PART 2: UNIVERSAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESOURCE TEACHERS

# Part 2: Universal Roles and Responsibilities of Resource Teachers

Resource teachers, like all school staff, have a set of professional and personal responsibilities that define the scope of activities within their school-based roles. In this document, the responsibilities that are common to all resource teachers, regardless of the setting in which they work, are referred to as *universal roles.*

One of the primary universal roles of resource teachers is to provide service and support to teachers and students within the context of fostering positive relationships in an inclusive learning environment (see page 7 of Manitoba Education, *Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms*).

When the primary role of the resource teacher in an inclusive school environment focuses on supporting and working with classroom teachers, all students benefit. Resource teacher roles may also include leadership, management, and other resource duties to support teachers and students.

The universal roles and responsibilities of resource teachers represented in the following graphic are discussed in a broad sense in this part of the document. There may be aspects of a resources teacher's current position that are not reflected here.

## Universal Roles and Responsibilities of Resource Teachers
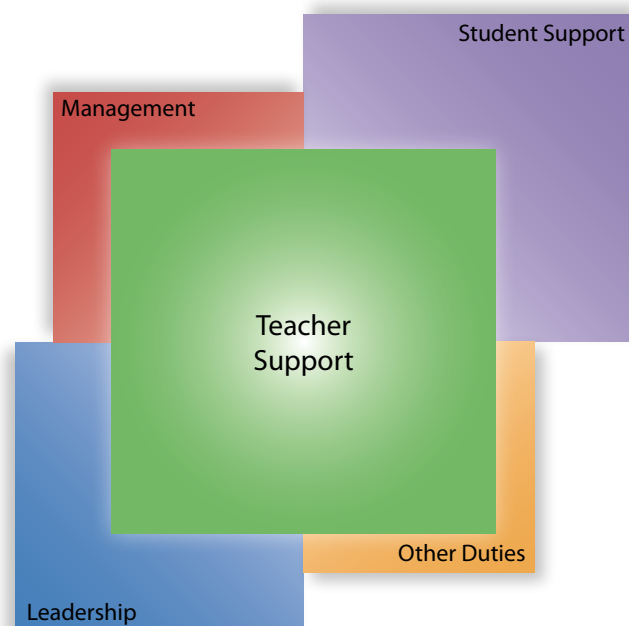
Suggested Resource

Manitoba Education. *Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2011. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/behaviour/index.html>.

Teacher Support

Resource teachers work with classroom teachers to address the diverse learning needs of students in the school by gathering and sharing information, modelling strategies, co-teaching, and supporting the planning for and implementation of appropriate educational programming.
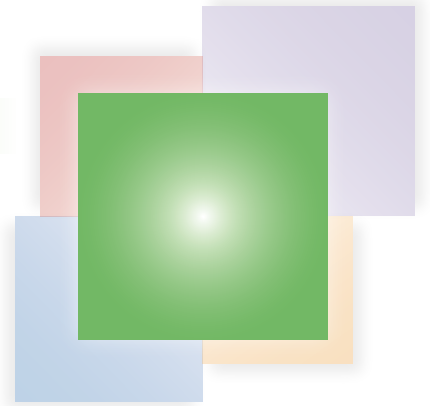
Addressing Diversity

The diversity of student populations demands that teachers use a variety of instructional approaches, rather than a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Teachers need to plan actively for appropriate educational programming that enhances the full participation of students with exceptional learning needs in the classroom.

Providing support to classroom/content area teachers will enable these teachers to address the diverse needs of all their students. The classroom teachers work together with the resource teacher to identify the strengths and needs of the students within the classroom. One way to determine these needs, and to ensure equity of support and services, is to develop a class profile.

> One of the clearest and most important revelations stemming from brain research is that there are no "regular" students. The notion of broad categories of learners—smart, not smart, disabled, not disabled, regular, not regular—is a gross oversimplification that does not reflect reality. By characterizing students in this way, we miss many subtle and important qualities and focus instead on a single characteristic. (Rose, et al. 38)

Class Profile

See Tool 1: Class Profile Template and Tool 2: Class Profile (Sample).

Developing a class profile is a process by which in-school teams meet to determine the classroom context through descriptive information collected about the students within the class. This information, which is usually written on a class profile template or recording form, assists the in-school teams in determining how they might work in meaningful ways with the classroom teacher.

The class profile provides for a more efficient and effective service delivery by determining where supports are needed the most. The strengths and needs of the class as a whole, along with the goals for the year, are written down, as described by the classroom teacher. The needs of individual students are also shared; however, the strengths and needs are seen in the context of the classroom rather than in isolation. In this way, the classroom teacher is able to

plan universally for the entire class, ensuring all students have access to the curriculum. The resource teacher can then plan with the classroom teacher to identify supports, which may include scheduling adult support within the classroom according to the priority of needs in the school.

Programming Support

Through a universal design lens, an inclusive school will provide all students with the supports and opportunities they need to become participating students and members of their school communities. Effective educators use a range of instructional supports to address student diversity.

A discussion of the various instructional supports, including differentiated instruction, adaptations, modification, and individualized programming, follows. See the Glossary at the end of this document for definitions of the terms *differentiated instruction, adaptation, modification,* and *individualized programming.*

Differentiated Instruction

For supporting information, see Appendix 6: Multiple Intelligences and Appendix 7: Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).

Universal design encompasses differentiated instruction, which includes recognizing the student's learning style, multiple intelligences, and social and emotional learning. It also takes into account when adaptations, modification, and individualized programming related to the student's specific needs identified within a class profile may be appropriate. A growing number of Kindergarten to Grade 12 classroom teachers use differentiated instruction, multiple intelligences, and social and emotional learning in their day-to-day teaching practice to meet the diverse needs of all students. The role of the classroom teacher is crucial to the planning for inclusion of all students to access the curriculum.

The first premise of inclusion is that teachers believe in and actively plan for student differences in their classroom/content area by providing differentiated instruction so that all students have an opportunity to succeed in the provincial curriculum. To teach most effectively, teachers take into account whom and what they are teaching. Differentiated instruction, which is responsive instruction, will be sufficient for most students to access the curriculum.

The in-school team may determine that some students may require additional support because of their exceptional learning, social/emotional, behavioural, sensory, physical, cognitive/intellectual, communication, academic, or special health-care needs.

> **Suggested Resource**
>
> Manitoba Education and Training. *Success for All Learners: A Handbook on Differentiating Instruction: A Resource for Kindergarten to Senior 4 Schools.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education and Training, 1996.

Adaptations

All students will benefit from universal strategies and interventions that teachers use to ensure learning within the curriculum. Some students who are in the targeted or intensive population due to learning and/or behaviour challenges may need adaptations to ensure they have equal opportunity to access the curriculum and demonstrate their learning (see Figure 1 on page 4 of *Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms*). These adaptations may include specific instructional strategies, interventions, and/or access to assistive technology.
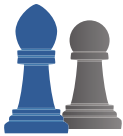
Examples of High- and Low-Tech Assistive Technology

- high-interest/low-vocabulary materials related to the topic/subject being studied in the classroom
- assistive technology
    - word-prediction software, speech-to-text and text-to-speech software, electronic Spell-Checker, iPad applications
    - iPads, Braillers, frequency modulation (FM) systems
    - standing frames, patient lift systems, tennis balls on bottom of chairs, special lined paper, calculators, manipulatives
- augmentative communication devices

Adaptations are used when teaching and assessing in schools to allow students to show the teacher what they understand. Adaptations make it possible to assess the progress of many students using the same criteria as those used with other students. Students should not be penalized for requiring adaptations that allow them to access curricular outcomes. Student-specific adaptations need to be documented to ensure successful strategies are communicated to other educators and to parents.

