

SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

The **Better Education Starts Today** strategy is our government's vision and set of priority actions needed to ensure we are putting Manitoba students first. The strategy commits to the philosophy of inclusion, respect for diversity, and student achievement for all. The vision is for all Manitoba students to succeed, no matter where they live, their background, or their individual circumstances.

A strategy for students with special needs

Students with special needs are those who require specialized services or programming when deemed necessary by their in-school support team, which includes the student and parents/caregivers.

Specialized services or programming may be needed in areas such as: academic, social/emotional, behavioural, sensory, physical, cognitive/intellectual, communication, physical and mental health.

Our goal is to support students with special needs and their families to succeed. To achieve this goal, we will:

- revitalize inclusive practices
- enhance appropriate educational programming
- ensure student and family involvement in the planning process.

How will the Better Education Starts Today strategy revitalize inclusive practices?

Manitoba continues to incorporate a strong philosophy of inclusion within its education system.

- ✓ Establish a new Minister's Advisory Council on Inclusive Education to identify professional learning needs and enhanced classroom-level supports, as well as strategies to ensure timely assessment, learning supports, and clinical services.
- ✓ Develop a new provincial funding model that is fair, transparent, and sustainable to simplify funding to schools, create predictability in funding and increase consistency in supporting students with special needs across the province.
- ✓ Renew interdepartmental protocols to guide student transitions into kindergarten and from school into the wider community.
- ✓ Review and update Manitoba's policy on intervention and discipline to include consideration of a student's special needs.

How will appropriate educational programming be enhanced?

Early intervention:

- ✓ Develop a comprehensive approach to early and ongoing identification and intervention in reading, writing and math to make sure students have the foundational skills needed for future learning.

- ✓ Focus on children entering kindergarten as well as students who have experienced disrupted learning (e.g., refugees).
- ✓ Enhance collaboration between teachers, student services professionals, parents and caregivers to ensure early and ongoing identification of learning needs and supports.

Timely access:

- ✓ Provide timely assessment, learning supports and clinical services to students identified by the in-school support team

Assessment and reporting:

- ✓ Put in place a provincial report card for students with special needs to measure progress in both academic and non-academic areas.
- ✓ Develop a provincial data and performance measurement strategy to measure, monitor and report on key outcomes for all students related to achievement, engagement and satisfaction.

Mental health and wellness:

- ✓ Build on the enhanced mental health programming introduced during the pandemic in partnership with the new Department of Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery.

How will students and their families continue to be involved?

Students with special needs and their parents will play a critical role in informing the path forward.

- ✓ Parents and students will be included on the Minister's Advisory Council on Inclusive Education.
- ✓ A provincial survey to inform school plans and broader decision making will be created for students, their parents and staff.
- ✓ A provincial Student Advisory Council will provide youth perspectives, insights and advice to the Minister of Education on topics that are current and emerging for Manitoba K to 12 students.

Student-specific planning

Student-specific planning (e.g., adaptation plans, modification plans, individual education plans, behaviour intervention plans, health care plans, and personal transportation plans) supports students with special needs and students who are at risk to learn and grow within inclusive school and community settings.

Student-specific planning will continue to be key for students with special needs to succeed academically, behaviourally, emotionally and physically.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

It is important to bring your questions forward to inform communication and decision making.

- ✓ To reach out to the Education Transformation Team, please email edutransformation@gov.mb.ca.
- ✓ To stay informed, see www.bettereducationmb.ca.
- ✓ To participate in surveys, town halls and other consultations, visit Engage Manitoba at www.engagemb.ca.

Thank you for your contributions to the ongoing consultation process and for working to improve the educational system in Manitoba as we focus on success for all students.