



## **PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

### **Student Services Department - Philosophy**

Every student in the Portage la Prairie School Division has a fundamental right to equality of opportunity to develop his/her full potential, academically, socially and in the acquisition of basic skills for a happy and productive life. The Division supports Manitoba Education's commitment to fostering inclusion for all people.

*Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members. Through recognition and support, an inclusive community provides meaningful involvement and equal access to the benefits of citizenship.*

*In Manitoba, we embrace inclusion as a means of enhancing the well-being of every member of the community. By working together, we strengthen our capacity to provide the foundation for a richer future for all of us.*

Reasonable accommodation for students, based on identified needs, will be met in a regular classroom setting with age appropriate peers. As much as possible and within available resources, students with special needs should experience school like their peers without exceptional needs.

An integral part of the Portage la Prairie School Division's philosophy is that it is inappropriate to deviate in any major way from the regular program for any student without prior and continuing consultation with the parents or guardians of the student. A student's placement in an alternate class setting, either partially or on a full-time basis, shall require written consent of the parent or guardian.

In the event that supports to the regular classroom setting are required, they shall be applied using the attached model (IFD-E). The delivery of support services shall be based upon the individual needs of each student with the goal being to utilize the service closest to Level I that meets these needs. A regular review of the delivery system shall include consideration to moving the student toward Level I of the delivery model.



### **Alternate Programming**

Manitoba Education has stated that the educational needs of most students in Manitoba can be met in the regular classroom using “Foundation” courses that can be “modified”, “adapted”, or “individualized” by the Teachers. A small number of students, even with individualized, modified or adapted programs, may require alternative placements in classrooms with low pupil-teacher ratios for all or part of their school day. In addition, some students for whom English is not a first language, may also require English as an additional Language (EAL) experiences specifically designed to assist them in making the transition into the English program.

“Adaptations” are available to all students who require a wider range of teaching strategies in order to be successful in completing the provincial subject area curriculum outcomes. Although the approach used with the students or the length of time allowed for the learning to take place may be altered, the minimal outcomes for each curriculum remain the same.

“Modified” courses are intended for students with significant cognitive disabilities and refers to altering the number, essence, and content of the curricular learning outcomes that students are expected to meet. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is required for students with “modified” course credits.

“Individualized” courses are intended for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The educational outcomes are developmentally and age appropriate and highly individualized to take into account the learning requirements of the student. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is required for each student with “individualized” course credits.

“EAL” courses specifically designed to assist students for whom English is not a first language in making the transition into the English program must be identified as such for credit purposes. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is required for each student enrolled in an “EAL” course.

### **Special Class Placement**

Students who are experiencing difficulty with the provincial subject area curriculum outcomes will be referred to the school support team which should include the parent(s), the Classroom Teacher, the Resource Teacher, the School Guidance Counselor and/or other professionals closely involved with the student’s education program. Discussions may focus on appropriate adaptations or modifications that may be required.

Students who continue to function below the expectations of the school support team, even after adaptations and modifications have been implemented, may require other education alternatives. These alternatives may include, but are not limited to:



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1. Retention in the present grade with Resource Teacher assistance with an adapted or modified program.
2. Retention in the present grade with Resource Teacher assistance or Educational Assistant support in specified areas.
3. Promotion to the next grade with an adapted or modified program and/or Resource Teacher assistance.
4. Transfer to an alternative school that offers a different classroom program or a different resource program.
5. Placement in a Special Education program.

In cases where it appears that a Special Class Placement is appropriate and acceptable to the parent, the following steps shall be taken:

1. The Principal will arrange a meeting with the parents, the school Support Team and others closely involved with the student to explore the options available for supporting this student, including the possibility of placement in a Special Needs program. This discussion will assist the parent in understanding that:
  - a) Special Class placement involves removal from regular classes for a significant part of each school day;
  - b) Special Class enrollments are limited, and placement may not be possible at that time;
  - c) as parents, they have the right to decline placement in a Special Class.
2. If the school support team and the parent are in agreement that placement in a Special Education Class appears to be the best option, the "Referral for Special Class Placement" form should be completed as required. Completed forms should be forwarded as follows:
  - a) Applications for Jr. High Learning Assistance programs should be completed by school teams and forwarded to the Director of Student Services for final approval.



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- b) Applications for the Early Years and Jr. High Behavioural programs should be forwarded to the Director of Student Services who will arrange a meeting of the appropriate divisional placement committee.
  - c) Applications for the Pre-Employment Program, Community Transition Program, Community Outreach Program, and the Senior Life Skills Program should be completed by the school team and forwarded to the Director of Student Services for final approval.
3. After the decision for Special Class Placement has been made, the Director of Student Services will advise the Principal of the applying school of the committee's decision and request that the following actions be taken:
- a) The Principal of the applying school will advise the parents and staff of the decision. If the decision indicates that a placement at this time is recommended, the parents will be asked to indicate, in writing, their intention to have their child included in the program.
  - b) If the parents accept the placement, the Principal of the applying school will arrange for the transfer of all relevant documentation from the sending school and will also arrange for transportation, if required.
  - c) If the decision indicates that a placement at this time is not recommended, the Principal of the applying school will arrange a meeting with the parents and the school support team involved to plan an alternate course of action for addressing the child's educational needs.

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