



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

**2014/15 Special Education Evaluation Committee Review**

**REPORT**

**SACRED HEART SCHOOL (05796144)**

## 2014/15 Special Education Evaluation Committee Review Sacred Heart School (05796144)

### **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 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 Sacred Heart School on March 11, 2015.

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

Sacred Heart School reported 15 students in special education categories at the Fall 2014 Form 1701 data submission. For the purposes of this SEEC review, 14 student records were reviewed in the following low incidence special needs categories:

<b>Student Claims</b>	<b>Category</b>
9	Category D (Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment)
4	Category G (Autism Spectrum Disorder)
1	Category H (Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Serious Mental Illness)

The SEEC also reviewed one student record in the following high incidence special needs categories:

FTEs	Category
1	Category K (Mild Intellectual Disability)

An exit meeting was held with Rebecca Gilbert (Principal), and Christine Murphy (Learning Assistance Teacher) 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 nine student files reviewed by the auditors in Code D:

- One student was recommended for reclassification to Code K.

There were no recommended reclassifications for the four student files reviewed in Code G.

There was no recommended reclassification for the student file reviewed in Code H.

There was no recommended reclassification for the student file reviewed in Code K.

The auditor found that:

- One of the nine students reported in Code D did not have evidence of a medical diagnosis to support the claim in the category. There was evidence in the student file to support a placement in the Mild Intellectual Disability Category (Code K).
- The student claim for Code H did have diagnostic evidence to meet the criteria for placement in the Intensive Behaviour Interventions/Serious Mental Illness Category. Additionally, there is an internal Counselling Summary, Behavioural Checklist, and a Behavioural Intervention Plan in place. There is evidence of only a signature to demonstrate outside agency support. The outside interagency attended the Fall IEP meeting. There was no record of meeting notes, no interagency goals/strategies, or mention of the service on the IEP. The School was informed that more substantial evidence of interagency planning and collaboration has to be on file next year in order for the student to be claimed in this category.
- The School does not appear to have a reassessment schedule in place. A number of language and motor assessments are three or more years old.
- File evidence verified four students reported in Code D, three in Code G, and one in Code K have documented need of and recommendation for Speech and Language Pathology (SLP) services/assessment updates and no documentation of receiving direct ongoing intervention from a therapist.
- Two students in Code D have had similar two or more year's outdated documented need of and service for Occupational Therapy (OT). Next year these student claims should not be retained in this category, but be reclassified to regular education until there is evidence the students are receiving special education services to address the needs identified in the assessment documentation as outlined in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

- File documentation suggests three student claims in Code G should receive updated reviews/assessments from OT.
- The School reports that they employ therapists for IEP consults which the parent has to hire privately for intervention. The School permits private therapists to conduct sessions at the School.
- Special Education services typically funded by the School are Learning Assistance, Educational Assistance, Therapy and Behaviour Consults, and School Counselling.
- The student files are well organized in sections.
- There are a number of Diores of Prince George Forms in student files. These included: IEP Meeting Forms, Term Review Forms for Student Based Team Meetings, and Action Plan Forms. Many forms are yet to be filled in for the 2014/15 school year.
- Records of the Fall IEP meetings are sparse, often limited in content along with a listing of names present at the meeting. Accompanying Action Plan form notations are rare. Term Review forms are being completed at mid-year.
- Permanent Record Cards, including inclusions, are not completed until the student is transferring out of the school.
- Files contain relevant emails of IEP meeting dates/requests and of contact with professionals.
- The IEP format contains all required elements.
- The IEPs for students in all categories are written to individually reflect the specific needs of each individual student.
- The goals, objectives, and strategies generally relate to the diagnosis, but often do not incorporate a significant number of recommendations from various assessment or medical reports.
- IEP goals are largely measurable; objectives are rarely documented. Some objectives are focused on teacher practices and plans, rather than student focussed. The objectives were also embedded within the strategy column.
- Strategies are often focussed on environmental and assignment changes; specific remediation interventions are rarely included.
- Methods of Evaluation section rarely had anything other than a comment stating that “*the goal will be reported on in each period of the school year*”.
- Very few IEPs contained evaluation notations; the School reports a mid-year IEP review is just underway and delayed by an early Spring break.
- The IEP functional level section only states “*needs support*”, no details or levels are provided.
- The service provider section of the IEP did not include Learning Assistance. At times other services were not noted either.
- Frequency and duration of services are not documented on IEPs.
- One student was missing the *Special Education Funding: Parent/Guardian Confirmation Form*. All other forms are within student files.
- Parents are all offered opportunity to participate in the development of the IEP.
- The School has Health Plans for four Code D students needing either assistance with insulin pumps or injections for life threatening medical conditions.
- Educational assistants/staff assigned to students with medical conditions receive training.
- B.C. Insulin Management Records are logged and records of daily injections maintained.

## **Recommendations:**

The auditor recommends that:

- The School only claim students in Code D that meet the requisite reporting criteria in accordance with the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guideline.
- Students are only claimed in Code D if they have documentation of a medical diagnosis and assessment documentation indicating that the student's functioning and education is significantly affected by the physical disability or chronic health impairment.
- The School ensure processes are in place for annual review of impact on learning and for delisting students when they no longer meet Code D and Code H placement.
- The School report only student claims in each category when there is documentation to verify a plan for the delivery of recommended special education services. This evidence must be in place at the time of the claim.
- The School update assessments that support the recommendation of the student for the reported category in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Special Education Manual of Policy, Procedures and Guidelines. This includes the four students reported in Code D, three in Code G, and one in Code K who are in need of SLP services/assessment updates, and are not receiving direct ongoing intervention from a therapist. It also includes the five students, two Code D and three Code G, needing OT reviews/therapy.
- The School and/or Authority recognize the service provision requirement is directly related to the documented needs of the category claim. There is an obligation for the School to provide associated services.
- The School ensure inclusions on 1704 forms be maintained as per Ministry requirements and guidelines.
- The School establish an integrated case management planning and collaboration record.
- The School encourage consistent use of the various in-house and Diocese of Prince George forms and tools, with comprehensive entries.
- Details of meeting minutes and any action plan items be consistently recorded.
- Develop and record methods for measuring IEP goal/objective progress.
- Document in every IEP the types, levels and amount of service given to students, including learning assistance.
- Write measurable IEP goals and objectives for the student to achieve. (Not teacher achievable). Ensure these are listed in the correct column. Include recommendations from assessments.
- Develop specific strategies that include remediation.
- Complete all functional level sections of the IEP with actual details.
- Follow up with acquiring the *Special Education Funding: Parent/Guardian Confirmation Form*.
- Sacred Heart School be considered for a follow-up SEEC review.

### **Auditors' Comments**

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