



CAYMAN ISLANDS

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

CODE OF PRACTICE

14.1.08

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FORWARD

This document describes policy, practice, and procedure for Cayman Islands schools in relation to provision made for children who are of mandated school age, and early years (birth to 5 years of age), who may have Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Drafting Code of Practice for the Cayman Islands is a unique challenge for educators, as the islands' culture is highly influenced by Caribbean tradition, British territorial connections, and North American influences. Children moving on to tertiary educational settings are likely to not only enter University College of the Cayman Islands but frequently also institutions of higher education within any one of these three jurisdictions.

This challenge presents a unique opportunity to select the best features from all relevant jurisdictions in order to craft laws, regulations, and codes of practice which uniquely meet the needs of children and families who are served by the Cayman Islands Department of Education Services. When Education Law is fully revised and legislated, the language will likely follow definitions for SEN corresponding most closely to that of the United Kingdom. Those underpinnings, however, are consistent with most international forms of legislation on behalf of children with such needs:

- All children benefit from a broad, balanced, and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum for foundation/functional stages and the National Curriculum. Students with special educational needs should be allowed full access to the National Curriculum to the maximum extent possible, and expectations should be that they can progress within that curriculum.
- Schools and Early Years providers should work together with parents and community partners to ensure a child's special educational needs are identified early. Early interventions lead to more meaningful outcomes for children of SEN.
- Schools and settings need to utilize best or "research-based" practices when devising interventions prior to evaluating or assessing a child for special educational needs. Any subsequent provision for SEN should follow that same practice guideline.
- Special educational needs of children will normally be best met "inclusively" within mainstream schools or settings. Multi-disciplinary teams should always consider that educational services be provided in settings closest to the child's home and in the "least restrictive" setting possible based on IEP goals.
- Parents are full partners with school multi-disciplinary teams in the evaluation, identification, and educational planning for their children.
- Assessments are completed within prescribed time limits.
- Where a child is determined to have special educational needs, Individual Education Plans (IEP's) are clearly detailed, implemented within prescribed time limits, and reviewed annually.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Definition of a Child with Special Educational Needs

- A. Learning Difficulty/Disability**
- B. Special Educational Provision**
- C. Exclusions**

II. Identification, Assessment and Provision in School-Aged Settings

- A. Introduction: Graduated Response/Three Phases**
- B. Phase 1: Early Screening & Differentiated Instruction Plans**
- C. Phase 2: School-Based Support Teams & Individual Intervention Plans**
- D. Referral for Formal Assessment**
 - 1. Review of Existing Data Requirement Prior to Assessment**
 - 2. Informed Parental Consent for Assessment**
 - 3. Time Limits**
- E. Phase 3: SEN Eligibility & Individual Education Plans**
 - 1. Determination of Eligibility**
 - 2. Required IEP Components**
 - 3. Annual Review**
- G. Periodic Re-Assessment Requirement/Continue or Exit from SEN Services**

III. Identification, Assessment and Provision in Early Years Settings

- A. Introduction: Graduated Response/Three Phases**
- B. Referral for Assessment**
- C. SEN Eligibility and IEP Service Provision in the Early Years**
- D. Transition Planning Prior to School-Age Services**

IV. Equities for Children with Special Educational Needs

- A. Relationship with and Requirements of Private/Parochial Schools**
- B. Accommodations and Exemptions for Assessments**
- C. Parent Complaints and Appeals**
- D. Requirements for Placement of Children in SEN Special Day Schools**

I. Definition of a Child with Special Educational Needs

In general, children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which *requires* special educational provision to be made for them.

(A) Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- * have a *significantly* greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- * present persistent emotional/behavioral difficulties which *significantly* and adversely affect educational performances and progress; or
- * have a physical, health or sensory impairment which *significantly* hinders them from performing educationally or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age; or
- * have communication difficulties in oral expression or listening comprehension which affect interaction with others and *significantly* and adversely affect educational progress.

(B) Special Educational Provision means:

- * educational provision which is *additional to* or otherwise *different from* the educational provision made generally for children of the same age. This necessitates that there is substantial change in either the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction.

(C) Exclusions means that, for the purposes of this Code of Practice, a child may not be identified for Special Educational Needs primarily:

- * because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which they will be taught.
- * because the child has experienced educational disadvantage due to lack of learning opportunities such as frequent school changes, poor attendance, multiple teachers in the same year, or questionable home school curriculum.
- * because there has been an inappropriate curriculum and/or inadequate instruction.
- * because there has been cultural, environmental, or economic disadvantage.

