



Aboriginal Affairs and
Northern Development Canada

Affaires autochtones et
Développement du Nord Canada

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

High Cost Special Education Program

National Program Guidelines 2013-2014



Canada

For information regarding reproduction rights, please contact Public Works and Government Services Canada at: 613-996-6886 or at: droitdauteur.copyright@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca

www.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca

1-800-567-9604

TTY only 1-866-553-0554

English version (PDF)

QS-6298-000-EE-A1

Catalogue: R41-15/2013E-PDF

ISSN: 2291-4331

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, represented by the *Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development*, 2013

This Publication is also available in French under the title: Programme d'éducation spéciale à coûts élevés - Lignes directrices nationales 2013-2014

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Objective.....	2
3	Outcomes	2
4	Activities	2
5	Eligible Recipients	3
5.1	Eligible Recipients (Service Providers)	3
5.2	Eligible Participants (Students)	3
6	Funding Request Process	4
7	Eligible Expenditures.....	5
8	Ineligible Expenditures	6
9	Maximum Program Contribution.....	7
10	Monitoring and Accountability.....	8
11	Reporting Requirements	8
12	Contact Information	8
	Annex – Glossary of Special Education Program Terms	9

1 Introduction

The Special Education Program (SEP) provides additional investments to recipients who provide services for students who ordinarily live on reserve and whose special education needs cannot be met within the current resources that are made available for the general student population.

Broadly speaking, special education needs students fall within a continuum of mild to moderate, moderate to severe and severe to profound.

Special education needs categorized as mild to moderate needs are expected to be addressed within the funding and terms and conditions of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada's (AANDC) Elementary and Secondary Education Program.

Only high cost special education needs (ranging from moderate to profound) are eligible for additional funding under SEP.

There are two types of approaches that are typically used in the school systems that help school administrators identify if a student has high cost special education needs. These two approaches are sometimes combined:

1. The **intervention-based approach** is a formula-based method that does not require formal assessments before intervention strategies are introduced. Nevertheless these students must undergo a formal assessment no later than the end of the following school year. Under this approach, teachers with the appropriate training are able to use and interpret assessment instruments and develop the necessary intervention measures to address the student's immediate need(s) while waiting for a more formal assessment. . A student Individual Education Plan process should be initiated at this stage. A student Individual Education Plan (IEP) should be initiated at this stage. The intervention-based approach is designed to provide immediate attention to the high cost special education (HCSE) student by addressing the student's learning problems as soon as they are identified. This approach serves to mitigate some of the subsequent learning problems that may be experienced in later grades.
2. The **assessment-based approach** involves classifying student needs into recognized high-cost categories and providing a "per pupil" funding allocation to support individualized programming. Under this approach, children who are born physically dependent, who have multiple exceptionalities, or who have special needs due to autism may require ongoing assessments. These students are identified by a physician's report and are required to have an Individual Education Plan that recognizes the broad range of their physical/intellectual abilities and addresses specific educational, health, and personal care needs.

2 Objective

The objective of the SEP is to improve the educational achievement levels of First Nation students on-reserve by providing for access to special education programs and services that are culturally sensitive and meet the provincial standards in the locality of the First Nation.

3 Outcomes

- High cost special education students have achieved their fullest potential.
- An increased number of high cost special education students have acquired a high school diploma or a certificate of completion.

Recognizing that students with High Cost Special Education (HCSE) needs may not achieve the same academic objectives as students without HCSE needs, the goals set out in the students' individual education plans are a measure of the students' ability to meet or exceed their educational goals, demonstrating progression towards a high school diploma or a certificate of completion.

4 Activities

In keeping with the trend among provincial education systems, the SEP funding supports both direct and indirect services. This approach will maintain the requirement for formal assessments of students and the development of individual education plans (IEPs), and will also allow First Nation schools the flexibility to employ intervention strategies more quickly.

Activities funded under the program include:

- Identifying the students with high cost special education needs;
- Identifying the category or categories of exceptionality that applies to each student;
- Preparing an IEP for each student; and
- Selecting the types of services recommended in the student's IEP.

Direct Services

Direct services are program activities such as classroom student intervention and counselling, focused directly on meeting student needs. These activities may represent a minimum of 75% of the annual SEP resources (See Section 7 for Eligible Expenditures).

Indirect Services

In order to gain the benefits of aggregation, Indirect Services refer to an array of supportive programs and activities often, but not necessarily, delivered by Band operated schools or Regional First Nation Organizations (may also be referred to as First Nation Regional Management Organizations [FNRMO]).

