



Section Five: Instructional Programs

505R – LEARNING ASSISTANCE (REGULATIONS)

1. Role of the Learning Assistance Teacher

The role of the learning assistance teacher (LAT) is detailed below:

Major Responsibilities

- 1.1 to teach students to develop learning strategies for use in classroom settings or for independent learning;
- 1.2 to teach skill development or remediation;
- 1.3 to collaborate with the classroom teacher to assess learning needs, recommend instructional strategies, structures and resources, support implementation and evaluation for struggling learners;
- 1.4 to be the gatekeeper for communication with district and community resource personnel;
- 1.5 to provide assessment support including criterion-referenced, diagnostic, or norm-referenced assessments (Level B);
- 1.6 to synthesize information from parents/guardians, student records, other service providers, and health-related information to aid the assessment process; and,
- 1.7 to organize, participate in, and/or chair School-Based Team meetings.

Specific Responsibilities

- 1.8 under the leadership of the principal, participate as a member of a school-based team, screen referrals, make placement suggestions, refer to district services, and review/monitor programs established for students;
- 1.9 assess the needs of struggling learners;
- 1.10 consult with teachers, administrators and parents/guardians concerning issues including assessment data, curriculum adaptations, relevant teaching strategies and details of educational plans;
- 1.11 advocate for students to ensure appropriate differentiated instructional strategies, program adaptations and access to other support services are in place;
- 1.12 keep records of progress for struggling learners in Tiers 2 and 3 (see 505A Appendix A) within the Pyramid of Intervention including relevant district and school-based assessments, and communicate reports to appropriate personnel upon student transfer;
- 1.13 report student progress to parents/guardians and to school-based teams at regular intervals;



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- 1.14 in consultation with the principal, organize the overall yearly program to allocate appropriate time to the three major service components – assessment, instruction and consultation;
- 1.15 organize and maintain a collection of learning assistance support materials; and,
- 1.16 carry out duties as described in Section D. Special Considerations: Services D.1 Learning Assistance Services (*Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines*, March 2011).

2. Selection of Students for Learning Assistance

Student selection in a particular school will be based on the following:

- 2.1 an initial referral by the classroom teacher(s);
- 2.2 consultation with the parents/guardians; and,
- 2.3 the screening of the candidate by the school-based team, LAT or District personnel.

3. Responsibilities of the Principal: Coordination and Supervision

The principal will:

- 3.1 assist the LAT in program organization by:
 - 3.1.1 establishing a culture of collaboration among classroom teachers, LATs and other support staff to foster student success;
 - 3.1.2 providing leadership and supervision to school staff to allow for flexibility of timetabling, classroom arrangements, and quality differentiated instruction to meet the needs of struggling learners;
 - 3.1.3 providing learning assistance materials, repository and teaching space;
 - 3.1.4 providing a budget to support learning assistance; and,
 - 3.1.5 ensuring the school-based team meets regularly.
- 3.2 assume responsibility for supervising the implementation and assessment of the delivery of learning assistance.
- 3.3 assume responsibility for the implementation of educational programs (School Act Regulation 5(7) (a)) for students with special needs:
 - 3.3.1 ensure a case manager for each student; and
 - 3.3.2 ensure the development and implementation of student's Individualized Education Plans.
- 3.4 review efficacy of the learning assistance program.



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4. Evaluating the Performance of the Learning Assistance Teacher

LATs should be evaluated as required by the School Act.

5. Coordination of the Learning Assistance Teacher Program

- 5.1 As outlined in the Ministry guidelines, the learning assistance program should be coordinated at the District level to provide:
 - 5.1.1 appropriate in-service opportunities to upgrade LAT competencies;
 - 5.1.2 access to standardized resources for the learning assistance program;
 - 5.1.3 additional support, knowledge and direction for dealing with specific student problems; and,
 - 5.1.4 active, visible leadership based on specialized skills and training.

6. Qualifications of the Learning Assistance Teacher

It is recommended that a learning assistance teacher possess the following:

Major Competencies

- 6.1 strong interpersonal, communication and collaborative skills;
- 6.2 the ability to complete a variety of educational assessments, including classroom observation, curriculum-based assessment and diagnostic teaching methods, administration and interpretation of norm-referenced assessment instruments to Level B;
- 6.3 the ability to contribute to the development, implementation and evaluation of an individualized educational program that is appropriate for the student's assessed needs, in consultation with the classroom teacher;
- 6.4 classroom experience and professional coursework contributing to expertise in selecting and using a variety of instructional materials and strategies for supporting struggling learners;
- 6.5 organizational skills for managing a learning assistance program including scheduling, record-keeping, collaborating with parents, guardians and school staff to support struggling learners;
- 6.6 knowledge of administration and application of assessments listed in School District No. 23's K - 12 Assessment Plan; and,
- 6.7 competencies as set out by the BC College of Teachers for professional standards.



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Professional Qualifications

Based on the Ministry of Education Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines (March 2011), an LAT at the elementary to secondary level should be qualified as follows:

- 6.8 a Bachelor of Education degree (B. Ed.) or equivalent;
- 6.9 membership in the BC College of Teachers;
- 6.10 a minimum of five years of successful classroom teaching experience, preferably at more than one level;
- 6.11 university-level courses in the following areas:
 - 6.11.1 students with special needs;
 - 6.11.2 assessment/testing theory and practice; and,
 - 6.11.3 strategies for adapting and modifying the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students.
- 6.12 university courses in the following areas are recommended:
 - 6.12.1 teaching students with specific learning needs (e.g. learning disabilities, giftedness);
 - 6.12.2 computer technology for the classroom; and,
 - 6.12.3 meeting the diverse behavioural and emotional needs of students.
- 6.13 interpersonal communication skills acquired through specific training and/or relevant experience.