Adaptations to Provincial Tests

3.3.1 Procedures for Requesting Adaptations
Requests for adaptations are made at the time of registration when entering student data using the web application (*Provincial Test Student Registration*). Adaptations must be requested separately for each student for each test. (Manitoba Education, *Policies and Procedures for Provincial Tests* 5)

When students move to the post-secondary level, it is common for adaptations to be provided. The transition planning process needs to support students in mastering assistive technology and in advocating for themselves to ensure they continue to receive the required adaptations in their post-secondary education.

Suggested Resources

Manitoba Education. *Policies and Procedures for Provincial Tests.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2013. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/assess/docs/pol_proc/>.

———. *Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2011. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/behaviour/index.html>.

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning. *Provincial Test Student Registration (PTSR).* <https://web16.gov.mb.ca/ptsr/login.jsp>.


Modification and Individualized Programming

Some students with an intellectual disability will require additional supports. These supports may include modification or individualized programming dependent on the individual student's needs.

Students who have been diagnosed by a qualified professional as having a significant cognitive disability must have an individual education plan (IEP) that details the significant curriculum modification and implementation plans for their learning experience. Whenever a classroom teacher is addressing the variety of needs in the classroom, a resource teacher may be asked to provide resources and/or materials that supplement the instruction.

A very small number of students will require individualized programming because of their severe or profound cognitive disability and would not benefit from participating in the regular curriculum (although they may certainly benefit from being part of a classroom or school community with their peers). These are students whose IEPs focus on functional skills grouped into domains (see page 39 of *Student-Specific Planning*). Various resources are available to support teachers in developing individualized programming related to functional adaptive domains (e.g., see Downing; Ford, et al.; Oak Hill; Storey and Miner).
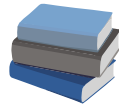
Suggested Resources

Downing, June E. *Academic Instruction for Students with Moderate and Severe Intellectual Disabilities in Inclusive Classrooms.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2010.

Ford, Alison, Roberta Schnorr, Luanna H. Meyer, Linda A. Davern, Jim Black, and Patrick Dempsey. *The Syracuse Community-Referenced Curriculum Guide for Students with Moderate and Severe Disabilities.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 1989.

The Oak Hill Center for Relationship and Sexuality Education. *Positive Choices: A Program on Healthy Relationships, Sexuality, and Safe Boundaries for Secondary Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.* Hartford, CT: Oak Hill, 2009.

Storey, Keith, and Craig Miner. *Systematic Instruction of Functional Skills for Students and Adults with Disabilities.* Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publishers, Ltd., 2011.

For supporting information, see Appendix 8: Student Support Team and Roles.

Many school divisions have student support teams (see page 12 of *Student-Specific Planning*) to ensure that appropriate educational programming is developed for each student's unique strengths and challenges. Student support teams have changing memberships, depending on individual student needs and staff expertise. As a result, roles and responsibilities within individual education planning and appropriate educational programming are flexible. The resource teacher is a valuable member of the student support team, but in some situations, another team member may be responsible for the delivery of programming.

Examples of the Roles of Student Support Team Members

- A school counsellor, psychologist, or social worker may be best suited to provide cognitive-behavioural strategies or develop and monitor a behaviour intervention plan.
- Other specialists/clinicians (e.g., a physiotherapist, speech-language pathologist, reading clinician) may also be involved in developing and/or delivering programming based on student need and the expertise of the person providing the support. The resource teacher may take on the role of monitoring the programming and managing some of the supports. For example, a student may have a student-specific outcome in the IEP developed by the occupational therapist (OT) related to developing fine motor skills (grasp and release). The resource teacher may observe, or the classroom teacher may indicate, that the student is struggling with these skills. It may be necessary for the resource teacher to call the OT to ask for more support related to the task/exercise/activity that was used for the development of the skills. The OT may revise the task/exercise/activity to allow the student more success.

At times, the student support team may need to prioritize the number of outcomes on which a student will be focusing for a given period, in order to address the needs within the school environment. The team will need to come to a consensus about these priorities (see Building Consensus on Priority Learning Needs in Appendix F of Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, *Supporting Inclusive Schools: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Programming for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder*). The resource teacher should meet with the classroom/content area teacher to determine which outcomes can be addressed within the classroom instructional setting and which require a different setting. A teacher's schedule/daily planner is often used to ensure the student's needs are addressed on a regularly scheduled basis.

See Tool 3: Daily Plan (Sample).

Suggested Resources

Manitoba Education. *Student-Specific Planning: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs).* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2010. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/iep/>.

Manitoba Education and Training. *Towards Inclusion: A Handbook for Individualized Programming Designation, Senior Years: A Resource for Senior Years Schools.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education and Training, 1995. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/individu/index.html>.

———. *Towards Inclusion: A Handbook for Modified Course Designation, Senior 1–4: A Resource for Senior Years Schools.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education and Training, 1995. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/modified/index.html>.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Supporting Inclusive Schools: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Programming for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2005. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/aut/>.

Data-Informed Decision Making

Using school-based data to inform comprehensive services increases efficiency and effectiveness. Thoughtful planning is needed to ensure that the services provide information and support that are relevant to defined purposes. There are many ways to gather data about the needs of a specific school community.

In recent years, the education community has witnessed increased interest in data-driven decision making (DDDM)—making it a mantra of educators from the central office, to the school, to the classroom. DDDM in education refers to teachers, principals, and administrators systematically collecting and analyzing various types of data, including input, process, outcome and satisfaction data, to guide a range of decisions to help improve the success of students and schools. (Marsh, Pane, and Hamilton 1)

Examples of Ways to Gather Data

- informal conversations with students, parents, and staff
- structured interviews
- needs assessments, surveys, or questionnaires (e.g., Grades 3, 7, 8, and 12 provincial assessment results, *Early Development Instrument, Tell Them From Me School Surveys,* "Youth Health Surveillance: Youth Health Survey 2012")
- review of student records

Suggested Resources

Healthy Child Manitoba. *Early Development Instrument (EDI).* <www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/edi/index.html>.

————. *"Healthy Schools Grant." Healthy Schools.* <www.gov.mb.ca/healthyschools/hsgrant/index.html>.

The Learning Bar. *Tell Them From Me School Surveys.* <www.thelearningbar.com/>.

Partners in Planning for Healthy Living. "Youth Health Surveillance: Youth Health Survey 2012." *Tools.* <http://partners.healthincommon.ca/tools-and-resources/youth-health-survey/>.

Resource teachers, like all classroom teachers, plan their learning activities and make strategic professional choices based on their training and their knowledge of human development in general and the needs of individual students in particular. They use all available data to make structural and student-based programming decisions.

Resource teachers are part of a broader delivery system designed to enhance the success of all learners. In supporting classroom/content area teachers, the resource teacher may be expected to coach, mentor, collaborate with, consult with, or co-teach with the classroom/content area teachers to facilitate instructional strategies that will enable students to be successful.

School-based data and feedback can serve to

- determine students' needs for programming and services
- determine the kinds of supports teachers need (e.g., consultation about individual students, skills for effective communication with parents, interpretation of assessment data, class profiles to determine support and service priorities)
- support the needs of parents (e.g., workshops on parenting, student-focused conferences on learning and behavioural issues)

- assist administrative decision makers in recognizing the need for change in policy, practice, or programming, including selecting a service delivery model or a combination of models and making possible adjustments to the responsibilities or time allotments related to the role of resource teachers

- assist all educational partners in understanding the benefits of current services and supports in combination with other services and supports provided by the school and community

- provide data that supports school and school division priorities

When resource teachers are supporting classroom teachers, it is important for them to work within the parameters of the identified service delivery model(s) of the school division/school. Students benefit when resource teachers support classroom teachers through leadership, management, or other resource functions.

Reflection Question

How can I help a teacher include a student with special learning needs in all classroom learning activities?

A resource teacher may be asked to coach, mentor, collaborate with, consult with, or co-teach with the classroom/content area teacher to facilitate instructional strategies that will enable the student to be successful.

