and/or request additional assessment. At this stage, school counsellors may ask the Ministry for Children and Families, child and youth mental health services, community agencies, and the medical profession to become involved in the identification and intervention process.

School Psychologists or representatives from other ministries or agencies usually guide the formal assessment process at this point. The formal assessments:

- analyze the student's functional behaviours in various settings and with different people who are regularly a part of her/his environment;
- integrate information from the different aspects of a student's life;
- focus on strengths as well as needs;

- rule out or address other conditions that may precipitate or contribute to the behaviour (e.g., hearing loss, learning disabilities, medication side-effects);
- clarify the characteristics of the behaviour disorder;
- address possible medical or health impairments;
- specify whether the student meets the criteria for moderate behaviour disorder (or another diagnosis); and
- contribute to the process of planning and evaluating the educational program.

Formal assessments conducted by the School Psychologist are summarized in a report shared with the parents, the teacher, the student (where appropriate), and the school-based team.

*Note: the identification and assessment process is modified, expedited, or waived temporarily when a student is endangering the safety of self or others.*

### **Planning and Implementation**

Using the process described in Section C, the IEP team plans collaboratively and includes involved inter-ministerial and community agencies. Because these students are often difficult to serve educationally, school support services are integrated with the services of other agencies wherever possible and provided to the student in the school, the home, or the community.

The IEP describes:

- current behavioural and learning strengths and needs;
- the goals for the student’s program, with measurable objectives;
- the behavioural strategies used to achieve the goals;
- if applicable, the components of the curriculum that will be adapted and/or modified;
- the resources needed to support the student;
- the names of staff responsible for implementing the plan (school, community agencies);
- the role of the parents in supporting the plan;
- means to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and a timeline for evaluation;
- decisions on where the plan will be implemented; and
- plans for transitions.

Schools usually implement intervention programs for students with moderate behaviour disorders in the settings where the behaviours occur, not through a change in placement. But administrative officers must ensure that the student, peers, or service providers will not be placed in an “at risk” position. Some of these students may need specialized services, learning environments, or temporary placements in the home or evaluation centres outside the school until they can re-enter the regular classroom full-time and/or successfully enter the world of work.

Specialized staff support students with moderate behaviour disorders. These students receive, but are not limited to, one or more of the following additional services:

- direct support in the classroom from a teacher specialist or an assistant to promote behavioural change through implementing the plan outlined in the IEP;
- placement in a program or service designed to promote behavioural change and implement the IEP; and/or

- ongoing, individually implemented social skills training and/or behavioural and learning strategies.

This support is frequently complemented by:

- in-depth therapy, counselling and/or support for the family in the community;
- adapted or supplementary curriculum and materials; and
- alternate instructional and/or evaluation strategies.

### ***Evaluation and Reporting***

In most cases, students with moderate behaviour disorders take part in the regular program, although some adaptation may be necessary (e.g., alternate evaluation methods). Evaluation is based on the regular standards (i.e., extent to which learning outcomes were attained). The method of evaluation is consistent with the IEP and ministry policies on the use of comments and letter grades.

Powell River schools provide reports on the same schedule used for all students. They report progress in all aspects of the program and progress related to IEP goals. Reports indicate the adaptations and modifications made to the student's educational program and the student's performance relative to widely-held expectations.

Because some students may require extensive modifications to parts of their program, some of their learning outcomes will be substantially different from those of other students. In these cases, evaluation is based on the degree to which the student has achieved individualized outcomes.

## ***Personnel***

### **Teachers**

The Ministry of Education expects that, with sufficient training, experience, and specialized support when needed, classroom teachers will be able to include most students with behaviour disorders and provide a program in which they can be successful. Powell River offers in-service training opportunities and a collaborative team approach to support and encourage the development of required skills.

Powell River school district ensures that teachers and counsellors responsible for programming for students with moderate behaviour disorders possess general training in special education and have completed additional courses in the education of students with behaviour disorders, motivational techniques, behaviour management, and precision teaching.

Teachers require skills in:

- behavioural observation, analysis, strategies, and management;
- consultation and collaboration;
- direction/supervision of behavioural intervention programs;
- adaptation of curriculum to meet a wide range of student learning needs; and
- counselling.

### **Teacher Assistants**

Teacher assistants working with students with moderate behaviour disorders are trained for the duties they are assigned. They have:

- an understanding of behaviour disorders;
- observational, motivational, and behaviour management skills; and
- communicative and collaborative skills.

Powell River school district provides in-service training opportunities for further development in these and related areas. Child and Youth Care Workers who have major roles in implementing educational programs for students with behaviour disorders possess at least two years undergraduate training in counselling and human development.

### **Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

#### **Child and Youth Care Workers**

Vickie Bleaney  
Rae Kennedy  
Angela Skillbeck

#### **Teachers**

Gerry Brach, Teacher Counsellor, Grief Point Elementary School  
Vernon Currie, Special Needs Teacher, Max Cameron Secondary School  
Sandra Fahey, Special Needs Teacher, James Thomson Elementary School  
Owen Gaskell, Special Needs Teacher, JP Dallos Middle School  
Nadia Hocking, Special Needs Teacher, Brooks Secondary School

Iris Kramer-Clarke, Teacher Counsellor and Student Services Department Head, JP Dallos Middle School

Russ Macdonald, Teacher Counsellor, Henderson Elementary School

Faye Perry, Special Needs Teacher, Edgehill Elementary School

Naida Schultz, Special Needs Teacher, Texada School

Veronica Soloman, Teacher Counsellor and Special Needs Teacher, Westview Learning Centre

Michelle Tom, Teacher Counsellor, Oceanview Middle School

Hanna Verkerk-English, Special Needs Teacher, Kelly Creek Community School

### **Service Level for 1997-98**

#### **Child and Youth Care Practitioners**

*See Students with Severe Behaviour Disorders*

#### **Teachers**

.9 Full Time Equivalent teachers

# Students with Learning Disabilities

## **Definition**

The Ministry of Education uses the following definition of learning disabilities.

“Learning disabilities\* is a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, and may occur across the life span. Problems in self-regulatory behaviours, social perception and social interaction may exist with learning disabilities but do not by themselves constitute a learning disability. Although learning disabilities may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g., sensory impairment, mental retardation, serious emotional disturbance) or with extrinsic influences (e.g., cultural differences, insufficient or inappropriate instruction), they are not the result of those conditions or influences.”

### **National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, 1988**

\* For the purposes of this document, the term “learning disability” includes conditions described as dyslexia, dyscalculia or dysgraphia, and may include students with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Learning disabilities vary considerably in their severity and impact on learning. Students with mild to moderate learning disabilities can be successful when given adapted classroom instruction combined with support through consultation and/or learning assistance services from a school-based Special Needs Teacher. Students with severe learning disabilities generally require more intensive intervention.

Students whose learning disabilities have not been identified and addressed early often exhibit secondary emotional and behavioural difficulties.

To be eligible for supplemental funding for Severe Learning Disabilities, a student must meet the ministry definition given above and the following criteria:

- severe difficulties in the acquisition of basic academic skills and/or school performance persist despite classroom-based remedial interventions, curricular adaptations, and learning assistance. The severity of these academic difficulties must be such that students demonstrate:
  - persistent difficulties in the acquisition of pre-academic skills such as recognition of letters and numbers in the early primary years; and/or
  - persistent difficulties in the acquisition of reading, writing and/or arithmetic skills in the later primary years; and/or
  - a discrepancy of 2 standard deviations between estimated learning potential and academic achievement as measured by norm-referenced instruments in Grades 3-12; and
- there is a significant weakness in one or more cognitive process (e.g., perception, memory, attention, receptive or expressive language abilities, visual-spatial abilities) relative to overall intellectual functioning as measured by norm-referenced assessment

instruments. This weakness has a direct impact on learning and school performance; and

- the criteria listed above are not the result of other disabling conditions or external influences described in the definition above; and
- the student receives specific additional services directed at addressing the learning disability (reduction in class size is not by itself a sufficient service to meet this definition); and
- a current IEP is in place.

### ***Students with Severe Learning Disabilities***

The ministry estimates that students with severe learning disabilities comprise one to two per cent of the school population.

In Powell River, a psycho-educational assessment determines the presence, nature, severity, and educational implications of a severe learning disability. Before referral for psycho-educational assessment, classroom teachers use the school's resources. They first try alternate strategies, consult with parents and colleagues and, through the school-based team, arrange assessment (generally including a norm-referenced academic achievement test), consultation, or pre-referral interventions from the school's Special Needs Teacher.

### **Identification and Assessment**

Most students included in the Severe Learning Disabilities category are identified through the progressive assessment process described in Section C. In some cases, students have been identified before school entry through assessments in clinical settings.

If these measures do not provide enough information, the school-based team refers the student for further assessment. The assessment is often multidisciplinary, supplementing the psycho-educational assessment with information from the speech-language pathologist or the physiotherapist.

The assessment of a student with a learning disability:

- integrates information from a number of sources (e.g., the family, health, social-emotional adjustment, developmental history);
- considers overall intellectual functioning, specific cognitive abilities, pre-academic or academic skills, and socio-emotional status;
- considers learning strengths and weaknesses and their implications for learning;
- contributes to the process of planning and evaluating the education program.

### **Planning and Implementation**

Powell River school district provides students with severe learning disabilities an educational plan that builds on their strengths and remedies or compensates for their area of disability.

A Special Needs Teacher supports students with severe learning disabilities. Typically, the program for a student with a severe learning disability includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- direct remedial, corrective, tutorial or skill-building instruction;
- adapted, modified or supplementary curriculum and materials;
- alternate instructional and/or evaluation strategies, including adjudicated provincial examinations;
- use of equipment, including computer and audiovisual technology;
- social skills training; and
- learning strategies.

## ***Evaluation and Reporting***

### **Evaluating student progress**

In most cases, students take part in the regular program with necessary adaptations (e.g., alternate evaluation methods). Evaluation is based on the regular standards (i.e., the extent to which learning outcomes were attained). The evaluation method is consistent with the IEP and district reporting policies on the use of comments and letter grades.

Because some students require extensive modifications to parts of their program, some of their learning outcomes will be substantially different from those in the regular curriculum. In these cases, evaluation is based on the degree to which the student achieves the individualized outcomes.

### **Reporting**

Powell River schools provide reports to parents in the format and on the schedule used for all students. They report progress in all aspects of the program and progress related to IEP goals. Reports indicate adaptations and modifications made to the student's educational program and the student's performance relative to widely-held expectations. All personnel directly involved in the ongoing educational program (e.g., classroom teacher, specialist teacher, speech-language pathologist) contribute to reports on student progress.

## **Personnel**

Powell River teachers, with sufficient training and experience and specialized support when needed, are able to include students with learning disabilities and provide a program in which they can be successful.

### **Teachers**

Teachers with responsibilities for supporting students with severe learning disabilities fulfill the qualifications described under Learning Assistance Services (see Section D). Their qualifications also include advanced course work in:

- characteristics and needs of students with learning disabilities; and
- specialized instructional and remedial strategies, technologies, materials and curricular adaptations.

As well, they have training and demonstrated skills in:

- social skills development and behaviour management;
- cooperative planning and collaborative consultation; and
- assessment, classroom management, and motivation.

### **Teacher Assistants**

Teacher assistants working with students with learning disabilities are trained for the duties they are assigned. They have:

- an understanding of learning disabilities;
- collaborative and communication skills;
- strategies for motivating students; and
- behaviour management skills.

In-service training includes opportunities for further skill development in these and related areas.

Teacher assistants work under the general direction of teachers and the supervision of administrative officers.