Gifted and talented pupils are not by reason of their gifts or talents within the definition of pupils with Special Educational Needs, though some pupils who are gifted and talented may have special educational needs due to emotional, behavioral or other learning difficulties. Separate Code of Practice for the identification and provision of differentiated curriculum and specialized services for students who are gifted and talented is provided separately.

II. Identification, Assessment and Provision in School-Aged Settings

A. Introduction: Graduated Response/Three Phases

In order to help children with learning or behavioral difficulties, schools should practice a graduated response that encompasses an array of intervention strategies prior to identifying a student as having special educational needs. This approach recognizes that there is a continuum of intervention strategies and, only where necessary, brings increasing specialist expertise to bear.

The school should make full use of all on-site resources (Phases 1 and 2) before expecting to call upon outside resources (Phase 3). An “At-Risk” register identifying children monitored by Phase 1 or 2 plans should be maintained by the SENCO at the individual school site. Only when a student has been identified through means of formal assessment and a Multi-Disciplinary Team determination process at the beginning of Phase 3, should they be placed on an official Special Educational Needs register centrally maintained by the Department of Education Services.

B. Phase 1: Early Screening and Progress Monitoring

The importance of early identification, assessment, and provision for any child who may have special educational needs cannot be over-emphasized. The earlier action is taken, the more responsive the child is likely to be and the more readily the delay may be amenable to remediation. Also, *assessment* should not be regarded as a single event which occurs prior to Phase 3 but rather as a continuing process which begins with the gathering of a wide variety of data beginning at Phase 1. Duties of schools at Phase 1 are:

1. Upon entry into either Reception or Year 1 classrooms, all students should be screened in multiple learning areas to determine whether any concerns might exist. This may be done using published developmental screening instruments in conjunction with teacher observation no later than within the first half-term of instruction. Results of this screening should be combined with multiple sources of evidence of children’s performance including records passed from preschool settings or gained from parent input. (Full Implementation by September 2009.)

In later Years, the process of screening should continue using progress monitoring strategies. For instance, schools might consider any student falling within the bottom two stanines of the annual TerraNova assessment as requiring further attention. Additionally, schools are encouraged to implement a system of continuous progress monitoring of *all* children using criterion-referenced or curriculum-based measures. Only when a child is not progressing satisfactorily despite the teaching style being differentiated should they be considered for more intensive strategies.

2. When a classroom teacher’s or other’s concern (underpinned by evidence regarding a student’s lack of progress despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities) occurs, the following actions should be followed and documented by the classroom teacher on a simple, concise Differentiated Instruction Plan (DIP):

- use existing information from the child's educational experience to document starting points or baseline for the development of an appropriate differentiated curriculum for the child.
- develop teaching strategies to be used (e.g. provide different learning materials, special equipment or manipulatives, increased direct instruction time, smaller group instruction, etc.) for no more than two or three short-term measurable targets as identified on the DIP.
- establish who will be responsible for the interventions (teacher, classroom teaching assistant, parent, student) and a reasonable time frame whereupon the Differentiated Instruction Plan will be reviewed to measure student progress.
- clearly state success (exit) criteria for each target.

3. This Differentiated Instruction Plan will be developed by the classroom teacher in consultation with the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and other consultants, when available.

4. Phase 1 Differentiated Instruction Plans should be reviewed at least termly, or possibly more frequently for some children. Reviews need not be unduly formal. Parents' input regarding their child's progress should be solicited, and their participation should be encouraged as part of the review process. Whenever possible or reasonable, the child should also take part in the review process and involved in setting or evaluating progress toward targets.

5. Exception: In extreme cases or times of crisis the SENCO may recommend a student's status be expedited to Phase 2 or assessment within Phase 3.

C. Phase 2: School-Based Support Team (SBST) Individual Intervention Plans

The triggers for Phase 2 should be that, despite receiving a differentiated program and concentrated support under Phase 1, the child: 1) continues to make little or no progress in specific academic areas of literacy and mathematics, 2) continues working at national curriculum standards significantly below that expected of children of a similar age, 3) has emotional or behavioral difficulties which substantially and chronically interfere with the child's own learning or the learning of others, 4) has sensory or physical needs and requires additional specialist equipment or regular contact by a specialist service, or 5) has ongoing communication difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

When more focused intervention planning is required based on the above criteria, the duty of schools at Phase 2 are:

1. The multi-disciplinary School-Based Support Team (SBST) should convene a meeting to consider all the information gathered during Phase 1 and make recommendations for more time-intensive or focused interventions on behalf of the student. The composition of the SBST can be determined by individual schools sites but must minimally include the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), one

of the child's classroom teachers, qualified specialist with understanding/capacity in the area of suspected need, and the child's parent. (The Team may proceed without the parent only in the case that there has been no response from the parent following three reasonable and documented attempts to gain participation.)

