



**Ministry of Education
Resource Management Division
Funding and Financial Accountability Branch**

2018/19 Special Education Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 48 (Sea to Sky)

2018/19 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 48 (Sea to Sky)

Background

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

In the 2018/19 school year, school boards reported 31,314 students enrolled in the low incidence supplemental special education funding categories at September 2018. School District No. 48 (Sea to Sky) reported 411 students in the special education categories as of September 28, 2018. For the purpose of this compliance audit, School District No. 48 (Sea to Sky) reported one student claim in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), four student claims in the Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability Category (Code C), 76 student claims in the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D), three student claims in the Visual Impairment Category (Code E), 13 student claims in the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Category (Code F), 55 student claims in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G), and 137 student claims in the Intensive Behavior Intervention/Serious Mental Illness Category (Code H).

The Ministry of Education annually conducts Special Education enrolment audits, in selected school districts, to verify reported enrolment on Form 1701. School districts are selected for audit based on a variety of factors, including the length of time since their last audit, the district's incidence levels compared to the provincial incidence levels, and changes in enrolment.

Purpose

The purpose of the Special Education enrolment audit is to provide assurance to the Ministry of Education and boards of education that school districts are complying with the instructions contained in [*Form 1701: Student Data Collection, Completion Instructions for Public Schools*](#) and Ministry policies are being followed. The audit also provides assurance that the students reported are receiving the service and have been placed in the appropriate special education category, as per the [*Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines \(April 2016\)*](#).

Description of the Audit Process

A Special Education enrolment audit was conducted in School District No. 48 (Sea to Sky) during the week of January 21, 2019.

An entry meeting was held on January 21, 2019 with the Superintendent, two Assistant Superintendents and the Director of Instruction. Daily meetings with the Director of Instruction were held to present preliminary findings and to seek clarification related to the contents of files.

A sample of one student file reported in Physically Dependent (Code A), four student files in Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Code C), 76 student files in Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (Code D), ten student files in Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Code F), 30 student files in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Code G), and 101 student file in Intensive Behavior Interventions/Serious Mental Illness (Code H) special needs categories were reviewed and evaluated to determine if the students in these categories were accurately reported on Form 1701.

The file review process did not encounter issues requiring school visits. The Director of Instruction was able to provide the audit team with evidence when clarification was required. Meeting daily with the Director of Instruction enabled the audit team to keep the District staff apprised of the audit progress.

An exit meeting was held with the Superintendent, two Assistant Superintendents and the Director of Instruction on January 24, 2019. The auditors reviewed the purpose of the audit and the audit criteria, explained the audit reporting process, reported their findings, clarified any outstanding issues, discussed reclassifications for the 2018/19 school year, and expressed appreciation for the assistance provided.

Observations

There were no recommended reclassifications for the student files reviewed by the auditors in Code A, Code C, Code D, Code E, Code G and Code H.

Of the 10 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code F:

- one student was recommended for declassification of any special needs category.

The auditors found that:

- The student files were comprehensive and well organized complete with the required evidence to verify the criteria.
- All documentation was current and dated.
- The diagnostic information supported the category in which the student was claimed.
- The IEPs were comprehensive with all the criteria areas evident. The objectives were measurable. The methods for measuring progress were well documented and relevant to the goals and specific objectives.
- There was an IEP Progress Report in a number of the files but not used consistently in all files.
- There were a number of forms, that when used, provided the evidence to verify the criteria was met. These included: School Psychologist File Review Form, Request for District Confirmation of Eligibility, Confirmation of Outside Agency letter, Community Care Plan, Additional Services Provided to Students, Educational Planning Conference, and the Supporting Documentation Checklist.
- Services corresponded appropriately with the category the student was claimed in.
- The educational program being provided for students reflected the needs and recommendations outlined in various assessments and reports found in the student file.
- There was consistent use throughout the District of the Instructional Support Planning Process which provided information as verification of the category claim.

- There was evidence in the file that the IEPs were reviewed regularly and changes were made as needed.
- The files for students in Code H contained comprehensive IEPs as well as a Behavior Support Plan, or Safety Plan, or both.
- One of the IEP formats used by the District contained a section for not only listing the support services the student was receiving but describing it as well.
- Any request for clarification was responded to in a timely manner.
- There was one student claimed in Code F with the most current Audiology Report indicating normal hearing in both ears. As the assessment documentation did not support the criteria for Code F nor was there evidence to indicate any impact on the student's education, the recommendation was for declassification from any special needs category.

Recommendations:

The auditors recommend that:

- The District continue their processes developing best practise programs and services to support student with special needs.
- The District ensure there is documentation to support that the student has been appropriately assessed and identified as meeting the criteria of the special education category in accordance with the Special Education Service Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines and aligned with the Form 1701 Instructions.

Auditors' Comments

The auditors wish to express their appreciation to the District staff for their cooperation and hospitality during the audit.