



**Ministry of Education
Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools**

2014/15 Special Education Evaluation Committee Review

REPORT

Southridge School (036 96610)

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Background

The Ministry of Education funds Independent School Authorities based on the Authorities' reported enrolment as of September 30th each year and supplemental special needs classifications in September and February. Independent School Authorities report students with special needs to the Ministry on *Form 1701: Student Data Collection* (Form 1701).

In the 2014/15 school year, the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (OIIS) conducted Special Education Evaluation Committee (SEEC) reviews of school and student records to assist OIIS and the independent school system in developing best practices in the area of special education programming and service provision. The Ministry will also use these review processes to develop an independent school special education audit protocol to be used in the future.

Purpose

The purpose of the SEEC review is to provide assurance to the Ministry of Education and Independent School Authorities that schools are complying with the instructions contained in [*Form 1701: Student Data Collection, Completion Instructions for Independent Schools*](#) and Ministry policies are being followed. The review also provides assurance that the students reported have been placed in the appropriate special education category, as per the [*Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines \(March 2013\)*](#).

Description of the Audit Process

An SEEC review was conducted at Southridge School on February 25, 2015.

Prior to the file reviews, an entry meeting was held with school assigned staff and the SEEC interviewed school administrators and staff to enquire about the Independent School Authority's policies, procedures and programs.

Southridge School reported 29 students in special education categories at the Fall 2014 Form 1701 data submission. For the purposes of this SEEC review, five student records were reviewed in the following low incidence special needs categories:

Student Claims	Category
1	Category D (Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment)
2	Category G (Autism Spectrum Disorder)
2	Category H (Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Serious Mental Illness)

The SEEC also reviewed 24 student records in the following high incidence special needs categories:

Student Claims	Category
1	Category P (Gifted)
22	Category Q (Learning Disability)
1	Category R (Moderate Behavior Support/Mental Illness)

An exit meeting was held with Drew Stephens (Head of School), Laurel Middelaer (Head of Junior School), Janet Holt (Director of Senior School Academic Program), Laura Holland (Senior School Learning Resource Teacher), Wendy Turriff (Junior School Learning Resource Teacher and Guidance Counsellor) and Jenni Watson (Junior School Learning Resource Teacher) at the end of the review day to present preliminary findings, seek clarification related to the contents of files, and express appreciation for the assistance provided.

Observations:

There was no recommended reclassification for the one student file reviewed in Code D.

There were no recommended reclassifications for the two student files reviewed in Code G.

Of the two student files reviewed in Code H:

- one student was recommended for reclassification to Code Q.

There was no recommended reclassification for the one student file reviewed in Code P.

There were no recommended reclassifications for the 22 student files reviewed in Code Q.

There was no recommended reclassification for the one student file reviewed in Code R.

The auditors found that:

- One student reported in Code H did not have evidence to meet the criteria for placement in the Intensive Behaviour Interventions/Serious Mental Illness Category as outlined in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedure and Guidelines. The assessment did confirm the student met criteria for placement in the Learning Disability Category (Code Q). There lacked documented evidence to support the occurrence of ongoing intensive behaviours across settings as well as intensive behaviour programming in the IEP. Although there was some external agency support, there lacked evidence of an integrated case management plan with wraparound service. Since this student is in Grade 12 and graduates this year, no recommendation has been made for reclassification of this student for the 2015/16 school year.
- Of the 22 files reviewed in Code Q, six of the IEPs did not contain any goals, objectives or methods for measuring progress.
- Many of the IEPs did not have clearly defined measurable objectives and methods for measuring progress in relation to the IEP.

- There were rigorous identification and assessment processes in place, which often led to early identification of student needs, particularly for students in Code Q.
- The two students in Code G participated in daily small group social skills programs with typical peers.
- There was evidence of a significant amount of communication between students, parents, teachers and support staff as well as strong graduation transitioning processes for students classified in both high and low incident categories. There was also extensive transitioning planning for students moving from elementary to secondary schooling.
- A range of technology supports were in place, such as one-to-one digital access as well as the Schoology program, which helped with organization and detailed communication about assignments and tests to both students and parents. Other technology programs allowed for individualized adaptations and modifications, such as Fast ForWord and Accelerated Reader, for students in both high and low incidence categories.
- Students were encouraged to participate in the IEP planning process, and both the parent and student roles and responsibilities were highlighted in the IEPs.

Recommendations:

The auditors recommend that:

- The School ensure that there is evidence appropriate to a Code H category such as copies of behaviour incidents and meeting minutes with identification of the roles and responsibilities of the various team members and support services, to verify the reported placement.
- There must be evidence of documentation that the medical condition seriously impacts student's education and achievement.
- The School ensure that all students claimed in Code Q have individualized goals with measurable objectives and methods of measuring progress.
- IEPs outline the level and amount of service given to students as well as goals and measurable objectives with methods for measuring progress in relation to the goals.
- The School has a signed Parent/Guardian Confirmation Form for all students including those reported in high incident categories (Codes K, P, Q and R).

Auditors' Comments

The auditors wish to express their appreciation to the school staff for their cooperation and hospitality during the SEEC review.