### **Teacher Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

Anita Adams, Special Needs Teacher and Student Services Department Head, Max Cameron Secondary School

Vernon Currie, Special Needs Teacher, Max Cameron Secondary School

Sandra Fahey, Special Needs Teacher, James Thomson Elementary School

Diane Lawn, Special Needs Teacher, Max Cameron Secondary School

Jody Lloyd, Special Needs Teacher, JP Dallos Middle School

Lois Montgomery, Special Needs Teacher, JP Dallos Middle School

Janice Rayson, Special Needs Teacher, Brooks Secondary School

Naida Schultz, Special Needs Teacher, Texada School

Sharon Scott, Special Needs Teacher, Henderson Elementary School

Susan Swaak, District Department Head, Special Education

Hanna Verkerk-English, Special Needs Teacher, Kelly Creek Community School

Sandra Whitehouse, Special Needs Teacher, Oceanview Middle School

**Service Level for 1997-98**

2.6 Full Time Equivalent teachers

***Resources***

Students who are print-handicapped because of a severe learning disability may be eligible to receive audiotape material from the Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired. Applications are made through the district Special Services Division.

# Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities

## ***Definition***

A student is considered to have a mild intellectual disability if intellectual functioning is:

- -2.01 to -3.00 standard deviations below the norm on an individually administered Level C assessment instrument of intellectual functioning; and
- there is a similar degree of delayed adaptive behaviour and functioning.

Although individual needs differ, many students with mild intellectual disabilities may require specific instruction for the development of gross and fine motor skills; communication skills; social skills, including personal independence, social responsibility and life skills; reasoning skills; and memory, problem solving and conceptualizing skills.

To be eligible for supplemental funding for Mild Intellectual Disabilities, students must:

- meet the criteria in the ministry definition; and
- have a current IEP; and
- receive ongoing special education service(s) outlined in the IEP and directly related to the student's identified special need(s). Reduction in class size is not by itself a sufficient service to meet the definition.

The special education service(s) must be in addition to any services provided under formula funding based on total student enrolment (e.g., learning assistance, counselling).

## ***Identification and Assessment***

A student with a mild intellectual disability is not always identified before entering the school system. Difficulties with adaptive behaviour may not have been documented. Adaptive behaviour is the “effectiveness or degree to which the individual meets the standards of personal independence and social responsibility...” (American Association for Mental Retardation [AAMR]).

A psycho-educational assessment based on a variety of measures of intellectual ability and adaptive behaviour, as well as information from the family and, where available, other service providers determines a student's level of functioning. Instruments such as the Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales and the Adaptive Behaviour Scale (AAMR) are used to assess an individual's adaptive behaviour. The current revisions of the Stanford-Binet and the Wechsler Intelligence scales are the most frequently used tests for assessing intellectual ability.

## ***Planning and Implementation***

Most students with mild intellectual disabilities benefit and learn best from being with age peers, but generally require additional intervention. As they proceed through elementary school, their IEPs specify modifications or adaptations to programs, use of special materials, and the measures of progress. Parents have an opportunity to participate in the planning process. To the extent they are able, students also participate.

The older the student, the greater the need for concrete educational objectives. At the secondary level, a student with a mild intellectual disability has the opportunity and option to take part in

a variety of educational and social experiences in the school and the community. It is reasonable and desirable for many students to continue in academic areas, with appropriately adapted programs and support where needed. Others are most enabled by an increase in community integration and work experience/work placement opportunities.

### ***Evaluation and Reporting***

Many students with mild intellectual disabilities take part in the regular program with some adaptations. Evaluation is based on the regular standards (i.e., the extent to which the student attains the learning outcomes for the course). The method of evaluation is consistent with the IEP and ministry reporting policies on the use of comments and letter grades.

Because some students may require extensive modifications to parts of their program, some of their learning outcomes will be substantially different from those in the regular curriculum. In these cases, evaluation is based on the degree to which the student achieves the individualized outcomes and referenced to individually set standards.

District schools provide reports to parents on the same schedule used for all students. They report progress in all aspects of the program and progress related to IEP goals. Reports indicate the adaptations and modifications made to the student's educational program. All personnel directly involved in that program (e.g., the classroom teacher, specialist teacher, speech-language pathologist) report on student progress.

## **Personnel**

With sufficient training and experience and specialized support when needed, Powell River's classroom teachers are able to include students with mild intellectual disabilities and provide a program in which they can be successful. In-service training opportunities and a collaborative team approach support and encourage the development of the skills and understandings the classroom teacher may require.

### **Teachers**

#### **Qualifications**

Powell River teachers with responsibilities for supporting students with intellectual disabilities fulfill the qualifications described for Learning Assistance (see Section D: *Learning Assistance Services*). They also have advanced course work in:

- the characteristics and needs of students with intellectual disabilities;
- specialized instructional methodologies and technologies; and adaptation and modification of programs for students with intellectual disabilities; and
- functional life skills and career development.

### **Teacher Assistants**

#### **Qualifications**

In Powell River, teacher assistants who work in classrooms with students with mild intellectual disabilities are trained for the duties they are assigned. They understand:

- the social, emotional, and educational implications of intellectual disabilities;
- functional life skills and career development; and
- technological support.

In-service training includes opportunities to develop further expertise in these and related areas.

Teacher assistants work under the general direction of teachers and the supervision of administrative officers.

### **Teacher Staff Assignments, 1997-98**

Anita Adams, Special Needs Teacher and Student Services Department Head, Max Cameron Secondary School

Sandra Fahey, Special Needs Teacher, James Thomson Elementary School

Diane Lawn, Special Needs Teacher, Max Cameron Secondary School

Jody Lloyd, Special Needs Teacher, JP Dallos Middle School

Lois Montgomery, Special Needs Teacher, JP Dallos Middle School

Faye Perry, Special Needs Teacher, Edgehill Elementary School

Janice Rayson, Special Needs Teacher, Brooks Secondary School

Sharon Scott, Special Needs Teacher, Henderson Elementary School

Hanna Verkerk-English, Special Needs Teacher, Kelly Creek Community School

Sandra Whitehouse, Special Needs Teacher, Oceanview Middle School

**Teacher Service Level, 1997-98**

1.0 Full Time Equivalent teacher

## **1.18 Severely Disabled**

This funding category includes:

- Students with Autism,
- Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing,
- Students with Moderate to Severe/Profound Intellectual Disabilities,
- Students with Physical Disabilities or Chronic Health Impairment, and
- Students with Visual Impairment

### ***Personnel***

#### **Teachers**

##### **Qualifications and Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

Teacher qualifications and staff assignments are described in each sub-category.

#### **Teacher Assistants**

##### **Support Service Assistant Service Level, 1997-98**

105.95 hours per day

# Students with Autism

## ***Definition***

Autism is a syndrome characterized by a marked disorder of communication and a severe disturbance of intellectual, emotional and behavioural development. It is defined and diagnosed through the observation of behaviours. The syndrome is caused by an underlying physical dysfunction in the brain or central nervous system, the exact nature of which is as yet unknown.

The Ministry of Education uses the American Psychiatric Association definition. Based on this definition, a student with autism exhibits impairment in:

- reciprocal social interaction;
- verbal and nonverbal communication;
- imaginative activity; and
- restrictive, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interest, and activities.

To be eligible for supplemental funding, a student must meet the following conditions:

- appropriately qualified professionals have made a diagnosis of autism; and
- a current IEP is in place; and
- the student receives ongoing and frequent additional special education services directly related to the autism. Reduction in class size is not by itself sufficient to meet the definition.

## ***Identification and Assessment***

Professionals appropriately qualified to identify and assess a student for a diagnosis of autism include the developmental/assessment team at Sunny Hill Hospital for Children, BC Children's Hospital, or Queen Alexandra Hospital, a pediatrician/psychiatrist, or a registered psychologist.

A student with autism in need of a special program is assessed to identify areas of strength and need and plan educational programs based on this information. The assessment integrates information on vision and hearing (sensory acuity), physical development, social adjustment, communicative competence, academic abilities, and educational achievement.

The Special Services Division staff work with the Powell River medical community in initiating assessments. School-based teams monitor all subsequent assessment and program planning activities.

## ***Planning and Implementation***

Each student's educational program is identified and reflected in a IEP that addresses the goals set out in the planning process. The focus is on improving the student's adaptive behaviour and skills to increase the range of functional skills for community living. This functional skill development is also reflected in the IEP. Intended learning outcomes involve one or more of the following areas:

- socially adaptive behaviours and social responsiveness;
- motor development;
- communicative competence; and

- academic performance.

Each student's IEP clearly notes procedures and timelines for reviewing intended instructional outcomes.

Many children with autism receive services from other ministries. School district personnel coordinate their work with staff from the Ministry for Children and Families, the medical community, and community activities.

## ***Resources***

Gateway Provincial Resource Programs are provided for students with autism and students with disabilities in the autism spectrum, such as Pervasive Developmental Disorders.

Gateway House is a residential and outreach resource in Delta BC operated by the Ministry for Children and Families. The school program is funded by the Ministry of Education and administered by School District No. 37 (Delta). It provides educational services during the regular school year and for six weeks of summer school. Students are placed in Gateway House by the Ministry for Children and Families.

The Gateway outreach program is available to provide assessment and consulting services to Powell River school district. Access to its services is through referral to the district Special Services Division.

## ***Student Evaluation and Reporting***

The Powell River school district includes students with autism in regular evaluation and reporting. Student progress reports are based on the goals, strategies, and outcomes outlined in the IEP. Since these students usually require extensive program modifications, evaluation is based on the degree to which the student achieves individual learning outcomes. IEPs also identify any adaptation of assessment procedures required to provide a fair appraisal of the knowledge and skills a student with autism has acquired.

Reviews of student progress involve the student, if appropriate, the parents or guardians, and all other members of the IEP team. The team determines whether the student is attaining the established goals and identifies required adjustments to the instructional program.

## ***Service/Teacher Evaluation***

Responsibility for evaluating services for students with autism rests with the Director of Instruction (Special Services). Responsibility for evaluating the performance of individual staff rests with the school principals for school-based staff and the Director of Instruction (Special Services) for district staff.

## ***Personnel***

### **Qualifications**

In Powell River school district, students with autism have helping teachers with:

- skills and training in behaviour management, communication, motor, and social skills development;
- the skills necessary to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate functional and realistic individual programs; and
- the ability to work effectively on trans-disciplinary teams and direct/coordinate the work of teacher assistants and other relevant personnel.

The District Special Needs Teacher for Autism has special responsibilities for children with autism and children with disabilities within the autism spectrum. This teacher is responsible for coordinating district-wide services, providing staff development to school-based special needs teachers and teacher assistants, and serving as Powell River school district's liaison with Gateway Provincial Resource Programs.

The need for specialist support personnel for students with autism varies, depending on the student's situation. Where students with autism require district support services such as psycho-educational assessment/intervention or speech-language pathology, they have equitable access to this assistance.

The District Special Needs Teacher for Autism and Gateway House provide in-service to Support Service Assistants who work in classrooms with students with autism to ensure they have sufficient skills and training for the duties they are assigned

### **Teacher Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

Faye Perry, Special Needs Teacher, Edgehill Elementary School

Janice Rayson, Special Needs Teacher, Brooks Secondary School

Susan Swaak, BEd, MEd, District Special Needs Teacher for Autism, District Special Education Department Head for 1997-98

### **Service Levels for 1997-98**

#### **Teachers**

.70 Full Time Equivalent teachers

# Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

## ***Definition***

For educational purposes, a student considered deaf or hard of hearing has a medically diagnosed hearing loss that results in such a substantial educational difficulty that he/she requires direct services from a qualified teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing on a regular, frequent, and ongoing basis.

