

Administrative Procedures

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| <p>AP-430</p> <p>INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS BY PRIVATE THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS</p> | <p>Date of implementation: June 2019</p> <p>Date of review: February 28, 2024</p> |
| | <p>Related Administrative Procedures:</p> <p>AP-602 Services for Students with Diverse Needs and Intensive Supports</p> |

Purpose: To outline the protocol that schools will follow with respect to involvement of private third-party providers in schools.

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

- Parents/caregivers have retained such providers 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/caregivers, health professionals, and the Division share a common goal of supporting the student, within their defined roles.

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

Schools have the right and 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 parents/caregivers 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. Whenever possible, this collaboration will involve direct communication between relevant Division professionals and their third-party counterparts.

Definitions:

Direct Services – Services delivered by school staff such as teachers, educational associates, counsellors, learning support 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 outside agency where needed and requested by schools. This could include not for profit charitable organizations. The details of the services provided and the conditions of these services will be formally articulated in an agreement, memorandum of understanding or contract.

- **Private third-party services** – Private third-party services are those requested, retained and/or paid for by parents/caregivers and are provided by an external professional or community agency. They have not been requested by Prairie Spirit schools or Division staff.

Background: Some students may receive additional support through private third-party providers as determined by parents/caregivers. These services are often offered to students in the home, in the community or in a practitioner’s office setting.

Occasionally, schools receive requests from parents/caregivers to have private third-party services delivered in the school, either from parents/caregivers or directly from the third-party provider. Some examples of services that have been requested are:

- Tutoring services
- Occupational/physical therapy services
- Speech language therapy or audiology services
- Assessments, including those done by psychologists
- Intensive behaviour interventions
- Trial and implementation of assistive technology
- Services provided by community agencies (such as AIM or Autism Services)

Procedure:

- 1) Questions or concerns regarding requests for involvement of private third-party providers should be directed to the Learning Superintendent.
- 2) Because it is challenging to ensure student safety and privacy within the space limitations of a school building, 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.
- 3) Private third-party providers may, at the sole discretion of the Division, be permitted in schools to observe students where this assists the provider to set appropriate goals for the child in non-school environments and to ensure consistency of programming outside the school environment.
- 4) The following conditions must be met before a private third-party provider is permitted in a school:
 - a) A request by the private third-party provider to observe a student in a classroom must be made to the Principal (*Request for Classroom Observation form*).
 - b) The Principal will inform and consult with the relevant Division professional staff, which will often include members of the Learning Support Services team.
 - c) 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.

- d) If approved, the Principal will sign off on the request.
- 5) The Principal, in consultation with other relevant professional staff, will determine and schedule third-party requests in a way that minimizes the disruption to the delivery of the instructional program.
- 6) If parents/caregivers wish school staff to share information about the student with the private therapist or agency, the parent/caregiver must complete the *Consent to Release Information* on the Request for Classroom Observation form.
- 7) Private third-party service providers must be accompanied by or in the presence of a Division employee at all times during their school visit.
- 8) A Private third-party service provider 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.
- 9) All documentation generated from the observation:
 - a) Includes information only on the student for whom the observation was requested; and
 - b) Is reviewed with the Principal prior to distribution.
- 10) Private third-party providers may be invited to attend meetings with parents/caregivers 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.

References:

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

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

[*Request for Classroom Observation Form*](#) (internal document)