A resource teacher could

- support collaborative and consultative approaches to decision making, team planning, scheduling, and programming

- assist the classroom teacher in developing a class profile to ensure that all the diverse needs of the students are taken into account as the teacher plans lessons

See Tool 1: Class Profile Template and Tool 2: Class Profile (Sample).

- assist the classroom teacher in incorporating a universal approach when working with the students in the classroom

- work with the classroom teacher in a co-teaching partnership to address the needs of students and to provide students with a variety of approaches to teaching the lesson

- provide material and resources that have a broad level of readability and access to support the topic being discussed in the classroom

Supporting students begins with supporting the teacher(s). Ideally, the resource teacher and classroom teacher work together to identify and meet student needs.
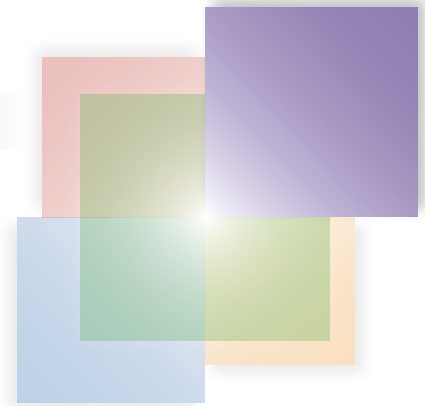
The Student Profile

See Tool 4: Student Profile (Sample Form).

A student profile provides a comprehensive and concise written description of the student's current level(s) of performance, and serves as a reference for the student support team in determining the student's strengths and priority learning needs. If a student has not had a student profile developed, the team will need to collect data about the student's past and current level(s) of performance. If a student has an existing profile, the in-school team may need to revise it, and may include other team members to expand the understanding of the student's needs. The resulting individual education planning process is based on a solid understanding of the student and is grounded in the student's profile.

> Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning. (Huba and Freed 8)
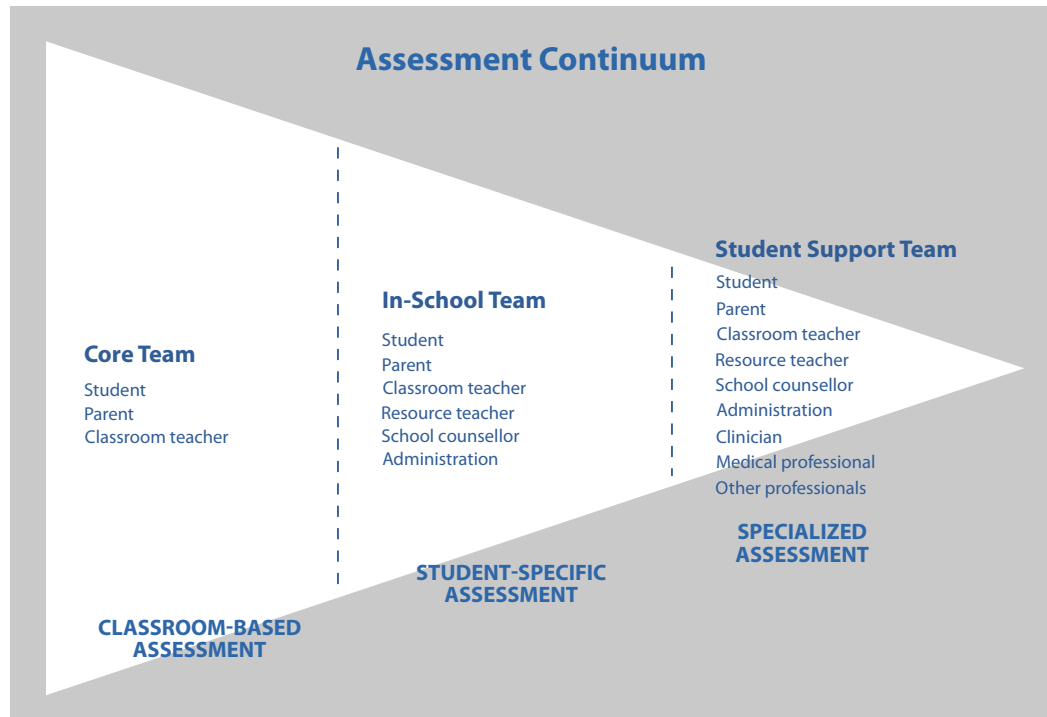
Suggested Resource

Earl, Lorna, Steven Katz, and Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education (WNCP). *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind: Assessment for Learning, Assessment as Learning, Assessment of Learning.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2006. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/assess/wncp/index.html>.

Collecting Data and Conducting Assessments

In developing or revising the student profile, the student support team will begin by collecting and reviewing all available data. A review of the cumulative file and the pupil support file is a good starting point before initiating further assessment.

As reflected in the following illustration, the assessment process starts with the information gathered through classroom-based assessment by the core team.

Assessment Continuum

Core Team

Student
Parent
Classroom teacher

In-School Team

Student
Parent
Classroom teacher
Resource teacher
School counsellor
Administration

Student Support Team

Student
Parent
Classroom teacher
Resource teacher
School counsellor
Administration
Clinician
Medical professional
Other professionals

SPECIALIZED ASSESSMENT

STUDENT-SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT

CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT

Classroom-Based Assessment

The classroom teacher is responsible for collecting evidence of the student's strengths and needs through a variety of informal and formal assessments. All teachers use multiple types of informal and formal formative and summative assessment information to assist with a variety of educational decisions. They use the results of these assessments to help identify students' learning strengths and needs and to develop and implement instructional strategies.

School divisions shall:
- use assessment results to guide programming decisions (MR 155/05)

(Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, *Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: Standards for Student Services* 13)

It is important that classroom teachers have tried a variety of instructional strategies, such as differentiated instruction and adaptations, prior to requesting assistance from the resource teacher. Many school divisions/schools have a process or checklists in place to ensure teachers have tried different ways to teach the student.

If differentiated instruction and adaptations have been implemented and appear to be insufficient to assist a student in meeting expected learning outcomes, the teacher may ask the in-school team to provide additional support or may consult with the resource teacher to determine whether the student requires student-specific assessment.

In some schools, a formal referral process to the resource teacher may be required; in other schools, the referral process may be less formal. Educators need to be aware of the processes and procedures to access support in their school or school division.

Student-Specific Assessment

The resource teacher analyzes the data received from the classroom teacher to determine what additional information about the student is needed. The first step is to gather this additional information. The resource teacher observes the identified student to collect additional data that will inform the decision about the need for interventions and programming, such as further differentiated instruction strategies and/or adaptations.

Assessment

4(1) A principal must ensure that a pupil is assessed as soon as reasonably practicable if he or she is having difficulty meeting the expected learning outcomes.

(Manitoba, *Appropriate Educational Programming Regulation 155/2005*)

For supporting information, see Appendix 9: Ecological Inventory and Appendix 10: Functional Behavioural Assessment (FBA).

The resource teacher should arrange for a convenient time with the classroom teacher(s) to collect the data through observation of the student. The resource teacher may also select other methods for acquiring this information. This process may include using informal tests, error analysis as the student does a specific task, interviews, surveys, or other data-gathering techniques such as checklists, an informal reading inventory, an ecological inventory, a functional behavioural assessment, and so on.

The resource teacher and classroom teacher(s) meet after their observations of the student to discuss the data collected and to begin planning the next steps, which may involve

- further testing by the resource teacher
- pre-referral consultation with a clinician to provide additional strategies, to do an observation of the student, or to determine whether a formal assessment referral needs to be started
- developing strategies/interventions to be tried in the classroom
- planning co-teaching with the classroom teacher

- recommending adaptations (e.g., assistive technology, specialized material) to support the student

- providing direct support to the student in the classroom or in a small-group pullout or a one-on-one pullout for a short period of time for a specific purpose (e.g., speech therapy, social skills group, Reading Recovery, life skills programming)

- developing and implementing an IEP (see *Student-Specific Planning*)

If further assessment is required, the resource teacher could administer those assessments that he or she is qualified to administer, score the selected tests according to standardized procedures indicated in the instruction booklet for test administration, and provide an accurate interpretation of the information to the student support team. This may include knowing when to question the usual interpretation of a procedure because of intervening or mitigating circumstances.

