

Student Support Services



WEST
VANCOUVER
SCHOOLS

Table of Contents

Student Support Services—Philosophy	3
District Principal—Student Support Services	4
A.C.C.E.S.S.	5
Behaviour Support	7
Challenge	9
Counselling Services (Elementary)	11
Critical Incident Team	13
English as a Second Language (ESL)	15
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	17
Hospital/Homebound	19
Learning Disabilities	21
Reading Support	23
Resource Program	25
School Psychologist Services	27
Speech/Language Pathology	29
Teacher Assistants	31
Transition Services	33
Visually Impaired	35
Appendix A – Communication Guidelines	37
Appendix B – List of Additional Resources/Programs	39

Publication:

“West Vancouver School District Student Support Services”

September 2006

H:Student Support Services/SSS Brochure/SSS Brochure.pmd

Student Support Services—Philosophy



Student Support Services in West Vancouver School District aligns itself with Ministry Policy and operates based on the strong belief and practice of inclusion.

Inclusion is defined by the British Columbia Ministry of Education as:

. . . the value system which holds that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education. The practice of inclusion transcends the idea of physical location, and incorporates basic values that promote participation, friendship and interaction.

(www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/glossary.htm)

We recognize that each child has a unique learning style, and we therefore provide educational experiences where areas of strength are promoted, and areas of needs and challenges are developed and accommodated.

We strive to ensure that all students feel welcome and included in their learning environment, helping them to reach their full academic, social and emotional potential. We believe that this process is most effective when educators work in collaboration with the students' families as well as with any community and/or health professionals that may be involved in their lives.

District Principal—Student Support Services



Overview

The role of District Principal of Student Support Services is broad and varied. Some of the responsibilities include:

- Communicating with parents and staff regarding available services, program implementation and assessment
- Communicating with parents, teaching staff, special education assistants and administrators regarding concerns about children's learning issues
- Supporting collaboration among professionals to advance program development and implementation for students with special needs
- Attending school district, community and provincial meetings regarding creation and implementation of policies and programs pertaining to the education of students with special needs
- Serving on school district, community and provincial committees regarding issues involving the education of students with special needs
- Hiring of teaching and support staff for the delivery of Student Support Services

Alternate Career and Continuing Education for Secondary Students (A.C.C.E.S.S.)



Program Overview

The A.C.C.E.S.S. program seeks to promote feelings of self-worth in students and to assist students in obtaining the skills necessary for success in the future.

A.C.C.E.S.S. is the alternative school in School District 45 (West Vancouver), offering an educational option for students in the district. This program is located on the southwest campus of West Vancouver Secondary School (WVSS).

A.C.C.E.S.S. enrolls 40 students, ranging in age from 15 to 18, in an integrated program. The school is divided into a Junior program for Grades 9 and 10, and a Senior program for Grades 11 and 12. Enrollment in the program is based upon an interview process, compliance with the program agreement, and individual circumstances.

Students study the current Ministry of Education mandated curriculum and take part in a variety of electives, including physical education and work experience. Students may take all of their core courses in the A.C.C.E.S.S. program, or they may choose to take some core and elective subjects in the West Vancouver Secondary School building, with the consent of the Head Teacher of the program and the Vice-Principal of WVSS.

The school is staffed with three teachers and two Youth Workers. A.C.C.E.S.S. also incorporates school district-based services, such as district counselors and behaviour resource teachers. In addition to school district personnel, the program also utilizes community resources such as Family Services, Human Resources, Probation Services, and West Youth Outreach.

Program Description

A.C.C.E.S.S. objectives include:

- Providing individualized instruction in the academic subjects required for grades 9-12
- Enabling students to return to the regular secondary school system, or complete the secondary school graduation requirements in the A.C.C.E.S.S. program
- Providing pre-employment opportunities through Career Programs
- Encouraging students to prepare for post-secondary educational and vocational training
- Encouraging students to work independently in academic and applied work environments
- Encouraging students to develop short- and long-term goals
- Providing guidance and counseling through school and community-based personnel
- Creating a positive, cooperative educational environment

Program Access

- Students are referred to the District Principal of Student Support Services through the school-based team or counsellor
- The District Principal conducts an interview with the student to determine program suitability

Behaviour Support



Service Overview

Students can experience behaviour, social/emotional, or mental health problems that range from mild to serious. Most students with social/emotional difficulties can be supported in school through regular discipline, counselling, and school-based services. A smaller number of students require more intensive support.

