



Student Services Department

DISTRICT HANDBOOK

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SECTION I.

INTRODUCTION

The Policy of the Board of School Trustees outlines a philosophical direction, which guides the operation of Special Services in School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake). It states:

POLICY STATEMENT ON INCLUSION

It is the policy of School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) to support the practice of inclusion by serving students with special needs through a continuum of service delivery in regular classrooms, neighborhood schools and alternate sites provided all students needs can be met and a safe learning environment maintained.

A collaborative working relationship at all levels - principals, teachers, parents, consultative and administrative staff - is essential to the successful operation of the special services programs.

PURPOSES OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The purposes of the Special Education Services are consistent with those of the District at large, as reflected in the new philosophy.

In order for the pupils of School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) to grow academically, socially, emotionally, creatively, and physically, the Board of School Trustees makes these commitments within the limits of its authority under the School Act and Regulations and in keeping with the values placed on it by the citizens of this School District:

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) supports inclusion as a desirable goal and embraces a respect for the diversity of all learners. Inclusion must have broad dimensions i.e. children must feel a part of the group as well as being physically present. However, full inclusion is not always the best placement for a child or other children in a program. Decisions are the outcome of the team planning process and **prerequisites to inclusion are:**

- a welcoming, respectful environment for all
- a team consensus reflects the wishes of parents, students and staff in addressing student needs.

- Adequate and appropriate resources, competently trained professionals and paraeducators and involvement of other agencies where appropriate.

THE STUDENT SERVICES PHILOSOPHIC STATEMENT

Kootenay Lake School District supports the process of inclusion by serving students with special needs through a continuum of service delivery in regular classrooms and neighbourhood schools provided students needs can be met and a safe learning environment maintained.

In general, student support services work within the guidelines of the Ministry of Education's Special Education Services: Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines (1996) and within the specific direction of School Board Policy.

THE STUDENT SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of student support services is to provide all children with an equal opportunity to access educational programs that will develop their individual potential and the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for a productive, independent and satisfying life.

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) endorses the ideal description of an educated citizen as one who is:

- thoughtful, able to learn and to think critically, and who can communicate information from a broad knowledge base
- creative, flexible, self-motivated and who has a positive self-image
- capable of making independent decisions
- skilled and who can contribute to society, including the world of work
- productive, who gains satisfaction through achievement and who strives for physical well-being
- cooperative, principled, and respectful of others regardless of differences
- aware of his/her rights and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, community, Canada, and the world.

- Student support services in School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) operate within a framework of the following assumptions:
 - Support Services does not represent separate and distinct curriculum. It is similar curriculum adapted or modified, as necessary, to meet individual needs and develop individual potential.
 - The emphasis on educating students with special needs in neighbourhood school classrooms with their age and grade peers does not preclude the appropriate use of resource rooms, self-contained classes, community-based training or other specialized settings.
 - Placement in other settings should occur when it is the appropriate option after considering the educational needs of the student and others.

In general, student support services work within the general guidelines of the Ministry of Education's Special Education Services: Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines (1996) and within the specific direction of School Board Policy.

DISTRICT LEVEL SUPPORT SERVICES

The specific goals of the Student Services Department are:

STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT GOALS

To work toward implementing Ministry Guidelines and Board Policy regarding the inclusion of students in the most enabling educational environment.

To assist in the selection of appropriately trained specialist staff who possess educational and technical skills necessary to provide quality programs.

STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT GOALS cont.

To provide an active in-service program to support teachers in the provision of services to children and youth with special needs in regular classrooms.

To coordinate, establish and promote working relationships with parents, community agencies and Ministries.

To monitor the effectiveness of special education programs and services.

In carrying out its vision and goals, the Student Services Department offers direct and consultative services. The Student Services Referral Form (see District Form Book) must be signed by the parent and principal or designate before any direct services will be given to students.

DISTRICT STUDENT SERVICES POLICY

Confidential Information and Assessment Results

Confidentiality, Consent and Release of Information:

Student records are considered confidential and, if appropriate, will be shared with unauthorized persons only after the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have granted written permission. If requested, reports will be given to parents after they have had a conference with the professional staff qualified to interpret the data in "its proper and intended context". Parental authorization is required before student data will be released to other agencies.

Prior to formal district staff level psycho-educational assessment, the parent(s) or guardian(s) and the student shall be informed of the purpose of the assessment and the established procedures.

Medication

Medication should be kept under locked conditions. If medication is administered daily, a signed log should be kept with the medication. Refer to Board Policy 310. There is a "Request For Medication At School form in the Policy Manual".

File For Students Designated As Having Special Needs

Students designated as having special needs should have a distinct, small red three-ring-binder (provided by the district office) contained in the main student file for all special needs related to the student's disability. The **tabs** included in the binder refer to the: **(1) audit checklist; (2) the IEP; (3) Medical Reports; (4) Other professional reports; and, finally (5) school history and team meeting notes.** This is the critical information that will be requested by the district office in the event of an audit.

Permission For Learning Assistance Services

Parents should be informed and grant permission for their child to receive learning support services. This consent can be either a returned parental signature or documentation that the parent has been informed. See form contained in the appendix section as a sample of district recommended practice in this area.

File Storage And File Content

When unsupervised, student files should be kept locked at all times. Never put anything in a student file that you wouldn't want a parent to read.

Procedures For Evaluation Special Education Services And Programs

The Student Services Department undertakes to carry out an evaluations of the different departments when requested.

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention

It is the policy that all employees dealing with physically acting out children take the crisis prevention training provided by the district.

When children physically act out, non-harmful control and restraint techniques are recommended only as a LAST RESORT.

GUIDELINES:

1. HANDS OFF policy is recommended
2. If the child is on the floor- hands off
3. USE APPROVED CONTROL TECHNIQUES TO ENSURE IMMEDIATE SAFETY- Once child begins to de-escalate - hands off.

4. Use control techniques to transport child to safe place and then- Hands off.
5. For self injurious behavior, the Director of Instruction (Student Services) should be notified and a program of dealing with the student should be reviewed on an individual basis

IDENTIFICATION ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING SERVICES

Definition:

Identification, assessment and planning are processes by which we provide recommendations for improving the student's instructional program. Through the process of collection and interpretation of data, a plan is developed to provide intervention techniques that focus on the student's individual strengths and needs. The identification and assessment of students should include consideration of the setting in which the student learns. Specifically, consideration should be given to:

- the classroom environment
- classroom management methods
- teacher and peer attitudes
- curriculum content
- instructional materials
- instructional strategies
- evaluative methods
- support services
- student and family characteristics (emotional, social development, intellectual and vocational)

Process -

The process of assessment and planning focuses on the student's behavior in the classroom setting. It should lead to an Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P.) that should be implemented and then regularly evaluated. Through all levels parents should be informed and, if appropriate, invited to assist in the development of the I.E.P. We do not require parents to sign the IEP. However, a recent audit experience indicated the need to provide evidence of parental consultation beyond the IEP box that is routinely checked. The form included in the **APPENDIX 2** (Section 1) should now be signed by all parents to indicate they have been appropriately consulted in the development of the IEP.

Classroom level -

The first step begins with the classroom teacher making daily observations regarding learning, behavior and social interaction of the student. The teacher uses a variety of observational techniques, collects work samples and keeps records of daily progress. The teacher may also administer teacher-made criterion-referenced tests based on the curriculum and goals of instruction.

School Level -

The second step involves interventions through school-based teams. School-based teams typically:

- assist the classroom teacher with ideas and support in adapting curriculum or instructional strategies
- provide perspectives and skills within the school to assist teachers
- monitor and prioritize referrals for additional assessment within the school
- recommend consultations beyond the school level;
- name a case manager, as needed, who is responsible for maintaining the student's file, maintaining home contact, calling case conferences, keeping case conference minutes and ensuring follow-up.

The teams may include school administrators or individuals with administrative authority within the school: classroom teachers, learning assistance teachers, parents and individuals who have specialized knowledge of the student, e.g., teacher assistants, counsellors, resource teachers, school nurses, and other community professionals. **It is the expectation that all schools will have an operational school based team with core members including an administrator, a learning support teacher or other special services personnel and representative classroom teacher.**

The team will often consider data such as the following:

- curriculum-based assessment
- collection of data through observation
- administration of selected standardized tests
- information from parents or guardians and the student
- review of school records for pertinent educational information
- consideration of additional social or medical information
- information from other professionals involved

Permission for School-Based Testing

Parents should be informed regarding the purpose of the school-based psycho-educational assessment and grant their permission for the assessment to take place. Routine reading inventory and achievement testing results should be reported to parents but permission need not be granted to administer such tests.

District Level

In those cases where the school-based team decides that it is necessary to gather additional information in order to provide appropriate instruction, a request for district specialist staff consultation may be in order. This step should only be taken after considerable school-based assessment and intervention has occurred. Normally a WJ-R psycho-educational assessment will have been completed on the student prior to district referral.

It should be noted that students with an obvious identifiable disability may warrant an immediate referral.

The district referral consultation form should be completed and signed by the principal or designate. Parents should sign to grant permission **if direct service to the student is requested.**

DEVELOPING AN INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN

Note: The I.E.P. planning team may constitute different members than the school-based team.

Following the referral, an Individualized Educational Plan (I.E.P.) may be refined and a procedure for implementation of the plan should be reviewed. The I.E.P. constitutes a record of the ways in which the student's special program will differ from the mainstream in terms of content, pacing, or instructional approach. The I.E.P. should be a "practical" working guide that team members use to clarify roles and functions in the student's program. The building principal is responsible to ensure completion of the I.E.P.s.

Parents or guardians, as well as teachers, paraeducator support staff, and outside agency personnel should be encouraged to play a role in the development of the I.E.P. and be involved in implementation and monitoring as required.

Schools are requested to use the District IEP format because it incorporates all Ministry requirements for IEP content.

The I.E.P. should be reviewed and updated twice a year with the final update in May or June to provide transition into the next school year.

Principles

- a. All students **with special needs** must have an I.E.P. Students with special needs are district approved and reported to the Ministry.
- b. The District has limited resources to provide release time required for planning.
- c. L.A. students having more than 25 hours of remedial instruction per school year and who are not designated as children with special needs should have:
 - one or two goals, decided upon by the LAT and the classroom teacher, recorded briefly and simply
 - these goals may be included in report card format
 - these goals can be group goals (similar to other children)
 - these goals should be reviewed and updated as appropriate
- d. I.E.P. format should follow the district model contained on the server using File Maker Pro.
- e. All student records are kept confidential and should only be released upon written authorization of parent, student or guardian.
- f. Assessment and personal information should not be included on an I.E.P. cover sheet.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Definition

English as a Second Language students are those whose primary language(s) of the home, is/are other than English and who may therefore require additional services in order to develop their individual potential within British Columbia's school system. Some students speak variations of English that differ significantly from the English used in the broader Canadian society and in school; they may require ESL support.

Principles

The same principles of learning apply to ESL students as they do to all learners, namely:

- learning requires the active participation of the student
- people learn in a variety of ways and at different rates,
- learning is both an individual and group process
(adapted from “Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, 1995”)

In addition, the following principles address the needs of ESL students:

- English language proficiency and knowledge of Canadian culture are fundamental to the success of students in our school system and in our society.
- There are educational, social, and economic benefits to maintaining a student’s first language (s). The educational system therefore should respect and value an individual’s first language(s) and culture, and recognize the importance of the continued use of the first language (s).
- Student learning is enhanced by judicious dual/multi language use.
- To facilitate learning, students should see their history, literature, and cultural experiences in general reflected in the classroom and curriculum.
- Equity of access across the province to services, facilities and resources must be provided for students for whom English is a second language.
- ESL students who also have special needs require services to address both their language proficiency and their special need.
- Parents/Guardians play a vital role in the education of their children by working in partnership with educators. Parental support is an important component of an ESL student’s education. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in the learning process.
- Fundamental principles in reporting to parents apply to parents of ESL students as well; effective reporting should recognize language and cultural differences.
- Districts have the responsibility to provide educationally appropriate services for students for whom English is a second language, and are accountable to the Ministry and the public for those services.

- The Ministry has the responsibility to provide funding for a range of ESL services to eligible district, to ensure that funds are equitably distributed, and that, funding provided is used in accordance with current research and effective ESL practices in accordance with current research and effective ESL practices.

Initial Identification

The purpose of initial assessment is to identify student need for ESL service. Essential elements, which require attention in the assessment process, include language proficiency (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) relative to the student's age, as well as academic, cultural, social and emotional needs. The teacher will adapt the student's program as necessary.