2. Proposed interventions should be recorded on an Individual Intervention Plan which includes the same components as the Phase 1 plan, but which clearly indicates a change in measurable targets, development of alternative strategies, or increased intensity or frequency of interventions.

3. At this Phase, a more careful assessment of the child's learning strengths and weaknesses or behavior needs may be required. If a designated specialist specifically observes the student, gathers questionnaire data from teachers and/or parents, or individually administers any tests as part of this process, signed informed parental consent should always be obtained by the school. This written consent is not required for the gathering of "functional" data gained by such means as conversations among professionals and with parents, record reviews, or whole-classroom or school-wide environmental observations.

4. Phase 2 Individual Intervention Plans should be reviewed at least termly, or possibly more frequently for some children. Reviews need not be unduly formal. Parents' input regarding their child's progress should be solicited, and their participation should be encouraged as part of the review process. Whenever possible or reasonable, the child should also take part in the review process and involved in setting or evaluating progress toward targets.

D. Referral for Formal Assessment

When regular reviews of Phase 2 interventions continue to describe a child's learning difficulty and reveal lack of progress towards targets despite interventions, the School-Based Support Team (SBST) may refer a child for formal comprehensive assessment or evaluation to determine eligibility for special educational service provision. Such referral should be accompanied by documentation of these required components:

1. Review of Existing Data

- Relevant health and medical history, including results of recent hearing and vision screenings.
- Documentation of the primary language of the child and the home.
- Results of any previous educational assessments, including instruments administered by an advisory specialist or TerraNova results, when available.
- Input from the classroom teacher(s) in regard to level of educational attainment in comparison to the National Curriculum based on criterion-referenced assessments. Relevant classroom or school behavioral observations should be noted.
- Views of the parent or caregiver, and of the child when appropriate.
- Observations and input from involved SEN professionals.

- Observations and input from involved community-based service providers, where appropriate.
- Brief review of Phase 1 and Phase 2 plans and outcomes.

2. Informed Parental Consent

Based on review of existing data, the SBST will state the need to collect additional formal assessment data. When stating this need, it should be clearly documented as to which types of additional assessments or tests are being requested. Once the parent is provided this information, signed parental consent is required prior to proceeding.

3. Time Limits

The formal assessment of a student, including the subsequent multi-disciplinary team meeting to review results and make eligibility determination, must be completed within 60 school days from receipt of parental consent. This 60-day timeline may be extended up to an additional 30 days, provided it is in the best interest of the child and the parents and school agree in writing to such an extension. Extension can also be made if a parent fails to make their child present on the days scheduled for assessment.

E. Phase 3: SEN Eligibility and Individual Education Plans

Within 60 school days and following formal comprehensive assessment of a student, the School-Based Support Team (SBST), with all required multi-disciplinary team members present, will meet to review results and determine eligibility for Phase 3 special educational needs service provision.

1. Determination of SEN Eligibility will be made consistent with Definition of Special Educational Needs (Section I.A.B.C). The Team will verify this by documentation which specifies:

- Verification that a student has a learning difficulty in one or more of the areas defined in Section I.A.
- Description of educational provision required for the student to meet the National Curriculum which is *additional to* or otherwise *different from* the educational provision made generally for children of the same age.
- Consideration of the impact of any exclusionary factors as outlined in Section I.C.
- Signed agreement or disagreement by all Team participants.

2. Within 30 school days following initial determination of eligibility for Special Educational Needs services, the SBST will develop and review an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) which outlines provision of services. Required IEP components are:

- Statement of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), including strengths and needs.
- Measurable annual goals that address the needs identified in the PLAAFP statement.
- Clear description of special educational needs services to be provided, including time to be provided each week, location and responsible school personnel.
- Clear description of supplementary aids, services, or classroom adaptations which are to be provided.
- Documentation of any accommodations or exemption for external assessments. (See Section IV.B)
- For students who are 14 years old and older, documentation of a transition plan which includes post-secondary goals related to education, training, employment or independent living skills. A statement should include what in-school and interagency supports will be provided to achieve these goals.
- Signed participation from Team members.

