

## 421 ROLE OF LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHERS

### Background

As defined by Alberta Education, an inclusive education system is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance of, and belonging for, all students. Inclusive education in Alberta means a value-based approach to accepting responsibility for all students. It also means that all students will have equitable opportunity to be included in the typical learning environment or program of choice

### Qualifications

1. The Learning Support Teacher shall meet the following criteria:
  - a. The Learning Support Teacher is an Alberta certified professional teacher
  - b. The teacher must have completed 3 years of successful classroom teaching experience
  - c. The teacher must have completed a professional graduate level program related to special education including a practicum at the post-Bachelor's Degree. A Master's Degree related to Special Education is preferred.
  - d. Level B Assessment Certification
2. In exceptional cases, when an employee who is hired as a learning support teacher does not fully meet these qualifications, the following regulations shall apply:
  - a. The teacher/employee will receive a letter from Division Office indicating that the appointment to that position is for a period not longer than one school year.
  - b. After a period of one year, the teacher/employee will provide evidence to Division Office of having enrolled in a professional program relating to special education. This program should consist of a minimum of four (4) full course equivalents including a practicum at the post-Bachelor's Degree level. At least one of the courses must be in the area of Level B Assessments.
  - c. If the teacher/employee does not show evidence of enrolment in such a program, the special education position must be relinquished.
  - d. The teacher is expected to complete the graduate level educational program within four (4) years of the initial assignment to a special education position.
  - e. Principals will review the educational qualifications of their special education staff

on an annual basis.

- f. Division office personnel responsible for Learning Services will annually review the qualifications of special education staff who are working towards completion of the minimum qualifications.
- g. The teacher/employee will forward annually to Division Office, documentation such as transcripts indicating successful completion of course work leading toward the minimum qualifications.

### **Role of Learning Support Teacher**

The Learning Support Teacher (LST) supports individual teachers and school teams to develop differentiated strategies, to coordinate and to monitor the development of programs for children with diverse learning needs. They are focused on instructional leadership and building teacher capacity. The Learning Support Teacher (LST) plays a central role in collaborating with staff so all students can achieve to the best of their abilities.

Learning Support Teachers adhere to the [Alberta Education Teaching Quality Standard](#) that outlines expectations with regard to the knowledge and abilities needed to create inclusive learning environments “where diversity is embraced and every student is welcomed, cared for, respected and safe.”

The Learning Support Teacher will support and/or lead in the following areas:

#### **1. Advocacy and Support**

- a. Advocates for inclusive education.
- b. Works in the classroom with school teams and individual teachers to support instruction that will allow students to receive an education in the least restrictive, most inclusive environment possible.
- c. Support professional staff as they meet the Teaching Quality Standard in the area of inclusion and inclusive practices.
- d. Provides input and support to school administration as they determine the direction and planning for service delivery for diverse students. This may include establishing schedules and monitoring assignments and duties of service providers and educational assistants that support students.

#### **2. Collaboration and Communication**

- a. Collaborates with classroom teachers to review pertinent information and documentation for student programming.

- b. Actively participates as a member of the school based collaborative team whose focus is to connect and program for students who are needing support
- c. Coaches and supports staff as they develop their skills and abilities in meeting the diverse learning needs of all students.
- d. Supports the writing of anecdotal notes, reports, letters to professionals, parents, teachers, and administrators.
- e. Reviews and supports the implementation of the district referral process in collaboration with the school team.
- f. Co-teaches when it is mutually agreed upon to support programming for students.
- g. Schedules, participates in and facilitates meetings as needed.
- h. Collaborates with school-based teams when developing wraparound services.
- i. Ensures that teachers are aware of the school's Continuum of Supports and Services and supports them in navigating this continuum support students.

### 3. **Instruction**

- a. Supports teachers by adding to their repertoire of instructional skills and strategies, as well as helping them explore the use of researched-based and innovative practices and resources.
- b. Supports the collaborative design, implementation and monitoring of universal, targeted and specialized interventions in instruction, environment, curriculum topics and materials to support teachers to meet individual student needs. Is an expert in differentiated instruction to support teachers in accommodating the learning needs of all students.
- c. Supports the accommodation process for achievement testing/diploma exams. Instructs individuals or small groups in the area of academics, social, emotional or behavioral needs which are created for a specific purpose and length of time. Supports implementation of Assistive Technology.
- d. Supports classroom teachers in:
  - i. Planning and developing interventions, adaptations, accommodations and modifications for student programming
  - ii. Instruction in the classroom to meet the needs of all learners

Communication with parents.

- iii. Together with the classroom teacher, and under the direction and supervision of the administration, provides direction and guidance to educational assistants.

**4. Program Development: Collaborative facilitation of the Individual Program Plan (IPP) and accessing additional supports**

- a. Maintains a current understanding of Alberta Education expectations, criteria and mandates with regard to Special Education.
- b. Understands the requirements of an Individual Program Plan (IPP) as outlined in the Standards for Special Education document.
- c. Develops, implements, monitors and evaluates Individual Program Plans, Behaviour Support Plans, Individual Care Plans, etc., in collaboration with the classroom teacher and in consultation with the school-based team.
- d. Initiates and coordinates transition planning.
- e. Assists teachers in developing and maintaining documentation related to Individual Program Plans.
- f. Ensures appropriate paperwork and documentation are in place and maintains documents, student records, and files as required by CRPS.
- g. Seeks out additional supports and submits appropriate referrals for students as required to access additional supports and services.

**5. Assessment:**

- a. Uses a variety of assessment procedures to gather additional information necessary to determine appropriate interventions and programming for students with diverse learning needs.
- b. Adheres to district expectations regarding standardized testing and Level A, B and C assessments.
- c. Uses assessments to measure, monitor and evaluate academic and behaviour progress as an ongoing process.
- d. Helps the school based collaborative team with selection of appropriate assessments, understanding and interpretation of assessment results, and implementation of recommendations to improve instruction.

## References

Section 3, 11, 16, 33, 52, 53, 56, 196, 197, 204, 222 Education Act  
Student Record Regulation 97/2019  
Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12  
Standards for Special Education  
Standards for the Provision of Early Childhood Special Education  
Standards for Psycho-Educational Assessment (1994) Alberta Education

## History

Developed: August 2003  
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