

Education Programs and Services

Services for Students and Children

BACKGROUND

Increasing numbers of students and children require services, during school and Early Childhood Services (ECS) program hours, other than those traditionally provided by school authorities. Examples include physical health, mental health and child welfare services.

The Alberta Government is responding to the need for fundamental change to the way children's services are provided in Alberta, and government departments are working together to improve service delivery at the provincial level. Government initiatives include:

- 1 In 1992, a four-department (Alberta Learning, then Alberta Education, Children's Services, then Family and Social Services, Health and Wellness then Alberta Health and Justice and Attorney General) Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee was established to work towards coordinated service delivery. This committee supports the work of the Commissioner of Services for Children, appointed in 1993 to design a new, province-wide, integrated, more effective and community-based system of support to children and families.
- 2 One of the goals in Alberta Learning's *Three-Year Business Plan* is to "improve the coordination of services for children with special needs."
- 3 Other interdepartmental work relates to developing an agreement for funding and providing health and related support services for students and implementing an action plan to improve services for Aboriginal persons with disabilities.

For students and children to receive the services they need, service providers need to work together at both the provincial and local levels. Increasingly, school authorities are working

together with members of the community to improve services at the local level.

POLICY

School authorities will work together with members of the community to meet the needs of students and children who are "at risk" or who have special needs.

STATUTE

School Act

Principals

- 20 A principal of a school must
- (a) provide instructional leadership in the school; ...
 - (d) ensure that students in the school have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister; ...
 - (g) promote co-operation between the school and the community that it serves; ...

Powers of boards

- 60 (1) A board must
- (a) establish policies respecting the provision of educational services and programs; ...

Agreements

- 62 (1) A board may, without the approval of the Minister,
- (a) enter into an agreement with
 - (i) a person, or
 - (ii) a joint committee established under section 63,

respecting the provision of educational, managerial or other services with respect to the operation of schools;

- (b) with respect to its resident students, enter into an agreement with another board or person to provide education programs;
- (c) enter into an agreement with another board, a non-profit organization or a municipality concerning the promotion and development of recreation and community services.

Other sections:

- s. 8 Right of access to education
- s. 18 Teachers
- s. 22 School council
- s. 23 Student records
- s. 28 Private schools
- s. 30 Early childhood services program
- s. 45 Responsibility to students
- s. 29 Special education program
- s. 48 Special Needs Tribunal
- s. 63 Joint committees, etc.
- s. 123 Appeal to board
- s. 124 Review by the Minister
- s. 125 Powers on review

REGULATIONS

The *Early Childhood Services Regulation* A.R. 31/02as amended, *Private Schools Regulation* A.R. 190/00, and *Student Record Regulation* A.R. 71/99 as amended must be referred to in conjunction with this policy. See Section 5, **School Act** Regulations, in the *Policy, Regulations and Forms Manual*.

ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

- 1 “work together” means working with at least one other member of the community to ensure that students have access to the services they need during school hours. This means bringing all levels of government, private, non-profit and volunteer services together at the community level to minimize duplication of effort and improve access for, and responsiveness to, children and families in need.

Examples include information-sharing procedures, co-location of staff, and joint service planning and delivery agreements (informal or formal);

- 2 “at risk” means students and children considered, for any reason, to be at risk for learning problems;
- 3 “students with special needs” mean:
 - (1) students described in section 47(1) of the **Act** as being in need of special education programs because of their behavioral, communicational, intellectual, learning or physical characteristics;
 - (2) students who may require specialized health care services; or
 - (3) students who are gifted and talented.
- 4 “community” means anyone who has an interest in the students in a school, including:
 - (1) students and their families;
 - (2) community agencies, organizations and associations;
 - (3) other local education authorities within and across school jurisdictions, including school councils and operators of Early Childhood Services programs;
 - (4) regional authorities, including Regional Health Authorities and Children’s Services Authorities ;
- 5 “school authorities” means school jurisdictions or funded private schools, private ECS operators, and Charter Schools.

PROCEDURES

- 1 School authorities will develop, keep current, and implement written local policy and procedures for working with other members of the community to design and deliver services for students and children at risk or with special needs.

Local policies and procedures will be consistent with provincial policy and procedures, including the *Standards for Special Education*.

- 2 School authorities will include plans and strategies for the delivery of services for students and children in their three-year education plans and results reports.
- 3 To meet the needs of students and children, school authorities, particularly through school principals and counsellors, will take an active role to initiate or participate in working together with other members of the community to improve services.

REFERENCES

Please refer to current editions of the following for additional information:

Early Childhood Services (Policy 1.1.3)

Educational Placement of Students with Special Needs (Policy 1.6.1)

Guidance and Counselling (Policy 1.6.3) *Guide for School Board Planning and Results Reporting*

Kindergarten Program Statement

Laying the Foundation: A guide for planning children's services in Alberta - Handbook I

Programming for Students with Special Needs

School Authority Accountability (Policy 2.1.1)

Special Education (Policy 1.6.2)

Standards for Special Education

Three-Year Business Plan

See Section 7 of the *Policy, Regulations and Forms Manual* for information on where the above document(s) may be obtained, and for Department / Branch addresses, phone and fax numbers.