These activities may represent a maximum of 25% of the annual SEP resources (See Section 7 for Eligible Expenditures).

5 Eligible Recipients

5.1 Eligible Recipients (Service Providers)

Eligible recipients of the SEP funding are:

- band councils,
- federal schools,
- provincial ministries of education,
- provincial school boards/districts,
- private education institutions, or
- organizations types which can be designated by band councils (band/settlements, tribal councils, education organizations, political/treaty organizations, public or private organizations engaged by or on behalf of First Nation bands).

Note: Eligible recipients who can only provide special education indirect services are only eligible to receive funding to deliver those indirect services (See Section 7 for Eligible Expenditures).

5.2 Eligible Participants (Students)

To qualify as an eligible participant, the following criteria must be met:

- The student with exceptionalities is registered or is eligible to be registered on the nominal roll, i.e. is enrolled in and attending either a band-operated, federal, provincial, or a private/independent school that is recognized by the province as an elementary or secondary institution.
 - An Individual Education Plan (IEP) must be in place or be in the process of being created when a student has been identified by the school administration or a team of experts as having high cost special education needs. The IEP must map the student progress during the school year. An IEP is also known as an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), an Individual Program Plan (IPP) or an equivalent plan according to the province of residence.
- The student's age is from 4 to 21 years (or the age range eligible for elementary and secondary education support in the province of residence) on December 31 of the school year in which funding support is required.
- The student is ordinarily resident on reserve* (a student who is ordinarily resident on reserve lands that are leased is not eligible for funding unless that student is a registered Indian).

* *Ordinarily resident on reserve* means that the student usually lives at a civic address on reserve, is a child in joint custody who lives on reserve most of the time, or is staying on reserve and has no usual home elsewhere. Students continue to be considered ordinarily resident on reserve if they return to live on reserve with their parents, guardians or maintainers during the year, even if the students live elsewhere while attending school or working at a summer job. (In this context, reserves are deemed to include land set aside by the federal government for the use and occupancy of an Indian band, along with all other Crown lands which are recognized by DIAND as settlement lands of the Indian band of which the student is a resident.)

Note: In the case of a child in the care of a Child and Family Services Agency, or in the care of the province, the residency of the child is determined by the residency of the family with whom the child is placed. A guardian is a person who assumes authority for the child through a legal guardianship agreement.

6 Funding Request Process

Submission of funding requests

- SEP is a national program that is managed and funded by the regional offices. Each year, the AANDC regional offices solicit, review, and evaluate incoming SEP funding requests from eligible recipients.
- Eligible recipients must submit detailed requests for all the high cost special education activities to be undertaken during the school year, clearly stating how the proposed activities will further the objectives of the program and respond to the students' high cost special education needs and the expected results of the program.
- The programs or services that are to be implemented or maintained during the school year must be comparable to the high cost special educational programs and services that are currently rendered by the (relevant or applicable) provincial schools.

Deadline for submission of funding requests

May 15

Assessment Criteria

- Capacity to manage the implementation of the activities proposed in the funding request;
- Engagement and commitment involving support from schools and communities;
- Comparability with programs and services provided by provincial schools within the locality of the First Nation;
- Implementation activities that identify timelines, cost-effectiveness and, anticipated impact on outcomes;
- Management activities that support governance, deliverables, monitoring, and reporting; and
- Costs assessed on the basis of estimation of reasonableness of expenditures.

Note: Meeting these criteria does not guarantee funding from the Special Education Program.

Review and Approval of Funding Requests

The funding requests will be reviewed and approved by the AANDC regional office or jointly by the AANDC regional office and a First Nation management organization. A written response will be sent to applicants to confirm whether, or not, their funding request has been approved. Funding will be available in the form of a one year Set contribution. The definitions for the different contribution types can be found in the [funding agreement models](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1322746231896/1322746482555) (<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1322746231896/1322746482555>).

7 Eligible Expenditures

SEP programs and services are divided into two categories: Direct (First Level Services) and Indirect (Second Level Services).

