

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES MANUAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JANUARY 2015

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PREFACE

The purpose of this manual is to assist schools in developing programs and services that enable students with special educational needs to meet their goals. The mandate for differentiated programming and inclusive education is outlined in the Pyramid of Intervention Model, the framework to be followed for identification and implementation of services.

This manual replaces the 1995 publication, *Special Programs Services, A Handbook of Guidelines and Procedures* published by Public Schools Branch, Department of Education.

Some material in this manual has been adapted from provincial publications under the sharing agreement of the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP):

Alberta Education Special Education Branch.
Alberta Education, 2006. *Individualized Program Planning; Programming for Students with Special Needs Series*. Alberta Education Special Education Branch.

British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2011.
Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Manitoba Education and Training, 2010. *Student-Specific Planning, A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs)*

Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment, 2006.
Northwest Territories Student Support Plans: Guidelines for Development and Teacher Resource Kit

Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment, 2008.
Northwest Territories Program Support Guide Programming for Student Success

USING THIS MANUAL

Recognizing that research, practice and policy in education will continue to evolve, the manual has been designed for periodic updating. Pages are marked with the date of release. Updates will be issued as required.

Every effort has been made to provide proper acknowledgement of original sources and, where we have adapted material, to remain true to the content and spirit of the original. Any error is the responsibility of the authors of this manual, and every effort will be made to correct it. To suggest changes or corrections, direct any questions or comments to:

Director, Student Support Services
Department of Education
Government of Yukon
Whitehorse, Yukon
Phone: (867) 667-8000
Fax: (867) 393-6423

A. KEY TERMS

Achievement Tests assess students' skill development in academic content areas. Achievement tests measure the extent to which a student has profited from instruction and life experiences compared to others of the same age or grade.

Adaptations are changes made to the teaching process, learning environment, materials, time demands, assistance, evaluation or student products that help students achieve the learning outcomes of the prescribed curriculum.

Appeals are timely, fair and open processes that protect the rights of students and parents and address differences of opinion about the education of a student.

Assessment is a systematic process of gathering information about what and how a student has learned. Through analysis, decisions are made to improve learning. It is a collaborative and progressive process designed to identify the student's strengths and areas of need, set goals, and results in the identification and implementation of instructional planning. This process involves assessment for, as, and of learning.

Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) is a step by step plan that provides key information about a student's behaviour. It is used to help staff who work with the student to provide positive supports to help the student increase their engagement. The Behaviour Support Plan

contains preventative practices (designed to adapt or modify the environment addressing the antecedents and consequences that are triggering /maintaining the behaviour) and, replacement or alternative behaviour(s) that are taught and reinforced. It is implemented for about 4 to 6 weeks, continually monitored through progress assessments and then evaluated based on the results of the data collected and the student's response to the intervention(s).

Functional Behavioural Assessment (FBA) is a process of identifying the purpose(s) that a specific behaviour serves for a student. Functional Behaviour Assessments can help to identify likely contributors (setting events, antecedents, and consequences) associated with an inappropriate behaviour and to suggest the underlying causes of that behaviour.

Consultation is a process in which parents, school staff and appropriate others share information relevant to the student's educational program.

Collaborative Consultation is an interactive process in which people with a particular expertise work together to solve a common problem or address a common concern, to generate an appropriate program or process or find solutions to problems. A successful collaboration process is voluntary, involves mutual trust and open communication, and results in identification/clarification of the problem to be addressed. Each participant's contribution and participation are valued equally.

Data Collection is a process that involves the collection of evidence to determine effective specific programming for student achievement (academic/behaviour). Data may be collected by informal means (teacher-made tests, observation, interview, work sample analysis, etc.) and formal means (the use of norm referenced standardized tests). Curriculum-based assessment is a valuable part of the assessment process. Data/evidence may also be solicited from other professionals.

Differentiated Instruction is a way of teaching that acknowledges and responds to the differences among students. Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods to support student learning and to help each student be as successful as possible.

Diversity reflects a philosophy of equitable participation and appreciation of the contributions of all people. It is a concept that refers both to our uniqueness as individuals and to our sense of belonging or identification within a group or groups. Some of these differences may be more visible than others.

Exceptional or Special Educational Needs are identified during assessment. These needs are the basis for an appropriate educational program that is documented and outlined in an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) as determined by school administration in consultation with professional staff (School Based Team and Student Support Services consultants), parents and possibly students.

Identification of students who may have special educational needs is a continuous process that determines the educational programming, services, and related supports for that student to be successful.

Inclusion describes the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education. The practice of inclusion provides students with the most enabling and least restrictive environment to meet their individual learning needs, including meaningful participation and interaction with others. Inclusion refers not merely to setting but to specific instruction and support for students with special needs in classrooms.

An **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** is a documented plan that outlines the educational program for a student as determined by a School Based Team. It is a working document that is used on a daily basis in inclusive classrooms. It is a record of student progress. An Individual Education Plan is developed through a collaborative team effort involving the student, parents, teachers and resource personnel. The individuals involved may change over time depending on the needs of the student. The team develops goals based on a student's current needs and skills and writes the plan for the school year in the student's Individual Education Plan. This is reviewed three times per year.

Informed Consent means the parent/legal guardian has been provided with all relevant information. The parent/legal guardian understands and agrees to the carrying out of the activity for which his or her consent is sought. The parent understands that the granting of consent is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time. This includes providing parents/legal guardians with as much information as a reasonable or prudent person would want to know before making a decision or agreeing to an assessment. When a child is in the care of the Director of Family and Children's Services, the signature of the social worker (not foster parent) is required as legal guardian.

Integration is one of the major strategies used to achieve inclusion. Integration means students learn with their peers and are provided with the necessary accommodations and adaptations and/or modifications to be successful. The adaptations and/or modifications are determined on an individual basis. The principle of "placement in the most enabling learning environment" applies to the extent to which an individual student is placed in a regular classroom or assigned to an alternate placement.

The **least restrictive and most enabling environment** for a student with special educational needs shall be determined by the school administration in consultation with School Based Team (SBT) and consultants from Student Support Services with focus on the goals of the IEP. In all cases, the regular classroom shall be considered as the first option for the implementation of the IEP.

Life Skills Programming is programming based on functional skills that all individuals need to live, work, and take care of themselves. It often focuses on skills needed for independent living.

Modifications are instructional and assessment-related decisions made to accommodate a student's educational needs that consist of individualized learning goals and outcomes different than prescribed learning outcomes of a course or subject.

A **Parent** of a student, according to the *Yukon Education Act*, means the biological parents, the adoptive parents by custom or otherwise, the person legally entitled to custody, or the persons who usually have the care and control of the student.

Parental involvement means a meaningful partnership between school professionals and parents to develop the student including the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, cultural, and aesthetic potential to the extent of his/her abilities to his/her fullest potential. This includes input and informed consent of parents and guardians into the referral, assessment, and program planning processes.

Referral is the process of requesting additional support(s) to ensure that learning activities, strategies and resources are appropriate to the student's strengths and needs. This referral occurs after classroom-based interventions or supports have been determined unsuccessful after a prescribed amount of time.

School Age means the ages during which a person is permitted to enroll in an educational program, from 5 years and 8 months to 21 years of age as at September 1 as defined in *Part 1: Definitions of the Yukon Education Act*.

School Based Team is an ongoing collaborative problem-solving unit which assists teachers to develop and implement instructional and/or management strategies. The Team coordinates resources for students with special educational needs within the school. The School Based Team consists of an administrator and other school personnel. Others, such as specialist teachers or Student Support Services consultants, may be invited members at the discretion of the chair of the School Based Team.

School Completion Certificate is issued when a student on a modified program has achieved the goals of his/her Individual Education Plan. It is not a Dogwood Graduation Certificate.

Student Learning Plan (StLP) is a document that identifies adaptations for learning difficulties or enrichment strategies required for success. These adaptations help the student to meet the prescribed learning outcomes. The teacher, assisted by the Learning Assistance Teacher or counsellor, develops the Student Learning Plan. The Student Learning Plan represents good teaching strategies without changing the prescribed learning outcomes.

The key to the success of a Student Learning Plan is ongoing and open communication between the student, parent and teacher. You and your child should have a clear understanding of:

- the student's strengths in the various subject areas in relation to the grade level or prescribed learning outcomes;
- the strategies the teacher will use to help the student improve performance or add breadth and depth to the learning experiences.

Transition Planning is the process that involves the student, parents, professionals, receiving school and staff and community agencies to enable students to prepare for and successfully make changes. This involves preparation, implementation and evaluation in order to prepare the student to make major transitions during his/her life – from home or pre-school to school; from class to class; from school to school; from school to post-secondary, community or work situations.

B. YUKON EDUCATION

Yukon Education Act/Legislation

The Yukon Education Act delineates the guiding principles for all education. Part 3 - Division 2 of the Yukon Education Act, describes the responsibilities of the education system with regards to students. The sections highlighted below are of particular interest to students with exceptional needs.

- Recognizing that Yukon people agree that the goal of the Yukon education system is to work in co-operation with parents to develop the whole child including the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, cultural, and aesthetic potential of all students to the extent of their abilities so that they may become productive, responsible, and self-reliant members of society while leading personally rewarding lives in a changing world; and
- Recognizing that the Yukon education system will provide a right to an education appropriate to the individual learner based on equality of educational opportunity; prepare students for life and work in the Yukon, Canada, and the world; instil respect for family and community; and promote a love of learning; and
- Recognizing that meaningful partnerships with greater parental and public participation are encouraged for a high quality Yukon education system; and
- Recognizing that the Yukon curriculum must include the cultural and linguistic heritage of Yukon aboriginal people and the multicultural heritage of Canada; and

- Recognizing that rights and privileges enjoyed by minorities as enshrined in the law shall be respected.

Guiding Principles

Yukon Education establishes the curriculum and philosophy of education for all Yukon schools. Yukon Education stresses success of all learners through inclusive education. To succeed, some students may require adaptations in methodology, materials or assessment techniques; or modifications or enhancements of programs; or compensatory skill development.

Inclusive Education

The vision for inclusive schools in the Yukon is that every student feels accepted, valued and safe in school and students' strengths and challenges are central to all decisions. Core values and beliefs in schools include:

- All students can learn;
- Students learn in different ways, at different rates and in different places;
- Students come from diverse backgrounds and want their differences to be respected;
- Students have the right to appropriate education programming and required supports;
- Parental involvement is essential.

