

ASSESSMENT SERVICES

For children and youth who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind or visually impaired

The Assessment Process

Assessments are provided at the APSEA Centre for the purpose of assisting schools in developing program goals for students who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind or visually impaired. Referrals for assessment are initiated by the school team which includes public school staff, parents and APSEA itinerant teachers. Typically students are referred for an APSEA assessment when a change is noted in the student's behaviour/performance at school or at a school transition time. Key transition times include school entry, entering junior high school or middle school, entering high school and preparing for post-secondary/work.

Once a student has been referred, the school, parents and itinerant teachers are asked to complete an information package and return it to the assessment team by a specific date. Upon receipt of the completed information packages, an assessment is scheduled at the APSEA Centre in Halifax. The assessments generally take two days; meals and accommodations are provided for the parents and students at the APSEA Centre.

Student assessments are done by the Centre's Assessment Team. The team includes an audiologist, functional vision specialist, psychologists, speech and language pathologist, academic and academic/language assessors and professionals who evaluate students in specific areas (e.g., Signed Communication Proficiency Interviewer, Physiotherapist, etc.). As well, the assessment team has access to consultants on deafblindness, preschool development, career education and the development of children with multiple disabilities.

Types of Assessments

- Comprehensive Educational Assessment
- Assessment Prior to School Entry
- Assessment for a Blind/Visually Impaired Student with Additional Needs
- Assessment for Deaf or Hard of Hearing Student with Additional Needs
- Career Planning Assessment
- Assessment of Deafblind Students

Specific Areas Assessed

- Functional Vision
- Audiology
- Cognition
- Academic
- Academic/Language
- Signed Communication
- Speech and Language
- Orientation and Mobility
- Braille
- Physiotherapy
- Independent Living Skills
- Assistive Technology
- Career

Assessment Follow-up

Within four weeks, detailed reports are sent to the parents, school, student services and other agencies authorized by the parents to receive the reports.

Once the report is completed, the itinerant teacher arranges a meeting with the parents and local school district personnel. The purpose of that meeting is to discuss the team's findings and recommendations. This information can be used to:

- Identify learning strengths and needs.
- Collaborate with school district personnel in planning appropriate educational programs.
- Plan goals for an Individualized Educational Program.
- Determine the need for support service from APSEA and from local school district personnel.
- Assist in the selection of high school courses, co-operative education options, planning for post-secondary education.
- Facilitate transition planning.

Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority

The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) is an interprovincial co-operative agency established in 1975 by joint agreement among the Ministers of Education of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland.

The agreement provided for the creation of the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority and authorized it to provide assessments for persons from birth to 21 years of age with low incidence sensory impairments. This includes those who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind or visually impaired and who are residents of Atlantic Canada.

The APSEA Agreement is the only one of its kind in Canada, and as such, may serve as a model for service delivery at a regional level. Operational costs are shared among the four provinces.

Location

The APSEA Assessment Centre is located in the Residential Building at the APSEA Centre, 5940 South Street, Halifax, N.S.

For further information, please contact:

Superintendent
Voice/TTY: (902) 424-7765
Fax: (902) 424-5819
E-mail: bt@apsea.ca

Director
Programs for Students who are
Blind or Visually Impaired
Tel: (902) 424-8510
Fax: (902) 424-0543
E-mail: bvi@apsea.ca

Director
Programs for Students who are
Deaf or Hard of Hearing
Tel/TTY: (902) 424-8939
Fax: (902) 424-0543
E-mail: dhh@apsea.ca

Director
Resources & Assessment Services
Tel: (902) 424-8540
Fax: (902) 424-6421
E-mail: assessment@apsea.ca

Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority
Commission de l'enseignement spécial
des provinces de l'Atlantique
5940 South Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 1S6
Tel/TTY: (902) 424-8500
Fax: (902) 424-0543
www.apsea.ca