



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Report on the Population of Public School Students With Exceptionalities

Anglophone Sector
School Year 2000-2001

STUDENT SERVICES UNIT
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES BRANCH

August 2002

Background

The Department of Education has had a legislative mandate for inclusive schooling, specifically that all students will be educated in their neighborhood schools in regular classroom settings alongside their non-exceptional peers, since the introduction of *Bill 85 – An Act to Amend the Schools Act*, and the subsequent proclamation of the 1986 *Schools Act*. The current *Education Act*, (2001) states in Section 12:

Programs and services for exceptional pupils

12(1) Where the superintendent concerned, after consulting with qualified persons, determines that the behavioural, communicational, intellectual, perceptual or multiple exceptionalities of a person are contributing to delayed educational development such that a special education program is considered by the superintendent to be necessary for the person, that person shall be an exceptional pupil for the purposes of this Act.

12(2) The superintendent concerned shall ensure that the parent of a pupil is consulted during the process of the determination referred to in subsection (1), and in the process of developing special education programs and services for the pupil.

12(3) The superintendent concerned 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 superintendent having due regard for the educational needs of all pupils.

12(4) Where an exceptional pupil is not able to receive a special education program or service in a school due to

(a) fragile health, hospitalization or convalescence, or

(b) a condition or need which requires a level of care that cannot be provided effectively in a school setting,

the superintendent concerned may deliver the program or service in the pupil's home or other alternative setting.

12(5) The Minister may issue policies to District Education Councils for the declaration of exceptional pupils under subsection (1) and the placement of exceptional pupils under subsection (3).

12(6) A decision made by a superintendent under subsection (1) or (3) shall be made

(a) subject to any policies or directives of the District Education Council concerned,

(b) subject to any policies issued by the Minister under subsection (5), and

(c) only with respect to pupils who are enrolled in a school in the school district or who reside in the school district for which the superintendent is appointed or reappointed.

1997, c.66, s.2; 2000, c.52, s.13.

This legislation, since its inception, has established New Brunswick's educational system as one of the most progressive in the world with respect to inclusionary practice. Throughout the past 16 years, educational administrators and teachers from various countries around the world have come to New Brunswick to visit public school classrooms to meet with educators to discuss how to implement and maintain an inclusive school setting. OECD singled out New Brunswick in the books *Successful Services for our Children and Families at Risk*, 1996, and *Inclusive Education at Work*, 1999, for achievements in inclusionary practices.

Under the Education Act, students who are deemed to be exceptional must be provided with a special education program, defined under the legislation as:

"An education program for an exceptional pupil that is based on the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and which includes a plan containing specific objectives and recommendations for education services that meet the needs of the pupil;

This legislation, along with the Constitution Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, and the New Brunswick Human Rights Act, all govern the ways and means that school districts provide services and programs to students who are deemed exceptional.

Notwithstanding New Brunswick's reputation for a progressive educational context with respect to inclusion, New Brunswick's educational system does have a number of issues pertinent to the delivery of special educational programs and services that require continuing examination in order to improve the delivery system and to ensure that exceptional students learn and achieve to their potential. Standards that apply to students who are not on a special education plan should equally apply to students with exceptionalities, where possible. Parents and educators must always set high expectations for exceptional students. Additionally, the only true picture of student achievement is one that reflects the achievement of all students. Thus, to ensure that exceptional students are evaluated against common standards of achievement, the Department of Education must strive to provide appropriate accommodations for the administration of school-based and external assessments.

In addition, it is clear from our experiences over the past twenty years that educators working with children with exceptionalities require the collaboration and support of others. These include parents, pre-school specialists, and many other professionals outside of the school system, including those within the health professions, such as physicians, nurses, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, mental health psychologists, social workers, and others.

