



COMMISSION SCOLAIRE SIR-WILFRID-LAURIER
SIR WILFRID LAURIER SCHOOL BOARD

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Policy Outlining the Organization of Services for Students with Handicaps, Social Maladjustments or Learning Difficulties

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy is developed in conformity with...

- The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, R.S.Q., c. C-12;
- The Education Act, R.S.Q., cl-13.3;
- The Act Respecting Access to Documents Held by Public Bodies and the Protection of Personal Information, R.S.Q., c.A-2.1;
- The Basic School Regulations – pre-school, elementary, and secondary education, 2000 G.O.II, 3429;
- The Youth Protection Act, R.S.Q.,c. P-34.1.
- The Collective Agreements in force
- The Civil Code of Quebec
- "Adapting Our Schools to the Needs of All Students, Policy on Special Education, Ministère de l'éducation, 1999".
- Students with Handicaps, Social Maladjustments or Learning Difficulties Définitions, Direction de l'adaptation scolaire et des services complémentaires, Ministère de l'Éducation 2000.
- Act to Secure the Handicapped in the Exercise of their Rights, R.S.Q., c. E-20.1.

- 1.1 Section 235 of the Education Act mandates the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board to
- “...adopt, after consultation with the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities, a policy concerning the organization of educational services for such students to ensure the harmonious integration of each such student into a regular class or group and into school activities if it has been established on the basis of the evaluation of the student’s abilities and needs that such integration would facilitate the student’s learning and social integration and would not impose an excessive constraint or significantly undermine the rights of other students.”
- 1.2 This policy and its related Handbook of Procedures (referred to in 6.4), which apply specifically to the Youth and Vocational Education sectors, include:
- 1.2.1 method(s) for preparing and evaluating the individualized education plans intended for such students.
 - 1.2.2 procedures for evaluating and reporting results for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning difficulties with IEP’s; such procedures shall provide for the participation of the parents/guardians of the students and the students themselves, unless they are unable to do so;
 - 1.2.3 methods for including these students into regular classes or groups and into regular school activities as well as the support services required for their inclusion and taking into consideration the weighting required to determine the maximum number of students per class or group;
 - 1.2.4 terms and conditions for grouping those students in specialized schools, classes or groups.
 - 1.2.5 procedures for identifying students with special needs and informing and involving parents regarding services provided.
 - 1.2.6 procedures for distribution of services within the mandate of the School-level Special Needs and Board Parity Committees.
 - 1.2.7 procedures for transitioning from one educational setting to another for students with high needs and adaptation difficulties.

2.0 BASIC ORIENTATION

- 2.1 The policy of the Ministère de l’Éducation du Loisir et du Sport, (MELS) on Special Education articulates the basic orientation of all action in Special Education as follows:
- “...to help students with handicaps or social maladjustments or learning difficulties succeed in terms of knowledge, social development and qualifications, by accepting that educational success has different meanings depending on the abilities and needs of different students, and by adopting methods that favour their success and provide recognition for it.”¹
- 2.2 The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board supports the learning of students in the regular school community with their peers in the regular classroom. The school in this context has a sense of community, collaboration and cooperation. It fosters partnerships with parents/guardians and outside agencies and is characterized by flexible learning environments with problem solving approaches to meet student needs.
- 2.3 The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board supports this orientation and vision and believes that each student has the right of equal access to a quality education and to an educational environment that will allow her/him to experience and achieve success, recognizing that success has different meanings for different students.
- 2.4 The present policy harmonizes with the goal of success for all which underlies both the Québec Education Program and the school board’s strategic plan.

¹ Adapting our Schools to the Needs of all Students: Policy on Special Education: Ministère de l’Éducation, (MEQ). February 2000.

- 2.5 Early identification of those students who have special needs particularly at the Kindergarten/Cycle I levels is a priority in order to intervene by providing support to them and to their teachers. This support would facilitate their attainment of the intellectual, methodological, communications-related, and personal/social competencies appropriate to their abilities and when possible, to their cycle.

3.0 IDENTIFICATION AND SUPPORT OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS²

It is the classroom teacher's responsibility to detect students who are experiencing difficulties that may lead either to an academic delay or to behavioural challenges. The teacher will identify the symptoms of such students and working from a preventative perspective, attempt to respond to the needs using differentiated instructional strategies and classroom management strategies to address those needs, complemented by school team meetings with the parents/guardians/student.

