

Special Education Department Plan 2023-2024

Section A - Standard 1
Model for Special Education



Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
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Standard 1

Model for Special Education

The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board's (KPRDSB) mission is to inspire our students to excel in learning, to succeed in life and to enrich our communities. We are an innovative and responsive educational community focused on student achievement, well-being and success for all; we value the diversity and uniqueness of all students, employees and community members. We are ambassadors of public education.

As school board, and in our schools, we VALUE:

- Achievement, wellbeing, and success for all;
- Students' Unique Strengths and Skills
- Holistic Approaches to Indigenous Knowledge and Focus on Truth and Reconciliation
- Service Excellence and Accountability
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Collaboration with Families, Partners and Communities
- Social Responsibility and Social-Emotional Learning

Our priorities are rooted in our mission to inspire our students to excel in learning, succeed in life and enrich our communities

Excel in Learning:

We are committed to achievement and success through:

- Establishing a strong foundation for student achievement in literacy and math.
- Supporting student success in differentiated and diverse learning pathways responsive to the unique strengths, skills and needs of all students.

Succeed in Life:

We are committed to well-being and belonging through:

- Honouring Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing, engaging in Truth and Reconciliation, and elevating First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, perspectives, and histories.
- Creating safe, inclusive spaces where belonging, well-being, and mental health support student engagement, and the diversity and lived experiences of students and staff are valued and reflected in learning and working environments.
- Embedding principles of human rights to ensure equity and inclusion for all.

Enrich our Communities:

We are committed to relationships through:

- Building social responsibility and enhancing accountability, service excellence, transparency and evidence-based decision making. Strengthening outreach and engagement with students, staff, families, communities and partners, to enrich relationships, amplify diverse voices and develop innovative partnerships.

The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board's objectives for Special Education is as follows:

We promote equitable learning for all when we:

- collaboratively create and maintain mentally healthy, positive environments
- support the implementation of engaging and evidence-based Tier 1, 2 and 3 programming
- create inclusive environments that respect and value individual strengths and needs
- value and incorporate student voice, identity and culture in identifying personal strengths
- develop organizational conditions which support students to reach their full potential.

For the school year 2024-2025, Special Education Services professionals will continue to focus on the following areas:

- Service Delivery Models of Special Education
- Intensive Support Model to build school capacity in supporting students with IEPs
- Providing Professional Learning for SERTs and Classroom teachers in the area of differentiated instruction
- Conduct a SERT review to maximize time SERTs spend with students and to building teacher capacity in servicing students with IEPs

Our model for special education is rooted in inclusion. The Board's model of special education complies with all relevant legislation and regulations, specifically but not limited to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act, and the Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities Act.

As per KPR Policy ES-3.8: Special Education, programming will be developed based on individual student needs, identified through assessments and reflected in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) in order to ensure consistency with the values and standards of the Ministry of Education, the Board's values, and the following guiding principles:

- Our policies, practices, programs and interactions value equity, diversity, inclusiveness and the dignity and humanity of each individual.
- A climate of high expectations that promotes excellence is critical to the success of all learners and reiterates our belief that all students can succeed.
- We embrace a tiered approach to prevention and intervention in order to most effectively support student needs, with a particular emphasis on strategies which are good for all students, that may identify or even prevent difficulties before they arise.
- We are committed to physically and mentally healthy and safe schools and workplaces for all of our students and staff.
- We strive to meet the learning needs of all students through universal design for learning, differentiated instruction, and assessment for learning; what is necessary for some is helpful for all.
- We strive to meet the social-emotional learning needs of all students through evidence-based programming and practices.
- In KPRDSB, the principal leads the implementation of the Special Education model in the school, including programming, organizational structures and environmental conditions.
- Our classroom teachers are the primary educators for all students. Teachers require the support of the principal, and may require the support of special education support staff, other teachers such as the Special Education Resource Teacher, Special Education Department staff, and/or external professional staff, functioning as collaborative teams, in order to meet the learning needs of all students in inclusive classrooms.
- Our students will receive support to address their assessed needs, to work toward their goals, and to strive for independence.