Students who require behaviour supports are students whose behaviours reflect dysfunctional interactions between the student and one or more elements of the environment, including the classroom, school, family, peers and community. This is commonly referred to as a behaviour disorder. Behaviour disorders vary in their severity and effect on learning, interpersonal relations and personal adjustment.

In general, intervention programs should be implemented in the settings in which the behaviours are occurring, rather than through a change in placement. However, integrated approaches should not place the student, his/her peers, or those providing services in an “at risk” position.

Service Description

The Behaviour Resource Team provides some or all of the following services, depending upon individual needs:

- Assessment of behaviours and their functions
- Building positive behaviour support plans (in consultation with parents and staff)
- Providing proactive strategies to ensure success in the school environment through curricular and environmental adaptations
- Modeling and consulting with the teacher on classroom management techniques
- Providing information and materials for teaching social skills
- Assisting in the implementation of recommendations
- Liaising with parents, classroom teachers, administrators, additional school staff and outside agencies (e.g., Vancouver Coastal Health, psychiatrists, Children's Hospital, etc.)
- Participating in creation of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) goals, objectives and strategies (See IEP Handbook for further information)
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the plan to ensure ongoing success

Service Access

- Students are generally identified as needing behaviour support by the classroom teacher
- The classroom teacher typically consults with parents and attempts alternate strategies to support the student in the classroom
- If additional support is required, the teacher may seek assistance from the school-based team
- When deemed appropriate by the school-based team, a referral may be made to the District Behaviour Screening Committee. This will determine eligibility for assessment and support by the Behaviour Resource Team
- Support is ongoing and remains in place as long as is necessary.

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_5.htm

Challenge



Service Overview

Challenge opportunities for enrichment and extension are offered for students who demonstrate high intellectual ability, interest and motivation to learn. Challenge Service is offered by a team of Challenge Resource teachers who, in collaboration with classroom teachers, support learning opportunities within each school. Challenge Service provides an assessment process, school-wide service coordination, liaison with district-wide enrichment activities, and Individual Education Plan (IEP) coordination for students who are considered gifted. The role of the IEP is to nurture the strengths and address the needs of the gifted learner through ongoing support.

Because the needs of bright and gifted students vary in nature and intensity, Challenge Resource teachers support an array of services to address these individual needs. The objectives of the IEP for a gifted learner may include curriculum compacting; curriculum adaptation within the regular classroom; opportunities for interaction with other high-ability students; extension and enrichment opportunities; mentorship; individual research studies; and acceleration by subject or grade.

Service Description

Challenge Resource Teachers:

- Provide and support learning opportunities within the schools which reflect the needs of each school
- Provide district-wide services and seminars for students
- Support the individual needs of students with Individual Education Plans

Services may include:

- School-wide themes and activities (e.g., Science Fairs, Night of the Notables, Lego League Robotics, Destination ImagiNation)
- School-based curriculum extension groups
- Collaborative planning and team-teaching in the regular classroom
- Individual education planning (IEP) for designated students, in consultation with parents and classroom teachers
- Curriculum compacting and adaptation
- District Challenge Exploration seminars
- Overnight retreats at the upper elementary and early secondary grades
- Math Challenge Online
- Write Challenge

Service Access

The British Columbia Ministry of Education Special Education Policy Manual indicates:

A student is considered gifted when she/he possesses demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of exceptionally high capability with respect to intellect, creativity, or the skills associated with specific disciplines. Students who are gifted often demonstrate extraordinary intensity of focus in their particular areas of talent or interest.

(www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_4.htm)

Guided by this definition, Challenge Resource teachers formally assess students who have been referred by their teachers and/or their parents on a yearly basis. Usually, students are referred for challenge assessment in their upper primary or intermediate grades, although occasionally early primary students are assessed. Identification of giftedness is on the basis of:

- Observations by teachers
- A test of creativity
- An assessment of cognitive ability
- A questionnaire completed by parents
- A record of achievement
- An inventory of student interest
- Examples of products

Following the assessments, the district Challenge teachers meet in committee to review each student profile and make recommendations to the school-based team regarding service options. The length of time that students are involved in Challenge activities is determined by their needs, and by the nature and scope of the activity. Students who have been identified as gifted learners have their needs and Individual Education Plans reviewed yearly.

