



**Autism Specialist  
PROGRAM  
Halifax Regional Centre for Education**

**Title**

Autism Specialist – PROGRAM

**Scope of Responsibilities**

The Autism Specialist shall be responsible for working collaboratively with school-based staff and Student Services Unit Teams to directly support programming for students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in a way that maximizes student learning experiences. Consistent with policies of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Halifax Regional Centre for Education, the Autism Specialist will work within the Inclusive Education Policy framework for the delivery of specialized supports and services to students. Working collaboratively with a team of multidisciplinary professionals, the Autism Specialist will demonstrate a strong commitment to the school improvement process in support of student learning and reports directly to the Facilitator, Student Services.

**Competencies Required**

The Autism Specialist shall have the following competencies:

- (a) Current knowledge and understanding of ASD, the impact on learning, communication, and social engagement;
- (b) The ability to contribute to the development of programming for individuals and groups of students;
- (c) The ability to assess and analyze student behavior in a school setting;
- (d) A demonstrated understanding of the administration, scoring, interpretation and outcome development of the Assessment of Basic Language Learning Skills (ABLLS), TTAP), Functional Assessment and Curriculum for Teaching Everyday Routines (FACTER);
- (e) The proven ability to apply training and experience in current approaches in the diagnosis, assessment and interventions for individuals with ASD; such as such as Program for the Evaluation and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS), Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication related to Handicapped Children (TEACCH approach), Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and Strategies for Teaching based on Autism Research (STAR);
- (f) The ability to evaluate the effectiveness of intervention strategies;
- (g) Excellent communication (written, oral, electronic), problem solving, and interpersonal skills;
- (h) A demonstrated understanding and commitment to inclusive education;
- (i) Proven ability to design instruction based on the adaptive skills of students with ASD;
- (j) Possess knowledge of the medical, psychological and social-emotional aspects of students with ASD;
- (k) Ability to apply training and experience to develop, implement, and monitor individualized programs and teaching strategies based on the individual needs of students;
- (l) The ability to employ non-violent crisis intervention techniques;
- (m) The proven ability to demonstrate teaching strategies and coach school staff;
- (n) Experience in planning and developing training and professional learning opportunities related to students with behavioral challenges;
- (o) A demonstrated understanding of the behavioral strategies consistent with positive behavioral supports, including aspects of Applied Behavior Analysis;
- (p) The proven ability to work as a contributing team member of multidisciplinary professional teams;
- (q) The ability to utilize current technologies;
- (r) Demonstrate fair and ethical judgements in accordance with NSTU guidelines and/or Professional Governing body;

- (s) Possess knowledge of provincial and Halifax Regional Centre for Education policies, guidelines and procedures and the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, students, teachers and schools as they relate to individuals with special needs;

### **Competencies Required, cont'd.**

- (t) The ability to work and communicate effectively within the Halifax Regional Centre for Education, with students, parents, community members and external groups;
- (u) Ability to apply knowledge, experience and commitment in the areas of culturally responsive pedagogy, race relations, cross cultural understanding, human rights and diversity;
- (v) The desire and ability to engage in continuing education and professional development;
- (w) The ability to maintain and promote confidentiality as the norm.

### **Qualifications**

- (a) A valid Nova Scotia Teaching Certificate or Special Certificate;
- (b) Minimum five (5) years experience working in school settings with students diagnose with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD);
- (c) Master Degree in Special Education, Inclusive Education/Diverse Learners; Psychology; Human Communication Disorders, or acceptable equivalent;
- (d) Experience/training in evidence-based approaches in programming and intervention for students with ASD is considered an asset.

### **Specific Job Components**

The Autism Specialist shall perform tasks as are assigned by the Facilitator, Programs and Student Services. These tasks may vary from time to time with the evolution of the organization and may include, but are not limited, to the following:

- (a) Participate on school planning teams to assist in problem solving and program planning, as needed;
- (b) Share the responsibility with other team members of interpreting and reporting assessment results and other pertinent information with parents/guardians, administrators and other professionals;
- (c) Work collaboratively with administrators, teachers, parents/guardians and students in the design, implementation and review of comprehensive individualized program plans;
- (d) Organize and deliver a variety of professional development activities both individually and as part of a team;
- (e) Assist when needed in the design, implementation and evaluation of instructional and behavioral programs that enhance the student's social participation in family, school and community activities;
- (f) As part of the program planning team assist parents and other professionals in planning appropriate transitions for students with ASD;
- (g) Liaise with parents/guardians, educators, and outside agencies to help access additional supports and services for students with ASD;
- (h) Other duties as assigned.