

WELCOME TO REACH! **TEACHER INFORMATION**

Your jurisdiction/school has contracted REACH services for a student in your class. We thought you would like more information about this service.

What is REACH?

REACH consists of a multidisciplinary team whose mandate is to provide educational support services to students with special needs in Southern Alberta. REACH is one of four such support teams in the province funded by Alberta Education. REACH covers the area from Red Deer south with offices in Calgary, Lethbridge and Red Deer.

What does REACH do?

REACH provides support to the learning team in developing and implementing educational programs for students with severe learning needs. REACH is committed to providing an effective and efficient educational support service that is designed to facilitate student access to and participation in their educational programs.

What Educational Support Services are Available from REACH?

REACH staff will travel to your school and provide on-site support to meet the needs of your student. The services provided may include:

- **Assessment** to determine a student's strengths and areas of need for programming purposes.
- **Consultation** to provide support to school staff through a collaborative teaming process for the development of student programs and curricular modifications.
- Support for the identification and implementation of **Assistive Technology**
- Support to facilitate **Inclusion**.
- **Transition Planning**.
- **Inservices** to provide information on a wide range of topics relevant to your student(s).

What does CONSULTATION mean?

Members of the REACH team assist most often through the **Consultation** process. Consultation is designed to support the school learning team to meet the student's needs on a daily basis within their learning environment. That is, the student receives the services they need during their regular school day. Consultation is a collaborative process – the learning team plays a major role in deciding how they want REACH consultation services delivered to them and identifying areas of priority to focus on. As a member of the learning team, REACH consults and shares information with classroom teachers, parents, students (where appropriate), other school and jurisdiction staff, and others as required.

Consultation can include:

- meeting with the teacher and teaching assistant to discuss ideas to help the student in their learning process
- demonstrating strategies, approaches, techniques and program modifications
- observing the student in the classroom to help determine adaptations, program or environmental modifications and equipment needs
- participating in planning conferences and Individual Program Plan (IPP) meetings
- providing information about specialized materials, resources and services that facilitate student participation in the learning environment
- developing understanding and knowledge of individual student needs
- providing information regarding current developments and trends in service to special needs learners and their teachers.

Please note that REACH does not provide direct therapy where students are pulled out of class on a regular basis.

How Do I Work with REACH?

- During an initial team meeting, you can discuss how the REACH team member(s) can best support the student(s) in your classroom.
- Identify a convenient time to discuss student needs and programming when the team visits.
- Inform others involved with the student about REACH team visits. Let parents know about REACH visits.
- Be aware that the REACH team members will want to see the student in their natural learning environment, in other words, your classroom. The REACH team member will probably want to observe academic areas relevant to their discipline. For example, the physical therapist may want to observe gym class, the occupational therapist may want to see the student writing, the speech language pathologist will want to see the student communicating with others . . .
- If an assessment is requested, a quiet room will need to be available.
- Should you have any questions, concerns, feedback, or require additional information, never hesitate to call the REACH consultants working with your student.

Who is on the REACH Team?

The team consists of Educational Consultants for the Blind/Visually Impaired, Educational Consultants for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Psychologists, Speech-Language Pathologists, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Educational Audiologists.

For additional information, reference the Discipline Descriptors on the REACH website.

What is on the REACH website?

At www.reachservices.ab.ca you will find additional information about REACH, including student eligibility, the referral process (including the forms needed), discipline descriptions and inservices available.

We look forward to working with you and your student(s).