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_4.htm

Counselling Services (Elementary)



Service Overview

Elementary school counselling services aim to facilitate the educational, personal, social, and emotional development of students in schools and in the community. Elementary school counsellors work with individuals, groups and classes to provide both intervention and prevention services. Individual/group counselling typically supports students who need assistance with school-related problems and issues, self-esteem, individual responsibility, social skills, and other social/emotional issues. Students are referred to the school counsellor by themselves, teachers, the school-based team or parents. On-going counselling for elementary students requires parental permission.

Service Description

The role of the school counsellor includes counselling, consultation, co-ordination and education.

Counselling:

- Preventative: Education and early identification of potential social/emotional difficulties for individuals, and positive change for the school as a whole
- Developmental: Education and guidance regarding normal life cycle changes
- Remedial: Addressing distress and crisis situations through therapeutic intervention

Consultation:

- Collaborating with students, other educators (teachers, the district behaviour team, principals, speech language pathologists, school psychologists, resource teachers, learning assistance teachers etc.), parents, community professionals, and the school-based team in planning goals and effective strategies for individual students, groups and the school as a whole
- Helping in the development of effective behavioural change

Co-ordination:

- Assisting in the co-ordination of school and community services for students through referrals, case management, and as a liaison between home, school, agencies and community

Education:

- Providing support to other educators in implementing the Career and Personal Planning curriculum and in promoting healthy school environments
- Providing direct instruction to individuals and groups in areas such as peer helping, conflict resolution, parenting, diversity and social skills.

Case-managing Behavioural IEP's

- Students who are identified as needing moderate or intensive behaviour support have an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- This document is coordinated by the school counsellor who is also the case manager
- The IEP outlines the student's strengths, needs, long term goals, short-term objectives, and effective strategies for positive behaviour
- Parents are an integral part of the IEP planning process, and counsellors must work closely with them
- Counsellors must work closely with mental health professionals in the community who are also working with a student who has an IEP for behaviour support

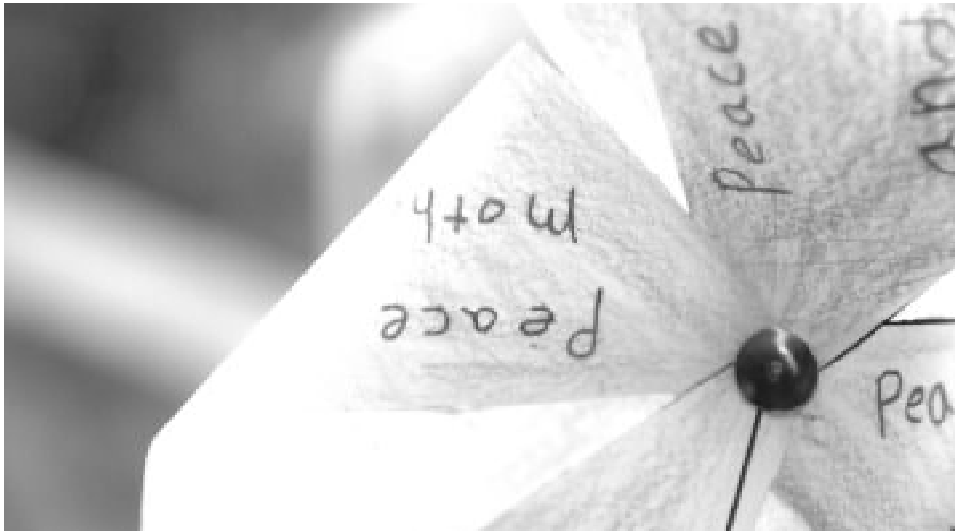
Service Access

- Students are referred for elementary school counseling services through the school-based team
- The length of service is assessed on an individual case basis

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/services_2.htm

Critical Incident Team



Service Overview

The West Vancouver School District has a Critical Incident Team. Team members include counsellors, school psychologists, and administrators. In the event of a trauma at a school, various members of the team may be called upon to provide counselling services to support school staff in dealing with incidents that affect the students, staff, and community.

Service Description

In response to a critical incident, members of the team will:

- Gather facts
- Activate the response team
- Communicate with staff
- Set up counselling centres
- Talk with students
- Inform parents
- Assist in communicating funeral arrangements
- Review with the team after the event
- Assist in remembrance activities

Service Access

- School administrators inform the Critical Incident Team leaders of incidents which may be upsetting to school staff, students, or members of the school community
- Leaders determine the response required in consultation with other team members, school staff and community organizations

English as a Second Language



Service Overview

English as a Second Language (ESL) is an additional service that enables English Language Learners (ELLs) to succeed in the regular classroom. According to the BC Ministry of Education, supported integration of ESL learners into age-appropriate classes is best practice. The ultimate goal of ESL service or instruction is to assist students to become proficient in communicative and academic competence, or the ability to use the language appropriate for the situation.