Educators in Yukon are committed to help all students reach their individual learning potential. To do this consideration is given to recognizing:

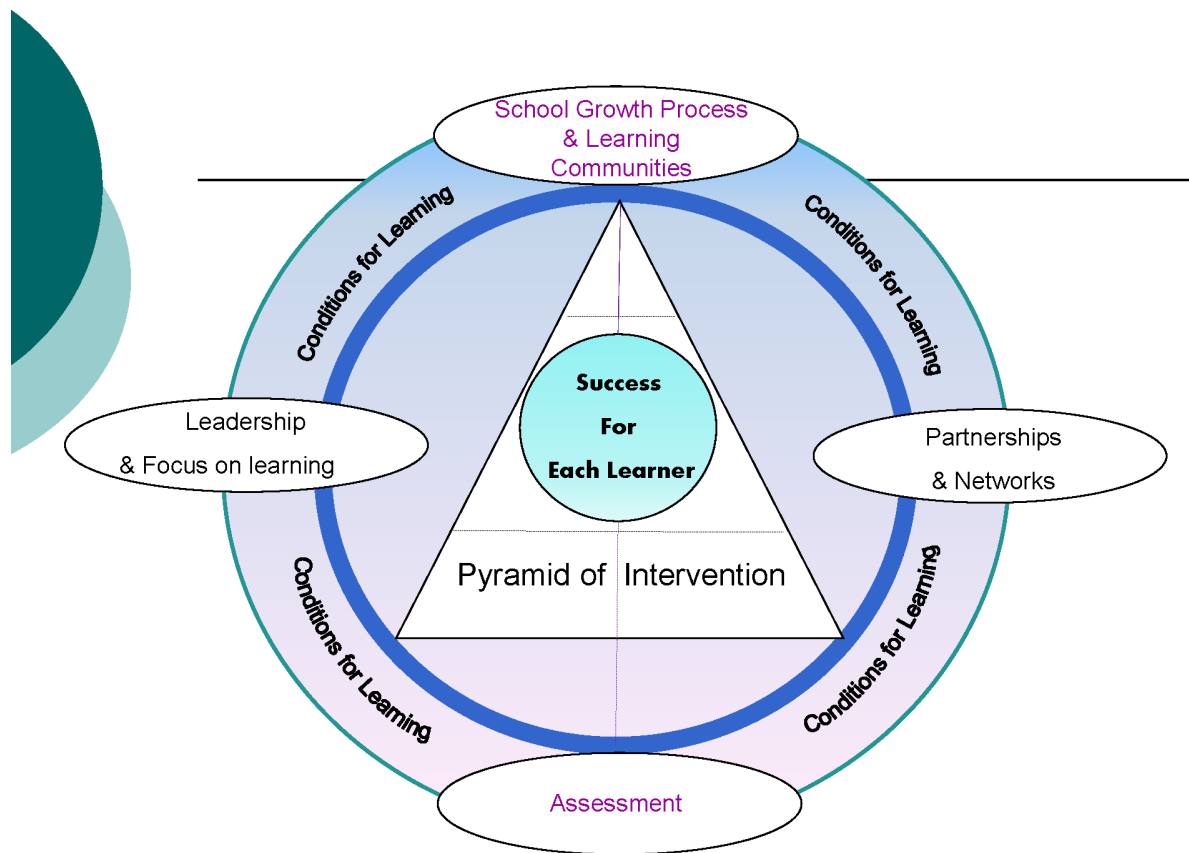
- that education is life-long learning;
- the importance of the philosophy of inclusive education;
- the involvement of community in education;
- the importance of traditional knowledge, cultural practices, histories and languages;
- the importance of building and maintaining strong relationships with partners and communities;
- the importance of honesty, integrity and accountability;
- the importance of effective communication.

Further consideration is given to respecting:

- Yukon First Nation linguistic and cultural diversity, traditional knowledge, cultural practices, histories and languages;
- Elders' and seniors' knowledge as being foremost and integral to the transmission of language and culture;
- Community values: respect, love, sharing, caring, teaching.

The Yukon Education Accountability Framework

The *Yukon Education Accountability Framework* speaks for the vision of “Success for Each Learner”.



It captures each aspect of accountability as outlined in the *Yukon Education Act*. The Assessment Matrix is foundational to programming and to school growth planning.

The Pyramid of Intervention is the problem-solving framework that has been adopted by Yukon Education to ensure that each learner is taught in such a way as to promote engagement through their particular learning styles, interests and for some with enabling supports.

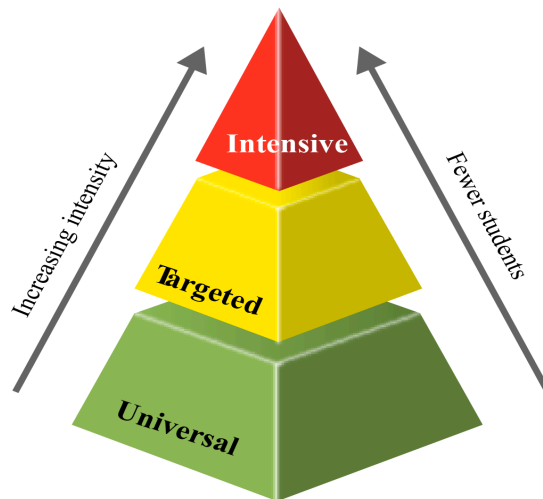
Each element of the *Accountability Framework* has accompanying policies or procedural documents. Each element has been the subject of considerable discussion by advisory committees. Each element also represents one of the significant themes addressed in the Education Reform document. Assessment and programming, leadership and partnership, accountability and planning were all significant demands emerging from the Education Reform document. The Framework also addresses the two areas of concern outlined in the Auditor General's Report of 2008: ensuring that a planning cycle is followed and ensuring that decisions are made based on evidence and data.

Education Problem Solving Framework

The Pyramid of Intervention

Throughout a student's schooling, students and parents are involved in discussions of the most appropriate program for a student based on strengths and needs.

The **Pyramid of Intervention** is a problem-solving framework to address the educational needs of students who may require further support, assessment and programming.



Tier 1 of the Pyramid of Intervention represents the universal programming and instruction, strategies and interventions that address student's educational needs under the instruction of the regular classroom teacher.

Tier 2 of the Pyramid of Intervention represents targeted instruction, strategies and interventions, in addition to universal programming. Targeted instruction is in response to identified

student and/or group specific educational needs under the instruction of the regular classroom teacher with possible additional supports from school-based professionals.

Tier 3 of the Pyramid of Intervention Model represents intensive instruction or support, strategies and interventions in addition to universal and targeted programming. Intensive instruction is in response to identified student specific needs under the instruction of the regular classroom teacher, with possible additional supports from school based professionals, Student Support Services staff and/or interagency and community supports.

C. PARTNERSHIPS

Yukon Education is committed to an inclusive philosophy and practice that welcomes all students and provides learning opportunities appropriate for diverse strengths and needs. Meaningful partnerships within Yukon Education, with parents and with non-governmental organizations, encourage collaboration in order to maintain a quality education system.

Collaborative Consultation

Collaborative consultation is key to successful partnerships. Everyone involved in the consultative process has a contribution to make. Relationships between Yukon Education staff and other partners are integral to support student learning.

Yukon Education

Yukon Education provides the framework, policies, guidelines and funding for special education programs and services. Yukon Education has responsibility to:

- Set standards and ensure adherence to those standards;
- Develop and implement policies;
- Develop guidelines and procedures;
- Monitor trends in research and practice and provide leadership to improve standards of practice;
- Review and evaluate programs and services;
- Maintain data systems to monitor and evaluate programs and services for students with special educational needs;
- Foster professional development;

- Work with other departments to facilitate a consistent approach to deliver non-educational support to students as covered by protocol agreements; and
- Participate in long-term planning and set priorities.
- Yukon is home to an ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse population. Yukon Education values the contributions of all parents.

Student Support Services

Student Support Services provides support to schools and families in the delivery of services to students with special educational needs to:

- Establish and maintain consistent ways of responding to schools to help identify and assess students with special needs
- Collaborate with School Based Teams to determine, plan, and organize required services;
- Recommend and assist with co-ordination of resources needed to deliver a full range of programs and services;
- Provide advice and assistance to help school-based administrative staff and teachers;
- Participate in local inter-agency structures to provide coordinated services for children and youth;
- Provide advice and assistance in the development of territorial policies and procedures;
- Maintain information systems necessary for planning and reporting data on students with special needs;
- Plan and co-ordinate staff development programs for personnel;

- Involve community groups in program planning and evaluation;
- Assist to monitor program quality for students with special needs;
- Liaise with preschool and post-secondary that provide programs for students with special needs; and
- Participate in community-level planning with other agencies and government departments to set service priorities.

Schools

The school responds to student's needs using the problem-solving framework of the Pyramid of Intervention.

This guiding framework is meant to:

- ensure that a School Based Team is operational in the school, and to facilitate collaborative efforts of the team members;
- Identify and plan support and intervention for students with special educational needs through data/evidence collection;
- Ensure collaboration and consultation with colleagues and consultants, students and/or their parents;
- Refer students to Student Support Services for further services;
- Plan, implement and track student achievement on Learning Plans and Individual Education Plans;
- Oversee the placement of students and ensure that parents are provided with regular reports;
- Prioritize the use of school and additional resources.

Parents

The *Yukon Education Act* promotes the active involvement of parents. Parents make important contributions to student and school success.

For children in care, schools must ensure that the guardian (Director, Family and Children's Services represented by the assigned social worker) is participating in relevant consultations and is receiving information from the school.

Students

All students have the right to learn in an environment that is safe, welcoming and conducive to their learning needs. Students have the responsibility to respect school code of conduct authorized by the administration and School Board/School Council within the scope of their Individual Education Plan.

Students have the right to:

- have their needs identified and assessed in a timely and comprehensive manner;
- receive appropriate programming;
- contribute to the process and planning for their own special educational programming;
- evaluate programs and services available to them, as appropriate.

Yukon First Nations

First Nations people in each community are invited and encouraged to be active participants on School Council/Board.

The Yukon First Nation Education Advisory Committee (YFNEAC) provides technical guidance, support and recommendations related to Yukon First Nations education to the Public Schools Branch. The Committee ensures that Yukon First Nations perspectives and knowledge are incorporated into Public Schools Branch programming.

Together the committee works for an effective and supportive education system where:

- Yukon First Nations students participate in an education program that values achievement and success and encourages them to develop a strong sense of who they are;
- teaching and learning occur in schools where Yukon First Nations culture, history and language are an integral part of programs delivered at the school, in the community and on the land;
- the education partnership is focused on helping students succeed and achieve their dreams;
- the education program and environment develop all students' potential, support their achievement and success, and prepare them for life and life-long learning.

D. SCHOOL BASED RESPONSE TO STUDENT NEED

Overview

The Pyramid of Intervention is a school wide systematic problem-solving framework that is used to assist with all aspects of the school and for every student.

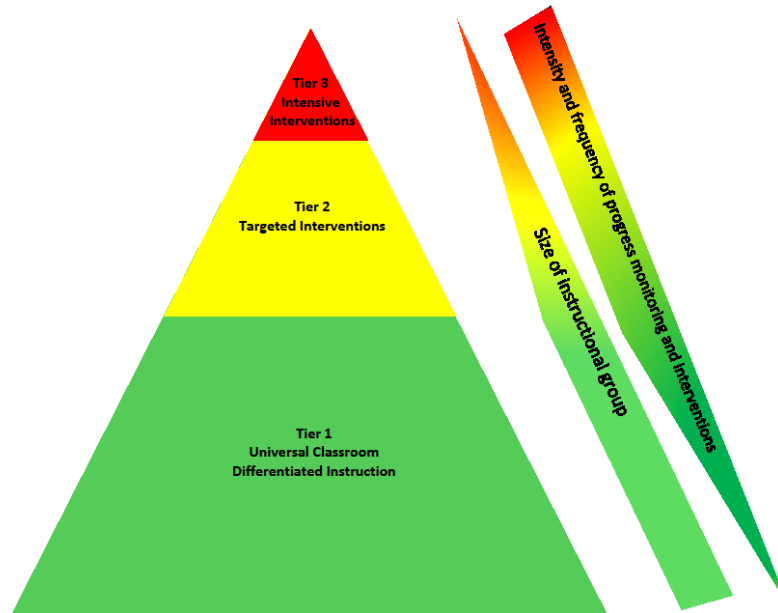
The Pyramid of Intervention is designed to allow for early and effective responses to student's learning, to provide a level of instructional intensity matched to their level of need and then provide a data-based method for evaluating the effectiveness of instructional approaches.

The process is based on five steps:

1. Identification and assessment;
2. Planning;
3. Program support/implementation;
4. Evaluation; and
5. Recording and reporting.

Together this process ensures a continuous and flexible progression that works as a continuous model to provide an educational experience suitable for each child at their current level of ability.

Pyramid of Intervention Framework



Pyramid of Intervention Framework

Early identification is an essential element of successful program planning. Students may be identified as having special education needs before they enter the Yukon school system. With this identification, supports and programming are addressed before transitioning in Yukon schools. If a student is not determined as requiring additional supports/resources before entering school, then the classroom teacher works with the Learning Assistance Teacher to communicate any needs or concerns to the School Based Team.

