

**MOOSE FACTORY ISLAND
DISTRICT SCHOOL AREA BOARD**

BOARD POLICY NO. GOV-25	
Approved	
Last Revised	
Board Motion	

SPECIAL EDUCATION

1. PURPOSE

The Moose Factory Island District School Area Board is committed to ensuring that all students, including those identified as having exceptional learning needs, receive the best-quality education possible.

The Board believes that early recognition of learning needs and early intervention is the most effective way to ensure that students remain confident about their abilities and engaged in learning throughout the school program. When some students are identified as having special learning needs, the Board provides effective special education supports, and offers students and parents a range of program options.

2. DEFINITIONS

Special Education: Special education primarily consists of instruction and assessments that are different from those provided to the general student population.

Special Education Program: A special education program means, in respect of an exceptional student, an educational program that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan (Individual Education Plan) containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meets the needs of the exceptional student. [*Education Act, S. 1 (1)*]

POLICY

3. Board Philosophy

The Moose Factory Island District School Area Board's education program is based on the following beliefs:

- All students can succeed.
- Each student has his or her own unique patterns of learning.
- Successful instructional practices are founded on evidence-based research, mitigated and strengthened by staff experience.
- Universal design and differentiated instruction are effective and interconnected means of meeting the learning or productivity needs of any group of students. Universal design involves broad principles for planning instruction and designing

learning environments for a diverse group of students. Differentiated instruction allows educators to address specific skills and difficulties within a classroom setting.

- Classroom teachers are the key educators for a student's literacy and numeracy development.
- Classroom teachers need the support of the larger community to create a learning environment that supports all students.
- Fairness is not sameness.

[Adapted from *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12. p. 7 and p. 12*]

4. Board Commitment

4.1. The Moose Factory Island District School Area Board is committed to providing a range of programs and services for students with special needs in a supportive environment which enables them to develop to their full potential as students and as members of their communities.

4.2. Board staff, students, parents and community partners, with the resources available, will collectively strive to ensure that:

- effective communication and collaboration promote a team approach to meeting student needs;
- assessment data is used to meet individual student needs;
- appropriate resources are provided and supported for students and staff;
- professional development opportunities are provided and supported for students and staff; and
- structures are in place to continuously review and revise current practices and efforts to promote student achievement and well-being.

5. Special Education Identification

5.1. All students require support from teachers, classmates, family, and friends in order to thrive and to gain full benefit from their school experience. The Moose Factory Island District School Area Board recognizes that some students have special needs that require supports beyond those ordinarily received in the school setting.

5.2. Special learning needs may be met through accommodations, and/or an educational program that is modified above or below the age-appropriate grade level expectations for a particular subject. The ministry sets out definitions of exceptionalities that must be used by school boards after determining that a student is an "exceptional pupil".

5.3. All students brought to an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (I.P.R.C.) in the Board are identified using the Ministry of Education categories of exceptionalities. These include:

- behaviour;
- communication (autism, deaf and hard of hearing, language impairment, speech impairment, learning disability);
- intellectual (giftedness, mild intellectual disability, developmental disability, intellectual disability);
- physical (physical disability, blind and low vision); and
- multiple (multiple exceptionalities).

5.4. Moose Factory Island District School Area Board will make every effort to ensure that exceptional students have access to an education that will enable them to develop the knowledge and skills they need in order to participate in the life of Ontario's communities.

5.5. Administrative Procedure 240 Special Education sets out Board expectations for accommodations and supports for exceptional students. This procedure also provides details about the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for every exceptional student.

6. Board Special Education Plan

6.1. In accordance with Regulation 306 Special Education Programs and Services, each school board in Ontario is required, every two years, to prepare and approve a report on the special education programs and special education services provided by the Board, and to submit it to the ministry.

6.2. Each Board is required to maintain a Special Education Plan, to review it annually, to amend it from time to time to meet the current needs of its exceptional students, and to submit any amendment(s) to the Minister for review.

6.3. The Special Education Plan is prepared by Board staff, in consultation with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). This plan is reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees before submission to the Ministry of Education.

6.4. Detailed requirements for the Special Education Plan are set out in the Ministry document, *Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans 2000*.

6.5. The Board's Special Education Plan informs the Ministry of Education and the public about special education programs and services that are provided by the Board in accordance with legislation and ministry policy on special education.

7. The Special Education Advisory Committee

7.1. The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) supports the Moose Factory Island District School Area Board in protecting the rights of students with special learning needs. Under Ontario's *Education Act*, every student is entitled to programming which best meets their needs.

- 7.2. SEAC provides information, advice and help to parents/guardians whose children require additional support. SEAC advises the Board on establishing and developing special education programs and services.
- 7.3. A detailed review of the role of the Special Education Advisory Committee is set out in Section 4 of Board Policy GOV-11 Parent and Community Relations.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legal References:

Education Act, paragraph 170 (1) 7: Duties of Boards: Provide Special Education
Education Act: Section 57.1 Special Education Advisory Committees
Ontario Regulation 181/98 Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils
Ontario Regulation 298 Operation of Schools, S. 30-31 Special Education Programs and Services
Ontario Regulation 306 Special Education Programs and Services
Ontario Regulation 464/97 Special Education Advisory Committees
Ontario Ministry of Education. *Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans. (2000)*
Ontario Ministry of Education. *Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools. (2010)*
Ontario Ministry of Education. *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12. (2013)*

Board References:

Board Policy GOV-01 Vision, Mission, and Values
Board Policy GOV-02 Strategic Directions and Key Priorities
Board Policy GOV-03 Role of the Corporate Board
Board Policy GOV-04 Role of the Director of Education
Board Policy GOV-07 Learning and Working Environment: Equity and Inclusion
Board Policy GOV-11 Parent and Community Relations—including Section 4: SEAC
Board Policy No. GOV-22 Communications
Administrative Procedure 115 School Planning and Reporting
Administrative Procedure 240 Special Education
Administrative Procedure 250 Student Assessment and Evaluation