

SPECIALIZED ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

DEFINITION

Specialized assessment refers to an individual student assessment completed by divisional personnel or community professionals that extends the information acquired by the in-school planning team through school-based assessment which will include teacher observations, teachers' formal and informal assessments and assessments by other in-school team members.

The purpose of specialized assessment is to collect additional information regarding the additional learning needs and abilities of the student across a variety of domains and specific learning contexts to determine the factors affecting the student's learning and what approaches would assist the student to meet the learning expectations in the classroom or to determine appropriate learning expectations.

Areas of specialized assessment may include: learning, social/emotional, sensory, behavioural, physical, cognitive/intellectual, adaptive, communication or health-care needs, and other factors relevant to the student's performance and learning.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Specialized assessment will be conducted by qualified professionals. Qualified professionals have the necessary education, training and experience to ensure that specialized assessments are completed in a competent and appropriate manner.

REFERRAL PROCESS FOR SPECIALIZED ASSESSMENT

Principals are responsible for ensuring that a student is assessed as soon as reasonably practicable and referred for a specialized assessment if the in-school team cannot determine why a student is having difficulty meeting the curricular learning expectations and is of the opinion that the student cannot meet curricular learning expectations even with differentiated instruction and adaptations.

Once the principal, the in-school planning team, the parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student (if 18+ years old) or substitute decision maker and qualified divisional professional(s) have decided that specialized assessment is required, the following steps must occur:

- (1) The need for specialized assessment must be explained by the principal or a member of the in-school planning team to the parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student, or substitute decision maker in clear language to ensure that they have a good understanding of the process (including how information will be shared and with whom), risks, benefits and expected outcomes (to inform programming/interventions).

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- (2) Informed consent as described in (1) will be obtained by the principal or a member of the in-school planning team prior to any interviewing or testing of the student as part of the assessment. Every reasonable attempt to obtain original written parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student, or substitute decision maker consent will be made. In the event original written consent cannot be obtained, digital consent will be accepted provided that this is documented clearly in the Pupil File including the date and signature of the person obtaining the digital consent. Specialized assessment cannot be initiated if the parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student, or substitute decision maker refuses consent. Written documentation of the refusal to consent shall be filed in the Pupil File.
- (3) The Student Services referral form shall be completed by the in-school planning team, signed by the principal and forwarded to the Student Services office.
- (4) Once consent has been obtained, the individual responsible for conducting the specialized assessment will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student, or substitute decision maker to explain the specialized assessment procedures.
- (5) Appropriate timelines for the assessment, interpretation meeting and written report must be identified by the school team and the professional conducting the specialized assessment and communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student, or substitute decision maker.

PRIORITIZING REFERRALS

- (1) Referrals for specialized assessment will be prioritized based on needs and requirements by the principal and the in-school planning team in collaboration with the qualified divisional professionals responsible for conducting the specialized assessment.
- (2) Specialized assessment will be completed as soon as reasonably practical. Appropriate programming will continue while the student is waiting for specialized assessment.
- (3) When required, divisional emergent issues will take precedence.
- (4) Direct referrals for specialized assessment from physicians, other professionals and outside agencies will not be accepted. Specific requests from parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student, or substitute decision maker, will be addressed based on the above procedures.

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CONDUCTING SPECIALIZED ASSESSMENTS

- (1) The qualified professional conducting the specialized assessment will follow the principles of fair assessment practices. *Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada (wcdsb.ca)*
- (2) The qualified professional conducting the specialized assessment will involve parent/guardian(s), adult student or substitute decision maker in the completion of the specialized assessment when appropriate.

INTERPRETATION TO PARENT/GUARDIAN/ADULT STUDENT/SUBSTITUTE DECISION MAKER

Specialized assessment results will be interpreted by a qualified professional.

The school team will make every effort to assist the parent/guardian/adult student or substitute decision maker to clearly understand the assessment information and facilitate participation in the development of a follow-up plan.

SPECIALIZED ASSESSMENT REPORTS

- (1) Specialized assessment reports will provide the parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student, or substitute decision maker and the in-school planning team with a summary of assessment findings and recommendations for programming. Recommendations may include other methods of differentiated instruction, assessment, adaptations and/or modifications to assist the student in meeting curricular learning expectations or student-specific learning outcomes.
- (2) In collaboration with the qualified professional providing the specialized assessment, the assessment data will be used to assist the in-school planning team with programming decisions and to monitor student progress. School teams, including the parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student, or substitute decision maker when possible, are responsible for developing student-specific outcomes where indicated by the assessment process.
- (3) A copy of the specialized assessment report will be:
 - (i) provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s), adult student, or substitute decision maker;
 - (ii) stored in the Student Document Management System.

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- (4) Results from specialized assessment will be released to individuals or agencies outside the school system only with signed parent/guardian/adult student, or substitute decision maker consent or by following *The Protecting and Supporting Children (Information Sharing) Act*.

Effective Date: September 22, 2009

Review Date:

Amended Date: March 15, 2016; September 18, 2018; May 16, 2023

Board Motion (s): 251/09; 88/16; 194/18; 134/23

Legal/Cross Reference: Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada (wcdsb.ca); The Protecting and Supporting Children (Information Sharing) Act C.C.S.M. c. P143.5; Standards for Appropriate Educational Programming,
https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/aep/pdf/standards_for_student_services.pdf