Teachers use differentiated instruction to create a learning environment that allows students to access the content of the class or course and fully participate in activities.

The pyramid is divided into three tiers, each representing a level of support required. At each tier of the pyramid the following five steps guide the problem-solving process.

Step 1 - Identification and Assessment

The performance of all students is evaluated systematically to identify those who are making adequate progress; those at some risk of failure if not provided with targeted assistance; and those who are at high risk of failure if not provided with intensive supports.

The classroom teacher gathers data using systematic classroom observations and evaluations. The teacher shares the findings with the parent and, when appropriate, the student.

Step 2 - Program Planning

The classroom teacher consults and collaborates with the Learning Assistance Teacher and possibly the School Based Team to establish a program that is matched to the level of instructional intensity each student requires within their classroom.

Step 3 – Program Support and Implementation

The intervention practices for those students that require additional targeted and intensive programming means that there

is a difference in the specificity of instructional target, the precision of the instructional approach, the frequency in monitoring the student's responsiveness to intervention efforts, and the number of instructional opportunities delivered to the students at each intensity level.

Classroom teachers can expect the assistance of their Learning Assistance Teacher at all levels of programming and can request Student Support Services staff, especially at the intensive intervention level.

Step 4 - Evaluation

Student progress is assessed on a regular and frequent basis in order to identify when inadequate growth trends might indicate a need for increasing the level of instructional support to the student.

Step 5 - Reporting

Student progress reporting is used to communicate the evaluation of interventions used and to determine whether the adaptations or modifications of the teaching practice were implemented consistently and with a high degree of accuracy for each of the intervention levels of the framework.

E. SCHOOL BASED TEAM

In order to respond to student need, every school will have a School Based Team (SBT) supported by the school administration and staff.

Any teacher, parent or Student Support Services staff may refer a student to the School Based Team (SBT). In secondary school, students may refer themselves. Where specialist teachers are involved with the student, it is expected that collaboration and consultation will have already occurred and teachers will participate in the School Based Team (SBT) referral process and in the School Based Team (SBT) meeting.

What is a School Based Team?

A School Based Team (SBT) is an on-going collaborative problem-solving unit of school personnel. The School Based Team (SBT) meets regularly to assist classroom and/or subject teachers to develop and implement instructional strategies that support student learning aligning with the Pyramid of Intervention framework.

Who is on the team?

The School Based Team (SBT) includes a core group of regular members, including the school administrator or designate, the Learning Assistance Teacher and a school counsellor. The referring classroom/subject teacher is a key member when his/her student is being discussed. Parents shall be invited to be members of a school based team that is established for their child. Others, such as specialist teachers, Student Support Services staff or community agencies, may be invited to attend a meeting when appropriate.

The administrator (chair) ensures there are resources available, encourages teachers to access the team, provides positive support to all team members and ensures due process and department policy has been implemented.

What does the School Based Team do?

Upon the request of the referring teacher, parent, or the student, the School Based Team (SBT) shares information and problem solves learning concerns to increase a student's opportunities for success. The team, in conjunction with the student's teacher(s), determines an appropriate action plan and monitors the progress of the plan.

The School Based Team (SBT) recommends additional programming or strategies, identifies the need for additional services and/or initiates referrals to access other school, department or community services. The team can also initiate or facilitate interagency planning and service delivery for specific students. To facilitate School Based Team (SBT) referrals, the classroom/subject teacher follows the identified process by each individual school.

Roles in School Based Team Meetings

The **Administration** (Chair) has a key role in ensuring that meetings are efficient and productive. The Chairperson should encourage participation and contributions of all team members so that essential issues are clarified and summarized. The chairperson also facilitates development of practical action plans that align with the Pyramid of Intervention framework. The chairperson will ensure

that the meeting will conclude on time and that minutes are maintained, filed and reviewed at next scheduled meeting.

The **Learning Assistance Teacher (LAT)** provides management services, including relevant documentation, to run an efficient meeting. This ensures accountability and improves chances for successful implementation of the action plans. The LAT prepares the agenda and relevant materials for distribution. The LAT checks in with those who have been assigned a responsibility or a follow up action.

The **referring teacher's** role includes providing documentation about the problem and the interventions already attempted. At subsequent meetings, the teacher reports back on the progress of new intervention strategies providing data to demonstrate progress.

School Based Consultation with Student Support Services Staff

When the School Based Team (SBT) is concerned about a student, they may consult with the pertinent Student Support Services staff. School Based Teams (SBT) may invite Student Support Services staff to attend meetings. Consultation may include clarifying questions about referrals and supporting the school's decision-making process. Some examples include identifying appropriate interventions, reviewing student progress, facilitation referrals to community agencies, determining the need for further assessment, and support with prioritization.

School Based Team Meetings/Reviews

The School Based Team (SBT) conducts regularly scheduled meetings in order to address new referrals and review students already on Learning Plans or Individual Education Plans. Regular reviews enable the School Based Team (SBT) to keep up-to-date regarding students on learning plans to determine if the allocation of resources is appropriate to implement the plans and to monitor the effectiveness of the plans.

F. SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering information from many sources to make appropriate educational decisions. It identifies the student's strengths and needs and contributes to the design and implementation of effective strategies. Classroom teachers are in a position to offer an abundance of information regarding students in their classrooms. Informal assessments should form the basis of a comprehensive profile of student strengths and challenges.

Types of School Based Assessment

Level A and B Assessments

All professionals must be sensitive to cultural, linguistic and experiential factors when selecting assessment procedures and interpreting results, as well as in the program planning process.

Level A – Classroom Assessment

Assessment information forms a baseline to measure student progress. Teachers use formative (assessment *for* learning,) and summative assessment (assessment *of* learning).

Examples of assessments teachers may use:

- Questioning
- Discussions
- Learning activities
- Feedback
- Conferences
- Interviews
- Student reflections
- File review
- Criterion-based measures (e.g. D.A.R.T.)
- Informal and formal observations
- Informal checklists
- Work samples
- Assessment portfolios
- Teacher designed tests/exams
- Curriculum-based assessment
- Performance Standards
- School-wide testing

Reporting of Level A Assessment

The results of Level A assessment is primarily reported in the student's report card as well as through communication with parent/guardians.

Level B – Standardized Assessment

Level B assessments are standardized assessment measures that may only be administered by those who have specialized training and certification (in test administration, scoring and interpretation). Level B tests are more complex and intensive than Level A, and require some understanding of psychometric principles, the traits being measured, and the discipline within which tests are used (e.g., educational, psychological, counselling). Level B assessments generally include most individual or group tests or achievement, interest and screening inventories. They provide detailed information in specific domains of functioning and are only necessary for a small proportion of students in situations that warrant more in depth evidence to inform individualized programming/interventions.

Qualifications of Test Administrators

Yukon Education supports the principles set forth in *Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests and Ethical Standards for Psychologists, 1999* published by the American Psychological Association and adopted by the Canadian Psychological Association. Educational and psychological tests are generally categorized according to levels of training required of the test administrators. Yukon Education and school administrators are responsible for ensuring that personnel administering tests have appropriate levels of training or are supervised by school psychologists with appropriate levels of training.

Response to School Based Assessment

Information collected using Level A and B assessment is used in response to student need, as outlined in the Pyramid of Intervention framework, for decision making regarding changes in program and/or implementation of supports. School staff, with support from Student Support Services if requested, follows steps 2 through 5 in the Pyramid of Intervention framework to document programming, strategies, interventions and supports into learning plans.

LEARNING PLANS

A learning plan is a collaborative document that is used to plan learning over a period of time. A learning plan outlines specific learning goals and objectives for an individual student. It identifies a student's strengths and/or needs, interests and learning styles and uses that information to match them with learning tools to maximize their learning.

The process of differentiated instruction in the classroom may not be sufficient to address the needs and learning goals of every student. Students experiencing learning difficulties, or for whom the goals and objectives of grade level curriculum are not challenging enough, may require additional program planning. These students may require adaptations and yet not need an IEP.

Student Learning Plans (StLP)

A Student Learning Plan is a document that identifies adaptations for learning difficulties, or enrichment strategies, required for student success. These adaptations assist the student to meet the prescribed learning outcomes. The teacher, assisted by the Learning Assistance Teacher or counsellor, develops the Student Learning Plan.

Strategies to accommodate students with learning style differences or medically diagnosed disabilities are required for all classroom situations and are not subject-related. Ongoing adaptations must be described and documented on a Student

Learning Plan. Students with disabilities may require complex support and the student-specific learning outcomes of an Individual Education Program.

Keep Parents Informed

The key to the success of a Student Learning Plan is ongoing and open communication between the student, parent and teacher. The parent and student should have a clear understanding of:

- the student's strengths in the various subject areas in relation to the grade level or prescribed learning outcomes;
- the strategies the teacher will use to help the student improve performance or add breadth and depth to the learning experiences.

The number of strategies should be minimal to ensure realistic implementation for both the student and the teacher. It is important to balance what is necessary for the student's success and what is reasonable to expect of the teacher. Any adaptations made to the instruction process should apply to the assessment process.

Student Learning Plan Components

These questions may help in developing the components of a Student Learning Plan.

1. Student Identification and Background Information
 - See Student Profile

2. Level(s) of Strengths and Needs
 - What is the student able to do?
 - Have various sources of information been considered?
 - Is the information organized according to curriculum?
 - Is each current level of performance written in precise, objective and measurable terms? (SMART Goals – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely)
 - Are the student's needs identified and prioritized?
3. Student-specific Outcomes
 - Are the outcomes derived from the student's level(s) of performance and needs?
 - Are the outcomes stated in positive terms?
 - Is the number of outcomes achievable and manageable?
 - Do the outcomes indicate what the student will do to demonstrate learning?
4. Performance Objectives
 - Are the performance objectives written in small, manageable units or steps?
 - Will the performance objectives lead to achievement of the student-specific outcomes?
 - When is achievement expected? (Time specific)
 - Is each performance objective observable or measurable?
 - What are the conditions under which the student will perform each objective?
 - What are the criteria for successful achievement of each outcome?

5. Instructional Strategies, Material, and Environments
 - What instructional strategies, assessment processes, and resources will be used?
 - Where will the outcomes be addressed, practiced and assessed?
6. Inform Parents
7. Team Members
 - Who are the team members who will implement the Student Learning Plan?
8. Evaluation and Review
 - How will the Student Learning Plan be evaluated?
 - What are the dates and times of review meetings?
9. Written Plan
 - Written by the classroom teacher in consultation with the Learning Assistance Teacher (LAT), with parent informed.

Completed Student Learning Plans are to be submitted by the teacher to the School Based Team.

Where should Student Learning Plans be kept?

The section of the Student Learning Plans delineating performance objectives and instructional strategies, materials and environmental adaptations are kept in the teacher's day plan book for quick reference, updating and for use by a substitute teacher.

The complete plan including history and background, diagnostic summary and levels of performance, learning objectives,

instructional strategies with reviews and updates is kept in the student's cumulative file.

Exit from a Student Learning Plan

If a student has met the identified goals and no longer requires the adaptations to meet prescribed learning outcomes, the Student Learning Plan has been completed. School Based Team notes the final decision in their team's meeting minutes. The parent will be informed that the student no longer requires a Student Learning Plan. A strategy to monitor student progress is developed for the following term.

Behaviour Support Plans (BSP)

What is a Behaviour Support Plan?

Behaviour Support Plans are written documentation of additional targeted and intensive group or individualized strategies and supports needed for students with behaviour difficulties/disabilities. The Behaviour Support Plan communicates to all staff working with the group or individual student, the step-by-step plans to positively support the student(s). The information in the plan needs to include:

- Key understandings about the student's behaviour
- Conditions or antecedent events that are most likely to trigger the problem behaviour
- Warning signs that the student is experiencing difficulty
- Plans for diffusing the situation
- Positive supports to help the student increase his or her abilities

- What peers need to learn to do to support this student
- Other strategies school staff can use to support and encourage this student

Where should Behaviour Support Plans be kept?

