

## The Role of the Educational Assistant

Educational Assistants are valued members of the school team. Educational assistants are assigned to assist with programming for students who have been identified as having exceptional educational needs under the Education Act. Working under the principal, with the guidance of the School Based Team and classroom teacher in consultation with Special Programs Consultants, Educational Assistants assist classroom teachers in the implementation of Individualized Education Plans. This assistance includes direct support to students with exceptional learning needs as indicated in Individualized Education Plans, assistance with the learning needs of all children in the class and other duties as assigned.

An Educational Assistant may be specifically assigned to meet the learning needs of a particular student or group of students. However, their role is to assist classroom teachers in meeting the needs of all students unless the student with whom they are working requires full time supervision for safety or medical care as specified by the IEP. Additionally, they are to assist the school in meeting the supervisory, cultural, social and emotional learning goals of all students as assigned.

The classroom teacher is responsible for instruction, assessment, and communication with parents, the School Based Team, consultants and specialists. The Educational Assistant assists students in focusing on instruction, in following directions, and in meeting classroom expectations in accordance with their IEPs and curricular expectations. The Educational assistant may assist with specialized programming, therapy, assistive technology, self and/or health care needs and the administration of medication if specialized student specific training has been provided in these areas as required and specified in the IEP. All students, in so far as they are able, should be included in regular curriculum, in regular classrooms and following prescribed learning outcomes unless otherwise specified by their IEP. It is important for students to be working toward greater autonomy and independence, therefore assistance should only be provided when needed and a plan should be in place to look at reducing this assistance, as well as time spent outside of the classroom.