Students diagnosed with a central auditory processing dysfunction are not traditionally served by teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing unless there is an additional diagnosis of peripheral hearing loss.

To be eligible for supplemental funding as a deaf or hard of hearing student, the following conditions must be met:

- a medical diagnosis of hearing loss has been made; and
- a current IEP is in place; and
- the student receives special education services directly related to his or her hearing loss from a qualified teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing on a regular, frequent, and ongoing basis.

## ***Identification and Assessment***

An audiological assessment identifies most children with significant hearing loss before they enter the school system. A few children, particularly those with less severe hearing loss, may not have been identified before school entry. Under the audiological services protocol agreement between the ministries of health and education, all students in the initial school entry year receive a hearing screening. A student who fails the screening is referred to the nearest health unit or audiology clinic for a complete hearing assessment.

Indeed, any student referred for special education services during his or her school career should be referred for a hearing assessment to determine whether an intermittent or chronic hearing loss is the primary cause of any learning or behavioural problem.

Hearing loss is generally measured in terms of decibel loss using international standards. Decibel losses do not always correlate with educational implications, however, and are not a sole criterion for determining the need for educational intervention.

Since any degree of hearing loss has educational implications, the identification of a student's hearing loss may require an assessment to determine the student's strengths and weaknesses in language development and communication skills. The assessment, usually carried out by a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, may include the administration of standardized tests for ability and achievement, curriculum-based assessment and observation, and teacher reports. Program planning decisions and recommendations for placing the student in a specific program are made only after completing a full assessment.

A critical part of the assessment process is determining the method of communication to use in the educational setting. While most students who are hard of hearing develop English language skills through the use of appropriate amplification and oral instruction, some students with

more severe hearing losses require either an English-based sign system or American Sign Language.

School districts are responsible for assessing the language(s) that will enable a student who is deaf or hard of hearing to have full access to the curriculum, and for providing staff with qualifications to meet the specific communication needs of individual students.

### ***Planning and Implementation***

The educational program for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing includes the regular program and specific instruction in:

- language development;
- auditory management;
- speech development;
- speech reading;
- sign language as required; and
- deaf culture when appropriate.

As well as addressing the direct effects of hearing loss and language development, the IEP addresses the significant social and vocational needs arising as a result of the hearing loss.

Most students who are deaf or hard of hearing can and should be educated in their local school district. Programming for students with hearing loss typically involves one or more of the following services:

- a regular class with direct, frequent support from a qualified itinerant teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing;
- a resource room staffed by a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing;
- a self-contained class staffed by a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing who has access to the appropriate support services; and/or
- an individual program for students with hearing loss and other special needs.

Because the prevalence of hearing loss is low, it is not always feasible to provide a full range of services in a single school district. The ministry encourages school districts to collaborate to provide regional programs serving the needs of students in several districts. The social and emotional needs of adolescent students who are deaf or hard of hearing may require more than itinerant services, for example.

When school districts cannot locally or regionally meet the needs of a particular deaf or hard of hearing student or special circumstances prevail, they may refer the student to the Provincial Educational Review Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students to seek programming recommendations and/or determine his or her eligibility for provincial resource programs.

### ***Evaluation and Reporting***

School districts are responsible for developing clearly defined policies and procedures that include a mechanism for:

- assessing the effectiveness of local programs for deaf and hard of hearing students;

- monitoring the educational program of a student placed in a regional or provincial setting to ensure continued appropriateness; and
- evaluating student progress specific to the additional service provided by a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing. Such evaluation may result in adjustment of communication methodology, recommendations for additional or reduced service or for alternate placement, etc.

Powell River schools follow the district's regular evaluation and reporting procedures for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Reports include specific comments on progress in the areas of language development and communication skill, as well as other areas identified on the IEP.

## ***Personnel***

### **Teacher Qualifications**

The ministry defines a qualified teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing as one with:

- a valid BC Teaching Certificate; and
- certification or eligibility for certification by the Association of Canadian Educators of the Hearing Impaired (ACEHI).

### **Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

Vernon Currie, District Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, BEd Diploma, Hearing Impaired, Certified Teacher, Association of Canadian Educators of the Hearing Impaired (ACEHI)

### **Service Level for 1997-98**

.45 Full Time Equivalent teacher

## **Resources**

### **Provincial Education Review Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students**

The Provincial Education Review Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students (PERCDHH) is a ministry-appointed body which may, upon the request of a district:

- advise a district on the educational needs of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing;
- determine eligibility for admission to any of the provincial resource programs for deaf and hard of hearing students; and
- recommend to the school district a specific provincial resource program that best meets the educational needs of the student.

Referrals are made through the district Special Services Division.

### **Auditory Training Equipment**

School boards are responsible for referring students with a hearing loss to the Ministry of Health for a needs assessment to determine whether they require auditory training equipment for classroom use (Ministerial Order 149/89, the Support Services for Schools Order). The Ministry of Education makes auditory training equipment (ATE) available to districts for the use of deaf and hard of hearing students in the public schools of British Columbia and provides for routine maintenance. Requests for auditory training equipment are made through the district Special Services Division.

### **Jericho Outreach Program**

The Jericho Outreach Program for deaf and hard of hearing students is available to provide consultation and support services to school districts.

Further information may be obtained from:

Outreach Consultant  
Provincial School for the Deaf  
Jericho Outreach Program  
5455 Rumble Street  
Burnaby, B.C. V5J 2B7  
Phone: (604) 664-8560  
Fax: (604) 664-8561  
TTY: (604) 664-8563

### **Resource Centre**

A Resource Centre for deaf, hard of hearing, and speech materials has been established as part of the outreach program of the Provincial School for the Deaf. It permits teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing and other district personnel to review recent professional publications, assessment tools, and media materials.

Targeted funds are provided annually to help boards provide the specialized equipment required by students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

**Funding for cochlear implant recipients**

When a child has had a cochlear implant, he or she requires (re)habilitation over and above the services normally provided to deaf and hard of hearing students. On application, a special grant is available from the Ministry of Education to provide such specialized support. Applications are made through the district Special Services Division. Funds are available for a maximum of three consecutive years following the implant date.

# Students with Moderate to Severe/Profound Intellectual Disabilities

## ***Definition***

A student is considered to have a moderate to severe/profound intellectual disability if:

- intellectual functioning is greater than three standard deviations below the norm on an individually administered Level C assessment instrument of intellectual functioning, and
- there is delayed adaptive behaviour and functioning of similar degree.

As individuals and a group, these students have particular learning characteristics. They require support in the development of communication skills, cognitive skills, fine and gross motor skills, self-care, life skills, and socialization skills. Generally, a student with this level of intellectual functioning is also significantly delayed in social-emotional development. There may be accompanying sensory, physical, and health disabilities. These students need specific instruction for many or all life-skills activities.

To be eligible for supplemental funding for Moderate to Severe/Profound Intellectual Disabilities, the student:

- must meet the criteria for the above definition; and
- have a current IEP; and
- receive ongoing special education service(s) outlined in the IEP and directly related to the student's identified special need(s). The special education service(s) must be in addition to any other services provided under formula funding based on total student enrolment (e.g., learning assistance, counselling). Reduction in class size is not by itself a sufficient service to meet this definition.

## ***Identification and Assessment***

In Powell River, a formal psycho-educational assessment determines the student's level of functioning. It includes information on:

- academic and life skills;
- communication skills;
- sensory disorders;
- social-emotional development; and
- specific aptitudes.

This assessment is based on a variety of measures of intellectual ability and adaptive behaviour\*.

Instruments such as the Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales and the Adaptive Behaviour Scale (AAMR) are used to assess an individual's adaptive behaviour. The current revisions of the Stanford-Binet and the Wechsler Intelligence scales are the most frequently used tests for

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\* Adaptive behaviour is the "effectiveness or degree to which the individual meets the standards of personal independence and social responsibility..." (AAMR)

assessing intellectual ability. A medical assessment is requested to provide an indication of visual, auditory, motor, or other physical needs that would affect the IEP.

### ***Planning and Implementation***

Because students with moderate to severe/profound intellectual disabilities need to learn appropriate skills and behaviours, they benefit from being with students without disabilities. They require intervention, however. In preparation for developing an IEP, teachers sometimes use planning mechanisms to identify the student's strengths and needs and elicit peer involvement and commitment.

As these students proceed through elementary school, their IEPs specify modified curricula, adapted materials, and measures of progress. Although some of the life-skills training for elementary students with moderate to severe/profound intellectual disabilities may take place in environments outside the regular classroom, the district takes care to ensure maximum opportunities for social integration with classroom age peers.

If a student with a severe to profound intellectual disability has a sensory impairment, physical disability, or medical/health needs, he or she may require support services from a teacher assistant as well as the expertise of a physiotherapist, a speech-language pathologist, or an itinerant specialist. These other professionals work with the school-based team to ensure joint planning and information sharing.

At the secondary level, a student has access to a range of meaningful educational and social experiences within the school and community. Many of these students benefit from participating in elective areas. The extent of their participation is determined with reference to IEP goals. Where schools have a system of home rooms, the students are included in a home room, even if they spend much of their school day receiving more specialized services such as intensive work experience. The aim is to ensure maximum opportunities for social integration.

The older the student or the more severe the disability, the greater the need for functional educational objectives. Since these students need to learn skills that afford many opportunities for practice and prepare them for adult life in the community, they need an increasing percentage of educational instruction in community environments.

Job training programs are essential if the goal is for the student to benefit from post-secondary work placements. A student with a moderate, severe or profound intellectual disability participates in work experience/job training, with support where required (see Section D: *Work Experience/Job Training*).

Generally, job and pre-employment skill training needs to begin earlier for these students than for age peers. Parent involvement in life/vocational planning is essential.

### ***Evaluation and Reporting***

Powell River schools include students with moderate to profound intellectual disabilities in regular evaluation and reporting based on the goals, objectives, and strategies outlined in their IEPs. Since extensive program modifications are usually required, evaluation is based on the student's progress toward the goals and objectives outlined in the IEP. If a student takes part in the regular program with some adaptations, evaluation is based on the regular standards (i.e.,

the extent to which learning outcomes were attained). The method of evaluation is consistent with the IEP and ministry reporting policies on the use of comments and letter grades.

Schools provide reports to parents on the same schedule used for all students. They report progress in all aspects of the program and progress related to IEP goals. Reports indicate the adaptations and modifications made to the student's educational program. All personnel directly involved in the ongoing educational program (e.g., classroom teacher, specialist teacher, speech-language pathologist) report on student progress.

Student progress is evaluated using a range of assessment techniques. These may include criterion-based measures, curriculum-based assessments, teacher observations, samples of student work, and the extent to which the student has achieved IEP goals.

## **Personnel**

### **Teacher Qualifications**

With sufficient training and experience and specialized support when needed, classroom teachers are able to include students with moderate to severe/profound intellectual disabilities and provide a program in which they can be successful. In-service training opportunities and a collaborative team approach support and encourage the development of the skills and understandings a classroom teacher may require.

Specialist teachers with responsibilities for supporting students with intellectual disabilities fulfill the qualifications described for learning assistance (see Section D: *Learning Assistance Services*). Whenever possible, Powell River's special needs teachers have advanced course work in:

- the characteristics and needs of students with intellectual disabilities;
- specialized instructional methodologies and technologies; and adaptations and modification of programs for students with intellectual disabilities; and
- functional life skills and career development.

Where students require adaptive devices or technological support, the district expects all personnel to be competent in their use and provides in-service opportunities to attain these competencies.

