



Parkland School Division

Procedure-Protocol for Educational Assistants Working in the Home of Students Identified as High Needs or Requiring Some Additional Educational Support

Parkland School Division has a number of students who have been identified with high needs requiring some additional support. As a result, a decision was made to respond by adding some support to their educational environment to help facilitate their ability to access educational programming. The role of the educational assistant supporting students with identified needs may vary depending on individual students and their presenting needs, but likely supports one or more of the following:

- Facilitating access to information – examples include assistive technology (ex. Text to speech, read and write gold), modified or adapted materials, small group or one on one instruction, alternative formatted materials (ex. Large print or audio)
- Increased supervision to ensure safety for student and others.
- Extra time or modified schedules
- Supporting student regulation (body breaks, extinguishing behaviors, gauging and managing self stimulating behaviors or co-regulation)
- Communication and/or social skills
- Facilitating the acquisition of disability specific skills such as the use of a communication device
- Supporting and increasing the students' repertoire of self-regulating tools and skills.
- Academic support and/or developmental support (differentiated materials, one on one assistance, repetition or practice)

Note: Educational environments that include students identified with high needs (or students that have benefited from some educational support) are allocated resources to support teachers within the educational environment to facilitate full participation in the educational programming that is being delivered.

In those situations where a family has made the decision to access the at home learning for school re-entry (option 2) the following procedures are applicable:

- Decisions regarding whether or not an educational assistant should be deployed to work with the student in the home environment should be made on a case by case basis.

The decision-making process should take into consideration the following:

Home environments are different from school environments so identify what educational support the student may need in the home environment to participate in the educational programming being offered? For example:

Scenario 1 - A student identified with having challenging behaviour

An educational assistant supporting a student identified with challenging or aggressive behaviors may be necessary within an educational environment to assist with supervision and monitoring of the behaviors to ensure all students are safe. This student may require body breaks, alternative activities, smaller group settings etc. to reduce stimulation, monitor regulation, reduce anxiety etc. and the educational assistant supports these opportunities within the context of a teacher managing a full classroom of students.

Within the home environment the parent(s) or guardian would be responsible for providing this level of support if necessary.

Scenario 2 - An educational assistant supporting a student with high functioning autism

An educational assistant's support may be necessary within an educational environment to assist with developing social stories, supervising small group work for academic or social skills activities, one-on-one instruction in reading body language or interpreting social cues.

Within the home environment, the parent(s) or guardian would assume the role of interpreting social cues, reading body language etc. and an educational assistant may be available to virtually support some one-on-one academic support or development of educational materials for use in the home.

- Assess the gaps and develop a plan to minimize the gaps without the educational assistant needing to go into the home. For example: assess what supports/materials can be prepared in the school environment and then delivered for use in the home.
- If the team identifies that a gap cannot be resolved through support from the educational assistant working from the school then consider the following prior to deciding whether or not assistance support in the home is possible:
 - Is the educational assistant comfortable to work in the home environment?
 - Is there an option for another educational assistant to work in the home that would be comfortable?
 - Ensure that the family and the educational assistant are using the self-assessment screening tool on a daily basis. The assistant should not go into the home if any of the parties involved answer yes to any of the screening questions. The individual with a yes answer will complete the AHS assessment tool and follow instructions.
 - The assistant is working under the direction of the virtual teacher and should be fully updated on the child's safety plan, behavior plan and individual program plan. The plan will address the following:
 - When and what personal protective equipment will be used for the time spent in the home. (for student, assistant and other individuals in the home at the time).
 - The timetable for the educational assistant work in the home (schedule) and if time in the home exceeds three hours a break needs to be incorporated into the schedule.
 - If the assistant or anyone in the home show symptoms the educational assistant must leave.
 - The educational assistant must never be in the home alone with the student.

The home and educational assistant will abide by Alberta Health regulations and guidelines at all times.