- Because they play an integral role in the holistic nature of programming for students with special needs, we will consult with parent(s)/guardian(s) in matters which affect the learning and wellbeing of their children.
- The IEP is a working document that is developed in meaningful consultation with the student, parents/guardians, and staff to ensure student success. Relevant assessment information determines if the student has special education needs. KRPDSB will provide continual assessment and regular revision of the IEP and its goals, and expectations will reflect the changing needs and progress of the student.
- We encourage and facilitate, where appropriate, the involvement of community partners to consult, to collaborate on programming, and to deliver supplemental programs/services for students.
- We are committed to providing opportunities for quality, on-going professional learning on evidence-based practice, as outlined in *Learning for All* (2013), to school board staff, principals, teachers and support staff.
- We will ensure that we are compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code) when determining appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities. Examples include use of assistive devices, specialized equipment, technology and accessible classrooms.
- We will hold transition meetings in a timely manner with all relevant stakeholders for students with special needs who are changing placements, in order to share information and make the best decisions to plan for student success.
- Program reviews and evidence of improved student achievement are recognized as accountability components in the delivery of Special Education programs and services in KRPDSB.

Inclusion

Students benefit from inclusion through the provision of a broad range of programs and services that support our primary goal of educating students in their home school community with their peers of the same age, whenever possible.

Our philosophy of inclusion is also supported by the use of universal design for learning to support the creation of quality programs for all students using a differentiated instruction framework. In this framework, assessment for learning helps us teach and assess students according to their readiness, interests, and learning styles. The programs of students with special education needs who have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are embedded in this differentiated instruction framework.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are designed to support the development of Special Education Programs to ensure students are provided with accommodations, modifications, and/or alternative programs based on their strengths and needs. The IEP is a working document that is developed,, in consultation with the student, parents, and staff to ensure student success. Relevant assessment information determines that they have special education needs. Continual assessment and revision of the IEP and its goals and expectations reflect the changing needs and progress of the student. Achievement of IEP goals and expectations is reported on the provincial report card, (for Ontario Curriculum goals), the alternative report card for Learning and Life Skills Classes and the Report Card Addendum (for goals that are alternative to the Ontario Curriculum).

Partnerships

Partnerships with students, parents/guardians, teachers, school administrators, support staff and community members are critical to the success of every student, particularly students with special needs.

The Tiered Approach to Instruction and Intervention

Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board's Special Education Services Department follows a tiered approach to prevention and intervention, as reflected in the Ministry of Education *Learning for All, A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for all Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2013). The tiered approach is a systematic way to provide high-quality, evidence-based assessment and instruction and appropriate interventions that respond to students' individual needs.