Ongoing Review

At least annually, the student's progress must be reviewed through an assessment of English language proficiency. If the student is not making progress, it may be necessary to conduct further assessment of the student's needs and to adjust services accordingly.

If the review determines that the student is functioning at the age and grade level given commensurate abilities, the student may no longer require ESL services. This does not preclude the student receiving ESL services in the future should the need arise.

Service Delivery

English as a Second Language services should be provided to assist students to become proficient in English and prepare them to achieve the expected learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum. Factors such as individual student need, the number of students requiring service, and their distribution throughout the school and district will determine the way in which ESL services are delivered. Services must be designed to be flexible in response to changing needs and will be reflective of both the needs of the students and the characteristics of the school district. Services may be delivered in a number of ways, including (but not limited to):

- partial or full pull-out arrangements - school-based,
- pull-out arrangements - itinerant,
- transitional classes,
- supportive programs within a regular classroom, and
- ESL specialist support to the regular classroom teacher.

Note:

- **An annual instructional plan needs to be designed to meet the individual needs of students or groups of students. It may follow the group template model contained in the IEP template short form as recommended for ongoing learning assistance support.**

LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

Learning Support Teachers refers to all teachers providing extra support for students, previously they may have been called ‘special education support teachers’ ‘resource room teachers’ and ‘learning assistant teachers.’

Learning Support is a school-based service. It is offered to students who experience mild to moderate learning difficulties and need learning assistance to meet their education goals. Generally, problems are language-based (listening, speaking, reading, writing), though mathematics may also require intervention. In some circumstances, where more intensive resource programs are not available, the Learning Support Teacher may be called upon to provide support to students with more severe learning difficulties. Learning support services are not primarily designed to meet the needs of students with social emotional difficulties whose need may be better met through counselling. Most learning assistance students do not require or qualify for other special programs.

Goals and Objectives of Learning Support

Learning Support Teachers assess students through:

- participating in and/or facilitating School-Based Team meetings.
- establishing pre-referral procedures with the classroom teacher .
- utilizing a collaborative consultation model in order to involve teachers in the identification and pre-assessment process.
- be part of a referral procedure to be used when intervention is necessary.
- utilize a variety of assessment strategies e.g. criterion and norm referenced assessment, behavioral assessment and observations.
- include parents in the assessment process, as appropriate, and to inform parents of the results of the assessment.

Learning Support Teachers provide intervention to students in order to enhance their academic, social, and personal growth:

- assist teachers in adapting and/or modifying the curriculum, materials, teaching and management strategies that are usually acting as case manager.
- provide service to students including team teaching in the regular classroom and providing pullout service.
- assist teachers to use a variety of intervention techniques including peer tutoring, learning strategies, cognitive behavior modification, metacognition and study skills..
- provide collaborative leadership with teachers, administrators, parents and students.
- facilitate planning of a concise and appropriate IEP for students receiving long-term direct instruction.
- provide documentation for all services
- include students, parent/guardian(s) whenever possible in the various stages of intervention.

Learning Support Teachers evaluate the effectiveness of the learning assistance program:

- evaluate the effectiveness of the identification and assessment procedures.
- evaluate service delivery models.
- evaluate student growth in the academic, personal and social domains, according to need.
- report/consult regularly to parents and classroom teachers.

SCHOOL-BASED EARLY INTERVENTION

Early intervention program refers to a program of support at the early primary level for children who are experiencing difficulty acquiring literacy skills (i.e. the complex oral language, early reading and writing skills). Development of complex writing skills falls within the responsibility of the Learning Support teacher. Support for the student should be multi-disciplinary and coordinated through the school-based team.

Each school is encouraged to use the district early intervention assessment tool. Other areas worthy of examination might be: vision, hearing, speech/language development, and motor skills. An example of an additional screening tool is included in the appendix.

Students may be referred for services by the parent and/or the classroom teacher following their observations and the screening results. The student who appears to benefit most from the early intervention program is the early primary student who requires a short term, more intensive boost for literacy development.

INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS INTENSIVE LEARNING SUPPORT

The individual progress intensive learning support is intended for those students who are slow learners or who have significant development delays. The students cannot work independently even with considerable adaptations in the regular classroom. In order to be considered for this type of intensive support, students will be more than two years behind in academic areas as measured by criterion and norm referenced assessments. Information regarding hearing, vision, speech and language and psycho-educational assessments should be considered prior to providing intensive learning support. Classroom observation and classroom level assessment information should also be considered. Such support will be arranged after discussion with the school-based team. Intensive support is not intended for students who mainly have behavioral difficulties.

The emphasis between Early Intervention and Individual Progress during the school year, and on a year-to-year basis, may vary according to the needs of students. Decisions on the emphasis of the program should be made at the school level and should be the outcome of school-based team planning sessions.

COUNSELLING IN THE SCHOOLS

The district provides funding support to all elementary schools for CommunityLink counselling services. Some schools use Youth and Family Workers and other schools use teachers trained in counseling. At the secondary level, counsellors are funded under the general PTR framework and are not part of the CommunityLinks funding support system.

In addition to the section on counselling in the Ministry Guidelines, services may also include:

1. Providing parent education and support groups.
2. Offering crisis intervention and management. School counsellors provide direct service to district schools in the event of a traumatic incident. They are trained in and follow the procedures established by the District Crisis Intervention and Management Plan. (See appendix.)

YOUTH AND FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER SERVICES

The CommunityLink Youth and Family Support Worker service is intended to support the social and emotional development of students. Youth and Family Support Workers may also be called upon to provide academic support as part of their daily programs. However, the primary focus of the Youth and Family Support Worker is to provide support in achieving the social-emotional and social responsibility goals of a student's program.

A Youth and Family support worker works under the direction of a counsellor and/or classroom teacher and under the supervision of the building principal and Director of Instruction -Student Services.

Youth and Family Support Workers may be assigned to schools for general support in the areas of social and emotional development and social responsibility development. Youth and Family Support Workers may also be assigned to support specific children in a school. Where a Youth and Family Support Worker is assigned to support a specific child, assignment of the worker will result after the following steps:

1. referral to the school-based team with supporting documentation
2. involvement of the parent/guardian and student (where appropriate) in the team process
3. involvement of other community agencies, where other agencies are involved with the student and/or family
4. agreement within the school team that intervention through a child and youth support worker is important for the student to achieve success across the goal areas
5. establishment of an I.E.P. for the student listing social-emotional and social responsibility goals for the support worker to focus on
6. a timeline for a review and possible completion of the intervention
7. consent of the parent/guardian or student, where the student is of age to provide informed consent.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

The School Psychologist provides consultation, psycho-educational assessment and in-service to School Based Teams.

The following process is used to access psychological services. The School Based Team reviews the student with the School Psychologist prior to initiating a formal signed referral. This important pre-referral intervention provides an opportunity for the School Psychologist to give suggestions or share ideas, which could circumvent a long and time consuming assessment process. Once the referral is agreed to, then the Psychologist will:

- a) establish a time for the assessment
- b) arrange to meet with parents to take a history during the assessment
- c) set up a time to review the child with the referral source
- d) conduct the direct assessment of the child
- e) feedback assessment results to the school-based team and the parents
- f) take part in a problem-solving meeting with the parents present to develop programming following the assessment information
- g) prepare a letterform report confirming the team's agreed upon recommendations. (Note: parents are informed as to how the report will be made accessible to others working with the student).

GOALS FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

- *To provide collaborative consultation*
- *To assist with pre-referral interventions*
- *To provide psycho-educational assessments for students referred by the school based team*
- *To provide ongoing collaborative planning, particularly for ADHD referrals*
- *To provide in-service training to school counselors, youth and family workers and learning support teachers*

SPEECH/LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY SERVICES

Speech/Language Pathologists provide pullout programs as well as support in classrooms on an itinerant basis.

The School Based Team identifies students with unusual, delayed, or disordered speech and/or language skills.

Consideration should be given to:

- "follow-up" list of students that were released from therapy during the previous school year;
- students involved in speech therapy at the end of the previous school year.

Diagnostic testing and observation, as well as consultation with the school-based teams, are used to plan therapeutic programs. These procedures should be consistent with the Ministry Guidelines (1996) specified on page D 14. Not all children referred will require direct intervention from the speech/language pathologist, but information sharing and monitoring of needs through collaboration among professionals and team management will ensure that appropriate and coordinated services are provided.

Some students will already be identified for service when transferring into school from pre-school settings. In most cases, a Speech/Language Pathologist at the Ministry of Health will refer these students. All district students should be discussed at the pre-referral intervention level prior to initiating a formal signed Special Services Referral form. This means that the Speech/Language Pathologist should consult with the referring source and the school based team designate prior to accepting referrals. This step will ensure that top priority students will get service and will provide the Speech/Language Pathologist an opportunity to give fast attention to students of lower priority by way of simple suggestions to the referring source which may preclude the need for a lengthy assessment process.

Some services are offered on a 3:1 schedule that provides scheduled itinerant services in schools for 3 weeks and then allows for flexible scheduling in the 4th week. The 3 weeks in the school are used for direct intervention with students and the 4th week is used for indirect services as outlined below:

1. Workshops. Organizing and presenting educational sessions for parents, teachers and paraeducators. Clinic observation room would facilitate this process.
2. Program planning/implementation for high needs students and their school based team. Allows for time in schools with students, teachers, paraeducators to plan and implement a program.

3. Assessment of new referrals could be separated from itinerant visits to schools preventing disruption of scheduled therapy sessions.
4. Parent interviews at home or in the office could be arranged so that they do not conflict with the itinerant school schedule
5. External Team visits such as POPARD and PISP could be scheduled on the 4th week of the cycle to prevent disruption to schools.
6. Home and classroom observations could be done without disrupting therapy sessions.
7. Time will be provided for inter collegial sharing consulting and program implementation.
8. Kindergarten screening and subsequent monitoring of kindergarten students could happen without disrupting regularly scheduled therapy sessions.
9. Office work and time to prepare materials, writing reports and scoring assessments could be facilitated.

PRIORITIES FOR TREATMENT

Priority One

Primary aged students with speech/language needs who are considered to need, and who will benefit from therapeutic intervention.

Intermediate students still on the caseload who are being monitored by the school-based team.

Priority Two

Intermediate students who were not previously referred but whose needs are responsive to treatment intervention.

Secondary students who were previously on the caseload and who may still require monitoring and treatment intervention.

Priority Three

Intermediate students who were not previously referred and whose needs are not considered to be responsive to treatment intervention.

Secondary students who were previously on the caseload and who may only require infrequent monitoring and consultation.

Once the referral is agreed to, the standard Student Services Referral Form contained in the district formbook should be used and signed by both the parent and the principal/designate.

GOALS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT SPEECH/LANGUAGE PROGRAM:

- ***To develop I.E.P.(Individual Educational Plans) goals on all referred students requiring treatment intervention.*** The I.E.P. must outline:
 - the objectives for therapeutic intervention,
 - the specific intervention strategies to address the communication goals
 - the expected outcomes for program monitoring and reporting purposes.
- ***To provide written progress reports at year-end or upon discharge of the student if this happens mid-year.***
- ***To maintain regular contact (according to timelines which must be specified in I.E.P.s) with parents & school based teams to monitor the effectiveness of therapeutic interventions.***
- ***To keep all assessment data in the central Student Services file.***

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES

Occupational therapy services are provided to children to promote quality of movement, posture, visual motor function, sensory processing and independence in activities of daily living.

Referrals are made using the standard special services referral form. It is expected the service will involve pre-referral intervention, assessment, letterform reporting

and ongoing consultative services. When direct treatment is required, the student's physician makes a referral to a community-based practitioners. This kind of service is considered to be a matter between health professionals and the family and is beyond the realm of the school district's responsibility.

(A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, 1996, p. D 18)

GOALS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES

To provide screening and assessment.

To consult with school staffs and families.

To train staff to carry out routines such as positioning, seating, feeding or motor activities for optimal maintenance of students in classroom settings during the school day.

To monitor and provide ongoing evaluation of students in classroom settings.

Calling the district Occupational Therapist accesses physiotherapy services.

HOSPITAL HOMEBOUND SERVICES

Students who qualify for hospital/homebound services are absent from school for periods of 10 school days or longer. Such students include those with injury, disease, pregnancy, surgery, and psychological reasons. Students who have dropped out of school or who are planning to drop out of school for medical reasons and who wish to continue their education at home may also access homebound services.

These services are provided through the use of "on-call" teachers. Whenever possible, consistency of past service and suitability for the counselling dimension of homebound/hospital service will be considered when selecting the service provider. Normally one afternoon of substitute time per week would be accessed for this purpose.

