

M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department

LAKEVIEW SCHOOL

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY 2011



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Approved by MFN Chief & Council, date & motion**

Special Education Policy for Lakeview School

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Mission Statement

Our school and community will do our best to guide student's learning in a way that includes our language, culture and traditions. Our educational program will give our students the tools to understand themselves and the world around them and enable them to live independent lives.

Special Education Philosophy

- All children have the right to obtain an education in the setting most appropriate for their needs.
- All children have the right to access an education that encompasses their spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development to prepare them adequately for lifelong learning.
- The M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department believes that for all students:
"It Takes A Community to Raise a Child"
- We believe that all students, including those with special needs are capable of being a life-long learner. Especially, when their unique learning needs are emphasized within the shared responsibility of the family, the community, and the school.

Special Education Policy Goals

- To provide a continuum of service for our students with special needs;
- To provide procedures for the identification and assessment of students with special needs;
- To attempt to address special needs as early as possible, recognizing the benefits of early intervention;
- To foster and maintain cooperative relationships with outside agencies, associations, etc that provide services for our special needs students;
- To plan or make available appropriate and useful professional development to assist school personnel in learning how to maximize the potential of students with a variety of special needs;
- To provide opportunities for parents to participate in the referral and identification process;
- To provide a balanced program based on the strengths and the needs of the child.

Code of Ethics

- School personnel will speak and act toward students and parents with respect and dignity, and will deal judiciously, always mindful of their rights.
- School personnel will respect the confidential nature of information concerning students.

Inclusion of Exceptional Students At Lakeview School

Special Education for the M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department will provide quality education that addresses the strengths and needs of its students, enabling them to reach their potential. It also speaks strongly to the inclusion of all students at Lakeview School. The majority of exceptional students will continue to be part of the regular classroom. Students who are part of the Aanj Maach Ta or Life Skills program will be integrated into their regular classrooms based on specific program goals. This means that modifications and

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accommodations will be made to expectations, instruction and assessment methods in order to ensure that every child feels success in relation to their own learning potential and needs.

Special Education Definition:

Special Education includes any student whose full potential is limited with the constraints of the regular school programs by virtue of their cognitive, physical, sensory, behavioral, emotional, developmental, language or social exceptionalities, such that they require additional supports or modifications to their programming.

Funding

M'Chigeeng First Nation believes that a few students will require services beyond those typically provided for Special Education students. The basic per student instructional services funding in the national funding formula for band operated school covers the costs to meet the needs of the majority of the students. For example it covers the costs for the teacher and the basic operation of the school and other "low cost/ high incidence" services such as informal assessments and remediation.

Funding Requests for High Cost Services

Within the present funding practice there is an opportunity to request additional funding, through INAC, to cover the cost for the provision of high cost/low incidence services that exceeds the resources available through the per student instructional services funding. Appropriate forms from INAC are submitted at the designated times to accommodate High Cost Services.

Roles and Responsibilities of Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT):

Coordinates the administration of referral process and specifically IPRC process;

- accesses outside agencies and service providers for assessments (psychological educational, speech & language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, behavioral therapy);
- interpret the results of assessments to assist in classroom planning;
- determine the programs and services required to meet the special needs of Lakeview School learners;
- develop, deliver and continually assess programs and services;
- assist students in reaching their potential;
- identify special needs through the administration of informal assessment tools to determine student achievement
- conduct ongoing assessment and review of identified students;
- assist in the development of the IEP;
- provide support to classroom teachers;
- maintain and update on-line IEP registry pertaining to special education services;
- ensuring appropriate information is placed in student's OSR.

Role and Responsibility of Special Education Assistant:

- plan language arts, math and life skills program;
- create IEP's for Life Skills students in these areas;
- provide written report card mark and comments each term;
- implement these programs for one block per day;

- assist classroom teacher for 1.5 blocks per day (literacy) in the classroom.