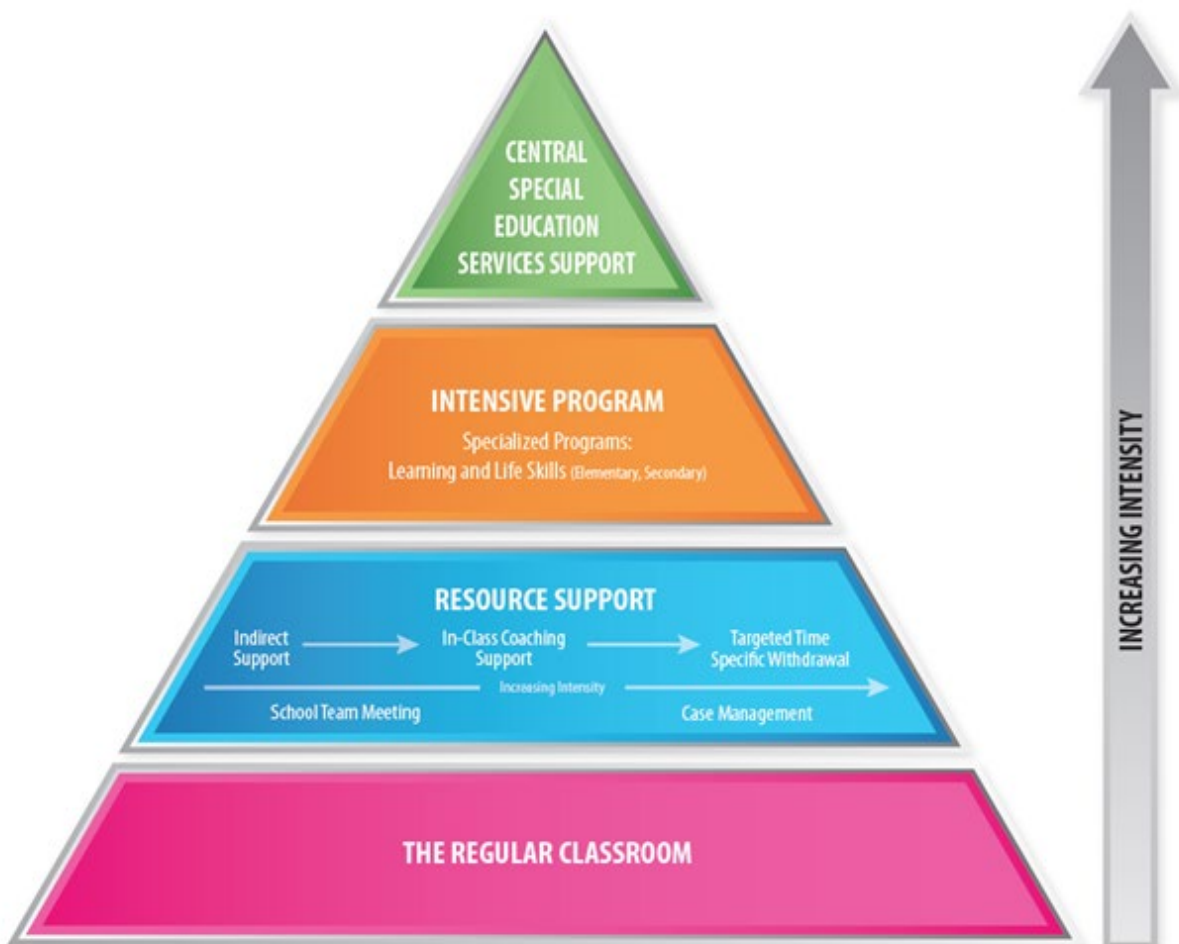
The tiered approach can:

- facilitate early identification of both students who may be at risk and students who may be in need of greater challenges,



- ensure appropriate and timely interventions to address the students' needs and significantly reduce the likelihood that they will develop further problems in the future.

SPECIAL EDUCATION DELIVERY MODEL



- A. The **REGULAR CLASSROOM** continues to be the primary learning environment for all students including those with special education needs. It is within the regular classroom that most students with special education needs will work through the Ontario Curriculum and/or an alternative curriculum based on their needs. Classroom teachers will, through the delivery of differentiated instruction, using the philosophy of universal design for learning, provide quality programming for students with IEPs to maximize their learning potential. They will determine the appropriate programming for students using assessment for and of learning.
- B. For many students with IEPs, **RESOURCE SUPPORT** by the Special Education Resource Teacher will provide opportunities to augment the regular classroom program. Varying degrees of additional support for the student with special education needs, along with that of their classroom teacher, can be applied. The Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) may work:

- indirectly with the classroom teacher through consultation,
 - directly with the classroom teacher using in-class coaching in the form of co-planning, co-teaching and co-debriefing of differentiated instruction to ensure student success,
 - directly with the student through withdrawal from the classroom, to address targeted and specific skills that will be reinforced back in the classroom.
- C. For some students with special needs the level of instruction and intervention can be delivered in an **INTENSIVE PROGRAM**. The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board provides the following intensive programs:

1) Learning and Life Skills Program:

- this program is for students with developmental disabilities, who score at or below the 2nd percentile on cognitive and adaptive behaviour measures on a psychological assessment
- students may access this specialized program, through a referral process, in community schools designed to meet their academic, functional academic, and life skills needs
- before students are enrolled in the Learning and Life Skills program they first must be presented at a Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board System Level Initial Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC) meeting for identification and placement
- this program can start as early as Grade 4, and finishes no later than June of the year that the student turns 21 years of age
- are self-contained classrooms for 50-75% of the day, with partial integration into regular classrooms and activities for a minimum of 25% of the day, with a class cap of 10 students.