Program

Instruction for students should be initiated as soon as possible. Parents are requested to inform the school of their child's illness and expected length of absence. Hospitalized or homebound students should continue with the school program as much as possible. When homebound students are involved, parents are expected to be available or have arrangements made for the presence of a guardian during the Hospital/Homebound teacher's visit. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that schools are informed regarding students with communicable diseases or

potentially unsafe conditions. When so informed, medical advice must be obtained by district staff regarding safety issues before providing home services.

Parents are encouraged to further support their child's education by; arranging for a suitable workplace, encouraging the student to follow a suitable schedule, participating in lessons when appropriate, reinforcing independence and responsibility through taking an interest in student assignments.

Service Delivery

Hospital/Homebound teachers deliver assignments and provide academic assistance to hospitalized or homebound students. The program responsibility remains with the student's classroom teacher(s). Regular contact should be established among the hospital/homebound teacher, the regular classroom teacher, and the parents.

GOALS FOR HOSPITAL/HOMEBOUND SERVICES

To deliver all appropriate assignments to student.

To provide reports to school on student progress.

To maintain regular contact with classroom teacher (s) and the parent.

To file a report with the District Special Services Office regarding services provided.

STUDENTS WITH MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Principles

- Flexible service options should be considered for students. (i.e. grouping with other children with special needs, learning assistance)
- Students with mild to moderate learning problems will be monitored through the learning support program according to need.
When the parent makes requests or school based team, school, and /or district level, assessments may be conducted.

Identification

- **Please see auditor checklists contained in the appendix of this section.**

STUDENTS WITH MODERATE TO SEVERE/PROFOUND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Principles

All moderate to severe profound mentally challenged students should have a PATH during grade 7 & during grade 10.

1. All team member's develop/revise the I.E.P. (based on PATH vision) according to Ministry Guidelines.
2. Expectations for inclusion should be consistent with long term PATH vision.
3. Classroom activities:
 - should be associated with whatever students are being taught
 - should make educational sense according to long-term PATH vision
4. Non-curricular activities and socialization goals should be established.
5. A case manager needs to be assigned to:
 - provide in-service and time for planning with teacher and teacher assistant.
 - coordinate case planning
 - clarify expectations for inclusion
 - develop program with classroom teachers so all have ownership
 - ensure I.E.P. is implemented and monitored according to student need
 - ensure expectations are appropriate and understood and reflected in programming timetable
6. Students will have increased community experience and daily living skills instruction when in senior high school years according to individual need and skill development.
7. Collaboration and planning may be frequent with all team members involved in the I.E.P. Goals should be all inclusive of life in the community of the school.
8. A full continuum of placement options needs to be considered according to each student's unique learning needs.

Identification

- Please see auditor checklists contained in the appendix of this section.

STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

FAS and FAE students have learning profiles that may be similar to students with learning disabilities and/or moderate behavior disabilities. It should be noted that these conditions depend on medical diagnosis and the diagnosis in itself is not sufficient to justify extra support. ADHD students also require medical diagnosis in consultation with school-based teams. Please refer to the Ministry resource guides in these areas. See appendix for listing of resource guides.

Principles

- Students receiving services need to meet criteria.
- Services should reflect the need as demonstrated in the identification process.
- Specialist teacher support may take the form of:
 - a) District Staff
 - b) Learning Support Teacher in the school. Support may be in class or involve pull-out.
- Support may involve training the teacher to meet the student's needs.
- There needs to be recognition of the long-term process for assisting SLD students.
- The importance of teaching accommodations and adaptations in addition to possible academic re-mediation and skill development should be reflected in the I.E.P.
- Collaboration and co-planning with all team members involved in the I.E.P. has to be ongoing according to time frames outlined in the I.E.P.

Identification

- Please see auditor checklists contained in the appendix of this section.

STUDENTS WHO ARE GIFTED

Definition

The gifted student possesses demonstrated or potential abilities with respect to intellect, creativity, or the skills associated with specific disciplines. Extraordinary task commitment must be in evidence. Gifted students may also have accompanying disabilities and should not be expected to have strengths in all areas of intellectual functioning.

Identification and Assessment Process

- Provide a multidimensional process for identifying gifted students
- Complete initial school-wide screening of students through parent, teacher and peer selection instruments
- Consider a variety of sources as valid components for identification, such as:
 - student talents, interests and task commitment
 - student records, portfolios, grades, anecdotal information, outstanding achievement or accomplishments in an area of talent
- Following initial screening and the identification of a select number of qualifying students, administer a standardized cognitive abilities test, such as the CCAT (Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test.)

Program/Service Delivery

- The gifted support teacher, in consultation with the classroom teacher and the parents will develop an IEP in accordance with Ministry Guidelines. The IEP may articulate only those services that are provided under the gifted mandate or may be more elaborate when the student has other needs. If students and their parents decide not to access gifted programming, that decision should be noted in the IEP.
- Programming should emphasize Intellectual Development, but Emotional, Personal, Social and Career Development opportunities should also be considered.
- A variety of options may be considered when designing IEP's, such as:
 - mentorships
 - seminars and conferences
 - independent and small-group study
 - inter-school interest groups
 - facilitated acceleration
 - retreats and exchanges

Evaluation

The method of evaluating and reporting will be consistent with the student's IEP and in accordance with Ministry Policy.

GOALS FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WHO ARE GIFTED

- *To provide consistent, equitable use of targeted funds for gifted.*
- *To assign a teacher at each school to act as the school based Gifted Support Teacher.*
- Responsibilities would include:
 - a) identification of students with gifted abilities
 - b) writing of IEP's
 - c) consultation and cooperative planning with classroom teachers
 - d) program planning and direct service to students
 - e) attending regular meetings of all school Gifted Support teachers for:
 - arranging inter-school activities
 - designing specific programs
 - developing district goals to ensure long-term program continuity
- *To maintain the positive practice of in-class enrichment activities.*
- *To change the emphasis from enrichment to focused and consistent service options for gifted students.*

Suggested Practices for the Gifted Program.

- *To continue the multidimensional identification process for identifying gifted students.*
- *After completing initial screening, add standardized testing such as the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT), to complete the identification process for a small number of selected students.*
- *To increase opportunities for gifted learners to interact with other gifted learners, both at the within school and inter-school levels.*
- *To offer Mentorship opportunities.*
- *To ensure that identified students have an IEP as required by Ministry Guidelines. The IEP may articulate only those services that are provided under the gifted mandate or may be more elaborate when the student has other needs. If students and their parents decide not to access gifted*

programming, that decision should be noted in the IEP. The simplified IEP form may be used for this process.

- *To provide programming to emphasize Intellectual Development as well as Emotional, Personal, Social and Career Development opportunities should also be considered for programming. In the later secondary years, Career Development may take on greater importance.*
- *To consider full range of services when designing IEP's:*
 - mentorships
 - seminars and conferences
 - independent and small group study
 - extra-curricular activities
 - guided independent learning
 - inter-school interest groups
- *To consider facilitated acceleration (in a particular subject area):*
 - correspondence
 - Knowledge Network
 - computer-assisted learning
- *To arrange retreats and exchanges.*

Identification

- Please see auditor checklists contained in the appendix of this section.

STUDENTS WITH MODERATE/ INTENSE BEHAVIOR DISORDERS or Students with Mental Illness.

Definition

Behavior disorders reflect the existence of dysfunctional interactions between the student and one or more elements of the environment, including the classroom, school, family, peers and community. Behavior disorders vary in their severity and, according to Ministry Guidelines (ref. E21 to E29 Special Education Services Manual), are either classified as moderate or severe.

Principles

- Referrals to the school psychologist once classroom and school management strategies have been attempted and have failed

- a) from parents and/or doctors via the school
 - b) from teachers via the school-based team
 - c) from other agencies via the school
 - d) Teachers should complete the BASC Behavior Checklist in making a provisional identification
- Once provisional identification has been made, the following assessment procedures will be undertaken by the school psychologist
 - a) review of school file and student history with the school
 - b) collection of information from school staff including **the completed auditor checklist from the school.**
 - c) review school based WJR assessment or carry out additional psycho-educational assessment
 - Following the assessment, the district psychologist will recommend to the Director of Student services whether or not the student meets the criteria as specified in the Ministry Guidelines for:
 - a) moderate behavior disorder
 - b) severe behavior disorder
 - The Director of Student Services will do final approval.

Planning and Implementation

- The school-based team will develop an IEP in accordance with Ministry Guidelines (E23), wherein the following interventions could be considered:
 - a) part-day schooling
 - b) direct support in the classroom by a paraeducator (teaching assistant)
 - c) intervention by a teacher with expertise in behavioral management either through support for an existing classroom teacher or via placement in a specialist program
 - d) program modification
 - e) intervention by a school-based counselor or youth and family worker.
 - f) consultation with the Learning Support Teacher
- In addition to the above school-based resources, assistance could be sought from the community agencies such as:
 - Mental Health
 - the visiting Child Psychiatrist
 - Ministry of Children and Families

Evaluating and Reporting

The method of evaluating and reporting will be consistent with the student's IEP and in accordance with Ministry Policy (ref. E24 Special Education Services Manual.)

Identification

- **Please see auditor checklists for moderate and intense behavior disorders contained in the appendix of this section.**

STUDENTS WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES/ DeafBlind

Definition

Students with deafblindness include those individuals with a degree of visual and auditory impairment which, when compounded, results in significant difficulties in developing educational, vocational, avocational and social skills. Impairments may range from partial sight to total blindness and from moderate to profound hearing loss.

Principles

- A multi-disciplinary assessment approach should be used.
- Instruction can either be adapted or modified to reflect individual needs.
- A school based case manager must be assigned.

Identification/Assessment

Students who are identified as having deafblindness should have current assessments that include information describing their sensory acuity's (vision and hearing), physical development, orientation and mobility (skills and knowledge), social development, academic abilities, educational achievement and communicative competence. A multi-disciplinary assessment approach is recommended.

Program/Service Delivery

Many deafblind students have potentially useful hearing and/or vision, which enhance their potential for integration into the classroom. Instruction should be adapted and the curriculum modified to reflect individual needs. Specific intervention and appropriate support must be available in order for each student to develop and learn. The student's educational requirements must be documented in a formal Individual Education Plan and appropriate reporting procedures are a necessity.

The student's program should provide instruction in communicative competence, social skills, orientation and mobility skills, visual skills, auditory skills, daily living skills, academic skills, specialized reading skills as required (i.e. Braille, large print, etc.), specialized mathematics skills as required (i.e. abacus, Nemeth Code, etc.), technological skills (i.e. tape recorders, microcomputers, etc.), and study skills and note-taking strategies.

Evaluation

Many students who are deafblind are of average or above average intellectual ability and can meet the objectives of the curriculum if appropriate adaptations are made to instruction and assessment methods. Reports of student progress should be based on the goals, strategies, and outcomes outlined in the IEP and on the degree to which the individual learning outcomes are achieved.

These students may require an adapted or modified program.

Identification

- **Please see auditor checklists contained in the appendix of this section.**

STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES or CHRONIC HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS

Principles

- School based team manager must be assigned.
- Every effort must be made to keep student in his/her neighborhood school.
- Medical personnel (e.g. medical doctor, physiotherapist, occupational therapist) will provide inservice on the disability.

Identification

Note: It is not the medical condition that determines eligibility for inclusion in this category. It depends on how much the medical condition affects the students' education.

- **Please see auditor checklists contained in the appendix of this section.**

STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

School District No. 8 will provide support through a qualified teacher for children with visual impairments. The responsibilities of the Teacher for Visually Impaired children include the following:

1. direct teaching service to children with visual impairments
2. consulting service to parents and teachers with children who have visual impairments
3. in-service sessions to school staff
4. coordination with other agencies who provide service to children with visual impairments
5. collaboration with school-based teams in the development of Individual Educational Plans
6. visual efficiency testing for children referred
7. interim reports on each student at the conclusion to a visit or at regular report card time
8. summary report and recommendations at the end of the school year for each visually impaired student receiving a regular support service

Support Program for Print-Handicapped Students

Print-handicapped students are students who have difficulty in the processing of print information. Print-handicapped students are not visually impaired students. Whereas visually impaired students may have deficits in the eye or optic nerve or cortex, the print-handicapped student has problems with the rapid and accurate processing of symbolic print information. Deficits may occur in the visual input of information (decoding) and the motor output of information (encoding).

Support is available for print-handicapped children in the input of information. Print-handicapped children are eligible for registration with the Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired in Vancouver. The primary method of support

comes in the form of taped curriculum that is available for print-handicapped children from the kindergarten to graduation level.

