

<b>_____ First Nation Education Policy</b>	NO. 700 - 03
	PAGE 1 OF 4
<b>SUBJECT: Elementary Special Education – Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>
	APPROVAL DATE: Minutes:   Motion # Year/Month: Reviewed: Revised:

**POLICY**

It is the policy and vision of the \_\_\_\_\_ First Nation Education Services Program to see each student reach their potential while attending \_\_\_\_\_ School. Through the administration of appropriate learning experiences that will address each student’s unique strengths, needs and interests, all students can achieve educational success.

**Rationale:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Education Services will have in place procedures to identify levels of development, learning abilities, and needs; and must ensure that educational programs are designed to accommodate these needs and to facilitate each child’s growth and development. These procedures are a part of a continuous assessment and program planning process which should be initiated when a child is first enrolled in school, or not later than the beginning of a program of studies immediately following Kindergarten and should continue throughout a child’s school life.

**Early Identification Procedures**

\_\_\_\_\_ Education Services believes that it is of the utmost importance to identify children with learning difficulties as early as possible in their education career so that programs can be designed to accommodate their needs to allow them to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually and physically to the best of their ability.

Therefore, \_\_\_\_\_ Education Services has developed early identification procedures that are key to building this success for all students:

- Transition plans for special needs pre-school students as outlined in *Guidelines for Early Childhood Transition to School for Children with Special Needs*.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Early Identification Student Learning Profile for Senior Kindergarten

- \_\_\_\_\_ Junior Kindergarten —gentle entry procedure to \_\_\_\_\_ School; parental interviews (reports from other agencies are requested)
- Community Available Health Service Early Years Services and Screenings, including Aboriginal Headstart Preschool Screening, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Senior Kindergarten beginning of year and end of year Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (examples :Concepts About Print, Ages and Stages, Oral Language Assessment, )
- Grades 1, 2 & 3 DRA, (administered September, January and May) as well as in SK (January and May) (*imbed continuous school wide assessments to ensure continuity from year to year*)
- Woodcock Johnson (administered April and May) to all Primary students in Grades 1 and 2
- EQAO to Grade 3 students in May each year.
- Referrals by classroom teachers to SERTs for assessment

### **Special Needs Consultation Process**

Consultation occurs between pre-school \_\_\_\_\_ Daycare/ Aboriginal Headstart and \_\_\_\_\_ First Nation Education Services personnel to ensure an effective transition into school. Outside agencies that may be involved in the consultation process are:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Health Services
- \_\_\_\_\_ Children's Services
- Pathways Children Services ( sample of provincial supporting services to community)
- St. Clair Child and Youth (sample of community service departments)
- Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) (health care service)
- Physicians
- Psychologists
- Association for Community Living
- Any program or agency which supports the child and family with special needs

**Early Identification Programs/Interventions and Description**  
 (see below an example of existing or planned programs and interventions)

<i>Program/Intervention</i>	<i>Description</i>
Transition to School for Children with Special Needs	These guidelines have been established by the _____ Education Services and partner agencies. They are intended to provide a seamless transition into the school system.
Literacy Program	SK – programming to start to learn and develop reading/writing strategies skills and knowledge.
Students are Tracked from K through 3	Observation surveys are administered at the beginning and end of SK. Data collected and information interpreted by Literacy team is used to ensure that program and instructional strategies meet student needs.
Early Literacy Support	Grade 1 student Observation Survey for Early Literacy Achievement is administered. Students requiring Early Literacy support are identified and programmed for.
Oral Language	The Oral Language Assessment is administered to all SK students.
Observation Surveys of Early Literacy Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ identify the students who are at risk for literacy acquisition (these would be Early Literacy support students)</li> <li>➤ provides teachers with information on which skills each child has or needs to be taught (in reading and in writing)</li> <li>➤ provides teachers with information on each child’s reading abilities to help form Guided Reading Groups</li> <li>➤ provides teachers with an assessment tool to support marks and comments on a report card</li> <li>➤ the Observation Survey can also be given periodically throughout the year to show how the students have progressed</li> </ul>
Early Identification Student Learning Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• form that will follow their record from Senior Kindergarten</li> <li>• signatures and any concerns should be noted each year in social development, speech and language, cognitive development, motor development, health, special talents and interests, and a summary of any conferences</li> </ul>
Teacher’s School Readiness Inventory(TSRI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will help to pinpoint a student experiencing difficulty and will be an indication as to whether more detail would be required</li> <li>• in the event that a student scores 11 or lower on the Readiness Inventory, the Kindergarten teacher, along with the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT), Early Literacy Teacher and Vice-principal, should meet to form a plan for the student</li> </ul>
In-School Support Team Meetings	The In-School Review team (Principal/Vice-Principal, SERT, and classroom teacher) meet at least once per reporting period throughout the year to discuss students who are not progressing as expected.

**The Teacher’s Role in Early Identification**

Classroom teachers are responsible for providing opportunities for children to develop their skills, attitudes and knowledge. Through continuous observations and on-going formal and informal assessments, teachers monitor student achievement. When a child

is not progressing at the rate they should, the classroom teacher uses a variety of different learning/teaching strategies in an attempt to help the child develop the required skills and knowledge. If the child is still experiencing difficulties, the classroom teacher contacts the special education teacher for assistance and possible assessment. Throughout this process the classroom teacher maintains close contact with the parents/guardians by means of meetings, telephone conversations, letters, and parent-teacher interviews. Parents are encouraged to have as much participation and input ~~in~~ in their child's education as possible, and to discuss any concerns they have about their child's progress with the classroom teacher.

### **Parent's Role in Early Learning**

Parents play an important and valuable role in the education of their child. Parents extend the learning of skills and promote the social, physical, emotional and cognitive development of their children. It is essential that there be ongoing communication between home and school to provide constructive and consistent learning experiences for the child.

Parents provide a wealth of knowledge about their child's strengths and needs which directly support the school learning environment. Parents can share information about their child's strengths and needs that will assist the teacher in planning and assessing to meet those needs appropriately. There are many opportunities for parents to communicate:

- at the time of school registration,
- during a home visit or school Open House (Early Years),
- at a parent-teacher conference,
- within the school setting.

The educational success and welfare of students are enhanced by active parent involvement. Parents and school personnel, working together in a partnership, ensure that all learning needs are met through ongoing communication, cooperation, active participation, and sharing of responsibility.

The classroom teacher, literacy lead and special education personnel will meet to discuss program planning, the curriculum areas where the student is struggling, and where the student's strengths lie. A program services referral form may be completed and after consent of the parent/guardian is obtained, formal assessments are carried out by special education school and board staff.

### **The Referral Process**

After gathering, reviewing and evaluating all available documentation a case conference is held to determine how the specific needs of the individual student can best be met. During the case conference parents are advised of the availability of support services, modifications, accommodations or alternative programs available to their child. An IEP is developed in consultation with the parents, the school, and other agencies involved in

the care of the child. At this time parents will be advised of the possibility of special education programming and/or an IPRC.

The school ensures that all interventions and strategies are explored before a student is considered for an IPRC.

Parents may also make a request to the principal of a school that an IPRC be held at any time throughout their child's educational career.

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