Recent and ongoing technological advances in adaptive devices related to computer access, environmental controls, and augmented communication have greatly enhanced learning opportunities for students with moderate to profound intellectual disabilities. The district expects specialist staff to stay informed on current developments and introduce new technology as appropriate and as resources permit.

### **Teacher Assistant Qualifications**

In Powell River, teacher assistants who work in classrooms with students with moderate to severe/profound intellectual disabilities are provided training for the duties they are assigned, so that they understand:

- the social, emotional, and educational implications of intellectual disabilities;
- functional life skills and career development; and
- technological support.

In-service training includes opportunities to continue developing expertise in these and related areas.

Teacher assistants work under the general direction of teachers and the supervision of administrative officers.

**Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

Sandra Fahey, Special Needs Teacher, James Thomson Elementary School

Jody Lloyd, Special Needs Teacher, JP Dallos Middle School

Mary Lynne McKamey, Special Needs Teacher, Grief Point Elementary School

Naida Schultz, Special Needs Teacher, Texada School

Sharon Scott, Special Needs Teacher, Henderson Elementary School

Sandra Whitehouse, Special Needs Teacher, Oceanview Middle School

**Service Level for 1997-98****Teachers**

.45 Full Time Equivalent teachers

# **Students with Physical Disabilities or Chronic Health Impairments**

## ***Definition***

A student is considered to have a physical disability or chronic health impairment based on the need for special educational services because of one or more of the following:

- nervous system impairment;
- musculoskeletal condition; and/or
- chronic health impairment.

By itself, medical diagnosis does not determine the special educational services required by students with physical disabilities or chronic health impairments. Students are only eligible for funding in this category if their physical disabilities or chronic health impairments adversely affect their education.

To be eligible for funding in this category, a student must:

- meet one or more of the above criteria; and
- have a current IEP; and
- receive direct, ongoing special education service(s) outlined in the IEP and directly related to the student's identified special need(s). The special education service(s) must be in addition to any other services provided under formula funding based on total student enrolment (e.g., learning assistance, counselling). Reduction in class size is not by itself a sufficient service to meet the definition.

## ***Identification and Assessment***

Assessments integrate current relevant information related to the student's intellectual, social/emotional, sensory, physical, and communicative abilities as well as his or her ability to perform daily living activities at school. Individual Education Plans take into account specific health and personal care needs and outline strategies to address those needs. When an extended IEP team or community case management team is formed, it typically includes medical professionals to help develop and implement an effective IEP. (See Section F: Community Case Management)

## ***Planning and Implementation***

More than medical diagnosis, the extent and impact of the physical/medical condition and the consequent need for services to give the student access to meaningful participation in an educational program determine the special educational services required by a student with physical disabilities or chronic health impairments.

Some students will become increasingly dependent because of degenerative conditions or terminal illnesses. It is important to encourage these students to maintain normal routines as long as possible. At the same time, the Powell River educational system affirms the rights of students and families to participate meaningfully in the individualization of the student's educational program. Health care plans are regularly updated and include emergency procedures as necessary to meet individual needs and circumstances.

Powell River schools provide students with physical disabilities or chronic health impairments opportunities to participate in school activities to the greatest extent possible. Where physical barriers exist, adaptations to facilities or equipment to allow access to school areas and programs are made as quickly as possible. (See Section G: Appendix 4, Facilities Planning)

The Powell River school board has developed a Universal Precautions Policy to follow in all situations involving contact with body fluids. (See Section F: Removal for Health and Safety)

### ***Evaluation***

In most cases, students with physical disabilities or chronic health impairments take part in the regular program with necessary adaptations. Evaluation is based on the extent to which the student achieves learning outcomes. The method of evaluation is consistent with the IEP and ministry reporting policies on the use of comments and letter grades.

Because some students require extensive modifications to parts of their program, some of their learning outcomes are substantially different from those in the regular curriculum. In these cases, evaluation is based on the degree to which the student achieves individualized outcomes and referenced to individually set standards.

Schools provide reports to parents on the same schedule used for all students. They report progress in all aspects of the program and progress related to IEP goals. Reports indicate the adaptations and modifications made to the student's educational program. All personnel directly involved in that program (e.g., classroom teacher, specialist teacher, speech-language pathologist) report on student progress.

## ***Personnel***

### **Teacher Qualifications**

The Ministry of Education expects that, with sufficient training and experience and specialist support when needed, classroom teachers will be able to include most students with physical disabilities and chronic health impairments and provide them a program in which they can be successful. Powell River school district provides in-service training opportunities and a collaborative team approach to support and encourage the development of the skills required. These include:

- knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with physical disabilities and chronic health impairments; and
- skills in specialized instructional methodologies and technologies and adaptation or modification of programs for students with physical disabilities or chronic health impairments.

Teachers with responsibilities for supporting students with physical disabilities or chronic health impairments also fulfill the qualifications described for learning assistance (see Section D: *Learning Assistance Services*).

In Powell River school district, a district physiotherapist helps to monitor the quality of the health services provided in the school. A protocol agreement with the Ministry of Health identifies the needs of these students as falling into three levels and clarifies responsibilities for in-school support. (See Section G: Appendix 1)

Recent and ongoing technological advances in adaptive devices related to computer access, environmental controls, and augmented communication have greatly enhanced learning opportunities for students with physical disabilities. Staff stays informed on current developments and introduces new technology as appropriate. The district uses the service of SET-BC for some of these students (see Section G: Appendix 3).

### **Teacher Assistant Qualifications**

Teacher assistants who work in classrooms with students with physical disabilities or chronic health impairments are trained for the duties they are assigned. They have:

- an understanding of the social, emotional, and educational implications of dependent needs;
- knowledge about functional life skills and career development; and
- knowledge about technological support.

In-service training includes opportunities to develop further expertise in these and related areas. Teacher assistants work under the general direction of teachers and the supervision of administrative officers.

**Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

Anita Adams, . Special Needs Teacher and Student Services Department Head, Max Cameron Secondary School

Vernon Currie, Special Needs Teacher, Max Cameron Secondary School

Sandra Fahey, Special Needs Teacher, James Thomson Elementary School

Mary Lynne McKamey, Special Needs Teacher, Grief Point Elementary School

Faye Perry, Special Needs Teacher, Edgehill Elementary School

Janice Rayson, Special Needs Teacher, Brooks Secondary School

Naida Schultz, Special Needs Teacher, Texada School

Sharon Scott, Special Needs Teacher, Henderson Elementary School

Veronica Soloman, Teacher Counsellor and Special Needs Teacher, Westview Learning Centre

Hanna Verkerk-English, Special Needs Teacher, Kelly Creek Community School

Sandra Whitehouse, Special Needs Teacher, Oceanview Middle School

**Service Level for 1997-98****Teachers**

1.5 Full Time Equivalent teachers

# Students with Visual Impairment

## ***Definition***

Visual impairment is a generic term that covers a range of difficulties with vision, including the following categories: blind, legally blind, partially sighted, low vision, and cortically visually impaired.

For educational purposes, a student with visual impairment does not have sufficient visual acuity to participate with ease in everyday activities. The impairment interferes with optimal learning and achievement and can result in a substantial educational disadvantage, unless educators adapt the methods of presenting learning opportunities, the nature of materials used, and/or the learning environment. This does not include students described as having visual perceptual difficulties unless they also have a vision loss.

Three conditions determine eligibility for supplemental funding as a visually impaired student:

- in the opinion of an ophthalmologist, optometrist, orthoptist or the Visually Impaired Program at British Columbia's Children's Hospital, the student's functioning is described by one of the following:
  - \* a visual acuity of 6/21 (20/70) or less in the better eye after correction;
  - \* a visual field of 20 degrees or less;
  - \* any progressive eye disease with a prognosis of becoming one of the above in the next few years; or
  - \* a non-correctable visual problem or related visual stamina that results in the student functioning as if his or her visual acuity is limited to 6/21 (20/70) or less;
- a current IEP is in place;
- the student receives additional special education services directly related to the visual impairment on a regular and frequent basis from a qualified teacher of the visually impaired. The special education service(s) must be in addition to any services provided under formula funding based on total student enrolment (e.g., learning assistance, counselling). Reduction in class size is not by itself a sufficient service to meet the definition.

## ***Identification and Assessment***

Powell River school district cooperates with Ministry of Health personnel to ensure all kindergarten students participate in a vision screening program for the identification and prevention of visual impairments. Schools also ask parents to arrange a vision and hearing screening for their child whenever a student is experiencing difficulties or having trouble learning.

To plan a student's educational program, the school district contracts with a teacher of the visually impaired for a functional vision assessment to identify the educational implications of the student's vision loss.

## ***Planning and Implementation***

The establishment of an effective system of service delivery to students with visual impairment depends on the availability of qualified, experienced teachers with regular classroom

experience and the ability to adapt materials, teach Braille, use visual aids and technological devices, and plan, develop, deliver, and monitor all aspects of schooling affected by visual impairment.

With appropriate support services and adapted learning resources or instructional methods, many students can follow the curriculum. When necessary, however, it is modified to reflect individual needs. A formal Individual Education Plan documents the student's educational requirements and any special measures taken to help meet those requirements.

IEP development considers the following needs:

- orientation and mobility skills;
- visual skills;
- specialized skills in reading (e.g., Braille, taped books, enhanced print, CCTV);
- specialized skills in mathematics (e.g., abacus, Nemeth Code);
- access to technology (e.g., Braille 'n Speak, tape recorders, computers);
- daily living skills;
- social skills;
- vocational planning and skill development;
- study skills and note-taking strategies; and
- concept development.

Many students with visual impairment require specialized equipment (e.g., Brailers, closed-circuit televisions, cassette recorders, optical aids) and adapted learning resources (e.g., Braille texts, enlarged print books, tapes). Because these tend to be very bulky, schools will ensure there is adequate, accessible storage available to the student.

A working area for instruction in specific skill development from the itinerant or resource teacher should also be provided. The area should be conducive to effective instruction (i.e., in compliance with health and safety codes, quiet, adequately lit and ventilated, and free from distractions).

## ***Evaluation***

The student's IEP outlines the specific strategies that will be used to evaluate progress. Parents receive reports on the student's progress for all aspects of the IEP as part of the school's usual reporting process.

Because of factors such as visual fatigue, slow reading and writing speed, and the visual components of evaluation tools such as video or maps, the student may require adaptations to usual classroom testing situations. The adaptations may involve additional time, the use of a reader or scribe or specialized equipment, a reduction in the volume of work required to achieve the same learning outcomes, the provision of a description of the visual components, such as a video, and the use of an alternate setting for completing the work. These adaptations are documented in the student's IEP and monitored for their appropriateness and effectiveness.

For students writing provincial examinations, Braille, large print, computer disk and audio tape copies of the examinations can be provided if teachers apply for them well in advance. The district Special Services Division is the source of more information on procedures for adapting provincial examinations to accommodate students with visual impairment.

## ***Personnel***

### **Teacher Qualifications**

Where districts request supplemental funding for students with visual impairments, teachers must have appropriate qualifications. The ministry defines a qualified teacher of the visually impaired as one with:

- a valid BC Teaching Certificate, and
- a Master's degree or diploma in the education of the visually impaired.

Since Powell River school district is unable to employ a teacher of the visually impaired, it provides regular services through sharing arrangements with another school district or through a fee-for-service arrangement with qualified specialist teachers of the visually impaired.

## ***Resources***

### **Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired - SET-BC**

School districts may borrow learning resources, reference materials, and equipment for the use of students with visual impairments from the Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired (PRCVI) and Special Education Technology-British Columbia (SET-BC). Contact is through the district Special Services Division.