The Behaviour Support Plan is kept in the teacher's day plan book for quick reference, updating and for use by a substitute teacher or Educational Assistant. Data collection, reviews and updates of the Student Learning Plan are kept in the student's cumulative file.

Who needs a Behaviour Support Plan?

An individual student or group of students with behaviour difficulties that require additional targeted and intensive positive behaviour supports in addition to school wide and classroom wide universal positive behaviour supports to meet their learning needs. The decision for a student or group of students to have additional strategies and supports documented into a Behaviour Support Plan is made collaboratively, by the classroom teacher in conjunction with School Based Team and other relevant staff that work with the student or group of students.

Keep Parents Informed

The key to the success of a Behaviour Support Plan is ongoing and open communication between the student, parent and teacher. The parent and student should have a clear understanding of:

- the student's strengths in the various subject areas in relation to the grade level or prescribed learning outcomes;
- the strategies the teacher will use to help the student improve performance or add breadth and depth to the learning experiences.

G. DETERMINATION OF A STUDENT WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

After school based assessment and intervention have been tried and learning concerns still remain, a student may be considered to *receive services to determine if the student has exceptional needs. As outlined in Division 2 Section 16(2), (3), (4), and (5) of The Yukon Education Act:*

- (2) Before a student is determined to be a student with special educational needs and if so, what Individual Education Plan is appropriate, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - a) the student shall be referred to Student Support Services for a determination of the assessments that may be required to be performed;
 - b) the parent of the student shall receive written information concerning procedures outlined in this section;
 - c) prior written informed consent by a parent for the psychological and other specialized tests that are not routinely used by teachers shall be obtained;
 - d) if appropriate, the assessment shall be multidisciplinary;
 - e) the results of the assessment reports shall be provided and explained to the parent;
 - f) a parent and, if appropriate, the student, shall be consulted before the determination of, and during the implementation of, an Individual Education Plan; and
 - g) the parents shall be provided with information concerning the right of appeal the Educational Appeal Tribunal.

- (3) Parents shall have the right to request for their children a determination in accordance with this section.
- (4) Parents shall be invited members of a school based team that is established for their child.
- (5) Where there is more than one parent for a child, consultation with one parent shall be deemed to be compliance with any consultation requirements of this section.

As per the Yukon Education Act, Yukon Education staff shall be compliant with this legislation in order to ensure equitable service for all students.

H. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Recommendations for referrals to Student Support Services specialists are made in consultation with Schools Based Team and relevant Student Support Services specialists after school based interventions have been tried and learning concerns still remain. In the event that a parent wishes a referral to be made, and this is in conflict with the judgment of the School Based Team, the school administration must make the referral. The referral form should indicate that the referral has been made in accordance with section 16(3) of the *Yukon Education Act*.

A school based team member will fill out the referral outlining the primary concern requiring support for the student and submit the referral to Student Support Services. School Based Team has the responsibility of prioritizing the students in their school referred to Student Support Services.

The referred specialist will contact the parent/guardian of the referred student prior to initiation of service and to get informed consent (Division 2, Section 16 (2) (c).) In the event where parents do not wish to provide consent the referral or parent signatures cannot be acquired, schools may still submit a referral to Student Support Services. At the request of the school administrator or the School Based Team, the relevant consultant will contact the parents and explain further the purpose of the referral and any recommended services. Where a parent signature still cannot be obtained, the relevant consultant may consult informally about the student's behavior or academic performance in the school setting for the purpose of supporting the referring school with program planning.

Informed Consent

The information should include:

- The purpose and nature of services;
- What types of services may be included and how results will be communicated to parents and school personnel;
- That consent is voluntary (i.e., legal guardian has ongoing right to refuse or withdraw consent for services);
- The benefits of Student Support Services (e.g., gaining a better understanding of a student's learning strengths and challenges in order to develop educational programming);
- Identification of possible risks (e.g., time away from the classroom, identification of needs that will require follow-up treatment or interventions);
- The mutual responsibilities of student, parent, school-based personnel and Student Support Services consultants;
- Any alternatives to service and possible outcomes;
- Time limits of consent;
- Privacy and confidentiality procedures (e.g., how the information can be used or shared).

Informed consent is the result of a process of reaching an understanding with parents and education personnel to work collaboratively. Therefore, informed consent must be obtained by the professional for the administration of specialized services not routinely used by teachers.

In the case of separated and divorced parents who have a legal agreement regarding custody, parents must provide documentation to the school regarding who has signing authority.

The legal guardian(s) must sign the consent form. If no legal custody agreements are in place, only one parent is required to sign the consent form. When a student is in the care of the Director of Family and Children's Services, the signature of the social worker (not foster parent) is required as legal guardian. The laws concerning custody and access to children are covered by the *Yukon Children's Act* and the *Federal Divorce Act*.

Consultation

Student Support Services staff provide consultation to schools on learning needs of individual and groups of students through informal means of phone, email and conversation as well as through attendance at School Based Team meetings. Student Support Services staff can provide recommendations for observed and school based assessed needs to help develop targeted and/or intensive strategies, interventions for programming to support student needs.

Assessment

Student Support Services consultants use several types of assessments that can be used to identify a student's learning needs. Specialized assessments will only be used when there are reasonable grounds to believe the information collected will assist in the development of a student's educational program.

Psycho-educational Assessment

Psychoeducational assessments provide information about a student's current level of functioning across the following domains: cognitive, academic, social, emotional and behavioural. Learning difficulties, memory, executive functioning, reasoning, and/or social skill development may be assessed. This type of

assessment applies a psychological and developmental framework to a student's learning in order to assist with educational planning.

Speech and Language Assessment

A Speech-Language Pathologist (S-LP) will conduct assessments to assist teachers in understanding the oral language and social communication needs of students, and the interrelationships between listening, speaking, reading and writing. A student may be referred if there are any questions concerning a student's ability to: follow directions; participate in classroom conversations; understand and retell stories; socialize with peers; organize ideas sequentially; speak on topic; use appropriate vocabulary, word order and grammar; speak clearly and fluently; and learn sound skills necessary to read and write.

Occupational Therapy Assessment

Occupational therapy assessments provide information about a student's current level of fine motor abilities, visual-perceptual skills, visual-motor integration, sensory-processing and self-regulation abilities, and level of independence with self-care tasks. Following the assessment, the ultimate goal of occupational therapy is to improve the student's performance of tasks/activities necessary for successful school participation by providing recommendations, strategies, assistive technologies, sensory solutions and more.

Physiotherapy Assessment

Physiotherapy assessments provide information about a student's current physical and gross motor function. Functional activities such as posture, seating and gait as well as specific

gross motor skill areas such as balance, coordination, strength and agility may be assessed. The physiotherapist will assist teachers in understanding the physical needs of students and how these needs may impact on school performance.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing Assessment

The teacher of the deaf/hard of hearing may conduct systematic observations and data collection, informal and formal assessments to determine communication, academic progress, social emotional functioning and well-being of the deaf and hard of hearing students as it impacts learning. He/she can advise teachers and other consultants on recommended adaptations for a particular student that may impact the assessment process. The teacher for students of the deaf/ hard of hearing may screen hearing at the school level. However, parents must take their child to Hearing Services (Health and Social Services) for full hearing assessment.

Blind/Vision Impaired Assessment

The teacher of the Blind/Vision Impaired may conduct systematic observations and data collection as well as informal and formal assessments to determine academic progress and social emotional functioning for visually impaired students as it impacts learning. The Teacher for Blind/Visually Impaired will conduct a functional visual assessment to determine if specialized adaptations or equipment is required. He/she can advise teachers and other consultants on recommended adaptations for a particular student with vision loss. If the school or nursing station personnel identify students with vision concerns, parents will be advised to take the student to an optometrist or ophthalmologist.

Reporting

The results of direct service, including results of assessment if they were administered, shall be provided and explained to the parent as per Division 2, section 16 (2) (e) of the Yukon Education Act. Where schools have experienced difficulties in contacting the parents in order to provide the results of an assessment, the school administrator will inform the parents by mail of the availability of qualified professionals to interpret the results of the assessment.

Student Support Services staff will interpret and communicate assessment findings to the parents, the student and staff in a timely manner. Assessment reports by Student Support Services staff are made available to the parents, the school staff and, when appropriate, the student, in accordance with the provisions of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (ATIPP)*.

I. INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

What is an Individual Education Plan?

An **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** is a document that outlines an educational program for a student as determined by a school-based team.

It identifies learning expectations that are adapted or modified from the expectations given in the curriculum document for the appropriate grade and subject or course, and/or any accommodations and special education services needed to assist the student in achieving his or her learning expectations.

Who needs an Individual Education Plan?

An Individual Education Plan may be developed for a student who has been identified as exceptional, and who has been deemed by the School Based Team (SBT) to require special education programs or services to achieve learning expectations and/or whose learning expectations are modified from the expectations set out for a particular grade level or course in a provincial curriculum document.

Individual Education Plan Criteria

Students are eligible to receive an Individual Education Plan if the student is determined to be a student with special educational needs, as stated in the Education Act. If it is determined that the student would benefit from learning accommodations to meet

their educational needs, but does not have special educational needs as determined through the Individual Education Plan criteria, that student's needs are outlined in a Student Learning Plan.

The need for special education may be determined at any time. The process of identifying such need focuses on the impact of the area of special need on the child's or student's functioning in an educational environment. This is accomplished through:

- a comprehensive, individualized assessment
- development of an Individual Education Plan with the involvement of the parent(s) and school personnel
- a regular review of student needs

Implementation Plan for IEP Criteria

Student Support Services Individual Education Plan Criteria is in effect beginning August 1, 2014. All new Individual Education Plans issued must refer to these specifications.

The following procedures will apply:

- Prior to issuing an Individual Education Plan, the relevant file review sheet must be completed and placed in the student's confidential file. The review sheet will be completed through a file review initiated by a school-based team member or a Student Support Services staff member.

- The type of IEP will be entered in the IEP document. Once a new student information system is implemented, the type of IEP will be recorded in the student information system. Further information will be provided in the Student Support Services Procedures, Individual Education Plan section.
- All other IEP procedures remain the same, as per the Student Support Services Handbook and Manual.

Students that have previously received a “Yukon Individual Education Plan” will remain active and valid in the Student Information System. The following timeline will apply:

- All students must have a file review sheet completed by June 2015. File reviews will be completed by a case manager. Assistance will be provided by an educational psychologist or designate from the Department of Education.
- File review results will be shared with parents/guardians of the student with an IEP by the case manager by October 15, 2015. Parents/guardians will sign a “Parent Consultation for New IEPs” Form and receive a copy of the file review form. A copy of this review sheet will be forwarded to Student Support Services.
- The type of IEP will be entered in the Student Information System after consultation with parents/guardians. This information will be entered into the student information system after January 1, 2015 to align with the implementation of the new Student Information System. Prior to January 1, 2015 students will be entered as “Yukon IEP” in YSIS. The

student's IEP criteria designation will be recorded within the IEP document.

- Parents/guardians that do not accept or agree with the file review, the student's IEP may remain on a "Yukon IEP".
- Data entered as "Yukon IEPs" in YSIS will be re-designated as Student Learning Plans in the Student Information System on January 1, 2016.

NEURODEVELOPMENTAL SPECIFICATIONS

GIFTED AND TALENTED

Giftedness is exceptional potential and/or performance across a wide range of abilities in one or more of the following areas:

- general intellectual ability
- specific academic
- creative thinking
- social
- musical
- artistic
- kinesthetic

LEARNING DISABILITY

This is the official definition adopted by the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC) on January 30, 2002.

