

## **Vancouver College Special Education Policy**

### **Preamble**

Vancouver College, as an Edmund Rice Christian Brothers Catholic school, is a community committed to all students. We recall the words of Pope John Paul II at B.C. Place in 1984, "the value and dignity of the human person does not arise from the physical or mental qualities, from efficiency, productivity, or speed in one's actions. It comes rather from the fundamental fact that each individual is created by God and redeemed by the blood of his Son, Jesus Christ." Our commitment is rooted in the fact that we are all God's children.

### **Policy**

Vancouver College is committed to the education of the whole child, as articulated in the fifth Essential Element of an Edmund Rice Christian Brothers Education. This necessarily includes the spiritual, social emotional, intellectual, artistic, and physical aspects of the student. Our special education procedures reflect our commitment to inclusion and integration of students of a neurodiverse nature.

### **Procedure**

Vancouver College implements a program and curriculum enabling it to accept and meet the neurodiverse needs of all students in their community as much as possible.

Services may include:

- Curricular support
- Accessibility through adaptations and modifications to the curriculum and learning environment
- Developmentally appropriate, neuro-affirming programming
- Professional resources such as occupational therapy, speech language services, etc.
- Access to support from Provincial Resource Programs
- Parental collaboration through the school based team

Consistent with this policy is an effort (within financial feasibility) to make our facilities accessible for students with diverse needs.

#### **1) Admission Procedure**

a) Admission of a student with exceptionalities is subject to Vancouver College's admissions policy & procedures.

b) In the event that assessments are not complete or documentation is deemed by Vancouver College as incomplete, arrangements and cost for the required testing is the responsibility of the parents. The application process will not proceed until all required testing/documentation is received by the school.

c) The status of the current program, which includes students and Education Assistants (EAs) and teachers, is taken into consideration when a new family applies.

d) Vancouver College reserves the right not to enroll or re-enroll students whose learning, behavioural, or social-emotional needs are best met by placement in another specialized setting (i.e.: programming and/or support as are found in school district Resource Rooms), or a specialized education program. Vancouver College will support families in exploring alternative settings that would better serve the needs of the student(s).

## 2) Learning Support Services via the Learning Centre (TLC):

a) The special education program will be designed as an inclusive program, endeavoring to create a supportive learning environment in which students with special needs are integrated into same peer-age classrooms to the greatest extent possible.

b) Program delivery may range from full inclusion to partial integration depending on the needs of the child and the needs of the program that is developed.

c) Parents and students participate in programming decisions. Final decisions regarding levels of integration, staffing and the student's educational program rests with the Learning Centre, in conjunction with the Administration.

d) The school will endeavour to meet the needs of each student by employing Education Assistants, offering program support via peer tutoring and mentorship where necessary, as well as consulting specialists such as mental health and behavioural specialists.

e) To support our neuro-diverse community of learners, we provide a variety of learning supports. Our diverse community consists of students both with and without categorical designations, and those who may also meet the Ministry of Education criteria for special education funding.

## 3) Individual Education Plan (IEP)

a) Each student with special needs must have an Individual Education Plan as outlined by the Ministry of Education. This is a prerequisite for funding under the Ministry of Education grant program.

b) An IEP is a document plan developed for a student with special needs that describes individualized goals, adaptations, modifications or curricular supplemental goals, the services to be provided, and includes measures for tracking progress. It serves as a tool for collaborative planning among members of the team. It is a usable, strength-based document that summarizes the plan for the student's educational program. The IEP is implemented and generated by the team working with the student and parent(s).

#### 4) Ministry of Education Supplemental Funding

a) The Ministry of Education provides a supplemental special education funding grant for students with specific learning, social-emotional, or physical needs. Diagnoses alone are not sufficient for the designation to receive the special education grant; the school must also provide documentation to indicate programming and supports are in place for the student. The Ministry of Education requires that assessment documentation for students receiving special education grants must be current.

b) 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. Vancouver College also recognizes that the special education grant monies alone are not sufficient to provide for all staffing and services needed for these students, and funds from the general school budget are also allocated for this purpose. Outside of school supports, families may be directed to support their son with intensive and explicit programming for those with gaps in key academic, mental health, or other areas that impact well being.

c) The Ministry of Education provides supplemental Special Education funding for students designated in Categories A-H. Students must be eligible to receive the basic student grant in order to be eligible for special education funding from the Ministry of Education.

d) There is no supplemental funding for students designated in Categories K, P, Q and R as well as those with documented need but not meeting the Ministry of Education's criteria. The funding for support services for students in these categories is designated by the Ministry of Education as being included in the basic student grant.

#### **Transition Planning: The Evergreen Certificate**

At Vancouver College, we believe that all students deserve recognition for their educational accomplishments. The Evergreen Certificate recognizes the accomplishments of school completion without a Dogwood graduation credential for students, including those with exceptionalities, who have succeeded in meeting the goals and objectives of their individual educational program.

Processes are in place for all students, including students with neurodiverse needs, which:

- Accurately identify students who require significant replacement goals to the usual Dogwood track educational programming,
- Apply appropriate interventions to meet the educational needs of every student on an Evergreen graduation track,
- Communicate and consult accurately and regularly with parents and/or guardians regarding the educational program and progress of their son.

However, at times, students are unable even to meet the requirement of the Evergreen Certificate, despite the efforts of the Learning Centre, Administration, and Vancouver College faculty. Success of this process ultimately depends on the student and their family. Students with an Evergreen Certificate may pursue further credit in British Columbia's Adult Graduation Program.