



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

2015/16 Special Education Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 72 (Campbell River)

2015/16 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 72 (Campbell River)

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. 72 (Campbell River) reported 290 students in the supplemental special education funding categories as of September 30, 2015. For the purpose of this compliance audit, School District No. 72 (Campbell River) reported four students in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), one student reported in the Deafblind Category (Code B), 25 students in the Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability Category (Code C), 108 students in the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D), four students in the Visual Impairment Category (Code E), seven in the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Category (Code F), 74 in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G), and 67 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. 72 (Campbell River) during the week of February 9, 2016.

An entry meeting was held on February 9, 2016, with the Superintendent of Schools, the Director of Student Services, two School Psychologists and two Integration Support Teachers. Daily meetings with the Director of Student Services 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 a presentation on the District's Student Services by the Director of Student Services and a School Psychologist. Various district publications on Special Services in the District were shared with the audit team, including a Reference Guide to Student Services.

Four student files reported in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), one student file in Deafblind (Code B), 25 student files in Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Code C), 108 student files in Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (Code D), four students in Visual Impairment (Code E), seven student files in Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Code F), 74 student files in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Code G), and 67 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.

Prior to the arrival of the audit team, the Director of Student Services, two School Psychologists and two Integration Support Teachers reviewed the file of every student claimed in a low incidence category. Any missing evidence to support each September 30, 2015 claim was sought. The audit team's file review process did not encounter issues requiring school visits. The School Psychologists and the Director of Student Services were able to provide the audit team with evidence when clarification was required. Meeting daily with the Director of Student services enabled the audit team to keep the District staff apprised of the audit process.

An exit meeting was held with the Superintendent of Schools, the Director of Student Services, two School Psychologists, and two Integration Support Teachers on February 12, 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, discussed reclassifications for the 2015/16 school year, and expressed appreciation for the assistance provided.

Observations:

- There were no recommended reclassifications for the four student files reviewed by the auditors in Code A.
- There was no recommended reclassifications for the one student file reviewed by the auditors in Code B.
- Of the 25 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code C, one student was recommended for reclassification to Code D.
- Of the 108 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code D, three students were recommended for reclassification: one to Code F, one to Code H and one to Regular.
- There were no recommended reclassifications for the four student files reviewed by the auditors in Code E.

- There were no recommended reclassifications for the seven student files reviewed by the auditors in Code F.
- There were no recommended reclassifications for the 74 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code G.
- There were no recommended reclassifications for the 67 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code H.

The auditors found that:

- One student with assessment data verifying Down's Syndrome was recommended for reclassification to Code D from Code C. The student no longer met the assessment criteria for Code C.
- Three student claims reported in Code D did not meet the criteria for placement in that category as outlined in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedure and Guidelines. One student was reported in error and should have been claimed in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing category (Code F). Audiology reports and IEP goals met the criteria for this reclassification. One student claim did not have medical documentation but did meet the criteria for Code H. The third student, diagnosed with diabetes, was able to function independently as of September 30, 2015.
- One student designated in Code G, had recently arrived from out of province. While the diagnostic evidence established the student as autistic, this evidence did not meet the standard established in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedure and Guidelines for this province.
- There were a number of students that had not had an assessment for ten years or more.
- There were a number of forms, that when used, provided the evidence needed to confirm that the student claims met the criteria. These included:
 - Integrated Case Management Notes
 - Screening Summary
 - Behavioral Reports
 - Record of Agency Contact
 - Instructional Planning Tools
- The student files were well organized, data was readily available, documentation was dated and current.
- 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.
- District staff in special education worked well with staff at the school level to provide critical information necessary for clarification.

Recommendations:

The auditors recommend that:

- The District report student claims in Code C only if they meet the criteria listed in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for that category. Assessment documentation showing the student's intellectual functioning in three or more standard deviations below the mean on an individually administered Level C Assessment and assessment documentation shows there are limitations of a similar degree in two or more adaptive skill areas.
- The District ensure any student claims in Code D meet the criteria listed in the Special Education Manual of Policies Procedure and Guidelines for that category. There must be documentation of a medical diagnosis in one or more of the following areas: nervous system impairment that impacts movement or mobility, musculoskeletal condition, or chronic health impairment that seriously impacts student's education and achievement. The student must be receiving special education services to address the needs identified in the assessment that are beyond those offered to the general student population and are proportionate to the level of need.
- The District consider updating assessments for students at least once in their secondary years to assist with the transition after leaving the K-12 school system.
- The District consider upgrading the diagnostic evidence of the autistic student from out of province to meet the criteria of this province's Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

Auditors' Comments

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