

## 6.07 Educational Support Services Policy

Foundational to all teaching and learning at Kootenay Christian Academy (KCA) is the view that all aspects of life fall under the Lordship of Christ. Therefore, to achieve its mission, KCA relies on God's Word as revealed in Creation and Scripture and strives to:

- Integrate faith with learning;
- Provide a high-quality educational program;
- Create a challenging and affirming learning environment;
- Free students to explore and examine all human endeavour within God's Creation;
- Educate all aspects of the child (spiritual, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, intellectual);
- Promote and model social justice and stewardship;
- Empower students to become agents of positive change in the community

In integrating faith with learning, KCA aims to provide a quality education to all students. Our mission is to assist families by providing a Christ centered, Biblically directed education that inspires students to pursue excellence in academics, moral character, and service to others. Educational Support Services (ESS) at KCA exists to help us fulfill this mission for students with learning differences or special needs.

Educational Support Services at Kootenay Christian Academy include:

- Special Education & Learning Assistance
- Occupational Therapy & Physiotherapy services
- Enrichment
- Counselling

Kootenay Christian Academy affirms that God created each of us to live interdependently in community. Belonging to a community means being safe, cared for, and accepted as a valued and contributing member.

*One of the marvelous things about community is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn't as individuals. When we pool our strength and share the work and responsibility, we can welcome many people...*

— Jean Vanier, *Community and Growth*

### 1. Admissions

Registration of a student requiring access to Educational Support Services is governed by, and subject to, all Kootenay Christian School admissions requirements and policies, including, but not limited to:

- Admissions Policy and process
- Class Size Policy
- Wait List Policy
- Student Code of Conduct

## **2. Educational Support Services**

Children with learning differences or special needs will be educated in the regular school environment to the greatest extent possible with appropriate enabling supports in place. Student learning needs are met by:

- an inclusive school environment
- differentiated instruction in the regular classroom
- general learning support in the classroom by education assistants

2.1. For some students, supports may also include:

2.1.1. individualized or small group programs/support within, or outside of, the classroom by specialized teachers, education assistants, and/or certified counsellors

2.1.2. access to technology, software, and/or other material supports

Kootenay Christian Academy 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.

Integration is one of the major strategies used to achieve inclusion. Students with learning differences are included in educational settings with their peers to the greatest extent possible, and provided with the necessary accommodations to enable them to be successful there.

## **3. Special Education**

Special Education serves students who have specific needs such as hearing loss, developmental delay, serious illnesses, autism, and/or behavioural needs. These students have a diagnosis given by qualified professionals and meet specific criteria established by the Ministry of Education for designation in the category.

- Physically Dependent (A)
- Deaf/Blind (B)
- Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability (C)
- Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment (D)
- Visual Impairment (E)
- Deaf/Hearing Impairment (F)
- Autism (G)
- Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Serious Mental Illness (H)

## **4. Learning Assistance**

Learning Assistance (LA) 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.

Some of the students receiving Learning Assistance support may meet criteria for designation in one or more of the following Ministry of Education categories:

- Mild Intellectual Disability (K)
- Learning Disability (Q)
- Moderate Behavior Intervention or Mental Illness (R)

Designation of a student in one or more of these categories requires a psycho-educational assessment conducted by a qualified professional, such as a Psychologist and/or a Doctor.

#### **5. Enrichment:**

The Enrichment Program provides support for students identified as benefitting from an enriched program outside of the regular classroom. These students may be working at a level well above the classroom expectations, or have skills and knowledge not typically supported in the regular classroom curriculum. Without additional supports and programs, these students

are at risk of becoming disengaged and disinterested in their learning. Through the enrichment program, we aim to:

- support classroom teachers with enriching materials for the students in their classroom
- help teachers differentiate materials for the students who require enrichment
- work with students independently or in a small group to meet required needs
- explore alternative programs/programming if required
- provide information for parents as required

Some of the students receiving Enrichment support services may meet criteria for designation in Ministry of Education Category P (Gifted). Designation in this category requires a psycho-educational assessment conducted by a qualified professional.

#### **6. Counselling:**

Counselling services are available for students who are struggling with social or emotional issues that impact 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.

Counselling services are provided by a trained Christian counselor who is contracted by the school. Request for counselling service for a student is made through Education Support Services. Parents, teachers, or the students themselves may request counselling services for a student. Parent consent is required before any student at KCA receives counselling services. Some of the students receiving counselling support may meet criteria for designation in Ministry of Education Category R (Moderate Behaviour Intervention or Mental Illness). Designation in this category requires a diagnosis by a qualified psychiatrist and/or registered psychologist.

All counselling services provided by the school are for school related challenges and are short-term. Students will be discharged from counselling after six weeks of intervention. At this time, the school counsellor will assess whether the student has the skills necessary to cope with their situation, in which case, the student file can be closed. If more intensive long-term counselling is required, or if counselling for other family members is needed, families will need to access counselling service outside of the school. The school counsellor may be able to provide information on counselling resources available within the community.

#### **7. Level of Educational Support Services available at Kootenay Christian Academy:**

Kootenay Christian Academy provides Special Education & Learning Assistance and Enrichment services for students whose learning, social, behavioural, physical, and spiritual needs can be met by a level of meaningful inclusion with their age/grade peers. Students' programs may include a combination of inclusion with peers in some subjects/activities, and individual or small group pull out programs for other subjects/activities.