### **Protocol to support pre-school children**

An established protocol recognizes the unique needs of young children who are visually impaired and require the specialized skills of teachers of the visually impaired. The protocol allows school boards to contract the services of teachers of the visually impaired to local agencies, preschools, and parents.

## **1.19 Students with Multiple Disabilities: Those Who are Physically Dependent with Multiple Needs (Dependent)**

### ***Definition***

A student with dependent needs is completely dependent on others for meeting major daily living needs. In order to attend school, she or he requires assistance at all times for feeding, dressing, toileting, mobility, and personal hygiene. Many students also require health care as defined in the Inter-Ministerial Protocols. The Ministry of Education estimates that .07% of BC students require this very intense level of service.

Some students are born with conditions or disabilities that make them dependent, while others acquire such conditions or disabilities. Some of these students will develop increasing independence as they learn and grow. Other students may experience decreasing independence because of degenerative conditions or terminal illness.

Students eligible for supplemental funding in this category must meet the following conditions. They:

- meet the eligibility criteria above; and
- have a current IEP; and
- receive specific additional service related to the identified special needs, as well as direct, ongoing special education service(s) outlined in the IEP and directly related to the identified special need(s). The special education service(s) must be in addition to any services provided under formula funding based on total student enrolment (e.g., learning assistance, counselling). Reduction in class size is not by itself a sufficient service to meet the definition.

### ***Identification and Assessment***

The Ministry of Education considers a student formally identified and assessed as having dependent needs for special education funding beyond that provided for low-incidence conditions.

Assessments integrate current relevant information related to intellectual, social/emotional, sensory, physical, and communicative abilities and the ability to perform activities of daily living at school. An Individual Education Plan recognizes the student's broad range of intellectual abilities and addresses specific educational, health, and personal care needs, as well as strategies to address those needs.

Developing an appropriate plan for a student with multiple needs frequently requires input from a number of specialists who are not typically part of a school-based team. They might include medical professionals, representatives of the ministries of children and families and health, and individuals with expertise in augmentative/alternative communication. For ongoing management, however, the team usually includes only key personnel.

Careful documentation and clear procedures address the health needs of these students while in school. The planning incorporates:

- available medical assessments;
- health care plans; and

- special emergency procedures.

## ***Planning and Implementation***

In providing services to a student with dependent needs, the school-based team addresses unique issues around seating, lifting, positioning, movement, feeding, medication, hygiene, and safety. Many services can be provided in a classroom environment but, for reasons of privacy and dignity, others require a more secluded space. The student may require adaptations to the learning environment to participate in aspects of school life and maximize independence.

To increase opportunities for participation, the student has access to as many parts of the school and school equipment as possible. Where physical barriers exist, adaptations to facilities or equipment are made as quickly as possible. The provincial Integration Support program provides information and strategies to maximize participation by students with multiple disabilities.

Recent and ongoing technological advances in adaptive devices related to computer access, environmental controls, and augmented communication have greatly enhanced learning opportunities for students with dependent needs. Specialist staff stay informed about current developments and introduce new technology as appropriate.

Normal routines are maintained as long as possible for a student with a degenerative and/or terminal condition who is or becomes dependent. Health care plans are regularly updated and include emergency procedures to meet individual needs and circumstances.

## ***Evaluation***

The method of evaluation for these students is consistent with the IEP and ministry reporting policies on the use of comments and letter grades.

Because some students require extensive modifications to parts or all of their program, their learning outcomes will be substantially different from those in the regular curriculum. In these cases, evaluation is based on the degree to which the student achieves the goals and objectives in the IEP and referenced to individually set standards.

Schools provide reports to parents on the same schedule used for all students. They report progress in all aspects of the program and progress related to IEP goals. Reports indicate the adaptations and modifications made to the student's educational program. All personnel directly involved in that program (e.g., classroom teacher, specialist teacher, speech-language pathologist) report on student progress.

Staff evaluate student progress using a range of assessment techniques. These may include criterion-based measures, curriculum-based assessments, teacher observations, samples of student work, and the extent to which the student has achieved IEP goals.

## ***Personnel***

### **Teacher Qualifications**

The Ministry of Education expects that, with sufficient training, experience, and specialist support, classroom teachers will be able to include students with dependent needs. Powell

River school district offers in-service training opportunities and a collaborative team approach to support and encourage the development of the required skills.

Teachers with responsibilities for supporting students with dependent needs fulfill the qualifications described for learning assistance (see Section D: *Learning Assistance Services*). They also have advanced course work in:

- the characteristics and needs of students with dependent needs;
- specialized instructional methodologies and technologies; and
- adaptation and modification of programs for students with dependent needs.

A qualified health professional may also be needed to monitor the quality of in-school health services on a regular basis.

Powell River school district ensures that staff who serve students with complex chronic health needs are trained and qualified to perform the functions required. (See Section G: Appendix 1, Local Protocol Agreements)

## **Qualifications of Other Professionals**

### **Health Care Assistants**

These assistants who work in classrooms with students with dependent needs are trained for the duties they are assigned. They have:

- an understanding of the social, emotional, and educational implications of dependent needs;
- knowledge about functional life skills and career development; and
- knowledge about technological support.

In-service training offers opportunities to develop further expertise in these and related areas.

Health Care Assistants work under the general direction of teachers and the supervision of administrative officers.

### **Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

Sandra Fahey, Special Needs Teacher, James Thomson Elementary School

Jody Lloyd, Special Needs Teacher, JP Dallos Middle School

### **Service Level for 1997-98**

.2 Full Time Equivalent teachers

9 hours per day Health Care Assistants

## 1.16 Students with Severe Behaviour Disorders

### ***Definition***

In general, behaviour disorders are a result of a degree of dysfunctional interaction between the student and one or more elements of his or her environment, including the classroom, the school, the family, peers, and the community.

Students with severe behaviour disorders exhibit either:

- uncontrolled behaviour such as aggression and hyperactivity, extremely disruptive behaviour in the school and most other environments consistently and persistently over time; or
- overcontrolled behaviour associated with severe mental health conditions that manifest themselves in profound withdrawal or other internalizing behaviours. These students generally have histories of profound problems and are very vulnerable and fragile, seriously at risk in classroom situations without extensive support.

To be eligible for supplementary funding, these students must meet one of the conditions above and exhibit behaviours that:

- are serious enough to be known to school, school district personnel, and other community agencies and to warrant intensive interventions by other community agencies beyond the school; and
- provide serious risk to themselves or others and/or significantly interfere with their academic progress and that of other students; and
- are beyond the normal capacity of the school to manage with typical special education interventions available in the school environment.

Students in this funding category are those most in need of community services. They require access to intensive, coordinated school/community interventions based on coordinated, inter-ministerial assessment planning and intervention processes required to manage and keep them in school and their community.

Students are eligible in this funding category only if the school district can demonstrate that it is incurring extraordinary costs related to delivering the students' educational programs. The district must also show:

- development and implementation of an IEP coordinated with intervention/care plans developed by appropriate community agencies in collaboration with the family;
- evidence of a coordinated, cross-ministry community response plan;
- documentation including previous plans and interventions to demonstrate that the district has exhausted its own resources and capacity to manage within the typical range of special education interventions;
- evidence of a planned inter-agency review process in a stated time frame, recognizing that many behavioural problems decrease with appropriate interventions.

The IEP includes the elements outlined for moderate behaviour disorders (see Section E: Students with Behaviour Disorders, including Rehabilitation Programs).

In itself, inter-ministerial involvement is not enough to warrant funding in this category. There must also be collaborative inter-ministerial planning, service coordination, and school-based service delivery.

Placement in this funding category may change from year to year because an intensive coordinated approach results in behavioural changes. Reviews are conducted at least quarterly, more frequently if warranted. Powell River school district claims students in this funding category in subsequent years only if justified because of particular circumstances in the intensity of each student's case management.

### ***Identification and Assessment\****

Initial identification of these students may begin in the classroom, although they are often identified in the home or community. Powell River schools fully document teacher observations and perceptions in consultation with the School Psychologist and the school-based team. The behavioural status of the student is also verified by school district or community-based personnel qualified to administer Level C tests. (See Section G: Appendix 2)

### ***Planning and Implementation***

IEPs are supported by the resources of the school district and involved agencies. Powell River school district attempts to plan its resource allocation to allow it to respond quickly to emerging cases requiring a community response throughout the year. Since the district expects that resources and interventions will result in behavioural change, resources are not fixed to a particular child's program or setting. This gives flexibility to move resources as necessary when new priorities emerge.

### ***Evaluation***

Individual program evaluation is provided and reported through a wide variety of sources: IEP reviews, progress reports, school-based teams, community-based team minutes/goals, and the local Child and Youth Committee community case management committee (see Section F: Community Case Management)

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\* Note: the identification and assessment process may need to be modified, expedited or waived temporarily when a student is endangering the safety of self or others.

## **Personnel**

At minimum, personnel meet the standards described under “Moderate Behaviour Disorders” (see Section E: Students with Behaviour Disorders, including Rehabilitation Programs).

### **Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

#### **Child and Youth Care Workers**

Vickie Bleaney  
Rae Kennedy  
Angela Skillbeck  
Shaunie Yates

#### **Teachers**

Gerry Brach, Teacher Counsellor, Grief Point Elementary School  
Vernon Currie, Special Needs Teacher, Max Cameron Secondary School  
Sandra Fahey, Special Needs Teacher, James Thomson Elementary School  
Owen Gaskell, Special Needs Teacher, JP Dallos Middle School  
Nadia Hocking, Special Needs Teacher, Brooks Secondary School  
Iris Kramer-Clarke, Teacher Counsellor and Student Services Department Head, JP Dallos Middle School  
Russ Macdonald, Teacher Counsellor, Henderson Elementary School  
Faye Perry, Special Needs Teacher, Edgehill Elementary School  
Naida Schultz, Special Needs Teacher, Texada School  
Veronica Soloman, Teacher Counsellor and Special Needs Teacher, Westview Learning Centre  
Michelle Tom, Teacher Counsellor, Oceanview Middle School  
Hanna Verkerk-English, Special Needs Teacher, Kelly Creek Community School

### **Service Level for 1997-98**

#### **Child and Youth Care Workers**

18.5 hours per day

#### **Teachers**

1.7 Full Time Equivalent teachers

## **1.32 Students Who are Gifted (Elementary and Middle Schools)**

### ***Definition***

As identified by qualified professionals, students who are gifted possess demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of exceptionally high capability in intellect, creativity, or skills associated with specific disciplines. These students often demonstrate outstanding abilities in more than one area and/or extraordinary intensity of focus in their particular areas of talent or interest. They may also have accompanying disabilities, however, and may not have strengths in all areas of intellectual functioning.

Intellectual development is the primary goal of education in BC, but personal, social, and career development are also educational goals included in the programming for students who are gifted. The major purpose of Powell River school district services for these students is to provide differentiated educational programs and services beyond the basic school curriculum so that they can realize their potential for high performance and become effective productive individuals and members of society.

### ***Identification and Assessment***

The Powell River school district supports early identification, since some gifted students whose abilities are not identified and addressed early may develop secondary emotional and behavioural difficulties. The district makes every effort to ensure that screening and identification procedures are not biased in terms of language, culture, gender, physical ability, or learning or other disability.

In most instances, a student considered for differentiated curriculum opportunities demonstrates:

- above average ability, creativity, and task commitment (motivation); or
- special skills or talents in a particular area.

