



Administrative Procedures

AP-430	Date of implementation: June 2019
	Date of update:
EXTERNAL PROVIDER INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS	Related Administrative Procedures:
	AP-602 Services for Students with Special Needs

Purpose: To outline the principles, background and protocol that schools will follow with respect to involvement of public and private third-party providers in schools where such professionals are retained and/or compensated by parents/guardians.

The purpose of the protocol is to clarify the relationship between the school and the public and private third-party service providers where:

- Parents/Guardians have retained such community professionals to support their child; and/or
- Staff from another agency and/or Ministry request to observe and/or work with a student at school.

This protocol recognizes that parents/guardians, community health professionals and the school share a common goal to pursue within their defined roles, the best interest of the child.

Principles: It is recognized that it is the role of the school, in partnership with parents/guardians, to be the primary providers of school-based programs and services.

Schools have the right to determine and the obligation to provide education programs and services in schools as prescribed by *The Education Act, 1995*.

Prairie Spirit schools provide a continuum of services. Division staff work in partnership with parent/guardians to ensure that the needs of the child are identified, considered and met. To that end, collaboration with community agencies and private therapists is valued.

Definitions:

Direct Services – Services delivered by school staff such as teachers, educational assistants, counsellors, student services’ staff and/or individuals contracted by the Division.

Third-Party Services – services delivered by individuals from an external organization. There are two types of third-party services – public and private.

- **Public third-party services** – Public third-party services are those delivered by staff from an agency or other public organization where needed and requested by schools. This could also include not for profit charitable organizations. An agreement, memorandum of understanding or contract will detail the services provided and conditions related to the provision of those services.

- **Private third-party services** – Private third-party services are those retained and/or paid for by parents/guardians. They have not been requested by Prairie Spirit schools.

Background: Some students may receive additional support through community agency staff or by private therapists/consultants hired by parents/guardians. These services may be beneficial to students and can be offered to students in the home, community or practitioner office setting.

Occasionally schools receive requests from parents/guardians to have private third-party services delivered in the school. Some examples of services that have been requested are:

- Tutoring
- Occupational/physical therapy services
- Speech language therapy services
- Assessments
- Intensive behaviours intervention

Procedure:

- 1) Due to difficulties with ensuring student safety, liability, confidentiality, supervision and availability of space within school buildings, private third-party services delivered directly to students during the school day are not allowed in the school setting unless specifically allowed under this procedure.
- 2) Private third-party professionals may, at the sole discretion of the Division, be permitted in schools solely for observation where this assists the privately retained professional or community agency staff to set appropriate goals for the child in non-school environments and to ensure consistency of programming outside the school environment.
- 3) The following conditions must be met before a private third-party professional is permitted in a school:
 - a) A request by a private third-party professional or community agency staff to observe a student in a classroom must be made to the Principal (Request for Classroom Observation form).
 - b) The Principal will determine if the requested observation can be carried out in such a manner that it:
 - i) Will not negatively impact the educational environment; and
 - ii) Will not interfere unduly with the privacy rights of all students and staff.
 - c) If approved, the Principal will sign off on the request.
- 4) The Principal will determine and schedule the number and duration of third-party requests in an effort to minimize the disruption to the delivery of the instructional program.
- 5) If parents/guardians wish school staff to share information about the student with the private therapist or agency, the parent/guardian must complete the "Consent to Release Information" on the Request for Classroom Observation form. Students over 15 years of age of sufficient maturity must also sign the consent.

- 6) Privately retained professionals or community agency staff must be accompanied by or in the presence of a Division employee at all times during their school visit.
- 7) A privately retained professional or community agency staff must keep confidential any personal information obtained about other students, teachers or staff while observing a particular student in a classroom in accordance with relevant legislation including *The Education Act, 1995* and *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and other relevant privacy information in accordance with the terms set out in the Request for Classroom Observation form.
- 8) All documentation generated from the observation:
 - a) Only includes information on the student for the purpose of their involvement; and
 - b) Is reviewed with the Principal prior to distribution.
- 9) Private third-party providers may be invited to attend meetings with parents/guardians only when the Principal or Learning Superintendent determines that such attendance is in the best interest of the child. When invited, the third-party provider will be required to observe the directions of the Principal or Superintendent with regard to their participation in the meeting.
- 10) Questions or concerns regarding request for involvement of community agency staff or private professionals should be directed to the Learning Superintendent.

References:

[*The Education Act, 1995*](#)

[*The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](#)