

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS / SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

YEAR ONE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Introduction

The shared goal of the ministries of Education, Children and Youth Services, and Health and Long-Term Care is to ensure that students and their families get the support they need to fully participate in the ELP.

Parents/guardians, school/school board personnel, and relevant community service agencies will need to continue to work together and, as partners, to identify existing effective practices based on the guiding principles and within existing policies, to support local implementation, in the following areas:

1. **Who** will provide services;
2. **How** services will be delivered (model);
3. **When** services will be delivered; and
4. **Where** services will be delivered.

Guiding Principles

1. Transition planning supports the participation of students in the ELP, including smooth transition and delivery of services for students with special needs / special education needs who enrol in the ELP. Transition planning should:
 - a. take place for students with special needs / special education needs and include students who are already receiving services within their community or who are on a waitlist to receive services within their community;
 - b. occur early; and
 - c. be coordinated by a designated individual.
2. Collaboration among parents/guardians, school/school board personnel, and relevant community service agencies facilitates the provision of services to the students with special needs / special education needs and minimizes potential barriers to service delivery.
 - a. Parents/guardians and relevant community service agencies should be invited by school / school board personnel to participate in transition and service planning.
 - b. Collaboration should focus on the individual needs of students and supporting seamless service delivery.

3. Decisions regarding service delivery consider the best interests of the student and the family in areas such as:
 - a. Continuity of service;
 - b. Expedient service;
 - c. Optimizing outcomes;
 - d. Supporting the child's participation in the ELP; and
 - e. Supporting the continuum of special needs / special education needs.

4. Ongoing review of the services provided focuses on meeting the needs of the student. This review:
 - a. involves the family and all relevant partners;
 - b. includes both formal and informal communication; and
 - c. takes place throughout the school year.

As with all students, the school principal (team leader) is responsible for the special education programs and services students receive in the school. The principal is also responsible for sharing these guiding principles with all partners and for encouraging all relevant individuals to work within them.