

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADDITIONAL HIGH COST FUNDING APPLICATION GUIDE

APPLICATION DEADLINES

ROUND 1 OCTOBER 15, 2019
ROUND 2 JANUARY 17, 2020



**First Nations Education Steering Committee
First Nations Schools Association**

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INTRODUCTION

To help address high cost special education needs in First Nations, the FNSA/FNESC reserves a portion of the BC SEP funding to provide services for students whose high cost special needs cannot otherwise be met. This document describes how schools can apply for the reserved funds.

HIGH COST DESCRIPTION

Students who are identified as having a “high cost” exceptionality must have

- Documented evidence that:
 - The student is receiving special education services to address the needs identified in the assessment documentation that are beyond those offered to the general student population and are proportionate to level of need.
 - A current IEP is in place (must be established after September 30, of previous school year with reviews).
 - The IEP has individualized SMART goals.
 - The goals correspond to the category in which the student is identified.
 - The student is being offered learning activities in accordance with the IEP.
 - The IEP outlines methods for measuring progress in relation to the IEP goals.
 - A parent/guardian was involved in the preparation of the IEP.

and meet the criteria for one of the following categories:

LEVEL 1

- Dependent handicapped: (applications must include medical diagnosis, multi-disciplinary assessment showing that the student is completely dependent on others for meeting all major daily living needs.)
 - The student requires assistance at all times for each of the following:
 - feeding; and
 - dressing; and
 - toileting; and
 - mobility; and
 - personal hygiene.
- Students who are Dependent Handicapped often use augmentative devices for communication

LEVEL 2

- Moderate to Severe Intellectual Exceptionality: determined by IQ as indicated on psycho-educational assessment (applications must include a full Educational Psychology assessment)

- To be eligible the following criteria must be met:
 - assessment documentation shows the student’s intellectual functioning is $SS < 60$ *or*
 - assessment documentation shows there are limitations of similar degree in 2 or more adaptive skill areas (appropriate to the student’s age) on a norm referenced measure of adaptive behaviour.

**Note: Every instrument has a measurement error of approximately 5 points, so a student may be identified with a moderate intellectual disability with an overall cognitive score as high as 70 when there are significant deficits in adaptive functioning, but would not be identified with a moderate intellectual disability if scores in two or more adaptive skill areas (appropriate to the student’s age) are not at a similar level.*

- **PHYSICAL EXCEPTIONALITY OR CHRONIC HEALTH:** e.g. FASD, Cerebral Palsy, Fragile X Syndrome, (applications must include medical diagnosis or multi-disciplinary assessment))

- There is documentation of a medical diagnosis in one or more of the following areas
 - Nervous system impairment that impacts movement or mobility; and/or
 - Musculoskeletal condition
 - Chronic health impairment that seriously impacts students’ education and achievement
- Assessment documentation shows that...
 - This student’s functioning and education is significantly affected by his/her physical disability or chronic health impairment and/or
 - The student with complex developmental behaviour conditions, including FASD, exhibits an array of complex needs in two or more domains that significantly impact the student’s education and achievement.

- **VISUALLY IMPAIRED:** i.e. student requires the use of adapted materials such as enlarged print and Braille and/or specialized equipment to gain information from print (applications must include optometrist or ophthalmologist report)
 - A documented report from an ophthalmologist, optometrist, orthoptist, or the Visually Impaired Program at the BC Children's Hospital describes the student's vision impairment as one of the following:
 - a visual acuity of 6/21 (20/70) or less in the better eye after correction; or
 - a visual field of 20 degrees or less; or
 - any progressive eye disease with a prognosis of becoming one of the above within a few years; or
 - a visual problem or related visual stamina that is not correctable that results in the student functioning as if his/ her visual acuity is limited to 6/21 (20/70) or less

- **DEAF/HEARING IMPAIRED:** i.e. student requires the use of hearing aids and/or an FM system (applications must include audiology report)
 - Assessment documentation shows that..
 - The student has a medically diagnosed significant bilateral hearing loss, a unilateral loss with significant speech/language delay, or a cochlear implant (typically documented in a report from a health professional such as an audiologist).
 - Assessment information indicates that the student has substantial educational difficulty due to the hearing loss.

