

_____ First Nation Education Policy	NO. 700 - 02
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SUBJECT: Elementary Special Education Roles and Responsibilities	EFFECTIVE DATE:
	APPROVAL DATE: Minutes: Motion # Year/Month: Reviewed:

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:

- Every student has individual learning needs, and those with exceptionalities have the right to special education programs and services.
- Academic excellence is important and achievable.
- Student's opportunity to learn is maximized within a secure, safe and nurturing environment.
- All students must have equitable access to our programs and facilities.
- Students must be responsible to themselves, others, and the environment.
- All people must be treated with respect, consideration and tolerance.
- Our partners must be meaningfully involved in education
- Our community's language, culture and traditions must be respected within the context of our organization.

Roles and Responsibilities for Special Education at _____ First Nation

Aboriginal Affairs Northern Development Canada (AANDC)

- Establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model. The model consists of the Special Education Grant, and other special purpose grants;
- Ensures that _____ provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils;
- Requires _____ to report on their expenditures for special education;

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

- Defines through *The Education Act*, Regulations, and Policy/Programs Memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services, and prescribes the categories and definitions by exceptionality.
- Sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement;
- Operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools for students who are deaf, blind or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

THE EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

- Measures and communicates the achievements of students, schools and school boards;
- Devises the province-wide standardized testing in mathematics, language and literacy.

THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

- Establishes and implements standards for certification and teaching practice, and professional development;
- Accredits faculties of education. _____ **FIRST NATION EDUCATION SERVICES**

- Establishes school policy and practices that comply with *The Education Act*, Regulations and Policy/Program Memoranda; AANDC Funding Requirements.
- Monitors school compliance with *The Education Act*, Regulations, and Policy/Program Memoranda; AANDC Funding Requirements.
- Requires staff to comply with *The Education Act*, Regulations and Policy/Program Memoranda; AANDC Funding Requirements.
- Provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for exceptional pupils of the First Nation;
- Obtains the appropriate funding and reports on the expenditures of special education;
- Develops and maintains a *Special Education Plan* that is amended from time- to-time and meets the current needs of the exceptional pupils of the First Nation;

Reviews the plan annually and makes available to stakeholders via electronic means;

- Provides statistical reports to AANDC, First Nation Chief and Council as required and as requested;
- Prepares a parent guide to provide parents with information about special education programs, services and procedures;
- Establishes one or more IPRCs to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them;
- Establishes a Special Education In School Review Team;
- Provides professional development to staff on special education.

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

- Carries out duties as outlined in *The Education Act*, regulations, and policy/ program memoranda, and through _____ policies;
- Communicates Ministry of Education, AANDC and _____ expectations to staff;
- Ensures that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes;
- Communicates _____ policies and procedures about special education staff, students, and parents;
- Ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, through an IPRC, is done according to procedures outlined in *The Education Act*, regulations and _____ policies;
- Consults with parents, community programs local school board staff and funding agencies to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional students;
- Ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements;
- Ensures that parents are consulted in the development of their child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP;
- Ensures the delivery of the program as set out in the IEP;

- Ensures that appropriate assessments are requested if necessary and that parental consent is obtained.

THE IN-SCHOOL REVIEW TEAM

Establishing an in-school review team is an important first step in creating conditions that will enable a student who is experiencing difficulty to succeed in the learning environment. The School team plays a significant role in helping classroom teachers address difficulties that a student may be experiencing in the classroom prior to, and after, formal assessment and identification.

The school team is made up of people with various types of expertise who work together to:

- support the student, the parent, and each other;
- collaborate, consult, and share information and knowledge to identify strategies that may increase the student's learning success.

In-School Review Team, under the guidance and leadership of the Principal will establish formal guidelines for the team's membership, meeting times, and procedures for recording and reporting on its activities. The core members of the team will include:

- the principal or vice-principal
- staff with specialized training (literacy teachers, trained staff, etc.);
- the school special education resource teacher;
- the student's current teacher and/or the referring teacher;
- education assistants who work directly with the student.

The team may also include staff and professionals in the community who have expertise with the various exceptionalities and in such areas as speech and language development, psychology, physical and occupational therapy, social work, and curriculum modification.

As circumstances require, the team may also seek assistance from outside resource people such as:

- parents and other family members;
- community associations/agencies/ programs;
- community elders
- service providers from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (e.g., Community Care Access Centers, which coordinate service providers such as occupational therapists and hospital personnel);
- service providers from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (e.g., representatives from treatment centers).
- Service providers from the AFN, COO, IEC, Union of Ontario Indians/ etc.