Roles and Responsibilities of Classroom Teachers:

- develop IEP for exceptional students;
- complete the “Subject/Courses” section of the IEP by due date stated by principal;
- put into effect the plans laid out in the IEP;
- make appropriate changes to the IEP when necessary, depending on the needs of the child
- assess and report on expectations in IEP;
- notify SERT and parent of any changes to IEP expectations, if made during the year;
- review the IEP each term and complete new “Subject/Courses” page (or continue present ones, if needed).

Referral Process (based on 7-Step Comprehensive Service Model supported by Ministry of Ed.)

1) Assessment in the classroom

- Recognition of problem (academic, behavioral, social/emotional)
- Pre-referral Steps:
 - a) Check Special Education Binder for your class. Review previous IEP’s to ensure the proper programming is in place.
 - b) Review O.S.R. (Read previous report cards, note attendance, read psycho-educational/speech & language assessments, especially recommendations page, all other relevant information).
 - c) Contact parents/guardians to discuss and document possible solutions (e.g. consistent use of agenda, improved sleep habits, nutrition, vision testing, etc..).
 - d) Discuss with previous teacher, if possible (e.g. strategies that were successful).
 - e) Gather portfolio of evidence of the problem (e.g. copies of incident reports, anecdotal notes, samples of writing, most recent reading scores (running record/PM/DRA), any other relevant information).

2) Referral to the SERT

- a) SERT/Principal reviews all information gathered by classroom teacher.
- b) SERT completes in-school assessments to determine student’s strengths & weaknesses.
- c) SERT/Principal make several classroom visits to observe & monitor.
- d) Meeting between teacher & SERT/Principal to discuss recommendations.

3) Referral to out of school professionals - 2nd level Services (Psycho-educational; Speech & Language, etc...)

- a) SERT provides appropriate paper work to teacher.
- b) Parent/Guardian will be contacted and a written consent form will be discussed and signed by the parent/caregiver before assessments, other than those conducted in class by the teacher or by the SERT.
- c) SERT places student on priority list (determined by SERT/Principal) and schedules assessments and parental feedbacks.

4) Referral to the IPRC

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- a) SERT schedules committee members and parents to meeting.
- b) SERT inputs all information on the on-line IEP engine & maintains file in O.S.R.

5) Statement of needs based on all assessment information

- a) A specific statement generated that provides clear synopsis of student's learning diagnosis

6) Individual Education Plan

- a) IEP based on statement of needs.
- b) SERT completes the following pages on IEP Registry (Student profile, Assessment, Sources/Equip, Prov. Assessments, Support Services, IEP team, Consult Log, Transition Plan); also creates template for Subjects/Courses page for teacher to fill in.
- c) The teacher who has student for the majority of time of the subject completes, implements and reports on these expectations.
- d) Non-Exceptional IEP: An IEP may be developed for a student who has not yet been formally identified as exceptional, but who has been deemed to require special education programs or services in order to attend school or to achieve curriculum expectations and/or whose learning expectations are modified from or alternative to the expectations set out for a particular grade level or course in a provincial curriculum policy document.

7) Reviews, monitoring & transitions

- a) SERT/Principal compares report card mark & comments to IEP, each term.
- b) SERT monitors throughout term if needed.

Early Identification

Experience and research clearly indicate the advantage of early identification and remediation of special needs. Providing adequate support to young students with special needs reduces the impact of their special needs as they grow and develop. Lakeview School will therefore support appropriate programs and interventions for at-risk students, including those related to areas pertinent to school success.

Grades 1, 2 & 3 students who are experiencing difficulty in the area of Language Arts will be considered for the following programs:

- 1) Reading Readiness (RR) - Literacy Resource Assistant delivers Jolly Phonics program
- 2) Early Reading Intervention (ERI) - Literacy Teacher delivers ERI program
- 3) Resource Withdrawal - SERT addresses special needs as outlined in assessments

Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)

Composition:

- SERT, principal, classroom teacher, parents/guardians, support services (if needed), student (if appropriate).

Roles:

- decide whether or not student should be identified as exceptional
- identify areas of exceptionality, using categories and definitions from Ministry
- decide an appropriate placement

- review identification and placement at least once in each school year

Who is identified as exceptional?

- The *Education Act* defines an exceptional pupil as “a pupil whose behavioral, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program...”. Students are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education.