3. Each Phase 3 IEP will be reviewed within one year from the previous review. A new document will be subsequently developed reflecting necessary revisions to required IEP components based on the student's needs.

G. Periodic Re-Assessment Requirement/Continue or Exit from SEN Services

For many students with milder disabilities, it would be desirable that, with quality service provision, a student might be removed from the SEN register over time. Nonetheless, careful periodic reassessment of student needs is required for continued quality educational planning.

Within one year prior to exit from any Key Stage, or more frequently, students served on Phase 3 IEP's must be routinely reassessed to determine whether they continue to require special educational needs provision. Review of existing data as outlined in II.D.1 will determine whether any additional formal testing is required as part of the reassessment. A statement as to continued need or ability to exit from SEN services will be made consistent with II.E.1.

III. Identification, Assessment and Provision in Early Years Settings

A. Introduction: Graduated Response/Three Phases

Early Years Education is part of the foundation stage of education for children from birth to school-age. During this time most children experience rapid physical, emotional, intellectual and social growth. For many children, the early education or preschool setting will provide their first experience of learning within a peer group. The Early Childhood Services Office within the Department of Education Services provides advice and guidance for early education practitioners regarding appropriate provision of learning and teaching experiences throughout the foundation stage.

Preschool practitioners should provide play and learning opportunities to help children develop in the following areas of learning:

- Personal, social, and emotional development
- Communication, Language & Literacy
- Mathematical development
- Physical development
- Creative development
- Knowledge & understanding of the world

It should be understood that children will progress at different rates within different areas during the foundation stage. It should not be assumed, therefore, that children who are making slower progress must necessarily have special educational needs. But, such children will need carefully differentiated learning opportunities to help them progress. Frequent and careful monitoring of children's progress should be maintained.

Consistent with school-age Code of Practice, a graduated response should govern levels of intervention when a child's rate of progress in a developmental area is inadequate. The preschool provider should make full use of all on-site resources and document differentiated instruction attempts (Phase 1) before expecting to call upon outside resources.

When it is documented that differentiated educational interventions yield limited or no progress, the additional expertise of early intervention specialist teachers, speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, or occupational therapists available through the Early Intervention Programme (EIP) within the Early Childhood Services Office may be called upon (Phase 2). These specialists may give advice on the use of new strategies, materials, or training supports for particular learning activities. An "At-Risk" register identifying children monitored by Phase 2 plans should be maintained by a designee within EIP, acting as SENCO.

Only when a student has been identified through means of formal assessment and a Multi-Disciplinary Team determination process at the beginning of Phase 3, should they be placed on an official Special Educational Needs register centrally maintained by the Department of Education Services. In extreme cases or times of crisis, the Early Intervention Programme SENCO may recommend a student's status be expedited to Phase 2 or assessment within Phase 3.

B. Referral for Assessment

The triggers for referral for formal multi-disciplinary assessment could be that, despite receiving individually differentiated instruction, the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas of development over a long period of time.
- continues working at an early years curriculum level substantially below that expected of children of a similar age.

- has emotional or behavioral difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of others, despite having an individualized Behavior Intervention Plan.
- has physical or sensory needs, and requires additional equipment or regular visits for direct intervention or advice by practitioners from a specialist service.
- has on-going communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

Consistent with school-age Code of Practice, a Review of Existing Data (I.D.1) should be documented by the SENCO on behalf of the Early Intervention Programme team. Informed parental consent (I.D.2) is required prior to completing any formal assessments.

The formal assessment of a student, including the completion of reports and conducting the subsequent multi-disciplinary meeting to determine eligibility for Phase 3 SEN services, must be completed within 60 school days. This 60-day timeline may be extended up to an additional 30 days, provided it is in the best interest of the child and the parents and school agree in writing to such an extension. Extension can also be made if a parent fails to make their child present on the days scheduled for assessment.

When a child under three years, nine months (3-9) of age has been referred to the Early Intervention Programme, it is probable that their parents or the Health Services will have first identified substantial special needs. The child is likely to have a particular condition or major health problem that has caused concern at an early stage. Assessment of children under 3-9 years of age need not follow the same procedures that are applicable to assessments outlined for children who are aged two and over.

C. SEN Eligibility and IEP Service Provision in the Early Years

Each multi-disciplinary evaluation to determine Early Years SEN eligibility must include the administration of a comprehensive developmental assessment. In addition, at least one more specialized instrument must be given by a qualified examiner to substantiate need within areas which appear to be specifically delayed.