Referrals must be submitted through the Director of Student Services at the Board Office. Referrals should only follow appropriate educational testing that identifies a learning disability and demonstrates a significant delay between cognitive ability, grade level expectations and the student's actual achievement level.

A catalogue of taped curriculum materials is available through the Director of Student Services.

Identification

- **Please see auditor checklists contained in the appendix of this section.**

STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

The **Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing** works directly with or monitors students who have a hearing loss.

Most children with significant hearing loss will have been identified through an audiological assessment prior to entering the school system. Some children, particularly those with less severe hearing losses may not have been identified prior to school entry. It is recommended that any student who is referred for special education services that result in an I.E.P. being developed and an adjusted program for the student during that student's school career, should be referred for a hearing screening. Any student who fails the Kindergarten hearing screening should be referred to the audiology clinic in Trail for a complete hearing assessment.

Following the identification of a student's hearing loss by an audiologist, a specific, standardized assessment may be administered by the Teacher of The Deaf and Hard of Hearing in order to determine the specific strengths and weaknesses of the student in the areas of speech and language development, and auditory abilities. This comprehensive assessment should also include the administration of standardized tests in the areas of ability and achievement. The student's program will be developed following the assessment.

Student Programs

Most students with a hearing impairment and who require direct or indirect services from a Teacher of The Deaf and Hard of Hearing will have an I.E.P. designed especially to meet their educational needs. However, no I.E.P. will be developed when students are maintaining satisfactory social and academic progress in the class but the Teacher of The Deaf and Hard of Hearing will monitor these students.

Service Delivery

Most students with hearing impairments can be educated in their neighborhood school. However, in view of the variability of educational needs of these students, other options are available:

- A regular class with varying levels of support from an itinerant Teacher of The Deaf and Hard of Hearing;
- An individual program for students with hearing impairments with additional special needs (e.g. multi-handicapped students with hearing impairments).

Provincial Programs

When the needs of a particular hearing-impaired student cannot be met locally or regionally, the student may be referred to the Provincial Educational Review Committee for the Hearing Impaired. The student may be placed in the Burnaby School for the Deaf, or in another Provincial Resource Program for the Hearing Impaired.

GOALS OF DISTRICT PROGRAM FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

The educational goals will contain specific instruction in:

- language development
- auditory management
- speech development
- speech reading
- sign language as required, and
- deaf culture when appropriate.

To offer direct instruction to students who have a hearing loss as shown by an audiological assessment, and who show delays in listening, language or other academic areas.

To develop, in consultation with classroom teachers and parents, individual educational programs for these students.

To provide consultative service to those hearing impaired students who are presently integrated in the regular classroom.

To provide consultative service to those hearing impaired students who are served in other special programs.

To maintain audiological, medical and academic records on students identified as hearing impaired.

To maintain a liaison with student, school and home.

To provide counselling, information and support to parents of hearing impaired students.

To provide sign language classes for students and adults who are involved with hearing impairment.

To provide assessment and diagnostic services for students with known or suspected hearing problems.

To serve as a resource person to other special education teachers for the assessment and programming of students with auditory problems.

To provide formal in-service to various school and community groups.

To disseminate materials and information related to hearing impairment.

To maintain close contact with outside agencies providing services to hearing impaired student (Ministry of Health - audiologist, public health nurses, speech/language pathologist; West Kootenay Family and Child Care Society; Children's Hospital; Ministry of Education Provincial Education Review Committee for the Hearing Impaired).

Identification

- **Please see auditor checklists contained in the appendix of this section.**

STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

Principles

- School based case manager must be assigned.
- Teachers and teacher assistants should have Gateway training.
- Gateway Home Support Services should be enlisted to help develop consistent home/school behavioral strategies.
- Early intervention is important to help students make as many gains as possible.
- Funding should be available for consultations and I.E.P. meetings.
- Paraeducators should be allowed to share positions to prevent burnout, as well as ensure continuity of program if one paraeducator is absent.
- On-going in-service opportunities should be provided.
- Networking should be encouraged through district office by way of sharing names of others who may be interested in a support group.
- Funding should be available to provide functional life skill training in natural settings.
- Should include plans for year-end transition into new classroom. A meeting between present and future teacher should be included in I.E.P.
- May be in matrix format.

Identification

- **Please see auditor checklists contained in the appendix of this section.**

SECONDARY-LEVEL SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Aspire Program (L.V. Rogers Secondary School)

Aspire is designed to accommodate a small percentage of secondary school age students who exist on the fringes of the mainstream and whose academic and

behavioral needs cannot be met in regular classroom settings. They may, as a result of problems involving family, school and community, be displaying a variety of anti-social behavior ranging from open hostility to withdrawal.

The major purpose of aspire is to help each student develop the social and coping skills necessary for successful completion of an educational program designed to allow for increased self-image, decision making, work-related skills and a high school graduation. Through a variety of success experiences, students are given an opportunity to develop positive feelings about themselves and “a place called school”.

As well, Aspire endeavors to provide academic challenges, which are both realistic and appropriate to each individual students capabilities. This includes providing instruction to address skill deficiencies in the four core subject areas.

Gage Alternate Program (Mt. Sentinel Secondary School)

The purpose of GAGE is to help each child in the program develop a strong sense of self-worth, independence, and personal expression. An Individual Education Plan is created, developed, and implemented to identify and meet the social/emotional/behavioral, academic, and career/work experience needs of each child. Each child’s IEP and progress are reviewed on a continual basis.

Students in GAGE must be able to reason and possess the potential to take responsibility for their choices and actions. They must be in the program by choice and be interested in pursuing the goals they identify for themselves. The child’s social, behavioral, and emotional needs have precedence over all else. Educational needs will be accommodated in an alternate format dictated by the strengths and academic direction of each child.

The program is designed to promote and foster self-esteem and skill development. Our main aim is to provide students with tools that enable them to develop and grow as healthy, functional human beings. By providing a safe, supportive environment, we hope to increase each child’s independence, freedom of expression, and self-esteem. An additional goal is to create ease in the families of the students with regard to the school and GAGE, providing them with a complete view of what their child hopes to attain through his/her involvement in the program.

Matrix Program (Central Education Centre)

The Matrix Program is for younger, mainly, junior secondary students who have not experienced success in the regular school environment. The program is included as part of the Central Education Centre. Referrals to the program are made to the

administration of Central and a screening committee considers admission and exit processes for each student referred. Normally the enrollment is kept small, around 12 to 15 students and some of the program includes community and recreational aspects.

Alternate/Support Program (Salmo Secondary School)

The Salmo Secondary Program provides an education for students who have experienced great difficulty in coping with the home, school, or community environment. The program will help students acquire basic academic and social skills needed to permit re-entry into the school system or further training.

Students work on independent learning packages. The teacher and student can adapt the packages so that the student will be successful in meeting the school requirements. Students' work at their own pace and a passing grade is given when a student has done a set amount of work. The teacher is available in the portable of the school on alternative days for assistance, direction, and correspondence.

Students are enrolled into the Salmo Secondary School Alternative Program by being referred through a school-based team, which includes the principal, vice-principal, counsellors, learning assistance teacher, and the Alternative Program teacher.

Creston Alternate Program (Prince Charles Secondary School)

The Creston Alternate Program is a program for students with social/behavioral difficulties who have been unsuccessful in the regular school system. It provides a flexible environment, in a separate school setting, where students can work at their own pace within flexible time scheduling on individualized educational programs with the assistance of a teacher, teacher's assistant and child care worker.

The Creston Alternate Program is designed to provide academic instruction up to the completion of Grade 10 (English, mathematics, science, social studies) to students between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. The program also encourages interpersonal skills and a positive self-image.

Pathways Community Learning Centre (Prince Charles Secondary School)

The Pathways Community Learning Centre features the Pathfinder Learning System. The Pathfinder Learning System is a self-paced, computer-managed program, which delivers a variety of, prescribed British Columbia credit courses of study.

The computer database “manages” and records learner progress and test scores and keeps registration information. The instructor places learners into their paths, teaches, evaluates assignments and progress, generates tests and prepares learners to undertake any required examinations. The instructor directs the coursework, providing help to suit the needs of each learner. The Teacher’s Assistant works with filing and organizing course materials, generating tests, and giving help to learners as required.

Learners work with a variety of print and non-print materials to complete their courses. After checking in with the computer to update activities, students spend the majority of work time away from the computer completing lessons, learning and practicing new concepts. The Pathfinder Learning System utilizes a mastery learning approach. Mastery learning levels are set in the computer, which means the system continues to provide practice for the learner until he or she achieves the mastery level.

Learner motivation and program flexibility are the keys to success. With the Pathfinder Learning System, learners take responsibility for both the pace and results of their learning experience.

Secondary Learning Centre (J.V. Humphries Secondary School)

This program is designed for students who are: (i) showing learning difficulty in a subject area; (ii) require enrichment in a subject area; (iii) are working on a special course or project; (iv) have difficulties with the English language; (v) are physically challenged.

General goals of the Secondary Learning Centre are: (i) to provide a comfortable learning environment; (ii) to give assistance in particular subject areas; (iii) to raise self-esteem through positive interaction; (iv) to challenge students to be the best they can be; (v) to provide assistance to students who are on correspondence; (vi) to support teachers in the general goals of education.

Specific goals of the Secondary Learning Centre are: (i) to encourage a positive self-image in students; (ii) to have students feel pride in their achievements; (iii) to have students enjoy learning; (iv) to have students accept the challenge of learning; (v) to encourage students to express emotions in socially acceptable forms; (vi) to enable students to work cooperatively and with respect; (vii) to develop students’ ability to think critically and creatively; (viii) to develop appropriate language expression; (ix) to enhance students’ problem-solving ability; (x) to encourage student freedom to explore and create; (xi) to enhance students’ decision-making ability.

Referrals to the screening process to determine eligibility for secondary-level special programs should be directed to the principal of each secondary school.

FIRST NATIONS YOUTH WORKER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The focus of this program is to provide support to First Nations children and their families in School District No. 8. All children will benefit from lessons on the culture of the Kootenay nation and other First peoples and from involvement in activities that include First Nations Children.

Services will be provided to support First Nations students with academic, social, emotional, career development and cultural knowledge of the Kootenay Nation and the cultures of other First Nations.

Services will be provided on a one-to-one, small group, large group, classroom, school-wide, family or community basis. The decision on how to deliver services will be made in the best interests of First Nations children, their families and the First Nations Community.

Program Goals

1. To encourage First Nations children to identify themselves as native people and to be proud of the fact.
2. To increase the graduation rate of all First Nations children in School District No. 8.
3. To support First Nations children and families in all areas of academic, emotional, social and cultural development.
4. To make education a greater family and community issue among First Nations people.
5. To advance the knowledge of First Nations children and other children in School District No.8, about the culture of the Kootenay Nation and the diversity of First Nations culture.

First Nations Youth Worker Duties

The First Nations Youth Worker Support Program is intended to support the academic, social-emotional and aboriginal cultural development of First Nations students.

The job duties of a First Nations Youth Worker are as follows:

1. monitor attendance, progress and performance of First Nations students
2. act as a liaison between First Nations students, parents, school personnel and community resource agencies
3. as required, assist First Nations students with their educational program
4. as required, assist in the provision of counselling support and other related support services to First Nations students and families
5. provide cross-cultural information to classrooms, including First Nations students
6. as required, attend staff meetings, school-based team meetings, advisory meetings, parent meetings and other special activities
7. perform other job-related duties, as assigned

A First Nations Youth Worker works under the direction of a counsellor and/or classroom teacher, and under the supervision of the school principal and Superintendent of Schools.

SECTION II. Roles and Responsibilities

Role and Responsibility of Principal

The powers and duties of the principal are set out in Section 5 of the Regulations of the *School Act*. Section 5 (7) specifically defines the principal's role and responsibilities for the school, staff, parents, students and the provision of educational programs.

To accommodate students with special needs, principals need to:

- develop with staff a school wide philosophy regarding inclusion;
- develop a school-based action plan for integration;
- ensure teachers receive the information they need to work with students who have special needs;
- organize the school to provide some first-line resource support to teachers on site;
- ensure that a school-based team is operational in the school;
- facilitate the collaborative efforts of the team and teaching staff;
- welcome and encourage parents/guardians and students to be active participants in the planning process;
- ensure that sufficient time is given to the learning assistance/student support teacher to clarify expectations at the beginning of the school year, to case manage and to conduct assessment.
- facilitate communication and collaborative planning among staff, parents and student;
- ensure that decisions made for the student's care reflect the responsibility the school bears as "In Loco parentis" when the child is in the school setting;
- ensure that procedures are carried out in a manner that does not put students or staff at risk;

- ensure that staff has current knowledge in the area of child abuse prevention and that legislative requirements are met; and that educators who work with students with special needs are aware of the indicators of child abuse and neglects as children with special needs are potential victims in equal or possibly greater numbers than other children.

