



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

2016/17 Special Education Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

**ST. PATRICK REGIONAL SECONDARY
(039 96030)**

2016/17 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT ST. PATRICK REGIONAL SECONDARY (039 96030)

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 2016/17 school year, the Ministry of Education conducted Special Education enrolment audits, in selected schools recommended by the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (OIIS), 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 \(April 2016\)*](#).

Description of the Compliance Audit Process

A compliance audit was conducted at St. Patrick Regional Secondary from February 6 to February 8, 2017.

Prior to the file reviews, an entry meeting was held with the School Principal and the Learning Support Services Coordinator. The auditor interviewed the School Administrator and staff to enquire about the Independent School Authority's policies, procedures and programs.

St. Patrick Regional Secondary reported 50 students in special education categories at the Fall 2016 Form 1701 data collection period. For the purposes of this audit, 21 student records were reviewed in the following low incidence special needs categories:

Headcount	Category
1	Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability (Code C)
2	Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (Code D)
2	Visual Impairment (Code E)
6	Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Code F)
8	Autism Spectrum Disorder (Code G)
2	Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Serious Mental Illness (Code H)

16 student records were also reviewed in the following high incidence special needs categories:

Headcount	Category
1	Mild Intellectual Disability (Code K)
1	Gifted (Code P)
13	Learning Disability (Code Q)
1	Moderate Behavior Support/Mental Illness (Code R)

An exit meeting was held with the Principal and two Learning Support Services Coordinators on February 8, 2017. The auditor reviewed the purpose of the audit and the audit criteria, explained the audit reporting process, reported the findings, clarified any outstanding issues, discussed reclassifications for the 2016/17 school year, and expressed appreciation for the assistance provided.

Observations:

There were no recommended reclassifications for the student files reviewed by the auditor in Code C, Code D, Code E, Code F, Code G, Code H, or Code K.

The one student file reviewed by the auditor in Code P was recommended for reclassification to Regular Education.

Of the 13 student files reviewed by the auditor in Code Q, three students were recommended for reclassification to Regular Education.

The one student file reviewed by the auditor in Code R was recommended for reclassification to Code Q.

The auditor found that:

- All the files were organized by category and alphabetically by student last name to allow easy access.
- The content of all files was well organized in the same consistent manner which made it efficient to find the required evidence and information.
- The IEP template used for all IEPs was clear and contained all requirements of an IEP.
- The goals corresponded to the category in which the student was reported and there was evidence in the files that identified students were receiving services beyond that of the general student population.
- The IEPs for students in all categories were consistently written to reflect the specific needs of the individual student.
- The Special Education student files contain an abundance of information including consent forms, diagnostic and medical reports, assessment information, IEP meeting notes, IEPs, medical information and progress reports.
- The Learning Services Handbook is a comprehensive document that covers a variety of processes and procedures, roles and responsibilities of Learning Support Teachers, Educational Assistants, and classroom teachers. It also includes protocol for student requiring accommodations and differentiation strategies for use in the classroom and a Learning Support Services Referral Form.
- The IEPs had individualized goals but many did not have measurable objectives.

- The Instructional Support Planning Tools are included in some files to support student placement in a certain category but are not used consistently.
- Many of the IEPs, especially in Code Q, did not have a specific date but only the school year (2016-2017).
- One student did not have evidence to meet criteria for Gifted (Code P). The student did not have a current IEP dated after September 30, 2015. The school staff concurred that the student does not meet criteria for Code P. There is no evidence to support placement in Code P. The school staff told the auditor that this student was reported in error.
- Three students did not have evidence to meet criteria for Learning Disabilities (Code Q). The school staff identified that this was a reporting error. All three student claims were declassified to Regular Education.
 - The psycho-educational assessment indicates that the student did not meet the criteria for Code Q. It was verified that the student does not have a Learning Disability.
 - One student was reported in Code Q due to attentional difficulties. The psycho-educational assessment stated student does not meet criteria to be designated as Learning Disabled.
 - One student reported in Code Q does not meet the criteria for placement in that category. The psycho-educational assessment indicates that a learning disability should be ruled out.
- It was verified that one student no longer meet the criteria for Students Requiring Behaviour Support or Students with Mental Illness (Code R). Behaviour is no longer an issue for this student. The School staff stated the claim was in error. There was evidence in the student file to support placement in Learning Disabilities (Code Q). The psycho-educational assessment and services and supports are in place aligned with the Learning Disabilities category.

Recommendations:

The auditor recommends that:

- The School only report student claims in Code P if they meet the criteria the Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines as having exceptionally high capability with respect to intellect or creativity or skills associated with a specific discipline.
- The School report only those student claims who meet the criteria for the category in which they are reported and ensure students are receiving special education support services to address the needs identified in the assessment information that are beyond those offered to the general population.
- The School ensure student claims, in each category, are reported only when there is current evidence to verify criteria has been met.
- As outlined in the Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines all IEPs in all categories must have measurable objectives to enable staff to assess student progress.
- The Instructional Support Planning Tools, be used in their entirety as effective assessments to support student placement in a special education category and to guide interventions.
- Ensure that IEPs are completely dated (day/month/year) as evidence that the current IEP is in place dated after September 30th of the previous school year.

Auditor's Comments

The auditor expresses appreciation to the school staff for their cooperation and hospitality during the audit.