- **AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER EXCEPTIONALITY:** (applications must include medical diagnosis with multi-disciplinary assessment)
 - Documentation of a diagnosis of ASD made by appropriately qualified professionals:
 - BC Autism Assessment Network (BCAAN), or
 - a pediatrician, psychiatrist, or registered psychologist whose assessment meets Standards and Guidelines* and adopted BCAAN policy changes (Sept. 2006).

LEVEL 3

- **SEVERE BEHAVIOUR OR SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS:** (applications must include full educational psychology assessment, behaviour incident documentation and behaviour plan)
 - Documentation includes:
 - a behavioural assessment and/or
 - a mental health assessment
 - The behaviour or mental health assessment indicates evidence of one or both of the following:
 - antisocial, extremely disruptive behaviour in most other environments and consistently/ persistently over time; and/or
 - severe mental illness diagnosed by a mental health professional (psychiatrist, pediatrician, physician, registered psychologist specializing in this area).
 - There is documented evidence that indicates the behaviour
 - places student or others at serious risk and/or
 - interferes with his/her academic progress and that of other students
- **SEVERE COMMUNICATION EXCEPTIONALITY:** (applications must include SLP assessment documentation)
 - There is current documented evidence (within the previous two years) that:
 - The child has a severe delay or disorder involving language
 - The child's speech production is highly unintelligible resulting in functional limitations in effective communication, social participation and academic achievement, individually or in combination
 - A severe delay/disorder involving language is assessed and diagnosed by a speech- language pathologist. The speech language pathologist uses a variety of formal and informal assessment instruments such as standardized tests, checklists, and observational measures, resulting in an interpretive report of the assessment results.

- A child identified with a severe delay/disorder involving language is one who:
 - has been assessed and diagnosed with a severe delay in expressive, receptive or total language or
 - has been assessed and diagnosed with a severe speech sound delay/disorder (phonological, articulation, fluency) AND the child's ability to communicate, socialize and participate in the learning environment is severely impacted as indicated by SLP.

Student Eligibility Criteria

Students must meet the following criteria to be eligible for additional high cost funding:

- On or eligible to be on the Indigenous Services Canada (ISC formerly known as INAC) nominal roll
- Attending a First Nations on-reserve school in BC
- Ordinarily resident on-reserve
- Have a long form Individual Education Plan (IEP) in place

Eligible Activities

The following are eligible expenditures for this funding including but not limited to: additional staff, specialized learning materials, physical accommodations or equipment, and additional assessments to enable students to meet their educational and social needs.

Total Funding Available

For the 2019/2020 school year, \$4,200,000 of SEP funding has been set aside for additional high cost special education.

Unallocated (SEP) Additional Funds

If the student for whom the additional funds are requested leaves the school prior to February 1st, 2020, or if the expenditures for the student are lower than expected, the unused additional funds must be returned to FNSA/FNESC by February 28, 2020. This will enable FNSA/FNESC to reallocate remaining funds in order to accommodate as many applications as possible.

Reporting Requirements

Schools that receive additional High Cost Special Education funding must account for those funds in their annual SEP Final Report due May 22, 2020.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Application deadline: October 15, 2019

Schools must complete the following application form and submit it, along with all required accompanying documents, to the FNEESC/FNSA office or at a Special Education Regional Workshop.

1. A Special Education Review Team will make all funding decisions. A minimum of 3 FNEESC Special Education staff members and a FNSA Board member will be included on the Review Team.
2. Schools that submit approved applications will receive a letter indicating the amount of additional funding allocated, and will also be required to sign a contribution agreement prior to the release of the approved funds.
3. Schools that are not approved for additional funding will also receive a letter. The FNEESC/FNSA Special Education Resource staff will make every effort to assist schools in supporting students for whom funding cannot be approved.

Supporting Documentation Required

The following information/documents are required for all applications:

- Assessment/diagnosis and identification confirmation directly related to the criteria for the identified high cost special education category.
- A completed FNSA/FNEESC Student Individual Education Plan (IEP), including appropriate SMART goals for the student, as well as learning activities to be offered in accordance with the IEP. Template documents are available on the FNEESC and FNSA Special Education web pages.
- Parental consent forms (see the authorization form included with this document).