

RATIONALE: PURPOSE FOR INCLUSION:

Tween Valley Christian School has accommodated special needs students for several years. However, it has become abundantly clear that serious questions about these students' educational needs were not being addressed. Therefore, a clear policy with a firm commitment and systematic planning to achieve full inclusion will be the school's long-term goal. If the inclusion of all students with disabilities is seen as a desirable goal, then all stakeholders including administration, teacher, parents, and others need to find new, more effective ways to collaborate throughout the inclusion implementation process. It is the school's responsibility to ensure that all students with physical or cognitive disabilities to have full access to the school and general routines of regular school life.

Most compelling reason for full inclusion is to avoid identifying and quantifying students which only result in labelling students leaving them alone in separate programs and social stagnations. This in turn creates systematic exclusion. A clear policy and systematic planning to actively changing the direction taken for so many years will ensure full inclusion in all aspects of school for all students.

POSITION:

Tween Valley Christian School believes in the best possible education for all students. Therefore, Tween Valley Christian School welcomes and accepts all exceptional students and whenever possible and practical and depending on students needs and parental choice will place each student in age-appropriate classes.

KEY FEATURES OF AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL:

1. An effective Inclusive School communicates the vision of a positive and invitational school. Emphasis will be on support, encouragement, and instruction. Parents and students should sense that there is an atmosphere that is supportive. If students experience difficulties (and they will) staff will be there to assist. On the other hand, when students experience success, staff will be there to acknowledge and encourage.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS:

- A. It will be critical to bring staff to agreement on school wide procedures and attitudes dealing with Inclusion.

It is imperative for every staff member involved with special need students to work collaboratively in the practical implementation of inclusion. This will ensure that inclusion will meet the needs of our unique population and teaching staff, as well as increase the degree of ownership by the staff.

- B. Inclusion procedures will reflect the written and oral involvement from parents and students.

It is essential to involve students and parents in the process. The more parents and students contribute to the process, the greater the degree of commitment.

- C. This Inclusive School Policy will be centered around our school mission statement.

As problems and new challenges arise, and new procedures become necessary, changes can be evaluated on the basis of the mission statement. This reduces the likelihood that decisions may be based on political convenience. This Inclusionary policy must reflect the mission statement.

- D. Although teachers will be encouraged to corporately strive towards excellence and equity in education, consistency in implementing an inclusive education will be imperative. Flexibility and teacher individuality is necessary to set up and run their own programs.

- E. This Inclusive Education Policy will be designed to act as a guide for staff development and hiring purposes.

Policy will provide everyone with a vision of our school for the screening of new staff members.

- a. when effectively developed and implemented, the policy will serve as an in-service tool. By clarifying “best practice” in writing, staff must evaluate their

ability to implement procedures and determine staff development and staff development activities that will assist them in their efforts.

In this way the policy serves as a framework for change.

b. It will be the intension of this policy to present a clear picture of Tween Valley Christian School's philosophy and procedures. Moreover, it will serve as a vehicle for hiring new staff members. The tone of this policy will attract applicants who wish to teach in a positive Inclusionary school climate.

F. The Inclusive Policy will be systematically evaluated, revised, and updated each year. If this policy is going to guide procedures and practices of the staff at our school, it must be examined and revised as necessary at least once a year. The school is continually undergoing changes and evolving. therefore, it is important that the policy evolves as practical changes occur. By annually evaluating this policy staff will ensure that the document continues to be both relevant and functional.

G. Conclusion

The foundational policy will attempt to provide the staff of Tween Valley Christian School with a tool for developing and maintaining a positive Inclusionary school climate.

THE SCHOOL'S ROAD TO INTEGRATION:

1. Changes attitudes

- a. Integration is for everyone
- b. The rights of the students to equal schooling
- c. Present Federal and Provincial laws will prevent us returning to segregation
- d. Not all students will be learning their grade at grade level.
- e. Just good teaching, nothing new
- f. Meeting all student's emotional, spiritual, and social needs

2. Timetable accommodations

- a. Collaboration
 - i. Teachers
 - ii. Teacher assistance
 - iii. Parents
 - iv. Principal
 - v. Students

- b. Instruction
- c. Materials and Facilities
- d. Planning and Supervision

3. Public Relations

- a. Community
- b. School Board Members
- c. Parents
- d. Teachers
- e. Workshops and Conferences
- f. Media
- g. Correspondence
- h. Department of Education

4. School Related Extra-Curricular Activities

- a. Athletic Events
- b. School Functions
- c. Intramurals
- d. Real life experiences (Life Skills)
- e. Work Experience Activities
- f. Career Education
- g. Driver Education
- h. Registered Apprenticeship Program

5. Developing Peer Awareness

- a. Encourages peers helping peers
- b. Students remain with their peer groups as much as possible
- c. Avoid stereotypes and labeling
- d. Resources reflecting tolerance acceptance and appreciation of individual differences
- e. Providing staff workshops on integration
- f. Long term commitment from administrators

6. Discipline and Behavioral Strategies

- a. Consistent but firm
- b. Routines will be established
- c. Avoid unnecessary confusion
- d. No toleration for students to bring harm either to himself or to others
- e. unusual circumstances may require suspension
- f. Different but equal and fair punishment
- g. Clearly defined expectations as opposed to fuzzy expectations

7. School Expectations

- a. Traditional mind sets must change
- b. Curriculum adaptations
- c. Student involvement
- d. Future preparations
- e. Criterion referenced
- f. Evaluation procedures

8. Retention

- a. Workload
- b. Timetabling
- c. Additional semesters – time frame flexibility

9. The whole notion of Inclusion requires that Tween Valley Christian School explores ways of linking formal education with opportunities in the community through which students develop skills to take their place as adult community members.