“Learning Disabilities” refer to a number of disorders, which may affect the acquisition, organization, retention, understanding, or use of verbal or nonverbal information. These disorders affect learning in individuals who otherwise demonstrate at least average abilities essential for thinking and/or reasoning. As such, learning disabilities are distinct from intellectual disabilities.

Learning disabilities result from impairments in one or more processes related to perceiving, thinking, remembering or learning. These include, but are not limited to: language processing; phonological processing; visual spatial processing; processing speed; memory and attention; and executive functions (e.g., planning and decision-making).

Learning disabilities range in severity and may interfere with the acquisition and use of one or more of the following:

- oral language (e.g., listening, speaking, understanding)
- reading (e.g., decoding, phonetic knowledge, word recognition, comprehension)
- written language (e.g., spelling and written expression)
- mathematics (e.g., computation, problem solving).

Learning disabilities may also involve difficulties with organizational skills, social perception, social interaction and perspective taking. Learning disabilities are lifelong. The way in which they are expressed may vary over an individual’s lifetime,

depending on the interaction between the demands of the environment and the individual's strengths and needs. Learning disabilities are suggested by unexpected academic underachievement or achievement, which is maintained only by unusually high levels of effort and support.

Learning disabilities are due to genetic and/or neurobiological factors or injury that alters brain functioning in a manner that affects one or more processes related to learning. These disorders are not due primarily to hearing and/or vision problems, socio-economic factors, cultural or linguistic differences, lack of motivation or ineffective instruction, although these factors may further complicate the challenges faced by individuals with learning disabilities. Learning disabilities may co-exist with various conditions including attentional, behavioural and emotional disabilities, sensory impairments or other medical conditions.

For success, individuals with learning disabilities require early identification and timely specialized assessments and interventions involving home, school, community and workplace settings. The interventions need to be appropriate for each individual's learning disability subtype and, at a minimum, include the provision of:

- specific skill instruction
- accommodations
- compensatory strategies
- self-advocacy skills.

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Intellectual disability is characterized by significant limitations in:

1) Intellectual functioning

This is measured by intellectual/cognitive assessments. Significant limitation in intellectual functioning is considered to be *approximately 2* standard deviations below the population mean. A score of approximately two standard deviations below average represents a significant intellectual deficit.

2) **Adaptive behavior**

Significant limitation in adaptive behavior is defined as deficits of *approximately 2* or more standard deviations below the population mean in one or more aspects of adaptive behavior, including: conceptual, social, or practical adaptive skills.

3) These limitations occur during the developmental period. This means problems with intellectual and adaptive functioning were evident during childhood or adolescence (up to 19 years).

The assessments used to measure Intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour must be standardized and culturally appropriate.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

A student with autism (or other pervasive developmental disorder) is included in this category. A clinical diagnosis by a psychiatrist, registered psychologist, or medical professional or diagnostic team specializing in the field of autism is required.

FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

A student diagnosed with severe fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) may have fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) or alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disorder (ARND) and is included in this category. A clinical diagnosis by a psychiatrist, registered psychologist or medical professional diagnostic team with specialized training or medical professional specializing in developmental disorders is required. Students with FASD who

exhibit significant impairment in the areas of social functioning, life skills, behaviour, learning, attention and concentration will need extensive intervention and support.

EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIOURAL SPECIFICATIONS

SEVERE EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIOURAL DISABILITY

A student with a severe emotional/behavioural disability is one who:

- displays chronic, extreme and pervasive behavioural and emotional disorders and requires close and constant adult supervision, high levels of structure, and other support services in order to function in an educational setting. The behaviours significantly interfere with the student's functioning across settings, and interfere with both the learning and safety of the student and other students. For example, the behaviours may be dangerous, highly aggressive and destructive (to self and/or others), violent and/or extremely compulsive;
- may display self-stimulation or self-injurious behaviour. In the most extreme and pervasive instances, severe oppositional behaviour may qualify; with either a clinical diagnosis or a statement by a qualified professional indicating that the child experiences severe behavioural difficulties.

For serious mental health concerns, a clinical diagnosis of a severe emotional/behavioural disorder should be made by a psychiatrist, registered psychologist or a developmental pediatrician, in addition to extensive documentation of the nature,

frequency and severity of the disorder by school authorities. The effects of the disability on the student's functioning in an education setting should be described. An ongoing treatment plan/behaviour plan should be available and efforts should be made to ensure that the student has access to appropriate interventions.

A clinical diagnosis of a severe emotional/behavioural disorder is not necessarily sufficient to qualify under this category. Some diagnoses with behavioural components that are not sufficient to qualify are: attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), attention deficit disorder (ADD) if they exist alone without the severe emotional/behavioural aspects.

Mild/Moderate Emotional/Behavioural Needs – No Individual Education Plan Required

A student identified with a mild to moderate emotional/behavioural needs exhibits behaviours that interfere with the learning and safety of the student, other students and staff.

Behaviour and emotional needs are characterized by a number of observable maladaptive behaviours, which may include:

- a) an inability to establish or maintain satisfactory relationships with peers or adults
- b) a general mood of unhappiness or depression
- c) physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems difficulties in accepting the realities of personal responsibility and accountability

- d) inappropriate behaviour or emotions under ordinary conditions
- e) continued difficulty in coping across school settings in spite of remedial intervention
- f) physical violence and/or physical destructiveness (to self, others, or environment).

Students with this learning profile must have identified goals and objectives in a Behaviour Support Plan and/or Safety Plan.

Students who also require academic supports will also require a Student Learning Plan.

PHYSICAL SPECIFICATIONS

PHYSICAL OR MEDICAL DISABILITY

A student identified with a physical or medical disability is one whose physical or medical condition interferes with the ability to learn and requires modification of the learning environment. The existence of a physical disability or medical condition, in and of itself, is not sufficient for the student to be designated in this category but must include:

A student with a physical or medical disability:

- a) has a medical diagnosis of a physical disability, specific medical condition which creates a significant impact on the student's ability to function in the school environment (note: some physical or medical disabilities have little or no impact upon the student's ability to function in the school environment);

- b) requires adult assistance and modifications to the learning environment in order to benefit from schooling; and
- c) requires significant special programming, resources and/or therapeutic services.

SENSORY SPECIFICATIONS

VISUAL DISABILITY

A student identified with a mild to moderate visual disability is one:

- a) whose vision is so limited that it interferes with the ability to learn and requires modification of the learning environment.
- b) who is designated as having limited vision should have a visual acuity of less than 20/70 (6/21 metric) in the better eye after correction and/or a reduced field of vision.

BLINDNESS

A student with severe vision impairment is one who:

- a) has corrected vision so limited that it is inadequate for most or all instructional situations, and information must be presented through other means; and
- b) has a visual acuity ranging from 6/60 (20/200) in the better eye after correction, to having no usable vision or a field of vision reduced to an angle of 20 degrees.

For those students who may be difficult to assess (e.g., cortical blindness-developmentally delayed), a functional visual

assessment by a qualified specialist in the field of vision or a medical professional will be sufficient to support eligibility.

HEARING DISABILITY

A student identified with a mild to moderate hearing disability is one whose hearing condition:

- a) affects speech and language development and
- b) interferes with the ability to learn.

A student with mild (26 to 40 decibels) to moderate (41 to 70 decibels) hearing disability will have an average hearing loss of 26 to 70 decibels unaided in the better ear over the normal range of speech. The normal range of speech is between 500 Hz and 4000 Hz.

DEAFNESS

A student with a severe to profound hearing loss is one who:

- a) has a hearing loss of 71 decibels (dB) or more unaided in the better ear over the normal speech range (500 to 4000Hz) that interferes with the use of oral language as the primary form of communication, or has a cochlear implant preceded by a 71 dB hearing loss unaided in the better ear; and
- b) requires extensive modifications and specialized educational supports; and
- c) has a diagnosis by a clinical or educational audiologist.

New approvals require an audiogram within the past 3 years.

What must an Individual Education Plan contain?

Individual Education Plan learning outcomes are described as high and attainable goals and objectives. The objectives are developed using the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-related).

The Individual Education Plan must include:

- essential information including medical, social, and educational background;
- the present levels of educational performance of the student;
- instructional strategies, responsibilities and materials;
- assessment criteria for measuring attainment of, or progress toward, objectives;
- record of progress at target dates;
- persons responsible for the implementation of the Individual Education Plan including parents;
- required adaptations, modifications and supports;
- the period of time and process for review of the Individual Education Plan;
- evidence of assessment or review, which could include revisions made to the plan and the tracking of achievement in relation to goals;
- when applicable, plans for the next transition point in the student's education.

Program Planning Process

As students move into a learning environment where instruction is provided by multiple teachers, it is important that:

- the case manager be identified to coordinate programming;
- all school staff are committed to creating an inclusive environment.

Who is involved in writing the Individual Education Plan?

The individual education planning team core members include a school administrator, case manager (Learning Assistance Teacher), classroom/subject teacher(s), parent(s) and student as appropriate.

School Administrator

The school administrator has several responsibilities related to Individual Education Plans as identified in the *Yukon Education Act*. The administrator, in consultation with the Individual Education Plan school based team, will decide to develop an Individual Education Plan. The administrator will invite parental involvement and, with the parents, decide the nature and extent of the student's involvement. Administrators participate as a member of the Individual Education Plan team. Lastly, the administrator assigns support personnel, provides appropriate materials and facilitates in-service training, given the needs of the student.

Individual Education Plan Case Manager / Learning Assistance Teacher

The Individual Education Plan case manager performs the following duties:

- identifies potential team members within school support staff, relevant personnel from Student Support Services and, in collaboration with parents, any community agencies.
- invites team members to Individual Education Plan planning meetings;
- chairs and participates as a member;
- documents the plan on the electronic Individual Education Plan form and distributes;
- communicates with team members about ongoing issues;
- provides support to classroom teacher(s), subject matter specialists and/or educational assistants in the implementation;
- provides advice about materials and resources;
- generates ideas for modifications, teaching and assessment strategies;
- ensures the Individual Education Plan is reviewed on a continuous basis, and at reporting periods;
- reports the results of all reviews to the School Based Team (SBT);
- remains as case manager from year to year, whenever possible.

Classroom or Subject Teacher(s)

As a leading participant in the development of the Individual Education Plan, the classroom or subject teacher(s) is responsible for the student's individual education program.

Classroom or subject teacher(s):

- share background information on the student;
- identify the student's strengths and needs through observation and assessment;
- assist in setting annual student outcomes and short-term learning objectives;
- plan and carry out appropriate instruction and short-term learning objectives;
- develop strategies for assessment of student progress;
- maintain ongoing communication;
- review each student's progress during the normal reporting period for each school. Written progress reports will be provided to the parents.

Parents

As members of the Individual Education Plan team, parents are expected to participate fully as a member of the collaborative team. Parents

- share the relevant educational, social, emotional and physical information about the student's development;
- identify their values and their goals for their child;
- act as advocates for their child;
- offer feedback on effective strategies;
- help to achieve continuity of programming over time; and

- approve the Individual Education Plan before it is implemented (Section 16(2) of the *Yukon Education Act*).
- may request additional reviews of the Individual Education Plan as long as the time period between reviews is at least two months.

Records to indicate the school's effort to secure parental cooperation include telephone calls and letters indicating the date/time/ place of Individual Education Plan team meetings.

Student

The student is the centre of the Individual Education Plan process. The nature and degree of student involvement depends upon age and ability to understand and communicate.

The student may:

- identify values, preferences, and strengths through self evaluation;
- help to set instructional goals and annual student outcomes;
- participate in a discussion of strategies and behaviours that enhance their learning;
- strive to achieve identified objectives; and
- self-manage or co-monitor progress toward short-term learning objectives and annual student outcomes.

How is the program delivered?

