

Learning Disabilities

From the Special Education Policy Manual – Saskatchewan Education

Definition (Policy Manual – Draft April 1996 pp. 76-77)

Students with severe learning disabilities (LD) have a discrepancy between ability and achievement in one or more of the following skill areas: reading; writing; language acquisition; mathematics; reasoning or listening. Although the following may co-occur, the discrepancy is not primarily the result of a visual, hearing, or motor disability; emotional, social or behavioural disability; or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Frequently students with learning disabilities perform poorly on tasks requiring information processing, memory, focused attention, and organization. Learning disabilities are believed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction. Difficulties are experienced by the individual from childhood through adult life.

Identification (Policy Manual – 1989 based on regulation 49 d p. 66)

A pupil may be identified as a (high cost) severely learning disabled pupil “when assessment by qualified personnel acceptable to the minister affirms that:

- i) the pupil has an intelligence quotient of 85 or higher, as measured by an approved individual test;
- ii) there is a significant discrepancy, one standard deviation or greater, between aptitude and achievement; and,
- iii) the pupil’s average rate of progress in the skills subjects, including reading, is not greater than half that of average pupils as measured by an approved achievement test.”

Funding (Policy Manual – Draft 1996 p.73)

Block funding referred to as **Special Needs Program (SNP)**, assists school divisions in providing programs for students with special needs that are of higher incidence. Recognized under SNPF are students with: learning disabilities; emotional, social, and behavioural disabilities; mild and moderate disabilities, speech or language disorders; and gifted learners.

The broad spectrum of both needs and service delivery models require that many flexible options be available to support the student and the regular class teacher. It is acknowledged that the regular classroom and the general curricular may not meet the extraordinary, intensive and prolonged needs of some students with special needs; those students may require a personal program plan.

Programs and Supports (Policy Manual – Draft April 1996 p. 79)

Programs and supports for students with special needs (learning disabilities, mild and moderate designated disabilities etc...) are offered in a wide variety of frameworks and address a wide array of learning styles and behaviours.

Personal Program Plans (Policy Manual – Draft April 1996 p, 21)

Policy 10.2 Each student receiving on-going special education intervention should have a personal program plan.