Requests for support services:

Before making a request for a student not previously identified, the teacher who detects a problem will initiate a TIIP (Teacher Initiated Intervention Plan) at least 40 days for behaviour difficulties, about a month for students with learning difficulties, as determined by the School Level Special Needs Committee.

IDENTIFICATION CATEGORIES:

3.1 At-Risk:

3.1.1 Definition:

At-risk students are students who display characteristics likely to affect their learning or behaviour that will place them in a vulnerable situation, particularly, with respect to academic failure or their socialization, without immediate intervention.

At-risk students are not included in the definition of students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties.

3.1.2 Identification: Referral for identification, review and assessment must be made to the school principal (Teachers' Collective Agreement, Article 8-9.00).

3.1.3 Support: The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) details the tangible support measures to be provided to the student and to the teacher, including assistance from the remedial/supporting teacher and non-teaching professionals and other support personnel. The At-Risk students MAY need an IEP.

3.2 Learning Difficulties

3.2.1 Definition:

A student may be identified as having learning difficulties when remedial measures, carried out by the teacher or by others involved in intervention efforts over a significant period of time, have not enabled the student to make sufficient progress in his or her learning to meet the minimum requirement for successful completion of the cycle with respect to:

- The language of instruction or mathematics (at the elementary level) as provided for in the Quebec Education Program

² Special Needs refers to those students covered by section 235, Education Act.

- The language of instruction and mathematics (at the secondary level) as provided for in the Quebec Education Program

3.2.2 Identification:

Referral for identification, review and assessment must be made to the school principal (Teachers' Collective Agreement, Article 8-9.00).

A psycho-educational assessment must have been completed and should indicate a significant academic delay.

3.2.3 Support:

Students with Learning Difficulties shall have an IEP.

3.3 Students with Handicaps

3.3.1 Definition:

- Mild motor impairment
- Organic impairment
- Language Disorders
- Severe Language Disorders
- Profound intellectual handicaps
- Moderate to severe intellectual handicap
- Pervasive development disorders
- Psychopathological disorders
- Atypical disorders
- Severe motor impairments
- Visual impairments
- Hearing impairments

3.3.2 Identification:

Referral for identification, review and assessment must be made to the school principal (Teachers' Collective Agreement, article 8-9.00).

3.3.3 Support:

A student with a handicap, who has already been identified shall have an I.E.P. so the support measures are in place before the student's enrolment and placement in the school (Education Act, section 96.14).

3.4 Students with Social Maladjustments

3.4.1 Definition:

Students with Behavioural Difficulties are deemed such when an psycho-social assessment carried out by a qualified professional shows that they have a marked inability to adapt, manifested by significant difficulties in interacting with one or more elements that make up their social, family or school environment. These are defined by:

- Students with behavioural difficulties
- Severe Behaviour Difficulties Students with severe behavioural disorders linked to a psycho-social disturbance

3.4.2 Identification:

Referral for identification, review and assessment must be made to the school principal (Teachers' Collective Agreement, Article 8-9.00).

3.4.3 Support:

A student identified as having social maladjustments with either behavioural difficulties, severe behavioural disorders linked to psych-social disturbances, shall have an IEP and Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of the IEP where applicable so that the support measures are in place when the student starts school.

4.0 PREVENTION / EARLY INTERVENTION

The school board will provide educational services aimed at preventing or lessening learning difficulties and adjustment problems. Particular emphasis will be placed on early support measures favouring the acquisition of literacy and the development of appropriate social behaviours at all levels . The following procedures are applied:

- Orientation activities and the progressive entry model at the Kindergarten level will provide an opportunity to identify students who are at-risk.
- The emphasis on prevention and early intervention is supported by the school board's literacy initiatives at all levels.
- Development of appropriate social behaviours through the implementation of school-wide positive behaviour supports (PBS) and Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of the IEP where applicable.
- Development and implementation of transitional plans from one educational setting to another.
- Complementary Services intake meetings with parents of new students with special needs.

5.0 INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (I.E.P.)

5.1 Section 96.14 of the Education Act states:

"In the case of a handicapped student or a student with a social maladjustment or a learning disability, the principal, with the assistance of the student's parents/guardians, the staff providing services to the student, and the student himself, unless the student is unable to do so, shall establish an Individualized Education Plan adapted to the needs of the student. The IEP must be consistent with the school board's policy and in keeping with the ability and needs of the student as evaluated by the school board before the student's placement and enrolment at the school."

5.2 The principal shall ensure that the parent/guardian is informed on a regular basis on the implementation and periodic evaluation of the individualized education plan (IEP). The principal shall encourage parental participation in the development and periodic revision of the IEP.

