

# **STUDENT SERVICES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY PINEWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Education Act mandates every school governing board to:

“....approve the approach proposed by the principal for the implementation of the student services and special education services programs prescribed by the basic school regulation and determined by the school board.”<sup>1</sup>

This policy shall include:

- (1) Procedures for evaluating handicapped students and students with learning difficulties
- (2) Methods for integrating these students into regular classes as well as support services provided for their integration
- (3) Methods for preparing and evaluating the IEP intended for such students

The policy on Special Education announced by the MEQ sees the basic orientation of all action in Special Education as follows:

“.....To help students with handicaps or social maladjustment 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 adapting methods that favor success and provide recognition for it.”<sup>2</sup>

Pinewood Elementary School believes that every child has the right of access to a quality education and to an educational environment, which will allow him/her to experience and achieve success.

The goal of Special Education: To assist students with special needs to function to the best of their abilities so that they may become self-supporting and contributing citizens of society.

<sup>1</sup> Section 88, Education Act (R.S.Q., Chapter 1-13.3)

<sup>2</sup> Adapting our Schools to the Needs of All Students: Policy on Special Education: MEQ Feb.2000

## **2.0 PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION**

- For the purpose of obtaining a clear profile, incoming kindergarten children shall be screened sometime between May and August, prior to the first official kindergarten school day. The student services personnel assigned to our school shall assist the teachers and the principal in this process. Information gathered from this process shall be used to create heterogeneous groups.
- Kindergarten students shall continue to be screened throughout their kindergarten year.
- Children experiencing difficulties in kindergarten or cycle one (1) shall receive intervention through resource teachers and counseling, as well as services from a speech pathologist for assessments and assistance, within the classroom environment with particular emphasis on reading skills.
- As parents' collaboration is critical to the educational success of the students, they must be closely involved as partners in various intervention strategies.
- Teachers must inform the principal of identified students with special needs, and must adapt strategies to promote success for all students.

## **3.0 INCLUSION**

Inclusion is a vision that all children belong and can learn in the regular school community. Pinewood Elementary School is an inclusive school that fosters a sense of community, collaboration, partnership with parents, and flexible learning environments to meet student needs. We are committed to an inclusive approach in educating each special needs child in the school as much as possible, by bringing the support services to the child and adapting the learning environment so that he/she will benefit from being in the regular class.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- The principal will take into account the following when including special needs students in the regular classroom:
  - The severity of the student's handicap/difficulties
  - The class profile
  - The needs of other students
  - The support services available
  - The provisions of the teacher's collective agreement
- The principal will inform teachers of strengths and difficulties of students with special needs by sharing reports etc.

- The principal will ensure on-going assistance and support to teachers as needed
- The principal will identify professional development needs of teachers of special needs students, and develop and implement in-service plans as needed.
- Teachers will identify students having difficulties and report them to the school principal
- Teachers will use adaptive strategies, classroom management techniques and diagnostic means to promote success for all students.
- Teachers will work collaboratively with other professionals in the class in responding to special needs of the students.
- Teachers, with the assistance of other staff members, will be responsible for developing, revising and implementing IEP's for identified students with special needs.
- Teachers are encouraged to consult the academic and confidential files as required.

#### **4.0 SUPPORT SERVICES**

In order to determine appropriate and adequate services to students with special needs, all school personnel must share information about special needs students. This process of information gathering and sharing shall be carried out through various means on an on-going basis, such as:

- Inter-disciplinary team meetings
- Informal meetings between various non-teaching professionals, the principal and teachers
- IEP meetings
- Meetings with parents

The special needs services are intended to provide support to both the teacher and special needs students. Such support services /or strategies may include the following:

- Resource teachers
- Technician/attendants
- Speech/language pathology
- Special Child Care Counselor
- Psychologist
- Social worker

- Individual Education Plan
- Adapted materials
- In-service workshops
- Itinerant teachers/services such as; Montreal Assoc. for the Blind etc.
- Special school (part-time or full time i.e. Jewish General Hospital Day Program)

## **5.0 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS**

- The IEP is a tool designed to plan, coordinate, and communicate the individual needs of identified special needs students.
- It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure the establishment, maintenance and periodic evaluation of the IEP. Teachers, support staff, parents and the student if possible, will assist in the development and revision of the IEP.
- The IEP should contain the following information:
  - Student's abilities
  - Strengths and limitations
  - Student's needs
  - Goals/ results to obtain
  - Means to be implemented
  - Home recommendations
  - Follow-up plan
- An IEP must be developed and revised annually for every student identified with special needs.
- The IEP must be available, active and evolving.
- Communication with the parents will occur ten (10) times each year including the report cards. Any member of the professional team may communicate with the parents. These communications must be recorded and placed in the student's academic file. They may include any of the following:
  - Formal reports
  - Parent interviews
  - Written course descriptions/objectives
  - Open house or parent information evenings
  - Progress reports
  - Behaviour modification charts
  - Individual meetings with parents
  - Phone calls

## **6.0 EVALUATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

(Extrapolated from the Evaluation & Promotion Policy – Pinewood Elementary)

Alternate modes of evaluation may be used for students with learning difficulties provided that the measurement instruments address the same objectives. The decision to adapt an evaluation instrument will be linked to the program modifications outlined in the IEP.

The following are some strategies, which may be used to adapt evaluation:

- Use of scribes for written exams
- Oral presentations or use of tape recorders instead of written assignments
- Keyboarding and enlarged fonts on exams
- Extended timelines to complete an exam/test/assignment
- Fragmented exams/tests
- Adjusting expectations to the student's individual abilities and capacities
- Using technologies where applicable and appropriate
- Any other device/tool/strategy that may adapt the evaluation appropriately to the needs of the student.

The resource teacher may provide assistance to the teacher(s) for adapting evaluation tools and determining results to be recorded. As well, she may evaluate the students working directly with her. The classroom teacher may use these evaluations for recording purposes.