

## **Enrichment and Skill Development Programming for Special Education**

Enrichment and Skill Development programming align with our understanding of a student's learning profile to inform special education.

This afternoon is an introduction to enrichment and skill development programming focused on the learning needs of classroom and subject teachers. There will be more professional learning. Educators working on comprehensive assessment teams will receive detailed professional learning regarding characteristics, qualifiers and special education programming in the fall.

For those that wish to explore further, full details on enrichment and skill development programming, including the characteristics and qualifiers used by assessors, is available in Appendix B of *Teaching to Diversity*.

Rest assured, any student with a comprehensive assessment supporting an existing exceptionality will meet one or more of the new enrichment and skill development programming areas. This means children receiving special education programming under existing ministry criteria will continue to receive special education programming under the new criteria.

After reviewing the introductory material, you will be given some questions to consider in small groups. A preview of the questions you will receive are available on the next two slides. You may wish to think about them as you listen to and/or read the material in preparation for the small group conversations.

### **Academic Skill Development, Social-Emotional/Behavioral Skill Development, and Enrichment**

We will begin by exploring the role of the classroom or subject teacher with respect to the determination of Academic Skill Development, Social-Emotional/Behavioral Skill Development, and Enrichment programming. As you listen and/or read, consider why it is important to ensure the teaching and learning described in the criteria has occurred prior to considering whether or not a student would benefit from special education programming.

**Academic Skill Development** programming is special education to support skill development in foundational literacy and foundational numeracy. Special education programming is informed by Comprehensive Assessment and determined by a Program Planning Team. A diagnosis of specific learning disorder and/or communication disorder

will be considered; however a diagnosis in and of itself does not determine special education programming.

The provision of evidence-based instruction is a precursor to determining whether or not a student would benefit from academic skill development programming.

- For those following the RTL Policy in K-6, this includes universal instruction and intensive intervention as outlined in the Tiered Approach to Learning.
- For those following the Service Delivery Model in 7-12, this includes sound classroom instruction informed by pre-referral intervention.

A recent human rights commission report in Ontario highlights the importance of evidence-based instruction and preventative intervention in reducing the number of students identified with a disability and requiring special education service. It noted that with evidence-based instruction, early identification, and intervention, at-risk students will not require special education programming.

To understand the commission's statement, consider the following:

- it takes longer to intervene in 4th grade than in kindergarten because learning gaps widen as curriculum advances;
- with early identification and prevention programs, the number of children who are placed in special education can be significantly reduced; and
- the overwhelming majority of children with reading difficulties will achieve grade level in reading if they receive the right help in early primary.

Similarly, **Social-Emotional/Behavioural Skill Development** programming is special education to support social-emotional/behavioural learning. Special education programming is informed by Comprehensive Assessment and determined by a Program Planning Team.

While a diagnosis is not required to determine the need for special education programming and services for social-emotional/behavioural skill development, it is expected that a student would either be seeing an appropriate health professional or will be referred for further assessment and potential diagnosis. The comprehensive assessment informs such a referral.

For the vast majority of students, the provision of evidence-based instruction in social-emotional learning foundational skills is a precursor to determining whether or not

a student would benefit from social-emotional/behavioural skill development programming.

- For those following the RTL Policy in K-6, this includes universal instruction and intensive intervention as outlined in the Tiered Approach to Learning.
- For those following the Service Delivery Model in 7-12, this includes sound classroom instruction informed by pre-referral intervention.

**Enrichment programming** is special education to support a student with exceptional intellectual potential and/or performance. Special education programming is informed by Comprehensive Assessment and determined by a Program Planning Team.

Enrichment requiring special education is typically associated with superior/very high intellectual ability.

For the vast majority of students, the provision of classroom-level enrichment is a precursor to determining whether or not a student would benefit from advanced enrichment programming through special education.

- For those following the RTL Policy in K-6, this includes enrichment of universal instruction.
- For those following the Service Delivery Model in 7-12, this includes sound classroom instruction informed by pre-referral intervention.

