



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

2015/16 Special Education Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

**SELF DESIGN LEARNING COMMUNITY
(039 96721)**

2015/16 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SELF DESIGN LEARNING COMMUNITY (039 96721)

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 2015/16 school year, the Ministry of Education through the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (OIIS) conducted Special Education enrolment audits, in selected schools, to verify reported enrolment on Form 1701.

Purpose

The purpose of the Special Education enrolment audit 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 audit 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 \(September 2013\)*](#).

Description of the Compliance Audit Process

A compliance audit was conducted at SelfDesign Learning Community the week of February 15, 2016.

There was an opportunity for the Lead Auditor to visit SelfDesign prior to the audit to ensure the access to the data management systems would not create any challenges for the team to verify the criteria was being met for the upcoming compliance audit. After a brief tutorial of both systems it was determined that there would be no difficulty with the team accessing the data required to conduct the audit.

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

SelfDesign Learning Community reported 618 students in special education categories at the Fall 2015 Form 1701 data submission. For the purposes of this audit, 252 student records were reviewed in the following low incidence special needs categories:

Student Claims	Category
12	Category A (Physically dependent)
1	Category B (Deaf/Blind)
9	Category C (Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability)

Student Claims	Category
90	Category D (Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment)
1	Category E (Visual Impairment)
3	Category F (Deaf or Hard of Hearing)
100	Category G (Autism Spectrum Disorder)
36	Category H (Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Serious Mental Illness)

In order to review the sample of student files, the auditors were introduced to the two data management systems SelfDesign Learning Community has developed. One system was developed for the Kindergarten to Grade 9 student data and the other system for Grade 10 to 12 student data. After a brief tutorial the audit team was able to manoeuver through the systems and access the required evidence to verify criteria was being met.

The documentation needed to verify the category claim was scanned by the School and available in a file called “Funding Documents”. Evidence of the “Special Education Funding: Parent/Guardian Confirmation Form” and proof of residency in B.C. was available in a “Legal Documents” file.

Any clarification requests were dealt with in a timely manner and contained the information the auditors were requesting.

Although the file review process did not encounter issues requiring the need to visit the student, there was an opportunity to observe students engaged in various learning activities in video clips accessed through ePortfolio.

An exit meeting was held with the Principal, Acting Principal, three Senior Coordinators, four Educational Coordinators for Special Education, a High Incidence Coordinator, a Systems Administrator, and a Manager of Accounting and Administration on February 19, 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 12 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code A.

There was no recommended reclassification for the student file reviewed by the auditors in Code B.

Of the nine student files reviewed by the auditors in Code C:

- one student claim was recommended for reclassification to Code D.

Of the 90 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code D:

- one student claim was recommended for reclassification to Regular Education.

The one student file reviewed by the auditors in Code E was recommended for reclassification to Code G.

There were no recommended reclassifications for the three student files reviewed by the auditors in Code F.

Of the 100 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code G:

- one student file was recommended for reclassification to Code H.

There were no recommended reclassifications for the 36 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code H.

The auditors found that:

- In reviewing the Legal Documents file there were several student files that did not contain the “Special Education Funding: Parent/Guardian Confirmation Form”. Upon request, the school staff were able to produce eight of the 13 missing forms with an explanation for the remaining five missing forms. For the remaining missing forms, the School staff were able to provide the audit team with evidence of attempts to obtain the forms sent to the families from the School’s communication log.
- In the Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability category (Code C) one student claim did not have evidence that the criteria was met in accordance with the Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. All evidence verified the student met the criteria for the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment category (Code D). A response by the school staff to the clarification request confirmed the claim in Code C was made in error.
- In the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment category (Code D) one student claim did not have evidence to support a diagnosis of FASD or complex developmental behavior condition. Although a Registered Psychologist made the diagnosis statement in a report, there was no evidence of a report from a qualified medical specialist or consultation with a multi-disciplinary team of specialists (i.e., registered psychologist, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist).
- In the Visual Impairment category (Code E), one student claim did not have a documented report from an ophthalmologist, optometrist, orthoptist or the Visually Impaired Program at the B.C. Children’s Hospital describing the student’s vision impairment. There was evidence in the student file that the criteria for Autism Spectrum Disorder (Code G) was met. There was a diagnosis of ASD made by appropriately qualified professionals (FHAN) as well as an IEP and evidence of services aligning with the criteria for Code G.
- There was one student claimed in Code G that did not have the evidence in the student file to support a claim in that category. There was evidence in the student file to support the criteria for Intensive Behaviour Interventions or Serious Mental Illness (Code H). This evidence included a behavioral assessment, evidence describing the student’s behavior as well as an IEP and services that aligned with the criteria for Code H. A clarification request confirmed that the claim in Code G was made as “an enrollment error”.
- The student files were comprehensive.

- The IEP format was designed so that all the required information was readily available throughout the various sections of the IEP.
- All the IEPs were current and dated.
- Every IEP had evidence that the parent was involved in the creation of the IEP and its goals.
- There was a clear indication of who the service providers were and their role to support the student.
- The IEP goals contained measurable objectives and indicated assessment of goal achievement. Each goal also had a section called “Highlights of Learning” which contained learning successes, successful strategies, valuable activities and effective support services. The goals were specific to the individual student and reflected the category in which the students were reported. The objectives were comprehensive and often reflected recommendations from various reports and assessments.
- For students in Grades 10 to 12 there was often a “Transition Planning” or “Next Steps” goal.
- During the review of the student records it was evident students were receiving appropriate and comprehensive programs designed to meet their individual learning needs.

Recommendations:

The auditors recommend that:

- The School ensure that there is the required evidence to support that the students have been appropriately assessed and identified as meeting the criteria listed in the Special Education Manual of Policies Procedures and Guidelines for the reported category.
 - For student claims in Code D there must be evidence in the student file to support a diagnosis of FASD or complex developmental behaviour condition made by a qualified medical specialist in consultation with a multi-disciplinary team of specialists.
 - For student claims in Code E contain assessment documentation by the appropriate professionals. If the evidence aligns with the criteria in another special education category, classification should be made in that category.
- The School ensure they report only student claims in each category when there is evidence to verify criteria has been met.
- The School ensure that any mandatory forms required by the Ministry are evident in the student files.
- The School maintain the commendable level of service and documentation that was presented and identified during the audit.
- The School 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 school staff for their cooperation and hospitality during the audit.