Identification and assessment of strengths and talents uses multiple criteria and information from a variety of sources, including:

- classroom-based assessment;
- teacher nomination based on anecdotal records, observations;
- parent, peers, and/or self nomination;
- behavioural checklists, inventories, and student portfolios;
- recognition/nomination by the school-based team;
- formal individualized assessment by school-based staff;
- formal psycho-educational testing, including assessment of cognitive ability, achievement, aptitude, and creativity. A school psychologist may undertake formal assessments to Level C as a final step in this process (see Section G: Appendix 2, Assessment Guidelines).

## ***Programs and Services***

Since students who are gifted form a heterogeneous population, their individual needs, experiences, aptitudes, and interests vary. The Powell River school district differentiates programs and services to meet the diverse needs of exceptionally capable learners and provides additional resources as required. For example, some students who are gifted benefit from using information technology, which gives them access to information sources not readily available in our community.

Regardless of how schools deliver services, some common elements characterize an individualized program appropriate for a student who is gifted:

- it is different in pace, scope, and complexity, in keeping with the nature and extent of the exceptionality;
- it provides opportunities for students to interact socially and academically with both age peers and peers of similar abilities;
- it addresses both the cognitive and affective domains;
- it incorporates adaptations and/or extensions to content, process, product, and learning environment; and
- it goes beyond the walls of a school into the larger community.

### **Programs**

As a result of the assessment process, Powell River school district offers three program levels.

#### **Level One**

Classroom teachers provide enriched curriculum-embedded programs to students they have identified using, in most cases, informal assessment tools. The school keeps a record of these students and, in a short note on the report card, informs parents that the child is receiving enrichment as part of his or her educational program.

#### **Level Two**

Classroom teachers, with support from school-based counsellors or Special Needs staff and/or the District Special Needs Teacher - Gifted, provides adjusted programs for identified students. Teachers access support through the school-based team, which offers suggestions and strategies for program enrichment and/or additional resources. Need is usually substantiated by some form of individualized diagnostic assessment tool (e.g., PIAT-R, KTEA, C-CAT). If involved at this level, the District Special Needs Teacher - Gifted, consults with teachers and provides checklists, suggestions, units, projects, and the like, based on the student's needs. As with Level One, schools inform parents through comments on the report card.

#### **Level Three**

The Special Needs Teacher - Gifted, in collaboration with classroom teachers, support staff, and administration, provides individualized programs and resources involving extensive adjustments, some which may not be curriculum-embedded. An IEP documents these adjustments. Programs for students who are gifted often require a blend of opportunities available both in the school and the community. The more extraordinary the student's abilities, the more necessary it becomes to expand the options beyond the regular classroom.

The school-based team provides access to Level Three programs. If the team determines a student requires additional programming beyond the classroom or school, it refers the student

to the district Special Services Division for intensive individual assessment and/or psycho-educational testing. The division then assigns the Special Needs Teacher - Gifted to form an IEP team, develop an individualized program, and provide direct instruction and/or human or material resources as necessary.

## **Services**

Supplemental services for a gifted student include all or some of the following elements:

- independent guided education: projects suggested by teachers or students;
- specialist teacher instruction in resource rooms;
  - tiered assignments
  - learning centres
- special groupings that provide opportunities for learning with intellectual peers;
- consultative services to help teachers expand experiences in the regular classroom;
- process skills training (e.g., upper-level thinking skills, creative thinking skills, creative problem solving, future problem solving);
- accelerating/compacting some or all of the student's program;
- opportunities for challenges and contests (e.g., math and science);
- opportunities to attend community-level courses or workshops;
- leadership training;
- mentorships;
- guidance to address emotional and social needs.

## ***Student Evaluation and Reporting***

Powell River school district includes gifted students in regular evaluation and reporting. If there are extensive program modifications, evaluation is based on the degree to which the student achieves individual learning outcomes. For students with an IEP who receive direct service from the Special Needs Teacher - Gifted, parents receive an extra reporting form. Reports of student progress are based on the instructional objectives and procedures outlined in the student's IEP. They indicate the adaptations and modifications made to the student's educational program and performance relative to widely-held expectations. All personnel directly involved in the ongoing educational program report on student progress.

## ***Program/Staff Evaluation***

Responsibility for evaluating programs and services for students who are gifted (elementary and middle schools) rests with the Director of Instruction (Special Services) and principals of elementary and middle schools. Responsibility for individual staff evaluation of the Special Needs Teacher - Gifted rests with the Director of Instruction (Special Services).

## ***Personnel***

### **District Special Needs Teacher - Gifted**

Powell River's District Special Needs Teacher - Gifted has:

- successful teaching experience at the elementary, middle, or secondary level;

- knowledge of curricula and instructional resources across a range of school years;
- knowledge of human behaviour and child development, and an understanding of the needs of exceptional children;
- skills to assess the educational needs of students and create or adapt instructional techniques, activities, and materials to meet individual needs;
- an understanding of how the gifted student conceptualizes, learns, thinks, and reasons;
- an ability to teach problem-solving methodologies for ultimate independent learning;
- an ability to assume the role of “facilitator” rather than “lecturer”;
- open-mindedness, flexibility, and creativeness to stimulate students’ thinking;
- strategies for teaching, adapting, and extending the curriculum to meet the diverse individual needs of gifted students.

### **Qualifications**

Powell River teachers who provide specialized support service for gifted students meet the following qualifications:

- a minimum of five years successful classroom teaching experience;
- post-graduate course concentration in Gifted Education

### **Staff Assignments for 1997-98**

#### **Teacher**

Michael Leahy, BEd, post-graduate year (Gifted Education); Member, Creative Education Foundation; Member, Association of Educators of Gifted, Talented and Creative Children of BC

#### **Teacher Assistant**

Susan Hill

### **Service Level for 1997-98**

1.0 Full Time Equivalent District Special Needs Teacher - Gifted (elementary and middle schools)

3.5 hrs per day Support Service assistance

.25 Full Time Equivalent teachers (Brooks Secondary School)

.25 Full Time Equivalent teachers (Max Cameron Secondary School)

# Section F

## References

<b>Access to Technology Support.....</b>	<b>F-1</b>
<b>Appeals/District Review Committee .....</b>	<b>F-2</b>
<b>Child Abuse Prevention .....</b>	<b>F-2</b>
<b>Community Case Management .....</b>	<b>F-3</b>
<b>Distance Learning for Students with Special Needs .....</b>	<b>F-3</b>
<b>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy .....</b>	<b>F-3</b>
<b>Full Day Kindergarten .....</b>	<b>F-4</b>
<b>Learning Resources .....</b>	<b>F-4</b>
<b>Removal for Health and Safety.....</b>	<b>F-5</b>
<b>Student Records: Use and Management.....</b>	<b>F-5</b>
<b>Transition Planning.....</b>	<b>F-6</b>
<b>Transportation .....</b>	<b>F-7</b>

## **Section F: References**

### **Access to Technology Support**

A variety of technology supports are available to students with special needs and their teachers.

#### ***Support for Staff***

##### **Provincial**

The Community Learning Network (CLN) has a Special Education Menu that provides current information on a number of topics. It also includes a bulletin board for networking on special topics.

An *Integration Support Line* offers teachers, teacher assistants, and administrators advice and information to help them ensure the inclusion of students with special needs. The number to call is 1-800-876-8542.

##### **Local**

The Powell River school district offers technology workshops to its employees during the summer and on professional development days. The district Special Services Division, in partnership with SET-BC, provides additional technology workshops to address technology needs for individual students.

#### ***Support for Students***

##### **Provincial**

Targeted students have access to the Auditory Training Equipment program from the Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired. Contact the district Special Services Division for further information. They also have access to the Special Education Technology-British Columbia (SET-BC) program (see Section G: Appendix 3).

##### **Local**

Special Services holds a small number of computers and other technological support devices to assist students with special needs and students with speech/language problems. It gives first priority to students with special needs who do not qualify for SET-BC equipment. Contact the district Special Services Division for further information.

## **Appeals/District Review Committee**

Powell River established an appeal bylaw policy and bylaw regulations in 1990 (see, School District 47 (Powell River) *Policy Manual*, Appeals Bylaw Policy, Appeals Bylaw Regulation).

The Board hears appeals provided that those appealing a school district employee decision have first made every attempt to consult with the employee(s) concerned. The function of the District Review Committee is to:

- hear all appeals brought under Section 11 of the School Act and uphold, alter, or revoke employee decisions under appeal;
- review all student suspensions of 11 days or more and uphold, alter, or revoke employee decisions under appeal;
- review and, if appropriate, determine the educational program to be made available to students suspended for 11 days or more; and
- report in writing decisions of the committee to students and parents of students affected by such decisions, with copies to the employee(s) and the supervisor(s) involved in the case.

Decisions of the District Review Committee may be appealed directly to the Board of School Trustees. Such appeals should be made, in writing, to the Superintendent of Schools.

## **Child Abuse Prevention**

Child abuse includes physical, emotional, and verbal neglect or abuse and sexual abuse. Child protection legislation requires the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect to the Ministry for Children and Families. Educators need to ensure they have current knowledge in this area and are meeting legislative requirements. They have a legal responsibility to report all suspected cases of abuse and neglect to the Ministry for Children and Families and to follow the appropriate protocol procedures when reporting a case.

Children with special needs are potential victims of child abuse in equal or, possibly, greater numbers than other children. Educators who work with special needs children need to be aware of the indicators of child abuse and neglect.

Powell River school district has established a protocol to use with suspected cases of child abuse in schools when the alleged offender is a school district employee (see, School District 47 (Powell River) *Policy Manual*, “Child Abuse Investigations in Schools, Item no. 6145” -- Policy, Regulation and Exhibit). The protocol outlines the superintendent’s responsibilities in investigating situations of alleged neglect.

## **Community Case Management**

The Powell River Child and Youth Committee, recognizing the need for coordination of a variety of services from various agencies to provide effective service to troubled youth and their families, developed *Community Case Management, Powell River Guidelines*. These guidelines describe a preventative intervention process designed to maintain or return a young person to a circumstance of least possible intervention.

The Powell River model uses a team approach to develop and monitor a community case management plan. The team is composed of representatives from agencies providing services to the individual. It is managed by a case manager, who could be an agency representative, a parent, or the student.

Copies of the guidelines are available from the district Special Services Division.

## **Distance Learning for Students with Special Needs**

From time to time, students with special needs, particularly those hospitalized or homebound for unusually long periods, may require an educational program delivered through correspondence.

With the permission of the principal, students enrolled in a BC public school are entitled to take one or more correspondence courses, provided they meet the academic prerequisites set by the minister. The board pays the regional correspondence school fee set out in the Correspondence Education Order.

Enrolment in a correspondence course remains valid for a period of no more than two years.

## **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy**

Under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (1992), students and their parents have a right to know what individual student information is being collected and how it is being used.

Schools must inform parents and the young person about information they are sharing and the purpose for the sharing.

Section 97 of the School Act and Ministerial Order 14/91, the Student Records Disclosure Order, permits disclosure of the student record kept by the board to a person planning to deliver or delivering health services, social services, or other support services to that student. This is consistent with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, which states, under section 33(d), that a public body may disclose personal information “for the purpose of complying with an enactment of, or with a treaty, arrangement or agreement made under an enactment of British Columbia or Canada”.

Powell River school district ensures that practices for the collection, use, and disclosure of personal student information comply with section 27(2) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The Secretary Treasurer is the information officer for Powell River school district (see, School District 47 (Powell River) *Policy Manual*, “Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Item no. 2500(P)” and “Student Records Item no. 6161 (P)(R)”). Direct specific questions about freedom of information or rights to privacy to the Office of the Secretary Treasurer.