The Department of Education has, over the past several years, provided direction and guidance to school districts in their delivery of educational programs and services to students with exceptionalities. Early documents included:

- *Working Guidelines on Integration (1988;*
- *The Integration of Special Needs Pupils in New Brunswick Senior High Schools, February 1989;*
- *Teacher Assistant Guidelines for Standards and Evaluation, May 1994;*
- *Report of the Special Committee on Social Policy Development on the Review of School Integration, 1989;*
- *Best Practices for Inclusion, July 199;*
- *Cooperative Review of Services for Students with Exceptional Needs 1994.*

All provided focus for school districts in order to comply with both the letter and spirit of the law. During the intervening years, as more research emerged, knowledge has been gained about various exceptionalities. Accordingly, additional documents and resources have been developed and distributed to provide information, knowledge, and skills to educators in order to make New Brunswick's school system as inclusive as possible. These documents include:

- *Gifted and Talent Students: A Resource Guide for Teachers, 1997;*
- *Teacher Assistant Support Protocol, July 1999;*
- *Resource for the Identification and Teaching of Students With Specific Learning Disability, November 1999;*
- *Resource for the Transition of Students with Exceptionalities from School to Work or Post Secondary and Adult Life, May 2000;*
- *Resource for Assisting Struggling Learners, September 2000;*
- *Guidelines for New Brunswick Alternative Education Programs and Services, March 2002;*
- *Guidelines and Standards-Educational Planning for Students With Exceptionalities, July 2002*

The release of each of the documents listed also entailed either provincial or district in-service, and sometimes both. As well, many of the documents assisted the Department of Education in identifying specific summer institutes to help educators learn more about the areas described within the documents.

The Department of Education is currently in the process of developing a policy for the education of students with exceptionalities that will lay out the framework for our continuing determination and commitment to provide high quality educational programs and services to students who have exceptional learning needs.

Purposes of Survey

It is important to effectively identify the programs and services that are required now and in the future. Therefore, a survey of exceptionalities was administered for gathering baseline data on the number of students in New Brunswick's English school system that are identified as exceptional students under the *Education Act*.

Although individual school districts have had processes and procedures in place to identify the number of students who are exceptional, the purpose of the accounting has traditionally been for identifying the need for, and deployment of, teacher assistants. The Department of Education recognized that there are other areas that require a provincial perspective, such as the number, prevalence, incidence rates, distribution, and needs of districts related to students with exceptionalities. Accordingly, the information contained in this report provides assistance in defining the nature and extent of professional development and in-service training that is necessary at school, district, and provincial levels. In addition, the information contained in this report may assist government in addressing the needs of students from a multi-disciplinary perspective, for example, through an integrated and coordinated services delivery model. Certain information will inform programs and services to students with specific exceptionalities, such as specific learning disability, autism spectrum disorder, and attentional disorders. As well, information from the survey will assist in defining the knowledge, skills, and competencies that new and current teachers must acquire through both their pre-service and in-service teacher development.

This survey originally contained two parts: a form for resource teachers and a form for school principals. Not all variables were analyzed. Difficulties encountered with the completion and compilation of data from the survey for principals led to the decision to forego this facet of the survey for this first survey. It is expected that the next version will be revised to make it easier for completion and data collection.

Survey of Exceptionalities Methodology

Section 12 (1) of the Education Act identifies the following categories of exceptionalities:

1. Behavioural
2. Communicational
3. Intellectual
4. Perceptual
5. Multiple exceptionalities

In order to be more precise in the determination of the nature of the above-mentioned exceptionalities, each of the categories were further subdivided using the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual -IV* terms of reference used by psychologists, psychiatrists and other medical practitioners, and which is a basis for this glossary of terms. All conditions required a documented diagnosis through collaboration with professionals.

Resource and methods teachers were asked to complete one form for each student who was receiving direct, indirect, or monitoring services from a methods and resource teacher. School district personnel, including School Principals, District Student Services supervisors, Directors of Education, and Superintendents, supervised the compilation of data.

Accuracy of Summary Data

The results of this survey, the first of a periodic census related to the population of students served by resource teachers, do have a margin of error. The primary source of error is that of lack of uniformity, or the subjectivity, in which individual raters applied the definitions of exceptionalities. (See Appendix A.) Individual school rater errors tend to cancel each other when data are summarized at the provincial level. In addition, there were some key entry errors as well as incomplete data categories on several data forms. The data is based upon a total of 15,060 forms, each representing an exceptional student as defined under the Education Act, which were completed and returned by school districts. Based on the total student population at the time of 86,555, this indicates a total of 17.4 per cent of students within the anglophone school system were identified as being exceptional as per the Education Act.