> It is the responsibility of the test administrator to determine whether he or she is qualified to administer a specific test.

Resource teachers conduct formal and informal assessments of behaviour, learning, achievement, and environments within the classroom or other setting to

- design learning experiences that support the growth and development of individuals with exceptional learning needs

- identify supports and adaptations required for individuals with exceptional learning needs to access the curriculum and to participate in school-based and provincial assessments

- monitor the progress of individuals with identified learning needs who are working on regular curriculum outcomes and those who are working on student-specific outcomes identified in their IEPs

- identify and use appropriate technologies

- assist the classroom teacher(s) to adjust instruction in response to the ongoing learning process

Students may have diverse needs that require specific expertise. As professionals, resource teachers should recognize their boundaries of competence and deliver only those services and use only those techniques for which they are qualified by training or experience.

Resource teachers should understand

- the policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment related to referral and instruction of individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

- measurement theory and practices for addressing issues of validity, reliability, norms, bias, and interpretation of assessment results
- that there are three levels of tests typically designated by psychological test distributors (Levels A, B, and C). These levels correspond with the test user qualifications required to purchase a particular test or product. Resource teachers need to be aware of what they are qualified to administer.

Specialized Assessment

Once the in-school team has implemented a variety of strategies and adaptations based on classroom and student-specific assessment data, and the student continues to have difficulty meeting expected learning outcomes, referral for specialized assessment may be considered. The purpose of a specialized assessment is to explore further the reasons why the student continues to struggle to meet expected learning outcomes and to assist the student support team to develop appropriate programming.

Once it is determined that the student requires additional specialized support or assessment by a divisional support person, such as a clinician (e.g., psychologist, speech-language pathologist), or by a behaviour support person, then the process used in the school division/school is followed. It is important that parents have agreed in written form to the referral.

Assessment

4(2) A principal must ensure a pupil is referred for a specialized assessment if the pupil's teacher and resource teacher, guidance counsellor or other applicable in-school personnel are

  (a) unable to assess why the pupil is having difficulty meeting those outcomes; or

  (b) of the opinion that differentiated instruction and adaptations are insufficient to assist the pupil in meeting those outcomes.

4(3) A principal must ensure that the pupil's parent is informed before the pupil is referred for a specialized assessment, and no interviewing or testing as part of the assessment may occur without the parent's consent.

(Manitoba, *Appropriate Educational Programming Regulation 155/2005*)

Whenever specialized assessments are undertaken, the test administrator shares the results with the student's parents and school team using jargon-free language, ensuring that they understand the information. Schools may use an interpreter for parents for whom English is not the first language, to ensure they understand the information and have opportunities to ask for clarification.

The recommendations written in the assessment report need to be shared with the appropriate member(s) of the student support team. This information is then incorporated into the student's IEP, as appropriate. If it is determined that outside divisional referral is required (e.g., to a medical practitioner, hearing or vision specialist, mental health professional), the referral would come from the parents. It is the role of the school or the resource teacher to inform the parents about these services and to assist parents in accessing them.

Many students with exceptional learning needs have been assessed prior to coming to school, and the assessments from the intake meeting provide initial information to develop the student's profile when developing an IEP.

> **Suggested Resources**
>
> Manitoba. *Appropriate Educational Programming Regulation 155/2005.* Winnipeg, MB: Queen's Printer, 2005. Available online at <http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=155/2005>.
>
> Manitoba Education. *Student-Specific Planning: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs).* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2010. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/iep/>.

Communicating with Parents

Parents play a primary role in the lives of students. Collaboration with parents is in the best interest of students; therefore, it is a key component of the resource teacher's role when supporting students.

Communicating Student Progress

Classroom teachers provide parents with information about student progress in many ways, both formally and informally, such as by telephone calls, emails, school-home communication books, or other communication processes set up by the school.

Another way teachers communicate student progress to parents is through Manitoba's provincial report card. The primary purpose of this report card is to communicate formally to parents at certain points

> Students will feel safe when they see the adults from the two parts of their lives—school and home—come together to focus on their interests. When teachers and parents communicate regularly and work collaboratively, they are more likely to develop a degree of trust. Then, if a concern arises, they are more inclined to respect and support each other. (Manitoba Education, *Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms* 13)

of time in their children's growth and achievement as learners. The provincial report card forms one part of a communication system. It formally documents and communicates the student's summative achievement to parents.

Classroom teachers use a variety of effective instructional practices to ensure students meet curricular expectations. They record student progress through a variety of grading and reporting processes.

Suggested Resources

Manitoba Education. *Manitoba Provincial Report Card Policy and Guidelines: Partners for Learning, Grades 1 to 12.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2013. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/assess/docs/report_card/index.html>.

———. *Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2011. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/behaviour/index.html>.

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning. "Provincial Parent-Friendly Report Card Initiative." *Assessment and Evaluation.* <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/assess/report_cards/index.html>.

Developing Strong Working Relationships

Educators seek to develop relationships with parents based on respect for their respective roles. Positive working relationships usually develop when the educator strives to

- develop effective communication with parents, avoiding jargon
- seek and use parents' knowledge and expertise in planning
- maintain communication between parents and professionals
- recognize and respect individual and community diversity

Different opinions are a natural part of working relationships. From time to time, these differences can lead to disagreements or even disputes. This in itself is neither positive nor negative. It is the way individuals choose to handle differences that can lead to positive or negative outcomes. When people try to solve problems in a fair and cooperative way, they are able to resolve differences positively. This, in turn, helps build a positive environment in schools. Everyone benefits from a positive school environment, and students benefit the most.

Working together to create the kind of environment where disagreements do not become disputes is a worthwhile goal. It is important to keep in mind, however, that dispute resolution is not about avoiding dispute at all costs. When individuals look for positive approaches to resolving disputes, they are creating opportunities to build strong working relationships.

If there is a need for a formal process to review issues, the school principal or school division administration should be involved. If child protection issues are involved, other processes are necessary (see Manitoba Family Services and Housing, *Child Protection and Child Abuse Manual*).

Suggested Resources

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: A Formal Dispute Resolution Process.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2006. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/aep/>.

———. *Working Together: A Guide to Positive Problem Solving for Schools, Families, and Communities.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2004. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/problem_solving/index.html>.

———. *Working Together: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs in School.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2004. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/parent/handbook.html>.

Manitoba Family Services and Housing. *Child Protection and Child Abuse Manual: Protocols for School Division Staff.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Family Services and Housing, 2003. Available on the Provincial Advisory Committee on Child Abuse (PACCA) website at <www.pacca.mb.ca/pdf/school_division_protocol.pdf>.

Advocating for Students

Along with parents, educators take on the important role of advocating for students. The resource teacher works with students, school principals, teachers, clinicians, parents, and the community to advocate for positive solutions to emerging concerns and difficult situations or academic needs. These concerns and situations may range from relatively minor issues to serious decision making about programming, setting/placement, coursework, transitions, and life choices.

Some students require additional support to help them advocate for themselves until they have developed sufficient skills to adovocate for themselves independently. Part of the resource teacher's role is to work with parents, students, and other educators to support students in developing increasing responsibility, decision-making skills, and independence, including understanding of personal needs and strengths to succeed in life.

