

**SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY**  
**Freedom Thinkers Education**  
**PBL Society**

**Policy Statement**

Freedom Thinkers Education PBL Society believes that all students have unique educational needs and that each person can play an essential role in our school community. Our model of education is inclusive by nature, whereby each student will co-create a personalized Student Learning Program with Freedom Thinkers Education's educational team, for his/her growth, development and advancement.

**Admission**

Every effort will be made to accommodate students in our school. However, due to the nature of our learning program, which relies heavily on individual student decisions and self-motivated leadership, there may be situations where we may not be able to accept individuals into our school.

Because we are a small school and intend to remain small as a necessary part of our learning program design, we may not have the economy of scale required to implement staffing, equipment, or programming needed to support all students adequately, even when eligible for supplemental funding from the Ministry of Education.

**Instruction Format**

As consistent with our school's philosophy and approach to education for all of its students, students with special needs are encouraged to be as independent as possible. Their program will be carried out in settings consistent with those of all other students. This is due mainly to the nature of learning within our school's approach to educating students.

**Teachers' Responsibility**

Teachers are responsible for the students' educational program. They communicate regularly with one another to determine best practices for each student, including those students with special needs. Teachers are also responsible for reporting to parents regarding a student's progress.

The school does not make a distinction between a teacher and a learning assistance teacher. All teachers are expected to offer the kinds of learning assistance that each student needs.

### **Principal's Responsibility**

The Principal is responsible for supporting the program according to the Individual Education Plan (IEP), and for maintaining the vision for inclusion in the school. They process new admissions, sign contracts with outside services where appropriate, and provide the same services as for all students (e.g. budgeting, staffing, staff supervision, facilities, safety, dealing with major concerns, appropriate curriculum, etc.)

### **INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)**

Each student receiving a special needs grant from the Ministry of Education must have an IEP on file. The IEP outlines the educational plan for the student to enable him/her to function in his/her learning environment. It outlines the program modifications and/or adaptations for the student and the services that are to be provided. It is formed and implemented by a team, which may consist of any of the following people:

1. Teachers
2. The student's parents/guardians
3. Other members of the educational team
4. The student
5. Peers
6. Principal

The Individual Education Plan is created generally as follows:

#### ***September***

1. Meet with members of the educational team to discuss each child with Special Needs.
2. Coordinate the involvement of therapists and consultants (where appropriate)
3. Provide support for teachers as the students with Special Needs settle into their new learning environment.
4. Observe students with Special Needs in learning environment
5. Hold IEP meetings to establish or to update IEPs
6. Administer or arrange for the administration of relevant assessments

#### ***November and March***

1. Assess and evaluate each students' program
2. Problem-solve with school based team as needed
3. Receive and process new applications
4. Continue direct instruction
5. Evaluate program

#### ***June***

1. Hold team meetings for year-end reporting
2. Update progress on IEP for following year
3. Apply for Special Education grants for the following school year.
4. Participate in determining the student's placement and assistant placement for the coming year.

## **Personalized Learning**

It is important to note that because the school operates through a personalized learning approach, each student has a personal Student Learning Plan. This approach means that all students essentially have an IEP, including students with special needs. Adjustments are made throughout the year to optimize the learning conditions for each student in the school, and not just as part of a formal IEP review process.