2) Primary Communications Classes:

- this program supports students with intense communications needs in the primary division;
- it consists of accommodated or modified expectations from the Ontario Curriculum, as well as alternative expectations in the areas of communication skills; self-regulation; social skills; executive functioning; and independent living skills, with the goal of generalizing these skills to the regular classroom eventually, and to other areas of their daily lives;
- The goals of the program are:
 - Acquisition of skills that allow students living with intense communication needs to learn effectively, socialize, communicate and self-regulate in school and in daily living environments;
 - Providing a program and learning environment which minimizes triggers which precipitate unsafe behaviours in school.
- students must meet all the following criteria for referral:
 - in Grade 1, 2, or 3;
 - data indicates significant difficulties in three or more of the following areas:
 - communication
 - independence
 - academic achievement
 - learning readiness
 - school engagement
 - social skills

- executive function
- engages in behaviours that interfere with academic achievement, such as aggression, elopement, disengagement;
- requires 1:1 staff support to initiate work and remain on-task in a regular classroom setting.
- Students are IPRC'd into the Primary Communications system class as Special Education Class with Partial Integration. Programming would include opportunities for integration into their same-age classrooms and into all school-wide activities, as appropriate and in accordance with the goals on the IEP.
- Students would remain in the program for a minimum of one year, or until they had the skills to return to the regular classroom setting and be successful in that placement. Classes would be capped at 6 students.

D. The next level of the Special Education Delivery Model involves the schools accessing the services of the Board's professionals and specialized consultants and teachers through the **CENTRAL SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES.**

Given the geographic size of our Board, services have been divided into three main regions: Peterborough, Northumberland and Clarington. Each region has a Community Education Centre from which most of our central special education personnel are located. The following central special education services personal offer support to students and teachers in the Board:

- System Principals of Special Education Services
- Special Education Consultants (Instructional Leadership Consultants - ILC)
- Psychological Clinicians
- Speech and Language Pathologists (SLP)
- Communication Disorder Assistants (CDA)
- Mental Health Clinicians (MHC)
- Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBA)
- Behaviour Support Assistants (BSA)
- Itinerant Teachers for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Itinerant Teachers for the Blind and Low-vision
- Specialized Equipment Amount (SEA)/Assistive Technology Trainers and Technicians

Departmental Focus 2024-2025:

Close opportunity and achievement gaps to support equitable outcomes

What does this mean? In a *Learning for All* model:

- Tier 1:
 - Collaboration with Equity Department, Indigenous Education Department, K-12 Program Departments for professional learning and culturally appropriate responses to student needs
 - Effective IEPs and individualized programming (e.g. renewed IEP writing resources; social-emotional learning programs/tools in use in every school, including trauma informed practice; mandatory Multi-focus Team meetings to determine modifications to grade level)

- Effective organizational structures (e.g. SERT and Education Worker schedules, effective SEA trials, appropriate on-boarding of new staff in the department and in schools, common understanding of customer service in the Special Education department)
- Effective environmental conditions (e.g. Workplace Violence Risk Reassessment Form B, implementation of Administrative Regulation *Supporting Positive Student Behaviour: Safety for All*; updated Debriefing Guidelines for unsafe student behaviour)
- Capacity building/Professional development in:
 - Tier 1 Strategies, including Assessment for Learning, Universal Design for Learning, Differentiate Instruction, in collaboration with K-12 Program Department
 - Building Student Profiles
 - Effective IEP writing for Modified and Alternate programs
 - Effective transitions
 - Continued Applied Behaviour Analysis learning for EAs, Principals, SERTs;
 - Supporting Positive Student Behaviour Administrative Regulation for Principals, SERTs;
 - [Ontario Human Rights Commission's Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities](#) for Principals
- Tier 2:
 - Reflecting students' lived experiences in allocation of human resources to schools, including SERT, Education Worker, professional assessments
 - More direct consultations from MHC, SLP, BCBA, BSA, Psychological Services staff for specific students
 - Presenting students to Multi-Focus Team as per *Supporting Students Checklist – Learning for All*
- Tier 3:
 - Assessments, programs, interventions, as appropriate, from BCBA, MHC, SLP, BSA, Psychological Services staff for specific students who continue to need support after Tier 2 interventions
 - Revised Behaviour Support Plan to encompass more ABA strategies
 - [Empower](#) comprehensive reading intervention program developed by SickKids Hospital in Toronto in all KPR elementary schools