



Section Four

Early Identification Process and Intervention Strategies



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EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCESS AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Guiding Principles for Early Learning

As stated in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 11, Early Identification of Children's Learning Needs, School Boards must define "procedures to identify levels of development, learning abilities, and needs" and must "ensure that educational programs are designed to accommodate these needs and to facilitate each child's growth and development."

Lakehead District School Board is committed to early learning, and Early Identification is an integral part of the vision for excellence for all students. As part of an ongoing commitment to early learning, Lakehead District School Board provides:

- a five day, full time Kindergarten program in all schools
- early childhood educators as support in all first and second year Kindergarten classes
- an Early Intervention Program for Kindergarten to Grade 2 students

Lakehead District School Board continues to invest energy and resources into these critical years of personal, social and academic development that will have the most influence on long-term learning.

Early Identification Procedures

Lakehead District School Board has two formal identification procedures that are key to building future success – the Special Needs Transition Plan and FAIR START. The procedures for the Early Identification guidelines are supported by the following documents:

- The Kindergarten Program, 2016
- Growing Success – The Kindergarten Addendum: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2016
- Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Resource Guide, 2017
- Early Identification of Children's Learning Needs Policy, Ministry Memorandum No. 11, 1982
- Early Reading Strategy. The Report of Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario, 2003
- Planning Entry to School. A Resource Guide, 2005

Beginning KINDERGARTEN Intake Process for Students with Special Education Needs

Roles and Responsibilities of Key Participants - Child attending a licensed Child Care Centre

TIME	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	ACTION
November-December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Resource Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin discussion with Parent/Guardian about their child attending school
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Resource Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain Parent/Guardian consent to share information (based on custody status) • Collaborate with Parent/Guardian to complete the <i>KINDERGARTEN Intake Package</i>. Community agencies/service providers will be consulted as necessary • FAX the completed <i>KINDERGARTEN Intake Package</i> to the appropriate school board (see page 3 of <i>KINDERGARTEN Intake Package</i>) • Arrange a visit for School Board/Special Education Personnel to the Child Care Centre
February - June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Guardian • Child Care Resource Teacher • School Board/Special Education Personnel • Agencies/Service Providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register child at school; Child Care Resource Teacher may assist the family if required • Encourage parent/guardian to provide the school with additional information or documentation • Communicate with agencies/service providers regarding transition to school
April - May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • School Board/Special Education Personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School to initiate a Case Conference meeting to include the following individuals as required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Principal ✓ Parent/Guardian ✓ Child Care Resource Teacher ✓ Agencies/Service Providers ✓ School Board/Special Education Personnel
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Guardian and Student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for transition to school • View school/classroom environment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • School Board/Special Education Personnel 	
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Guardian and Student • Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for transition to school • Additional school/classroom visit, if required
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Educator Team • Student • School Board/Special Education Personnel • Child Care Resource Teacher (optional) • Professional(s) from identified agencies/service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review scheduled staggered start for Year 1 KINDERGARTEN • Follow up with school and family regarding transition to school

Beginning KINDERGARTEN Intake Process for Students with Special Education Needs

*Roles and Responsibilities of Key Participants - Child **NOT** in a licensed Child Care Centre*

TIME	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	ACTION
November - December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies/Service Providers working with families who are NOT enrolled in a licensed Child Care Centre • Special Needs Officer (TBDSSAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin discussion with Parent/Guardian about their child attending school
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Needs Officer (TBDSSAB) • Parent/Guardian with agencies/service providers • School Board/ Special Education Personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain Parent/Guardian consent to share information (based on custody status) • Collaborate with Parent/Guardian to complete the <i>KINDERGARTEN Intake Package</i>. Community agencies/service providers will be consulted as necessary • FAX the completed <i>KINDERGARTEN Intake Package</i> to the appropriate school board (see page 3 of <i>KINDERGARTEN Intake Package</i>).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange a visit for School Board/Special Education Personnel to visit the home
February - June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Guardian • Special Needs Officer (TBDSSAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register child at school; Special Needs Officer (TBDSSAB) may assist the family • Encourage parent/guardian to provide the school with additional information or documentation • Communicate with agencies/service providers regarding transition to school
April - May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • School Board/Special Education Personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School to initiate a Case Conference meeting to include the following individuals as required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Principal ✓ Parent/Guardian ✓ Agencies/Service Providers ✓ School Board/Special Education Personnel ✓ Special Needs Officer (TBDSSAB)
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Guardian and Student • Principal • School Board/Special Education Personnel • Special Needs Officer (TBDSSAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for transition to school • View school/classroom environment
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Guardian and Student • Principal • Special Needs Officer (TBDSSAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for transition to school • Additional school/classroom visit, if required
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Educator Team • Student • School Board/Special Education Personnel • Special Needs Officer (TBDSSAB) (optional) • Professional(s) from identified agencies/service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review scheduled staggered start for Year 1 KINDERGARTEN • Follow up with school and family regarding transition to school

FAIR START

Lakehead District School Board began an initiative in 1996 called FAIR START. FAIR START is a standard procedure when a child registers for Kindergarten. A wide range of professionals in the community are involved (audiologists, optometrists, speech and language pathologists and early-year screeners).

