
Inclusive Education: A Review of Programming and Services in New Brunswick

Terms of Reference

I. Context: Why we need this review

New Brunswick has been recognized internationally for its inclusive educational practices and can be credited with great achievements in inclusive education over the past decade. However, the current review is in recognition of the fact that the environment and the challenges have changed significantly.

The new environment includes advances in knowledge about brain development, greater sophistication in diagnosis and treatment, changes in public perception and expectation, increased recognition of the diversity of learners and their particular needs, changes in family capacity and composition, pressure to reduce dropout rates, and precedent-setting human rights and court cases. These and other factors have led to new demands on resources, teachers and other school personnel that cannot be accommodated without new skills, approaches and supports.

The promise of *Quality Schools, High Results (QSHR)*, the Department of Education's ten-year strategic plan, is to improve the achievement of New Brunswick students and ensure individual learner success. It contains nine action areas that are of particular relevance for the success of students with exceptional needs. The recommendations of this review will inform the specific actions that will ensue from QSHR over the next ten years. The recommendations will ensure our actions are built on the solid foundation that already exists, and are those that will make the greatest difference, given the particular challenges and unique strengths of this province.

Some challenges that have been identified are:

- increasing focus on prevention of educational delay;
- improving programming for students, particularly those who require intervention but are not identified as exceptional;
- ensuring the principles of inclusive education are consistently applied in all public schools;
- managing fiscal pressure;
- meeting the needs of increasing numbers of students presenting exceptional needs, including medically fragile students;
- meeting the needs of increasing numbers of students with behavioural challenges;
- improving integration between curriculum and student services, leading to more effective planning and decision-making;
- ensuring the responsibility for the learning of students with exceptional needs is well-managed between "regular" and student services personnel;
- providing quality training for classroom teachers to achieve the best results for all the students in their classes;
- providing quality training for resource and methods teachers and teacher assistants and other paraprofessionals;

-
- improving allocation and use of resource and methods teachers and ensuring effective use of teacher assistants and other paraprofessionals;
 - improving transition programming for exceptional students;
 - ensuring better learning outcomes for First Nations students with exceptional needs, taking into account the unique situation of these students; and
 - building interdepartmental support.
-

II. Purpose: What we want to accomplish

This review will produce recommendations to:

- assist the government of New Brunswick to develop a policy framework for inclusive education; and
 - develop a model for an effective, accountable, inclusive education system which makes the best possible use of human and other resources, capitalizes on positive partnerships and responds to the particular requirements of each linguistic sector.
-

III. Scope: What is to be examined

This review will examine:

- current practices pertaining to inclusive education in New Brunswick, taking into account the linguistic duality of the public education system;
- current research in inclusive education and practices in other jurisdictions to identify
 - optimal knowledge and skill sets for teachers, paraprofessionals and other school personnel
 - strategies used by other jurisdictions to provide their school personnel with the required knowledge and skill sets (e.g., pre- and in-service training)
 - accountability measures/practices for monitoring individual progress as well as the effectiveness of educational programming
 - service options for rural areas and small schools
 - solutions to classroom composition issues
 - levels of service and organization of non-educational services/resources required to support the learning of students with exceptional needs
 - the role of the public education system in relation to pre-school children who are at risk of entering school with educational delays
 - measures to prevent/reduce learning delays
 - transition planning for exceptional students; and
- the human rights, legal and policy environment pertaining to exceptional students.