Kootenay Christian Academy may not be able to provide educational support or programming for students whose learning, behavioural, or social needs are best met by placement in a specialized setting (i.e. program/supports as are found in school district Resource Room), or a specialized educational program.

#### **8. Supplemental Ministry of Education Funding:**

The Ministry of Education 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 comprehensive 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, and no more than 5 years out of date.

The total Special Education grant monies received by the school support the programs of all special needs students in the school system. KCA is a community that values inclusion, and like other schools also recognizes that the Special Education grant monies alone are not sufficient to allow us to provide the staffing or to implement the services needed for these students. At the discretion of the Principal, a minimum of ten percent of student grant monies, from the general school budget, are allocated for the purpose of creating adequate support structures for these students. The Ministry of Education requires that all schools allocate funds beyond the Special Education grant received, in order to provide adequate services and support for students with special needs. A minimum amount of ten percent is common practice in British Columbia.

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 Ministry of Education. There is no supplemental 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 as being included in the basic student grant.

#### **9. Inclusive Education Plan (IEP):**

All students at KCA who have special needs as defined by the BC Ministry of Education must have an Inclusive Education Plan (IEP). Exceptions to this policy must meet the permissible criteria established by the Ministry. 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 Ministry of Education Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines, Section E.

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. It makes reference to those aspects of the education program that are adapted or have been modified, and identifies the support services to be provided. IEP learning outcomes are often described as goals and objectives.

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.

#### 9.1. Adaptations & Modifications

Adaptations are small changes made to a child's program so that the student is learning the same material and meeting the same expectations as his/her peers.

Examples of adaptations are:

- 9.1.1. fewer questions assigned
- 9.1.2. answers being given orally instead of written
- 9.1.3. allowance for a variance of written output, such as the use of a computer or a scribe

**Modifications** are changes made to a child's program so that the student is learning different material and has different expectations than his/her peers.

9.2. An IEP must have one or more of the following:

- 9.2.1. 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
- 9.2.2. a list of the support services required to achieve goals established for the student
- 9.2.3. a list of the adaptations to educational materials, instructional strategies or assessment methods.

9.3. An IEP should also include the following:

- 9.3.1. the present levels of educational performance of the student
- 9.3.2. the names of all personnel who will be providing the educational program and the support services for the student during the school year
- 9.3.3. the period of time and process for review of the IEP
- 9.3.4. evidence of evaluation or review, which could include revisions made to the plan and the tracking of achievement in relation to goals
- 9.3.5. plans for the next transition point in the student's education (including transitions beyond middle school).

Where the goals established for the student are different from the expected learning outcomes for the age or grade, these should:

- be accompanied by measurable objectives developed for each goal to enable IEP review and evaluation IEP documentation provides evidence that:
- the parent (and student, where appropriate) was offered the opportunity to be consulted about the preparation of the IEP

- the student is receiving learning activities in accordance with IEP
- the IEP is reviewed at least once each school year

An exception can be made if:

- the student with special needs requires no adaptation or only minor adaptations to educational materials, or instructional or assessment methods
- the expected learning outcomes established by the applicable educational program guide have not been modified for the student with special needs
- the student with special needs requires, in a school year, 25 hours or less of special instruction, by a person other than the classroom teacher in order for the student to meet the expected learning outcomes.

#### **10. Educational Program Placement:**

Kootenay Christian Academy 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. KCA will provide a student who has learning differences with an educational program in a classroom where the student is integrated 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 small group setting.

#### **11. School Environment:**

Kootenay Christian Academy strives to ensure a safe and productive learning and working environment for each of our students and staff. We are committed to implementing Restorative Practices and positive behaviour supports within our school. Kootenay Christian Academy also adheres to guidelines of the Ministry of Education in regards to student and staff safety, including guidelines for Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings.

#### **12. Exclusion from School**

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 reasonable effort to meet these students' needs using appropriate professional resources, implementing behaviour and safety plans. 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. The plans developed may include gradual reintegration, part-time attendance at school for a period of time, or recommendation of an alternate school placement.

#### **13. Alternate Educational Program**

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. The recommendation for alternate

educational programming may come from a medical professional, counsellor, 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.

#### **14. Alternate School Placement**

There may be times when Kootenay Christian Academy believes that the needs (educational, social, and/or behavioural) of the student would be better met by placement in another school or community program. KCA will make reasonable effort to integrate the student; however, placement at an alternate school will be suggested 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. Considerations will be the educational needs of the student and the educational needs of others in the school. When applicable, Kootenay Christian Academy will support parents in exploring alternative settings that would better serve the needs of the student and the family.

#### **15. Educational Support Services – Capacity**

Kootenay Christian Academy strives to provide and implement high quality educational programs for all of 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. In order for the school to be able to continue to meet the needs of these students through the progression of their school life, KCA recognizes that there is a limit to the number of students with special needs, or those requiring access to specialized support services that can effectively be served and supported within a classroom, a grade level, a campus, and within the K – 9 school system.

#### **16. Allocation of services to students**

Supports and Special Education services are offered to students at the discretion of the school Principal, in coordination with the Special Education Coordinator, and are dependent on the following factors

- Number of students within a class
- Specific student need
- Diagnosis/funding category
- Dynamics of the class; other student need(s)