



POLICY NUMBER AND NAME: 04.12 EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (ESS)	SECTION: 04 – STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND EDUCATION
	VERSION: 2.0
	LAST REVISION DATE: JUNE 19, 2023
ADOPTED: MAY 24, 2014	REVIEW FREQUENCY: ANNUALLY (TO CONFIRM TO MINISTRY CHANGES)

PREAMBLE

An inclusive model of education exists at Richmond Christian School (RCS) to ensure that all students, regardless of their physical, academic, social or emotional needs, are supported and equipped to joyfully serve Christ in all aspects of life. The Educational Support Services (ESS) department aims at providing differentiation and effective interventions for all K-12 learners and to provide individualized learning experiences and methods of assessment for students who require adaptations, modifications and/or additional classroom support.

REVIEW HISTORY		
DATE	VERSION	CHANGES
JUNE 19, 2023	2.0	REVISED TO CONFORM TO MINISTRY REQUIREMENTS

Enrolment at RCS and participation in the ESS program are guided by **Policy 04.01 Admissions and Enrollment**.

Our practices are guided by the BC Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/inclusive/special_ed_policy_manual.pdf

“All students should have equitable access to learning, opportunities for achievement, and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs.”

“Special education programs and services enable students with special needs to have equitable access to learning and opportunities to pursue and achieve the goals of their educational programs.”

Richmond Christian School promotes an inclusive education system in which students with learning differences are fully participating members of a community of learners. The practice of inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with full integration in the regular classroom and goes beyond placement to include meaningful participation and the promotion of interaction with others.

Richmond Christian School has students with diverse learning needs that vary from campus to campus and from year-to-year. Diversity poses opportunities for students, parents and teachers, and demands that we examine what we do and how we do it, in a way that serves the best interest of all students in our schools. RCS is committed to providing inclusive instructional support that is learner focused, flexible, and responsive, acknowledges that God has made each one of our students unique.

1. INTERNAL SERVICES

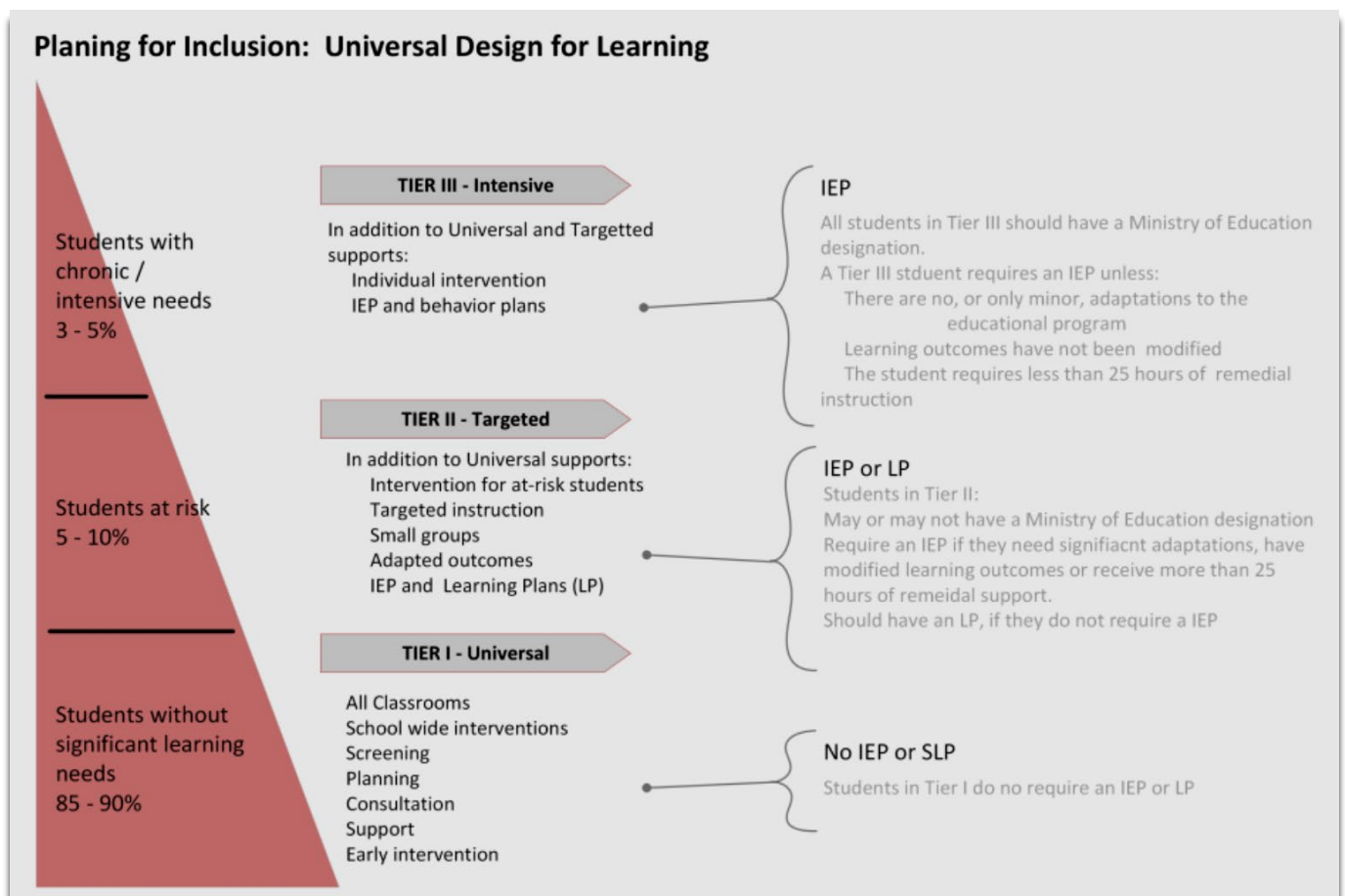
- a. School-based team
- b. Counselling
- c. Multi-tiered, universal supports and interventions
- d. Early literacy intervention
- e. Push-in and pull-out, small group instruction
- f. Differentiation, adaptations and modifications guided by ongoing formative assessments
- g. Targeted, short-term learning support

2. GUIDING BELIEFS

- a. The primacy of the classroom environment is central to the child's experience.



- b. Diversity is the norm. Planning for diversity is a collective responsibility and requires a collaborative approach. Student learning is maximized when instruction is differentiated to support diverse learning needs.
- c. We honour the uniqueness of all students as diversely created by God (i.e., through inclusive education and equitable resource distribution) as a fundamental value that must be supported.
- d. Ongoing professional development is critical in order to create inclusive learning spaces.
- e. Instructional support is focused on a continuum of interventions, beginning early and the least intrusive interventions, which are guided by RCS's framework for Universal Design (universal, targeted, intensive).



3. FUNDING GRANTS & STAFFING ALLOCATIONS

- a. The Ministry of Education (MOE) provides a supplemental special education funding grant for students with specific learning, social/emotional, or physical needs.