IV. Deliverables: What will be produced

Recommendations in each of the following areas will respond to the requirements of the two linguistic sectors of the public education system.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Recommendations for the elements of a policy statement on inclusion for the New Brunswick government | Recommendations for the following will be included: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ a definition of inclusion▪ vision and values for inclusive education▪ a model for an effective, accountable, inclusive education system▪ clarification of the responsibility of government, and the respective roles of parents and partner departments in the delivery of supports for student learning▪ defining service levels |
| 2. Working definition of exceptional student | Proposal for a common working definition of exceptional student for both linguistic sectors to permit provincial reporting and tracking of outcomes. |
| 3. Recommendations for a new service delivery model to replace the Support Services to Education Agreement | Recommendations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ effective elements for a new service delivery model for support services for students. This will include services currently delivered by the departments of Education, Family and Community Services, the Department of Health and Wellness and the Regional Health Authorities and will address:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the provision of professional and paraprofessional services required to support student learning and- improvement of school readiness▪ the DOE's relationship with APSEA |
| 4. Recommendations for Standards/Accountability Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Recommendations for the creation of objective, measurable outcomes to provide data on the effectiveness of educational programming for students with exceptional needs, both system-wide and for individual students.▪ Strategies and indicators for determining the inclusiveness of public schools.▪ Recommendations for consistent accounting practices in schools and school districts to facilitate the collection of cost data pertaining to services provided to students with exceptional needs.▪ Recommendations for tracking the effectiveness of allocation/use of resources at the district level. |
| 5. Proposed Funding Model | A funding model will be proposed. |

V. Statement of Work

Each phase of this project will take into account the linguistic duality of the New Brunswick public education system and the particular needs of the anglophone and francophone communities.

PHASE I

Background Research

This review is to include:

- current research on best practices in inclusive education
- practices of New Brunswick and other jurisdictions pertaining to inclusive education, successful solutions, including service integration, measures/evaluation
- legislation and case law
- provincial demographics/statistics on students with exceptional needs
- Office of the Comptroller's report
- existing data to permit estimates of incidences of common exceptional needs that will require services
- CMEC and CAMET directions/opportunities

Work completed at end of Phase I

Draft summary of background research completed, translated and presented to Interdepartmental Advisory Committee (see committee composition in section VII).

PHASE II

Consultations will, at minimum, include the groups identified below, and will include the opportunity for written submissions to be made to the consultant.

1. Department of Education Staff

- 2 days*
- will include one meeting each with designated staff of the following groups:
 - Secteur des services éducatifs francophones including the francophone Assistant Deputy Minister
 - Services aux élèves branch
 - Educational Programs and Services Division including the anglophone Assistant Deputy Minister
 - Student Services unit
- individual meetings with staff from the Administration and Finance division (e.g. Pupil Transportation, Educational Facilities, Human Resources, Finance and Services, Post-secondary Education)

2. School District Administrators

- ½ day x 2

<u>Group composition</u>	<u>Number of people / session</u>	
	<u>Anglophone</u>	<u>Francophone</u>
Superintendents	9	5
Directors of Education	9	5
Directors of Human Resources	9	5
Directors of Finance and Administration	9	5
	<hr/> 36	<hr/> 20

3. School District Staff

- 1 day x 2

Group composition

Teachers (2 per district)
Principals/ VPs (2 per district)
Resource and Methods Teachers
Guidance
Psychologists
Teacher Assistants
Itinerant teachers for the vision and hearing impaired
Student Services Supervisors
Other Supervisors (e.g. At-Risk/Positive Learning)

Number of people / session

<u>Anglophone</u>	<u>Francophone</u>
18	10
18	10
6	5
6	5
3	5
5	5
2	5
3	3
4	4
<hr/> 65	<hr/> 52

4. Student Services Supervisors (+ Resources & Methods Advisory Committee)

- 1 day x 2
- maximum 25 people
- separate anglophone and francophone sessions

5. District Education Councils (DEC)

- ½ day x 2
- will include each DEC chair and one additional DEC member from each DEC
- maximum 25 people
- separate anglophone and francophone sessions

6. Teachers Associations/Union

- ½ day

7. CUPE

- ½ day
- both bargaining units (teacher assistants & bus drivers)

8. Parents

- ½ day x 4 (evening and / or Saturday sessions)
- separate sessions with parents of students with and without exceptional needs

Group composition

Have children with EN

in kindergarten

1-5

6-8

9-12

alternate sites / other

No children with EN

in kindergarten

1-5

6-8

9-12

alternate sites / other

Number of people / session

anglophone francophone

5

5

15

15

15

15

15

15

5

5

55

55

9. Middle & High School Students & Post-High School

- ½ day x 4
- focus groups with 14-16 students per group
- separate by language and exceptional needs/no exceptional need

10. External Stakeholders

- 1 day x 2
- anglophone session (max. 50 people / session)
- francophone session (max. 50 people / session)
- to include at least the groups listed below. Additional invitations to be agreed upon between the consultant and the Department.