General Analysis

The results of the survey illustrate the wide diversity of students and the types of exceptionalities that are found within classrooms in New Brunswick's anglophone sector schools, and in particular within the English core program. Parental choice between the English core program and the French Immersion program has resulted in a significant number of students with exceptionalities in the English core program. It can be assumed parents of exceptional children are selecting a learning environment that offers their children the greatest opportunity to succeed, in this case based on their mother tongue. Consequently, a significant percentage of services in support of exceptional students are found in the English Core program. Services are intended for students regardless of the program placement; students with exceptionalities in the French Immersion program will receive services if they are identified as being exceptional.

The findings confirm that teachers require regular and sustained professional development and in-service in understanding the nature and characteristics of the many different types of exceptionalities. In particular, teachers must be knowledgeable of the variety of methods of interventions required at early grade levels, i.e. K-2, to prevent some students from becoming students with exceptionalities due to inability to read. The data also indicate a need to provide professional development in the areas associated with behaviour and intellectual conditions as well as some communication and perceptual/sensory conditions, particularly with respect to understanding conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, emotional disorder, language disorder, intellectual disorder, slow learner, and learning disability.

Results of Survey

Based on September 30, 2000, English School District
Population of 86,555 Students

Number of Exceptionalities by District

District	Frequency	District Population	Percentage by District Population	Percentage by total provincial population
2	3421	17034	20.8	3.95
6	1951	10774	18.1	2.25
8	2108	14390	14.7	2.44
10	950	4670	20.3	1.10
14	1211	9393	12.9	1.40
15	1155	4666	24.8	1.33
16	919	6839	13.4	1.06
17	873	5988	14.6	1.01
18	2174	12801	17.0	2.51
District Totals	14,762			
Unaccounted	298			.02
Provincial Totals	15,060	86,555		17.4

The total percentage of students, 17.4, is consistent with the ranges (17% - 21%) of the other provinces in Atlantic Canada as well as those of other provinces across Canada. These figures are also consistent with the percentage of students who are classified as being special education students in the United States.

There is a fair degree of inter-district variability, though it is expected that larger centers with more services to offer, such as the Moncton, Saint John, Fredericton regions, would have higher percentages of students with exceptionalities. As well, inconsistency of raters as well as subjectivity will account for some degree of variability, thus requiring that resource teachers be provided with in-service in understanding differences in the various exceptionalities.

Even when definitions of exceptionality are clearly defined and rigorously applied, as in other provinces and states, there continues to be geographic differences and significant differences between and among districts. The reasons for such are many and include the cultural context, socio-economic variables, educational variables, and others. Further research would have to be conducted to provide clear answers as to the variability among districts.

Number of Exceptionalities by Gender

District	Frequency	Percentage
2 Males	2068	62.8
2 Females	1227	37.2
6 Males	1217	67.8
6 Females	579	32.2
8 Males	1297	64.1
8 Females	726	35.9
10 Males	588	63.8
10 Females	340	36.2
14 Males	764	64.9
14 Females	414	35.1
15 Males	711	61.6
15 Females	411	36.6
16 Males	545	61.7
16 Females	339	38.3
17 Males	543	65.7
17 Females	283	34.3
18 Males	1373	65.3
18 Females	729	34.7
Provincial Total Males	9106	60.4
Provincial Total Females	5048	33.5
Total Males and Females	14,154	93.9

Approximately 1/3rd of New Brunswick's exceptional students are female and 2/3^{rds} of the exceptional students are male. There is remarkable consistency among the 9 districts. These figures are virtually identical on a provincial scale to those of the U.S.A where 1/3rd of special needs students are female and 2/3^{rds} are male.

The trend to identify more males than females in any area of exceptionality is an international phenomenon. While there is national and provincial data to indicate that girls do better than boys in math, reading, and science, the analysis of why there are more male students who are exceptional than female is still under study. There are studies that identify maturational factors, as well as cognitive, medical, and psychological developmental reasons for the overall 2-to-1 gender gap. Other reasons that may contribute to the disparity between the genders are that boys tend to act out more, whereas girls tend to be more passive. Boys experiencing learning difficulties tend toward attentional or more obvious behavioural manifestations unlike girls who tend to be more compliant. Hence, boys tend to be identified more easily, particularly in those areas such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, or Specific Learning Disability where the exceptionality is less easily identified than a visible disability. Accordingly, there may be an over identification of males and an under identification of females. New Brunswick PISA results

also show a general inequity between males and females; thus, it is not surprising that this is also reflected in the population of students with exceptionalities.