5.3 The individualized education plan (IEP) is the primary vehicle for outlining the support to students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties. The IEP is established by the principal in collaboration with the staff working with the student having special needs following the ad hoc committee process. (Teachers' Collective Agreement, Article 8-9.00)

5.4 The Advisory Committee (Education Act, section 187) may advise the school board on the implementation of an IEP.

5.5 The IEP should include the following examples below:

- Specific needs of the student;
- Goals, competencies, strategies and accommodations;
- Resources and support services to be provided to the student;
- Responsibilities of the different parties;
- Timelines for success and review;

- Alternative methods for the evaluation of student progress;
 - Procedures for communicating with the parents/guardians/students.
- 5.6 The IEP must be available, active and evolving to reflect the changing needs of the individual student. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure the implementation of the IEP, its periodic evaluation, and revision when necessary (Education Act, section 96.14). In order to facilitate the transitioning of students with IEP's, school personnel are encouraged to record IEP's on the digital format available online.
- 5.7 The parents/guardians of students for whom an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) has been developed will receive ten communications each year including regular school reports and/or adapted school reports for students with special needs. These communications may include any of the following: formal reports, parent/guardian interviews; student-led conferences, portfolios, written course descriptions and objectives; open house; parent/guardian orientation/information meetings; progress reports; individual meetings with parents/guardians; documented communications with parents such as telephone, email, etc. (Basic School Regulation Division VII section 29)

6.0 DELIVERY OF SERVICES

- 6.1 The delivery of services to students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties will be realized in the most appropriate learning environment in their community schools and in regular classes, where they will benefit from the support services outlined in their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of the IEP where applicable.
- 6.2 In accordance with the provisions of section 235 of the Education Act, when the specific needs of a student are such that they cannot be met within the community school, or within a regular class, an alternative placement will be explored in keeping with the individual needs and abilities of the student. Upon the recommendation of the school board, alternative placements may include programs outside the jurisdiction of the school board. The parents/guardians and the student, where appropriate, shall be consulted regarding these alternative placements.
- 6.3 Upon adoption of this policy, the school board will establish a process of systematic follow-up and evaluation of each student who receives support by virtue of this policy. This process starts by ensuring that each teacher who receives a student identified with special needs is informed beforehand. To provide systematic follow-up, each school will ensure the articulation between cycles for each student having an IEP. The school board shall coordinate annual meetings between elementary feeder schools and receiving secondary schools so that the teachers and the principal of the receiving school can plan the appropriate support to ensure student success for students with special needs. Individualized transition plans should be established for all students with high needs and severe adaptation difficulties. This plan shall facilitate the transition from one educational setting to another.
- 6.4 Furthermore, in collaboration with the Special Education Parity Committee and the Special Education Advisory Committee, the school board will provide a Handbook of Procedures to facilitate the implementation of this policy.

7.0 SCHOOL BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS³

- 7.1 The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board will make available to schools a variety of strategies to identify students who may have special needs, as well as provide a variety of professional development opportunities, and will inform the schools accordingly.
- 7.2 The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board will evaluate the needs and abilities of such students before the student's placement and enrollment at the school, in accordance with section 96.14 of the Education Act, ensuring that students arriving from another school retain any identification and intervention plan that has been made on their behalf.
- 7.3 The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board will coordinate with outside organizations such as health and social services in order to ensure services to students with special needs and to provide support services according to their mandates, and to share their expertise with the school teams.
- 7.4 The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board will make the necessary arrangements for the placement of students whose educational needs it determines cannot be met by the services offered within the school board.
- 7.5 The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board will, within its available funds, work with the school to make available to the student and to the teacher, resources and support services, which have been identified in the individualized education plan (IEP) and Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of the IEP where applicable.
- 7.6 The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board will support and promote the development of the school-wide behaviour plans which detail the various programs and approaches to be used to encourage and teach positive behaviours.