Group composition	
<u>anglophone groups</u>	<u>francophone groups</u>
DEC chair	DEC chair
NBCC (community colleges)	NBCC
NB Association for Community Living	Association du Nouveau-Brunswick pour l'intégration communautaire
Learning Disabilities Association of NB	Troubles d'apprentissage – association du Nouveau-Brunswick
Autism Society of NB	Autism Society of NB
Premier's Council on the Status of the Disabled	Premier's Council on the Status of the Disabled
First Nations representation	First Nations representation
Dialogue on Education Committee	Dialogue on Education Committee
NB Home & School Federation	Comité des parents du N.-B.
Canadian Parents for French	-
Universities (e.g. Faculty of Education representation)	Universities (e.g. Faculty of Education representation)
NB Psychologists Association	NB Psychologists Association
others as identified	others as identified

11. Partner Departments

- 1 day
- to include: head office, regional and front-line staff, as appropriate
- representing: Family & Community Services, Health & Wellness, Public Safety, Training & Employment Development

NOTE: Formal sessions with the NB Human Rights Commission, the Ombudsman's Office or the Office of the Comptroller are not included based on the understanding that these offices will be contacted as required by the consultant.

Work completed at end of Phase II

Draft summary of consultations completed, translated and presented to Interdepartmental Advisory Committee.

PHASE III
Preliminary Findings and Final Consultation

- Key concepts considered for inclusion in the final report to be presented to the Interdepartmental Advisory Committee, and internal and external stakeholders.

Final Consultation – Internal & External Stakeholders

- 1 day x 2
- group composition and location to be determined by consultant in consultation with Interdepartmental Advisory Committee
- anglophone session (max. 75 people / session)
- francophone session (max. 75 people / session)

Work completed at end of Phase III

Summary of stakeholder session II and key concepts, translated and presented to Interdepartmental Advisory Committee.

PHASE IV
Final Report

- Final report submitted to Minister.
-

VI. Sources of Information

Documents held by the Department of Education

Documents held by the Department of Education required by the consultant for this review will be provided (unless protected).

Working session with resource group:

Once key concepts have been reviewed by the Interdepartmental Advisory Committee, a working session with education experts is to be convened. The role of this resource group will be to act as a think tank/sounding board for vetting the key concepts. Participants will be jointly named by the consultant and the Interdepartmental Advisory Committee.

VII. Presentation of Findings

The role of the “Interdepartmental Advisory Committee” will be to share information with, and provide advice to the consultant as the project proceeds.

<u>Members</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
Co-Chairs - Education K-12 ADMs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review draft summary of background research at completion of Phase I. ▪ Review draft of findings of consultation sessions at to completion of Phase II. ▪ Review key concepts prior to working session with resource group. ▪ Review suggestions of resource group at completion of Phase III. ▪ Review final report.
1 superintendent from each linguistic sector	
Department of Health and Wellness – Assistant Deputy Minister	
Department of Family and Community Services – Assistant Deputy Minister	

VIII. Work plan

	Action	Deadline
1	Study launched.	November 30, 2004
2	<i>Draft summary of background research completed – Phase I presentation.</i>	March, 2005
3	Consultations completed. (Expected to run from December, 2004 to June, 2005). <i>Draft summary of consultations completed - Phase II presentation.</i>	June, 2005
4	Key concepts presented to Interdepartmental Advisory Committee.	July, 2005
5	Working session with resource group.	July, 2005
6	External and internal stakeholder session II.	August, 2005
7	<i>Summary of resource group and stakeholder session II suggestions presented to Interdepartmental Advisory Committee - Phase III presentation.</i>	August, 2005
8	Presentation of key concepts to DECS to receive their input.	September, 2005
9	Draft report presented to Interdepartmental Advisory Committee.	September, 2005
10	Final report presented to Minister <i>Phase IV completed.</i>	October, 2005