The active involvement of parents enhances the effectiveness of the school team. Parents and students have important information to share with members of the school team and

should be invited to meet with the team when necessary and appropriate. The support of parents has positive and pervasive effects on the child's success in school, and parents should be encouraged to feel that their contribution is a valuable part of the school-team process.

Stages in the In-School Review Team Process:

Stage 1. Classroom Screening and Intervention

Apart from the parent, the classroom teacher is usually the first person to recognize that a student is experiencing difficulty in learning. Generally, the teacher initiates the problem-solving process at the classroom level. The teacher should discuss the concerns with a previous teacher, review information in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR), and make some initial program adjustments (refer to the Teacher Intervention Checklist- Appendix A). The teacher should also contact the student's parents to discuss the matter and the planned program adjustments. During this process, the teacher is able to form his or her own judgments about the student's strengths and needs. The teacher, principal (and other relevant staff) then determine what resources, support personnel, and strategies are available to meet those needs. If the student continues to have difficulty, a referral is usually made to the in-school support team. Ongoing communication with the parents can elicit valuable information about the student and is encouraged.

Stage 2. Referral to the In-School Review Team

At the request of the student's teacher or the principal, the in-school support team will allocate time at a regularly scheduled team meeting for discussion of the student's problems with learning. Problems may be academic (either underachievement or the need for enrichment), behavioral, social, or a combination of these, or may involve such things as poor attendance, medical issues, or a variety of other circumstances that are adversely affecting the student's learning.

In addition to regular members of the team and at the invitation of the team leader/chair, the team may include additional persons who have information or expertise to share. The selection of additional members depends on the needs of the student and the personnel resources available to the school team. Team members may include teachers who work with the student, paraprofessionals who work with the student, and service providers from community agencies who may have relevant information to share. Where a number of teachers are involved, some information may be presented through reports collected from teachers. However, it is important for those most closely involved with the student to be present. The meeting should be structured to establish a welcoming atmosphere and to ensure that all participants feel that their opinions are valued and respected.

Attention to details such as choice of room, seating arrangements, and introductions can contribute to a productive meeting. (Refer to Appendix 1 for a sample agenda checklist.)

The referral to the in-school review team may result in one or a combination of the following actions:

- a determination of the interventions or accommodations needed;
- program interventions in the regular classroom;
- a FBA conducted by the in-school support team;
- classroom circles used in the regular classroom;
- the addition of specific supports in the classroom or the withdrawal of the student from the classroom for limited periods of time (e.g., for remediation or enrichment);
- referral to other specialized services, including itinerant hearing, vision, and/or speech and language services, psychological services, and social services or medical support;
- referral for assessment, which may or may not lead to an IPRC referral;
- on-going monitoring leading to review after several weeks.

The overall goal of the program-planning process is to enable the student to learn successfully. Decisions about interventions and accommodations to the learning environment are best made at the in-school support team meeting. The needs of the individual student, the resources available, and parent and student preferences must all be considered in determining the nature and extent of the interventions and accommodations recommended and provided. The in-school support team uses the expertise of its members to make decisions about how to assist the student to achieve to the best of his or her ability. Follow-up monitoring permits the team to build on the student's success and to change the interventions that are not effective.

