

LEARNING SERVICES – PHILOSOPHY & AIMS

Background

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

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

Furthermore, the District believes that:

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

Learning Services includes staff development, counselling, English as an additional language (EAL) and special education.

Procedures

1. General

- 1.1 The District will follow the guidelines of the interministerial protocols by participating in:

- 1.1.1 local interministerial committees designed to provide coordinated services for children and youth; and
- 1.1.2 community-level planning with other agencies.

1.2 Schools

1.2.1 All schools shall have a school-based team. This team has a formal role and supports classroom teachers in developing and implementing instructional and/or management strategies. Examples of school-based team functions include:

- sharing information
- problem-solving
- planning
- providing resource materials
- monitoring progress, regularly
- maintaining accurate records
- making recommendations
- assigning a case manager

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. Counselling

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

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

3. English as an Additional Language
 - 3.1 English as an Additional Language support services are provided to students whose first language is not English. The English as an Additional Language program is provided for students who require formal English as an Additional Language in order to participate and progress within the regular educational program.
 - 3.2 The English as an Additional Language program provides an awareness and understanding of Canadian culture within our multicultural mosaic.
 - 3.3 An annual instructional plan shall be developed for each student receiving direct service.

4. Special Education
 - 4.1 The District provides a full range of services and programs which accommodate the strengths and needs of all students with special needs, including:
 - 4.1.1 services to students which reflect the Ministry and District commitment to the philosophy of inclusion and the practice of integration; and
 - 4.1.2 a continuum of programs and services in a variety of settings.
 - 4.2 District screening committees will review referrals for District special programs to determine appropriateness of the program for the student and to ensure a degree of consistency.
 - 4.3 Students who demonstrate learning difficulties and/or acceleration in their learning, as determined by classroom teachers and parents, will have access to assessment and intervention.
 - 4.4 Individual Education Plans
 - 4.4.1 An Individual Education Plan must be developed for each student with special needs who requires adaptations and/or modifications.
 - 4.4.2 An Individual Education Plan may be developed for other students identified by the school-based team.
 - 4.4.3 Parents/guardians will be consulted in planning their child's Individual Education Plan. School personnel must inform parents/guardians and explain the implications of curriculum changes as they affect graduation requirements.
 - 4.4.4 Students who have been identified as requiring an Individual Education Plan shall have a plan developed. All Individual Education Plans shall be reviewed on an ongoing basis with teachers and parents, and students, as appropriate.
 - 4.5 The District will facilitate the resources and time to support appropriate transition planning for students with special needs within the District. For students entering and exiting the District every effort will be made to ensure transition planning.

- 4.6 The District will support the development of specialized materials and provide technologies, within available resources, for special education students according to the individual education plan.

5. Appeal Process

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

6. Glossary of Terms for - Student Services

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

- 6.1 Adaptations - may include alternate formats, instructional strategies or assessment procedures in order to assist those students who are capable of participating in prescribed curriculum. Students are assessed using provincial standards for the course of study and receive full credit for their work. The curriculum content is not changed.
- 6.2 Assessment - is a systematic process of gathering information from many people in order to make appropriate educational decisions for a student. It is a collaborative and progressive process designed to identify the student's strengths and needs, and results in the identification and implementation of selected educational strategies.
- 6.3 Collaborative consultation - is a process in which people work together to solve a common problem or address a common concern. Collaboration encourages mutual trust and open communication among people involved.
- 6.4 Inclusion - supports equitable access to learning by all students 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.
- 6.5 Individual Educational Plan (IEP) - is a written plan which is an ongoing record of a student's educational program outlining planning decisions and linking assessment with the student's program. The Individual Education Plan describes program modifications services and/or adaptations that are to be provided.
- 6.6 Integration - encourages students with special needs to participate and interact fully with other students in neighbourhood schools and to develop friendships. Integration involves placing students with special needs in classrooms with their age and grade peers, and providing them with the necessary support, accommodations and adaptations - determined on an individual basis - to enable them to be successful.
- 6.7 Modifications - are changes to curriculum content in order to meet the needs of the student, and may also include adaptations. Modified programs may result in an Evergreen (school leaving) certificate rather than a Dogwood certificate at the end of grade twelve.

- 6.8 Parent/Guardian - means “a) the guardian of the person of the student or child; b) the person legally entitled to custody of the student or child; or c) the person who usually has the care and control of the student or child”.
- 6.9 Special Educational Needs - are those which make it necessary to provide a student undertaking an educational program with different resources from those which are needed by most students. Special educational needs are identified during assessment of a student; they are the basis for determining an appropriate educational program (including necessary resources) for that student.
- 6.10 Student Services Teacher - in elementary, middle and secondary schools, teachers providing educational support services to students, teachers and parents and are currently known as: learning assistance teachers; learning resource teachers; support teachers; resource program teachers; and skill development teachers.
- 6.11 Transition Planning - is the preparation, implementation and evaluation required to enable students to make major transitions during their lives - from home or pre-school to school; from class to class; from school to school; from school district to school district; and from school to post-secondary, community or work situations.

Reference: Part 1, Section 13, School Act
Form 211-1 Learning Services Department – Parental Consent for Programming
Form 211-3 Learning Services Department – District Screening Form
Form 211-4 Learning Services Department – Application for SEA Consultation Hours

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