

## Administrative Procedure 210

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### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

#### Background

Early childhood is a particularly significant period in human development. Early Childhood Services (ECS) programs provide services to address the developmental needs of children before they enter grade one. In ECS programs, young children participate as active partners in learning, build a set of shared experiences and develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for subsequent learning. ECS programs meet the developmental learning needs of children and prepare them for lifelong learning.

The Division supports early childhood education programs permeated by the Catholic faith for children of eligible age. The programs will reflect Division mission, goals and objectives while adhering to the goals, objectives and program dimensions as outlined by Alberta Education.

The principles used when providing ECS programming include the following principles:

- Young children learn best when programming meets their developmental needs
- Young children develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for later learning.
- Young children with special needs, through early intervention strategies, develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for later learning.
- Young children build a common set of experiences through interaction with others.
- Parents have the opportunity for meaningful involvement in the education of their young children.
- Coordinated community services meet the needs of young children and their families.

#### Definitions

Early Childhood Education programs provide services to address the developmental needs of children before they enter grade one.

The age of eligibility for all types of ECS programs are as follows:

| <b>Eligibility Type</b>                     | <b>For funding of an ECS program, the minimum age of the child on September 1 of the program year must be:</b> |
|---|--|
| Child with a severe disability/delay        | 2 years, 6 months  |
| Child with a mild/moderate disability/delay | 3 years, 6 months  |
| Regular program child                       | 4 years, 6 months  |
| Developmentally immature child              | 5 years, 6 months  |



Program Unit Funding is available for children with severe disabilities/delays starting at a minimum age of 2 years, 6 months to a maximum age of less than 6 years on September 1. This funding is provided for a maximum of 3 years. Parents of children qualifying for Program Unit Funding may be able to access Family Orientated Programming.

Kindergarten programs provide services to address developmental needs of children in the year immediately before they enter grade one.

## Procedures

1. School enrolment in early childhood education programs is optional.
2. Parents will be able to have their children participate in the annual Division preschool screening.
3. Programming will be provided for eligible children with special needs. Assessment information will be kept on file.
4. Registration for Kindergarten and Preschools in Division schools will take place at the local school.
5. Children attending ECS Designated Sites will be approved by the Associate Superintendent of Student Services. In the ECS Designated Sites, at least 70% of the ECS children served have severe disabilities/delays.
6. The learner expectations of the Kindergarten Program Statement will be adapted and modified to meet the needs of each child.
7. Evaluation processes will stress individual growth and development.
8. For children that qualify for exceptional codes, an Individualized Program Plan will be developed by the teacher in collaboration with parents and professionals involved in service delivery.
9. Parents will be consulted with and informed of all program placement decisions involving their child.
10. Parents have the right to make a formal appeal of decisions regarding the special education needs of their children to the Board. If they are not satisfied with the Board's decision, parents will be advised of their right to request that the Minister of Education review the Board's decision.

Reference: Section 8, 30, 60, 61, 113, School Act  
 Early Childhood Regulation 31/2002  
 Early Childhood Policy 1.1.3  
 Funding Manual for School Authorities  
 Standards for Special Education  
 Standards for the Provision of Early Childhood Special Education  
 Policy 13 – Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters

