



District School Board Ontario North East

Special Education Guide for Parents and Students

The Education Act requires that School Boards provide Special Education programs and services for the “exceptional” students. This guide has been designed to provide you with information about the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), and to set out for you the procedures involved in identifying a student as exceptional, determining the student’s placement, or appealing such decisions if you do not agree with the IPRC. If, after reading this guide, you require more information, please contact the principal of your child’s school or visit our website: <https://www.dsb1.ca/Programs/Special%20Education/Pages>. If you wish to receive this guide in Braille, large print, or audio format, please contact the principal of your child’s school. When used in this guide, the word “parent” includes guardian.



District School Board Ontario North East believes that:

- Every student is a valued and welcomed member of our learning community;
- All children and youth have unique strengths, and can succeed given the necessary support, services and programming;
- All students should be educated in an environment of learning which will assist in developing their maximum, individual potential;
- It is a continuous pursuit to develop and implement the programs and services that will both address the needs of the learner and reflect the beliefs of the board.

Our Vision: *Empowering all learners to achieve personal excellence.*

Our Mission: *Together, we inspire innovation and a passion for learning.*

Our Priorities: **EQUITY INNOVATION CULTURE**

What is an IPRC?

Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards set up Identification, Placement, and Review Committees (IPRCs). An IPRC is composed of at least three people, appointed by the Board, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer of the Board.

What is the function of an IPRC?

An IPRC will:

- decide whether or not your child should be identified as exceptional;
- identify the areas of your child's exceptionality (according to the categories and definitions provided by the Ministry of Education and Training);
- decide an appropriate placement for your child; and
- review the identification and placement at least once in each school year, unless waived by the parent.

Who is identified as an exceptional student?

The Education Act defines an exceptional student as *"a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical, or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to benefit from placement in a Special Education program"*. Students are identified according to the categories and definitions provided by the Ministry of Education. A copy of these can be provided by the principal of your child's school.

What is a Special Education program?

A Special Education program is defined in the Education Act as an educational program that:

- is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation; and
- includes a plan (called an Individual Education Plan or IEP) containing specific objectives and an outline of Special Education services that meet the needs of the student and include a range of placement options.

What are Special Education services?

Special Education services are the resources, including support staff and equipment required for development and implementation of the Special Education program.

A student does NOT have to be formally identified by the IPRC process to benefit from Special Education programs and/or services.

What is an IEP?

An IEP is an Individual Education Plan developed for your child in consultation with parents and the student, (where the student is 16 years of age or older).

It must include:

- a description of the student's strengths and needs and specific educational expectations;
- an outline of the special education program and services that will be received;
- a statement about the methods by which your child's progress will be reviewed; and
- a transition plan that includes the specific goals, actions required, person(s) responsible for actions, and timelines for each educational transition where the student requires support.

The IEP must be completed within 30 school days after placement in a program as determined by the IPRC. The IEP will be placed in the student's Ontario School Record (OSR) and parents will receive a copy. An IEP may be developed for students who are receiving special education supports and services, but have not been formally identified as exceptional. For more information on the IEP, please refer to the Special Education in Ontario Policy and Resource Guide. (2017)

How can parents be involved in developing their child's IEP?

Parents can assist with the development of the IEP by:

- participating in the IEP process;
- advocating for their child's best interests;
- providing information about their child's likes, dislikes, learning styles, interests, and reactions to situations, and about the talents and skills their child demonstrates in the home and community;
- reinforcing and extending the educational efforts of the teacher by providing opportunities to practice and maintain skills in the home; and
- maintaining open communication with the school.

How is an IPRC meeting requested?

The principal of your child's school:

- must convene an IPRC meeting for your child, within 15 days of receiving your written request;
- may (with written notice to you) refer your child to an IPRC when the principal and the child's teacher (or teachers) believe that your child may benefit from a special education program.

May parents attend the IPRC meeting?

Regulation 181/98 entitles parents and pupils (16 years of age and older):

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

Who else may attend the IPRC meeting?

- other resource people such as your child's teacher, special education staff, board support staff, or the representative of an agency, who may provide further information or clarification;
- any person you may wish to speak on your behalf or support you and your child; and
- an interpreter, if one is required. (You may request the services of an interpreter through the principal of your child's school.)
- students aged 16 and over, or by invitation of parents if younger.