Determination of eligibility and the rules governing Individual Education Plan (IEP) development and implementation are consistent with that of school-age Code of Practice (I.E). Children under the age of 3-9 will be served under a less complex Individual Play Plan (IPP) developed under the guidance of the Early Intervention Programme. Where children from birth through five have such severe and complex needs that they require specialized settings or extraordinary allocation of human or financial resources to meet their educational goals, the authority for such placements and financial commitments resides jointly between the Head of Early Childhood Services and the Head of Student Services.

D. Transition Planning Prior to School-Age Services

The Early Intervention Programme should, within at least the term prior to a child transferring from Early Years to primary school setting, conduct a review of the Individual Education Plan in order to consider the most appropriate SEN provision at school-age. Arrangement for the transfer of all EIP records for children maintained on either the “At-Risk” or SEN register for Early Years should be made at that time.

IV. Equities for Children with Special Educational Needs

A. Relationship with and Requirements of Private/Parochial Schools

TBA: On-Going Consultation with the Ministry of Education.

B. Accommodations and Exemptions for Assessments

Accommodations are specific practices and procedures that provide students with equitable access during instruction and assessment. Accommodations are made in order to provide a student equal access to learning and equal opportunity to demonstrate what is known. They are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student’s SEN needs. Accommodations can be changes in the presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling of educational activities. There should be a direct connection between a student’s disability or need and the accommodation(s) provided to the student during educational activities, including assessment.

Students should receive the same accommodations for classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and external assessments. No accommodations should be provided during assessments that are not also provided during instruction. However, not all accommodations for instruction are appropriate for use during a standardized assessment.

Accommodations may not provide verbal or other clues or suggestions that hint at or give away the correct response to the student. Therefore, it is not permissible to simplify, paraphrase, explain, or eliminate any test item, prompt, or multiple-choice option. Additionally, accommodations provided for one student may not impede or impact other students in the testing room. It is the responsibility of the Testing Administrator to see that each student who qualifies for testing accommodations receives these accommodations while also ensuring that other students who do not receive accommodations are not affected.

Cayman Islands Department of Education Services offers three levels of accommodations to students participating in external assessments:

1. **Standard Accommodations** are provisions made in how a student accesses and demonstrates learning that does not substantially change the instructional level, the content, or the performance criteria. Students who have either a Phase 1, Phase 2, or Phase 3 plan may be considered for standard accommodations.

Depending on standardised administration requirements of the tests' publishers, examples of standard accommodations might include extended testing time, separate location or preferential seating, small group or individual administration, more breaks, read aloud or sign instructions for math or writing items, special lighting, special furniture or pencil, more breaks or shorter sessions, repeat directions, write answers directly into test booklet, record or dictate answers to multiple choice responses to a scribe, or use color overlay.

** Although English as a Second Language learners are not covered under this Code of Practice, they may also be considered for standard accommodations.*

2. **Non-Standard Accommodations** are provisions that involve substantial changes in what a student is expected to learn and/or in the way that learning is demonstrated. Such changes are made to provide a student with meaningful and productive learning experiences, environments, and assessments based on individual needs and abilities. Non-standard accommodations affect the comparability of test scores, and results will be disaggregated from those of same-aged peers when reporting.

Only students with Phase 3 IEP's may be given non-standard accommodations. School-Based Support Teams should exercise caution in considering whether a student requires non-standard accommodations in order to access the test. Students considered for these accommodations should be using such alternative accommodations consistently in their daily instruction.

Depending on standardized administration requirements of the tests' publishers, examples of non-standard accommodations might include using assistive technology (spell check, grammar check, or predict-ahead software), record responses or dictate to a scribe on writing tests, or read or sign for items on the reading tests.

3. **Exemptions** are intended for students who experience significant cognitive impairments which prevent meaningful participation in testing. In the case of exemption from external assessments, students nonetheless should be engaged in on-going criterion-referenced assessments as part of their instruction which document progress within the National Curriculum.

** Although English as a Second Language (ESL) learners are not covered under this Code of Practice, they may be considered for exemption if they have been enrolled for less than one academic year and who the School-Based Support Team documents are unable to take the tests.*

C. Parent Complaints and Appeals

If a parent or court-appointed guardian appeals a decision made by the School-Based Support Team or has a complaint regarding the actual provision of services, this should be directed for the purposes of mediation to the Head of Student Services, Cayman Islands Department of Education Services. This Officer will reconvene the Team to attempt resolution of the complaint or appeal. Written notice of the results of that conference will be provided to the parent and the Director of the Department of Education Services.