> **Suggested Resources**
>
> Employment and Social Development Canada. *Literacy and Essential Skills*. <www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/les/index.shtml>.
>
> National LifeWork Center. *Blueprint for LifeWork Design*. <www.lifework.ca/lifework/blueprint.html>.
>
> Stewart, Debra, Matt Freeman, Cheryl Missiuna, Jan Burke Gaffney, Lorie Shimmell, Salina Jaffer, and Peter Rosenbaum. *The KIT: Keeping it Together for Youth (the Youth KIT)*. Hamilton, ON: *CanChild* Centre for Childhood Disability Research, McMaster University, 2010. Available online at <http://canchild.ca/en/canchildresources/youth_kit.asp>.
>
> This resource helps youth to provide, obtain, and organize their own information as they transition to adulthood.

Advocating for Student Voice and Choice

Both student voice and choice help involve learners actively in their education and in the life of their school.

- *Student voice* refers to the opportunities students have to express their opinions and have their opinions heard and considered.

- *Student choice* refers to the opportunities students have to make decisions affecting their life and learning in school.

Educators have a role in ensuring students are provided with opportunities to have both voice and choice as part of their school experience (see pages 6, 25, and 26 of Manitoba Education, *Engaging Middle Years Students in Learning: Transforming Middle Years Education in Manitoba*).

> **Suggested Resource**
>
> Manitoba Education. *Engaging Middle Years Students in Learning: Transforming Middle Years Education in Manitoba*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2010. <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/my_foundation/>.

Planning for Various Transitions

Resource teachers are often members of student support teams when planning for the various transitions throughout the schooling of students with exceptional learning needs. When acting as case managers for particular students, they play a lead role in the transition process.

All students experience many transitional periods throughout their schooling, such as

- transition from community to school
- transitions between grades in the same school
- transitions between schools
- transition from school to community

A discussion of these transitions follows.

Transition from Community to School

All school divisions will have a process for a student's school entry; however, the specifics of the process may vary from one school to another. Some typical components of the school-entry process are

- welcoming parents
- visiting the school
- meeting the teacher
- providing information on services
- assessing student readiness

As their child's first teachers, parents have an understanding and a knowledge of their child's abilities/performance, preferences/interests, strengths, and needs. They are a vital resource and should be included in the initial intake meetings.

Sometimes students with exceptional learning needs have been involved in day cares, in early childhood centres, with outside agencies, and so on. These organizations will have information about the student that is valuable to share with the receiving school. Provincial guidelines are available to assist student support teams in gathering the information prior to the student's school entry.

Suggested Resources

Healthy Child Manitoba. *Education and Child and Family Services Protocol for Children and Youth in Care.* Winnipeg, MB: Healthy Child Manitoba, May 2013. Available online at <www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/publications/>.

———. *Guidelines for Early Childhood Transition to School for Children with Special Needs.* Winnipeg, MB: Healthy Child Manitoba, Sept. 2002. Available online at <www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/publications/>.

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning. "Student Services Information for Parents." *Student Services/Special Education.* <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/parent/index.html>.

Transitions between Grades in the Same School

School divisions/schools may use a variety of processes for sharing information among teachers when students transition between grades in the same school. Some Manitoba schools use the class profile as a starting point for discussion. Others have informal or formal meetings to share information. Resource teachers need to be knowledgeable about the processes used in their school division/school.

Transitions between Schools

In many school divisions, students are required to make a transition from one school to another as they progress through the grades. Some students will remain in the same school throughout Kindergarten to Grade 12.

For students with exceptional learning needs, and for their families, the transition from a familiar setting to a new school setting can be anxiety provoking and stressful. The resource teacher may need to arrange visits to the new setting throughout the year preceding the transition to relieve the anxiety of the student and the parents. These visits should be planned during IEP, intake, and/or transition meetings, as appropriate. In addition, the resource teacher may arrange a transition meeting so that the sending school and the receiving school can share information about the student's ability/performance, preferences/interests, and strengths/needs prior to the transition. Some schools develop social stories for the student and parents to read over the summer to ease the transition. These social stories may include topics such as lockers, lunch area, recess, classroom structure, and so on (see Chapter 5, page 8, of *Supporting Inclusive Schools: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Programming for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder*).

> **Suggested Resource**
>
> Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Supporting Inclusive Schools: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Programming for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2005. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/aut/>.

Transition from School to Community

The process of planning the transition from school to community needs to be initiated as soon as students with exceptional learning needs enter high school or are between 14 and 16 years of age. Students are the central members of the student support team in the transition planning process. Plans for the student's transition should be documented in the student's IEP. Case managers should follow the same process in transition planning as in planning the IEP.

Transition planning also includes

- scheduling and facilitating transition planning meetings
- determining graduation dates together with the student and parents
- determining members of the student support team, in consultation with the student and parents
- helping the student and parents find services and resources available in the community
- supporting parents to ensure that appropriate referrals are made to the necessary adult support programs

At times, transition planning may involve long-term creative planning with community members/businesses/organizations. This planning may make it possible for the student with exceptional learning needs to remain within the community in which he or she is living and function as an active member of this community.

Graduation Requirements

Successful completion of one of the following school Programs is required to earn a Manitoba high school diploma:

- Senior Years English Program
- Senior Years Technology Education Program
- Senior Years Français Program
- Senior Years French Immersion Program

If students have significant cognitive disabilities that do not allow them to meet the Manitoba curricular outcomes, even with supports, the school team determines that these students' courses will be modified and they will receive a **modified (M)** course designation. The M course designation is to be applied on an individual course basis to those courses developed or approved by Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning. Modification means that the number or content of the Manitoba curricular outcomes are changed to meet a student's cognitive learning needs. Modifications need to be outlined in an IEP and identified on the student's report card. Students receive marks according to their achievement of the modified curricular outcomes and receive a Manitoba high school diploma upon meeting graduation requirements.

Some students' cognitive disabilities are so severe that they require learning outcomes that are individualized and different than the Manitoba curricular outcomes. The student's specific outcomes or goals should be outlined in an IEP. The **individualized (I)** programming designation is not course-specific but identifies a full year of individualized programming. Students do not receive marks; their progress is documented through the IEP process, and they receive an Individualized Senior Years Program: Certificate of Completion.

Students receiving an I programming designation in high school will receive a certificate of completion upon leaving school at the time indicated in their individual transition plans. For more information, see *Graduation Requirements* (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning).

Copies of the Individualized Senior Years Program: Certificate of Completion (stock number 72501) can be ordered from the Manitoba Text Book Bureau.

Suggested Resources

Healthy Child Manitoba. *Bridging to Adulthood: A Protocol for Transitioning Students with Exceptional Needs from School to Community.* Winnipeg, MB: Healthy Child Manitoba, Mar. 2008. Available on the Healthy Child Manitoba website at <www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/publications/> and on the Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/policy/transition/>.

———. "Interactive Roles and Time Lines in Transition Planning—Chart." *Transition Protocol.* Available on the Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/policy/transition/web/chart.pdf>.

———. *Working Together: A Parent's Guide to Transition from School to Community.* Winnipeg, MB: Healthy Child Manitoba, Apr. 2010. Available on the Healthy Child Manitoba website at <www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/publications/> and on the Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/parents/transition/index.html>.

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning. *Graduation Requirements.* <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/policy/grad_require.html>.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Focus on the Future: A Parent and Student Guide to Senior Years Graduation Requirements.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2008. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/parents/grad/>.

Manitoba Education, Training and Youth. *Towards Inclusion: A Handbook for Individualized Programming Designation, Senior Years: A Resource for Senior Years Schools.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, 1995. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/individu/index.html>.

———. *Towards Inclusion: A Handbook for Modified Course Designation, Senior 1–4: A Resource for Senior Years Schools.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, 1995. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/modified/index.html>.

Manitoba Text Book Bureau. Home Page. <www.mtbb.mb.ca/>.

Reflection Questions

What are some strategies to assist a student who is non-verbal to have a voice and choice in his or her educational programming?

Just because students are unable to speak does not mean they have nothing to say. Communication is a basic human need; therefore, students with limited or no speech still have the same communication needs as the others in the class. Resource teachers and members of the student support team need to work to find an effective communication strategy.