The ESL program in West Vancouver has three main goals:

- To develop the students' social language required to learn and communicate appropriately with peers and adults
- To develop the students' academic language required to learn and communicate the skills and knowledge covered in all subjects
- To preserve and develop a pride of heritage, and an understanding of Canadian culture

Service Description

The ESL specialist:

- Acts as an advocate for ESL students, for multicultural understanding in the school and community, and for the idea that continued growth in students' first languages should be supported
- Provides English instructional support, either in a separate setting or within a main-stream classroom
- Provides support to the classroom teacher based on the ESL needs of their students
- Provides ongoing communication between home and school
- Designs and implements the Annual Instruction Plan (AIP). An AIP is a document that outlines goals for individual ESL students. The document is part of the cycle of assessment, goal setting, implementation and reporting. AIPs outline yearly learning outcomes for each ESL level. An AIP documents the type of service delivered, the materials and adaptations provided, the assessments used to measure progress, and recommendations for the following school year

Service Access

- The BC Ministry of Education defines ESL students as those whose primary language(s), or language(s) of the home, is/are other than English and who may therefore require additional services in order to develop their individual potential within British Columbia's school system
- Some students speak variations of English that differ significantly from the English used in the broader Canadian society and in school; they may require ESL support
- The ESL specialist, the classroom teacher, and others with appropriate expertise have a role to play in the determination of who receives ESL service
- Students are able to receive ESL support for up to five years

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/esl.htm

Deaf or Hard of Hearing



Service Overview

Hearing loss affects about ten percent of the population. Students with hearing loss may have language deficits that affect communication, social skills and academic achievement. Any degree of hearing loss has educational implications so any student with a diagnosed hearing loss can be referred to the District Hearing Resource Teacher (DHRT) for direct and/or consultative support.

Service Description

The role of the DHRT is to support the student who is deaf or hard of hearing and their classroom teacher, in collaboration with their parents and other school based team members and district support staff.

Services may include:

- Assessment and specific instruction in the areas of language development; auditory management; speech development; speech reading; sign language if required; and deaf culture, when appropriate
- Support as required in the areas of academics, social skills, self advocacy, vocational and career planning
- Development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each student as required, and support of each student's classroom program
- Liaising between home, school, and outside agencies

- Support for the care, use and performance of assistive listening devices
- Interpreting audiological reports and explaining the educational implications to team members (including the student as appropriate)
- Consultation with classroom teachers and school based teams
- Collaboration with other support staff to provide individual programming for deaf or hard of hearing students with other special needs
- Making referrals to district special education staff as needed (e.g., psycho-educational assessment, counselling, gifted program)

Service Access

The BC Ministry of Education defines a deaf or hard of hearing student as:

. . . one who has a medically diagnosed hearing loss which results in such a substantial educational difficulty that he/she requires direct services on a regular, frequent and ongoing basis by a qualified teacher of the deaf or hard of hearing.

(www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_10.htm)

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing are always identified by a qualified audiologist. Students who are suspected of having a hearing loss should be referred for an audiological assessment at The North Shore Children's Hearing Clinic. Referral for the services of the District Hearing Resource Teacher are made to the District Principal of Special Education.

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing are eligible for services from the DHRT throughout their academic career from Kindergarten to Grade 12, as required.

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_10.htm

Hospital/Homebound



Service Overview

Hospital/homebound teachers provide services that enable students to continue their educational programs when hospitalized or absent from school for extended periods during the school year due to medical reasons. Services are typically delivered in a student's home or in a hospital setting.

Service Description

The Hospital/Homebound teacher:

- liaises with school staff regarding the educational program of the student, including instruction, assessment and evaluation
- collects academic materials and delivers to student
- ensures collaboration, consultation, and coordination with all caregivers, including parents, hospital and public health personnel
- provides direct instruction to the student as determined by the hospital/homebound teacher, in consultation with the classroom teacher, until the student returns to school

Service Access

- Students are referred by their school administrator to the District Principal of Student Support Services for access to the program

For further information, visit the Ministry websites:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/services_6.htm

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/services_7.htm

Learning Disabilities



Service Overview

Learning Disabilities teachers support students with identified learning disabilities that may affect the acquisition, organization, retention, understanding, or use of verbal or nonverbal information. These disorders may affect learning in individuals who otherwise demonstrate at least average abilities essential for thinking and/or reasoning. As such, learning disabilities are distinct from global intellectual disabilities.