Should a mediated agreement not be achieved, the parent or guardian has final right of appeal to the Director of Education Services. This request for appeal must be submitted in writing to the Director within 10 school days of the mediation session provided by Head of Student Services. The Director will hear arguments for both sides of disagreement within a reasonable timeframe. Within 10 school days of this hearing, a finally exhaustive written decision will be issued to the parent and school.

E. Requirements for Placement of Children in SEN Special Day Schools (Lighthouse School and Alternative Education Centre)

For a small number of children with special educational needs, IEP goals cannot be appropriately addressed within full-time inclusive mainstreamed school settings. This is due to the nature and severity of the student's disability. In all cases, a child shall never be placed within a Department of Education Services SEN Day School without a Multi-Disciplinary case conference which includes the parent. (The Team may proceed without the parent only in the case that there has been no response from the parent following three reasonable and documented attempts to gain participation. In such cases, results and any determinations by the Team should be mailed to the parent via certified letter.)

Three programs (Lighthouse School, Tutorial Unit at the Alternative Education Centre, and Transition Unit at the Alternative Education Centre) are available for SEN Special Day School placements depending on student age and need:

1. The Lighthouse School

Programs at the Lighthouse School are designed for school-aged children who exhibit significant learning difficulties resulting from lowered intellectual functioning, autism disorder, or multiple disabilities (including medical, sensory or health conditions). Students eligible for placement must, in addition, be assessed to have significant delay in adaptive functioning in two or more of the developmental areas of:

- Physical Health/Motor Skills
- Communication (Receptive, Expressive, Written)
- Social/Emotional Functioning
- Daily Living Skills

Only students who have received formal comprehensive assessment, followed by the development of a Phase 3 IEP, will be considered for enrollment at Lighthouse School. Referrals may only come from other government schools or from the Early Intervention Programme (EIP).

A decision to have a child placed at the Lighthouse School must be made by a multi-disciplinary School-Based Support Team convened by the sending school or the EIP. In addition, representatives from the Lighthouse School will need to become knowledgeable of the child's specific educational needs and be present at the SBST meeting in which the educational placement at the Lighthouse School is considered.

2. Alternative Education Centre: Tutorial Unit

The Tutorial Unit housed at the Alternative Education Centre is available to high school students whose behaviors are chronically and significantly disruptive to their learning and/or the learning of others. It is intended that students who enter this program are provided differentiated National Curriculum, intensive interventions such as counselling and other behavioral remediation, and IEP planning which will eventually and gradually allow them inclusion back into their mainstreamed setting.

Only students who have received formal comprehensive assessment, followed by the development of a Phase 3 IEP, will be considered for enrollment within the Tutorial Unit at the Alternative Education Centre. Additionally, the sending school must evidence the completion of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) which has led to a formal Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of that Phase 3 IEP. BIP strategies must have been implemented and reviewed for effectiveness over an appropriate length of time prior to referral to the Tutorial Unit.

A decision to have a child placed at the Tutorial Unit must be made by the multi-disciplinary School-Based Support Team convened by the sending high school. In addition, representatives from the Alternative Education Centre will need to become knowledgeable of the student's specific educational needs and participate at the SBST meeting in which the educational placement decision within the Tutorial Unit is made.

If a determination is made for placement within the Tutorial Unit, the sending IEP document must designate clear behavioral targets which will indicate readiness for and activate reintegration back into mainstreamed settings. The Alternative Education Centre monitors behavioral progress on a scheduled basis, and high schools may not prevent reintegration should the appropriate progress be achieved towards IEP behavioral targets.

3. Alternative Education Centre: Transition Unit

The Transition Unit housed at the Alternative Education Centre is available to high school students in Years 11 and 12 whose behaviors are chronically disruptive to their learning and/or the learning of others, presenting serious violations of social/legal rules or danger to the health and safety of others. Enrollment in the Transition Unit represents a final, exhaustive effort to achieve graduation through an alternative curriculum. Final goal is employability and not eventual return to the mainstream setting.

A decision to have a child placed at the Transition Unit must be made by an administrative team from within the Department of Education Services, upon recommendation and referral from the sending high school to the Office of Student Services. A representative from the Alternative Education Centre will be invited to that meeting in which placement within the Transition Unit is determined. To be considered, a student must meet criteria for enrollment; in addition, the sending school must document a history of prior formal interventions (Behavior Intervention Plans, school-based student services provision, and external agency involvement).