Appendix A: Contract Amendment - Statement of Work

I. Context

This statement of work is additional to the professional services contract signed November 5, 2004 for the provision of recommendations concerning inclusive education in New Brunswick ([Inclusive Education: A Review of Programming and Services in New Brunswick](http://www.gnb.ca/0000/publications/curric/inclusive.pdf) <http://www.gnb.ca/0000/publications/curric/inclusive.pdf>).

Further information is required for completion of two of the deliverables stated in the terms of reference and one additional area identified as a result of research carried out during Phases I and II of the study:

II. Statement of Work / Deliverables

Deliverable 3A: Administrative Structure for Service Delivery Model

(related to Deliverable 3 in the original terms of reference):

In addition to the recommendations pertaining to a new service delivery model required by the original terms of reference, recommendations are to be included in the Phase III report as described below.

Requirements

1. Examine the administrative structure in place for the delivery of support services to students in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

This will include:

- (a) contact with relevant departments, agencies and at least two school boards/districts in each province under study to gain an understanding of:
 - the manner in which support services are provided to students in public schools
 - any administrative structures, committees or other mechanisms in place to enable integration of services
 - the success of implementation
 - (b) in-person interviews with officials of the Department of Learning in Saskatchewan as well as officials of at least one school board in Saskatchewan, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the components and impacts of this model
2. Examine levels and organization of support services for students in Finland.

This will include:

- (a) participation in an international conference in Finland as part of a delegation of education officials from New Brunswick, to gain insight into the factors present in Finland that have enabled its students to place highest of participating OECD countries in the last PISA testing
- (b) interviews with officials of the Finnish National Board of Education to better understand the types and organization of services that are provided through schools to students to support learning

Note: Support services for students include a range of services such as: psychology, social work, audiology, speech language pathology, nursing, physiotherapy, occupation therapy, and health supports (e.g., diabetic care, intubation).

New Deliverables

Recommendations for:

1. a reasonable level of service to be provided by the New Brunswick Department of Education
2. elements of an administrative structure that would support the service delivery model to be recommended under Deliverable 3 in the original terms of reference

Deliverable 4A: Analysis of Appeals Process

(added to Deliverable 4 in the original terms of reference):

In addition to the recommendations pertaining to standards and accountability required by the original terms of reference, recommendations are to be included in the Phase III report as follows.

Requirements

1. Examine the appeals process as provided under New Brunswick's *Education Act* in relation to:
 - (a) procedural fairness
 - (b) legislation of a sample of other Canadian jurisdictions as identified during Phase I
 - (c) accessibility and effectiveness of the current process in New Brunswick

New Deliverables

- Analysis of the "fit" of the current process in relation to the goal of having an inclusive, high-achieving public education system.
- Recommendations for improvements to the New Brunswick appeals process within an inclusive, high-achieving public education system.

Deliverable 5A: Funding Model

(related to Deliverable 5 in the original terms of reference):

In addition to the recommendations pertaining to a funding model required by the original terms of reference, recommendations are to be included in the Phase III report as follows.

Requirements

1. Examine the mechanisms/structures through which support services to students in public schools are funded in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland including, for each province:
 - support services provided to all students and those for exceptional students
 - the overall amount of money allocated for support services for students
 - the sources, means of allocation and amount of funding for various areas of service provision
 - identification of each province's framework as census, categorical or hybrid

New Deliverables

Recommendations for a funding framework for New Brunswick that will support the recommendations regarding the service delivery model and administrative structure proposed.

The recommendations must reinforce:

- inclusive educational practice
- equitable allocation of resources to meet student needs