



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

2015/16 Special Education Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 6 (Rocky Mountain)

2015/16 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 6 (Rocky Mountain)

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).

In the 2015/16 school year, school boards reported 26,633 students enrolled in the low incidence supplemental special education funding categories at September 2015. School District No. 6 (Rocky Mountain) reported 169 students in the supplemental special education funding categories as of September 30, 2015. For the purpose of this compliance audit, School District No. 6 (Rocky Mountain) reported four student claims in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), two student claims in the Deafblind Category (Code B), six student claims in the Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability Category (Code C), 41 student claims in the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D), six student claims in the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Category (Code F), 44 student claims in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G), and 66 student claims in the Intensive Behavior Intervention/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 are receiving the service and 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. 6 (Rocky Mountain) during the week of February 1, 2016. An entry meeting was held on February 1, 2016 with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent-Leader of Learning Services. Daily meetings with the Assistant Superintendent 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 an overview of the relevant program information.

A folder that was tabulated with Rocky Mountain School District Learning Services Strategic Plan 2014-2019 was given to the auditors. The following information was presented:

- Amalgamation of three districts and the resulting complexities.
- A key priority for the District to have a senior person with special education training.
- School Psychology is no longer contracted.
- Many staff changes within special education.
- An alternate school is connected to each secondary school.
- Every teacher is trained in Response to Intervention
- Challenges obtaining service for special needs children. District has created teams of service professionals. National Youth Screening Project and GAIN are two such services. Many families still go to Alberta for service.

A sample of four student files reported in the Physically Dependent category (Code A), two student files in Deaf blind (Code B), six student files in Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Code C), 41 student files in Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (Code D), six student files in Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Code F), 44 student files in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Code G), and 66 student files in Intensive Behavior Interventions/Serious Mental Illness (Code H) special needs categories were reviewed and evaluated to determine if the students in these categories were accurately reported on Form 1701.

An exit meeting was held with the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent on February 5, 2016. The auditors reviewed the purpose of the audit and the audit criteria, explained the audit reporting process, reported their findings, clarified any outstanding issues and expressed appreciation for the assistance provided.

Observations:

There were no recommended reclassifications for the student claims reviewed.

The auditors found that:

- The evidence in the files showed sufficient documentation to support that the students had been appropriately assessed and identified and/or the student had been offered learning activities in accordance with his/her IEP.
- One student reported as Code F had evidence to indicate they were receiving support services from the teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing in September 2015, however, testing done in November 2015 identified no hearing problems. Based on the November evidence, this student no longer meets the criteria for Code F and should be reclassified to regular education for the 2016/2017 school year.
- The evidence required to support the various categories was available and identified in the file. There were many effective practices evident:
 - Each school organized their files in a similar manner.

- Forms were consistently used and filled out. There were many logs: email, contact, and behaviour logs. These were all dated.
- IEPs were clearly detailed in all areas.
- Integrated Case Management forms specified the role and responsibility of the person listed on the form.
- There were a number of forms that were used to provide the evidence needed to confirm that the student claims met the criteria. These included:
 - Behaviour Safety Plan
 - Functional Behaviour Assessments
 - Behaviour Intervention Plan
- The student files were well organized, data readily available, documentation dated and current.
- Every file had a dated line that showed the parent involvement.
- There were a number of District developed forms that were used consistently and contained the information auditors needed for evidence during the audit. The transition plans from Primary to middle school and the high school were useful.
- 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 RTI 1 to3 tiers were very specific.
- There were a number of pro-social and emotional programs.
- Both Code F and Code B categories had goal progress report as well as IEPs.
- There was consistent use of the Instructional Support Planning Document in Code D and Code H. Student files contained evidence needed for these categories.
- All the student files reviewed in Code F contained evidence of well defined services and programs as well as up to date assessments.
- 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.
- All the student files reviewed in Code G contained evidence of well-defined services and programs as well as up to date assessments.
- There were a number of student files in all categories that contained transition goals.
- The District has found creative ways to obtain required services for their students. One such service is the CCI team. It consists of Registered Psychologist, MCFD and CYMH members, family service counselors and school counselors. There is also GAIN.
- The District use a psychiatrist for phone consultation.

Recommendations:

The Auditors recommend that:

- Documentation of the level and amount of service given to students be clearly recorded in the IEP.
- The District maintain the commendable level of service and documentation that was presented and identified during the audit.
- The District continue with the processes in place to meet the individual needs of the students.

Auditors' Comments

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