



**Ministry of Education  
Resource Management Division**

**2019/20 Special Education Enrolment Audit**

**AUDIT REPORT**

**SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 75 (Mission)**

## **2019/20 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 75 (Mission)**

### **Background**

The Ministry of Education funds boards of education based on the boards' reported enrolment as of September 30<sup>th</sup> 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 2019/20 school year, school boards reported 31,798 students enrolled in the low incidence supplemental special education funding categories at September 2019. School District No. 75 (Mission) reported 429 students in the supplemental special education funding categories as of September 30, 2019. For the purpose of this compliance audit, School District No.75 (Mission School District) reported six student claims in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), one student claim reported in the Deafblind Category (Code B), 20 student claims in the Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability Category (Code C), 162 student claims in the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D), five student claims in the Visual Impairment Category (Code E), three student claims in the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Category (Code F), 142 student claims in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G), and 90 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. 75 (Mission) during the week of February 24, 2020.

An entry meeting was held on February 24, 2020 with the Superintendent, Director of Instruction-Student Services, two School Psychologists and two Inclusion Mentor Teachers. Daily meetings with the Director of Instruction-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 binder of District policies, handbooks, processes and programs that were referenced during the interview.

A sample of six student files reported in the Physically Dependent category (Code A), one student file in the Deafblind (Code B), ten student files in Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Code C), 85 student files in Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (Code D), five student files in Visual Impairment (Code E), three student files in Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Code F), 25 student files in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Code G), and 70 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-Student Services was able to provide the audit team with evidence when clarification was required. Meeting daily with the Director of Instruction-Student Services enabled the audit team to keep the District staff apprised of the audit progress.

The file review process encountered three issues requiring a meeting. A number of the student claims were without evidence of B.C. residency. While evidence was provided for most students on the registration forms, some schools did not report residency consistently. A number of IEPs did not contain specific dates, but only the month and year. There were three students reported in Code H that did not have evidence that met the diagnostic criteria for reporting in Code H. In all instances, the Director of Instruction-Student Services was able to provide evidence that met criteria.

An exit meeting was held with the Superintendent, Director of Instruction-Student Services, three School Psychologists and two District Inclusion Mentor Teachers on February 28, 2020. 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 any of the student files reviewed by the auditors.

The auditors found that:

- Two student claims in Code D did not have evidence in the student file of a medical diagnosis made by a qualified medical specialist. Diagnostic medical reports that met criteria for Physical Disability/Chronic Health were provided upon request.
- Four students claimed in Code D did not have evidence in the student file that the students' functioning and education were significantly affected by their Physical Disability/Chronic Health impairment. Evidence of the severity of the impact of the Physical Disability/Chronic Health was provided upon request.

- One student claim in Code D required verification the student was receiving special education services to address the needs identified in the assessment documentation. Evidence of the special education services aligned with the criteria was provided upon request.
- Two student claims in Code H did not have evidence in the student file of a mental health diagnosis by a mental health professional. Diagnostic reports by mental health professionals that met criteria for Code H were provided upon request.
- One student claim in Code H did not have evidence in the student file of a behavioural assessment indicating the need for intensive behaviour supports. An assessment of intensive behaviour that met criteria for Code H was provided upon request.
- Two student claims in Code H did not have evidence in the student file of outside agency integrated case management. Evidence of integrated case management that met criteria for reporting in Code H was provided upon request.
- Several IEPs did not have complete dates; only the month and year were listed.
- The student files were well organized with segments indicating each section topic.
- There was a consistent process across the District for reviewing IEP goals and objectives as recorded in the IEP Review document. This document provided a thorough summary of student progress toward goals, current information, academic progress and plans for the next grade.
- There was evidence of comprehensive transition planning and the consistent use of transition planning forms, which provided goals and timelines for transitioning through elementary, middle and secondary schools, as well as to adulthood.
- There was the consistent use of a Personal Development form to guide the allocation of special education services based on need.
- There was evidence of a high level of inter-agency planning for students reported in Code H for Intensive Behaviour/Serious Mental Illness. The District used a Care Team Meeting Notes form to document the collaborative and integrated case management for students.
- The District had a consistent process for an annual review of designation to determine if students continued to meet the criteria for reporting in special education categories. A Special Needs Designation Removal form was used to indicate when a change or removal of classification was needed.
- The District undertakes a thorough intake process for new students which was documented in a Review of File form. The form provided a summary of diagnostic information, information about the impact on student functioning and education, and also detailed further actions or documentation that was required to report a student in a special needs category.

### **Recommendations:**

The auditors recommend that:

- The District's support services staff ensure student claims in Code D have evidence that meets the criteria listed in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures 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.

- There must be evidence that the student’s function and education is significantly affected by their Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment.
- There must be evidence indicating the special education services the student is receiving to address the needs identified in the assessment documentation.
- The District’s support services staff ensure student claims in Code H have evidence that meets the criteria listed in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for that category.
  - For students with a serious mental illness, there must be evidence of a mental health assessment made by a mental health professional.
  - For students needing intensive behaviour support, there must be evidence of a behavioural assessment indicating antisocial, extremely disruptive behaviour in most other environments and consistently over time.
  - There must be evidence that the planning is coordinated, across-agency and community using integrated case management.
- The District ensure that all students reported for funding have evidence the District has verified B.C. residency in accordance with the [K-12 Funding-General policy](#).
- The District’s support services staff consider ensuring all IEPs are identified with a complete date including the day as well as month and year.
- The District’s support services staff maintain the commendable processes in place, identified at the time of the audit, 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.