Direct Services:

Direct services must represent a minimum of 75% of the annual SEP resources. The Direct Services SEP allocation is to be spent on high-cost student support services. The following is a list of eligible expenditures for direct services:

- Costs associated with the acquisition of professional assessments;
- Costs associated with completion of student assessments;
- Salaries/benefits for special education teacher;
- Salaries/benefits for individual teacher aide / paraprofessional workers;
- Costs associated with educational psychological services;
- Costs associated with counselling / social work services;
- Costs associated with Elder / mentoring / cultural services;
- Costs associated with speech / language services;
- Costs associated with occupational therapy services;
- Costs associated with physical therapy services;
- Costs associated with instructional / resource materials; and
- Costs associated with assistive technologies / equipment purchases.

Indirect Services:

Up to 25 percent of the SEP allocation may be spent on school activities and services that will improve special education programs for high-cost special education needs students. The following is a list of eligible expenditures for indirect services:

- Costs associated with providing information services;
- Costs associated with contracting and providing professional support services;
- Costs associated with contracting and providing professional assessment services;
- Costs associated with professional development for professional accreditations;
- Costs associated with other professional development (e.g., workshops, conferences);
- Costs associated with administrative support;
- Costs associated with accommodations (e.g., lodging (room and board));

- Costs associated with accommodation needs, and may also include changes in how a student accesses information and demonstrates learning. These may include changes in the method of instruction, the curriculum, and the environment; and
- Costs associated with transportation (e.g., the transportation of severely disabled, special day-class pupils, and orthopedically impaired pupils who require a vehicle with a wheelchair lift, as specified in their IEP).

Note: Administration Costs: Administration costs cannot exceed 10 % of the sub-total amount requested before administration costs. The Data Collection Instrument (DCI) will automatically calculate the amount.

Further distribution of funds by AANDC's funding recipient: When a funding recipient further transfers, to a Third Party, funds that were received under this program, the 10% allowed for administration costs must be divided between the parties, as agreed to between the parties. The total administration costs retained by all parties cannot exceed 10% of the sub-total amount requested before administration costs.

8 Ineligible Expenditures

- Services for special education students whose needs are mild to moderate are expected to be addressed by AANDC's Elementary and Secondary Education Program.
- Enhanced programs and services for gifted students or enriched, subject-specific programming for students streamed into, for example, drama and the arts are not eligible for SEP funding.
- Expenditures for constructing, operating, and maintaining facilities, or purchasing vehicles are provided through AANDC's Capital Program and cannot be charged to the SEP budget allocation.
- Expenditures already covered by other programs.

9 Maximum Program Contribution

The maximum amount payable to a recipient is set on a case-by-case basis, limited overall by total available funding both nationally and regionally.

The maximum contribution for high cost special education services per student shall not exceed the costs in accordance with the educational components set out below:

Tuition Rate for Specialized Schools (e.g., Provincial School for the Deaf)

- \$65,000 is the maximum amount allowed per year, per high-cost special education student attending a specialized school. The student must be registered or be eligible to be included on the Nominal Roll. When this maximum funding allocation is provided for a student, the band council is not entitled to receive the regular elementary or secondary education program funds for that student.

Tuition and Transportation Rate for Schools

- \$30,000 is the maximum amount allowed per year for tuition per high-cost special education student attending a federal, provincial, band operated, or private/independent school.
- The First Nation that records the student on its Nominal Roll will receive funding for the student through the elementary and secondary education program, and will be eligible to receive additional tuition funding under the SEP.
- From the \$30,000 amount, \$5,000 is the maximum amount that can be used per student, per year for school transportation.

Accommodation for High Cost Special Needs Students (includes room and board)

- \$50,000 is the maximum amount allowed per year for a high-cost special education needs student.

Emergency Transportation for High Cost Special Needs Students

- \$5,000 is the maximum amount allowed per year, per student for emergency transportation. An example of emergency transportation would be when a designated student who resides away from home has to return home due to a death in the family.

Note: Depending on the severity of the student's exceptionality, according to methods prescribed by the province of residence and provincial standards for funding eligibility, the maximum contribution may be increased by the salary of a teacher's aide (per student) over and above the instructional services tuition rate.

10 Monitoring and Accountability

AANDC is committed to providing assistance to recipients in order for them to effectively carry out the obligations contained in each funding agreement. Regional offices and other departmental contacts are available to answer questions and provide guidance related to AANDC programs and funding.

To ensure that program terms and conditions and funding criteria are being met, that funds are expended on the intended purposes, and that AANDC's accountability to Parliament is being met, in-office and on-site monitoring and compliance activities will be conducted with all recipients.

11 Reporting Requirements

The recipient's funding agreement lists the reporting requirements. To access the reports (Data Collection Instruments), log on to the AANDC Services Portal. If you do not have access to the AANDC Services Portal, contact your regional office. The regional offices coordinates can be found in the [Contact Information](#) section of this document.

12 Contact Information

For further program information, please visit the [Special Education Program](#) page (<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033697/1100100033698>).

The regional offices coordinates can be found on the [Contact Regional Offices](#) page (<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033694/1100100033695>).

You can also write to:

Education Branch
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
10 Wellington Street
Gatineau QC K1A 0H4
Fax (819) 934-1478
Education@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca

These National Program Guidelines can be downloaded from the departmental website in the [Education](#) section (<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033601/1100100033605>). AANDC education programs funding recipients can also access them through the *View Instructions* button on the first page of this program's Data Collection Instrument (DCI). To access the Data Collection Instruments (DCIs), log on to the AANDC Services Portal.

Annex – Glossary of Special Education Program Terms

This table lists the acronyms and terms used in the Special Education Program.

Term	Definition
Accommodation Services	<p>The goal of accommodations is to give students with special education needs the same opportunities to succeed as other students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation provides funding for Room and Board for a student that is attending a school in a different community. • Accommodation can also be defined as allowing a change or alteration in the regular way a student is expected to learn and complete assignments or participate in different ways in classroom activities. • Accommodation can include special teaching or assessment strategies, equipment or other supports that remove, or at least lessen, the impact of a student's special education needs.
Assessment-based Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment means the ongoing process of collecting information about the students using a number of formal and informal methods across a variety of domains relevant to performance (behavioural, communicational, intellectual, learning or physical characteristics). The results will help the teacher to develop and implement appropriate high cost special education programming and support. • The formal assessment-based approach involves the participation of health and mental care specialists who evaluate and identify students who are physically disabled, who have chronic health or mental issues, or who have complex multiple exceptionalities. • Their evaluations and recommendations on how to address the student's special education needs are to be incorporated into the student's Individual learning plan (or its equivalent).

Term	Definition
Assistive Technologies / Equipment	<p>The following list of Adaptive Hardware and Software is only provided as an example of the types of tools that can be used in the classroom to assist the high cost special education needs students.</p> <p>Hardware:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audiocalc is a talking scientific calculator; • AudiSee is an audio-visual FM system used by oral-deaf or hard of hearing students (enhances understanding of speech and filters environmental noise); • Dream Writer Smart Keyboard is a portable keyboard with a built in word processor; • Franklin Language Master is a Merriam-Webster dictionary 300,000 word spell checker with visual and auditory feedback; • Hewlett Packard Scanner and Laser Jet Printer; • Juliet Braille Embosser is a Braille printer; • Kurzweil Personal Reader is a scan and text reading technology; • Magna Cam is a portable scanner and print magnifier (mini-screen/TV/eye-wear); • Tracker 2000 is a head mouse and bat keyboard; and • V-Cam is a head mounted zoom-lens (Jordy - zoom - lens video eyewear). <p>Software:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DeskTalk PC speech output; • Dragon Naturally Speaking continuous speech recognition; • Duxbury Braille Translator; • JAWS for Windows/ DOS speech output synthesizer (screen reader); • Open Book Unbound OCR software, scan text and convert to E-text; • Text Help, Wordsmith & Inspiration, (multi sensory computer software that assists reading fluency and enhances writing development for students with reading and written language difficulties); and • Zoom Text (print magnification screen reader).

Term	Definition
Counselling / Social Work Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School Counselling and Social Work Services Department helps students and families to overcome personal social and emotional barriers and problems to promote students school performance, development and achievement. • Through a variety of modalities, including individual, family, small group and classroom programming, counselors promote a strength based approach seeking to enhance student's social/emotional competency, promote resiliency and increase students' availability for learning. • Counsellors also provide crisis intervention response, case management and assessment services, as well as community development, outreach and referrals. • As part of the school multidisciplinary team, counsellors are available for case consultation, provision of professional development, and intervention planning.
Educational Psychological Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An educational psychological assessment is used to identify the underlying issues that may be preventing a student from achieving his or her academic potential.
Elders: Mentoring/Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Aboriginal communities, Elders are keepers of traditional teachings and language. They are greatly respected for their life experience and wisdom, and members of the community often seek their counsel. • Elders are experts in the areas of Aboriginal knowledge, language and culture, and schools can look to them for their teachings and experience. They are available for student counselling and to provide a resource for teachers.