8.0 SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- 8.1 The Principal puts into effect an on-going process that develops multidisciplinary school teams (the school administration, non-teaching professionals such as psychologists and speech-language pathologists, as well as other individuals who may contribute to this process) to observe students who are potentially at-risk. Teachers may be invited to participate. This multi-disciplinary team may request support services to the School Level Special Needs Committee in 8.2.
- 8.2 The Principal ensures that a School Level Special Needs Committee (SLSNC) is established in order to ensure various support measures for students experiencing difficulties, such as regular and special education, remedial/supporting teachers, behaviour technicians, counselling, speech and language support, referrals to outside resources, etc., (Teachers' Collective Agreement Article 8.9-00)
- 8.3 The Principal enters into a partnership with the parents/guardians of students with special needs, and the student where applicable, and ensures their participation in all procedures and interventions aimed at meeting their child's needs.
- 8.4 The Principal exercises the final responsibility in assigning staff (EA 96.21), after the resources were distributed adequately and appropriately by the SLSNC as per the Teachers' Collective Agreement.
- 8.5 The Principal, in collaboration with the school staff, ensures the development and implementation of the IEP and the behaviour intervention plan that specifies the resources available and the strategies to be followed to meet the needs of the student. In exceptional cases, when the needs of the student places the learning or security of themselves or others at risk, the principal may call upon the support services of school board personnel.

³ Special Needs refers to those students covered by section 235, Education Act.

9.0 TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- 9.1 The teacher will use pedagogical flexibility and differentiated instruction in his/her teaching approach particularly for students with special needs.
- 9.2 Should the teacher detect, after a 30-40 day period, that these means as described in 9.1 do not respond to the needs of some students with special needs, s/he will inform the principal of students who demonstrate particular social maladjustments or learning difficulties or show signs of a mild motor impairment, an organic impairment or a language disorder, a moderate to severe intellectual handicap or severe developmental disorders or a severe physical handicap...according to the Article 8-9.00 of the Teachers' Collective Agreement.
- 9.3 The teacher shall complete a Teacher Initiated Intervention Plan (TIIP) in order to record all strategies, accommodations and adaptations applied.
- 9.4 The teacher may participate in meetings (i.e. ad hoc committee, case conference, IEP meetings etc...) to recommend appropriate interventions to address student needs.
- 9.5 The teacher will participate in the development, implementation and periodic evaluation of the individualized education plan (IEP) and Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of the IEP where applicable.

10.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMPLEMENTARY AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROFESSIONALS

- 10.1 The professionals may provide screening materials and intervention methods for students who are experiencing difficulties and, as a member of the school team, may assist in the development of the individual educational plan and Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of the IEP where applicable.
- 10.2 The professionals shall assess, evaluate, diagnose and recommend any follow up measures to aid the students with special needs.
- 10.3 The Complementary Services professionals shall make recommendations for outside health and social services appropriate to the needs of the student.
- 10.4 The Complementary Services professionals shall have a consultative role to the principal and teachers in the use of adaptive strategies in order to facilitate learning for a student with special needs.
- 10.5 The professionals may assist the teacher in developing and supporting intervention and treatment programs implemented by technicians and attendants who are working with students with special needs.
- 10.6 The Complementary Services professionals shall participate in Inter-Disciplinary Team meetings (professionals such as psychologists, speech and language pathologists, guidance counsellors, consultants, occupational therapists) as needed.

11.0 PARENTAL PARTICIPATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- 11.1 The parent/guardian should notify the school principal of any special needs that could affect his/her child's progress in school and that could require the school to adapt its services, and should provide copies of diagnostic assessments and reports if applicable.

- 11.2 The parent/guardian of a child who received special services from a partner organization (social services, health agencies, re-adaptation center, etc.) should inform the school administration in order to allow coordination of the services offered to the child and to avoid duplication of services. Confidentiality will be respected.
- 11.3 The parent/guardian is informed of any evaluation of abilities and needs of his/her child, and of the child's identification as a student with special needs.
- 11.4 The parent/guardian has the right to be informed of the results of the evaluation of the abilities and needs of his/her child, and of the child's identification as a student with special needs.
- 11.5 The parent/guardian has the right to access the confidential file according to school board procedures and to contribute to the information kept within it.
- 11.6 The parent/guardian of a child with special needs will be encouraged to participate actively in the early intervention process, providing timely information to school personnel about the strengths, limitations and needs of their child.
- 11.7 The parent/guardian will be an active participant in meetings convened by the Principal to plan the intervention process and assess its effectiveness.
- 11.8 The parent/guardian will be encouraged to lend his/her active support with other interventions specified in the individual education plan (IEP) and Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of the IEP where applicable, including those that take place outside the school.