What is a Special Education Program?

- Based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation
- Includes an Individual Education Plan (IEP) containing specific objectives and an outline of special education services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil

What Special Education Services can be provided?

- resources, including support personnel and equipment necessary for developing and implementing a special education program

What is an IEP?

It includes:

- specific educational expectations;
- an outline of special education program and services that will be received;
- a statement about the methods by which student’s progress will be reviewed
- for students 14 years and older (except those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness), a plan for transition to appropriate post secondary school activities such as work, further education & community living;
- an IEP must be completed within 30 days after the student has been placed in the program and the principal must ensure the parent receives a copy

How is an IPRC meeting requested?

- upon receiving written request from parent;
- may, with written notice to parent/guardian, refer your child to an IPRC when the principal and the child’s teacher or teachers believe that the child may benefit from a special education program;
- a review IPRC meeting is held within the school year, unless the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from the parents, dispensing with the annual review;
- A parent may request a review IPRC meeting any time after the student has been in a special education program for 3 months.

Who Attends an IPRC?

- principal, SERT, classroom teacher, parent and other personnel working with student.

What Happens at the Meeting?

- SERT chairs the meeting, introductions are made, assessment results discussed, and best placement decision is made based on needs of child.
- decision if student is exceptional
- category and definition of exceptionality is discussed
- description of student strengths/weaknesses
- recommendations for program/services
- reasons for special education placement
- parents are encouraged to ask questions, join in the discussion and sign if in

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agreement

- IEP will be discussed and will be developed

How is an IPRC decision appealed?

- If a parent/guardian disagrees with the IPRC's identification or with the placement decision, they will have one month to write a letter to the Education Committee outlining the decision they disagree with and a statement that sets out reasons for disagreeing.

Placement Options

Regular Class with In-Direct Support

- SERT provides assistance to the classroom teacher through programming ideas, how to modify programming, checking in on student (SERT/TA works with all students).

Regular Class with Support/Assistance

- SERT/TA will come into classroom and assist students under the direction of the classroom teacher- with work assigned by the classroom teacher – based on IEP.

Regular Class with Group Resource Withdrawal

- SERT withdraws a small group of students from the regular classroom for short periods of time (no longer than 45 minutes) to provide assistance to the student in their areas of need as outlined in the IEP.

Self-Contained Classroom (full time or part-time)

AANJ MAACH TA/LIFE SKILLS

- Some students may need to work in a self-contained classroom for all or some of their school day to receive special programming deemed necessary through the IPRC meeting.

Record Keeping

- A student file will be set up for all students referred for Special Education Intervention and it will include a copy of referral forms, consent forms and assessment results.
- A student file will be set up for Second Level Specialized Services containing original documentation at KTEI.
- All documentation will be kept in locked file cabinets at KTEI and Lakeview School.
- Only authorized personnel will access records. Authorized personnel are defined as those staff members working for the benefit of the student.

Transitions

- We recognize the importance of the following transitions in a student's life and will endeavor to provide the necessary supports to ensure that students have as little disruption in their education as possible.
Daycare to Lakeview School Sr. Kindergarten class
Grade 8 to Secondary School
- We recognize the extra care required in assisting students with special needs in the area of transitions and will make every effort to support these students in a manner that meets their individual needs.

- In cases where students are transitioning between schools, Lakeview School's SERT will communicate with the new school to ensure student services are not disrupted.

SEAC - Special Education Advisory Committee

- Since M'Chigeeng First Nation has only one school on the Reserve it is not feasible to maintain a Special Education Advisory Committee representing all areas of exceptionalities. In this case, we will come under the umbrella of the United Chiefs and Councils of Manitoulin and KTEI have membership on the closest Provincial Board. Lakeview School has non-voting representation on the SEAC for the Rainbow Board of Education.

Evaluation

- We will strive to review our programs and planning on an on-going basis to ensure accountability. A variety of assessment tools will be considered to provide as much information as is possible to assist students before having to proceed to Second Level Services for Psycho-Educational and Speech and Language Services.
- Our evaluation will include an ongoing review of student progress and student services offered during the year.