

EDUCATION: PROGRAMS

Policy 512.6 (previously 602.6)

Special Education

Framework

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has implications for the educational provision for children with special needs. Among the most important of these implications are (1) equality of provision, (2) protection from any cruel or unusual treatment or punishment, (3) fair procedures in the identification and classification of students' special needs, (4) school staff accountability for the design and implementation of individualized educational plans (I.E.P.s).

The School Act states that "a board shall make available an educational program to all persons of school age resident in its district". It is the declared policy of the Ministry to see that educational services are available to youngsters regardless of what handicap they may have. If educational services cannot appropriately be provided in the traditional school setting, then the Special Education Division of the Ministry will assist boards to see that appropriate services are provided in the home, in an institution, or in another setting.

Board Policy

In view of the above, it is the declared policy of the Board of Education (Richmond) to provide an educational programme for all school-age children in the district. Insofar as possible, children shall be placed in regular or special classrooms within the district's schools, although other placements may be found for children with severe or multiple handicaps whose needs cannot be adequately provided for in district schools.

When a child has a handicap of a particular type or severity so that even the provision of special support services in the schools (such as aides, learning assistance, and special classes) will not provide an environment in which effective instruction can take place, the Ministry's procedures on special provision shall be followed.

Placement of Handicapped Students

The Superintendent of Schools shall develop, and submit to the Board for approval, procedures for the screening and placement of children with special needs, and for the involvement and redress of parents in placement decisions concerning their children.

Educational placement decisions for each child will seek to place the child in as normal a setting as possible, in keeping with the Ministry's guidelines and the needs of the child. Each exceptional child's learning will be reviewed periodically for re-evaluation and adjustment of his/her educational plan if necessary.

Facilities for Handicapped Students

In implementing section 3.7 of the B.C. Building Code, provisions for the physically handicapped will be provided in all new school construction, and a reasonable number of existing buildings will be modified to permit access by physically handicapped students.

Legal References

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
School Act Secs. 2, 94, 103, 109, 182 (2f), 189
Ministry of Education Circular No. 63, 1978 September 06
Administration Handbook on Special Education, 1986
BC Building Code, Section 3.7

Note: Special education programmes may be included under function 3 of the Board's operating budget, and be eligible for partial Provincial funding. There are currently 20 approved special programme categories in which the Province shares costs with the Board.

A review of these special education programmes, their definitions, and the respective school, district, and Provincial responsibilities are contained in the Administrative Handbook on Special Education and in Special Programmes - A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, both published by the Ministry and available in the office of the Director of Instruction (Special Programmes).

Note 2: A "Directory of Student Support Services" is available from the office of the Director of Instruction (Special Programmes). It contains detailed information about all special programmes offered, diagnostic procedures, placement, educational programme development for each child, and parental involvement.