The Individual Education Plan is implemented in the least restrictive and most enabling environment, which in most cases is the inclusive classroom.

Program support and implementation can include:

- adaptations to make the learning environment more accessible;
- alternate approaches to instruction and/or evaluation;
- use of adaptive/assistive technologies;
- provision of intensive intervention modifications to the curriculum content;
- provision of support services as needed (counselling, educational assistants, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, or physiotherapy);
- provision of specialized training as needed.

When are other agencies involved?

Some students will require services and supports provided by agencies in the community. It is essential that these community services be coordinated. This ensures consensus regarding goals, consistency in interventions and an integrated approach to service delivery. The Individual Education Plan team is responsible for:

- co-operating with these community services;
- requesting parents' permission to exchange information;
- keeping school staff informed of services available;
- documenting the need for services;

- planning the delivery of services with community partners through the case manager;
- ensuring school-based services are coordinated with community services;
- documenting in the Individual Education Plan the community services provided and those responsible for delivering them;
- assisting in the review and evaluation of service delivery;
- facilitating and planning the transition of students from the school to the community;
- facilitating the continuity of coordinated supports when students transfer between schools/communities.

When is an Individual Education Plan delivered in an alternate setting?

When the goals of the Individual Education Plan cannot be accomplished within the classroom, other types of classroom settings may be used. A student’s placement in the classroom may be evaluated when interventions in the classroom have not been successful. Conditions that may be evaluated are:

- physical or psychological security of students. Included here are actions (striking or hitting a student, throwing missiles, using objects as weapons). In addition, prolonged exposure to a high rate of verbal abuse or badgering is considered to create a psychologically punitive environment.
- Behaviours that interfere with the quiet operation of a classroom (prolonged shouting, yelling, screaming,

banging) and which cannot be reduced in intensity or duration in a relatively short period of time.

- Behaviours that interfere with the orderly running of a classroom such as high rates of non-compliance to legitimate teacher requests, continued interference with the person or possessions of other students (bothering or hassling other students which results in general upset) or any other documented behaviour which interferes with the teacher maintaining an orderly environment.

When a student's placement is considered for an alternate setting, the following will be evaluated:

- Preservation of the dignity, privacy or comfort of the student.
- Intervention requires the use of equipment in a certain location because of size, weight and fragility, cost and multiple users.
- The school has proven that all intensive interventions and strategies have been exhausted and the needs of the student with exceptionalities are so intensive as to impact the educational needs and rights or other students.
 - Frequent, intense, prolonged behaviours that interfere with the day-to-day instruction and/or physical or psychological security of students and staff.
 - A teacher is not able to effectively teach, monitor and evaluate the larger group.

- The Individual Education Plan team provides an alternate plan including the proposed steps to return the student to an inclusive classroom environment, when appropriate.
- The school has documented the impracticality of maintaining a student within a less restrictive setting.
- The amount of time in that a students is in the company of peers is an important consideration.

How is student learning on an IEP assessed and reported?

Students are assessed using prescribed curriculum standards including modified components. Evaluation and reporting procedures accommodate the range of adaptations and modifications:

- a regular program with some adaptations;
- a regular program but with some modified components;
- a completely modified program.

Use of adapted evaluation procedures should be noted in the student's Individual Education Plan particularly for students who may be requesting adjudication of B.C. exams. For these students, evaluation is based on whether the learning outcomes have been met. The methods of evaluation and reporting progress must be consistent with Department of Education grading and reporting policies for the K-12 program.

Progress reports must be made in the same general format and

on the same schedule as for all students in the school. Regular letter-grading and reporting procedures will be followed for adapted program, although adapted assessment methods may be necessary. When curriculum is modified, the use of letter grades and percentages may not be appropriate. Structured written comments will be used to report the level of success. Additional informal reporting may include other procedures such as daily logs.

Official transcripts of courses/marks should identify whether a course has been modified. With written consent, information about modifications should be communicated to post-secondary institutions or community agencies providing adult services.

Exemption from participation in Standardized Assessments

The school administrator may request an exemption from participation on standardized assessments in exceptional circumstances. Permission must be granted by the Department of Education.

Criteria for exemption

The school administrator may request an exemption from participation in territorial assessments if, given the full range of permitted accommodations, the student would not be able to provide evidence of learning under the circumstances of the assessment. Specifically, exemptions may be requested for students who meet the following criteria:

- The student's Individual Education Plan has significantly different goals from the expected learning outcomes of the regular curriculum.
- The student has a medical condition, which impedes his/her ability to complete standardized assessment (as specified by a medical practitioner).
- The student has serious emotional and/or behavioural difficulties such that participation in a territorial assessment will cause undue anxiety and/or compromise the assessment results.
- The student has a mental health issue (as specified by a medical practitioner) such that participation in a territorial assessment may be deleterious to their condition and/or compromise the assessment of other students.

Reasons for exemption to be documented in the Individual Education Plan

The school administrator shall ensure that the reason(s) for requesting an exemption from a particular territorial assessment are included in a student's Individual Education Plan. The school administrator shall ensure that there is evidence from a psychologist or other specialist that supports why the assessment is not appropriate for the student.

Application for exemption

The school principal shall complete a Request for Exemption from Standardized Assessment form and forward this to the Director of Student Support Services by September 30th each year.

Types of adaptations permitted

Adaptations include adjustments in scheduling, changes in setting, the use of assistive technology and/or adjustments in the format of the assessment. Extra time and supervised breaks may be allowed for provincial exams.

Adaptations for participation in Standardized Assessments

The majority of students who have a Student Learning Plan or an Individual Education Plan shall participate in territorial standardized assessments. Typically, these students will be following the expected learning outcomes of the regular curriculum with adaptations. Schools must provide adaptations to facilitate the participation of these students in territorial assessments of achievement. Adaptations must not affect the level or content of the assessment, the performance criteria or the reliability and validity of the assessment.

Adaptations to be documented in the Individual Education Plan

Any adaptations recommended to facilitate the student's participation in territorial assessments must be identified in the Individual Education Plan. These adaptations must be:

- appropriate to the student's particular needs, as identified in the Individual Education Plan;
- included among the strategies, accommodations, and resources identified in the Student Learning Plan or Individual Education Plan as necessary for regular classroom assessments;
- described in specific rather than general terms (e.g., "use of a word processor" rather than "answers recorded in other manner").

Duty to Report

Administrators must ensure that all students on Student Learning Plans or Individual Education Plans for whom adaptations are identified have them specified in their Student Learning Plan or Individual Education Plan. Administrators also have a duty to report the names of students and the accommodations identified on *Accommodations For Participation In Standardized Assessments* form and to forward this form to the Director of Student Support Services by September 30th each year.

Adjudication for B.C. examinations

Yukon follows the B.C. requirements for adjudication on B.C. provincial examinations. The adjudication process provides equity and accessibility to students with special educational needs by allowing adaptations to provincial exams. The adjudication policy is reviewed each year. Current information on the adjudication process can be found at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/handbook/. The Learning Assistance Teacher or school counsellor is responsible for completing all forms regarding adjudication in consultation with the School Psychologist.

Other types of assessment

Referrals to agencies or professionals that may entail a cost to Yukon Education will only be made in consultation with the Director of Student Support Services. Information from other agencies must be readily useable for purposes of planning and easily integrated into the Student Learning Plan or Individual Education Plan.

Private assessments

Private assessments are conducted by professionals not employed by Yukon Education and are paid for by the student's parent(s). When relevant, parents are encouraged to provide a copy of any assessment reports of their son or daughter for the information of the School Based Team (SBT).

The School Based Team shall:

- Inform the Director of Student Support Services that a student has been assessed privately;
- Provide a copy of any assessment report received by the School Based Team (SBT) from the parents to the Director of Student Support Services;
- Request the appropriate staff from Student Support Services to attend a meeting of the School Based Team (SBT) to provide an interpretation of the assessment report;

- The School Based Team (SBT) shall consider the information in the assessment report regarding a student's learning needs.

Yukon Education will respect the wish of parents to obtain an assessment privately. If the parent chooses to provide a copy of the assessment report to the School Based Team (SBT), the Student Support Services staff will provide technical expertise to assist the SBT in the interpretation of test results and any other information contained in the report. Yukon Education requires the School Based Team (SBT) to consider fully the information in any private assessment report. The school administrator and School Based Team (SBT) will make a decision concerning whether a student has an exceptionality that requires a special education program under Division 2 of the *Yukon Education Act* and, if so, what special education program (Individual Education Plan) is required.

Referral for Assessment to a Physician

After discussion with the appropriate consultant, if the School Based Team (SBT) believes that a student might benefit from a medical assessment, it may suggest such an assessment to the parents. The school shall provide the parent with a written report that describes the student's presenting issues and outlines how such an assessment might contribute information about the student's learning needs.

Student Learning Plans and Individual Education Plans at the Secondary Level

When students with special educational needs move from elementary to secondary school, additional factors must be considered and the Student Learning Plan and the Individual Education Plan processes adjusted. There are three possible scenarios for a secondary student:

1. Grade 12 Graduation.
2. School Leaving Certificate with unique learning outcomes.
3. A student is taking some regular courses and also working on some individualized outcomes to receive a School Leaving Certificate. The student can continue to work on Graduation requirements beyond Grade 12.

At the secondary level, there is flexibility in the range of courses available to meet many students' diverse needs. Close examination of all the course offerings should be the first step when scheduling courses consistent with the program plan for students.

Student Involvement

Secondary school students are the primary contributor to the Student Learning Plan or Individual Education Plan process. The student may, where possible,

- identify values, preferences, and strengths through self-evaluation;
- help to set goals and outcomes;
- be informed of course offerings at their school;

- participate in a discussion of strategies and behaviours that enhance their learning;
- strive with assistance to achieve identified objectives.

Ongoing and progressive involvement is also essential in creating the groundwork for self-advocacy skills. Students with well-developed self-advocacy skills have increased confidence, independence and a greater sense of control over their education.

Work Experience

The career paths for students with special needs will be varied. For some, perhaps because of their interests or the challenging nature of their special needs, an approach that includes extensive on-site training and the provision of technical aids may be required. Some students may require pre-job preparation and extensive simulation and practice.

Schools are encouraged to develop strategies for supporting the career and life transitions of all students, including those who have special needs. Work experience activities should be individualized and documented in the Individual Education Plan.

Students with special needs should have access to all career education opportunities available to students including job shadowing, career preparation, co-operative education and any other career program or activity.

J. TRANSITION PLANNING

Students experience significant transition points throughout their education. The transition process for a student with special educational needs requires careful planning to ensure that the student is supported.

Facilitating Transitions for Students with Special Needs

The school administration, in collaboration with the School Based Team (SBT), parents and relevant Student Support Services personnel are responsible to ensure that all students, including those with special needs, have planning for major transitions.

Transition team members should include:

- The case manager of student's Individual Education Plan;
- Parents, and when appropriate, the student;
- Teachers and Educational Assistant, both current and receiving;
- Student Support Services staff both current and receiving;
- Involved agencies and/or community services personnel.

Transition from Child Development Centre (CDC) to Kindergarten

The Child Development Centre in collaboration with the Yukon Education facilitates a smooth transition for the student. The Child Development Centre transition process ensures:

- parents are well-informed about the programs and resources;
- a personal connection between parents and the school;
- information is given to the schools to understand the student's learning profile, current level of functioning in all areas, and successful strategies for the student;
- that referrals for continuing support services are made in a timely manner;
- all needed equipment and training are available to staff before the student enters school.

Transition of students with Individual Education Plans between grades within the same school

Before the new school year, the case manager will arrange a meeting between the sending teacher and the receiving teacher to discuss the student's learning plan, programming and successful strategies. Any additional equipment and any necessary training for the teacher and/or the Educational Assistant will be arranged before the beginning of the school year. The case manager will ensure that the receiving teacher is aware of the contents of the student's confidential file and the

Individual Education Plan. An Individual Education Plan planning meeting should be scheduled following this initial review.

