

# Canada's New Brunswick forbids segregated education

Canada (New Brunswick)/Department of Education and Early Childhood Development: Inclusive Education Policy of 2013

Canada's province of New Brunswick adopted a legally-binding policy on Inclusive Education in 2013, setting out clear and easy to follow requirements for all public schools, installing education support teams, and defining Personalized Learning Plans. It forbids segregated settings and targets all children, not only those with disabilities.

## IN BRIEF

New Brunswick's Policy 322 on Inclusive Education was introduced in 2013 after a comprehensive review. To ensure that all provincial public schools are inclusive, the policy defines a system that supports students in common learning environments. It sets clear requirements for each educational authority (department, school district superintendent, school principals, etc.), including procedures for the development of Personalized Learning Plans, inclusive graduation, and clear guidelines for any variation to the common learning environment.

## FACTS & FIGURES

- More than 1,000 teachers have become part of the new Education Support Team.
- With an additional 2,400 educational assistants, about 3,400 staff members address the challenges of teaching a diverse student population.
- A three-year action plan (2012–2015) was developed and US\$48 million was dedicated to inclusion support services.
- 17 district inclusion facilitators were hired to support the implementation of the policy over a two-year period, and 49 high schools were involved in learning networks on inclusive practices.

## INNOVATIVE ASPECTS

### Clarity around inclusion

The policy clearly defines what is expected of schools, including that practices of segregated education and alternative education programmes must not occur. It establishes expectations that children will be educated in common learning environments, providing clear guidelines around individualized planning.

### No labelling

The policy uses inclusive language and eschews labels such as “special needs” to avoid discrimination against children with intellectual or other disabilities.

### Effectiveness

The policy was initiated with a corresponding action plan to support its implementation.

## CONTEXT

In 1986, New Brunswick changed its policies to require that students with disabilities be included in regular classrooms. Over time, however, inclusive practices were inconsistently applied, and there was no guiding policy at the provincial level. Two reviews of Inclusive Education, in 2005 and 2010, led to a report that recommended issuing an official policy. As part of the province’s commitment to Inclusive Education, disability organizations were consulted. In 2013 the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development signed the first provincial policy on Inclusive Education. The policy is not disability-specific, but rather a broader framework for inclusion in education, aligned with the belief that inclusion is about all – and not just a specific subset – of students.

## QUOTE

*“Every child is important to us, and that is why we fully embrace diversity and respect in our schools.”*  
—Brian Gallant, Premier, New Brunswick

## KEY FEATURES

The New Brunswick Policy 322 on Inclusive Education of 2013 is a provincial legally-binding policy that sets out the requirements of an Inclusive Education system for all public schools, overseen by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. It lays out in detail standards for inclusion, including requirements for all school personnel to ensure that each student can fully participate in a common learning environment by applying student-centred learning and providing accommodations, with variations occurring only under strictly limited conditions. Segregated and alternative education programmes for students enrolled in kindergarten to grade eight are prohibited. School principals have to ensure that for certain students a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) is designed by a team of experts, and classroom teachers must implement and evaluate the PLP. Also, a single version of the high school diploma must be granted.

## OUTCOME, IMPACT, AND EFFECTIVENESS

- In 2014 the UNESCO/Emir Jaber al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah Prize to Promote Quality Education for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities was awarded to New Brunswick.

- The policy is a continuous process, but already more students are benefitting from an education system that is more inclusive, and students with disabilities can expect to be included in regular learning environments and to have a Personalized Learning Plan.

## **TRANSFERABILITY, SCALABILITY, AND COST-EFFICIENCY**

New Brunswick's Inclusive Education work serves as a model for others seeking to strengthen inclusion in public schools. In the last three years leaders in education from Québec (Canada), Spain, Switzerland, and elsewhere have visited New Brunswick schools to learn how teachers put into practice Policy 322.

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## **POLICY**

Policy 322 on Inclusive Education of 2013, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, New Brunswick, Canada

## **SOURCES**

New Brunswick's Policy 322 on Inclusive Education, 2013: <http://bit.ly/1H4eCSi>

UNESCO/Emir Jaber al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah Prize, 2014: <http://bit.ly/1Xt1tM4>

Education Watch Update on Inclusive Education, Winter 2014: <http://bit.ly/1KA9Ufh>  
<http://bit.ly/1KA9W6O>