

# District Special Education Programs Review

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We inspire student success by providing an innovative, caring and responsive learning environment



*BC promotes an inclusive education system in which all students are fully participating members of a community of learners. Inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with integration... goes beyond placement to include meaningful participation and interaction with others. Students may be placed in settings other than a neighbourhood school. ...only done when the school has made all reasonable efforts to integrate the student, and it is clear that a combination of education in classes and supplementary support cannot meet their educational and social needs.....*

BC Special Programs Manual: Policy Procedures and Guidelines

# STUDENT FOCUSED RATIONALE

- To identify any services/programming gaps,
- To respond to student/society' changing needs,
- To build on current strengths

This is part of the Board's commitment to **encourage responsible innovation in meeting students' and society's changing needs.**

The VSB Senior Management Team (SMT) and Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC Appendix 1) provided advice and feedback for the review.



# VSB 2021 STRATEGIC PLAN

- 5 Guiding Principles:

*Inclusion, collaboration, excellence, transparency, engagement*

- 4 Goals: *Innovate teaching/learning, capacity building, culture of shared responsibility, effective leadership/governance*

- **Goal 1: Engage learners through innovative teaching/learning practices**

**Objective 1: Enhance support for students with specific needs**



# 73 DISTRICT PROGRAMS

## District Elementary Programs:

1 TEIR  
7 ELSP  
2 SELC  
9 ExSEL  
3 MACC  
1 LS  
2 LS-ASD  
Alderwood

Total 26 programs - 8 types

Total students 328

## District Secondary Programs (excludes Alternate)

13 LSP	4 LAC
1 GOLD	1 STEP
2 PASE (wrk exp)	1 Sec Strategies
2 Social Dev.	2 ARC
8 LA/LS	11 LS
1 Sec Trans	1 GOLD

Total 47 programs – 12 types

Total students 718

- Current population of students with an identified designation 5147
- Total number of students receiving programming in District Programs 1064
- Total number of students receiving programming in schools 4083

# District Programs - Comparable Data

- 73 District Programs serve 20% Students With Special Needs (SWSN) – **more than Surrey and Coquitlam** combined – does not include Alternate
- **More Programs for high than low** incidence students - statistically high incidence students are in most classrooms and typically receive services there, as is the case in most districts
- **More Secondary than Elementary** Programs – statistically larger schools have enough SWSN to **group** appropriately within a neighbourhood school
- All Secondary Programs are 1-2 or 1-5 years – some Elementary offer part-time and more flexible approaches, with the goal of returning to their neighbourhood school

# METHODOLOGY: AN APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

## Context:

Inclusion policy, revised curriculum, 20% students with special needs attend District Programs, declining student enrolment

Inquiry through: on line survey, 15 focus group meetings, 24 program visits, involving staff, parents, students, community

- *What is going well?*
- *What are some of the challenges?*
- *What suggestions are there for improvement?*
- *Anything else that needs to be considered?*

# KEY FINDINGS/EMERGING THEMES

- **The district vision, program range and staff expertise are invaluable.** However the organization of District Programs and school level programming would benefit from **more inclusive service delivery**
- **District Programs benefit from smaller classes and centralized management.** District staff expertise however, could be used to **develop further inclusive professional development planning**
- VSB has a clear vision and knowledge of Inclusive Education among district staff that appears to be inconsistently applied to school programming. **Further development of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices in all schools is needed**
- School and District staffing and how they are assigned, impact student learning. This could be enhanced through building staff capacity and systemic changes that better reflect VSB's vision, guiding principles and goals



# RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Pilot Secondary LSPs as school programming
2. Pilot Secondary Fully inclusive schools
3. Further develop elementary programming
4. Update all documents to reflect inclusive education and UDL
5. Develop Counsellor roles and responsibilities
6. Develop an inclusive Professional Development Plan
7. Focus on local neighbourhood schools development
8. Plan to maximize service delivery at the classroom level
9. Prioritize the use of UDL, RTI and PBS approaches
10. Develop the use of FOS and PLC models to enhance capacity building
11. Develop a needs based formula for the allocation of staffing to all schools
12. Focus on joint working e.g. District/Program and school staff working together

# For SEPTEMBER 2018

## Pilots, Pro D & Steering Group

- 4 Secondary Schools have identified themselves to develop their LSP District programs as School level Programming:
  - Churchill, John Oliver, Prince of Wales, Vancouver Technical
- UBC's Jennifer Katz
  - Teaching to Diversity (UDL) - Pro D for the pilot schools and District
  - Ensouling our Schools – Pro D for all Schools
- Development of more data driven processes for monitoring student success
- Steering group to be formed to develop a 5 year action plan focused on the further development of school level programming/instruction and a more flexible continuum of service delivery reflecting Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles
- Learning Services will focus through the lens of Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being with the support of Jennifer Katz as it relates to the renewed curriculum