Learning Disabilities teachers work with students whose disabilities range in severity and may interfere with the acquisition and use of one or more of the following: oral language, reading, written language, or mathematics. The severity of these academic difficulties is such that students demonstrate:

- Persistent difficulties in the acquisition of pre-academic skills, such as recognition of letters and numbers in the early primary years, and/or
- Persistent difficulties in the acquisition of reading, writing and/or numeracy skills
(www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_3.htm)

Service Description

While the classroom teacher is ultimately responsible for implementation of each student's program, the Learning Disabilities teacher works in close collaboration with the classroom teacher. Learning disabilities service is an inclusive school-based program which includes the development, coordination, and monitoring of the Individual Education Plan (IEP), consulting with and supporting the classroom teacher with regard to program implementation.

Services may include:

- The development and revision of IEPs
- The organization of program delivery and program evaluation
- Overseeing implementation of individual program objectives
- Student evaluation and reporting
- Collaboration with district special education staff and other professionals
- Direct remedial, corrective, tutorial or skill-building instruction
- Adapted, modified or supplementary curriculum and materials
- Alternate instructional and/or evaluation strategies, including adjudicated provincial examinations
- Use of equipment, including computer and audio-visual

Service Access

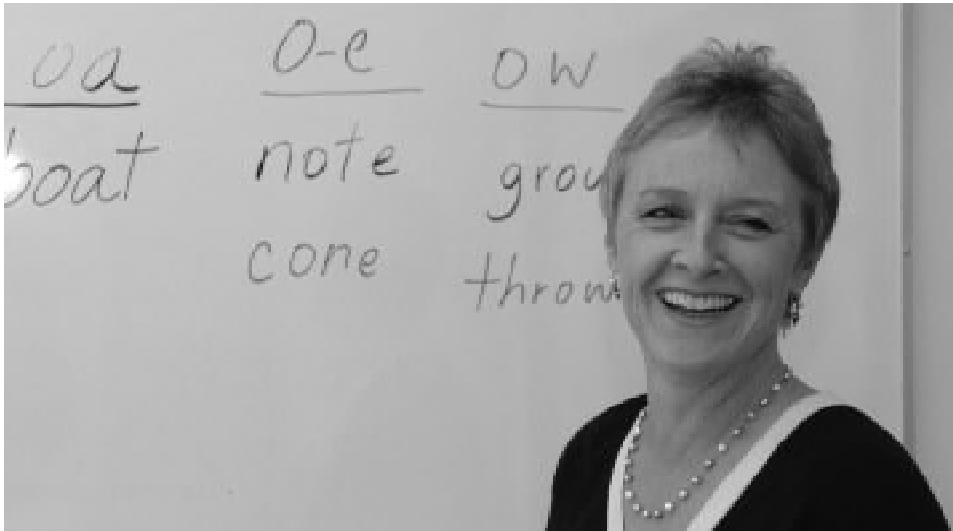
In order for a student to be considered for designation as a student with a learning disability, the sequential process is as follows:

- Assessment of learning needs and use of alternative instructional strategies by classroom teacher
- Consultation with the parent and, when appropriate, with the student, with possible screening to investigate whether there is a health basis for the learning difficulty
- Collaboration with school-based learning assistance teacher to develop additional assessment and intervention strategies
- Referral to the school-based team for further assistance in implementing strategies or coordination of support services
- Possible referral for comprehensive assessment(s) (psycho-educational, speech/language) to determine the presence, nature, severity and educational implications of a learning disability and provide additional information for planning
- Upon completion of assessment (district or community), if appropriate a referral is made to the District Learning Disability Screening Committee
- The District Learning Disability Screening Committee determines whether the student meets the criteria for identification to the Ministry of Education for designation as a student with a learning disability
- Support is ongoing and will remain in place as long as necessary

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/planning_3.htm

Reading Support



Service Overview

The District Reading Support teacher provides services which assist students having significant difficulty learning to read and/or with aspects of the reading process. These services are provided both directly to students and indirectly through teacher training.

