

**EXTERNAL FUNDING REVIEW
FOR MANITOBA EDUCATION, CITIZENSHIP AND YOUTH
FALL 2006**

**PARTICIPANT PACKAGE
SPECIAL NEEDS FUNDING CONSULTATION
PROPOSED CHANGES TO LEVEL II AND III FUNDING PROCESS**

THE CONSULTATION PACKAGE

Introduction and Background Information

The purpose of this consultation is to receive feedback on a draft package of proposals that are intended to improve the Level II and III funding application process. These changes are based on:

- a) Previous recommendations contained in *The Manitoba Special Education Review, Final Report, 1999*.
- b) Feedback received during the consultations on Appropriate Educational Programming (Bill 13)
- c) On going feedback from parents and educators

An external facilitator has been retained to conduct a three session consultation process for:

- a) Representatives of our key stakeholder groups
- b) Parents
- c) Provincial Student Services Administrators

Once the feedback has been received, it will be collated, analyzed and compiled into a final report and an executive summary.

Key elements of the current funding process will remain:

- Application-based, with three funding rounds during the year (fall, January, and June)
- School divisions determine who to submit and how to allocate dollars to provide supports that address the student's learning needs
- Parents participate in the application and programming process and sign applications
- The Funding Review Team (FRT) determines Level II and III eligibility and years of funding
- School divisions can appeal FRT decisions
- Schools Finance Branch flows dollars to school divisions
- Portability of funding
- The URIS and EBD III procedures will not be changed

Current Eligibility Criteria:

To be considered eligible for special needs Level II and III funding, a student must:

- Be registered in the school division submitting the application
- Be receiving a full day of programming in school or an appropriate alternate setting, and
- Meet the criteria in the funding guidelines

The Proposals

This consultation package is divided into five sections.

Each section has a proposal to improve the current special needs funding Level II and III application process.

Proposal No. 1: Provide maximum-year Level II and III funding for students with life-long disabilities.

Current Funding Process: Students with life-long disabilities may be multi-year funded for up to four years.

Proposal No. 2: Provide multi-year funding (up to four years) for students who are eligible for approval as emotionally-behaviourally disordered (EBD).

Current Funding Process: Students with emotional/behavioural disorders are funded for one year at a time.

Proposal No. 3: Require School Divisions to submit a summary of attendance for all students receiving Level II and III funding at the end of each school year.

Current Funding Process: Divisions report the student's previous school year's attendance when a funding application is submitted. For some students, this may occur once every four years.

Proposal No. 4: Revise the existing Level II and III application form.

Current Funding Process: Currently school divisions use categorical funding annotated descriptors as a guide to completing a funding application. Section one of the current application form requires an open-ended description of a student's needs, exceptional behaviours, and academic performance. The other sections of the application ask for diagnostic/assessment information, resources and interventions the student requires, attendance information, and signatures of parents and school division staff.

Proposal No. 5: Implement a process between Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (MECY) and school divisions to verify attendance and continued eligibility for Level II and III funded students.

Current Funding Process: Currently, school divisions just report enrollment at the beginning of the school year on September 30. There is no other process currently in place to verify the attendance after September 30 of multi-year funded students and their continued eligibility for special needs funding.

Proposal No. 1:

Provide maximum-year Level II and III funding for students with life-long disabilities.

The intent of this proposal is to reduce the number of funding applications submitted during a student's time in school.

- Students with life-long disabilities who meet eligibility criteria based on information provided by the school division will receive Level II or III funding for the maximum number of years possible.
- Approval for maximum-year funding - When a student is approved for maximum year funding, the school team will not be required to submit another application for the student as long as he or she is in school (graduates or turns 21 whichever comes first).

Proposal No. 2:

Provide multi-year funding (up to four years) for students who are eligible for approval as emotionally-behaviourally disordered (EBD).

The intent of the proposal is to extend the amount of time that a student approved as emotionally-behaviourally disordered can be funded.

- Students approved as emotionally-behaviourally disordered who meet eligibility criteria based on information provided by the school division will receive Level II funding for multiple years (up to four) per application.

Proposal No. 3:

Require School Divisions to submit a summary of attendance for all students receiving Level II and III funding at the end of each school year.

The intent of this proposal is to provide an attendance-based accountability mechanism for students receiving Level II or III funding.

- School divisions will submit a summary of attendance for all students receiving Level II or III funding.
- Students who do not attend school or do not demonstrate an acceptable level of attendance will not be eligible for Level II or III funding.

Proposal No. 4:

Revise the existing Level II and III application form.

The intent of this proposal is to revise the existing application form to make it more user-friendly and provide for a balanced perspective of the student's current functioning. Concurrently, there may be a need to update the funding criteria to be consistent with the funding application.

- The application will be revised and streamlined to reflect a student's current functioning.
- The funding criteria may need to be updated to reflect the changes made to the application form.

Proposal No. 5:

Implement a process between Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (MECY) and school divisions to verify attendance and continued eligibility for Level II and III funded students.

The intent of this proposed change is to implement a process between MECY and school divisions to verify that Level II and III funded students:

- Meet attendance requirements;
 - Receive supports that address needs identified in their IEPs; and
 - Remain eligible for Level II or III funding.
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- Every school or school division in Manitoba (public or funded independent) receiving Level II or Level III funding dollars will participate in a verification process.