



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

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

REPORT

St. Michaels University School (061 96469)

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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 St. Michaels University School on March 4, 2015.

Prior to the file reviews, an entry meeting was held with school assigned staff from the Learning Resource Team (LR). The SEEC interviewed St. Michaels University School staff to respond to enquiries about the Independent School Authority's policies, procedures and programs.

St. Michaels University reported 77 students in special education categories at the Fall 2014 Form 1701 data submission. For the purposes of this SEEC review, seven student records were reviewed in the following low incidence special needs categories:

Student Claims	Category
2	Category F (Deaf or Hard of Hearing)
1	Category G (Autism Spectrum Disorder)
4	Category H (Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Serious Mental Illness)

The SEEC also reviewed 33 student records in the following high incidence special needs categories:

Student Claims	Category
9	Category P (Gifted)
20	Category Q (Learning Disability)
4	Category R (Moderate Behavior Support/Mental Illness)

At the end of the review day an exit meeting was held with Learning Resource Teachers Susan Vachon, Petra d’Entremont, Laura Miller, Keira Ogle and Claire de Rosenroll, and School Counsellor Allison Peace to present preliminary findings and express appreciation for the assistance provided.

Observations:

There were no recommended reclassifications for the two student files reviewed in Code F.

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

Of the four student files reviewed in Code H:

- one student was recommended for reclassification to Regular Education.

There were no recommended reclassifications for the nine student files reviewed in Code P.

Of the 20 student files reviewed in Code Q:

- one student was recommended for reclassification to Regular Education.

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

The auditors found that:

- One student claim for Code H did not have evidence to meet the criteria for placement in the Intensive Behaviour Interventions/Serious Mental Illness Category as the School was not able to provide the file for the team to review.
- One student claim in Code Q did not meet the designation category criteria. The assessment documentation evidence to support the criteria for a claim in this category clearly stated in the report that the student did not qualify.
- All requests for information and documentation were promptly addressed.
- While in the majority of cases the evidence required to support the various categories was available, it was not always easily identified in the file for the following reasons:
 - Each school organized their files in a different manner (three different campuses which essentially operate as separate entities).
 - Forms were not consistently filled out in relation to parental input on the IEP process. Upon further inspection of additional documents, verification was obtained.
 - There are a number of IEP formats used in the School and completed to different degrees of comprehensiveness.

- There were a number of forms, that when used, provided the evidence needed to confirm that the student claims met the criteria. These included:
 - Counsellor Records
 - Functional Behaviour Assessments
 - Behaviour Intervention Plans
 - OneNote electronic system for recording/organizing data
 - Parent/School communication logs
 - Detailed School meeting notes
 - Detailed Learning Resource records
 - Transition planning
 - Adjudication records for Grade 10-12
- The student files were well organized, data readily available, documentation dated and current. Two laptops were set up with the One Note system for the team to verify electronic files for the Senior School.
- There were a number of school-developed forms that were used consistently and contained the information auditors needed for evidence during the audit. These included: the IEP format, Integrated Case Management Meeting notes and home/school communication forms.
- The IEPs for students in all categories were consistently written to reflect the specific needs of each individual student. The goals and strategies often reflected recommendations from various assessment or medical reports.
- The IEPs were usually signed even though this is not a requirement of the Ministry.
- The IEP process at the School was started in the previous school year (June) and completed by the first week of October after consultation with parents and teachers.
- There was consistent use of the Instructional Support Planning Document for Code H student files providing useful evidence needed for these categories.
- The Code H student files reviewed contained a considerable amount of evidence to support the additional services being provided to students. Outside agency support and collaboration was well documented.
- The Code H student IEPs reviewed consistently contained transition information in the section “Year End Recommendations/Transition Information”. This was also evident in student IEPs in other categories.
- All the student files reviewed in Code F contained evidence of well defined services and programs as well as up to date assessments.

Recommendations:

The auditors recommend that :

- While the School reports students that meet criteria, the School consider implementing processes are in place for delisting students when they no longer meet criteria for category placement in the future.
- The School report only those student in Code Q for whom they have assessment documentation to support the criteria for that category.

Auditors' Comments

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