Service Description

A District Reading Support team may include the reading support teacher, speech and language pathologists, and/or school psychologists, in consultation with school-based personnel. This team meets on a regular basis and determines priorities in regards to the needs of students struggling with reading. The services of the team and/or the reading support teacher may include:

- Consulting with teachers about students who may be having difficulty learning to read and/or with aspects of the reading process
- Identifying and monitoring progress of students with reading challenges
- Determining appropriate student programming (e.g., Phonographix)
- Providing in-service to teachers in the use of various reading programs
- Delivering intensive reading programs to students on a short-term basis

Service Access

- The service can be accessed through the school-based team



Resource Program



Service Overview

Resource teachers support students with special needs who fulfill Ministry requirements for designation. These students may include those with intellectual disabilities, autism, physical disabilities, and chronic health issues. The Ministry of Education requires that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) be developed for each of these students. These IEPs may contain modified and/or adapted program goals. During elementary school years, resource teachers support students in their neighbourhood school. During the secondary years, there is an option of attending the District Secondary Resource Program currently housed at West Vancouver Secondary School.

Service Description

Elementary/Secondary Resource Services

While the classroom teacher is ultimately responsible for the implementation of each student's program, the resource teacher works in close collaboration with the classroom teacher. Resource teacher service is an inclusive school-based program which includes the development, coordination and monitoring of the IEP, and consulting with and supporting the classroom teacher and teacher's assistant with regard to program implementation.

Services may include:

- The development and revision of IEPs
- The organization of program delivery and program evaluation
- Overseeing implementation of individual program objectives
- Student evaluation and reporting
- Collaboration with district special education staff and other professionals
- Supervision of teacher assistants
- Individual or small group instruction

District Secondary Resource Program

This program is staffed by resource teachers and teacher assistants who work together with classroom teachers to support student learning. This program allows for students to attend regular classes or remain in the centre with individual or small group instruction, depending upon individual needs. This program also incorporates work experience, transition planning and portfolio development with a view to graduation requirements.

Resource teachers, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, are responsible for:

- IEP development, program design, evaluation, and reporting
- Organizing and overseeing the duties of teacher assistants

Teacher assistants are responsible for:

- Implementing IEP strategies under the supervision of the resource teacher, in collaboration with the classroom teacher and other professionals

Service Access

Students receiving these services are often identified prior to school entry by multi-disciplinary team assessments at community agencies. On occasion, students may be identified at a later age and usually by a multi-disciplinary team assessment. While individual needs may differ, many will require specific instruction for the acquisition of gross and fine motor skills, academic skills, communication skills, assistance with the development of social skills including personal independence, social responsibility and life skills, as well as with reasoning skills, memory, problem solving and conceptualizing skills.

The District Secondary Resource Program is designed for secondary school-aged students who fit criteria for Ministry designation, and whose parents have decided to choose this option.

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education websites at:

Intellectual Disabilities: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_2.htm

Autism: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_11.htm

Physical Disabilities/Chronic Health: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_8.htm

School Psychologist Services



Service Overview

School psychology services are often provided when a student is not performing up to expectations in the classroom or when persistent behavioral problems are evident. The school psychologist plays a key role in helping to determine if there are underlying psychological causes that need to be brought to light in order for school staff to understand how best to help a particular child succeed. The search for underlying causes generally reveals if there are any underlying cognitive process weaknesses that are contributing to the problem (i.e., does the child have a learning disability), or if there are any social/emotional factors involved (i.e., is the child displaying depression or anxiety symptoms).

In the determination of the presence and severity of special needs, the school psychologist often conducts in-depth psycho-educational assessments. Following this assessment using standardized measures and after consultation with school staff, parents, and other professionals, the school psychologist writes up a report explaining the strengths and weakness of the student. The goal is to provide concrete, realistic recommendations for teachers and parents that will aid them in understanding the student and in helping him or her to succeed.

In addition to providing assessment and program planning services, the education and training of school psychologists is required in decisions to designate students as having learning disabilities and in declaring secondary students in need of adaptations for provincial examinations based on Ministry of Education criteria. School psychologists are also available for collaboration, consultation, and professional development.

Service Description

- Providing collaborative consultation
- Assisting with pre-referral interventions
- Providing psycho-educational assessments
- Interpreting results of psycho-educational assessments for teachers, parents, and students
- Providing educational strategies linked to assessment outcomes to assist with Individual Education Plan development
- Providing ongoing collaborative planning
- Assisting with the identification of student needs for Ministry of Education purposes
- Consultation with parents and teachers
- Providing professional development workshops

School Psychologist responsibilities may also include:

- Participation on Individualized Educational Planning (IEP) teams to define goals, objectives and strategies
- Participation on school-based teams to initiate and monitor referrals for assessment and program planning and involvement in the pre-referral intervention process
- Participation on District Screening Committees

Service Access

- Students have been identified as needing extra support and are receiving learning assistance.
- The learning assistance teacher has consulted with the school-based team
- When deemed appropriate by the school-based team, and in consultation with a school psychologist or speech and language pathologist, a referral for assessment may be forwarded to the District Assessment Intake Committee

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/speciald/ppandg/services_3.htm

Speech/Language Pathology



Service Overview

Speech-language pathology services are designed to support students whose educational and/or social progress is adversely affected by communication difficulties. Any student with delayed, disordered or atypical language (both oral and written) and/or atypical speech skills should be brought to the attention of the speech/language pathologist.