12.0 SUPPORT MEASURES

- 12.1 The school board shall identify for the following school year, in all its categories of personnel, the specialized resources available in the schools and in the school board for the provision of services to students with handicaps or social maladjustments or learning difficulties and shall so inform the Special Education Parity Committee in accordance with the Teachers' Collective Agreement
- 12.2 These specialized measures and resources may be considered to fulfill the dual mission of providing support to the students and to their teachers. This also implies that the support personnel has a good understanding of the student's disabilities prior to and upon servicing the student. Such an understanding may be obtained through the participation in professional development opportunities provided by the consultants at the Complementary Services department. These measures include, among others:
 - Remedial/supporting teachers⁴
 - Technicians and attendants
 - Intervention measures in literacy
 - Limitation of cross-cycle combined classes (according to the philosophy of the Quebec Education Plan)
 - Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of the IEP where applicable.
 - Special classes
 - Home tutoring (interim measure)
 - Small ratio groupings
 - Educational and Complementary Services (speech-language pathology, psychology, special education consultants, subject consultants etc.)
 - Other support services and resources available via entente with the Ministry of Health and Social Services
 - Technological aids
 - Assistive technology software and hardware
 - Specialized programs and learning materials

⁴ The Remedial/supporting Teacher is defined in the Handbook of Procedures.

- Specialized equipment
- Itinerant teachers (Montreal Association for the Blind, Montreal Oral School for the Deaf, etc.)
- In-service training for teachers and other professionals, according to school recommendation
- Specialized facility (full or part-time): e.g. Jewish General Hospital - Day Treatment Center, Summit School, Peter Hall School, MacKay, Montreal Association for the Blind (MAB) etc...

13.0 EVALUATION and CERTIFICATION OF STUDENTS with SPECIAL NEEDS

13.1 The school board will promote the goal of Success For All by providing an opportunity for the recognition of different types of achievement. Recognized achievement may be in keeping with the goals established in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

13.2 Evaluation of students with special needs will comply with The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board policy on the Evaluation of Learning in the Elementary and Secondary Schools with modifications or adaptations, if appropriate, when it is part of the student's Individualized Education Plan:

“Alternative forms of summative evaluation may be used for students with learning difficulties provided that the measurement instruments address the same objectives. The decision to adapt a summative instrument will be linked to program modifications outlined in an Individual Education Plan and in accordance with the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) guidelines.”

“Alternative means of evaluation may include use of scribes for written examinations, oral presentations or the use of electronic recording devices instead of written assignments, extended time-lines, breaking large exams into several sessions, keyboarding and enlarged type on exams.”

“When an alternative means of evaluation is to be used the Principal or his/her delegate will inform, in writing, all parties (student, parent(s)/guardian(s) and teacher(s) of the alternate mode of evaluation to be used and reason for its use.”⁵

13.3 Formal recognition of achievement for students with special needs may include:

13.3.1 The Secondary School Diploma (SSD) for those who complete the full requirements for the awarding of this diploma as set out by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) in the Basic School Regulation.

13.3.2 A Diploma of Vocational Education (DVS) for those who complete the requirements for the awarding of this diploma as set out by MELS for each program. Admission to a program of study leading to a DVS is open to the following three categories of students:

- Students who hold a Secondary School Diploma;
- Students 16 years of age as of September 30 of the school year during which s/he begins vocational training, who have successfully completed Sec. IV English, French and Mathematics. There are a few vocational education programs open to students with Secondary III level credits in these three core subjects; a few programs require one or more Sec. V level credits in these three core subjects;
- Students 18 years of age and over who have successfully completed the General Development Test (GDT).

⁵ Educational Policies for Elementary Schools (1) Policy #99-ED-03: Programme of Studies for the Elementary School, (2) Policy #99-ED-03: Evaluation of Learning in the Elementary and Secondary Schools – 6.0 Adapting Evaluation for Students with Special Needs.

- 13.3.3. A Certificate of Pre-Work Training (three year program) or a Certificate of Training for a Semi-Skilled Trade (one year program) for those students aged 15 years and over as of September 30, who are duly enrolled in one of these two Work Oriented Training Path (WOTP) programs. On the recommendation of the school board, MELS shall award a Pre-Work Training Certificate to every student who has completed the training of not less than 2,700 hours and has successfully completed the work skills education program of not less than 900 hours. On the recommendation of the school board, MELS shall award a Certificate of Training for a Semi-skilled Trade, with mention of the trade, to every student who has completed the training of not less than 900 hours and has successfully completed the practical training component for the semi-skilled trade of not less than 450 hours.
- 13.3.4 Students with special needs at the elementary and secondary levels may participate in the school leaving/graduation exercises with the general education students to receive their certificates for programs successfully completed.

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