When a child is registered for Kindergarten, parents/guardians are assisted in completing a FAIR START Screening booklet. The screening booklet asks questions focusing on the six areas of child development:

- Hearing
- Vision
- Gross Motor
- Fine Motor
- Speech and Language
- Social Development

Teacher's Role in Early Learning

The teacher assesses stages of development by observing the child's learning abilities and needs, and then structures the learning environment – space, materials, time and instructional strategies – to meet those needs appropriately.

The early years are critical. Play-based, problem-solving learning environments offer children an array of opportunities to explore, discover and create. An environment designed for learning by solving problems through play provides rich sensory stimulation which the young child absorbs and integrates into the core brain development. (McCain & Mustard, 1999, p. 159)

Teachers use reflective practice, planned observation, and a range of assessment strategies to identify the strengths, needs and interests of individual children in order to provide instruction that is appropriate for each child ("differentiated instruction") (The Kindergarten Program, 2016).

A variety of tools may be used to gather and record assessment data, for example:

- Oral Language Assessment
- Sound Skills Screener
- Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- FAIR START Screening Results and Recommendations
- Observation and recorded anecdotal notes
- Portfolios, checklists, etc.
- Developmental profiles
- The Ontario Curriculum
- The Ontario Exemplars
- DRA – Developmental Reading Assessment

Parent's Role in Early Learning

Parents play an important and valuable role in the education of their child. Parents promote the social, physical, emotional and cognitive development of their children. It is

essential that there be ongoing communication between home and school to provide constructive and consistent learning experiences for the child.

Parents provide a wealth of knowledge about their child's strengths and needs which directly support the school learning environment. Parents can share information about their child's strengths and needs that will assist the teacher in planning and assessing to meet those needs appropriately. There are many opportunities for parents to communicate:

- at the time of school registration,
- during a home visit or school Open House (early years)
- at a parent-teacher conference,
- within the school setting.

The educational success and welfare of students are enhanced by active parent involvement. Parents and school personnel, working together in a partnership, ensure that all learning needs are met through ongoing communication, cooperation, active participation and sharing of responsibility.

Programs that Support Intervention

The programs identified by Lakehead District School Board demonstrate the range of practices necessary to implement the kind of balanced programming envisioned by the Operational Plan, and The Early Learning Report.

FAIR START	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fair Start is a Thunder Bay community venture ▪ Partners from education, health, community professionals in optometry, audiology, and speech, the daycare community and child development agencies ▪ Screens children as young as 18 months up to school age to identify any difficulties which should be addressed to ensure healthy child development
First Steps Reading, Writing, and Oral Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lakehead District School Board has adopted <i>First Steps</i> Reading/Writing and Oral Language to support the Balanced Literacy Plan ▪ <i>First Steps</i> provides developmental profiles which assist in baseline assessment and individualized programming
Oral Language Assessment And Sound Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OLA data provides insights into the level of oral English structures a student can listen to with full understanding (receptive language) ▪ Teachers provide strategies to help improve a student's expressive oral language
Early Childhood Educators (Kindergarten Classes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The primary role of ECE workers in the Kindergarten classroom is to enrich the student's learning and to support the classroom teacher by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ helping develop oral language skills ▪ making observations regarding ▪ personal, social, and academic growth

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ maintaining the philosophy of the Kindergarten programs: <i>learning through play</i>
<p>Early Reading Intervention (Good Reader’s Club)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom teachers identify students who need intervention based on data from assessments including the DRA ▪ Facilitators instruct small groups of students-maximum 6 with similar reading levels one half hour devoted to reading and one half hour devoted to phonemic awareness, phonics and word work each day ▪ This intervention is in addition to regular classroom literacy instruction and occurs at a different time than the regular classroom literacy block ▪ Program lasts 17 weeks ▪ Includes pre-testing and post-testing of students’ progress to track gains
<p>DRA - Developmental Reading Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developmental Reading Assessment is administered to SK-8 students twice per year ▪ Data collected and information interpreted by Lakehead District School Board personnel will be used in each school to ensure that program and instructional strategies meet the needs of students ▪ Assessment determines student’s reading levels, strategies that students use and need to work on and fluency
<p>System Literacy Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of common assessment tool (DRA) ▪ Data driven instruction ▪ Use of Professional Learning Communities to focus on student achievement tied to a specific SMART goal
<p>Jolly Phonics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Jolly Phonics</i> is a program used by Kindergarten, Grade 1 teachers and facilitators ▪ <i>Jolly Phonics</i> is a thorough foundation for decoding and spelling ▪ Teaches the letter sounds in an enjoyable multi-sensory way, and how to use them as strategy to read and write
<p>Handwriting Without Tears</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Handwriting Without Tears</i> Readiness Program inspires active learning and teaching for children of all abilities ▪ Ensures the development of correct and comfortable habits and provides the foundation skills necessary to get children “ready” to write well ▪ Features: multi-sensory teaching tools and techniques, consistent and child-friendly illustrations, lesson formats and instruction language ▪ Effective strategies to: prevent reversals, develop letter and number fluency, promote fine motor skill development