10. Tween Valley Christian School's Work Experience, R.A.P., and Green Certificate program will continually be evaluated and modified to meet the needs of special students. Teaching basic life and occupational skills will be viewed as core components for the High School mandate.

PARENTS ROLE AND INVOLVEMENT

1. Inclusion and integration must welcome the participation of parents:
 - a. Parents should be prepared to help and support willing teachers and administrators.
 - b. The parents must be honest as well as realistic about the abilities of their child.

- c. Inform the teacher how the pupil learns best.
 - d. What the child's interests are.
 - e. How to avoid problems and how to deal with the pupil as he/she may react in a particular situation.
 - f. Avoid the temptation to blame someone when things don't go right.
 - g. Concentrate on finding solutions cooperatively
 - h. Parents should support any effort provided to reward or acknowledge teacher of exceptional children.
2. Parents must support a pupil centered education.
- Parents cannot expect the traditional evaluation procedures such as tests, marks, and grade. This only sets the pupil up for certain failure.
- The evaluation process must therefore be criterion centered. Evaluation must be based upon the abilities of individual pupils.

ADMINISTRATOR ROLES

1. Be Committed

- a. Success of Inclusion will depend upon:
 - i. Planning
 - ii. Promotion
 - iii. Implementation
 - iv. Rewarding

2. Initiate integration

- a. Integration as ongoing learning (in-service).
- b. Provide ample opportunity for In-service and Workshops relating to Inclusion.
- c. time for all staff to adjust and become supportive.

3. Support and allow for transitional planning

- a. Separate to integrated environments
- b. Allow for teacher release time
 - i. Observe pupil
 - ii. Meet with parents
 - iii. Other teachers, Resource teacher
 - iv. Prepare for the student.

4. Encourage realistic teacher expectations and attitudes

Often high school teachers' expectations are too high, consequently they only become frustrated – no reflection upon the teacher.

5. Prepare all teachers and support staff.

- a. Providing school-based training.
- b. Provided resource corner including:
 - i . Articles
 - ii. Books
 - iii. Video tapes etc. for staff to read and review.
- c. Class visitation

6. Expand Resources

- a. Ensure flexibility and creativity in using school resources
- b. Budgeting for resources
- c. Hire support services
- d. Be prepared to assist staff in organizing
 - i. peer support groups
 - ii. volunteer personnel
 - iii. available to teach their classes
 - iv. provide time for visitation and observations
- e. Collaborate and meet with teachers regularly
- f. Problem solve
 - i. By establishing school-based teams
 - ii. Increase parents' involvement
- g. Public Relations
 - i. Promote success.

ROLE OF THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

MUST BE COMMITTED TO INCLUSION AND BELIEVE THAT IT CAN WORK

1. Function as an advocate and program planner for special needs students.
 - a. Provide information on the value of inclusion to school personnel and community.
 - b. Provide information on how to facilitate inclusion to school personnel.

GENERAL

Teachers Consult and collaborate with teachers, parents, and other personnel and/or agencies to assure students success in learning. Their job responsibilities include collaboration, liaison, program development, monitoring, and professional development.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES IN EACH AREA

A. Collaboration with school, parents, students, and vocational student service agencies.

1. Provide support for personnel involved in meeting student needs.
2. Develop and evaluate individual programs
3. Handle student referrals.
4. Support the need for collaborative, problem-solving approach in handling school concerns.
5. Organize problem-solving teams to handle challenge situations.
6. Obtain needed information/strategies for working with students with very challenging situations.

B. Program Development:

1. Assess program needs of students referred.
2. Gather and consolidate background information on student achievements and behaviour and determine where further diagnostic assessment is required.
3. Administer and interpret additional tests needed to establish appropriate instructional programs.
4. Assist in the inclusion of assessment recommendations in I.E.P's or adjusted programs.
5. Assist in adapting regular programs instructional procedures to meet students needs.
6. Utilize strategies that promote the inclusion of all students (i.e., multi-level instruction, cooperative learning.)
7. Document adjustments in programs for students with special needs.
8. Establish and implement behavioral programs in cooperation with the school principal and school psychometrics
9. Provide individual and small-group instruction on an ongoing basis for compelling reasons necessary to meet student's instructional needs.

C. Monitoring:

1. Implement strategies agreed upon through case conferences, consultations, or problem-solving sessions.
2. Monitor the effectiveness of individual programs.
3. Monitor the coordination of support personnel involved in individual cases.
4. Monitor the need for use of resource room materials
5. Monitor teacher assistant timetable and student schedules
6. Monitor the school process for identifying and meeting the needs of “at-risk” students.

D. Professional Development:

1. Attend professional conferences, workshops, and in-service training sessions within outside the district.
2. Promote personal growth by conducting or participating in the presentation of school district professional development sessions.
3. Set personal goals.
4. Keep informed on current issues of relevance to the role.
5. Participate in research projects within the system.
6. Evaluate and document student progress

ROLE OF THE TEACHING ASSISTANT:

MUST BE COMMITTED TO INCLUSION AND BELIEVE THAT IT CAN WORK

1. Evaluate and document student progress.
2. Collaborate with classroom teachers to help develop student program or I.E.P.
 - a. Keep anecdotal records or daily logs
 - b. Monitor-supervise use of materials