## Full Day Kindergarten

Some students identified as having special education needs are eligible for 950 hours of instruction immediately upon attaining the age of eligibility for kindergarten. These are students who:

- are dependent handicapped;
- have moderate, severe, or profound intellectual disabilities;
- are deaf or hard of hearing;
- have visual impairment;
- have autism; and/or
- have physical disabilities.

School districts may claim these students for full day special education funding and report them on Form 1513 in September of the year in which they are admitted to school, providing that an appropriate Individual Education Plan has been developed to address their special educational needs.

Powell River school district has the option of contracting for services through a preschool or child development centre for some portion of the child's educational program in the kindergarten year.

## Learning Resources

Because of the diversity of students with special needs who are integrated into classrooms, the district requires a wide range of learning resources to support the educational program. The District Resource Centre and school-based libraries acquire learning resources that include provincially recommended or locally evaluated titles from several of the following media: software, video, print, manipulatives, and optical formats such as CD-ROM and laser disks.

IEP team members ensure congruity between the content of learning resources used and the intended learning outcomes stated in the IEP, making available alternate formats such as large print, closed captioning, and audiotaping where students require them.

In many cases, the ministry provides provincially recommended resources in alternate formats or assistance in reformatting them. The *Catalogue of Learning Resources*, along with the annotations published by the ministry, provides a wealth of information on each recommended learning resource.

For more information on recommended resources, contact the District Resource Centre.

## Removal for Health and Safety

BC's School Act makes the following provision for removing a student from school:

109. (4) If a teacher or administrative officer suspects a student is suffering from a communicable disease or other physical, mental or emotional condition that would endanger the health or welfare of the other students, the teacher or the administrative officer, as the case may be, shall report the matter to the school medical officer, to the school principal and to the superintendent of schools for the district, and may exclude the student from school until a certificate is obtained for the student from the school medical officer or a private medical practitioner permitting the student to return to school.

Powell River school district uses this reactive process only when absolutely necessary (i.e., when proactive preventative measures have not been effective). The Director of Instruction (Special Services) serves as the superintendent of school's designate for section 109 (4) referrals to the medical health officer.

The Ministry of Health (Nov. 1993) provided guidelines on precautions for preventing the spread of communicable diseases. These are included in the School District 47 (Powell River) *Policy Manual*, "Universal Precautions (General Hygiene) Item no. 2341.8 (R)".

The Powell River School Board will continue to make available an educational program for students removed or excluded from school for health or safety reasons.

## Student Records: Use and Management

A student record is defined in legislation as any record of information in written or electronic form pertaining to (a) a student, or (b) a child registered with a school but receiving a home education. Under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, a student record includes any written record regarding a student.

Section 97(1) of the School Act requires boards to establish and maintain a record for each student and each child registered with the board's schools. This section also requires a board to permit a person providing health services, social services, or other support services to obtain from the records information required to carry out those services. This is reflected in the School District 47 (Powell River) *Policy Manual*, "Student Records Item no. 6161 (P)(R)".

Under most circumstances, the school contacts parents to ask that they sign a *Release of Information* form.

In Powell River, records maintained for students with special education needs typically include information related to identification and assessment, an Individual Education Plan and relevant follow-up, and review information about monitoring progress or placement. Along with IEPs, each year the following test reports are placed in an envelope labeled with the type of reports enclosed and the dates of each report:

- School-based test reports/results
- Psycho-educational Assessment reports
- Specialized assessments such as Speech and Language, Physiotherapy
- Audiology screenings
- Counsellor reports
- Disciplinary reports

- Assessments conducted by outside agencies

These envelopes, kept in the student's folder, form part of the complete student records maintained at the student's school. Portions of those records relating to the provision of district special services and records of test protocols are also maintained at the district Special Services Division until the student reaches school-leaving age. The Special Services Division is responsible to maintain records of students resident in the district whom the board has placed in Provincial Resource Programs or programs in other districts.

## Transition Planning

As they grow, students experience significant transition points -- from home or day-care to kindergarten, from class to class and school to school, from school district to school district, and from school to post-secondary or work situations. These transitions almost always involve changes in:

- locations;
- expectations;
- rules;
- services;
- peer groups;
- staff;
- jurisdiction; and/or
- life-style.

The transition process for a student with special needs requires especially careful planning to ensure that the elements of the Individual Education Plan or Community Case Management Plan and the support services required to carry them out are not disrupted or lost in the process.

When establishing procedures for transition points, Powell River school district personnel are asked to keep in mind that transitions:

- are continuous;
- occur as part of a planned education program;
- involve preparation, implementation, and evaluation;
- should be included in the Individual Education Plan or Community Case Management Plan; and
- may require services that school teams need to be aware of and use as required.

Transition planning involves individual transition plan development, student follow-up studies, and long-range planning. The Powell River Pre-school Transition Committee supports transitions of pre-school aged children with special needs into public school. The process is outlined in the local agreement between the Ministry for Children and Families and School District 47. The committee is composed of representatives from the school district, Coast Garibaldi Health Unit, and Supported Child Care.

The transition committee meets on an as-needed basis to receive referrals and initiate the planning process. The committee's role is to:

- screen applications for transition services
- prioritize referrals to make optimum use of available resources
- coordinate transition services with the services of other agencies

- initiate transition teams as required

Planning to support the transition of students with special needs from the school system to the community is facilitated by the Powell River Transition Planning Committee, which includes representation from the Powell River school district, Malaspina University College (Powell River Campus), the Ministry for Children and Families, and the Ministry of Health. The committee recognizes that students with special needs are at risk of being uninvolved in decision-making and community life, under-employed or unemployed, unable to access further education or training and, generally, unable to lead fulfilling lives. Carefully developed and coordinated transition plans are essential to specify the supports and services needed to enable the student to be successful in the community.

This planning begins at least two years before a student leaves school. It is specific to individual student needs and addresses issues in meeting those needs, including the actions needed, the initiator for each action, an approximate date for the action, and completion or follow-up dates.

## **Transportation**

Function 7.70 of the Financial Management System deals with transportation to and from instructional programs, including transportation services for students in special needs programs. Powell River school district is authorized to provide these services either directly, by contract, or by payment of a transportation allowance.

The Ministry of Education provides funding to enable the Powell River School Board to provide the most appropriate transportation arrangements for students with special needs. These include:

- regular transportation;
- special transportation;
- transportation assistance to parents who drive their children;
- transportation for curricular, co-curricular, extra-curricular, and assessment activities;
- transportation between school and home for out-of-district students enrolled in Provincial Resource Programs; and
- special equipment to make transportation services accessible. Buses to transport students with physical disabilities may require the installation of hydraulic lifts.

Powell River school district uses the following guidelines in providing transportation for students with special needs:

- Unless it is in the educational interests of the student to do otherwise, the district provides regular transportation services as a first option.
- Transportation routes and schedules are designed to ensure that instructional time for students with special needs is not shortened.
- Students with special needs who require supervision are not left unattended at transportation drop-off or pick-up points.
- Where a student requires Level III health care procedures on a continuous or unpredictable basis, a qualified health professional provided under the protocol agreement with the Ministry of Health accompanies the student while in transit.
- Guidelines for walk limits and maximum time in transit allow provision for the individual needs of students with disabilities.

- Where appropriate, travel-training programs for students with special needs are provided as part of the Individual Education Plan.
- Whenever feasible, the use of public transit by the student is considered a means of enhancing student independence and growth.
- In-service is provided to bus drivers to facilitate travel for individual students or groups of students.

Special transportation arrangements are made through the Special Services Division.

# **Section G**

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## Section G: Appendices

### Appendix 1: Protocols

#### Inter-Ministerial Protocols for the Provision of Support Services to Schools

Fourteen of the protocols focus on a particular school or student support service:

- Audiological services.
- Generalized school health services.
- School environment and health inspection of schools.
- Educational programs in containment/attendance centres.
- Educational programs for treatment centres and hospitals.
- Preschool programs for children with special needs.
- In-school support for special needs children.
- Services to school-age children and young people with severe mental, behavioural, and emotional disorders.
- Psychological services.
- Physiotherapy and occupational therapy.
- Speech and language therapy.
- Family and child services to support children in schools.
- Provision of specialized equipment.
- Policing in school and on school property.

A fifteenth protocol, an agreement to track the impact of the protocols, is designed to ensure that a follow-up mechanism is provided to determine areas needing adjustment over a 10 year implementation period.

The *Rehabilitation Resource Programs: Program Management Protocol* between the ministries of Children and Families and Education, issued in March 1989, is incorporated in the protocol agreements, as are pre-existing Operations Protocols between the ministries of Education and Attorney General, which govern the operations of educational programs in Youth Custody and Attendance Centres.

Each protocol agreement includes:

- the ministries involved in the agreement;
- a background statement to clarify current status;
- the target population for services;
- the services to be provided; and
- the obligations of each ministry.

The following are some key elements of the agreements that can provide direct benefits to students:

- Sharing information (within provisions of freedom of information legislation).
- Coordinating service responses, such as interventions in cases of abuse and neglect.
- Providing specialized services.
- Avoiding duplication of services.
- Shortening response time.

The intent is that the agreements will form the framework for ongoing discussion and service development at the local level. An important mechanism to help meet the needs of the local community is the Powell River Child and Youth Committee. This committee, which includes representatives of the various ministries, the school district, and other key agencies in the community, coordinates the efforts of various agencies and personnel in the community by establishing and maintaining a cooperative inter-agency, interdisciplinary approach. Effective local committees can also provide data to help participants plan their base services in the community.

Child and Youth Committees operating effectively at the local level can help school district representatives ensure that schools receive necessary support services so that they can meet their obligations to students with special needs registered in the school district.

## Local Protocol Agreements

Powell River school district, in partnership with other agencies, has developed local agreements to support students. These protocols are summarized here. The complete protocols are available at District Special Services.

### 1. Protocol between the Special Services Division of School District #47 and Powell River Family Physicians

Pertains to screening students for Attention Deficit Disorders. *Statement of Intent:* Where a School-Based Team feels that a student may have a medical or psychiatric problem (e.g., ADHD, FAS, Conduct Disorder), parents should be advised to consult with their Family Physician.

### 2. A Local Agreement between School District #47 (Powell River) and Powell River Pre-Schools

Pertains to transitions from pre-school to public school for students with special needs. *Statement of Intent:* to provide a smooth transition from pre-school to public school for each student with special needs, within the limits of available resources. It is the responsibility of the local representatives to maintain consultation at all levels to ensure effective coordination of the delivery of transition support services.

### 3. A Local Agreement between the Representatives of School District #47 (Powell River) and Powell River New Life Society and Sliammon Native Drug & Alcohol Abuse Program

Pertains to Drug and Alcohol Support Services for public school students. *Statement of Intent:* to provide a range of drug and alcohol services to public school students, within the limits of available resources. The representatives of School District #47 (Powell River), Powell River New Life Society, and the Native Alcohol and Drug Program are responsible for maintaining consultation and coordination at all levels to ensure the effective delivery of drug and alcohol support services to children and youth.

### 4. A Local Agreement between the Local Representatives of the Ministries of Education and Health

Pertains to in-school support for special needs students. *Statement of Intent:* to provide appropriate support services in every public school, within the limits of available resources. The local representatives of the ministries of education and health are responsible for maintaining consultation at all levels to ensure effective coordination in the delivery of school support services.

### 5. School District-Community Suicide Prevention Guidelines (To be included as part of the district's proposed "School Crisis Action Plan")

Pertains to school staff roles and responsibilities in the event of suicide ideation or disclosure of a suicide attempt.

**6. (Draft) Crisis Intervention Teams protocol between individual schools and the school district and between the community and schools (To be included as part of the district's proposed "School Crisis Action Plan")**

Pertains to the provision of emotional support services to school communities following a tragic event.