Diagnosis alone is not sufficient for the designation to receive the special education grant, the school must also provide documentation to indicate the programming and supports in place for the student. The Ministry of Education requires that assessment documentation for students receiving special education grants must be current; no more than 5 years out of date.
- b. RCS, as a community that values inclusion, also recognizes that the special education grant monies alone are not sufficient to allow us to provide the staffing and to implement the services needed for these students, and funds from the general school budget are also allocated for this purpose. The Ministry of Education requires that all schools allocate funds beyond the special education grants received to provide services and support for students with special needs.
 - i. RCS will annually provide an additional subsidy beyond the special education grant to provide staffing and services to a maximum of +25% of the total grant allocation.
 - ii. The Ministry of Education provides supplemental special education funding for students designated in Categories A – H. Students must be eligible, as a student in BC, to receive the basic student grant in order to be eligible for special education funding from the MoE.
 - iii. There is no supplemental MoE funding for students designated in Categories K, P, Q, and R, or for English Language Learners. The funding for support services for students in these categories, is designated by MoE as being included in the basic student grant.
 - iv. Funding from the Ministry of Education claimed by RCS for the purposes of special education is used to fund educational assistants, specialist teachers, coordinators and administration, and additional learning resources and training required to deliver inclusive programming.
- c. Funding is block funding that is provided directly to the school. It is not considered to be attached to specific students, and therefore staffing allocations and caseloads are determined by the Superintendent in consultation with the Principals and ESS Coordinators.
- d. Staffing allocations are reviewed in May of the previous school year and in January of the current school year and are allocated based on identifiable and quantifiable needs-based assessments of students and classrooms. Schedules and staffing are changed accordingly.
- e. Students receiving Special Education Support are served by the classroom teacher, an educational assistant (if needed), and an Educational Support Services Special Coordinator. Staffing levels will be as follows:
 - i. 1.0 FTE ESS Coordinator for 18-20 funded students (mixed needs) and students being processed for funding.
 - ii. If there is a large proportion of high needs students, this caseload should be reduced. This caseload will be re- evaluated twice a year (September and January) to reflect changes in the number of newly funded students and the withdrawal of students in the program.
 - iii. Educational assistants are assigned to students based on need, using a baseline per funded student of:



- 1) Elementary
 - a) Grades K-2 – 1.0 FTE per class, inclusive of the FTE assigned for a classroom assistant.
 - b) Grades 3-5 – 0.5 FTE per funded student
 - 2) Middle
 - a) 0.4 FTE per funded student
 - 3) Secondary
 - a) 0.3 FTE per funded student
- f. An assistant who works one-on-one with a high-needs student will normally work with the same student for a maximum of three years. It is sometimes advisable to have two assistants share responsibility for a student with high needs. As much as possible, assistants should work full-time.

4. SUPPORT STAFFING LEVELS

Learning Support staffing levels will be as follows:

- a. Elementary
 - i. Approximately 0.15 FTE Learning Support Teacher per class
 - ii. Number of classroom assistants = 0.33 FTE per class and/or as outlined in the Class Size Guidelines policy
- b. Middle
 - i. Approximately 0.4 FTE Learning Support Teacher per grade
 - ii. Number of classroom assistants = 0.33 FTE per class and/or as outlined in the Class Size Guidelines policy
- c. Secondary
 - i. Approximately 0.35 FTE Learning Support Teacher per grade
 - ii. Number of classroom assistants = 0.8 FTE per grade and/or as outlined in the Class Size Guidelines policy

5. LEARNING SUPPORT

- a. Learning Support provides support for students who have learning challenges and differences. This includes students who have speech and language delays, fine motor difficulties, emotional, social, and behavioural concerns and/or academic needs.
- b. Students receiving Learning Support may or may not require an IEP.
- c. Communication & Reporting
 - i. Students receiving learning support do not require an extensive learning support plan.



- ii. Parents/caregivers will be notified when a student requires learning support that goes beyond the support provided to all students or is referred to the school-based team.
- iii. Progress reports will indicate what interventions were delivered by LST (learning support teacher) and how successful they were in improving academic achievement.
- d. Learning support will typically be provided in small groups by a Learning Support Teacher, inside or outside of the classroom.
- e. Students may only qualify for ongoing learning support (tier 2 or 3 interventions) as approved by the principal, ESS Coordinator and/or school-based-team.

6. DESIGNATIONS

- a. Special Education serves students who have specific needs such as hearing loss, developmental delay, chronic illnesses, cerebral palsy, autism, and/or behavioural needs. These students have a diagnosis given by qualified professionals and meet specific criteria established by the designation in the category.
 - i. Level 1
 - 1) Physically Dependent (A)
 - 2) Deaf/Blind (B)
 - ii. Level 2
 - 1) Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability (C)
 - 2) Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (D)
 - 3) Visual Impairment (E)
 - 4) Deaf/Hearing Impairment (F)
 - 5) Autism (G)
 - iii. Level 3
 - 1) Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Serious Mental Illness (H)
 - iv. Unfunded
 - 1) Mild Intellectual Disabilities (K)
 - 2) Learning Disability (Q)
 - 3) Moderate Behaviour Support (R)

7. ENRICHMENT

- a. RCS does not provide an official enrichment program but through the universal supports in the classroom will provide additional challenge or depth for students.

