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**Ministry of Education
Resource Management Division**

2010/11 Special Education Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay)

2010/11 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay)

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).

The Resource Management Division 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 have been placed in the appropriate special education category, as per the *Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines (September 2009)*.

Description of the Audit Process

An entry meeting was held on January 31, 2011 with the Superintendent, Director of Student Learning, Acting District Principal of Special Education and the Secretary Treasurer. Daily meetings with the Acting District Principal of Special Education were held to present preliminary findings and to seek clarification related to the contents of files.

Prior to the file reviews, the auditors interviewed District staff to enquire about the District's policies, procedures and programs. The auditors were provided with a copy of the Mission Statements and the District Handbook. Information was provided on the organization of the files.

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

An exit meeting was held with the Superintendent, Director of Student Learning, Acting District Principal of Special Education, Director of Instruction-Human Resources, and the Secretary-Treasurer on February 4, 2011. 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 2011/12 school year, and expressed appreciation for the assistance provided.

Observations

Of the 75 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code D:

- Two students were recommended for reclassification to Code C.
- Two students were recommended for reclassification to Code H.
- Six student was recommended for reclassification to Code Q.
- One student was recommended for reclassification to Code R.
- One student was recommended for reclassification to regular education.

Of the 135 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code H:

- Two students were recommended for reclassification to Code R.
- Eight students were recommended for reclassification to regular education.
- Three students were not attending.

The auditors found that:

- There were a number of forms that contained useful information:
 - Special Services Received
 - Tracking Sheets
 - File Review Document
- A significant number of student record files were missing and had to be located.
- There were no copies of student record files to ensure criteria were being met for those students who had moved out of the district.
- Multi-disciplinary assessments were not always evident for students reported in Code D.
- Documentation of behaviour assessments were in the majority of files, however many assessments were not current.
- Evidence indicated Alternate Program staff, at times, did not ensure current documentation met criteria for placement in Code H.
- Some files were incomplete; there were no assessments, no IEPs, and no outside agency to support placement in Code H.
- For a number of students there was no evidence to support placement in any Special Education category.
- Some files did not contain the required medical diagnosis.
- Students with mental health issues were reported in Code D.
- There were instances the services provided did not meet the criteria for the category reported.
- There was no evidence of an educational program being provided to some of the students reported in Code D.

Recommendations

The auditors recommend that:

- The District ensure special education category criteria documentation be retained for at least the duration of the school year in which the claim was made to ensure evidence exists for students who have left the District.
- Students receive an educational program provided by the District and meet the criteria for placement in the appropriate Special Education category.

- Students be in attendance in the District before being claimed for funding.
- To be eligible for special education funding, there must be documentation to support the student has been appropriately assessed and identified by the District as meeting the criteria for the special education category and there must be a current IEP in place.
- All IEPs document all resources and services currently available to students.
- Students with mental illness be reported in the behaviour category that is in accordance with their needs.
- A district-wide process be developed and implemented to ensure students are placed into the appropriate special education categories in accordance with the Ministry of Education's Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

Auditors' Comments

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