

Special Education Policy

Nipisihkopahk Education Authority (NEA) is committed to providing educational programs designed to meet the learning needs of all students.

When necessary and where possible, NEA will establish and maintain special education programming and/or services to address the unique needs of all students. Whenever possible, students shall be integrated into an inclusive setting. If integration is unsuccessful, the student will be placed in a program designed to meet their individual needs within the most inclusive environment possible.

Both parents and educators shall be involved in the educational decisions for students with special needs.

A. Definitions

- a. Students with special needs are identified as being in need of special education programs and/or services because of their behavioural, communicational, intellectual, learning or physical needs, as well as students who require specialized health care services and those students who are considered gifted.

B. Guiding Principles

- a. NEA believes that all students can learn.
- b. Each student is valued as an individual with differing needs and learning styles.
- c. All students have a right to an education that helps them achieve to their fullest potential.

C. Guidelines

- a. A plan for screening students shall include:
 - i. Classroom created assessments and measures;
 - ii. Such group academic aptitude and achievement tests as approved by the Superintendent of Schools or designate; and
 - iii. The establishment of a Learning Team (principal, teacher, classroom support teacher, counsellor, etc.) in the school that shall assist in determining levels and forms of intervention.
- b. Students requiring further assessment shall be referred to the Student Services Coordinator through the school administration.
 - i. The Superintendent of Schools or designate shall determine that evaluations are conducted by persons qualified to administer individual psycho-educational assessments; and
 - ii. Parental consent shall be obtained and parents will be informed of the results and recommendations from those assessments.

- c. Parents or guardians will be invited to participate in, be informed of, and provide informed, written consent for student programming and placement decisions.
- d. As much as possible, programs and support services shall be provided to meet the special needs identified through the assessment process:
 - i. Programs shall promote the most enabling curriculum and learning environment that include developmental and age appropriate experiences;
 - ii. Each student shall have an Individual Program Plan (IPP) that includes goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria that will be followed and updated regularly;
 - iii. IPPs will be created prior to October 20 or within 30 days of receiving the results of formal evaluations;
 - iv. Parents shall be invited to participate in the development of the IPP.
 - v. Every effort will be made to have IPPs signed by November 20 each year. Parents or guardians will be invited a minimum of 3 times and each attempt shall be recorded on the IPP signature page.
 - vi. A copy of the IPP shall be available to parents.
- e. Parents have the right to appeal to resolve disputes that may arise as the result of implementation of this policy. However, NEA expects that every effort will be made to resolve problems at the school level.
- f. The Principal shall:
 - i. Ensure that teachers follow best teaching practices;
 - ii. Ensure that teachers follow the Response to Intervention model to identify students who are struggling and adjust programming to try and meet their needs before they fail;
 - iii. Make recommendations for screening and assessment services;
 - iv. Obtain parental consent for assessments;
 - v. Ensure that parents and guardians are invited to receive the results of the assessments.
 - vi. Notify parents and guardians that they may receive a copy of the assessment;
 - vii. Ensure confidentiality of reports and records on the basis of those who need to know;
 - viii. Monitor and assist with classroom management;
 - ix. Interpret the Program of Studies as it applies to students with special needs;
 - x. Ensure that programs are reviewed periodically;
 - xi. Demonstrate instructional leadership through providing information about new programs, materials, teaching strategies and professional development opportunities to teachers; and
 - xii. Participate as a member of the Learning Team that makes placement decisions including, but not limited to, the appraisal of each student's academic and behavioural status and the development of goals and objects as outlined in the IPP and/or Behaviour Plan.

- xiii. Ensure the observance of provincial and NEA policy where applicable;
- g. The Teacher shall be primarily responsible for the implementation of a special education program that shall:
 - i. Meet the needs of the student by:
 - Monitoring the effectiveness of instructional strategies and materials;
 - Determining the need for additional specialist assessment; and
 - ii. Include the development of an IPP, in collaboration with the Learning Team, that includes appropriate instructional goals and objectives;
 - iii. Provide the opportunity for parental or guardian involvement.
 - iv. Include ongoing student evaluation and program adjustment through the use of:
 - Anecdotal records;
 - Checklists;
 - Curriculum Based Measures (CBMs);
 - Diagnostic information;
 - NEA recommended evaluations;
 - Observation;
 - Work samples and portfolios;
- h. The parent shall consult with school personnel and play a significant and supportive role in implementing the special education plan for their child(ren). Parents shall be informed of their right to appeal any exceptional student's placement by following the proper procedures as they're outlined in NEA policy. Parents shall be expected to assume some responsibility for:
 - i. Advising the school of any medical, emotional, or other related problems that could interfere with the student's success in school;
 - ii. Providing consent for the transmission of previous assessments or current assessments completed by external agencies;
 - iii. Reviewing with the teacher the nature and intent of the IPP and/or Behaviour Plan and participating in its development; and
 - iv. Supporting the student's plan in the home.