### **Adaptive Skill Development and Accessibility Skill Development**

Next, we will explore the role of the classroom or subject teacher with respect to Adaptive Skill Development and Accessibility Skill Development Programming.

**Adaptive Skill Development** programming is special education to support a student with significant difficulties with intellectual and adaptive functioning. Special education programming is informed by Comprehensive Assessment and determined by a Program Planning Team.

Adaptive Skill programming is typically associated with intellectual disability.

A wide range of programming options are available to students depending on their learning profile.

Students requiring some programming may enter kindergarten on prescribed curriculum. As the curriculum advances, support may be needed to learn academic

skills. Initially, this support may take the form of a modified prescribed course and/or intensive intervention determined by the Program Planning Team or alternate programs. Later, an alternate course may be required.

Students requiring moderate programming may require modification of kindergarten curriculum with supportive interventions/programs. Early in schooling, students may need alternate courses. Eventually, an alternate curriculum may be required. Accommodations may be needed.

Students requiring substantial programming may need an alternate curriculum upon school entry.

Finally, **Accessibility Skill Development** programming is special education to support a student who has a medical diagnosis related to physical functioning, vision, and/or hearing, which impacts their ability to access learning. Special education programming is informed by Comprehensive Assessment and determined by a Program Planning Team.

Special education programming and services for accessibility skill development is outlined under the subcategories of physical; blind or visually impaired; and D/deaf or hard of hearing.

A student whose sole learning need is related to being D/deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, or who have a physical disability has a medical diagnosis. The diagnosis initiates the comprehensive assessment to inform teaching and learning, not classroom or subject teachers working with the student.

Students requiring Accessibility Skill Development programming may or may not benefit from one of the previous enrichment or skill development areas discussed.

Pause for Table Discussion with 3-4 people:

**Why is it important that responsive evidence-based teaching occur earlier rather than later in schooling?**

**Why is responsive evidence-based teaching important prior to considering comprehensive assessment?**

Consider the educational frameworks of Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction, the Tiered Approach to Learning/Pre-referral Intervention, and EAL/LEARN Programs in your response.

In rare instances, where teaching and learning needs are very significant, teachers may consult with the Service Delivery Team without going through the process of Enrichment of Universal Instruction (K-6), the Tiered Approach to Learning (K-6), or Pre-referral Intervention (7-12).

**When would a teaching and learning team initiate an immediate consultation request with the Service Delivery Team in relation to:**

- Social-Emotional/Behavioural Skill programming
- Enrichment programming
- Adaptive Skill Development programming

**For Your Information: Co Occurrence**

Enrichment and Skill Development areas co-occur to inform special education programs and services. This table outlines the relationship among enrichment and skill development areas. Accessibility Skill Development may co-occur with all other programming areas. Adaptive Skill Development may co-occur with Accessibility Skill Development only. The remaining areas may mix and match. These five areas work together to inform a student’s learning profile and special education programming.

Special Education Programming and Services	May co-occur with
<b>Enrichment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● accessibility skills</li> <li>● academic skills</li> <li>● social-emotional/behavioural skills</li> </ul>
<b>Academic Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● accessibility skills</li> <li>● social-emotional/behavioural skills</li> <li>● enrichment</li> </ul>
<b>Accessibility Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● academic skills</li> <li>● adaptive skills</li> <li>● social-emotional/behavioural skills</li> <li>● enrichment</li> </ul>
<b>Adaptive Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● accessibility skills</li> </ul>
<b>Social-Emotional/ Behavioural Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● accessibility skills</li> <li>● academic skills</li> <li>● enrichment</li> </ul>

## **Final Activity**

We'll end the day with an activity that shows the relationship between diagnosis and enrichment/skill development programming. The activity is designed to highlight the difference between a medical model that relies heavily on diagnosis, versus a teaching and learning model that is more concerned with evidence of student learning in the presence of responsive teaching.

Take a moment to read and discuss each scenario for students A, B, C and D. Jot down or remember your Yes/No answer for the last column once you have decided whether or not each student requires special education programming and services. The answer key will be displayed on the following slide.