Communication difficulties may occur in relative isolation, but are most often associated with intellectual disabilities, autism, physical disabilities, sensory impairments, emotional/behavioural problems, learning disabilities or other learning difficulties, including ESL students with underlying communication disorders.

Service Description

Speech/language pathology services may include a full range of services encompassing prevention, identification and assessment, program development and planning, consultation, collaboration with other educators and community professionals, in-service training, as well as information sharing with families and other service providers.

- Assessment of children with academic concerns in the areas of reading, oral communication and written language
- Consultation with teachers and other professionals regarding program planning for students with oral and written communication disorders
- Consultative support and direct instruction to teacher assistants for program implementation goals and objectives

- Report writing and interpretation of assessment information to teachers, parents and teacher assistants
- Participation on Individualized Educational Planning (IEP) teams to define goals, objectives and strategies surrounding communication, reading, written language and behaviour

Speech/Language Pathologists responsibilities also include:

- Participation on school-based teams to initiate and monitor referrals for assessment and program planning and involvement in the pre-referral intervention process
- Early identification of students at risk for developing communication-based learning problems
- Participation on District Screening Committees
- Coordination of Provincial Outreach Programs at the district level

Service Access

- Students are generally identified as needing speech/language services by the classroom teacher
- The teacher may seek assistance from the school-based team
- When deemed appropriate by the school-based team, a referral for assessment may be forwarded to the District Intake Screening Committee

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/services_4.htm

Teachers' Assistants



Service Overview

Teachers' assistants work under the general direction of a teacher in the school, and under the supervision of an administrative officer. Under the direction of a teacher, teachers' assistants play a key role in student program implementation. While teachers are expected to design and evaluate programs for students with special needs, teachers' assistants perform functions which range from personal care to assisting the teacher with instructional programs.

Service Description

Teachers' assistants:

- Attend Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings at the request of the case manager
- Collect data pertaining to student program
- Report to IEP team on progress of program implementation
- Implement directions outlined by professional staff
- Communicate with teacher at regular intervals information regarding student program
- Communicate with parents when requested to do so by the teacher
- Transport students to community activities
- Implement strategies delineated in the IEP to achieve stated objectives
- Follow personal care protocols as outlined in the IEP and/or personal care plan

Service Access

- Teachers' assistants are assigned based on individual student needs

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/roles_3.htm

Transition Services



Pre-School – Kindergarten

Some children enter into a school district having already received support during their pre-school years. When this is the case, it is appropriate for the parents of the child to contact the principal of the home school to let them know that the child will be entering Kindergarten in their school in the next school year. This allows the school team (e.g., resource teacher, learning disabilities teacher, speech and language pathologist, school psychologist, occupational therapist) the opportunity to meet with the parents, child and pre-school team to plan a smooth, productive transition into the school system.

Although each case is treated on an individual basis, transition planning generally includes school staff conducting an observation of the child in the pre-school setting, meeting with the parents (and child when appropriate), as well as pre-school and any other supporting staff. These meetings may take place any time throughout the school year as needs dictate; however, they generally commence in the latter part of the final term, after Spring Break.

Elementary – Secondary

As children leave their elementary schools and enter into the secondary system, a number of planning sessions take place to ensure a smooth transition from one setting into another. These gatherings typically involve the specialist teacher(s) (e.g., resource teacher, learning disabilities teacher, challenge teacher, counsellor, ESL teacher) from the elementary system meeting with the secondary specialist teacher(s) to discuss the student's strengths and needs.

As each student has individual needs, these discussions include the key professionals involved with the child, and will vary from case to case. Transition meetings are an integral part of the process, allowing the receiving school to consider all the necessary information to best support the student in the upcoming school year.

In addition to school staff meetings, students and their parents are invited to meet with the receiving specialist teacher in either a small group or an individual setting. This meeting may involve a description of the program, service delivery, and a tour of the new school. If the team feels it necessary for the success of the student, some individual visits to the new school may be scheduled as well.