Term	Definition
<p>Exceptionalities</p> <p>The following seven categories of exceptionalities are recognized by the provinces and are the terms that the SEP program has chosen to use and measure in the SEP data collection instrument (DCI):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Exceptionality: Students with physical limitations or deficiencies as to require special assistance in learning situations. These students experience functional, visual, orthopedic, motor, or hearing impairments, which impact upon their ability to walk, play and learn. • Behaviour Exceptionality: Students assessed as having neurobehavioral developmental disorders are often linked to mood disorders such as depression or bipolar disorders; personality disorders; conduct disorders (including oppositional defiant disorder or disruptive disorder); anxiety disorders; impulse control disorders such as Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD or AD/HD or ADD). • Chronic Illness / Medical Issues: Students assessed as having ongoing long standing; asthma, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, cystic fibrosis, epilepsy, allergies and/or diabetes. • Intellectual Exceptionality: Students assessed as having IDD (Intellectual Developmental Delays), or with DD (Developmental Disability). These types of abnormal intellectual abilities prevent the student from learning like the average student and require differentiated experiences/instructions. • Communication Exceptionality: Students assessed with learning disorders that are characterized by impairment in comprehension and/or use of verbal communication skills or the written or other symbol system of communication. These are often associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors. • Mental Health: The pressures of school and growing up can be overwhelming and difficult for children to cope with successfully. Depression in children can lead to loss of appetite, aches and pains, and lack of energy. Students may be diagnosed as having; Depression, Eating disorder, schizophrenia, suicidal tendencies, Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. • Multiple Exceptionalities: Students assessed as having a combination of disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities.

Term	Definition
<p>High Cost Special Education (HCSE)</p>	<p>SEP was created in 2002 to provide critical programs and support to First Nation students living on reserve who have moderate to severe and severe or profound behavioural and/or physical challenges (such as autism, deafness, and blindness).</p> <p>Student with high cost special education needs may have more than one type of exceptionality but for the purpose of funding under AANDC, they are usually categorized according to their greatest need. According to Departmental planning documents, while provincial definitions can vary on types of exceptionalities, high cost special education students have generally been assessed as being or having:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically dependent • Hearing impairments • Moderate to severe behavioural disorders • Chronic health impairments/physical disabilities • Deaf and blind students • Autism • Communication disorders • Severe learning disabilities
<p>IEP: Individual Education Plan</p> <p>An IEP can also be called an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or an Individual Program Plan (IPP).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEPs will vary depending on the educational jurisdiction. • A student who has been identified by a team of experts as having high cost special education needs must have an IEP in place, one that will map his or her progress during the school year. • The IEP will identify the curricular areas that will need to be modified or it will state whether the child requires an alternative curriculum which is often the case for students with severe autism, severe developmental needs or cerebral palsy etc. • The IEP will also identify the accommodations and or any special educational services the child may need to reach their full potential.
<p>Individual Teacher's Aide</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A title used in several provinces instead of the title of Paraprofessional Worker. Provides direct educational support in and outside of the classroom with a specific focus for teaching prevocational, functional language skills, motor activities, self-care, functional living, social and community skills to all individuals served.
<p>Instructional / Resource Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching materials for special education are professionally designed to foster the various learning techniques employed in the special needs Classroom. Specialized manipulative, workbooks and videos focus on specific skill sets. • Special education materials also offer success-oriented adaptations and cross-curricular activities to promote child-centered programs.

Term	Definition
Language Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language impairment is a learning disorder characterized by impairment in comprehension and/or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors.
Occupational Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational therapists specialize in working with children or adults, or persons with distinct problems such as dementia, traumatic brain injury and chronic pain, or provide special interventions such as return-to-work programs.
Para-professional Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used in several provinces instead Teacher's Aide. They provide direct educational support to the teacher in and outside of the classroom.
Physical Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide services in circumstances where physical movement and function are threatened by aging, injury, disease or environmental factors. This encompasses physical, psychological, emotional, and social well being.
Special Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The certified special education teacher provides educational programming and classroom interventions that will support students who have moderate to profound physical disabilities and learning exceptionalities.
Speech / Language Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech-language pathologists (speech therapists) diagnose and treat or remediate communication disorders in children. Developmental paediatricians and paediatric neurologists will also sometimes diagnose a speech or language disorder and refer the child to a speech-language pathologist for treatment.

Disclaimer: The SEP glossary provides general information and is not intended as a substitute for professional advice.