Communicating allows students to connect with others, make decisions that affect their lives, express their feelings, and feel part of the community in which they live. Therefore, a student who is non-verbal or minimally verbal should be given many opportunities throughout the day to have voice and choice in educational programming.

A first step may be asking parents how they give their child a voice and allow choice making in the home setting. The resource teacher may want to involve the speech-language pathologist to help determine which type of assistive technology and/or augmentative communication device or approach would be appropriate for a student's needs. A teacher could record the voices of peers onto the student's augmentative communication device rather than recording an adult's voice. It would be important to ensure the parents of the peers involved with the recording are aware of the purpose of the recording. The resource teacher should check school and school division policy related to recording of student voices.

A speech-language pathologist may also be of assistance to the student support team in determining how the student who is non-verbal or minimally verbal can make choices throughout the day. Many teachers use augmentative communication devices to allow students to make preferred choices.

When should a student be involved in the student-specific planning process?

Students should be involved in the student-specific planning process as early as possible. Student participation in the planning process is largely dependent on the creativity of the student support team in finding ways to engage the student.

In general, allowing students to have a voice in the planning process results in the students learning a skill that will benefit them long term. Students who are involved with the planning process learn to advocate for what works for them to be successful in both school and post-school environments.

Leadership

Resource teachers have a leadership role in the implementation of the student service delivery model(s) within the school setting. They provide leadership by staying current in the field of student services to assist and support the school community in understanding and promoting inclusive educational practices.
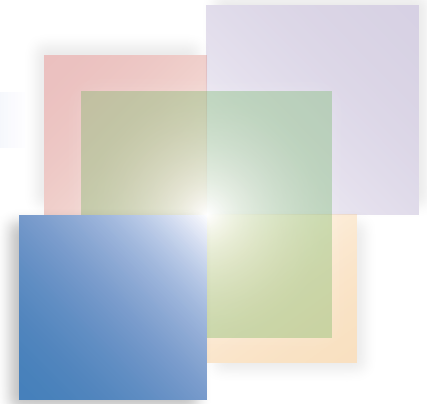
Engaging in and Providing Professional Learning

Resource teachers are often involved both in providing others with professional learning (through sharing information related to current issues in personal/social, educational, and transitional planning) and in engaging in professional learning opportunities for themselves.

Personal Professional Growth

To stay current with teaching practices and with issues affecting children, youth, and families, it is important for resource teachers to engage regularly in professional learning.

One strategy for pursuing professional growth is to become a member of teaching associations that provide resources and professional learning opportunities.

- Organizations such as The Manitoba Teachers' Society (MTS), Manitoba Association of Resource Teachers (MART), Manitoba Council for Exceptional Children (MCEC), and Student Services Administrators' Association of Manitoba (SSAAM) offer workshops, resources, and materials that are helpful to resource teachers.
- Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning provides extensive resources, consultation, and professional learning opportunities.
- Many resource teachers have pursued further education and training to complete a professional certificate.

Suggested Resource

For more information regarding professional certification, see:

Manitoba Education. *A Handbook for Certified Professional School Personnel in Manitoba.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Nov. 2009. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/profcert/handbook.html>.

Professional Learning for Building Capacity

Often school divisions/schools invest time and resources to ensure that resource teachers have up-to-date professional learning opportunities, with the expectation that they will share this training with other staff members within their school division/school. At times, resource teachers will be expected to take a

> The resource teacher must be an experienced and knowledgeable teacher who can provide leadership to help build teacher capacity for utilizing differentiated pedagogical strategies in the classroom. (AuCoin and Porter)

leadership role in the school community. These resource teachers establish and maintain an ongoing professional relationship with school staff, clinicians, and other service providers who work with students in the school. Educational planning and ancillary services are coordinated in the best interest of the students. Colleagues can offer encouragement and advice related to students' identified needs.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Resource teachers are important members of the school team, and in this capacity may lead the team toward effective overall management of inclusive initiatives. In this role, resource teachers may be requested to organize PLCs. These PLCs may involve book studies, opportunities to learn through a presentation on live streaming or in webinars, and/or information-sharing sessions related to a topic of professional study. Many schools divisions use part of their monthly staff meetings to focus on a topic for a PLC. Sometimes these sessions are voluntary and could be held over the lunch hour with a bag-lunch theme or after school with a dine-and-discuss focus.

Suggested Resource

Ciurysek, Sandra, Sheri Handsaeme, Lisa Palko, Sherri Sterling, and Warren Toth. *Professional Learning Communities: A Literature Synopsis.* Coordinated/ed. by David Townsend and Pam Adams, University of Lethbridge. Available on the Alberta Education website at <https://education.alberta.ca/apps/aisi/literature/pdfs/FINAL_Professional_Learning_Communities.pdf>.

School-Based or School Division-Based Committees

The resource teacher could be asked to be part of a school-based and/or a school division-based committee. As a school-based committee member, the resource teacher may be in that position as a staff member, and may or may not be there because of his or her resource role. On a school division-based committee, the participants will be chosen based on the need for a particular area of expertise within that committee's function. When a resource teacher is approached to be part of a committee outside the school, the principal should be informed.

Information about Access to Services

Communities offer a wide range of resources that are valuable to schools and the families they serve. These resources include people who volunteer their time in the school, organizations that offer enrichment opportunities, businesses that offer career-related information and workplace experiences, and agencies that provide various social services for students and families.

Individual school divisions will have access to different services within their community; therefore, resource teachers may need to investigate and develop a list of services available in the community. It may also be beneficial to clarify the classroom teacher's role in providing the student support team with information that may lead to referring students to external or internal services.

Suggested Resource

CONTACT Community Information. *Manitoba's Community Resource Data Warehouse.* <www.contactmb.org/>.

As a program of Volunteer Manitoba, CONTACT's data warehouse is a source of information to the broad spectrum of community services available throughout Manitoba.

Reflection Question

How does the resource teacher's leadership role support teachers?

The primary role of the resource teacher should focus on supporting classroom teachers. When the classroom teacher is supported, the students are supported and will be receiving appropriate educational programming. In the leadership role, the resource teacher provides information and resources to ensure the classroom teacher builds capacity in the area of a student's identified needs.

The in-school team may determine that some students may require additional support because of exceptional learning, social/emotional, behavioural, sensory, physical, cognitive/intellectual, communication, academic, or special health-care needs. The resource teacher may provide the classroom teacher with the necessary information about these students in order to plan appropriate educational programming. The resource teacher should be aware of which information the classroom teacher already has and build on this understanding. If the resource teacher has an opportunity to co-teach with the classroom teacher, the resource teacher can model various co-teaching approaches.

One of the goals for resource teachers is to ensure that each strategy suggested to classroom teachers has been researched, is evidence based, and supports appropriate educational programming within the classroom/school. It is important to take the current practice of the classroom teacher into account and build on this practice.

Management

Management is another important role of resource teachers that supports classroom teachers and students. The management responsibilities of resource teachers may include

- acting as case managers
- planning meetings
- collecting and using data to inform school-based and/or student-based decisions
- writing reports and funding applications
- maintaining records and pupil files
- managing resources
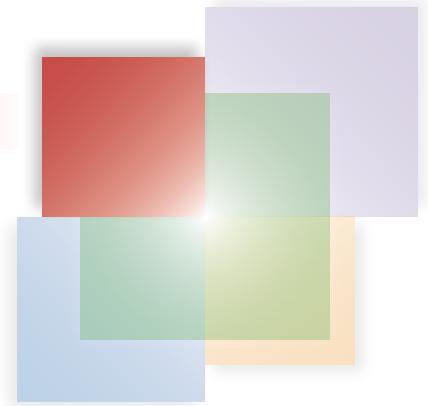
Case Management

At times, the resource teacher may be expected to undertake the role of case manager (see page 35 of *Student-Specific Planning*).