Students with Exceptionalities by Program

Program	Frequency	Percentage of Students with Exceptionalities
English Core	13,796	91.6
French Immersion	1264	8.4

Degree of Resource Teacher Support

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Direct	6854	45.5	48.3	48.3
	Indirect	3428	22.8	24.2	72.5
	Monitored	3897	25.9	27.5	100.0
	Total	14179	94.2		
Missing	0	881	5.8	100.0	
Total		15060	100.0		

RESOURCE AND METHODS SERVICE

Direct - The student receives instruction individually or in a small group from the R & M teacher.

Indirect - The student receives accommodations, modification, or individualization of classroom programming from the classroom teacher as a result of consultation with the R & M teacher.

Monitored - The student is not receiving any accommodations, modifications, or individualization of classroom programming from the classroom teacher at this time, but the R & M teacher and the classroom teacher monitor the student's progress on a regular basis.

Regular classroom teachers are responsible for all students in their classes. Resource and Methods teachers provide a collaborative support model for teachers and students. The number of full time equivalent Resource and Methods teachers is 297 or 7.9 % of the total teacher population.

Students with Exceptionalities Provincially by Grade

Grade	Frequency	Percentage of Total Number of Students with Exceptionalities
K	509	3.4
1	968	6.4
2	1209	8
3	1289	8.6
4	1302	8.6
5	1292	8.6
6	1283	8.5
7	1251	8.3
8	1220	8.1
9	1469	9.8
10	1143	7.6
11	840	5.6
12	642	4.3
Unaccounted	643	4.3
Total	15,060	

School Level	Frequency	Percentage of Total Number of Students with Exceptionalities
Elementary School (K-5)	6569	43.6
Middle School (6-8)	3754	24.9
High School (9-12)	4094	27.2
Unaccounted	643	4.3
Total	15,060	100.

Total Exceptionalities by Category

	Frequency	Percentage of Students with Exceptionalities	Percentage of Total Student Population
Behavioural	5370	35.7	6.2
Communication Disorder	2361	15.7	2.7
Intellectual Conditions	9883	65.7	11.4
Physical Conditions	1319	8.8	1.5
Perceptual/Sensory	3884	25.8	4.5

Some students, though entered only once by the school, may have one or more conditions for which they are being served by Resource Teachers and other professionals. For example, a student with a specific learning disability may also have attentional difficulties, i.e., ADD, ADHD

EXCEPTIONALITIES BY BEHAVIOURAL CONDITIONS

Behavioural Condition	Frequency	Percentage of Students with Exceptionalities	Percentage of total population
Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder	2062	13.7	2.4
Conduct Disorder	282	1.9	.3
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder	77	.5	.08
Oppositional Defiant Disorder	313	2.1	.36
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)	48	.32	.06
Bipolar Disorder	34	.2	.04
Tourette's Syndrome	143	.9	.16
Emotional Disorder	332	2.2	.38
Schizophrenia	5	.03	.00005
Other	2074	13.8	2.4
Total	5370	35.7	6.2

EXCEPTIONALITIES BY
COMMUNICATION CONDITIONS

Communication Condition	Frequency	Percentage of Students with Communicational Exceptionalities	Percentage of total population
Autism	147	1.0	.17
Asperger's Disorder	101	.7	.12
Rett's Disorder	3	.0002	0
Pervasive Developmental Disorder	195	1.3	.22
Selective Mutism	31	.2	.04
Language Disorder	1063	7.1	1.23
Other Communication Disorder	821	5.5	.95
Total	2361	15.7	2.7

EXCEPTIONALITIES BY
INTELLECTUAL CONDITIONS

Intellectual Conditions	Frequency	Percentage of Resource Students with Intellectual Exceptionalities	Percentage of total population
Intellectual Disability	1367	9.1	1.6
Slow Learner	4204	27.9	4.8
Gifted	524	3.5	.6
Other (undiagnosed)	3788	25.2	4.4
Totals	9883	65.7	11.4

EXCEPTIONALITIES BY
PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Physical Conditions	Frequency	Percentage of Resource Students with Intellectual Exceptionalities	Percentage of total population
Gross Motor Disability	169	1.1	.20
Cerebral Palsy	118	.8	.14
Mobility Device Required	111	.7	.13
Medically Fragile	211	1.4	.24
Spina Bifada	52	.3	.06
Other undiagnosed	658	4.4	.76
Total	1319	8.76	1.5