Secondary – Post-Secondary Life

During the secondary school years, students refine their focus on plans for post-secondary life. This is done through consideration of their interests, preferences, strengths, skills and needs. Some students will enroll in post-secondary education facilities; others will seek meaningful employment. Some may pursue meaningful social, recreational and community activities, and still others may pursue independent and daily living goals.

Regardless of the chosen path, each of these students will need to prepare for their post-secondary plans. Secondary counsellors work in close collaboration with the specialist teacher(s), the students and their families to help facilitate this process, incorporating activities such as work experience, transition planning and portfolio development.

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/moe_clt_resource_rb0144.pdf

Visually Impaired



Service Overview

The teacher for the visually-impaired supports students whose visual acuity is not sufficient for the student to participate with ease in everyday activities. Visual impairment is a generic term which covers a range of difficulties with vision and includes the following categories: blind, legally blind, partially sighted, low vision, and cortically visually impaired. It is not intended to include students described as having visual perceptual difficulties unless they also have a vision loss as described above. The Ministry of Education requires that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) be developed for each of these students.

Service Description

While the classroom teacher is ultimately responsible for implementation of each student's program, the teacher for the visually-impaired works in close collaboration with the classroom teacher. Services may include:

- Functional vision assessment
- Participation on IEP teams to define goals, objectives and strategies pertaining to student vision needs
- Modifications and/or adaptations directly related to the student's visual impairment
- Collaboration with district and school-based special education staff and other professionals

Service Access

- Students receiving these services are identified as having a visual impairment by an ophthalmologist, optometrist, or by the Visually-Impaired Program at British Columbia Children's Hospital

For further information, visit the Ministry of Education website at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/planning_9.htm

Appendix A

Communication Guidelines



The communication process works best when there is collaboration and ongoing consultation between the classroom teacher(s) and the parent(s). Clear communication is key. Addressing issues in a timely fashion helps to prevent minor issues transforming into larger problems.

Points for consideration include:

1. Ask your classroom teacher for a meeting time to discuss concerns that you have concerning your child. Using the performance standard quickscales as a point of reference is helpful for articulating your concerns (see IEP Handbook).
2. Prior to the meeting think about why you would like to meet with the classroom teacher. Asking yourself questions such as those listed below may assist you in structuring your thoughts.
 - Do I need to be heard and have my views recognized and validated?
 - Am I dissatisfied and want to see changes for my child?
 - What action do I want taken?
 - Am I wanting more information about my child's program or progress?
 - Do I need to know what I can do at home to support my child's learning?
3. In writing, organize your concerns about your child's academic/social performance and/or educational program. For specificity, please refer to the performance standards in the IEP Handbook.

4. Try to begin the meeting on a positive note. Be specific about things that are going well for your child in the school (e.g., feels safe and welcome in the school). This will help to create a positive atmosphere which will in turn facilitate positive outcomes.
5. During the meeting, listen carefully and take notes. If you think that you may become emotional during the meeting, you may wish to ask another adult to accompany you to the meeting in order to assist you with processing information both during and after the meeting.
6. To conclude the meeting, consider completing an action plan implementation checklist (see IEP Handbook). Having a written plan helps everyone understand their responsibilities. Frequently, further investigation is one key part of the action plan. If this is the case, please refer to Developing an Individual Education Plan (see IEP Handbook). Before leaving the meeting, set a date for your next meeting.
7. If repeated attempts at communication with the classroom teacher does not result in forward movement, you may wish to address your concerns with the school vice-principal or principal.
8. In the unlikely event that the situation cannot be resolved at the school level, then contacting the assistant superintendent or superintendent is an appropriate option.

Student Support Services – District Contact List

For a complete list of Student Support Services staff in West Vancouver School District, visit our website at www.sd45.bc.ca and click Programs and Services>Student Services.

Appendix B

List of Additional Resources/Programs

www.sd45.bc.ca/ps/student-services.html

West Vancouver School District: Student Support Services—*IEP Handbook*

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/

Ministry of Education: Special Education

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/

Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/iep_1.htm

Developing an Individual Education Plan

www.bctf.bc.ca/

B.C. Teachers' Federation

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/iep/

Parent's Guide to Individual Education Planning



**WEST
VANCOUVER
SCHOOLS**

West Vancouver School District
1075 - 21st Street
West Vancouver, BC V7V 4A9
T (604) 981-1000
F (604) 981-1001
www.westvancouver.schools.ca