



Educational Program Assistant Programs and Student Services

Scope of Responsibilities

The Educational Program Assistant supports the teaching/learning of students with special needs by providing support in the areas of personal care, behaviour management and instructional program under the direction of the supervising teacher and student planning team. Consistent with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Halifax Regional Centre for Education policies, the Educational Program Assistant will work within an established framework to provide support services that maximize student learning experiences. Working collaboratively within a team the Educational Program Assistant reports directly to the Principal of the School.

Competencies Required

An Educational Program Assistant in the Halifax Regional Centre for Education shall have the following competencies:

- (a) The ability to treat students in a respectful, responsible and fair manner with due consideration to the students' physical, social and psychological development;
- (b) The ability to demonstrate an understanding of fostering independence in students with special needs;
- (c) The ability to demonstrate appropriate responses to student initiated interactions;
- (d) Demonstrates fair and ethical judgements in accordance with Teacher Assistant Guidelines (N. S. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2009);
- (e) The ability to work as a contributing team member;
- (f) The ability to promote an atmosphere of respect for students and adults;
- (g) The ability and desire to engage in continuing education and skills upgrading;
- (h) The ability to make a positive contribution to the school's functions and activities;
- (i) The ability to assist teachers by gathering information regarding the student's program and outcomes;
- (j) The ability to refer parents/guardians and agencies requesting student information to the supervising teacher and/or Student Planning Team;
- (k) The ability to address conflicts with teachers at the classroom level first; school level second; and Centre level third;
- (l) The ability to utilize current technologies;
- (m) The ability to work successfully in a team environment;
- (n) The ability to work and communicate effectively within the Halifax Regional Centre for Education, with students, parents/guardians, community members and external groups;
- (o) The ability to apply knowledge, experience and commitment in the areas of race relations, cross cultural understanding, human rights, and diversity;
- (p) The desire and ability to engage in continuing education and professional development;
- (q) The ability to maintain and promote confidentiality.

Qualifications

- (a) High School Diploma or equivalent;
- (b) Current Emergency Level First Aid & CPR Training;
- (c) Physical abilities consistent with requirements of the job which may include personal and physical care, safety and behaviour management. This includes outdoor spaces on school property;
- (d) Experience in supporting children/youth;
- (e) A related diploma or certificate from a recognized post secondary institution, including a formal practicum placement will be considered an asset.

Specific assignments may dictate the need for other training/experience such as health/physical care, emotional/behavioral problems, signing, community support, and/or use of communication devices.

Specific Job Components

An Educational Program Assistant in the Halifax Regional Centre for Education shall perform tasks as assigned by the Principal and works under the supervision of the Teacher and Student Planning Team. These tasks may vary, from time to time, with the evolution of the organization and may include but not be limited to the following:

I. PERSONAL CARE

- (a) Assist students to move about during the school day, including lifting and positioning students, exercising and supporting as outlined in the Individualized Program Plan (IPP) or physiotherapy/occupational therapy plan, embarking and disembarking from transporting vehicles and accompanying students to community-based educational programs, when necessary;
- (b) Assist students with feeding, as required;
- (c) Assist students with personal care, hygiene, and toileting as required;
- (d) Administer medication and carry out medical procedures under the direction of principals and in accordance with district policy and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development policies and protocols on administering medication to students;
- (e) Supervise students to ensure a safe environment;
- (f) Assist students in the operation of support equipment, as required;
- (g) Contribute to Student Planning Team meetings and other required meetings.

II. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

- (a) Assist in promoting students' emotional growth, well-being and independence;
- (b) Encourage the development of student dignity and self-esteem;
- (c) Facilitate positive interactions among all students;
- (d) Help motivate students and encourage student participation;
- (e) Assist in the implementation and tracking of behaviour management plans as developed by the teacher and/or the Student Planning Team (for example: employing de-escalation strategies, fostering pro-social and conflict resolution skills and implementing calming strategies);
- (f) Contribute to Student Planning Team meetings and other required meetings.

III. SUPPORT FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

- (a) Assist students in following the programs, strategies, exercises and materials identified/developed and introduced by the teacher;
- (b) Assist the teacher(s) in the preparation of material;
- (c) Provide feedback on observations of students to the supervisory teacher;
- (d) Accompany students to and from community-based programs and provide support, within this program, as necessary;
- (e) Contribute to Student Planning Team meetings and other required meetings.