



**Ministry of Education
Resource Management and Corporate Services Division
School District Financial Reporting Unit**

2016/17 Special Education Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 35 LANGLEY

2016/17 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 35 LANGLEY

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 2016/17 school year, school boards reported 28,048 students enrolled in the low incidence supplemental special education funding categories at September 2016. School District No. 35 (Langley) reported 1,015 students in the supplemental special education funding categories as of September 30, 2016. For the purpose of this compliance audit, School District No. 35 Langley reported ten student claims in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), one student claim reported in the Deafblind Category (Code B), 47 student claims in the Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability Category (Code C), 386 student claims in the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D), six student claims in the Visual Impairment Category (Code E), 27 student claims in the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Category (Code F), 343 student claims in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G), and 195 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 \(April 2016\)*](#).

Description of the Audit Process

A Special Education enrolment audit was conducted in School District No. 35 (Langley) during the week of January 30, 2017.

An entry meeting was held on January 30, 2017 with the Superintendent, three Assistant Superintendents, the Secretary Treasurer, the Director of Instruction–Learning Support Services, and the District Vice Principal–Learning Support Services. The District staff presented an informative Power Point presentation providing an overview of the District's demographics,

descriptions of various programs available to students, staffing information, intervention and assessment process steps and information about their IEP.

Daily meetings with the Director of Instruction–Learning Support Services and the District Vice Principal–Learning Support Services were held to present preliminary findings and to seek clarification related to the contents of files.

A sample of ten student files reported in Physically Dependent category (Code A), one student file in Deafblind (Code B), 20 student files in Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Code C), 150 student files in Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (Code D), six student files in Visual Impairment (Code E), 20 student files in Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Code F), 50 student files in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Code G), and 150 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.

The file review process did not encounter issues requiring school visits. The Director of Instruction–Learning Support Services and the District Vice Principal–Learning Support Services were able to provide the audit team with evidence when clarification was required. Meeting daily with the Director of Instruction enabled the audit team to keep the District staff apprised of the audit progress.

Any clarification requests were responded to in a timely manner with the evidence the auditors required.

An exit meeting was held with the Superintendent, two Assistant Superintendents, Secretary – Treasurer, Director of Instruction - Learning Support Services, and District Vice Principal – Learning Support Services on Friday, February 3, 2017. 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 2016/17 school year, and expressed appreciation for the assistance provided.

Observations:

Of the 150 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code H:

- six students were recommended for reclassification to Regular Education.

There were no other recommended reclassifications for the remaining student files reviewed by the auditors.

The auditors found that:

- Six student claims for Intensive Behaviour Interventions/Serious Mental Illness (Code H) did not have evidence to meet the criteria for placement in the Category.
 - two student claims had no evidence to verify the student was receiving any additional support services or evidence to support that planning was coordinated, across agency and community. There was no integrated case management.

- for one student claim it was verified that there was no evidence to support the claim. There was no evidence of a behaviour or mental health assessment or diagnosis, IEP, additional support services, or evidence of coordinated planning across agency and community.
 - one student claim had no evidence of a behaviour or mental health assessment, nor any additional services being provided, no outside agency involvement or indication of the severity of the behaviour or the impact on learning.
 - two student claims were for students new to the District. It was verified that these students were not reviewed by Learning Support Services staff prior to the Form 1701 Fall Data Collection submission. The student files did not contain evidence required to verify placement in the Intensive Behaviour Interventions/ Serious Mental Illness Category.
- There were a number of forms that were used fairly consistently and contained information pertinent to verifying the criteria. These were the Individual Education Community Care Plan, Educational Planning Conference Form, the IEP Goal Progress Report, and the Learning Support Services Confidential File Review.
 - The IEPs were comprehensive with all criteria areas being met. The methods of measuring progress were documented, and relevant to goals and specific objectives. There were timetables and hours of support available to verify that students were receiving additional support services. The diagnostic information supported the criteria for a student claim in that category. The IEP Progress Report provided information regarding the progress students were making on their individual goals and objectives.
 - The services students were receiving correspond appropriately with the category they were claimed in.
 - The Learning Support Services Confidential File Review provided evidence that the District reviewed student designations and made changes as needed.
 - There were a significant number of student files in Code H that did not contain the documentation required to verify the student claim in that category. Documentation missing included: assessment information to support the claim, evidence of coordinated planning across agency and community, IEP, and evidence to support severity of behaviour and impact on student learning. The District staff were able to provide additional evidence not initially available when the various files were initially presented for review.
 - One Alternate School had no current IEPs in the file, no evidence of attendance at claim date, no evidence of additional support services being provided or evidence of coordinated planning across agency and community. Through audit clarification requests to District staff, additional evidence was provided to verify the claims.

Recommendations:

The auditors recommend that :

- The District ensure student claims in any Special Education category are those that meet the eligibility requirements as per the Form 1701 Student Data Collection Form Completion Instructions and the Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

- The District ensure that Form 1701 reporting is verified prior to submission and that student files are updated and reviewed regularly to ensure the student claims meet the criteria in the category in which they are claimed for the reported school year.
- The District ensure student claims in Code H have evidence to verify a behavior or mental health assessment or diagnosis. There must be evidence that planning is coordinated across agency and community as specified in the Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. There must be an IEP in place dated after September 30th of the previous school year and the students must be receiving additional services.
- The District review and ensure that all Code H student files have the appropriate evidence in place at the claim date that verifies the criteria outlined in the Special Education Manual of Policies Procedures and Guidelines and related Ministry policies including those required for Alternate Education Program schools are met.

Auditors' Comments

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