EXCEPTIONALITIES BY PERCEPTIONAL SENSORY
CONDITIONS PROVINCIALY

Perceptual/Sensory Conditions	Frequency	Percentage of Resource Students with Perceptual/Sensory Exceptionalities	Percentage of total population
Learning Disability	1920	12.8	2.2
Central Auditory Processing Disorder	266	1.8	.31
Other (undiagnosed)	1267	8.4	1.5
Blind or Visually Impaired	162	1.1	.19
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	269	1.8	.31
Total	3884	25.8	4.5

Conclusion

New Brunswick's educational achievements related to inclusion and leadership in inclusionary practices are emulated in all provinces in Canada and in many countries around the world. Nevertheless, it is clear from qualitative and quantitative information gathered that a number of issues should be addressed to ensure that students with exceptionalities are being educated, commensurate with their abilities, to the highest expectations of all students.

It is the intent of the Department of Education to renew efforts to enlist the support of teacher training institutions in providing new teachers with a clearer understanding of the nature of exceptionalities and the strategies, programs, and services necessary to facilitate learning for all students. Equally, the Department of Education will continue its efforts, through the development of curricular support and best practice documents, and collaborative consultative workshops with districts as well as with focused workshops in areas such as learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, behavioural disorders, and other areas of exceptionalities. Because of this survey, four areas of exceptionality were identified as areas of need for professional development. These include behavioural conditions, particularly Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, language disorders, intellectual conditions, and specific learning disabilities. Accordingly, the Department of Education intends to:

- develop professional development opportunities through summer institutes on gender issues to build awareness in the teaching staff;
- have all Student Services documents translated to French in order to provide more basic information to French immersion teachers with respect to the identification and teaching of students with exceptionalities, so that they can more effectively be accommodated in the French immersion program;
- develop a resource document that will assist teachers in recognizing behavioural conditions, in performing a functional behavioural analysis, and in developing behaviour plans for students;
- continue to provide and augment professional development opportunities regarding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder through summer institutes;
- offer, in partnership with speech-language pathologists from the Department of Health and Wellness, summer institute professional development opportunities with regard to teaching strategies and programming for students with language disorders in communication disorders.
- continue to collaborate with the New Brunswick Association for Community Living to provide professional development opportunities regarding students with intellectual disabilities and regarding inclusive principles.
- revise the document "*Best Practices for Inclusion*"
- collaborate with the New Brunswick Learning Disabilities Association in identifying a vision and goals for the next five years with respect to professional development and other issues in learning disabilities.
- produce a resource document related to the identification and teaching of students with Specific Learning Disability at the 9-12 level. The Department of Education at the same time will reintroduce the elementary level document.

- collaborate with the District Supervisors of Student Services to provide continuing support for the clarification of the characteristics of exceptionalities, the related teaching strategies and the planning for professional development.
- continue to provide districts with the opportunity for professional development and support on the model of collaborative consultation that assists classroom teachers by providing, through the resource teachers, more information regarding knowledge and teaching strategies for students with exceptionalities.

The Department of Education extends its appreciation to all educators who have participated in this survey. In addition, the Department of Education offers support to districts as they study their data and make plans to sustain / implement programs and services that enable all students to achieve curricular outcomes to the best of their ability.

For Further Information:

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Survey of Exceptionalities

Teacher #: _____

Date: _____

Student ID #: _____

School ID #: _____

Grade(Please circle): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Gender: M F

Program: French Immersion English

TA Support: None Full-time Part-time Share

R & M Service: Direct Indirect Monitored

Please see the Glossary of Terms and check the appropriate box or boxes for each child you serve either directly, indirectly or monitor. Each child on your caseload should have a completed survey sheet. PLEASE ENSURE THAT A STUDENT'S PROFILE IS ENTERED ONLY ONCE PER SCHOOL.

