

SPECIAL EDUCATION



A Parent Guide
to
Identification, Placement and Review Committees
(IPRCs).

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We are committed to...

- ✓ offering a full range of appropriate programs and services to exceptional students;
- ✓ focusing on individual student strengths and needs to provide each exceptional student with the most appropriate program and services;
- ✓ including all staff members in the category of special educators as they all play vital roles in student development;
- ✓ partnering with parents in the education of exceptional students through planning and implementation of programs and services.

INTRODUCTION

The Education Act requires school boards provide, or purchase from other boards, special education programs and services for children who need them. In accordance with regulation 181/98, school boards must establish Identification, Placement and Review Committees (IPRCs).

These committees are composed of at least three people, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer of the Board. This guide explains the IPRC process of identifying and placing students in these programs and services.

It also outlines your rights as a parent and the procedure for appealing IPRC decisions. For more information, please consult the Board contact list on the back of this guide.

ROLE OF THE IPRC

The IPRC:

- ✓ decides whether or not a child should be identified as exceptional;
- ✓ identifies the area and category of the exceptionality;
- ✓ decides on appropriate placement for the child who has been identified as exceptional; and
- ✓ reviews the identification and placement at least once each school year.

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What a parent/guardian needs to do to request an IPRC.

- ✓ You may place a written request asking the school principal to refer your child to an IPRC.
- ✓ The principal may also refer your child to an IPRC if he/she and your child's teacher(s) believe that your child would benefit from a special education program.

Within fifteen days of receiving the request or giving the notice, the school principal will provide you with a written statement indicating approximately when the IPRC will meet. At least ten days before the meeting you will also receive a copy of this guide and an invitation including the date, time and location of the IPRC meeting.

WHO ATTENDS

Regulation 181/98 of the Education Act entitles parents to attend IPRC meetings. It states that you:

- ✓ be present at and participate in committee discussions about your child; and
- ✓ be present when the committee's identification and placement decision is made.

If you are unable to attend;

- ✓ contact the school principal to arrange an alternate date or time; or
- ✓ let the principal know that you cannot attend. Following the meeting, the principal will forward you a written statement of the IPRC decision concerning identification and placement and any recommendations regarding special education programs and services.

Also attending are;

- ✓ the IPRC members; the principal of your child's school;
- ✓ your child (students 16 and over may attend and participate);
- ✓ your child's teacher, other resource people, special education staff, board support staff or an agency representative.
- ✓ a representative who may support you or your child; and/or
- ✓ an interpreter, if required (provided upon request).

Others may attend the meeting (e.g. an advocate) if requested.

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Prior to the IPRC meeting...

- √ the school principal will ensure that the results of any assessments have been discussed with you.
- √ you will receive a written copy of the information about your child that the Chair of the IPRC has received, such as assessment results or a summary of information.
- √ you may provide any written information to the school principal that you want the IPRC to review and consider.

DURING THE IPRC MEETING**During the IPRC meeting...**

The Chair of the IPRC will begin the meeting by introducing the committee members and outlining the purpose of the meeting.

The IPRC will review all available information about your child. They will:

- √ consider an education assessment of your child;
- √ consider, if they think it is necessary, a health or psychological assessment of your child. This assessment will be subject to the provisions of the 1996 Health Care Consent Act, and conducted by a qualified practitioner;
- √ interview your child, with your consent if the child is under 16, if they think it would be beneficial to do so;
- √ consider any information that your or your child submit; and
- √ discuss your child's strengths and education needs.

Throughout the meeting, you will be encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion. The committee may also discuss any proposal made about a special education program or service for your child. Once all the information has been presented and considered, the IPRC will make a decision concerning your child.

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The committee will consider...

1. Whether your child should be identified as exceptional. The Education Act defines an exceptional student as “a pupil whose behaviour, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program.” You may place a written request asking the school principal to refer your child to an IPRC.

A “special education” program is defined by the Education Act as an educational program that:

- ✓ is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation;
- ✓ includes an Individual Education Place (IEP) containing specific expectations and an outline of special education services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil.

