



Maple Hill School

SECTION	General School Administration
POLICY NAME	Special Education Policy
POLICY NUMBER	327
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DATE REVISED	
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Preamble:

Maple Hill School, believing that all students, including those with significant physical, intellectual, social or emotional disabilities, are to be treated with dignity, respect, integrity, safety, fairness and be able to determine their own learning and work towards continually exceeding expectations, will enroll students with special needs.

Policy:

1. Criteria for Admission

- a. Admission to the special education program of this school is subject to all the policies and procedures which apply to other admissions and to the additional policies and procedures described here.
- b. The school aged siblings of the student with special needs will also be enrolled.
- c. Students with special needs will be admitted only when the necessary support services can be provided. Funding for support services is the responsibility of the parents, school society and BC Ministry of Education. In cases where BC Ministry of Education grants are not available, the parents and school must seek alternative funding.
- d. Wherever possible, a completed application form accompanied by relevant medical and assessment reports should be submitted by February 15th for September enrolment.
- e. An interview with the administration and special education staff will be arranged. Final acceptance will not be given until arrangements for necessary support services have been approved by MHS.

Guidelines for Administering an Inclusive Special Education Program

- a. The special education program will be designed as an inclusive program, endeavoring to create a supportive learning environment in which students with special needs are integrated into their age-peer classrooms to the greatest extent possible. Decisions on levels of integration will be based on the real needs of the children. Program delivery may range from full inclusion to partial participation with an emphasis on developing life skills.
- b. MHS will meet the needs of its students by employing staff and contacting specialists for specific tasks, including speech, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. The services of a special education resource teacher who can act as a resource to both classroom teachers and support personnel and coordinate the program will be provided. The case load for the special education resource teacher will not exceed ten students with high needs.
- c. Working with parents, the student's school-based team will formulate and carry out IEPs that will enable the student to develop to his or her fullest potential.
- d. Teachers who teach at MHS must be willing to accept a student with special needs in their classrooms and be an active member of the student's school-based team. Course work in special education is a desirable requisite for those applying as teachers to the school.

Coordinating the Program

A successful special education program requires both coordination and educational expertise. Although students with special needs will be registered in regular classes, the teachers of these classes may neither have the expertise to plan appropriate educational programs nor the time to deal with consultants as may be required. Feeling that they lack this expertise and time, classroom teachers might therefore resist having a special needs child enrolled in their classes. A teacher with training and experience in special education is available as a resource. When enrolment warrants, a special education resource teacher will be hired to supervise the entire special education program. The special education resource teacher may be responsible for some teaching as well. In some cases, the services of an itinerant teacher might be contracted or the learning assistance teacher may also serve as the special education resource teacher. As the number of students with special needs increases, we may need to appoint a special education coordinator.

The following is a sample list of services that would be carried out by a special education coordinator:

- act as team leader for the school-based team
- develop objectives for an IEP jointly with parents and others
- develop, coordinate and monitor instructional plans
- arrange to access specialized materials and equipment as necessary
- conduct diagnostic testing and assessments as a basis for program planning
- coordinate meetings with parents and school-based team members
- select materials and strategies to meet individual learning needs

- provide direct instruction to the student with special needs in a separate as needed
- train teaching assistants and provide in-service to staff
- coordinate the involvements of therapists and consultants
- meet with the school-based team to problem solve on an ongoing basis
- share information routinely about student progress and coordinate reporting process to parents
- carry out administrative tasks related to record keeping, ordering materials, maintaining specialized equipment, arranging appointments, processing new applications and applying for grants and government funding.

Students who are identified as special needs must have an IEP. The IEP must be developed with parental/guardian input. For further details related to what an IEP must cover and best practices, please see the additional documents of this policy. Please also refer to the Instructional Support Planning Process documents for the specific category designation.

High Incidence Special Needs

With high incidence special needs students (Category K (mild intellectual disability), P (gifted), Q (learning disabilities, R (students requiring behaviour support or students with mental illness), Maple Hill School will develop IEPs for these students in order to best support their learning. Maple Hill School will work with parents/guardians and community partners (i.e. Richmond Health) in order to get students the help they need. Any student that has a high incidence designation must be actively supported while they are a student at Maple Hill School. This would include bringing in other professionals should services be required.