BEHAVIOURAL CONDITIONS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Bipolar Disorder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct Disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourette's Syndrome |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Disorder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oppositional Defiant Disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Schizophrenia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

COMMUNICATION CONDITIONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Autism | <input type="checkbox"/> Selective Mutism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asperger's Disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Language Disorder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rett's Disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pervasive Developmental Disorder
Not Otherwise Specified | |

INTELLECTUAL CONDITIONS

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Gifted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slow Learner | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gross Motor Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Medically Fragile |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cerebral Palsy | <input type="checkbox"/> Spina Bifida |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility Device Required
(e.g. wheelchair, walker, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

PERCEPTUAL/SENSORY CONDITIONS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Blind or Visually Impaired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central Auditory Processing
Disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf or Hard of Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms

BEHAVIOURAL CONDITIONS

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder - A condition typically characterized by inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity which interfere with a child's ability to concentrate and complete schoolwork

Oppositional Defiant Disorder – Children with this disorder present as manipulative, self-focused, willful, and defiant of authority figures

Conduct Disorder – A repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others as well as societal norms or rules are violated

Tourette's Syndrome - A neurological condition characterized by either verbal or motor "tics" which can interfere with a child's learning and social interactions

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder – A condition characterized by recurrent obsessions or compulsions that are severe enough to be time consuming or cause marked distress and is recognized as excessive and unreasonable

Schizophrenia - A complex biochemical disorder of the brain often marked by disorganization of thought, social withdrawal, lack of attention and apathy.

Bipolar Disorder - A condition characterized by unpredictable and volatile mood swings, from high energy to rages, which interfere with a child's ability to function effectively at home, at school and in social situations

Emotional Disorders – A range of problems including: depression, separation/attachment problems, problem eating-behaviours, post-traumatic stress disorder, phobias, and anxiety disorders

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) - Abnormalities associated with the mother's drinking alcohol during pregnancy. Defects range from mild to severe, including growth retardation, brain damage, intellectual disability, hyperactivity, anomalies of the face, and heart failure.

COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

Autism - A condition typically characterized by the presence of markedly abnormal or impaired development in social interaction and communication and a restricted repertoire of activity and interests.

Rett's Disorder - This condition usually shows a loss of multiple skills following a period of normal functioning after birth; e.g. speech, mobility, interests.

Asperger's Disorder - This disorder usually shows impairment in social interaction and the development of restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests, and activities with no significant delays in language, cognitive development, self-help skills, adaptive behaviour, or curiosity about the environment.

Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified - A condition typically characterized by impairment in the development of reciprocal social interaction or verbal and nonverbal communication skills, or when stereotyped behaviour, interests and activities are present, but do not fall under other categories.

Selective Mutism - A condition typically shown by the persistent failure/refusal to speak in specific social situations.

Language Disorders - Conditions typically characterized by impairment in expressive or receptive language skills, articulation, or by the presence of stuttering.

INTELLECTUAL CONDITIONS

Intellectual disability - A condition in which the child's learning abilities are significantly impaired such that an individualized program is required

Slow learner - Children with this designation would be those who need considerable repetition and practice with the basic components of the curriculum, and thus require modification in their educational program

Gifted - These are children who exhibit rapid and accurate learning and reasoning skills, for whom the regular program will need to be enhanced to meet their thirst for intellectual stimulation. (This category, though not identified in the *Education Act*, is generally considered exceptionality, and programming and services are provided for gifted and talented students.)

PERCEPTUAL/SENSORY CONDITIONS

Learning Disability - A condition typically found in persons of average to above average potential who display processing deficits in attention, visual processing, auditory processing, visual perception, language, written expression, math, organization, or memory that interfere with their ability to learn.

Central Auditory Processing Disorder - A specific type of auditory processing disorder characterized by the presence of uneven response on audiological assessments.

Deaf or Hard of Hearing - Persons with this condition must have been diagnosed as deaf or hard of hearing by a medical practitioner or audiologist.

Blind or Visually Impaired - Persons with this condition must have been diagnosed legally blind or partially sighted by a medical practitioner or optometrist.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Gross Motor Disability - with this disability, there is an obvious impairment in the development of motor coordination such that it interferes with academic achievement or the activities of daily living.

Medically Fragile - This would characterize students who have a severe medical condition(s) that requires constant attention, and often interferes with the child's opportunity to learn. A physician has identified this condition(s) and the student is under a doctor's care.

Cerebral Palsy - A neurological condition that requires a physician's diagnosis.

Spina Bifida - A condition that results in the congenital midline defect of the spinal column.