2. What Category and Definition of exceptionality applies to your child, according to those provided by Ontario’s Ministry of Education. These include:

- ✓ Behaviour
- ✓ Communication – Autism, Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Language, Speech or Learning Impairment
- ✓ Intellectual – Giftedness, Mild Intellectual Disability, Developmental Disability
- ✓ Physical – Physical Disability, Blind and Low Vision
- ✓ Multiple Exceptionalities

3. The most appropriate placement for your child, if identified as exceptional. In making this decision the IPRC must first consider whether placement in a regular classroom with appropriate special education services will:

- ✓ best meet your child’s needs; and
- ✓ be consistent with your preferences.

Specific placement options include:

- ✓ regular classroom with monitoring;
- ✓ regular classroom with resource assistance and/or withdrawal; or
- ✓ fully self-contained or partially integrated special education class.

Preference is given to keeping a child in his or her local school with the appropriate program and service supports. If the committee decides that your child should be placed in a special education class, it must state the reasons for that decision in its written statement of decision.

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The IPRC written statement of decision will state:

- ✓ your child's strengths and needs;
- ✓ whether the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional;
- ✓ Where the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional – the category and definition of exceptionality;
- ✓ The IPRC's placement decision, and the reasons for placement in a special education class, if that is the decision; and
- ✓ The IPRC's recommendations regarding a special education program and special education services.

AFTER THE IPRC'S DECISION

If you agree with the IPRC decision concerning identification and placement, you will be asked to sign the IPRC Statement of Decision. You may sign the statement at the IPRC meeting, or take it home for further consideration.

If the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional and you have agreed with its identification and placement decision, the Board will promptly notify the school principal of the need to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for your child.

WHAT IS AN IEP?

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written plan describing the special education program/service that your child requires as an exceptional student. It is developed in consultation with you. It includes:

- ✓ Specific educational expectations;
- ✓ An outline of the special education program and services that will be received;
- ✓ A statement about the methods used to review your child's progress; and;
- ✓ A plan for transition, for students with Autism and for students 14 and older.

The IEP must be completed within 30 school days of your child's placement in a special education program. The school principal will ensure that you receive a copy of this plan.

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If you do not agree with either the identification or placement decision made by the IPRC, you may:

- √ Within 15 days of receipt of the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss your concerns – or your child’s concerns, if he or she is 16 years or older.

A second meeting will be held as soon as possible after the request has been received. The IPRC will determine if it will change its decision(s), or not, while you are present. If you remain dissatisfied, you may appeal the decision(s) of the IPRC.

HOW TO APPEAL AN IPRC DECISION

You can appeal an IPRC decision by filing a notice of appeal within 30 days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 days of receipt of the decision made during the second meeting. Appeals should be addressed to:

**Director of Education
Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board
90 Ontario Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6B 6G7**

The notice of appeal must state which of the IPRC decisions you are appealing and your reasons for disagreeing with the committee.

APPEAL BOARD MEMBERS

A special education appeal board consists of three members, none of whom has had any prior involvement with the matter under appeal. The committee has:

- √ One member selected by the Board;
- √ One member selected by you, the parent(s); and
- √ A Chair selected jointly by the other two members, or by the appropriate district manager of the Ministry of Education if the two members are unable to agree on the Chair.

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The Chair of the appeal board will arrange a meeting within 30 days of being selected (unless the school board and the parents both provide written consent to a later date).

The appeal board will receive the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview anyone who may be able to contribute information about the matter under appeal. You and your child (over the age of 16) will be invited to attend and participate in discussions.

The appeal board will make its recommendation(s) within 3 days of the date of the meeting. It may:

- ✓ Agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented; or
- ✓ Disagree with the IPRC and make a recommendation to the school board about your child's identification, placement, or both. The appeal board will send a written report of its recommendations and reasons to you and the school board.

IMPLEMENTING APPEAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Within 30 days of receiving the appeal board's written statement, the school board will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations.

(PLEASE NOTE: school boards are not required to follow the appeal board recommendations)

You may accept the decision of the school board, or you may appeal to a **Special Education Tribunal**. You may request a hearing by writing to the tribunal's secretary. Information about applying to the tribunal will be included with the appeal board's decision.

IDENTIFICATION & PLACEMENT REVIEWS

A review IPRC meeting is held within the school year, unless you notify the school principal that you feel it is unnecessary and that your child is being served well by the current identification and placement.