8. COUNSELLING

- a. Counselling services are available for students who are struggling with social or emotional issues that are impacting their educational progress or school experience. Counselling support aims to provide a trusting, understanding environment where students can discuss personal issues, explore and examine their own feelings, faith commitment, beliefs and behaviour. Through counselling students will be able to develop, understand and practice effective communication, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.
- b. Counselling services are provided by trained Christian counselors contracted by the school. Request for counselling service for a student is made through the school-based-team and/or administration. Parents or teachers may request counselling services for a student, and students (age 13 or over) may request counselling services for themselves.
- c. Parent consent is required before a student under the age of 13 will be referred to the school counsellor. For students aged 13 or over, only the consent of the student is needed - parent consent is not required; however, whenever possible, the school will seek inform parents that their child is accessing counselling services.

9. INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP):

- a. All students at RCS who have special needs as defined by the BC Ministry of Education, must have an IEP.
 - i. Exceptions to this policy must meet the permissible criteria established by the ministry.
 - ii. The IEP will be developed in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines (BC Ministry of Education). A student with special needs is a student who has a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, has a learning disability, or has special gifts or talents, as defined in the MoE Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines, Section E.
- b. An IEP is a documented plan developed for a student with special needs that describes individualized goals, adaptations, modifications, the services to be provided, and includes measures for tracking achievement. It serves as a tool for collaborative planning among the school, the parents, the student (where appropriate) and, as necessary, other ministries and/or community agencies. The IEP document does not describe every aspect of the student's program.
- c. Some students require small adaptations and minimum levels of support; other students with more complex needs may require detailed planning for educational modifications, adaptive technologies, or health care plans.
- d. An IEP must have one or more of the following:
 - i. the goals or outcomes set for that student for that school year where they are different from the learning outcomes from the provincial learning outcomes for their grade
 - ii. a list of the support services required to achieve goals established for the student



- iii. a list of the adaptations to educational materials, instructional strategies, or assessment methods
- e. An IEP should also include the following:
 - i. the present levels of educational performance of the student
 - ii. the names of all personnel who will be providing the educational program and the support services for the student during the school year
 - iii. the period of time and process for review of the IEP
 - iv. evidence of evaluation or review, which could include revisions made to the plan and the tracking of achievement in relation to goals
 - v. plans for the next transition point in the student's education (including transitions beyond school completion)
- f. Where the goals established for the student are different from the expected learning standards for the age or grade, these should be accompanied by measurable objectives developed from learning standards in the same subject areas from a lower grade level
- g. IEP documentation provides evidence that:
 - i. the parent (and student, where appropriate) was offered the opportunity to be consulted about the preparation of the IEP
 - ii. the student is receiving learning activities in accordance with IEP
 - iii. the IEP is reviewed at least once each school year

10. ENROLLMENT

- a. Enrollment is in keeping with Policy 04.01 Admissions and Enrollment, Sections 7a to 7g. Applicants who require support must meet all enrollment criteria. In addition, the ESS department must affirm that the applicant can be properly supported and that the department is able to meet the student's learning needs. Copies of all relevant assessment reports and any special needs funding history must be provided with the application package.
- b. Richmond Christian School strives to provide and implement high quality educational programs for all our students, including the appropriate use of specialized programs, resources, and/or staff needed to support the educational programs of our students with learning differences or special needs.
- c. For the school to be able to continue to meet the needs of these students through the progression of their school life, RCS recognizes that there is a limit to the number of students with special needs, or those requiring access to specialized support services that can be effectively served and supported within a classroom, a grade level, a campus, and within the K–12 school system.
- d. Determinations of capacity within a grade cohort will be determined by the Superintendent in consultation Principals and ESS Coordinators.

11. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM PLACEMENT

- a. Richmond Christian School will ensure that parents of a child receiving Educational Support Services are offered the opportunity to have meaningful consultation regarding the student's placement in an educational program and/or support services.
- b. RCS will provide a student who requires learning support an educational program in an inclusive classroom with other students to the greatest extent possible. The emphasis on educating students with learning differences in the regular classroom with their peers does not preclude the appropriate use of specialized programs or supports that are implemented outside of the classroom in either a 1:1, or in small group setting.

12. REFERRALS AND ASSESSMENTS

- a. Students may be referred to ESS at any time during the school year if an area of concern is identified by a teacher, administrator, parent or ESS team member. Referrals can be made to the campus specific ESS School Based Team (SBT).
- b. A written confirmation from the student's parent or guardian must be obtained:
 - i. in advance of any additional support being rendered through RCS ESS
 - ii. in advance of any level B or level C assessments
 - iii. when a student is exempt from a particular course or school program; or
 - iv. when denying recommended support or funding
- c. While soliciting input from parents, final decisions regarding the level of inclusion, staffing and the student's educational program rest with the administration.
- d. Parents are responsible for covering the costs of assessments. Parents who require financial support can apply to have 50%, to a maximum of \$1500, for assessment costs covered through outside support means. This applies to assessments required for ministry designation or support services required for student programming while at RCS.

13. EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL

- a. All students are subject to the school's behaviour guidelines and progressive behaviour discipline measures; however, some students may exhibit challenging behaviours that can be disruptive to the classroom and/or unsafe for themselves or others and require additional supports. The school will make a reasonable effort to meet these students' needs using appropriate professional resources, implementing behaviour and safety plans, and providing appropriate support for the student.
- b. There may be times when it is necessary to exclude the student from school in response to a behavioural incident until a behaviour plan can be implemented or updated, a safety plan implemented or updated, and/or other conditions, the school may require such as, but not limited to, a threat and/or risk assessment, to ensure the safety needs of the student, other students, and staff members are met.



- c. The plans developed may include gradual reintegration, part-time attendance at school for a period of time, or recommendation of an alternate school placement

14. ALTERNATE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:

- a. There may be occasional circumstances when a student receiving educational support services is not able to attend school for an extended period of time. In these instances, the school will, in consultation with parents, develop a plan to continue to support the student's educational program.
- b. The recommendation for alternate educational programming may come from a medical professional, counselor, and/or school personnel. This is most likely a consideration for students designated in Categories "D" and "H". The school staff will not be responsible to continue to support the student's educational program when parents choose to keep the student home for an extended period of time without the recommendation by appropriate professionals, and/or consultation with school personnel.
- c. There may be times when Richmond Christian School believes that the needs (educational, social, and/or behavioural) of the student would be better met by placement in another school community program. RCS will make reasonable effort to include the student; however, when it is clear that the combination of educational programming and supplementary support available within the school cannot meet the needs of the student, and there is clear evidence that placement in another setting is the only option - considering the educational needs of the student, and the educational needs of others in the school - Richmond Christian School will support parents, in exploring alternative settings that would better serve the needs of the student and the family.

15. School Leaving Certificate

- a. When special circumstances arise or when individual cognitive and physical challenges make it prohibitive or impossible to achieve a BC graduation certificate, the Dogwood Diploma, a School Leaving Certificate (Evergreen Certificate) may be issued by the Ministry of Education. This decision is made in consultation with the student's parents or guardians.
- b. School Leaving Certificates are intended to recognize the accomplishments of students, including students with special needs, who have succeeded in meeting the goals of their educational program as outlined in their IEP. All students in receipt of School Leaving Certificates can also receive a transcript of successfully completed Grades 10 to 12 courses that may be a mixture of credit and non-credit.