Transition of students with Individual Education Plans between schools within Yukon Territory

During the school year

The administrator of the sending school will notify the administrator of the receiving school and the Director of Student Support Services as soon as the parent's intent to relocate within Yukon is known.

The receiving administrator arranges a transition meeting between the personnel from the sending and receiving schools, parent(s) and Student Support Services staff to assist in the transition. Student information files are exchanged as expediently as possible. Any allocation of Educational Assistant support at the sending school must be reviewed by the administrators and Director of Student Support Services.

A New School Year

By October 31st of each school year, school-based teams will identify students with Individual Education Plans who will be transitioning from one school to another. The sending school will notify the receiving school of incoming students with Individual Education Plans and will provide information needed to maintain continuity of programming. Each receiving school will identify a case manager to facilitate the transition of information and

arrange an Individual Education Plan meeting. Student Support Services staff will be invited as required. The transition plan should include orientation planning for the student (and parents when applicable) and possibly a visit to the new placement to introduce new support staff.

Transition of Students on Individual Education Plans from Elementary to Secondary School

By November 1st, the elementary school administrator and/or Learning Assistance Teacher contact the secondary school regarding students with Individual Education Plans. A transition plan for entry to secondary school involves the student, parents, administrators, sending Learning Assistance Teachers and receiving Learning Assistance Teachers, teachers, and case manager. The teachers and Learning Assistance Teachers or case managers exchange and discuss:

- an up-to date student record;
- information about resources;
- strategies for teaching and/or behaviour management;
- adaptations and supports needed for student success.

Ideally, there should be one or more scheduled visits to the new school with introductions to school staff and an opportunity to spend some time in a classroom. It is recommended that support staff and/or parents from the elementary school accompany the student. Students may take a variety of work samples or a portfolio with them as a personal introduction of themselves to staff and students in the new setting.

As part of planning for transition, students should be encouraged to articulate their personal goals for post-secondary life. This information forms part of the Student Learning Plan and Individual Education Plan process of planning for transition.

Students and parents will be informed about:

- course options, course requirements, the course credit system and the career and program plan process;
- new and different routines;
- the number of different classrooms and teachers;
- student use of lockers, lunchroom, student clubs and noon hour and after school activities;
- opportunities to visit the new school;
- Educational Assistant assignment and role of Educational Assistant.

Transition of Students from Secondary School to Adulthood

The Individual Education Plan team helps facilitate the transition of students on Individual Education Plans in secondary school to further training, work and life in the community. A transition plan should be developed collaboratively with the student, family, and any services and agencies involved. Such decisions may include post-secondary education, employment, finances, future living arrangements and community and social involvement. The plan

should address any concerns the student or parents may have about the move to a new setting.

Transition planning for students leaving school must start early enough to ensure that the student has the supports and services in place for the next stage. For some students, this will require the involvement of other government departments such as Adult Services or community-based services such as Yukon College Learning Assistance Centre, Teegatha' Oh Zzeh and Challenge Community Vocational Alternatives, or others. Individuals from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may be invited to become members of the Individual Education Plan team for the purpose of transition. This assists the student in becoming familiar with the programs as well as sharing information with the program's staff.

K. ALTERNATE EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT

General Principles for Classroom Placement of Students with Special Needs

The *Yukon Education Act* states that students with special educational needs shall be a part of the inclusive classroom to the extent of their abilities. Where there is evidence that the delivery of a student's Individual Education Plan cannot be accommodated within the regular classroom environment, alternative educational placements are considered to address student need in the least restrictive and most enabling environment.

Shared Resource Programs

A Shared Resource Program is a placement offered in a setting that enhances the delivery of a student's Individual Education plan when that cannot be accommodated within the regular classroom environment. Students are integrated in meaningful participation with others as outlined in specific Individual Education Plan goals.

In an effort to ensure students entering Shared Resource Programs are appropriately placed, procedural guidelines are necessary. Individual cases are reviewed by the Manager of Inclusive Practices in conjunction with the Area Superintendent and the referring and receiving school administrators as applications are submitted.

Out of Attendance Area

In accordance with Section 11(1) of the *Education Act*, a student with special educational needs may be directed to attend a school out of their attendance area in order to better implement the goals of the Individual Education Plan. Such a decision will be made in consultation with the student's IEP team, superintendents, school administrators and Director of Student Support Services.

When this type of placement is made, the following procedures will apply:

- After consultation with the sending school and relevant consultants, the Director of Student Support Services will co-ordinate the collection of information to assist the superintendent of the receiving school to determine potential placements.
- The superintendent will arrange for a meeting between the superintendent, the sending and receiving school administrators, relevant Student Support Services consultants and other persons identified to attend.
- The superintendent, in collaboration with the Director, Student Support Services, will discuss the outcome of the meeting and communicate all decisions to all parties involved. The placement will be governed by Section 11 (1) of the *Yukon Education Act*.

These procedures will be implemented within 10 school days of the determination of placement for a student.

Out-of-Territory Placement

Cases involving consideration of out-of-territory educational programming placements are rare. Criteria to be used in judging out-of-territory placements are:

- The student's legal place of residence is Yukon.
- Evidence presented by the administration and Individual Education Plan team in consultation with Director of Student Support Services, superintendent and the Assistant Deputy Minister, indicate that all reasonable attempts have been made to provide an appropriate program in a location within Yukon.
- Placement out-of-territory is necessary to ensure the safety of the considered student and the programming is necessary to enable the student to receive life-saving medical treatment.
- Parental input and consent are required before placement decisions are made. In the event that parental consent is not obtained, the Individual Education Plan will be implemented in the student's school, home or other suitable location.
- Out-of-territory placement decisions will be made and reviewed every three months by the Deputy Minister.

L. SUPPORT SERVICES

School-based Support Personnel

Yukon Education provides both professional and paraprofessional support to schools to address the diverse learning of students.

Learning Assistance Program

The Learning Assistance Program supports inclusion and involves teachers in planning, implementing and monitoring programs available for students who may require additional supports. It provides a co-ordinated and integrated set of support services that include instruction, school-based consultation, collaborative planning and co-ordination with the School Based Team. It also includes Level B assessment and evaluation. In collaboration with the administrator, Learning Assistance Teachers help to organize, maintain, and integrate services in the school and, as part of a School Based Team, provide a major link with support services available at Yukon Education. The Learning Assistance Teacher provides case management service of students and facilitates School Based Team functions, including relevant documentation to allow the SBT to conduct meetings in an efficient manner. The Learning Assistance teacher provides direct service to students with special educational needs.

Learning Assistance Teacher

A teacher who is knowledgeable about curricular outcomes at all levels and assists teacher(s) with educational programming for students. He/she is an experienced teacher with additional specialist qualifications who provides a coordinated and integrated set of support services for teachers and their students with diverse learning needs.

Major Duties

Learning Assistance Teachers are involved in consulting, collaborative planning, assessing, evaluating and reporting progress, and delivering specialized instruction and support within the classroom and in other settings. They may also direct and provide training as necessary for Educational Assistants and Remedial Tutors, volunteers and peer tutors in intervention procedures to work effectively with the student. Learning Assistance Teachers facilitate smooth transitions between school levels.

The Learning Assistance Teacher's role has four major categories:

1. *Collaborative Planning and Coordination*: The Learning Assistance Teacher plays an active role in the identification, assessment, planning, implementation, and reporting and evaluation process for students with diverse learning. The Learning Assistance Teacher facilitates collaborative consultation, assists with early and pre-referral interventions and works closely with parents, teachers and the School

Based Team (SBT) to plan for, organize and access support services for students with special educational needs.

2. *Instruction:* The Learning Assistance Teacher will help identify and directly instruct students to develop learning strategies for use in the classroom setting or for independent learning.

- Skill development or remediation; and
- Assisting students to develop compensatory skills.

3. *Consultation services* include:

- collaboration with classroom teachers to design or implement and/or adapt instructional content or materials;
- advising teachers in adjustments to curriculum, instruction or environmental factors in the classroom;
- consulting with parents and students regarding learning strategies and organizational skills;
- consulting with Yukon Education and/or community resource personnel.

4. *Assessment*

The purpose of assessment and evaluation is to plan and implement an educational program. The assessment support may include:

- Criterion referenced or norm referenced assessment as appropriate to answer questions on how best to provide instruction or support.

- Systematic observation and collection of behavioral data to establish baseline/progress data or describe functional behaviors.
- Synthesis of information from parents, student records, other services providers, and health-related information.
- In-depth interviews with students to determine their knowledge of the learning.

School Counselling Program

School counselling services are school-based and are designed to support students, their families and educators. This program facilitates the educational, personal, social, emotional and career development of students in schools and in the community.

School Counsellor

School counsellors are experienced teachers with additional specialist qualifications in counselling. They understand that many students may experience social-emotional difficulties requiring intervention. School counsellors consult and assist in planning goals and effective strategies for students. They promote the educational, social, emotional and career development of students. Consultation may focus on students' individual needs or on programs or services. School counsellors can be active participants in the planning process assisting with the development of Student Learning Plans, Behaviour Learning Plans and Individual Education Plans.

School counsellors provide a continuum of preventative, developmental, remedial and intervention services and programs. They facilitate referral to community resources as well as instruct students in areas such as peer helping, conflict resolution, social skills and life skills.

Major duties

- Work as a member of the School Based Team;
- Work with individuals, groups and classes to provide both an intervention and a prevention service;
- Promote personal and social development appropriate to the student's developmental stages;
- Counsel students to foster growth in the students' self esteem, individual responsibility, and in skills such as decision-making and social skills;
- Enhance students' educational achievement through goal setting, assisting with the development of programs and activities such as promotion of effective work and study habits;
- Provide appropriate interventions to assist students with school-related problems and issues;
- Facilitate the goals of career education by assisting students and their families to explore and clarify the student's career options through developmental activities that stress decision-making, personal planning and career awareness.

Learning Support Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals such as Educational Assistants or Remedial Tutors work with classroom teachers, Learning Assistance Teachers (LATs), and Student Support Services staff in the implementation of programming. The assistance required will vary according to the individual needs of the student(s) and may include direct or indirect support.

Under the guidance of the classroom teacher and/or Learning Assistance Teacher, paraprofessional support may:

- provide specific educational, behavioural, social and life skills activities;
- provide personal assistance, specialized programming, assistance in using assistive technology, self and/or health care;
- assist students in working toward greater autonomy;
- work with individuals or groups in a practice or intervention activity;
- reinforce concepts presented by the teacher;
- monitor student responses or activities, collecting data and providing regular feedback to the teacher.

Student Support Services Personnel

Personnel in Student Support Services have dual responsibilities to Yukon Education and to the schools.

Departmental responsibilities include:

- Assisting in evaluation of programs, services and resources within their specialized discipline;
- Advising on trends, resources and professional development needs within their specialized discipline that relate to the education of students with special educational needs;
- Maintaining data systems to plan and evaluate programs and services for students with special educational needs.

School-related responsibilities include:

- supporting schools at Tier 1 by offering generic programming/management suggestions that can be integrated into general classroom delivery that are of benefit to all students;
- supporting schools at Tier 2 by offering more specific interventions for groups of students, and;
- recommending programming specific to a student's identified needs at Tier 3.

Typically, these responsibilities consist of:

- Consultation with the SBT, teachers and parents regarding student program development, intervention and evaluation;

- Participation on IEP teams for a small number of students with complex special educational needs;
- Assessment of individual students to assist educational programming and intervention. Staff provide oral feedback to the student, parents, teacher and SBT followed by a written report;
- Delivery of professional development for school staff, parents and/or community.

Consultants will confirm scheduled visits to assigned schools well in advance.

