



Teacher Assistant Support Protocol

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TEACHER ASSISTANT SUPPORT PROTOCOL

PHILOSOPHY:

Since the mid 1980's the government of New Brunswick has endorsed the philosophy of the inclusion of exceptional children into the regular classroom setting. The **Education Act**, which was proclaimed and came into force December 29, 1997, supports this philosophy by stating: "*the director of education shall place exceptional pupils such that they receive special education programs and services in circumstances where exceptional pupils can participate with pupils who are not exceptional pupils within regular classroom settings to the extent that is considered practicable by the director of education having due regard for the educational needs of all pupils.*" [Education Act, Article 12(3)]. In order to meet the needs of these exceptional children, many varied types of resources and support have been introduced into the educational system with the goal of helping the individual, over time, to move toward greater independence. This will, therefore, enable him or her to become a contributing member of society. One of the support systems used is the assignment of Teacher Assistants.

PURPOSE:

The assignment of Teacher Assistant support is complex and multifaceted. In order to help districts meet the challenge of assigning Teacher Assistant support, the Department of Education has developed this document for schools, parents and professionals. It outlines the definition of Teacher Assistant and the process by which Teacher Assistant support services should be accessed. It is recognized that the allocation of Teacher Assistant support is an educational decision and the responsibility of school districts.

The purpose of this document is to ensure that appropriate collaboration, problem solving, and planning at the school level has occurred before schools submit a request to the District Student Services team for Teacher Assistant support.

DEFINITION OF TEACHER ASSISTANT:

The Teacher Assistant works under the supervision and direction of the student's classroom teacher(s), resource teacher, principal and/or other professional staff. Teacher Assistants are paraprofessionals employed by school districts to support the inclusion and the special education goals of students who have been deemed exceptional according to the ***Education Act***. A Teacher Assistant should not be viewed as a student's personal assistant, but rather as a support to a teacher or classroom. In fact, very few students require full time teacher assistant support. When Teacher Assistants are assigned, they are usually shared among several students, or assigned on a part time basis. The capacity of the present school-based resources and the extent of the student's exceptionality will be factors determining the amount and kind of support needed. Students who have previously been served by the ***Early Childhood Intervention*** program and who continue to have significant difficulties will generally continue to receive support as they enter kindergarten unless it is deemed unnecessary after consultation.

In order for students to lead full and productive lives, they must be given the opportunity to move from a state of dependence to one of relative independence, thereby leading to a decrease in support services. It is recognized, however, that some students will always require on-going support.

REQUESTING TEACHER ASSISTANT SUPPORT:

The request process emphasizes a collaborative approach at the school level. The school-based team should help the teacher develop and implement all possible strategies and resources prior to a request to the district level for Teacher Assistant support. Class size and composition, support services, and workload of the teacher will be taken into account if Teacher Assistant support is requested. The request is made after careful collaboration with educators, other professionals and parents.

The following steps are recommended:

- 1. When a teacher in consultation with the parent/guardian recognizes that a student is not experiencing success from his or her school experience in spite of various interventions initiated by the teacher, the student's name should be forwarded to the school-based team for discussion.**
- 2. The school-based team will identify the student's strengths and needs.**
- 3. The team will undertake a problem solving process (e.g. 30-min problem solving technique) and will generate strategies to address these identified strengths and needs. These strategies will be prioritized and implemented.**
- 4. Informal and, if warranted, formal assessment will occur. Further strategies may be identified and implemented as a result of the assessment process.**
- 5. A Special Education Plan will be developed.**
- 6. Current school resources will be reallocated.**
- 7. After a school has completed steps one through six and the team considers that further intervention is warranted, a request to the District Student Services team for Teacher Assistant support may be initiated. The request should include:**
 - Recommendations from problem solving sessions**
 - Assessment results and recommendations**
 - Behavioural logs**
 - Any other pertinent information**
 - A record of all interventions and/or strategies attempted to date**
- 8. The appropriate district office personnel will review the referral and the accompanying documentation. Once this process is completed, a decision should be expected promptly.**

It is expected that members of the District team will be available for consultation throughout the process

TEACHER ASSISTANT SUPPORT

SAMPLE REQUEST FORM

TEACHER: _____ SCHOOL: _____

GRADE: _____ CLASS SIZE: _____

SUPPORT PERSONNEL INVOLVED:

RESOURCE TEACHER _____ SPEECH THERAPIST: _____

PSYCHOLOGIST _____ OTHER: _____

GUIDANCE: _____

DESCRIBE THE COMPOSITION OF THE CLASS:

REASONS FOR REQUEST:

STRATEGIES ATTEMPTED:

COLLABORATIVE TEAM MEETING:

Initial Date: _____ Review Date: _____

DATE OF REFERRAL FOR TA SUPPORT: _____

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

MINUTES OF SCHOOL BASED TEAM MEETING

MINUTES OF PROBLEM SOLVING MEETING

ASSESSMENT REPORT(S)

BEHAVIOUR LOG

OBSERVATION REPORT(S)

WORK SAMPLES

SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN

OTHER: _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

REVIEW DATE BY DISTRICT PERSONNEL: _____

SIGNATURE: _____
DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

COMMENTS: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
