POLICY: SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES			# 601
SECTION: 600 : Special Education			Page 1 of 3
APPROVAL/REVISION DATE: September 23, 2025	EFFECTIVE DATE: October 7, 2025	REVIEW DATE: October 7, 2030	
CROSS REFERENCE:	Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Resource Guide (2017) *Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990 – Part IX (Special Education); Regulation 181/98; Regulation 306 *Ontario Human Rights Code* (1990) *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA, 2005) *PPM 119: Ontario Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* (2013) *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, K-12* (2013) *First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (2014)		

A: POLICY

1. The cornerstone of an education based on a Catholic moral philosophy must be the recognition of Christ in every child. A true test of our commitment to this principle will be found in our support of programs and resources provided for students with special needs.

   A fundamental belief guiding our Special Education programs is that all students can achieve high levels of success, given the right conditions and support. A second guiding belief is the right of all students, to the extent that they are able, to be educated alongside their peers, in the regular classroom, and in their home school. Our goal is to enable all learners to reach their fullest potential, enabling them to take their place as independently as possible within society.

   The Board affirms its responsibility to provide Special Education programs and services in ways that uphold equity, inclusivity, accessibility, and respect for diverse identities. Programs and services will be free of systemic bias and barriers, and responsive to the unique strengths and needs of students, including those shaped by culture, language, indigeneity, gender identity, race, socio-economic status, and faith.

   Our Board offers the facilities, resources, support personnel and equipment necessary for developing and implementing special education programs and services.

B: GUIDELINES

2. The Board is committed to providing necessary and appropriate accommodations to the point of undue hardship in the form of special education programs, supports and services, including classroom based accommodations, to all students with demonstrable learning based needs, consistent with its obligations under the Education Act and in full compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.

   The Board provides programs and services to exceptional children that conform to the following principles and guidelines:

   2.1 The Board accepts the responsibility for providing appropriate programs for all of its students.

   2.2 The Board provides a range of Special Education programs and resources to meet the needs of all students, guided by universal design for learning (UDL), differentiated instruction (DI), and culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy (CRRP).

2.3 The norm for this Board is placement in a mainstream class or integration into the mainstream as the needs of the student allow, while recognizing and respecting the full range of placements available under Regulation 181/98.

2.4 Pupil placements are determined at an IPRC meeting and are based on:
- a focus on the best interests of the child
- the strengths and needs of the child, including relevant assessments and student data
- consideration of the wishes of the parents, and, where appropriate, the student's own voice.

2.5 Programs for exceptional students within the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board reflect students' strengths and needs and are based on on-going assessment.

2.6 Positive self-image, considered to be a key ingredient to success, is forged through accomplishment. Our programs will challenge students academically and socially to the full extent of their abilities. Our programs will be delivered in a manner that enables children to see Christ within themselves and in others.

2.7 Positive self-image is built on a foundation of caring relationships. The Board challenges its staff to take every opportunity to build Christian community among staff and students.

2.8 Indicators of a positive self-image are self-reliance and a sense of personal responsibility. To foster these qualities, Board programs and services shall be characterized by:
- learning goals that are appropriate to the student's abilities
- program expectations that are regularly discussed and reviewed with the student as appropriate
- Universal design for learning (UDL) and differentiated instruction (DI) that meets the student's needs
- teaching and assessment strategies that are continuously reviewed by the classroom teacher.
- regular evaluation and reporting on student progress
- withdrawal from the regular classroom for the purpose of specific, evidence-based, and time-bound interventions
- adult support that actively encourages increased independence and self-advocacy skills
- school and community support that advocates for inclusivity.

2.9 Special Education teachers provide critical support to classroom teachers and individual student programs. They ensure a coordinated approach to Special Education resources and services within each school.

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2.10 The Board will maintain a Special Education Plan, reviewed annually, for the provision of Special Education Programs and Services as directed by the Ministry of Education.

2.11 The Board is committed to meaningful consultation and collaboration with its Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), families, students, and community partners to ensure programs reflect community needs and promote equity.

2.12 The Board will cooperate with and utilize community and provincial service providers as required, ensuring coordinated and culturally responsive supports.