Director of Student Support Services

The Director of Student Support Services is responsible for the efficient and effective delivery of services promoting and actively encouraging student-centered, culture-based, inclusive education for all students, particularly for students with special educational needs in accordance with the *Yukon Education Act*. The Director provides leadership to professional and paraprofessional staff within Student Support Services. This includes a specific emphasis on the identification, implementation and development of programming for students with special educational or exceptional learning needs. The Director enables Student Support Services staff and teachers to deliver services to students to meet the goals of the Yukon Education within an inclusive educational framework.

Educational Psychologist

Educational Psychologists work with teachers, parents and students to:

- identify and address learning and behaviour difficulties that interfere with school success;
- provide recommendations and when possible, participate in individual student program planning meetings and reviews;
- conduct individual assessments such as classroom observation, file review, meeting with the classroom teacher and parents, and the administration of standardized tests;
- create positive classroom environments to increase achievement by assessing barriers to learning and helping plan the instructional strategies for improvement.

Educational Psychologists play an essential role in the assessment and identification of students with special educational needs and a supportive role in the planning and implementation of Individual Education Plans.

Assessment data is used for planning, goal setting, and developing interventions and strategies.

Speech and Language Consultants

Speech and Language Consultants are Speech-Language Pathologists who work in schools across all grade levels to address the communication needs of students. They consult with school personnel and parents on the implications that speech, language, literacy and social communication

differences have on students' educational success. They offer appropriate strategies, resources and adaptations for the unique communication needs of students.

Communication Assistant

Communication Assistants are paraprofessionals with post-secondary training as a therapy assistant and/or trained by Speech and Language Consultants. They support the implementation of intervention programs designed by the Speech Language Consultants to improve students' speech, language and communication skills.

Physiotherapist

Physiotherapists consult with staff, students and families to encourage maximum motor development to facilitate learning and integration in the school environment. Physiotherapists provide services to encourage the development of age appropriate motor skills. These services may include assistance in positioning to promote optimal physical access, assistance in maximizing independence for students who have limited mobility, and prevention and/or alleviation of movement dysfunction.

Occupational Therapist

Occupational therapists consult with schools, teachers, and families to promote functional skills within the school environment. Occupational therapists assess the student, environment and task, and strategize to optimize the student's function. The functional tasks of students include self-care, play and school productivity. An occupational

therapist can assess the specific areas of hand development, visual-perception and sensory processing.

Student Support Services Consultant

The Student Support Services Consultant works collaboratively with school-based teams to support the development of academic and behaviour learning plans. Student Support Services Consultants also work collaboratively with other Student Support Services staff to develop programming for students from recommendations made in assessment reports.

Teacher for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Teacher for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing provides direct service to students with a hearing loss and consultative service to schools, teachers and parents.

The intensity of services provided to students is determined by consultation with teachers, parents, and other professionals to develop effective programming and supports for the student. When there are specific concerns about a student's hearing ability, teachers and/or parents may make a referral to the School Based Team or the teacher may discuss concerns with the parent who may contact Hearing Services, Health and Social Services, for a complete hearing assessment.

The Teacher for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, with parent permission, may act as a liaison between the audiologist and the schools. He/she will provide specific suggestions to fit

the needs of each student, and will meet with the School Based Team to discuss how best to support the student.

Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired

The Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired is a specialist teacher with training in the education of blind and visually impaired students. The Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired serves an itinerant role and may provide direct service to the student and provides consultative service to schools, teachers and parents. This teacher provides support to blind and low vision students and their teachers at all grade levels by assisting those students who are able to function in a regular classroom setting with appropriate aids and equipment, program modification and other services. With parents' consent, the Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired may coordinate services with medical professionals.

Interagency Collaboration

Interagency collaboration refers to the process of working cooperatively with other agencies with a mandate or an interest in services for children with special educational needs. Approaches focus on policy development, program management and service delivery.

Yukon Education has signed protocol agreements with both government and non-government organizations. These agreements specify the nature of the collaboration, identify programs and services targeted for joint action, specify desirable outcomes or goals and provide a mechanism for evaluating the joint action.

Collaborative Ventures with Government Departments

Health and Social Services: Interdepartmental Collaboration on Children with Complex Needs Committee

Yukon Education and Health and Social Services have agreed to collaborate and coordinate processes for assessment, service planning and service delivery to children with complex needs who receive services from both departments. With Yukon Education, the guidelines apply to Public Schools Branch. With Health and Social Services, the guidelines apply to Mental Health Services (Community Health Services Branch), Regional Services Branch, Continuing Care Branch and Family and Children's Services Branch. The agreement consists of guidelines, terms of

reference for the Complex Needs Committee and a set of procedures.

Definition of a Complex Need

Due to the nature of a child or youth's needs, services are required from more than one department and often from many service providers. Complexity may be related to the nature of the child's disability or to the environment and the need for supports from multiple service providers. The child's or youth's needs result in significant limitations and service needs in one or more of the following areas:

- Behaviour;
- Socio-emotional;
- Cognitive and learning abilities;
- Communication and socialization skills and emotional regulation;
- Physical and motor development;
- Self-help and adaptive functioning skills.

The school administrator must contact the Director of Student Support Services to discuss a referral to Complex Needs Committee.

Protocol Agreement Regarding Interdepartmental Information Exchange on Children and Their Families between Departments of Education and Health and Social Services (1993)

This protocol formalizes the exchange of information between the two departments for the purpose of educational programming and the safety and well-being of the student.

Yukon Education will provide information to the Director of Family and Children's Services, or designate, as if they are the parent when a child comes into the care of the Director under the *Children's Act*. This information will include involvement in the development of Individualized Education Plans, provision of report cards and other relevant information.

When scheduling case conferences for children, the Director of Family and Children's Services Branch will seek to involve officials of the Departments (Director of Student Support Services and/or Individual Education Plan team case manager) who may be involved with the child and/or the child's family.

When a child comes into the care of the Director (whether on agreement with the parents or temporary or permanent order of the court) the Director will notify the child's school in writing of the child's change in status. The Director will also notify the child's school when a child leaves the care of the Director.

In August and January of each year the Director will provide to Yukon Education, Student Support Services, the names of all the children in the Director's care at that time and the name of a contact person within the Family and Children's Services Branch for each child. This information will be forwarded to the applicable school.

Collaborative ventures with non-government organizations

Yukon Education recognizes the supportive role played by organizations and agencies concerned with the education of students with special educational needs. Cooperation with Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) includes the participation of advocates in Individual Education Plan and occasional funding agreements for particular ventures of common interest and participation on committees.

Child Development Centre

Services to 4 year olds in Kindergarten

Yukon Education and CDC have a protocol regarding the delivery of services to four year olds with special educational needs who are enrolled in Kindergarten. The Child Development Outreach team meets with the school administration wherever there is a K4 class. With parental consent, the CDC outreach team:

- Screens K4 children for general developmental milestones;
- Identifies children with special needs;

- Develops individual program plans and provides follow-up and treatment for children requiring additional supports;
- Hires the program assistant in consultation with the administrator;
- Informs parents of results of the screening and other follow-up progress of the child when available.

Children and Youth Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Diagnostic and Support Teams

The Children and Youth Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Diagnostic and Support Teams are a Yukon-based service for children from birth to 18 years of age. The teams consist of a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder diagnostic coordinator, doctor/pediatrician, and staff from the Child Development Centre and Student Support Services, Yukon Education. Staff from the Child Development Centre or Student Support Services include a speech language pathologist, educational psychologist, occupational therapist, and physiotherapist.

A referral for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder assessment is submitted on the designated form to the Coordinator of the Children and Youth Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Diagnostic and Support Team. Prior to the referral being made, the referral must meet the assessment criteria. The referral will be accepted or declined based on the criteria for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder assessment outlined below.

Outside Agencies and Certified Professionals

Collaboration between professionals is in the best interest of the student and family. Input from other service providers can be valuable to a student's school-based team. Written consent for the release of confidential information from the parent(s) must be provided to the student's case manager before collaboration can occur.

Provision of Observation or Advice by Outside Certified Professionals

Where parents wish to have outside professionals, private consultants, or members of an outside agency influence school programs for a student, the following protocols apply:

- The professional should contact the Director, Student Support Services, who will facilitate a meeting with the school administrator, parent and the case manager.
- The initial meeting should discuss the information to be shared: how communication will be coordinated, various roles and responsibilities, and how decisions are made. The case manager will include the appropriate Student Support Services staff on the student's team in the discussion.
- The outside professional should be made aware in advance that school-based and Student Support Services personnel are responsible for decisions on the instructional, curricular or behavioural strategies delivered to the student.

M. RELATED POLICIES

Policy Subject
Administration of Medication to Students http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/policy/medication.html
Anaphylaxis http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/allergies_anaphylaxis_policy_sept_2012.pdf
Education Appeal Tribunal Procedures and Operations http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/Education Appeal Tribunal Procedures and Operations Policy.pdf
Safe and Caring Schools Policy http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/policy/safe_schools.html
School Council Dispute Resolution Procedure Policy http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/dispute_resolution_policy_april_2013.pdf
School Closure Policy http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/School_Closure_Policy.pdf
Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/sogi_policy_updated_dec_14.pdf
Student Attendance Policy http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/policies/student_attendance_policy.pdf
Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Protocol http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/policies/yukon_education_violence_threat_risk_assessment_protocol.pdf
Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Signatory Document http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/policies/yukon_education_violence_threat_risk_assessment_protocol_signatory_document.pdf

N. REFERENCES

Print Materials:

A Handbook of Yukon First Nations Education Resources for Public Schools. Yukon Department of Education. 2011.

Helping Students Succeed: Vision, Goals and Priorities for Yukon First Nations Education. Yukon First Nations Education Advisory Committee. 2008.

Manitoba Working Together: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs in School. Manitoba Education. 2004.

Positive Behaviours in Alberta Schools, An intensive individualized approach. Alberta Ministry of Education. 2008.

Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. Ministry of Education. British Columbia. 2011.

Special Programs Services: A Handbook of Procedures and Guidelines. Special Programs Branch, Yukon Department of Education. 1995.

Student Support Services: A Manual of Procedures, Personnel & Support Programs. Surrey, BC School District. 2008.

Yukon Teachers Handbook. Yukon Department of Education. 2011.

Yukon Education Act. 1990.

Websites:

- 1) *BC Parent and Education Partnership Project*
http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/reports/parent_engage.pdf
- 2) *Every Principal's Guide to Special Education in British Columbia*
http://www.bccpac.bc.ca/sites/default/files/resources/speced.epg_2002.pdf
- 3) *Informed Consent In Special Education Conceptual Definitions And Implications For Practice*. David Phillipott. Memorial University, Newfoundland.
<http://www.mun.ca/educ/faculty/mwatch/fall4/phillpott.htm>
- 4) *Guide for Educators and Families in the Effective Implementation of Response to Intervention as a means to improve Educational Outcomes for all students.*
www.rtinetwork.org
- 5) *Hard of Hearing and Deaf Students: A Resource Guide to Support Classroom Teachers*
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/hearimpair/toc.htm>
- 6) *Helping Students Succeed*
<http://www.yesnet.yk.ca/firstnations/pdf/yfneac.pdf>
- 7) *Partnership*
<http://www.cpco.on.ca/ResourceLibrary/Ministry/ParentEng.pdf>
- 8) *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind. Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, 2004.*
<http://www.wncp.ca/assessment/rethink.pdf>
- 9) *Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*. B.C. School District 22. <http://www.sd22.bc.ca/~deaf/index.html>
- 10) *Yukon Department of Education Appeal Tribunal Procedures and Operations*
[http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/Education Appeal Tribunal Procedures and Operations Policy.pdf](http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/Education%20Appeal%20Tribunal%20Procedures%20and%20Operations%20Policy.pdf)
- 11) *Yukon First Nations Parent Information*. 2008.
<http://www.yesnet.yk.ca/firstnations/pdf/yfneac.pdf>

