



**Ministry of Education  
Resource Management Division**

**2019/20 Special Education Enrolment Audit**

**AUDIT REPORT**

**SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 78 (Fraser-Cascade)**

## **2019/20 SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 78 (Fraser-Cascade)**

### **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. 78 (Fraser Cascade) reported 137 students in the supplemental special education funding categories as of September 30, 2019. For the purpose of this compliance audit, School District No. 78 (Fraser Cascade) reported three student claims in the Physically Dependent Category (Code A), six student claims in the Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability Category (Code C), 45 student claims in the Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Category (Code D), two student claims in the Visual Impairment Category (Code E), one student claim in the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Category (Code F), 29 student claims in the Autism Spectrum Disorder Category (Code G), and 51 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. 78 (Fraser-Cascade) during the week of February 3, 2020.

An entry meeting was held on February 3, 2020 with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary Treasurer, Assistant Secretary Treasurer, District Coordinator-Student Support Services, English Language Learning Coordinator, Indigenous Education Coordinator, Hope Secondary School Principal and Vice Principal, Two Rivers Education Centre Principal,

Agassiz Elementary and Secondary Principal, and the District's MyEdBC Contact. Daily meetings with the District Coordinator of Student Support Services and the Superintendent were held to present preliminary findings and to seek clarification related to the contents of files.

A sample of three student files reported in Physically Dependent (Code A), six student files in Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Code C), 45 student files in Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (Code D), two student files in Visual Impairment (Code E), one student file in Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Code F), 29 student files in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Code G), and 51 student files in Intensive Behaviour 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 District Coordinator of Student Support Services was able to provide the audit team with evidence when clarification was required. Meeting daily with the District Coordinator and the Superintendent enabled the audit team to keep the District staff apprised of the audit progress.

An exit meeting was held with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Assistant Secretary Treasurer, District Coordinator-Student Support Services, English Language Learning Coordinator, Indigenous Education Coordinator, Hope Secondary School Principal and Vice Principal, Twin Rivers Education Centre Principal, Agassiz Elementary and Secondary Principal and the District's MyEdBC Contact on February 7, 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, discussed reclassifications for the 2019/20 school year, and expressed appreciation for the assistance provided.

### **Observations**

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

Of the 45 student files reviewed by the auditors in Code D:

- One student was recommended for reclassification to Code Q.

The auditors found that:

- One student claim in Code D did not have evidence to meet the criteria for the Physical Disability/Chronic Health Impairment category. There was no evidence of a medical diagnosis nor did the IEP goals reflect a claim in Code D. There was a Psycho-Educational Report that had evidence to support a claim in Code Q.
- The files, as presented for the audit, were not in any consistent order making it a challenge to find evidence to verify the claims.
- While the District had developed several forms that contained helpful information, there was no consistent use of these forms throughout the District's schools.
- The Parent Acknowledgement of Designation form was annually signed by parents to indicate their knowledge of their child's designation and the proposed path to graduation.

- The IEPs at Hope Secondary for Code H had a segment labelled Goals Checklist, indicating there was an annual review of the IEP goals.
- Many of the Code H files included a Behaviour Rating Profile assessment which included detailed notes of the students' behaviour under the headings: Social/Emotional, Communication and Self Determination; providing evidence to support the impact of student behaviour in learning and functioning.
- Code H student files contained a considerable amount of evidence as verification of additional services provided.
- Outside agency support and collaboration was well documented.
- There were cases where the dates on some of the Instructional Support Planning Process (ISPP) forms and Functional Behaviour Assessments were from January 2020. In these instances, the auditors were able to find relevant evidence to support a September 2019 claim from the previous years' ISPP forms.
- The ISPP cover sheet identifies a comprehensive summary of the domains which are seriously impacted and can inform IEP goals and objectives, yet these were not always completed.
- The IEPs for Code G did not always contain evidence of the special education services provided to support students claimed in that category. The evidence was provided upon request.
- The services provided by the teachers of the Visually Impaired and Deaf and Hard of Hearing were not included on the student's IEP. There was evidence of service found in the student file or, when not found, were provided upon request.
- There were a number of competency based IEPs that required clarification to verify that there were individual goals and objectives aligned with the category in which the student was claimed. Additional, enhanced goals were provided to the auditors upon request.

## **Recommendations**

The auditors recommend that:

- The District's support services staff ensure student claims in Code D have evidence that meets the criteria in accordance with the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.
  - 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 the student's function and education is significantly affected by their physical disability or chronic health impairment.
- The District encourage the wide-spread use of instructional planning tools.
- The District's support services staff ensure there is eligibility evidence as at the September 30 claim date aligned with the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines and the Form 1701 Instructions.
- The District's support services staff ensure the competency based IEPs align with the current requirements for IEPs including those identified in the Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines: there *"is a documented plan developed for a student with special needs that describes individualized goals, adaptations, modifications, the services to be*

*provided and includes measures for tracking achievement”, and per the [Individual Educational Plan Order M638/95](#).*

- The District’s support services staff review and adhere to Section C of the Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for IEP development.

### **Auditors’ Comments**

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