An effective case manager displays the following characteristics:

- strong organizational and records-management skills
- strong interpersonal and communication skills
- critical thinking skills
- knowledge of and ability to develop positive relationships with community resources
- ability to empower students, parents, and/or caregivers
- strong educational values
- strong self-awareness

Any member of the student support team can play the role of case manager. It may be the person who knows the student the best or who has a positive relationship with the student and his or her family.

A case manager is assigned to facilitate the student-specific planning process.

Student-Specific Planning (Individual Education Plans)

Student-specific planning is the process through which members of student support teams, including educators, parents, and students (as appropriate), collaborate to meet the unique needs of individual students (see Chapter 3 of *Student-Specific Planning*). The purpose of student-specific planning is to help students attain the skills and knowledge that are the next logical step beyond their current levels of performance.

During the student-specific planning process and the development of a student's IEP, the case manager oversees the work of the student support team. Responsibilities of case managers generally include

School division should:

4. Require principals to designate a case manager and ensure that IEPs are developed with the assistance of the teacher and other in-school personnel (MR 155/05).

(Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, *Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: Standards for Student Services* 16)

- coordinating the development and ongoing revision of the IEP

- facilitating group decision making

- maintaining communication among team members, including parents

- ensuring that a process to monitor student progress and achievement is established

- organizing and chairing student-specific planning meetings

- distributing a written and timed agenda prior to meetings

- ensuring that meeting minutes are kept and distributed

- documenting and distributing revisions of the IEP

- initiating and maintaining contact with external agencies as required

For supporting information, see Appendix 11: Conducting a Variety of Meetings and Appendix 12: Conducting a Student-Specific Planning Meeting.

An effective team strives for consensus throughout the student-specific planning process. Meaningful agreement means that team members see themselves as respected participants in the planning process and are committed to the part they will play in implementing the student's IEP.

The student support team may meet formally to review a student's educational programming on dates identified in the IEP. These dates often correspond with school reporting periods. The frequency and timing of meetings, as well as the number of team members required at a given meeting, vary according to the needs of each student.

Planning for Behaviour

At times, the resource teacher may be assigned the role of case manager or team member for a student with emotional/behavioural challenges. As members of the school community, resource teachers share a responsibility to work with others to provide safe schools where all students feel respected and can reach their full potential.

Resilience research provides powerful evidence that "caring relationships, positive expectation messages and beliefs, and opportunities for participation and contribution" foster resilience and support students' healthy development and success in learning (Benard).

When schools develop caring relationships not only between educators and students, but also among students, among educators, between educators and parents, and between principals and staff, a safe and inclusive classroom climate is created (see Figure 2 on page 8 of *Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms*).

As a case manager or team member for a student experiencing behavioural challenges, a resource teacher may be in a position to support other members of the student support team as they work to develop positive, caring relationships with the student and his or her family. The resource teacher may also be in a position of needing to advocate on behalf of or alongside the student and/or his or her family to find opportunities for the student to participate in and contribute to the safe and caring school community.

To discuss classroom-based student behaviour or individual student behaviour, see Tool 5: The 30-Minute Behaviour Intervention Meeting (Sample).

At times, short, frequent problem-solving meetings are of benefit to the student support team working to implement an IEP related to behaviour (also known as a *behaviour intervention plan*). The 30-minute behaviour-intervention meeting often assists the student support team members in staying positive and proactive as they work toward implementing specific strategies and arriving at solutions by the end of the meeting.

> **Suggested Resource**
>
> Benard, Bonnie. "A Perspective on Resilience." *Tribes Learning Community.* <http://tribes.com/about/perspective-on-resilience/>.

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning provides a continuum of supports and services through a variety of resources for schools, families, and communities related to creating and sustaining safe and caring schools.

Suggested Resources

Manitoba Education. *Student-Specific Planning: A Handbook for Developing and Implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs).* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2010. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/iep/>.

———. *Towards Inclusion: Supporting Positive Behaviour in Manitoba Classrooms.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, 2011. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/behaviour/index.html>.

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning. *Safe and Caring Schools.* <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/safe_schools/index.html>.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: Standards for Student Services.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2006. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/aep/>.

Manitoba Education, Training and Youth. *Towards Inclusion: From Challenges to Possibilities: Planning for Behaviour.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, 2001. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/beh/index.html>.

———. *Towards Inclusion: Tapping Hidden Strengths: Planning for Students Who Are Alcohol-Affected.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, 2001. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/fas/index.html>.

The Wraparound Process

Wraparound is a process for meeting the complex needs of children and youth and their caregivers that involves the integration of multiple systems and the development of student-specific plans of care. It provides unconditional care through student-specific, needs-driven, and flexible programming within a community-based setting.

The *Wraparound Protocol for Children and Youth with Severe to Profound Emotional and Behavioural Disorders*

> is intended for service providers as well as caregivers and natural community supports who may be involved in building a collaborative care plan for children and youth who experience severe to profound emotional and behavioural disorders. (Healthy Child Manitoba 6)

The wraparound team consists of the student (as appropriate), the caregiver(s), and informal, formal, and/or community supports. The resource teacher may be invited to be part of the team or may be designated by the school principal to be the case manager.

Management of the Low Incidence Funding Process

Every school division is unique in how it provides a continuum of supports for students with exceptional needs. Some categorical grants, such as the Student Services Grant, are available to school divisions specifically to support students with exceptional needs. The Student Services Grant is designed to assist students with mild to moderate academic or learning needs due to social, emotional, behavioural, or physical factors that affect their ability to succeed in school, or who require behaviour intervention in the Early Years. School divisions use the Student Services Grant to provide a continuum of supports for the students with exceptional learning needs in their divisions.

In addition to receiving categorical grants, school divisions may apply to Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning for student-specific grants known as Level 2 and Level 3 grants. These are provided to school divisions when students with severe to profound needs meet established funding criteria. Appropriate supports are determined by school divisions and school teams, in consultation with parents.

The process for determining the eligibility of students for Levels 2 and 3 funding requires Manitoba's Student Services Unit Funding Review Team to consider student-specific applications on an individual basis. School teams, together with the student services administrator, identify those students requiring exceptional supports who may meet the criteria for Level 2 or 3 funding support (see Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, "Special Needs Categorical Funding Criteria Levels 2 and 3"). As a case manager, the resource teacher may be asked by the principal to complete a funding application for low-incidence Level 2 or Level 3 funding support (see "Funding for Student Services/Special Education").

Record Keeping

Resource teachers should be knowledgeable about the *Manitoba Pupil File Guidelines* (Manitoba Education) and school division/school-based policies on information sharing, consent, and referral. Student services records exist for some students in the pupil support file component of the pupil file, and resource teachers may be asked to manage this component (see page 12 of *Manitoba Pupil File Guidelines*).

It could be the responsibility of resource teachers to inform students, and their parents, as appropriate, that pupil records are kept, and to explain the purpose of such records. Information collected for such records is maintained and controlled in a responsible and efficient manner that is governed by the *Manitoba Pupil File Guidelines*.

Pupil File

The pupil file is an ongoing official record of a student's educational progress through the Kindergarten to Grade 12 public school system in Manitoba. It is a timeline record and a synopsis of a student's educational career and the supports . . . [provided] to maximize educational success. A pupil file includes the entire collection or repository of information and documentation compiled or obtained by the staff of a school or school division . . . relating to the education of the student, which is stored in written, photographic, electronic, or any other form, and which is held in a school, school board office, or any other location under the jurisdiction of the school board. Practically speaking, a pupil file can potentially consist of one or more of three components comprising cumulative student information, pupil support information, and youth criminal justice information. (Manitoba Education, *Manitoba Pupil File Guidelines* 1)

Here are some tips for maintaining records for a pupil file:

- Record student information in an objective, factual manner, avoiding third-party information.
- Describe behaviour, avoiding the use of undefined and/or unnecessary adjectives and refraining from giving opinions and making assumptions. Clearly identify the personal impressions, observations, and hypotheses as opinions (e.g., an impression of student "uneasiness" or student "avoidance") when personal impressions are required to clarify objective professional detail.
- Make and initial entries, and record information in a timely manner.
- Note and initial any subsequent alterations or additions, leaving the original entry legible and intact, and never erase, delete, or apply whiteout to recorded information.
- Ensure information is brief but sufficient to support continuity of the appropriate educational programming.