You may request a review IPRC any time after your child has been in a special education program for three months.

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A review IPRC considers:

- ✓ The information originally considered in making the initial identification and placement decision;
- ✓ The progress your child has made in relation to the IEP; and
- ✓ The original placement and identification decisions and whether they should continue or whether different decisions are in order.

BOARD PROGRAMS & SERVICES

The Board offers several program options in special education for students of all exceptionalities including:

- ✓ regular classroom setting with support services in place;
- ✓ withdrawal from the classroom for instruction; and
- ✓ special education self-contained classrooms that address the needs of exceptional children.

The Board also provides services in the areas of counseling, psychological testing, Autism Spectrum disorder support and language therapy.

For more information about special education services and programs, you can review the Board's Special Education Plan at your child's school, the Board office or on the Board's website at www.hscdsb.on.ca

WHAT IS SEAC?

SEAC is the acronym for Special Education Advisory Committee. It is legally mandated by the Ministry of Education and includes representation from Board Trustees, community agencies/associations, as well as members at large (parents). It operates to ensure that exceptional students receive appropriate educational services.

- ✓ SEAC may make recommendations to the Board concerning the establishment of special education programs and services.
- ✓ SEAC provides information, advice and assistance to parents and guardians whose children may require additional support.

All parents and community residents are welcome to attend our Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meetings. Contact the Board's Special Education Department at 945-5677 for dates and locations.

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Algoma Family Services
705-945-5050

Algoma Public Health
Infant Development Program
705-942-4646

Autism Ontario
Sault Ste. Marie Chapter
705-759-5965

Brain Injury Association of
Sault Ste. Marie & District
705-946-0172

Canadian National Institute
for the Blind
705-949-2610
1-800-743-0530

Canadian Hearing Society
705-946-4320

Canadian Mental Health
705-759-0458

North East Local Health Integration
Network (NELHIN)
705-949-1650

THRIVE
Child Development Centre
705-759-1131

Sault Ste. Marie
Down Syndrome Society
705-949-3496

Community Living Algoma
705-759-1700

Easter Seal Society
Sault Ste. Marie District Office
705-256-6112
1-800-316-5730

Learning Disabilities Association
of Sudbury
705-522-0100
1-855-522-0100

North Shore Tribal Council
705-356-1691
705-759-7285

Child & Community Resources
705-942-7267

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The Ministry of Education operates provincial and demonstration schools throughout Ontario for students who are deaf, blind, deaf-blind, and severely learning-disabled, as well as for those with learning disabilities in association with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Residential programs are offered at the schools Monday to Friday, for students who live too far from the school to travel daily.

Demonstration Schools

**Amethyst
Demonstration School**
1090 Highbury Ave.
London ON
N5Y 4V9
519-453-4400

**Trillium
Demonstration School**
347 Ontario St. S.
Milton ON
L9T 3X9
905-878-2851

**Sagonska
Demonstration School**
350 Dundas St. W.
Belleville ON
K8P 1B2
613-967-2830

NOTE: These schools are for English speaking students with severe learning disabilities and learning disabilities in association with ADHD.

Schools for the Deaf

**Ernest C. Drury School
for the Deaf**
255 Ontario St. S.
Milton ON
LT9 2M5
905-878-2851

**The Sir James Whitney
School**
350 Dundas St. W.
Belleville ON
K8P 1B2
613-967-2823

**The Robarts School
for the Deaf**
1090 Highbury Ave.
London ON
N5Y 4V9
519-453-4400

**School for the Blind
and Deaf-Blind**

**W. Ross Macdonald
School**
350 Brant Ave.
Brantford ON
N3T 3J9
519-759-0730

**Francophone School for the Deaf and
Those with Learning Disabilities**

Centre Jules-Leger
281 Lanark Ave.
Ottawa ON
K1Z 6R8
613-761-9300
(ATS) 613-761-9302

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Special Education Catholic Curriculum Coordinator
100A Ontario Avenue
Sault Ste. Marie, ON
P6B 1E3

☎ **705-945-5677**
☎ **1-800-267-0754**

Special Education Consultant
P.O. Box 399
Blind River, ON
P0R 1B0

☎ **705-356-6781**
☎ **1-800-267-0754**



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