



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

2018/19 Special Education Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 33 (Chilliwack)

2018/19 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 33 (Chilliwack)

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. 33 (Chilliwack) reported 1,808 students in the special education categories as of September 28, 2018. For the purpose of this compliance audit, School District No.33 (Chilliwack) reported 11 student claims in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), one student claim reported in the Deafblind Category (Code B), 40 student claims in the Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability Category (Code C), 323 student claims in the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D), eight student claims in the Visual Impairment Category (Code E), 34 student claims in the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Category (Code F), 242 student claims in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G), and 312 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. 33 (Chilliwack) during the week of December 3, 2018.

An entry meeting was held on December 3, 2018 with the Acting Superintendent, Assistant Secretary Treasurer, Director of Instruction, District Principal, Student Support Services, and the District Vice Principal of Student Services. The meeting began with a traditional drummer welcome by three First Nations senior students in the district. This was followed by an

informative power point presentation which provided an overview of the structure of the district, their programs and supports available to students. The auditors were also provided with a comprehensive binder of student services, procedures and guidelines for the district.

The file review process did not encounter issues requiring school visits. Daily meetings with the District Principal, Student Support Services and the District Vice Principal, Student Services were held to present preliminary findings to keep the District staff apprised of the audit process and to seek any required clarification related to the contents of the files.

A sample of 11 student files reported in Physically Dependent (Code A), one student file in Deafblind (Code B), 15 student files in Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Code C), 115 student files in Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (Code D), six student files in Visual Impairment (Code E), six student files in Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Code F), 40 student files in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Code G), and 114 student files 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.

An exit meeting was held with the Acting Superintendent, Assistant Secretary Treasurer, Director of Instruction, District Principal, Student Support Services, and the District Vice Principal of Student Services on Friday, December 7, 2018. The auditors reviewed the purpose of the audit and the audit criteria, explained the audit reporting process, reported the findings, clarified any outstanding issues 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 B, Code D, Code E, Code F and Code G.

Of the 15 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code C, there was one student recommended for reclassification to a different low incidence special need category.

Of the 114 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code H, there was one student recommended for declassification.

The auditors found that:

- The IEPs were current and for the majority were comprehensive and readily available.
- The IEP template used for all IEPs was clear and contained all requirements of an IEP in accordance with Ministry directives.
- The services provided to the students were appropriate to the category in which the student was claimed.
- The diagnostic information was thoroughly summarized on the IEP. Goals were specific to the category claim. The objectives were measurable. The methods for measurement and evaluation were clearly defined, documented and supported evidence in the file.
- The IEP goals and measurable objectives addressed the needs of the student and corresponded to the categories in which the students are reported.

- The IEPs for students in all categories were consistently written to reflect the specific needs of the individual student. The goals and strategies often included recommendations from various assessments or medical reports.
- There was evidence that identified students were receiving services beyond those of the general student population.
- There was consistent use of the Instructional Support Planning Tool in Code D and Code H files providing useful planning information and evidence required to meet criteria in these categories.
- Many of the Code H files were initially found to be lacking the required information. The District staff were able to produce documentation in a timely manner with only one student claim in this category found not to meet the requirements in accordance with the Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guideline's criteria.
- One student reported in Code H was recommended for declassification. The student was reported by the District's Continuing Education School. The Principal indicated that it is not their practice to claim any special education funds and that the student was reported in error.

Recommendations:

The auditors recommend that:

- The District continue their practice of maintaining current and comprehensive IEPs to address student needs while following Ministry directives.
- The District continue to incorporate results of assessments and medical reports where applicable in the IEPs.
- The District continue to encourage the use of the Instructional Support Planning Tool to guide intervention.
- The District ensure that Form 1701 reporting is verified prior to submission and that student files are updated and reviewed regularly to ensure the students continue to meet the criteria in the category in which they are claimed for the reported school year.
- The District report student claims in Code C only if the criteria listed in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for that category is met. Assessment documentation showing the student's intellectual functioning is three or more standard deviations below the mean on an individually administered Level C Assessment and assessment documentation shows there are limitations of a similar degree in two or more adaptive skill areas.
- The District ensure student claims in Code H have evidence to support the claim. There must be evidence that planning is coordinated across agency and community as specified in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. There must be an IEP in

place dated after the September reporting deadline of the previous school year and the students must be receiving appropriate services in addition to those available to the general student population.

- The District ensure that there is a diagnosis that meets criteria for the specified special needs designation.
- The District report only student claims in each category when there is evidence to verify criteria has been met criteria and that a plan for the delivery of appropriate special education services are in evidence at the time of the required claim.
- The District ensure that relevant information regarding the identified students is current and that processes are in place for declassifying students when they no longer meet category requirements.

Auditors' Comments

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