Role and Responsibilities of School Planning Team

Paraeducators (this term includes Youth and Family Workers) are a valuable resource in our schools. Paraeducators including Youth and Family Workers help motivate students, build their self-confidence, and provide additional individual attention to those who need it. Paraeducators will also work with other professionals who are part of the student's support team (e.g., speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist). Paraeducators work under the supervision of teachers and administrators.

The **classroom teacher** is responsible for providing a quality education to all students. Duties include: classroom organization and management, assessment, setting objectives, teaching, behavior management, working with parents and professionals, individual education planning, and reporting. The classroom teacher oversees the daily work of the teacher assistant.

The **support/learning assistance teacher** is a school-based teacher with the special knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to act as a resource to staff and parents who are supporting students requiring individual education programs.

The **parent or guardian** provides current home information about the student, ensures that the student arrives at school on time, and sees that medical and other concerns are followed .

The Role of the Teacher Working With Paraeducators

The teacher's role in working with paraeducators assigned to the school is to direct the paraeducator who assists in facilitating the inclusion of students with special needs. The teacher's prime focus is to encourage the student with special needs to become a more independent learner or member of the classroom/school/community. Teachers have the responsibility for designing, implementing and evaluating the entire educational program; paraeducators assist Teachers in this responsibility. The following are the teacher's responsibilities in directing the work of the paraeducator:

1. monitor that the paraeducator has the appropriate information and skills necessary to carry out assigned duties

2. initiate discussion with the paraeducator to develop a positive working relationship and clear communication procedures
3. schedule paraeducators' work day and meeting times
4. inform the paraeducator of the classroom management structure, discipline plan, expectations of the students, etc.
5. Arrange for resources required for paraeducator to complete assigned tasks
6. arrange for a workplace for the paraeducator in or out of classrooms as appropriate
7. model/teach techniques to paraeducators to use in instructional and behavioral assistance
8. provide direction to the paraeducator in the use of specific techniques, strategies, appropriate language, etc
9. include the paraeducator in the IEP process
10. inform the paraeducator of their tasks related to the implementation of the IEP
11. ask the paraeducator for input during the Teacher's assessment and reporting process (Teachers must not direct the TA to evaluate or report student progress)
12. direct the paraeducator regarding the purpose of, the content and the format of home/school communication
13. refrain from directing paraeducators to assume professional duties that are the responsibility of Teachers

SCHOOL ORIENTATION FOR TEACHER ASSISTANTS

Each school is unique. Therefore, it is important for new staff members to familiarize themselves with the routines, policies and practices of each school they are assigned to. Orientation to the school should be considered a process that takes place over time. It can be divided into four phases--the initial interview, the first day on the job, the first week, and on going. School orientation is the responsibility of the school administrator and his/her staff.

At the **initial interview**, staff members may be introduced, e.g., the teacher with whom you would be working, the secretary and/or business manager. Topics discussed may include:

- roles and responsibilities
- school code of conduct
- starting date
- work hours
- duration of contract

A tour of the school may be part of the initial interview.

On the **first day**, it is a good idea to arrive early so that you can meet the staff you need to know, find where to put your personal belongings, ask questions, and tour the school if you have not already done so. The following topics may be discussed:

- time sheets
- parking rules
- school key
- mailbox
- school handbook
- bell schedule
- work schedule
- emergency exits

A checklist for the first day can be found on page 41.

During the **first week**, you will have even more of an opportunity to familiarize yourself with the school. You can ask the teacher, administrator or any colleague on staff any questions you might have. Items to talk about may be:

- emergency procedures
- evaluation process
- how to run the photocopier
- staff meetings
- confidentiality
- union contact

It is a good idea to ask the teacher you are working with for feedback about how the first week has gone. A checklist for the first week can be found on page 43.

Orientation is **on going** as topics arise in the daily operation of a school. For example, when a professional day is planned you may have some questions related to what is available for you on that day.

YOUR FIRST DAY CHECKLIST

- Arrive at least 15 minutes early.
- Report to the office and introduce yourself.
- Indicate the name of the teacher(s) you will be working with and ask where you can locate them.
- Ask for directions to the staff room in order to find out where your personal belongings should go.
- Arrive in the classroom before the bell rings.
- Determine if there is a place in the classroom that the teacher has allocated for your use.
- Anticipate that the teacher may introduce you to the class and expect a brief response from you.
- Observe the classroom organization and get a feeling for the climate.
- Try to utilize the staff room during breaks in order to meet the other staff members.
- Ask about your own school key and mailbox.
- Ask the administrator if you are permitted or expected to attend staff meetings.
- Try to meet with the teacher during the day to review any questions you may have.
- Adopt a positive attitude towards all staff members in order to foster a collaborative working environment.

YOUR FIRST WEEK CHECKLIST

- Have I exchanged telephone numbers with the teacher?
- Have I learned emergency procedures in case of events such as a fire?
- Do I know who to call if I am going to be absent or late?
- Have I become familiar with the daily classroom schedule?
- Do I understand my job description and expectations?
- Do I understand how I am to divide my time among tasks?
- Do I understand the teacher's behavior management methods?
- Do I know in what ways the teacher wants me to assist in managing students?
- Do I know what student records I am to keep and where to file them?
- Do I know which outside-the-classroom activities I am responsible for? (E.g. lunchtime or playground duties)
- Do I know where supplies are kept?
- Do I know where to obtain equipment?
- Do I know how to operate classroom equipment? (E.g. computer)
- Am I familiar with the school policy concerning releasing a student to a parent, or other adult, who comes to pick up that student early?

- Do I understand the policy regarding reporting suspected cases of child abuse or neglect?
- Do I know how to complete my timesheet?
- Am I familiar with general hygiene procedures?

The Paraeducator (includes Youth and Family Worker) May:	The Paraeducator (includes Youth and Family Worker) May Not:
Be part of the collaborative team.	Initiate program changes.
Be left alone in the classroom, for brief periods of time under the direct/indirect supervision of another teacher when the teacher is unexpectedly away.	Be used as substitute for teachers.
Work without direct supervision with individuals or groups of students.	Present new curriculum concepts and skills without guidance from the teacher.
Be given specific instructional and management tasks, under the direction of a teacher.	Be given primary responsibility for instructional and management tasks.
Be involved in collaborative team meetings regarding a specific student.	Be assigned to attend collaborative meetings in lieu of the teacher.
Be used to support the inclusion of students in regular classes, e.g. scribing, assisting students with regular class assignments.	Be given primary responsibility for ensuring the inclusion of one or more students.
Be assigned tasks, which support classroom instruction, e.g. photocopying, bulletin boards.	Be used to carry out tasks usually assigned to other staff members in the building.
Help the teacher in supervising and arranging assemblies and group field trips. Take individual students on school related errands, job interviews, recreation, or shopping.	Take full responsibility for arranging and supervising field trips, assemblies, or school related errands.
Score objective tests and assignments and keep appropriate records for teachers.	Be responsible for assigning grades to a student or marking subjective or essay tests.

The Paraeducator (includes Youth and Family Worker) May:	The Paraeducator (includes Youth and Family Worker) May Not:
Assist in setting up learning centers and preparing instructional materials. Provide input into the development of Individual Education/Transition Plans.	Develop lesson plans, assignments, or Individual Education/Transition Plans.
Observe students and record these observations.	Impose disciplinary consequences without consultation with a teacher or administrator.
Be asked by the administrator to administer medication to a student or assist with medical needs, e.g., Ritalin, seizure management (appropriate instruction will be provided).	Treat injuries or other medical needs of a student without permission from appropriate personnel.
Work with individual students or groups on language development, as outlined by the speech/language pathologist or teacher.	Be responsible for selecting and/or developing materials for special tutorial groups.
Assist in skill demonstrations for the class or small groups.	Design skill demonstrations for the class or small groups.
Inform classroom teacher or support teacher of student learning difficulties and requests for help.	Report learning difficulties and requests for help to anyone except the classroom or support teacher.
Participate in conferences with parents and others, if requested by the teacher.	Communicate directly with parents and others.
Enter information in a home/school communication book when directed and signed by the teacher or administrator.	Enter information in a home/school communication book independently.

COLLABORATIVE CHECKLIST for Teachers and Para educators

This document is a discussion guide to help classroom teachers and teacher assistants develop a collaborative working relationship. It is not intended to be inclusive or prescriptive.

General

- Discuss changing telephone numbers with teacher
- Review emergency procedures in case of fire etc.
- Who to call if going to be absent or late?
- How to become familiar with the daily classroom schedule?
- What are classroom expectations when teacher giving directions, working with groups or called out of the classroom?
- Teacher preferences for dividing my time among tasks.
- How does the teacher want me to assist in managing student behavior?
- What student records am I expected to keep and where do I file them?
- What outside-the-classroom activities am I responsible for? (Playground etc.)
- Where are the supplies kept?
- Where do I obtain equipment?
- Is there anything I need to know about operating classroom equipment?
- What is school policy regarding releasing a student to a parent or other adult if someone comes to pick up that student early?
- Review policy regarding reporting suspected cases of child abuse.
- Discuss protocol for communication to parents.

Discuss Instructional Support

- Discuss how to help students with assignments and how to reinforce concepts presenting by the teacher.
- Supervisory preferences regarding small group, projects, or assignments.
- Processes for drill and practice activities.
- Operating audio visual or other supportive equipment.
- Observing and recording academic behavior.
- Observing and recording social behavior.
- Competing informal checklists on student progress.
- Assistance with marking, photocopying, expected.

Discuss Behavior Management

- What are the teachers' behavior management methods?
- What are helpful ways to reinforce appropriate behavior in accordance with the teachers plan?
- Supervising time out procedures?
- Checking on student task completions and student deadlines?
- Classroom strategies to support positive peer relationships and self-esteem?
- Modeling appropriate behavior expectations?
- Methods of discouraging inappropriate behavior?

Discuss Personal Care Assistance

- Toileting
- Seizure Management
- Feeding
- Administering medications
- Clothing and dressing
- Positioning
- Help with mobility

Discuss Supervising Community Activities to Enhance Life Skills

- Communication process when out on field trips and community explorations.
- Shopping trip travel and communication strategies.
- Leisure training and swimming trips.
- Work/study, work experiences.
- Use of public transportation.

Suggested Protocol for Problem Resolution

- Address the issue with the person(s) directly.
- If you are unable to resolve the issue together, seek assistance from an administrator.
- If district itinerant staff is involved, inform the administrator that you will be requesting assistance from the Director of Student Services. At this point mediation may be accessed.
- If a problem still continues, make an appeal for resolution to the Superintendent of Schools.
- If the problem is still unresolved, you can further appeal in writing to the Board of School Trustees.

RESOLVING INTERPERSONAL ISSUES

Problems in the classroom may be personal, procedural or related to the performance of students or workers. Due to a variety of reasons, people may ignore or postpone dealing with a problem that involves disagreements or conflicts with the other adult(s) with whom they work. Finding mutually acceptable solutions is not always easy. The responsibility for developing an effective process to alleviate a problem is likely to be left up to the teacher - teacher assistant team.

We convey ideas and express support to others using oral language, written language and body language. In order to communicate with others, it is important for us to develop and maintain effective interpersonal skills such as:

- being comfortable and relaxed with others, maintaining eye contact, and acknowledging the comments of other people;
- accepting in a non-judgmental way the feelings and ideas others are expressing;
- giving descriptive, non-judgmental, and specific reactions to others;
- expressing emotions clearly and sharing them easily and positively with others.

The following tips have proven effective with teacher - paraeducator teams:

- Communicate with your teacher as frequently as possible. Although it may not always be possible, try to set up a time to evaluate the day, discuss problems and plan for tomorrow.
- Try to be precise when following instructions. A clear written outline of your daily schedule is helpful.
- Ask if you do not understand. Making assumptions often creates confusion or misunderstanding.
- Discuss concerns privately as soon as possible. Do not let them intensify by ignoring them.
- Ask for your teacher's feedback on your participation in classroom routines and activities.
- Direct parents to the teacher as the main source of information about the student. Avoid answering evaluation questions that come from parents,

such as, "How is my son doing?" If this happens, talk about the activities the student is working on, such as, "He is writing a story about whales right now."

- Involve the teacher in all school-home communication. Notes and forms coming from home need to be given to the teacher. Notes home to parents need to be approved and signed by the teacher or administrator when requested.
- Discuss with the teacher any new idea you would like to try before you attempt to carry it out.
- Use "I" statements when expressing your thoughts, feelings, and opinions. Avoid using the word "should".
- Use names when talking about people.

