

SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN

SECTION 4: Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies

PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of early and ongoing identification procedures is to ensure that educational programs are designed to accommodate identified needs and to facilitate each child's growth and development.

- These procedures are a part of a continuous assessment and program planning process.
- This process should be initiated when a child is first enrolled in school or no later than the beginning of a program of studies immediately following Kindergarten and should continue throughout a child's school life.
- Cooperation amongst parents, teachers and resource personnel and the sharing of pertinent information regarding the child is crucial in enabling teachers to establish appropriate programs for each child.

Trillium Lakelands District School Board is committed to early identification and intervention when a student presents with concerns at any point throughout their educational career. TLDSB recognizes that although some children present with special education needs as early as, or prior to, kindergarten, some students may not present with special education needs until later in their educational career.

Trillium Lakelands District School Board believes that by providing early intervention, we will be able to identify learning gaps and provide targeted interventions to close learning gaps.

THE PROCESS FOR EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENT'S LEARNING NEEDS

TLDSB has processes in place common throughout the district to assist in determining students' differentiated needs to ensure appropriate programming and supports are accessed, such as:

- Classroom assessments;
- Referral to School Intervention Team and/or case conferences;
- Student specific Response to Intervention Plan;
- Resource support and interventions;
- Individual Education Plan;
- Referral to System Intervention Team for consultation;
- System Level Assessments.

Continued monitoring of students with special learning needs is expected throughout their school life. Classroom Teachers and Special Education Resource Teachers, under the direction of the principal, are responsible for ensuring student referrals are made to School Intervention Teams when a child presents with academic, behavioural or emotional concerns.

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Role of the Classroom Teacher	<p>The following steps are the responsibility of the classroom teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused observation at the student desk and classroom level assessment of student’s learning; • Refer to the School Intervention Team when students are not meeting grade expectations or demonstrating appropriate behavioural or social skills; • Working with the school resource teacher to plan and facilitate targeted interventions; • Implement, monitor and provide feedback to School Intervention/Student Success Team on intervention outcomes.
Role of the School Resource Teacher	<p>The following areas are the responsibility of the school resource teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with the teacher regarding parent conferences and communication; • Assistance with observation of students within their classroom learning environment; • Facilitation of School Intervention/Student Success Team meetings ; • Coordination of school level interventions; • Consultation with Specialized Services Department Staff; • Referral of students to outside agencies; • Conduct school level assessment.
Role of the Early Reading Intervention Teacher	<p>The following areas are the responsibility of the Early Reading Intervention Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the Classroom Teacher to facilitate Early Literacy Intervention groups for SK to grade 2 students from September to June to accelerate student learning and close achievement gaps; • Provide Early Reading Intervention daily with targeted instruction over the course of the school year to students with literacy needs as determined by intervention screening tools; • Establish and follow clear entry and exit criteria and maintain ongoing monitoring throughout Intervention Block; • Increase intensity and duration, with program targeting specific needs for students whose learning is not accelerating.
Role of the Principal	<p>The following areas are the responsibility of the principal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish regular School Intervention/Student Success Team meetings; • Establish early intervention as a school priority, evidenced in intentional scheduling/timetabling of interventions ; • Ensure that the Early Identification Process is followed as outlined in Early Intervention Key Messages; • Ensure monitoring of student interventions occurs ; • Ensure follow up of recommended actions for students with special needs.
Role of the Parent	<p>The following areas are the responsibility of the parent in relation to the Early and Ongoing Identification Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information about their child; • Work collaboratively with school and community partners to ensure all essential supports are accessed as required; • Work with the school to provide suggested learning opportunities in the home that complement the school program.

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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

For students who are considered to have specialized learning needs through the Early and Ongoing Identification process, following the Response to Intervention Model, the regular procedures used in special education are to be followed. These procedures include Board monitoring assessments, early intervention programming, referral to school intervention team, the development of an IEP if appropriate, and programming as outlined in an IEP addressing clear, measureable and achievable expectations. A referral for formal assessment should be considered after appropriate intervention strategies have been provided that target the student's specific needs. If formal assessments indicate the need, a referral may be made to an IPRC.

Procedures for Notifying Parents

For students who are considered to have specialized learning needs through the Early and Ongoing Identification process, it is critical that parents are informed as early in the process as possible.

- This parent notification should include any or all of these steps as appropriate to the level of need of the student:
- Observation Visit to the classroom if possible/Parent Interview
- Reflection of needs included in Provincial Report Cards Intervention and resource reports where applicable
- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students who are identified, or for whom modified program expectations are needed, with outcomes reflected in the Provincial Report Card

PROCEDURES FOR ASSESSMENT, IPRC CONSIDERATION, AND REFERRAL TO IPRC

Students considered to have specialized learning needs through the Early and Ongoing Identification process are referred for assessment, consideration for IPRC, and IPRC through the same processes used for all students requiring special education programs or services.

Referral for Assessment

- Students are referred to the School Intervention/Student Success Team to determine actions, strategies and supports that may be essential based on student data provided by the classroom teacher.
- The School Intervention/Student Success Team may recommend assessment of academic achievement by the school resource teacher/special education head or suggest the student be presented to the System Intervention Team when interventions are not yielding the desired results.
- A System Intervention Team, made up of a Special Education Consultant, Psycho-educational Consultant, Speech and Language Pathologist and Student Service/Attendance Counselor is available to the school's special education team for consultation when a student continues to present as at risk following the interventions and recommendations of the School Intervention Team.
- The System Team will review interventions to date as well as data (School Intervention Team actions, Behavioural tracking, Board and teacher assessments, PMB and CASI) presented by the school's Special Education Leadership Team.
- The System Team may
 - recommend additional strategies,
 - conduct an observation,

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- offer a consultative session to school staff or
- when viewed essential, recommend a psycho educational or speech and language assessment.

- Referrals for central assessment services are considered by the System Intervention Team, when the needs of a student are interfering with their acquisition of learning, and after reasonable interventions have been provided.
- Prior to conducting an assessment, Hearing and Vision concerns must be ruled out through the appropriate assessments.
- During the System Intervention Team meeting, the school must present evidence of interventions tried to date (intervention details, student work, monitoring and tracking) and School Intervention Team notes.

It is essential to recognize that formal assessments are a System Resource and the special education department has a responsibility in allocating supports based on a system perspective. Sameness is not “fairness”.

Parents should be notified when assessments will take place through the school resource teacher. Written parent permission is required before any central assessments are administered.

Types of Early Intervention Strategies Used Prior to Referral to IPRC

A number of programming strategies are used within the classroom and/or resource program prior to a student being referred to an IPRC and for students with Special Needs who do not meet IPRC criteria.

The following strategies are used as appropriate to individual students:

- Varying the pace of instruction
- Providing accommodations for the method of input or output
- The use of specialized learning materials
- The use of modified learning expectations through an IEP
- Initiation of a Response To Intervention Plan to outline programming, tracking and monitoring
- Additional programming available through outside agencies supporting young children

Parent Notification of Referral to an IPRC

Parents are notified if a child is being considered for IPRC referral. This notification takes place through parent interviews, phone calls, and / or normal reporting and interview meetings. A written confirmation of date, time, and place for an IPRC meeting is sent to parents prior to an IPRC meeting taking place.

Parent Notification of Consideration for Special Education Programs or Services

Parent notification takes place if a student is being considered for special education programs or services. These services might include referral for assessment, student services worker involvement, or resource programming.

This notification takes place through parent interviews, phone calls, and/or normal reporting and interview meetings.

Additional References:

[Policy/Program Memorandum #11: Early Identification of Children’s Learning Needs](#)