# Appendix 2: Assessment Guidelines

**These guidelines are based on the American Psychological Association, 1985, and Canadian Psychological Association, 1987, standards and guidelines for educational and psychological testing.**

The guidelines relate to the use of psychological tests and training in testing and assessment practices. They focus on distinctions among levels of tests and their related restrictions; test user's qualifications and responsibilities; and restrictions for the purchase of tests. These guidelines are a summary of the B.C. College of Psychologists' *Guidelines for Educational and Psychological Testing: A Report of the Educational Policy Advisory Committee* (May, 1994).

## **Level A Tests**

These tests can be adequately administered, scored, and interpreted with the aid of the manual, a familiarity with the client population, orientation to the setting where the testing is done, and a general knowledge of measurement principles and the limitations of test interpretations. This category includes most interest inventories, group or individual, and multiple-choice tests that employ a simple metric as the main avenue of interpretation (e.g., occupational clusters).

### **Administration of test**

#### **Training standards**

Advanced level course (senior undergraduate or graduate) in testing from an accredited college or university or equivalent training under the direction of a qualified supervisor or consultant. No other training required.

### **Interpretation of test**

#### **Training standards**

*Minimum Standard:* advanced level course (senior undergraduate or graduate) in testing from an accredited college or university or equivalent training under the direction of a qualified supervisor or consultant. No other training required.

*Best Practice:* minimum standard plus regular consultation for quality assurance with someone who has Level B or Level C training.

#### **Purchaser eligibility**

Although it depends on the publisher, generally the test must be ordered by an employee of the company directly responsible for administration of the tests or an individual qualified to purchase Level B or Level C tests.

## **Level B Tests**

These tests require specific training for administration, scoring, and interpretation. More complex than Level A tests, they require sophisticated understanding of psychometric principles, the traits being measured, the client population, and clinical issues involved in the setting where the testing is done. Level B tests generally include most individual or group tests of achievement or interest, screening inventories, and personnel tests.

### **Administration of test**

#### **Training standards**

Advanced level (senior undergraduate or graduate) course in testing from an accredited college or university or equivalent training under the direction of a qualified supervisor or consultant. Minimum preparation includes training in psychometric principles (reliability, validity, test construction) and supervised experience in administering, scoring, and interpreting tests.

### **Interpretation of test**

#### **Training standards**

*Minimum Standard:* advanced level (senior undergraduate or graduate) course in testing from an accredited college or university or equivalent training under the direction of a qualified supervisor or consultant, including training in psychometric principles (reliability, validity, test construction) and direct supervised experience in administering, scoring, and interpreting tests.

*Best Practice:* minimum standard plus regular consultation/supervision for quality assurance from someone with Level C qualifications.

#### **Purchaser eligibility**

These tests are available to individuals who meet the above training standards and agencies that employ qualified test users.

## **Level C Tests**

These tests require advanced (graduate level) training for interpretation in the specific professional field to which the tests apply (e.g., clinical psychology, counselling psychology, school psychology, industrial/organizational psychology). Some of these tests may also require this level of training for competent administration and scoring. More complex than Level A and B tests, these tests require an in-depth understanding of psychometric principles, the traits and constructs being measured, the client population, and the clinical issues involved in the setting where the testing is done. They also require a high degree of professional skill and judgement for their interpretation. This group generally includes any aptitude, language, personality, or clinical diagnostic test, group or individual.

## **Administration of test**

### **Training standards**

Where the person administering the test is closely and regularly supervised by a person qualified to use the test, the test administrator may have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in psychology or a related discipline. Academic or supervised clinical experience must include:

- training in the theoretical constructs underlying the specific test instruments;
- training in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of these instruments;
- training in psychometric principles; and
- direct supervision of administration and (if appropriate) scoring.

## **Interpretation of test**

### **Training standards**

*Minimum Standard:* a minimum of a master's degree in psychology or a related discipline and registration as a psychologist or certification by the provincial school psychologists' association. Academic and supervised clinical experience must include:

- training in the theoretical constructs underlying the specific test instruments;
- training in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of these instruments;
- training in psychometric principles; and
- supervised administration, scoring, and interpretation of these instruments.

*Best Practice:* minimum standard plus ongoing consultation/supervision for quality assurance with someone with Level C qualifications.

### **Purchaser eligibility**

Purchase of these tests is restricted to individuals who meet the training standards above and are members of qualified professional organizations and to agencies who have Level C qualified test users overseeing the testing program.

# Appendix 3: Technology and SET-BC

## Technology for Students with Special Needs: Policy Guidelines

The Special Services Division is guided by the following policy as it relates to students with special needs

1. **Students who require additional resources in order to participate in an educational program are the first priority for consideration for computer support.**
  - a) Computer technology should promote personalized access to the provincial curriculum. This can be accomplished by:
    - presenting new material and concepts in a variety of ways, including modelling and demonstration.
    - varying the pace of instruction as required, such as providing instruction in small, manageable steps.
    - providing redundancy as required, such as repetition of task directions and practice for "overlearning".
    - enhancing the context for learning, such as providing prompts and cues.
    - varying the degree of abstraction as required, such as simplification of task directions
  - b) Computer technology should promote increased student engagement.
  - c) Computer technology can increase a student's feeling of competency, not only by providing immediate and frequent reinforcement and feedback, but also by using instructional sequences that focus on strengths and offering the kind of interaction that does not include all the historically negative patterns the child has been accustomed to with adults.
  - d) For many students with special needs, using a computer helps solve some of their problems:
    - It gives them a finished product that looks as good as that of the best student in the class.
    - It makes revision a fairly simple process, since it does not involve rewriting the entire assignment.
    - With a built-in spell-checker and sometimes even a thesaurus, a word-processing program can take the dreaded drudgery out of proofreading.
    - The ease with which chunks of text can be moved is helpful in organizing or reorganizing an essay, report, or composition.

- e) Computer technology can help manage key ecological factors, including:
  - Reduction of distraction and irrelevant stimuli.
  - Provision of activities such as needed drill exercises without negative or authoritarian feedback.
  - Providing curriculum linkages in optional learning environments through telecommunications
  
- 2. **Computer technology, both software and hardware, should match the needs of the user.**
  - a) Computer technology should be flexible.
  - b) Computer technology should offer multidimensional learning experiences.
  - c) Computer technology should be considerate.
  
- 3. **Teachers responsible for managing educational programs for students with special needs who require technology are a high priority for staff development in the area of technology.**
  
- 4. **Special Needs Teachers who have primary responsibility for case management, assessment and school-based team operation should have access to technology that maximizes their efficiency.**
  - a) Schools should support their school-based special needs staff with appropriate hardware and software.
  - b) Special Needs Teachers should be able to communicate with each other and with district special services via e-mail.

# **Special Education Technology-British Columbia (SET-BC)**

## ***Mandate and purpose***

Special Education Technology-British Columbia (SET-BC) is a Provincial Resource Program established to help school districts support students' educational programs through the use of technology. The SET-BC program is implemented through a provincial centre in the Lower Mainland and eight regional centres throughout the province. Powell River is served by the Vancouver Island/Central Coast site and receives services for students who demonstrate restricted access to the curriculum due primarily to physical disability or visual impairment.

## ***Screening and Identification***

The Powell River SET-BC Advisory Committee is responsible for identifying and screening students for SET-BC services. Chaired by the Special Education Department Head, the committee meets three times a year. It receives referrals from individual schools by way of the school-based Special Needs Teachers and the District Physiotherapist. In selecting students for SET-BC services, the committee considers:

- how the disability restricts the student's access to the curriculum;
- the student's current academic/cognitive level; and
- educational goals established for the student.

## **Services**

Once the child is selected for SET-BC services, the Special Education Department Head requests staff from the Vancouver Island/Central Coast regional site to provide consultation to school-based teams in the use of technology to meet educational goals. The regional staff also monitors and follows up students in the school district who have previously received equipment or services. The Regional Vancouver Island and the Central Coast Regional office in Victoria serve as preview and demonstration centres for special education technology and provide training in technology applications for educational purposes.

Specific services provided by the SET-BC program include:

- assistance with the assessment of students' abilities and needs for technology;
- assistance in program planning and transition planning where technology is used to support learning outcomes;
- equipment loans and technical support of loan equipment; and
- inservice and workshops to train teachers and other staff in the use of the equipment.

## ***Service and Maintenance***

Technical difficulties with equipment are referred to the SET-BC staff in the regional site.

Loss or damage of items should be reported immediately. The Powell River school district maintains primary responsibility for equipment on loan and ensures that the equipment is listed in a district inventory for insurance purposes.

## ***Returns/Transfers/Transitions***

Equipment on loan remains the property of SET-BC. Accordingly,

- (a) If the student leaves the province or the equipment is no longer needed or appropriate, it is returned to the SET-BC centre from which it was obtained.
- (b) For students in their final year of secondary school who will be continuing their education at a B.C. post-secondary institution or plan to become clients of Vocational Rehabilitation services after graduation, the IEP Team case manager will advise the Special Education Department Head so that transition planning with SET-BC Adult Services can be initiated.
- (c) When students are planning to transfer to another school district in the province, Powell River contacts their SET-BC regional centre to determine standard transfer procedures. Equipment is then temporarily returned to SET-BC for transfer. It should not be transported by parents.

## Appendix 4: Facilities Planning

To make facilities accessible for all students, schools need to consider:

- drinking fountains, vending machines, lockers, elevators, stairs;
- light switches, electrical outlets, telephones;
- room identification, signage, signals, and alarms;
- storage space for equipment and instructional materials;
- work rooms for individual or small-group instruction;
- space for the performance of medical procedures; and
- accessible playgrounds.

For new construction and renovations, it's important to consider the need for all students to have access to all parts of the school. These include gymnasium, locker rooms, showers, washrooms, laboratories, shops, classrooms, library, auditorium, lecture hall, theatre, cafeterias, teaching kitchen, hallways, offices, playing fields, track, tennis court, playgrounds, parking lots, paths, walkways and ramps. This access should be as seamless as possible; i.e., with no obvious distinction that some feature is only for students with disabilities.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs has published an accessibility planning guide, the *Building Access Handbook*. This resource examines the building requirements from the British Columbia Building Code (1992) for persons with disabilities and may be useful when planning renovations or new facilities.

The Ministry of Education has prepared materials to complement the *Building Access Handbook* and already has other resources available, through the Learning Resources Branch, that may be useful to address accessibility issues. These include *The Universal Playground* (catalogue #FCG129), and *Access to Conferences, Institutes and Meetings: A Planning Guide* (catalogue #RB0024).

# Appendix 5: Board Policy Related to Special Education

## **SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 47 (POWELL RIVER): POLICY**

**EQUITY:** *Item No. 2342 (P), Approved May 14, 1996*

The Board of School Trustees recognizes the diversity of its students, staff and community members and is committed to providing a learning and working environment in which all persons are valued and respected.

Therefore, the Board of School Trustees endorses equity as an attribute of the Powell River School system. It supports and will promote the ideal of equal opportunity for students and employees who belong to groups which are and traditionally have been under-represented in our culture.

## **SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 47 (POWELL RIVER): REGULATION**

**EQUITY: STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** *Item No. 2342.2 (R), Approved August 25, 1997: Cross Reference: 7160 (P)*

In order to participate in an educational program, some students may require programs and services not usually provided to other students.

Therefore the Board of School Trustees will provide, within the limits of available resources, a continuum of services which reflects the diversity of special needs in the school district population and which includes planning with other ministries and community agencies where necessary.