APPENDIX 1: LEARNING ASSISTANCE INFORMATION AND CONSENT

LEARNING ASSISTANCE INFORMATION LETTER

(Date)

Dear _____:

_____ has referred _____
(Teacher's name) (Student's name)

to me for Learning Assistance. We have made an assessment of your child's learning needs which indicates that your child would benefit from a program designed by the classroom teacher and me to meet his/her individual needs.

The enclosed Learning Assistance Plan outlines the program.

Yours truly,

(Please detach this section and return to school.)

LEARNING ASSISTANCE CONSENT FORM

I consent to the participation of my child, _____ in the Learning Assistance Plan outlined in the attached form. I understand that my child's participation in the Learning Assistance Program will be reviewed on a periodic basis and that I will receive progress reports in addition to my child's regular report card.

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

APPENDIX 2: VERIFICATION PARENT HAS BEEN OFFERED CONSULTATION - FORM

IEP VERIFICATION OF CONSULTATION FORM

I understand it is a requirement of the Ministry of Education that I be consulted regarding the development of my child's IEP. (Individual Educational Plan). I understand, further, that the IEP will be reviewed and that I will be offered further consultation. The main goals of the IEP will be shared with me either through regular reporting channels (Report Cards) or through the scheduling of more formal IEP meetings.

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

APPENDIX 3: LEARNING ASSISTANCE PLAN

Name:

Grade:

Teacher:

Learning Assistance Teacher:

PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE:

Areas of concern:

GOAL:

In class goals:

Learning Assistance goals:

Materials will include:

Duration:

APPENDIX 4: I.E.P. REVIEW

CELEBRATIONS:

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES:

RECOMMENDATIONS AND TRANSITION PLANS:

APPENDIX 5: IEP PLANNING SHEET FOR PARENTS

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Name: _____

To develop the best possible program, we need your assistance and knowledge of your child. Below are some questions for you to think about in preparation for the IEP meeting. You may wish to write down your thoughts for future reference by the IEP team.

- What do you feel are the strengths of your child?

- What do you feel are your child's weaknesses (*e.g., areas that may be frustrating or that you feel your child has a particular need to improve in?*)

- How do you think your child learns best? (*What kind of situation makes learning easiest?*)

- Please describe educational skills that your child practices at home regularly? (*e.g., reading, making crafts, working with computers*)

- Does your child have any behaviors are of concern to your or other family members? If so, please describe the behavior(s).

- What are your child's favorite activities?

APPENDIX 7: AUDITORS CHECKLISTS

Mild Intellectual disabilities
Moderate to Profound
Learning Disabilities
Gifted
Behavior
Multiple Disabilities Deaf Blind
Physical Disability Chronic Health
Visual Impairment
Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Autism

**APPENDIX 8: JOINT PAPER BCTF/CUPE ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
TEACHERS AND PARAEDUCATORS**



SECTION III.

SCHOOL SUDDEN DEATH RESPONSE PROTOCOL

DEDICATION

Mr. Terry Hearne inspired this section of the manual in memory of the tragic loss of his son Brad.

STEP ONE: GATHER FACTUAL INFORMATION

- A. Principal Confirms the Tragic Event with:
- police
 - school district personnel
 - coroner
 - immediate family
 - community resource personnel
- B. Collect Information on the Tragic Event
- verify the details
 - people affected
 - emotional status of school
- C. Wishes of the family re:
- announcement
 - information for peers

STEP TWO: CONTACT SUPERINTENDENT AND DIRECTOR

- A. Unless advised otherwise, the Superintendent will act as the media contact person.

STEP THREE: ORGANIZE A PLAN WITH THE SCHOOL RESPONSE TEAM

- A. The School Response Team Should Meet (See APPENDIX A, Page 67 for Agenda)
- to discuss and develop an appropriate plan of action that takes into consideration both the wishes of the family and the needs of the school
 - to determine what needs to be done and clarify each person's job
 - to ensure that confidentiality is maintained until it is shared with staff and students
 - to distribute Response Team checklist

B. Details That Need to be Attended to:

- determine family's wishes regarding movement or disposition of personal affects
- at minimum replace lock
- determine the details of the event
- have the Superintendent act as the media contact person
- prepare a written statement
- inform staff/distribute staff checklist
- supply written statement to office staff. Refer calls to administrator or counsellor
- disseminate information - letter to parents
- contact feeder schools and other secondary schools
- contact required outside resources
- bring in additional support staff if needed
- lower the flag in the case of sudden death
- set up drop-in center - assign counsellors
- note who is absent (staff) to assure that all information shared is transmitted to those not in attendance
- assess whether substitutes will be required - experienced substitutes who can handle situation
- assess need for additional counselling support

C. Contact Community Resource Personnel as appropriate:

- Mental Health
- the school police liaison officer if the crisis involves the Police
- the area manager if the crisis involves Ministry of the Child and Families.
- public health nurse

STEP FOUR: COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL STAFF

A. Inform the Staff

- hold an emergency staff meeting prior to the start of school. (See APPENDIX B, page 69, for sample agenda.) Ensure that all staff is aware of reasons for meeting -
- if the tragic event happened during an evening or weekend, use a phone tree to call staff to a meeting before school. Make sure person being phoned repeats message. Don't leave message on answering machine or with a child.
- take over phoning for people most affected
- make sure all members of the Response Team are in attendance
- encourage staff members to deal with such feelings as shock, grief, anger and guilt
- prepare the staff to deal effectively with their students to a level of their comfort

- reassure staff that they will be supported in their efforts to give comfort to students, and that additional help is available to anyone who needs it, either staff or students

B. Develop a Plan for the Day with the Staff

- cancel special activities if necessary
- maintain a regular school schedule if possible
- state that information will be given to students during class discussion
- inform the staff of the resource counselling services that are available to staff, students and parents
- discuss what to do with the personal effects of the deceased
- note which staff members are absent to assure that all information shared is transmitted
- identify closest friends of deceased and other students of concern.

Break news in private.

- counsellor should move through timetable of deceased

C. Implement Plan for Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
(Discuss details with Director of Instruction)

STEP FIVE: ORGANIZE A DROP-IN CENTER

A. Some Suggestions on Establishing a Drop-In Center

Note: Do not call this a counselling centre, be sure to use term Drop-In Centre.

- establish a Drop-In Center prior to the sudden death announcement. This room or area can be an effective way to deal with a potentially large number of people who are in grief.
- this area may provide a place where individual students can take a “time-out” during the day to deal with their emotional reactions to the death
- it is important that students be able to receive support at the moment they need it, in a private and supportive setting
- small group counselling sessions may be helpful
- counsellors should have post intervention information available to students
- it is important that large groups of students are not allowed to congregate at will, in the Drop-In Center, for it may give way to feelings of hysteria
- use elementary counsellors from feeder schools and secondary counsellors when possible

STEP SIX: TEACHERS TALK TO THE STUDENTS ABOUT THE EVENT

- A. Be in the room as the students come in
 - be low-key and factual
 - see APPENDIX (page 78) for more informative suggestions

- B. Give information on the tragic event:
 - what happened, exactly
 - when and where
 - who was there at the time
 - what happened after the event
 - what family is there
 - what is going to happen, e.g. funeral

- C. Give the students time to react, discuss, and ask questions
 - give students permission to feel what they uniquely feel
 - use activities to process through their grief. Activities might include art, poetry, and creative writing

- D. Note the following points:
 - be prepared for some inappropriate questions and handle them in a matter-of-fact manner
 - allow expressions of grief rather than be too quick to reassure
 - listen and be empathic
 - demonstrate by your behavior that this is serious and that it affects you, too
 - model warmth and caring for all students

- E. Once the talk seems to be over, begin the regular day
 - be prepared for breaks in the day and more questions. Remember that reactions and reaction times will vary.

- F. Watch individual students who are having a hard time coping:
 - provide the opportunity for students to use the counselling services in the resource rooms
 - don't second-guess level of grief of student or staff member: people grieve differently

STEP SEVEN: SEND LETTER HOME WITH STUDENTS IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE

See APPENDIX D (page 90) for sample letter.

STEP EIGHT: INFORM STAFF AND STUDENTS REGARDING FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

A. The Funeral Service

- when appropriate, students and staff should have the opportunity to attend the funeral. To do this, you will need permission from the Superintendent to dismiss students. The funeral service has a definite role in helping peers “process” and accept the death of a friend or colleague. It helps to establish the reality of death, provides closure, and extends support to the family.

B. Memorial or Remembrance

- individuals may want to express their grief and remorse by contributing something in the name of the deceased.
- students and staff may wish to establish a memorial in the form of a scholarship, school landscaping, a school plaque, books for the library, construction of a showcase, or some other appropriate means.

STEP NINE: HOLD TEAM REVIEW WITHIN TWO WEEKS

- ensure that all “loose ends” have been looked after and that no issues or concerns have been missed
- review how well a plan worked so that improvements can be made in the handling of future situations
- write thank-you of appreciation to all who helped
- re-evaluate what was done, make appropriate changes for next time
- offer support counselling to team members to deal with their own feelings about their intervention
- continue to review the crisis intervention team model

DISTRICT RESPONSE TEAM

Rationale

The District has a Response Team. These teams are to be prepared to assist the schools in the management of serious crisis situations.

Membership of District Response Teams

- Superintendent

- Director of Instruction (Special Services)
- Counsellor- Chair of critical incident stress debriefing team.
- other professionals, district staff and community services as needed

Role of District Response Team Before a Crisis Situation

1. Be familiar with the Protocol and remind principal of resource.
2. Prepare a plan for the effective management of crisis situations.
 - Ensure that school plans are in place.
3. Review plans on a regular basis and make modifications as needed.
4. Consult with the school as needed.

Role of District Response Team During a Crisis Situation

1. If requested by School Response Team, to actively assist in the mobilization of the School plan.
2. Request additional support from the other sources if needed.
3. Contact appropriate schools in the community and district that would have students or staff that could be affected by the tragedy, e.g. younger siblings, former colleagues.
This should be done immediately upon receipt of information.

Role of District Response Team After a Crisis Situation

1. Monitor the situation and provide assistance if needed.
2. Assist those affected in finding appropriate support services.
3. Review how the crisis was handled and make appropriate recommendations for change of crisis plans.

THE SCHOOL RESPONSE TEAM

Rationale

Each school is expected to establish its own School Response Team. These teams should be prepared to assist the school administration in the management of crisis situations at the school level.

Membership of School Response Team may include:

- Principal (Chairperson)
- other school administrative staff
- counsellors
- department heads
- teacher assistants
- others, as appropriate - public health nurse, police liaison officer, Mental Health staff representative, secretary, and custodian.

Role of School Response Team Before a Crisis Situation

1. Be familiar with the plan.
2. School-based Team will review and be familiar with District plan.
3. Copy of Contact Form (Page 57) be forwarded to Superintendent and Director of Instruction (Special Services)
4. Establish and update phone tree.
5. Review plans on a regular basis and make modifications as needed.

Role of School Response Team During a Crisis Situation

1. Actively participate in the mobilization of the plan. Refer to page 2.
2. Request additional support from the District Response Team if needed.

Role of School Response Team After a Crisis Situation

1. Monitor the situation and provide assistance if needed.
 2. Assist those affected in finding appropriate support services.
 3. Review how the crisis was handled and make appropriate recommendations for change of crisis plans.
3. Follow-up with people most affected.

SCHOOL RESPONSE TEAM'S ROLE

STEP #1

Compile a list of the staff that may require extra support because of their closeness to the deceased.

STEP #2

Assign a team member to speak to classes where the teacher has requested this type of assistance.

STEP #3

Gather and maintain a list of “at risk” students, including those who were absent and also at risk, and review their need for further individual attention. Assist counsellors in arranging grief group.

STEP #4

Recommend to the principal those students who may need to go home or may require additional community mental health resources. Parents should be informed.

STEP #5

Contact other schools where siblings or close friends of the deceased may be attending. In case of a staff death, friends at other schools should also be contacted.

STEP #6

Assist in organizing the school or staff’s role in visitation to the family and funeral arrangements.

STEP #7

Meet at the end of the day to review the day and plan for the next day’s activities.

STEP #8

Arrange Critical Incident Stress Debriefing for staff.

TEACHER’S ROLE

Teachers play a vital role in helping students or staff deals with their feelings regarding the death of a student or staff member. Information to support them in doing this is included in the follow-up section.

If teachers are uncomfortable in this role, assistance can be requested from the School Response Team.