Stage 3. Follow-Up Meetings of the In-School Review Team

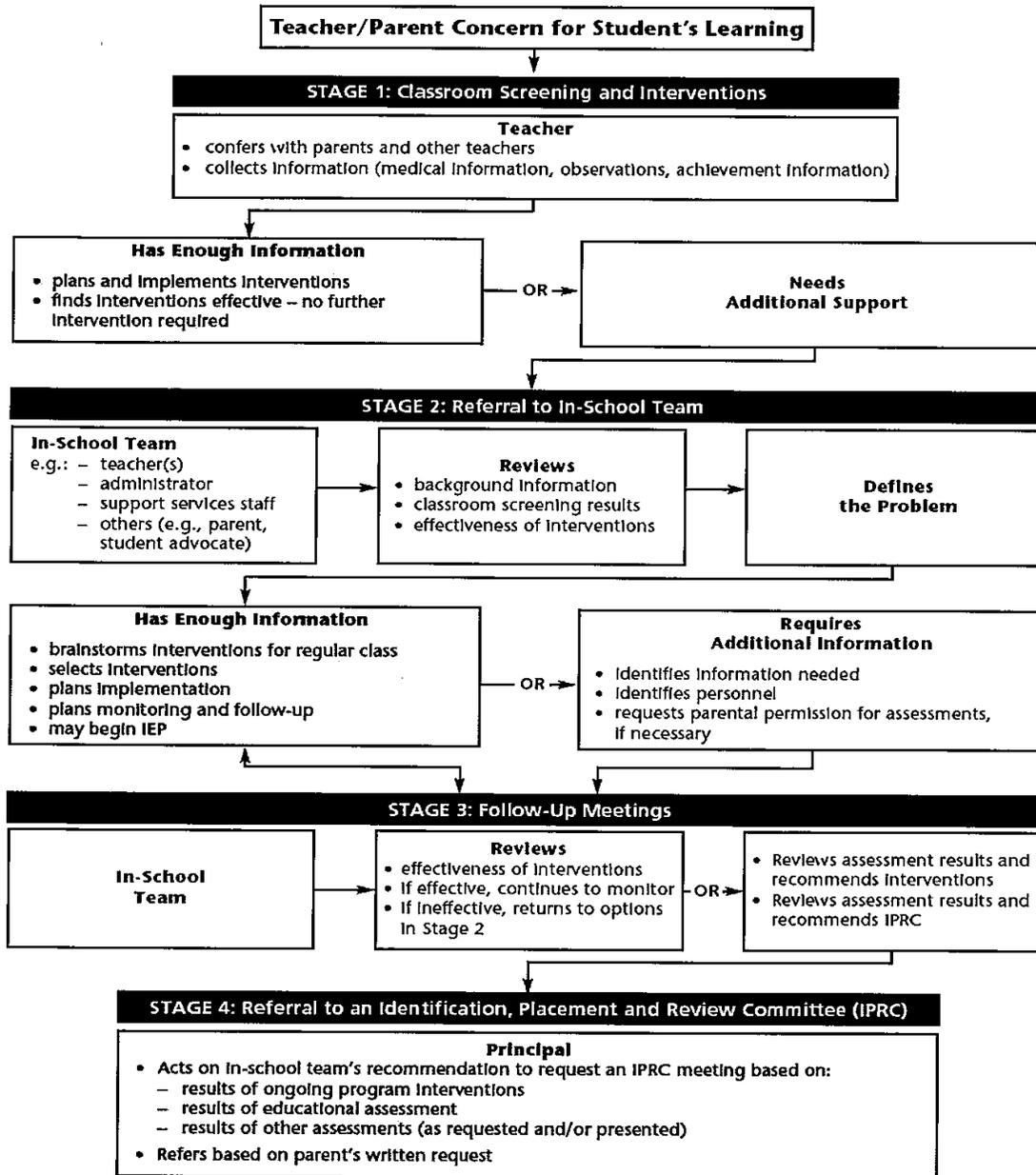
A student's case may be discussed once or over several meetings of the in-school support team, depending upon the student's ongoing or changing needs, the success of school-based problem-solving efforts, and the need for additional information from specialized services.

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE AGENDA FOR AN IN-SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAM MEETING

An in-school review team meeting usually proceeds in an informal yet orderly manner, with a prepared agenda. Team members:

- welcome the referring teacher to the team, ask the teacher to describe the issue or concern, review the current level of support, and discuss the teacher intervention checklist;
- ask the special education resource teacher or other support personnel to contribute additional information from informal observation and assessment;
- ask clarifying questions and decide if there is enough information to begin problem solving;
- ensure that there is consensus on the nature of the problem;
- discuss, evaluate, and refine suggestions and possible interventions;
- ask the referring teacher to choose interventions for an initial trial;
- determine the support needed to implement the chosen interventions;
- define the criteria for evaluating the success of the action plan;
- decide what additional input is needed, if any;
- set the date for follow-up to assess the effectiveness of the outlined interventions for this student.

Figure C.1: Stages of the In-School Team Process



THE TEACHER

- Carries out duties as outlined in *The Education Act, Regulations, Policy/Program Memoranda* and the Code of Ethics;
- Follows _____ policies and procedures regarding special education;
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of special education practices;
- Works with special education staff and parents to develop the IEP for an exceptional pupil;
- Provides the program for the exceptional pupil in the regular class, as outlined in the IEP;
- Communicates the student's progress to parents;
- Works with other school staff to review and update the student's IEP.

SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCE TEACHER (SERT)

- Holds qualifications, in accordance with Regulation 298, to teach special education;
- Monitors the student's progress with reference to IEP and monitors the program as necessary;
- Assists in providing educational assessments for exceptional pupils;
- Under the direction of the principal, and in addition to the responsibilities listed under The Teacher, the school resource teacher shall:
 - (a) oversee the implementation of _____ First Nation Education Service directives in the approved *Special Education Policy*, with special attention to the organization and operation of the IPRC process;
 - (b) collaborate with the teacher(s), review the identified student needs, coordinate the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each exceptional student;
 - (c) administer formal and informal assessments, and conduct classroom observations of student performance as part of the data collections;
 - (d) interpret the results of assessments, testing, and observations to develop

- appropriate programming strategies;
- (e) facilitate the organization of the in-school team meeting/case conference and assist in its operation;
 - (f) collaborate with teachers in the development of appropriate instructional and socialization strategies to meet student needs;
 - (g) provide program ideas and modifications, supplementary resource materials and behavioural strategies to teachers, education assistants, parents and peer tutors;
 - (h) as part of the collaborative process, provide direct instruction to the student in the classroom or through withdrawal where it cannot be provided in the classroom and where it is in the student's best interest to be withdrawn;
 - (i) provide examination/test/assignment assistance when required, and whenever possible, in the classroom;
 - (j) share up-to-date professional information regarding special education;
 - (j) facilitate effective communications with students, parents, teachers, administration, special education support staff and community-based agencies;
 - (l) collaborate with the classroom teachers in matters of student integration;
 - (m) direct and monitor special education teacher assistants in collaboration with the classroom teacher;
 - (n) liaise with outside agencies, clinics and medical practitioners regarding student's identified needs;
 - (o) perform other duties as determined by the principal.

EDUCATION ASSISTANT (also referred to as EA)

Purpose: To provide instructional support under the direction of the teacher, oversee the activities of students, promote a positive learning environment within the classroom, enable students to participate in educational and extra-curricular activities, and provide a positive environment for integration of the students through effective communication and involvement with all staff and students.

Under the direction of the principal, the education assistant shall:

- Provide care and assistance to the student(s) in daily routines, such as:

- a) bus/taxi duty – loading and unloading,
- b) personal belongings – dressing and undressing,
- c) toileting,
- d) feeding,
- e) supervision,
- f) medication,
- g) transfer and lifting,
- h) shallow suctioning, clean catheterization and other medical procedures with appropriate training;
- Follow the safety plan for the specific student;
- Provide assistance to meet any special needs pertaining to students in the class;
- Attend meetings as requested by administration;
- Assist the teacher with the collection of diagnostic/observational data;
- Assist the teacher in the effective delivery of specialized programs;
- Assist in preparing educational materials for specific activities as directed by the teacher;
- Maintain a school journal describing student performance and behaviour;
- Administer medication to students as directed; maintain records and forms related to the administering of medication to students as directed.
- Perform other duties and/or responsibilities that may be assigned.

Points to take into consideration when assigning duties to education assistants:

- EAs are assigned to the school not to a specific student.
- Communication to parents is done through the teacher or school administration.
- EAs must become familiar with the needs of the students. Developing a student profile, in conjunction with the teacher, for each special needs student is an effective way of ensuring that all the student needs are met.
- EAs carry out the program developed by the classroom teacher, resource teacher and the school administration.
- EAs must maintain documentation so that when the need arises a substitute can follow the program with a minimal amount of disruption.

Procedure For Education Assistant Access to the IEP

Education assistants will have access to a copy of the IEP as they work closely with students and they must be aware of the student’s needs and goals. A copy of the IEP can be obtained from the SERT and will remain in the school.

Education assistants may have an opportunity for input into the creation of the IEP.

PARENT/GUARDIAN

- Becomes familiar with and informed about Board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child;
- Participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities;
- Participates in the development of the IEP;
- Becomes acquainted with the school staff working with the student;
- Supports the student at home;
- Works with the school principal and teachers to solve problems;
- Is responsible for the student's attendance at school.

THE STUDENT

- Given an opportunity to provide input and feedback specific to individual programming;
- Complies with the requirements as outlined in *The Education Act*, Regulations, and Policy/Program Memoranda of the _____ First Nation Education Services;
- Complies with _____ First Nation Education policies and procedures;
- Participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other activities as appropriate.