

Administrative Procedure 302

Students

PROGRAM SUITABILITY

BACKGROUND

Alberta Education's mandate is to ensure that all students have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

The specific mandate of Westmount Charter School is to provide qualitatively differentiated educational programming for students who present as gifted, using an Inside Out approach.

For the purpose of this administrative procedure:

- parents are considered to be the biological and/or adoptive parents of the student, or those who have been awarded guardianship of the student, and;
- student and child are considered to be one and the same.

GUIDELINES

The superintendent is committed to providing an educational program designed to meet the needs of students who are gifted and accordingly recognizes that its accelerated, enriched and personalized program is neither suitable for nor in the best interests of the majority of students.

In honouring the charter board's commitment to hold the needs of all students as paramount, the principal reserves the right to refuse to re-register students:

- who have been unable to demonstrate reasonable progress over a reasonable period of time;
- whose primary need(s) at the time is not giftedness, or
- if the school does not have adequate expertise and/or appropriate resources to provide the accommodations to suitably meet their overall needs.

In order to complete their initial registration, or to complete their annual re-registration, parents will be required to provide formal acknowledgment of their understanding and acceptance of this administrative procedure and their willingness to abide by its provisions.

PROCEDURES

1. The principal will ensure that actions taken or contemplated under this administrative procedure are applied in a reasonable, objective, fair and timely manner.
2. When teachers identify students they perceive to be consistently experiencing significant and prolonged difficulty achieving the objectives outlined in Westmount's Charter, and after having informed the parents, the school will establish a committee to investigate and address matters related to that student's ability.
3. The committee shall consist of:
 - 3.1 the principal and/or assistant principal;
 - 3.2 representatives from the student services team; and
 - 3.3 other staff as required.

4. A student referred to the committee will, in most circumstances, demonstrate one or more of the following indicators on a consistent basis:
 - 4.1 a general lack of progress in most or all subject areas over time, despite significant support from teachers, student services and/or outside professionals or professional agencies;
 - 4.2 an increasingly negative impact on the student's self-concept and self-esteem;
 - 4.3 a severe medical and/or social-emotional issue preventing the student's meaningful attendance and participation in their educational program, and for which Westmount does not have adequate expertise and/or appropriate resources;
 - 4.4 prolonged negative impacts on the learning environment, such as:
 - 4.4.1 more time from Westmount staff than can be reasonably allocated; and
 - 4.4.2 significant compromise to the physical and/or social-emotional well-being and safety of self, other students or staff;
 - 4.5 curriculum mastery below grade level in more than one academic area, not associated with normal developmental expectations and/or a diagnosed learning disability;
 - 4.6 prolonged difficulty to keep pace with Westmount's accelerated curriculum; or
 - 4.7 prolonged failure to complete work assigned in class or as homework.
5. The committee will document and share with parents their observations and concerns regarding the performance indicators identified above.
6. The committee shall take the following steps when a student is referred:
 - 6.1 maintain a documented summary of all meetings and discussions, including those with the student's parents, and all reports from outside professionals and professional agencies;
 - 6.2 comprehensively review the student's record;
 - 6.3 communicate concerns regarding the student's performance to the parents and the student, where appropriate;
 - 6.4 meet with parents and the student to better understand the student's perspective and the context;
 - 6.5 consider the need for further diagnostic assessment;
 - 6.6 obtain parental written consent to have Westmount staff conduct further diagnostic assessments; or
 - 6.7 obtain parental written consent to have further assessment done by an outside professional or agency.
7. Unwillingness on the part of the parent to obtain or share further assessment may result in the student being withdrawn from the school.

8. With input from the student, teachers, student services, parents and any outside professional or agency, the committee may develop a student performance contract to address the specific issues.
9. A student performance contract shall include specific and measurable objectives, a reasonable timeline for meeting the objectives and timelines for reviewing the student's progress. A student performance contract will be signed by the student (where appropriate), parent, teachers, a representative from student services and an administrator.
10. Following the expiry of the term of a student performance contract, the committee shall meet with the teacher(s), the parent and the student (where appropriate) to determine whether or not there has been sufficient growth in the student's performance that Westmount's program can be said to be in his or her best interests.
11. Depending on whether the student has surpassed, met or failed to meet the expectations of a student performance contract, and after considering other pertinent information, the committee shall make one of the following recommendations:
 - 11.1 continue close monitoring of the student's performance;
 - 11.2 the student will be placed on an additional student performance contract; or
 - 11.3 the school does not have adequate expertise and/or appropriate resources to provide an education program that is suitable to the needs of the student or is in the best interests of the student and therefore recommends withdrawal from the school.
12. Under most circumstances, a recommendation that a student withdraw from the school shall be made only after he or she has been enrolled at the school for at least one school year. Possible exceptions to this would be:
 - 12.1 where the emotional well-being of the student is at significant risk;
 - 12.2 where the physical safety of the students in the learning environment is at significant risk; or
 - 12.3 where the functionality of the learning environment is significantly compromised.
13. Decisions regarding whether or not the student will continue at Westmount should be made by March 31 of the current school year.
14. Should parents choose to re-register their student following the recommendation that the student withdraw, the principal may refuse the student's re-registration for the next school year.
15. A decision to refuse the re-registration of a student shall be communicated, in writing, to the parent and the superintendent no later than April 30 of the current school year.

Parents shall be advised, in writing, of their right of appeal to the charter board pursuant to its policy on Appeals of Student Matters.

Cross Reference: Charter Agreement
 Charter Board Policy 1.1, Philosophy and Beliefs
 Charter Board Policy 1.2, Goals, Outcomes and Strategies
 Charter Board Policy 11, Appeals of Student Matters

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