STEP #1

Attend staff meeting and obtain all possible information.

STEP #2

Students should be allowed to openly express their feelings and be directed to the appropriate support personnel as needed. Facilitate the classroom discussion by sharing feelings and reactions with students. Request a School Response Team member to lead the class discussion if you feel uncomfortable.

STEP #3

Follow instructions in handout given by principal.

STEP #4

The names of any students or staff considered to be at risk or in need of counselling support, at present or as the week progresses, should be forwarded to the School Response Team. Allow students to go to the Drop-In Center (Secondary only, send peer or aide to accompany them.) Keep list of “at risk” students and give to School Response Team.

STEP #5

The principal and/or School Response Team members will be available to discuss concerns regarding students or procedures to be followed.

cont...

STEP #6

Attend after school staff meeting.

STEP #7

Participate in Critical Incidence Stress Debriefing.

ROLE OF OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL

All school personnel are affected by the death of a student or staff member; therefore, it is important to inform everyone of his/her role in dealing with this tragic event.

STEP #1

All school personnel should attend the staff meeting to be informed of the death and the plans for the day.

STEP #2

Secretarial staff should be clear on procedures for handling requests or calls from parents, news media and others. Be aware of extra personnel in building.

STEP #3

School Personnel should give the names of any students or staff they are concerned about to the School Response Team.

APPENDIX A

SUGGESTED AGENDA FOR INITIAL MEETING OF SCHOOL RESPONSE TEAM

1. Share information regarding the facts of this death. Agree that no information will be shared with anyone until a decision is made about:
 - a) What information is to be shared?
 - b) Proper process for notifying staff and students.
2. Assess the impact of the death on classes and individuals. Consider as well the impact for anyone who may have recently experienced a significant death, or, who may be facing one in the near future. What is the impact of this particular death on individual members of the response team? Can all members function objectively?
3. Identify school resources. Are there other staff members who might be helpful in this situation? Are there staff members who may require assistance in leading the classroom discussion?
4. What are the cultural or religious implications surrounding this death? How should they be addressed?
5. To what extent are other resources needed? The team could be augmented by a variety of school district and/or community resources, including Community Mental Health Personnel and other medical-health professionals. Is a consultant required to provide support and advice to the Response Team?
6. If the school has a peer-counselling program, should these students become involved?
7. Confirm the overall strategy and the specific roles of response team members for this particular crisis.
8. Develop an agenda for the general staff meeting.
9. Decide whether it would be helpful to send home a brief announcement about the death. A sample letter is included.

MEDIA GUIDELINES

During crisis situations, schools may encounter news media looking to create a story on the events as they occur. It is important to have established protocol in order to protect school personnel and the student body from misrepresentation or exploitation. The following is the District Protocol:

1. The Superintendent or Superintendent's delegate in the Kootenay Lake School District is directly responsible for communicating with the media. In the event of crisis, all requests for information must be turned over to the Superintendent or Superintendent's delegate.
2. Don't feel pressured to talk. Refer media to the Superintendent or Superintendent's delegate.
3. Never speak to the media "off the record."
4. The media may not interview students on school premises.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE STAFF MEETING AGENDA

1. Provide accurate information (double check)
 - a) student or staff name
 - b) time and place of death
 - c) any additional information
 - d) introduce School/District Response Team

2. School Response Plan
 - a) Prepare teachers to deal effectively with their students
 - i) how to notify their students
 - ii) encourage teachers to allow time for classroom discussion
 - iii) distribute “Leading a Classroom Discussion” (Appendix E, page 78) as support material
 - iv) procedures for students who want to leave the classroom -
grief stricken students should be accompanied to the drop-in center. If the students wishes to leave the school he/she should be released to a parent or guardian or an adult designated by the parent/guardian
 - b) Counselling support
 - i) District Response Team
 - identify team members
 - team is available to staff and students
 - will call in outside agencies as necessary
 - ii) School counselling staff
 - iii) Drop-In Center
 - c) Media contact policy
 - d) School schedule impact, e.g. early dismissal, cancellation of school events

3. The identification of at-risk students:
 - a) make counselling available to all students to help in identifying potentially suicidal individuals
 - b) staff should refer students who appear to be emotionally unstable to the counsellors

4. Date and time of a follow-up meeting
 - i) further update
 - ii) staff members will have an opportunity to discuss classroom experiences

APPENDIX C

ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE STUDENT BODY

The principal should take four concerns into account before informing the student body:

- a. When the announcement will be made (all students should be informed simultaneously.)
 - b. Content of the announcement (see sample announcement.)
 - c. Method by which the announcement is to be made.
 - d. Reactions to the hearing of the tragedy.
1. Do not wait. To delay can give rise to rumor, that rumor can add another dimension to the existing problem. Delays can also prompt anger on the part of the students - a feeling that “no one really cares.”
 2. A straightforward sympathetic announcement of a loss with a simple statement of condolence is recommended. In case of suicide, respect the wishes of the family. Use some discretion regarding any details of the death. **REMEMBER:** Sometimes early information is not accurate. Be as truthful as possible when responding to the questions of students. Prepare this statement to be read in all classes at the same time.
 3. Use of a classroom setting is most effective for the announcements. **DO NOT USE SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES OR P.A. FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS.**
 4. After the announcement, allow sufficient time for students to begin to discuss their feeling in their classrooms.

SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements of tragedy are like any other form of personal communication; they should be simple, straightforward, appropriate and unique. These samples can only give you a general idea. They are not “fill-in-the-blank” forms. Only you can give the personal touch that is needed at such a time.

1. After a suicide....

“A tragedy has happened. _____, a Grade _____ student has died suddenly. (Parental/family permission needed to divulge reason.) Details of _____’s premature death will not be released to protect the privacy of family members. You will be given information about funeral arrangements as soon as possible. This kind of tragic news is hard to accept. You may experience many feelings within the next few days. Everyone deals with loss differently. It is important to respect the way others grieve. Counsellors are available in room _____. Feel free to go and talk to the counsellors. They want to listen to your feelings and concerns.”

2. After a known fatality....

“I know that many of you may have already heard of the sad news but I wanted to tell you myself. _____, a _____ grade student was killed in an accident (or died in the hospital.) The information I have is _____. You will be given definite information about funeral arrangements when they become available to us.”

“The tragic news of such a premature death is always hard to accept. It is particularly difficult for _____’s family and close friends. You will probably experience many feelings within the next few days. You may feel sad, angry, confused, numb, depressed. These feelings are normal.”

3. At the time of the funeral....

“We are taking this time to think about _____, a grade _____ student at _____ School who died last _____.”

“_____’s funeral is being held right now at a funeral home in _____ and many adults and students from our school are there. A funeral is a special time to remember a person who has died and we are having this Remembrance Ceremony for all of us here who are not able to go to the funeral”

“When I finish speaking, we will have a time of silence to remember _____. If you did not know _____ well, here are some things his Grade _____ classmates wrote about him last week, after they had learned of his death. Many of the Grade _____ have known him since Kindergarten.”

“He was the kind of boy who was caring and helpful. _____ wanted to be a _____ when he grew up.”

“_____ couldn’t play outside but he was always happy. His smile never left his face.”

“He was very creative.”

“A lot of people loved him as a friend.”

“Take this time of silence to think of _____, to remember all the good things about him, and, finally, to say good-bye. In our silence we will send _____ our love and best wishes and know that his spirit lives on.”

4. How to deal with it:

- Drop-In Center (Secondary only)
- with card
- condolences to family
- funeral

APPENDIX D

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents will want information when a death has occurred in the school. Depending on the nature of the emergency, the entire community may be affected. Special communications to parents may be extremely helpful in gaining their support for the school and in reaching satisfactory closure to the crisis.

I. Guidelines for Parent Communications by Phone:

- a. Use active listening skills to calm an upset parent. Do not allow scapegoating.
- b. Contact the parents of any student who has had a difficult time coping with the death and give suggestions on how to offer support at home plus information on community mental health resources.
- c. Reassure parents that the school is responding to the emergency and describe the response activity.

II. Guidelines for Written Communication to the Parents

Depending on the impact of the death, a letter may be sent home with every student in the class or classes involved and, in some cases with the entire school. This letter could include the following information:

- a) Information about the death that has occurred.
- b) What the children have been told.
- c) Grief reactions that the parents might expect to see in their children.
- d) How to respond to their children.
- e) Attendance at funeral.
- f) Resources available to the parents.

Sample letters are included to generate ideas for parental communication.

SAMPLE LETTERS TO PARENTS

Sample Letter 1

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We have suffered a tragedy at our school. On (date), one of our students died suddenly and unexpectedly. In addition to our grief over the loss of this member of our school community, we are sensitive to the fact that such an event has an impact on other students.

In response, the school has implemented a plan, which allows students an opportunity to talk about their thoughts and feelings with trained professional staff. We expect that some will seek out this help, while others may not. Those who do will be provided an opportunity to express their feelings and grief. This is not intended to take the place of outside professional counselling or pastoral care.

Anticipating that your child may have a reaction to this event, we have some information available to you at your request, which could be helpful as you respond to your child's concerns. If you should determine that your child needs further professional counselling, please feel free to contact the school for phone numbers of local agencies that are available to assist you.

If it seems advisable, we will offer all concerned parents an opportunity to meet with professionals to discuss this recent crisis. Please do not hesitate to contact the school regarding your requests or concerns at (phone number.)

Sincerely,

Sample Letter 2

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian:

It is with sadness that I inform you of the death of a Grade ____ student in our school. _____ died from injuries suffered in a car accident, which occurred last evening (do not specify reason if death was by suicide or by causes which are unknown.)

The funeral will be held at _____ (Funeral Home or Church) at _____ a.m./p.m. If your child is planning to attend the funeral, parents are encouraged to accompany them. (Note: Send a letter home to parents even if you do not know the details of the funeral arrangements.)

Students will have varied reactions to the death of a peer. A wide range of reactions is normal in the grief process and can vary from withdrawal, to crying and anger. I encourage you to openly discuss with your child their reactions and feelings regarding the death of _____.

Special counselling services have been made available to students today and will continue to be available throughout the week and longer, if needed.

If you think your child needs additional counselling support, please do not hesitate to contact the school office at _____ (phone number.)

Sincerely,

Sample Letter 3

Dear Parents,

For your information we have provided the following dates and times of services for _____:

Viewing Service
Date
Time

Funeral Service
Date
Time

Both services to take place at:

_____ Funeral Home
Address

Should you wish your child to attend the funeral service on _____ it would have to be done with parent permission and parent supervision. Please feel free to call the school or funeral home if your require further information.

(Optional:)

Our school counsellor, Mr./Ms. "X", has generously offered to be available on the weekend for any parents who may feel the need to contact him/her. You may do so by contacting him/her at home, _____ (phone number.)

We appreciate the support and community feeling that has been evident these last few days. Thank you.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX E

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

Rationale

School is a place where learning takes place, where it is safe to ask questions and obtain factual information. Adults frequently attempt to insulate children from the realities of death. But children have the capacity to cope with stronger feelings of loss than many of us realize. If children sense that parents and teachers are hiding something, their suspicions can lead to fears and fantasies that are more problematic for them than the truth. A teacher's expression of sorrow in class conveys to students that strong emotions are natural, that mourning does not have to be hidden away. In addition, when students are allowed to grieve in a supervised setting with the comfort and reassurance of an adult, they will develop positive coping behaviors, which will serve as a foundation for subsequent death-related situations. By sharing our feelings and experiences when confronted with death, we feel less helpless and alone.

General Principles to Help Students of All Ages

1. It is important to acknowledge the reality of the death and your willingness to talk about it.
2. Be simple and straightforward. Discuss death in terms the child can easily understand.
3. Give the minimum facts regarding the death in a concrete, clear and accurate manner. Share only the information that is public knowledge.
4. Express your own feelings in an open, calm way, which encourages students to express their grief. Some bereaved students choose not to talk; discussion of the death strikes them as a source of more pain and some have a hard time verbalizing their feelings. These students should not be pressured to talk.
5. Project confidence and calmness. Be encouraging and reassuring.
6. Listen, acknowledge the loss and have a non-judgmental attitude.
7. Be patient. Many times because of their need for reassurance, young children will repeat the same questions. Older children may repeatedly tell about the relationship and reconstruct the loss. Repetitions of this sort are part of the normal grieving process.

8. Be prepared for any student(s) who may feel the need to discuss unpleasant features of the relationship.
9. Assess the meaning of the loss for each child. Pay close attention to those children who have experienced other recent deaths or losses, or, to those who have emotional problems.
10. Expect regressive behaviors such as fear of dark, sleeping alone, nightmares, or being left alone. Expect physical complaints such as stomachaches and headaches.
11. Be aware that both children and adults find it natural to show their empathy during grieving through hugging or touching on the arm.
12. Avoid imposing your own theology or/and personal beliefs.
13. Assess which students are in need of additional support and refer them to the Drop-In Center for individual assessment and counselling. Have someone accompany them there.

A. The Class Discussion

There is no right way to talk about death. The following statements are meant only as a guide. Words and phrases may have to be changed to better fit your students' needs. Please note that each classroom discussion will vary in length depending upon the age of the students and their emotional involvement with the deceased. Some discussions may be as brief as a few minutes, while others will continue for the entire class period.

Beginning

- (a) *“Something very sad has happened. (Name), a Grade ____ student, has died (in the hospital, in a car accident, etc.) This kind of sad news is hard to accept. You will probably have many feelings in the next while. You could be sad, angry, confused, depressed, afraid, or have no feeling at all for some time. When I've felt like this, it has helped me to talk to someone. Sharing my feelings made it easier, although not less painful, to deal with the tragedy. If you'd like to talk about the situation, I'd be glad to take time to do that. I'll try to answer any questions as well as I can.”*
- (b) Encourage children to share memories of their classmate or teacher, *“What are some of the things you want to remember about (Name)?”*

Responding

- (c) Acknowledge that a wide variety of feelings is normal; there is no one right way to react to death. Feelings will vary from student to student and will change over time.

“It’s okay to forget (Name) sometimes when you work and play.”

“Some of you feel angry that (Name) died. What can you do with your angry feelings?”

“It’s okay that some of you are very sad and some only a little sad.”

“Because (Name) died, you may be reminded of others that you cared for who have died.”

“It’s okay to cry - it’s all right.”

- (d) Acknowledge that you don’t possess all the answers. Often there is more comfort from an honest, *“I don’t know why,”* than from an attempt at explanations that don’t sound credible.
- (e) Acknowledge the various cultural or religious beliefs that may be expressed.

Concluding

- (f) Focus on what the students still have in terms of
 - the support that comes from sharing grief
 - a support network. Have each student think of someone he/she can go to for support
 - their individual strengths
- (g) Talk about the natural healing process. *“Over time the pain of missing _____ won’t hurt so much. That’s the way it should be. It doesn’t mean that you love _____ any less.”*
- (h) *“Class is almost over and it seems there’s more to talk about. Perhaps we can set aside some time tomorrow.”*
- (i) Give information about the Drop-In Center (Secondary only.) *“A Drop-In Center where you can go to talk about your feelings is available. The Drop-In Center will be located _____ for the next _____ days. You can use the Drop-In Center whenever you like. The people in the Center want to help you. They will listen to your feelings and concerns. They want to try to help you accept this loss.”*
- (j) It’s helpful to channel the feelings of the class into appropriate expressions of concern. It’s comforting for students to feel a sense of usefulness. Students may want to:
 - send personal sympathy notes
 - make casseroles or do some baking

- provide baby-sitting or transportation
- go to the grocery store
- mow the lawn
- raise money for a memorial scholarship fund or donations to medical research (not recommended in the case of suicide)
- offer a brief eulogy during the funeral service or at school assembly
- discuss what else they can do to remember
- if appropriate, students could be encouraged to select representatives to visit the family's home. These students could be accompanied by the Family Representative.

What Not to Do/Say

- (k) Avoid euphemisms such as “passed away,” “gone,” or “sleep,” which may confuse or frighten the child.
- (l) Avoid the general statement, “*If you need anything, tell me...*” It is better to say, “*Would it help if I...?*”
- (m) Avoid saying, “*I know just how you feel.*” It is more emphatic to say “*You must have a lot of feeling right now...*”

B. Leading the Class Discussion in the Event of a Suicide

Most students over eight years of age are old enough to understand the suicidal act. Children and teens often have romantic fantasies about death, which we do not want to encourage. The key here is to be truthful, but not to dwell on the details of how the student took his or her own life.

This type of sudden loss may bring with it a heavy overlay of guilt, shame, self-doubt and self-blame. Bereavement and mourning can be more intense and extreme.

Suicide Risk Factors That May Warrant Referral

Following a suicide or a sudden death, students may be more vulnerable to suicide attempts. Examples of reactions that might suggest potential suicidal behavior at this time of crisis are:

- an excessive grief response
- an extreme change in behavior
- statements that indicate a student wants to join the deceased
- statements that indicate a suicide pact has been made, “*I have to join him.*”
- previous suicide attempts
- other recent major losses

If it has been agreed with the family that this was a suicide, it is appropriate to use that term. If not, the class discussions will need to be conducted as for a sudden death.

What You May Say

- (a) *“A very sad thing has happened. (Name), a Grade ____ student has committed suicide. Details of the death will not be released to protect the privacy of his/her family. This kind of news is hard to accept. You will probably experience many feelings within the next while. You may feel sad, angry, confused, numb, depressed or even guilty. There was nothing any of you could have done to prevent the suicide.”*
- (b) *“You are not responsible. Despite any of the things that you may have done, or not done, you didn’t cause this death.”*
- (c) *“This kind of death does not need to happen. Studies suggest that at the moment of suicide, individuals think death is the only way out. Although it may not seem possible, feelings and circumstances can change. Many people when they feel unhappy or unloved think about hurting themselves. But there are many better options. There are people who can help.”* You may want to remind students about the Drop-In Center that is currently operating in the school, as well as the ongoing support that is available through the school counsellor or the Mental Health.
- (d) *“Some people who commit suicide believe that people will care more about them after they are dead, than when they were alive. This is not the case and when time passes, people ultimately go on with their lives.”*
- (e) At the end of the discussion, help students understand the importance of talking to someone when they feel despondent. Elicit suggestions from the class as to whom they would talk to, and ask each individual student to privately think of those people to whom they would turn.

APPENDIX F

Possible Grief Reactions in Children and Youth

Grief is a process. It is the work we must do to come to terms with loss. Grief is not a single emotion, but rather it is a constellation of feelings, which can be expressed through a variety of behaviors and thoughts. Because there are many ways to express grief, there are many ways to resolve grief. It should be remembered, then, that children who are grieving may be characterized by a variety of physiological symptoms and psychological and behavioral responses. Because there are varying theories on the child's concept of death, it may be helpful to ask the student for his/her own interpretation of what happened in order to deal with the issues at the most appropriate level of understanding.

THE GRIEF PROCESS

Grief is a natural, human reaction to a significant change or loss. It is a physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological response. Grieving is a common life process.

Grief is the healthiest way to accept our loss and put it into perspective. It helps us to face the reality of loss, recover, and grow through the experience.

The expression of grief may differ with each individual, yet follow a broad common framework. It is important to understand the process of grief.

No matter what type of loss is experienced, the same process is generally gone through each time, although the length and intensity of the experience will differ. The stages of grief are not necessarily in a particular order, for an individual may flow back and forth between stages. There is no set time for an individual to spend in each stage; to reach a level of acceptance may take months or years.

STAGES OF GRIEF

This is a commonly accepted description of the grief process.

STAGE	TYPE OF BEHAVIOR
Shock & Denial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Appears inactive, expressionless, numb* Exhibits denial, disbelief* Feels disorganized* Loses appetite
Fear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Feels terror* Panics in absence of parents* Feels helpless* Fears something will happen to loved one or self* Develops physical symptoms, sleep disturbances
Anger	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Resents others and self* Exhibits uncooperative and rude behavior* May become angry with those trying to help
Guilt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Blames self for loss* Has lowered self-esteem* May seek to punish self
Depression	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Feels empty* Appears unhappy and cries excessively* Yearns or searches for lost object or person* Withdraws, is silent
Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Has experienced separation or loss and is able to cope* Feels hopeful* Reorganizes life and focuses on the present

CHILDREN'S CONCEPT OF DEATH

This is a commonly accepted description of children's concepts of death at different ages. Children develop at different rates and may not fit these categories exactly.

3 - 5 Years Old: These children do not yet accept death as a permanent process. Death is seen as an ending. They fear separation and abandonment more than death. Children may feel mad or sad that someone is not coming home. They often ask questions such as *"When will Grandma come back?"*

5 - 9 Years Old: Fear personification of death - skeletons and ghosts, fear of graveyards, haunted houses, "bad" people, darkness and being alone. They know the body decays but believe the spirit still lives. Talk openly to clear up misconceptions and lessen fears. Reassure children that they will be looked after and accept that their level of conceptual understanding necessitates a concrete view of death.

10 - 14 Years Old: Children are beginning to understand and accept a mature, realistic explanation of death as final and inevitable. They are developing their independence from parents but are not yet fully established individuals. Consequently, a death, especially of a peer, can cause considerable distress based on a fear for his or her own security. They may refuse to believe they are mortal.

15 - 18 Years Old: Teens are aware of the issues of war, abortion, suicide, etc. They are moving to a more abstract level of thinking and yet their tendency is to react, especially in the death of a peer, in a highly dramatic, intense fashion, with a reliance on personalized rituals, symbols, etc. Their energy can appear to come in great spurts and their responses can be unpredictable.

Adult: The variety of grief response in adults is extensive, largely due to how previous losses have or have not been resolved.

SUGGESTED WAYS TO COMFORT A GRIEVING CHILD

- 1. Be Yourself.** Show your natural concern and sorrow in your own way and own words.
- 2. Be There** Spend time with the child walking, reading, and talking. Spend some time with the child away from the group.

3. Listen

Be sure to have good eye contact. Use simple, direct words. Let the child be mad or express other feelings.

4. Explain Things

Give information about what's going to happen. Keep promises made. Be as predictable as possible.

5. Comfort the Child

Don't assume that a seemingly calm child is not sorrowing. If you can, be a friend to whom feelings can be confided and with whom tears can be shed.

SUGGESTED WAYS TO COMFORT A GRIEVING ADULT

1. Be There

Attend the funeral, visit, call and spend time with those grieving. Particularly after the initial attention subsides, bring food, do errands.

2. Listen

Grieving people need to talk about the sudden vacuum in their lives. Allow them to know that you wish to hear about their experiences. Don't force conversation, allow the grieving person to lead.

Don't attempt to tell the grieving person how he/she feels. Ask (without probing), but realize you can only know what you are told.

Avoid talking to others about trivia in the presence of the recently grieving person, even if this is done to distract the bereaved.

Don't take away pictures, clothing, student belongings and/or desk too quickly.

Acknowledge the death.

3. Send a Note

Notes can share personal memories, short and simple.

4. Give a Gift

A collection of poems. A book to the library in memory of the deceased. A donation to a related charity.

5. Extend an Invitation

Consider what the person likes to do. Bereaved people often decline invitations or cancel at the last minute. Don't give up. Ask again. Don't forget the person after time has passed.

6. Encourage the Postponement of Major Decisions

Whatever can wait should wait until after the period of intense grief.

APPENDIX G

THE FUNERAL

1. A funeral is a leave-taking ritual, which in some cultures is a way of acknowledging our relationship to the deceased. There is general agreement among researchers that going to a funeral can be a positive experience, a way of saying good-bye. However, students should not be pressured into attending.
2. It is possible to take any school-aged child to a funeral if a parent accompanies the child or familiar adult, feels secure, and is prepared in advance for what will take place.

For example: “We have funerals so that people can say good-bye. Some people may be crying. Often a religious leader and a few other people talk about special memories and say special prayers.”

3. Young children may not be able to sit for the entire service. The adult in charge should try to maintain a close physical presence to reassure the child and answer questions. Sufficient adults need to be available to accompany any children who wish to leave early.
4. Adolescents sometimes wish to leave notes or mementos in, or on the casket, or at the gravesite. This should be discouraged as it may upset students and/or family members.

APPENDIX H

RESOURCE LIST

BEREAVEMENT

Networking

British Columbia Bereavement Foundation 689-9091

Death of a Child

The Compassionate Friends (Vancouver) 875-6381
Grief Support Group 352-2337

AIDS

AIDS Vancouver 687-5220
Vancouver Persons with AIDS Society 683-3381

SUICIDE

Crisis Intervention 352-3504
S.A.F.E.R. 879-9251

HOSPICE/PALLIATIVE CARE 352-2337

DIRECTORY OF SUPPORT SERVICES

Mental Health Centre 354-6480
Community Services 352-3504
Nelson Home Support 352-2911
Kootenay Lake District Hospital 352-3111
R.C.M.P. 352-2156
Nelson City Police 354-3919
Ministry of the Child and Families 354-6480

Kootenay Lake School District

School Board Office (Nelson & Creston) 352-6681/428-2217
Special Programs 352-6681