

Inclusive Education Policy

Each one called by name...(Isaiah 43:1) To be nourished, to be sustained, to grow, to the fullest extent of his/her gifts and abilities

Our inclusive education policy contains information which guides our practice with respect to students with diverse learning needs. This includes teacher beliefs, actions and commitment to addressing and supporting the students' growth and development. It also includes practices that students and teachers must do to provide valuable learning experiences for all children at their level of understanding.

This policy is based on the principles and guidelines provided in the following sources:

- 1 – Special education needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes - IB
- 2 – Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes - IB
- 3 – Learning for All - Ontario Ministry of Education
- 4 – Education for All – Ontario Ministry of Education
- 5 – Growing Success – Ontario Ministry of Education
- 6 – Dufferin-Peel Catholic Board Learning Plan

We are committed to:

- Providing a faith based education to all students in our school that is designed for them to be successful in an inclusive classroom.
- Keeping the student at the centre while promoting and nourishing the relationship between home, school and community.
- Promoting accessibility, honouring diversity and mutual respect and by demonstrating transparency and fairness.
- Using all forms of assessment (assessment for, assessment as and assessment of) to determine students' level of achievement and creating an action plan to support students in reaching their potential.
- Reporting to parents the current level of achievement of their children as well as the strategies and accommodations put in place to support their learning.
- Creating and implementing an IEP for any student who requires individualized supports to be successful.

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1. Inclusion

Definitions

Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools

In the Ontario context, education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

International Baccalaureate: Special Education needs within the IB Programmes

Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities.

We understand that an inclusive environment at St. James fosters and nourishes safe, caring and respectful learning environments rooted in faith.

2. Differentiation

The St. James staff is committed to refining their understanding and implementation of inclusive strategies and instructional practices that reflect the diverse needs, learning styles, and readiness to learn of all students. Planning for inclusion focuses on the differentiation of content, process and product. These inclusive strategies are used to support learners as measured by increased achievement levels on report cards for students with identified learning needs.

2.1 Universal Design

UDL focuses on using teaching strategies and pedagogical materials designed to meet diverse needs to enhance learning for all students. Through the use of flexible curriculum we create pathways towards fair and accurate assessment practices. Flexible curriculum. When we act on the belief that failure is not an option; that every student can learn regardless of age, skills or situation; then we will have achieved academic success for every student.

2.2 Resources

The Special Education consultant works with a family of schools to provide support for students and teachers in the inclusive classroom setting.

Support Services personnel, as part of Family of Schools and/or the Special Education and Support Service Department, are collaborating with educators, in particular, with the classroom teacher, to ensure that all students with diverse learning needs and/or who are at risk academically, physically, socially, emotionally, and behaviourally, are supported through differentiated learning experiences that are informed by timely, appropriate, assessments, supports and interventions.

Support Services Staff in Dufferin-Peel may include:

- Child and Youth Workers
- Educational Resource Workers
- Psychology Staff
- Social Work Staff
- Speech/Language/Hearing/Vision Staff

- Other Para-Professional and/or Professional Staff
<http://www.dpcdsb.org/CEC/Programs/Special+Education/Support+Services/#sthash.4uVbBQNp.dpuf>

The level of support is determined by the multi-disciplinary school team members, upon parental consent.

IPRC Class Placements / Models of Services:

Regular Class with Indirect Support: The student is placed in a regular class for the entire day and the teacher receives specialized consultative services.

Regular Class with Resource Assistance: The student is placed in the regular class for most or all of the day and receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a qualified special education teacher.

Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance: The student is placed in the regular class and receives instruction outside of the classroom for less than 50% of the school day, from a qualified special education teacher.

Special Education Class with Partial Integration: The student is placed in the regular class (where the student/teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31) for at least 50% of the school day, but is integrated with a regular class for at least one instructional period daily.

Special Education Class Full Time: The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class (where the student ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31) for the entire school day.

Services for Students with Diverse Programming Needs:

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board – Spectrum of Services:

- Speech and Language Services
- SW support
- CYW support
- Psychology (including PACS, Neuro Psych, Mental Health)
- Consulting Psychiatry
- Itinerant staff (Deaf & HH, Vision, Phys/Med, Transitions, Technology, ASD, Behaviour)
- ERW support

School Health Support Services:

The mandate of the CCAC School Health Support Services program is to provide access to school health professional services for students. The goal is to support the student in achieving their optimal level of functioning within the school setting. Supports include: SLP, OT, PT, Nursing.

2.3 Assessment

See assessment policy

2.4 Environment

St. James serves a diverse population of students and their families. We create a culture of respect for differences within a Catholic context. Classrooms are equipped with the necessary resources including, staff, access to technology, and other materials to support all learners.

2.5 Personalized Learning/Identification Process

- Identification of students with diverse learning profiles is an important initial component of program planning.