> **Suggested Resources**
>
> For more information on record keeping related to pupil files, see:
>
> Manitoba Education. *Manitoba Pupil File Guidelines*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, rev. Jan. 2012. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/policy/mbpupil/>.
>
> For more information on pupil file maintenance, retention, access, transfer, storage, and disposal, see:
>
> Manitoba Education. *Guidelines on the Retention and Disposition of School Division/District Records.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, rev. Jan. 2010. Available online at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/policy/retention/>.

Management of Resources (Personnel, Time, Finances)

Resource teachers work with principals **according to school policy and procedures** to discuss needs and use of financial and human resources.

To provide a continuum of support, resource teachers need to organize time effectively. Scheduling and establishing priorities should result in enhanced student learning and success. Results from class/student profiles and from needs assessments provide valuable data for planning.

The schedules of resource teachers are influenced by a number of factors related to prioritizing needs. Some of the factors that resource teachers may need to take into account when prioritizing schedules are

- student needs (e.g., unexpected new student arriving)
- developmental and functional needs of students
- availability of members of student support teams
- consultation with teachers, other professionals, and parents
- administrative responsibilities

Since full-time resource teachers generally have more flexibility in scheduling their time than full-time classroom teachers have, it is important for them to coordinate their schedules with other members of the student support team so that services and activities complement one another. This coordination of schedules allows resource teachers to

- establish times for in-classroom co-teaching, support, or observation, or for direct one-on-one teaching
- consult with classroom teachers and/or implement parts of the curriculum using a co-teaching model
- consult with external agencies and make appropriate referrals
- gain the support and cooperation of fellow educators
- arrange for small-group instruction
- contribute to student support teams

See Tool 6: Year-at-a-Glance (Sample) for a chart of common activities with which resource teachers may be involved. Resource teachers may wish to add to, or delete from, this sample if it does not match their school schedule and/or priorities.

The overall objective for resource teachers is to analyze their time over a full school year to determine whether they are using it effectively to meet the identified goals and outcomes of the teachers and students within the school.

A school principal may ask a resource teacher to manage a particular budget line. If this is the case, local school policies and practices must be followed. Budgeting is a consultative process in which the resource teacher may need to survey teachers and work with the principal to determine how the budget is best used.

As part of their resource-management responsibilities, resource teachers may be asked to fill out specific forms. They should check their school division/school requirements related to forms.

Reflection Questions

What are essential characteristics of a student services area?

Resource teachers will need to talk to the school principal about locating an area in the school that will fulfill the needs of students and staff on a daily basis. It is important to consider the area's atmosphere and layout and the resources available in it or nearby.

Here are some questions to consider when choosing an area in which to work:

- Does the facility provide confidential and secure areas for files?
- Is the area quiet? welcoming? comfortable?
- Is there room to display materials and resources?
- Is there access to a telephone and a web-linked computer?
- Is the setting secure and supervised?

May professional staff (such as school counsellors, clinicians, and resource teachers) maintain a working file in addition to the pupil file?

Professional staff may maintain a working file in addition to the pupil file

if the school division or district pupil file policy allows staff to maintain a working file. The existence of any such file should be documented in both the cumulative file component and a master pupil support file component. Professional staff should be aware that any record made during the course of employment with a school division or district is in the custody, or under the control, of the school division or district; it is not the author's personal property. Therefore, the working file is subject to the same access and privacy provisions as all other personal information or personal health information about a specific pupil. (*Manitoba Pupil File Guidelines* 38)

Other Duties

School principals may assign other duties to resource teachers.

While it is the principal's responsibility to supervise and evaluate staff, including educational assistants (EAs), resource teachers may be asked to assist the principal to organize the schedules of educational assistants and to provide ongoing training and support. Classroom teachers would also be involved in guiding and supporting educational assistants who are assigned to their classes.

Many resource teachers are also involved in organizing vision- and hearing-screening processes for their school community.
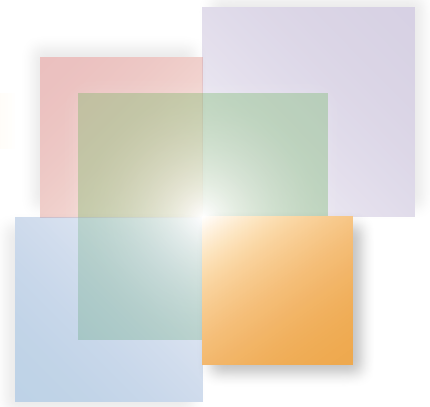
Reflection Question

How will I measure my effectiveness as a resource teacher?

Resource teachers are effective when

- they are aware of various models of service delivery and have a strong understanding of the particular model(s) being used in their school division/ school
- they have an appropriate balance in their various roles and responsibilities
- the classroom teacher feels supported in programming appropriately for the diverse needs of all students in the classroom
- the classroom teacher is aware of the diverse needs of all students in the classroom and feels confident in planning for and assessing her or his students
- students show growth toward meeting or approximating curricular or IEP outcomes
- students have voice and choice when working on their educational programming

Universal Roles and Responsibilities of Resource Teachers

Student Support

Management

Teacher Support

Other Duties

Leadership
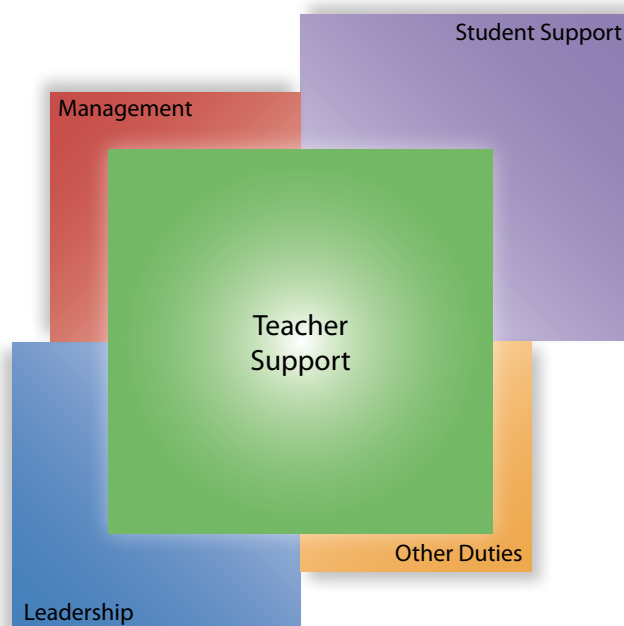
Conclusion

This document is intended to support new and experienced resource teachers, school principals, and school division administrators as they work collaboratively within the context of their school/school division service delivery model(s). The information provided will also assist in decisions related to delineating the roles of resource teachers in individual schools and school divisions and ensuring that the various roles are balanced in a way that is manageable for the resource teacher and supportive of classroom teachers and students.

Being a resource teacher is a rewarding experience. First and foremost, resource teachers provide support to classroom teachers to enable them to instruct the full diversity of students in their classrooms appropriately. Resource teachers are leaders who have a specific set of skills and understandings to share with schools/school divisions, including knowledge of service delivery models and allocation of resources based on the selected models. Responsibilities of resource teachers also include some management roles, such as facilitating meetings, assisting with data collection and analysis, writing and maintaining records, and acting as case managers for some (not all) students. Finally, as with any position, resource teachers may be assigned other duties from time to time. These varied roles and responsibilities, as well as the assortment of situations encountered from day to day, make the job of a resource teacher stimulating and satisfying.