



**Ministry of Education  
Resource Management Division**

**2018/19 Special Education Enrolment Audit**

**AUDIT REPORT**

**Choice School for Gifted Children (03896403)**

## 2018/19 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT

### Choice School for Gifted Children (03896403)

#### **Background**

The Ministry of Education funds Independent School Authorities based on the Authorities' reported enrolment as of September 30<sup>th</sup> 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 2018/19 school year, the Ministry of Education conducted Special Education enrolment audits, in selected schools recommended by the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (OIIS), to verify reported enrolment on Form 1701.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Special Education enrolment audit 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 audit 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 \(April 2016\)\*](#).

#### **Description of the Compliance Audit Process**

A compliance audit was conducted at Choice School for Gifted Children March 4 to 6, 2019.

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

Choice School for Gifted Children reported 57 students in special education categories at the Fall 2018 Form 1701 data submission. For the purposes of this audit, 22 student records were reviewed in the following low incidence special needs categories:

Headcount	Category
6	Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D)
7	Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G)
9	Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Serious Mental Illness (Code H)

35 student records were also reviewed in the following high incidence special needs categories:

Headcount	Category
33	Gifted Category (Code P)
2	Learning Disability Category (Code Q)

The Principal was the key contact person throughout the audit and was able to provide the audit team with evidence when clarification was required. Short meetings at the end of each day with the Principal and Occupational Therapist enabled the audit team to keep the School staff apprised of the audit progress.

The file review process encountered two issues requiring a meeting. The first issue was related to the criteria for Code D. There were five students reported in Code D for whom the evidence did not support the diagnostic criteria for the Physical Disability/Chronic Health category (Code D).

The second issue requiring a meeting was related to the assessment criteria for Code H. Five clarifications were required to obtain assessment information to confirm evidence of intensive behaviour intervention. The School was able to provide Instructional Support Planning Process documentation for Code H as behavioural assessment evidence.

The School alerted the auditors that one student in Code D had left the School. The designation, IEP, and service evidence was available and reviewed.

The file review process did not encounter issues requiring school visits.

An exit meeting was held with the Principal and Occupational Therapist on March 6, 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**

Of the six student files reviewed by the auditors in Code D:

- 4 students were recommended for reclassification to a high incidence special need category
- 1 student was recommended for reclassification to a different low incidence special need category

There were no recommended reclassifications of student files reviewed by the auditors in Code G, Code H and Code P.

Of the two student files reviewed by the auditors in Code Q:

- One student was recommended for reclassification to a different high incidence special need category

The auditors found that:

- Five students reported in Code D did not have evidence of a medical diagnosis to support placement in that category as outlined in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedure and Guidelines.
- One student reported in Code Q did not have a psycho-educational assessment. Evidence in the file supported assessment criteria and IEP goals that met criteria for a different high incidence special need category.

- Some of the students reported in Code P did not have IEP goals that addressed student areas of strength in giftedness. There was evidence of programming and service that supported the students' areas of giftedness, but it was not always recorded in the IEP.
- Assessment information about behaviour for students in Code H was not readily accessible.
- Inter-agency involvement for Code H was not readily accessible and was not well documented in the IEP.
- All students were identified as being elementary ungraded.
- Documentation showed unique learning opportunities to support areas of giftedness, behaviour and social-emotional learning throughout the School.
- Student self-selected Passion Projects, Challenge Topics and Mentorship programs provided opportunities for individualized extension in areas of interest and giftedness.
- There was evidence of regular meaningful and proactive communication with parents about student successes and needs.
- Occupational therapy services and cognitive behaviour strategies were deeply embedded in all classrooms to support sensory and emotional regulation and management of anxiety.
- The Special Education Funding: Parent/Guardian Confirmation Form was signed and included in all student files.

### **Recommendations:**

The auditors recommend that:

- The School ensure any student claims in Code D meet the criteria listed in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for that category. There must be documentation of a medical diagnosis in one or more of the following areas: nervous system impairment that impacts movement or mobility, musculoskeletal condition, or chronic health impairment that seriously impacts student's education and achievement.
- The School ensure that student claims in Code Q meet the diagnostic criteria listed in the Special education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for Code Q.
- The School ensure IEP goals correspond to the category in which students are reported.
- The School ensure any students claimed in Code H with serious behaviour have assessment criteria to support reporting in Code H as specified in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. Documented evidence of the behaviour that places the student or others at serious risk and/or interferes with his or her academic progress and that of other students must be in evidence before reporting student claims in this Category.
- The School ensure there is evidence of coordinated planning and integrated case management for students reported in Code H.
- As behaviour disorders vary in their severity and effect on learning, the School consider monitoring the level of behaviour and the progression of intensity for students from one year to the next.

- Based on the outcomes of the compliance audit and as a designated special education school, Choice School for Gifted Children be required to undertake a Ministry sanctioned workshop to review the requirements for category designations and the development of IEPs ensuring alignment with the category in which the student is identified.

### **Auditors' Comments**

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