



**Ministry of Education
Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools**

2014/2015 Special Education Evaluation Committee Review

REPORT

Maria Montessori Academy (061 96427)

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Background

The Ministry of Education funds Independent School Authorities based on the Authorities' reported enrolment as of September 30th 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 2014/15 school year, the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (OIIS) conducted Special Education Evaluation Committee (SEEC) reviews of school and student records to assist OIIS and the independent school system in developing best practices in the area of special education programming and service provision. The Ministry will also use these review processes to develop an independent school special education audit protocol to be used in the future.

Purpose

The purpose of the SEEC review 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 review 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 \(March 2013\)*](#).

Description of the Audit Process

An SEEC review was conducted at Maria Montessori Academy on March 3, 2015.

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

Maria Montessori Academy reported 44 students in special education categories at the Fall 2014 Form 1701 data submission. For the purposes of this SEEC review, 12 student records were reviewed in the following low incidence special needs categories:

Student Claims	Category
4	Category D (Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment)
6	Category G (Autism Spectrum Disorder)
2	Category H (Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Serious Mental Illness)

The SEEC also reviewed ten student records in the following high incidence special needs categories:

Student Claims	Category
1	Category P (Gifted)
9	Category Q (Learning Disability)

An exit meeting was held with Brenda McDermitt (Principal), Leslie O'Hagen (Learning Assistance Support), Maggie Fraser (Learning Assistance Support), and Courtney Rasura (Learning Assistance Support) at the end of the review day to present preliminary findings, seek clarification related to the contents of files, and express appreciation for the assistance provided.

Observations:

Of the four student claims in Code D there were no recommended reclassifications.

Of the six student claims in Code G there were no recommended reclassifications.

Of the two student claims in Code H there were no recommended reclassifications.

The one student claim in Code P was not recommended for reclassification.

Of the nine student claims reviewed in Code Q:

- one student was recommended for reclassification to Regular Education.

The auditors found that:

- One student was reported in Code Q in error. There was no file available with evidence to support a claim in this category. The School claimed they were surprised to see this student name on the audit list and felt an error occurred when the 1701 data was submitted.
- The student files were comprehensive, divided into sections with the required documentation/ evidence needed to support the criteria and conduct the audit in a most efficient manner.
- The diagnostic information was relative to each category claim and contained current, dated and comprehensive evidence needed to support criteria for that category.
- The IEPs were comprehensive and contained all the pertinent areas required by the Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. Goals were specific to the category claim and the objectives were measurable. The methods for measurement and evaluation were clearly defined documented and supported by evidence in the files. The "Planning for Transition" section was completed for students where it was appropriate.
- The IEPs were all dated 2014-2015 but some had specific dates of when the IEP was developed or when the IEP meeting was held.
- Services appropriate to the students' needs were readily available to the students and clearly defined on their IEPs.
- There was evidence students were receiving a program that corresponded to the individual needs outlined in the IEP and reflected recommendations made in a variety of assessment reports.

- The auditors appreciated the prompt response to any clarification requests.

Recommendations:

The auditors recommend that:

- The School report student claims in Code Q only if they meet the criteria listed in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for that category. Assessment documentation and an IEP must be in evidence to support a claim in this category.
- The School continue using the practises and processes they have in place to support students with special needs.

Auditors' Comments

The auditors wish to express their appreciation to the school staff for their cooperation and hospitality during the SEEC review.