- Students with diverse needs require differentiated programming and additional supports to appropriately address their specific learning needs.
- Assessment tools assist in developing and implementing appropriate programming for students with diverse needs.
- Special education programming is based on the assessed needs of students and is delivered through differentiated programming.
- Programming decisions are based on current assessment data, are made on an individual basis, and identify the most enabling environment for the student, while at the same time giving consideration to the learning and safety needs of all students.
- Educating students with diverse needs in inclusive settings, in their community schools, is the first placement option.
- Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) decisions are made in collaboration with learning team members with parents as the primary decision makers.

Technology

- 2 mobile computer labs with approximately 50 laptops for student use
- 6 desktop computers in the library for student use
- 1 mobile computer lab with laptops for each staff member
- 1 desktop computer in classroom for teacher and student use
- SMART technology in every classroom
- FM systems in classrooms (as well as individual systems for student with hearing impairments)
- Read Write Gold Program, WordQ, TextHelp, Dragon Naturally Speaking available on student computers
- Board Technology Support person available to staff

3. Principles of good practice

3.1 Affirming identity and building self esteem

St. James encourages the qualities, attitudes and characteristics identified in the IB learner profile promoting responsible citizenship and international mindedness. Social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures and affirm the identity of each learner promote self-esteem. In keeping with our Catholic faith and traditions, all persons are valued and respected.

3.2 Valuing prior knowledge

St. James teachers will explicitly activate learners' prior understanding, use prior understandings to differentiate tasks and activities, record information in learning profiles that will support planning for future differentiation, consider the time and strategies necessary for activating and building up background knowledge.

3.3 Scaffolding

In keeping with best practice, St. James teachers will scaffold learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be much more difficult to accomplish. Scaffolding will foster learners' increasing independence in taking responsibility for developing strategies of their own. Some of the strategies in place include: visual aids, demonstrations, dramatizations, technological supports, collaborative groups, and mother-tongue resources.

3.4 Extending learning

As learners progress through the years, they are required to read and write increasingly sophisticated texts in the content areas of the curriculum. Teachers at St. James help learners extend their learning by combining high expectations with numerous opportunities for learner-centered practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials and experiences.

4. School Profile

4.1 Identification

- May/June teachers summarize student profiles and submit to Special Education staff, administrators and next years' teacher.
- August/September students' files are reviewed by Special Education staff and information is summarized and shared with teachers and administrators.
- September Ontario Student Records (OSRs) are reviewed by Special Education staff, administrators and teachers and information about student profiles are shared with the appropriate resource staff. The Special Education consultant as well as outside agencies are also contacted for additional supports for exceptional learners.
- October Individualized Education Plans (IEP) are developed based on students' needs.
- IEPs are formally reviewed and updated each reporting period (November, February, June).
- May/June class lists for the following school year are created by administration with the support from grade level teams and Special Education staff while considering student needs.

4.2 Documentation/Reporting

See assessment policy

4.3 Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

“According to Policy/Program Memorandum No. 11, “Early Identification of Children’s Learning Needs” (1982), every school board in Ontario must have procedures in place to identify the level of development, learning abilities, and needs of every child who is enrolled in the school, and to ensure that educational programs are designed to accommodate those needs and to facilitate the child’s growth and development. These procedures are part of a process of *continuous assessment and program planning* that should be initiated when a child is first enrolled in school and that should continue throughout a child’s school life.”

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>

“For a student with special education needs who requires modified or alternative expectations, assessment and evaluation of his or her achievement will be based on the modified curriculum expectations or alternative expectations outlined in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP).”

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>

“For a student with special education needs who requires modified or alternative expectations, assessment and evaluation of his or her achievement will be based on the modified curriculum expectations or alternative expectations outlined in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP). For a student with special education needs who requires “accommodations only”, as described in his or her IEP, assessment and evaluation of achievement will be based on the appropriate subject/ grade/course curriculum expectations and the achievement levels outlined in the curriculum documents.”

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>

Students not identified through the IPRC process but require significant accommodations to their learning, in addition to differentiated instruction practices, may also benefit from the development of an IEP.

4.4 Allocation of staff:

Special Education Staff – teaching staff is not allocated by student need, but rather based on school population. As is CYW support, SW, Psychology, SLP, etc.

ERW staffing is based on student need – based on the data collected through our High Needs Profiles.

Funding for schools is managed through the Board. The Ministry funds by number of students formally identified, and supports continue to be distributed by school population, rather than need – again with the exception of our ERW allocation to each Family of Schools.

The following are Categories of Exceptionalities and Descriptions – Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

Behaviour

Communication

- Autism
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Learning Disability
- Language Impairment
- Speech Impairment

Intellectual

- Giftedness
- Mild Intellectual Disability
- Developmental Disability

Physical

- Blind and Low Vision
- Physical Disability

Multiple