



**Ministry of Education  
Knowledge Management and Accountability Division**

**2013/14 Special Education Enrolment Audit**

**AUDIT REPORT**

**SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 73 (Kamloops/Thompson)**

## **2013/14 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT**

### **School District No. 73 (Kamloops/Thompson)**

#### **Background**

The Ministry of Education funds boards of education based on the boards' reported enrolment as of September 30<sup>th</sup> 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 2013/14 school year, school boards reported 24,964 students enrolled in the Level 1, 2, and 3 supplemental special education funding categories at September 2013. School District No. 73 (Kamloops/Thompson ) reported 667 students in these supplemental special education funding categories as of September 30, 2013. For the purpose of this compliance audit, School District No.73 (Kamloops/Thompson) reported 12 students in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), one student in the Deafblind Category (Code B), 59 students in the Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability Category (Code C), 206 students in the Physical Disability/Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D), 14 students in the Visual Impairment Category (Code E), 29 in the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Category (Code F), 219 in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G), and 127 in the Students Requiring Intensive Behavior Intervention or Students with 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 have been placed in the appropriate special education category, as per the [\*Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines \(September 2013\)\*](#).

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

A Special Education enrolment audit was conducted in School District No.73 (Kamloops/Thompson) during the week of January 27, 2014.

An entry meeting was held on January 27, 2014 with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, Student Support Services. Daily meetings were held with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent 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 a document that described the context of the District's Special Education Services, a historical overview of Special Education enrolment, and an explanation of the Special Education Service Delivery model.

A sample consisting of 12 student files reported in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), 103 student files in the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D), 110 student files in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G), and 127 students in the Intensive Behaviour Interventions or Serious Mental Illness Category (Code H) 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 although a high school was arranged by the Assistant Superintendent at the request of the team. The visit was cancelled as examinations had recently concluded and the students were not in attendance.

An exit meeting was held with the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent on January 31, 2014. 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 2013/14 school year and expressed appreciation for the assistance provided.

### **Observations**

There were no reclassification recommendations for the 12 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code A.

Of the 103 student files reviewed by the auditors in code D:

- Two student claims were recommended for reclassification to regular education.

Of the 110 student files reviewed by the auditors in code G:

- Two student claims were recommended for reclassification to regular education.

Of the 127 student files reviewed by the auditors in code H:

- Seven student claims were recommended for reclassification to regular education.

The auditors found that:

- One student reported in Code D as having Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) had no medical diagnosis in the file, and while requested, was never provided by the conclusion of the audit. The review verified that this claim be reclassified to regular education until there is evidence that meets the criteria for placement in a special education category in accordance with the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines and Form 1701 Instructions.
- One student reported in Code D as having Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) had no evidence at all in the file to support Category D. The review verified that this claim be

reclassified to regular education until there is evidence that meets the criteria for placement in a special education category in accordance with the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines and Form 1701 Instructions.

- One student claimed in Code G had a provisional diagnosis in 2004 with a recommendation to update in six months. Ten years later, from 2004 to date, it was verified that no further steps were taken to obtain an actual diagnosis. Based on the evidence, the claim was reclassified to regular education until there is evidence that meets the criteria for placement in a special education category in accordance with the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines and Form 1701 Instructions.
- One student whose documentation did not support the criteria for placement in Code G as outlined in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines was reclassified to regular education. There was no evidence of support services beyond that offered to students in regular education.
- One student claim reported in Code H did not have documentation to verify the category code claim. This student was claimed with mental health issues, however students claimed under the “Serious Mental Illness” segment of this category must have a diagnosis made by a qualified mental health clinician (per Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedure and Guidelines). There was no evidence that a mental health professional had made the diagnosis to support the claim nor was there evidence to support intensive behaviour. Based on the outcome of this review the claim was reclassified to regular until there is evidence that meets criteria for placement in a special education category as outlined in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines and Form 1701 Instructions.
- One student claim for Code H had no evidence of an IEP or other documentation to verify the category claim and was reclassified to regular education.
- Two students reported in Code H had moved out of the District. One student reported in Code H had moved out of District mid-October. There was no evidence of a previous IEP with only a draft IEP on file, nor was there any evidence support service had been provided. One student had moved out of District in September to Alberta. There was no up dated information in the file to verify a September 2013 Code H claim. Based on the evidence, both student claims were reclassified to regular education.
- Three students claimed in Code H had no files, nor was any supporting documentation available despite ongoing requests to the District staff, or evidence of support service provided. The review verified that these claims be reclassified to regular education as there was no evidence to meet the criteria for placement in a special education category in accordance with the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines and Form 1701 Instructions.
- All files were organized in such a manner that evidence needed was readily available with the exception of a selection of Code G student files.
- Code G files had minimally acceptable IEP’s outlining a provision of services aligned with what students in regular education would receive. Reclassification was not recommended in these instances only as the required diagnosis were in evidence.
- In most instances, the IEP format used ensured all IEP criteria areas were addressed.
- The goals and objectives in the IEPs addressed the category in which the student was claimed.
- The Inter-Agency review plans were helpful and informative.

- The ABC charts were a positive addition, providing information that showed how the students were tracked.
- The use of the Behaviour Log was supportive of the evidence.
- Category A files were clear, comprehensive and complete.
- Not all secondary students requiring transition plans had them. This process was viewed as a work in progress.
- The strategies and services were appropriate to the categories claimed.
- The level of service, when provided at the schools, was well documented in the IEP.
- Parental involvement was clearly indicated.

### **Recommendations:**

The auditors recommend that:

- The District only claim students who are enrolled and attending, meet the requisite reporting criteria in accordance with the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guideline, and ensure processes are in place for delisting students when they no longer meet category placement.
- The District ensure the assessment data supports the criteria for placement in each category.
- The District ensure, for all their student claims, there is verifiable documentation that meets the corresponding criteria as specified in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, and that a plan for the delivery of these special education support services are in evidence at the time for the September 30<sup>th</sup> claim.
- The District ensure for all student claims, including those in Code G, that:
  - IEPs have individualized goals and measurable objectives, with adaptations and/or modifications where appropriate, and strategies to meet these goals.
  - IEPs have goals that correspond to the category in which the student is identified.
  - IEPs have services outlined that relate to the identified needs of the student.
  - IEPs have an outline of methods for measuring progress in relation to the goals.
  - Students are receiving special education services to address the needs identified that are beyond those offered to the general student population and are proportionate to level of need.
  - Students are being offered learning activities in accordance with the IEP.
- To maintain consistency in process with all other low incidence student claims, the District ensure all Code H students are attending and have evidence of receiving the appropriate support services.

## **Auditors' Comments**

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

**Education Sector Quality Assurance Branch  
Knowledge Management and Accountability Division  
Ministry of Education  
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