At least 10 days in advance of the meeting, the Chair of the IPRC will provide you with written notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend the meeting as an important partner in considering your child's placement. This letter will notify you of the date, time, and place of the meeting, and it will ask you to indicate whether you will attend. Parents or the principal of the student's school may make a request for the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting. As a courtesy, the Chair of the IPRC should be notified in advance of any representative or additional resource personnel invited to attend. Before the IPRC meeting occurs, you will receive a written copy of any information about your child that the Chair of the IPRC has received. This may include the results of assessments and a summary of information.

What if parents are unable to make the scheduled meeting?

If you are unable to make the scheduled meeting, you may:

- contact the school principal to arrange an alternative date or time; or
- let the school principal know you will not be attending, and as soon as possible after the meeting, the principal will forward to you, for your consideration and signature, the IPRC's written statement of decision noting the decision of identification and placement and any recommendations regarding special education programs and services.

What happens at an IPRC meeting?

The Chair introduces everyone and explains the purpose of the meeting. The IPRC will review all available information about your child:

- consider any reports that have been received by a professional;
- consider (subject to the provisions of the Health Care Consent Act, 1996) health or psychological assessments of your child conducted by a qualified practitioner if the committee feels that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
- consider any information that you submit about your child or that your child submits if he or she is 16 years of age or older;
- identify the student's strengths and areas of need.

The committee may discuss any proposal for special education services for the child. The committee members will discuss any such proposal at your request (or at the request of your child if the child is 16 years of age or older). Parents are encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion. Following the discussion, after all information has been presented and considered, the committee will make its decision.

What will the IPRC consider in making its placement decision?

Before the IPRC can consider placing your child in a special education class, it must consider whether placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services will:

- meet your child's needs; and
- be consistent with your preferences.

If, after considering all of the information presented to it, the IPRC is satisfied that placement in a regular class will meet your child's needs and that such a decision is consistent with your preference, the committee will decide in favor of placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services. 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.

What will the IPRC's written *Statement of Decision* include?

The IPRC's written *Statement of Decision* will state:

- whether the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional;
- where the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional, the following information:
 - the categories and definitions of any exceptionalities identified as defined by the Ministry of Education
 - the IPRC's description of your child's strengths and needs;
 - the IPRC's placement decision; and
 - the IPRC's recommendations regarding a special education program and special education services;
- where the IPRC has decided that your child should be placed in a special education class, the reasons for that decision.

What happens after the IPRC has made its decision?

If you agree with the IPRC decision, you will be asked to indicate, by signing your name, that you agree with the identification, placement and decisions made by the IPRC.

If the IPRC has identified your child as an exceptional student, and if you have agree with the IPRC identification and placement decisions, the board will promptly notify the principal of the school at which the special education program is to be provided of the need to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for your child.

Once a child has been placed in a Special Education program, can the placement be reviewed?

A review IPRC meeting will be held within the school year, unless the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from you, the parent, dispensing with the annual review. You may request an IPRC review meeting any time after your child has been in a special education program for 3 months.

What does the IPRC Review consider and decide?

With your written permission, the IPRC conducting the review will consider the progress your child has made in relation to the IEP. It will consider the same type of information that was originally considered by the IPRC, as well as any new information. The IPRC will review the placement and identification decisions and decide whether they should be continued or whether a different decision should now be made.

What can parents do if they disagree with the IPRC decision?

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
- within 30 days of receipt of the decision, file a written **notice of appeal** with the secretary of District School Board Ontario North East, P.O. Box 1020, Timmins, ON P4N 7H7

If you do not agree with the decision after the second meeting, you may file a Notice of Appeal within 15 days of your receipt of the decision.

If you do not consent to the IPRC decision but you do not appeal it, the Board will instruct the principal to implement the IPRC decision.

How do I appeal an IPRC decision?

- If you disagree with the IPRC's identification of your child as exceptional or with the placement decision of the IPRC, you may, within 30 days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 days of receipt of the decision from the second meeting described above, give written notification of your intention to appeal the decision to Secretary of District School Board Ontario North East, P.O. Box 1020, Timmins, ON P4N 7H7

What happens in the appeal process?

The appeal process involves the following steps:

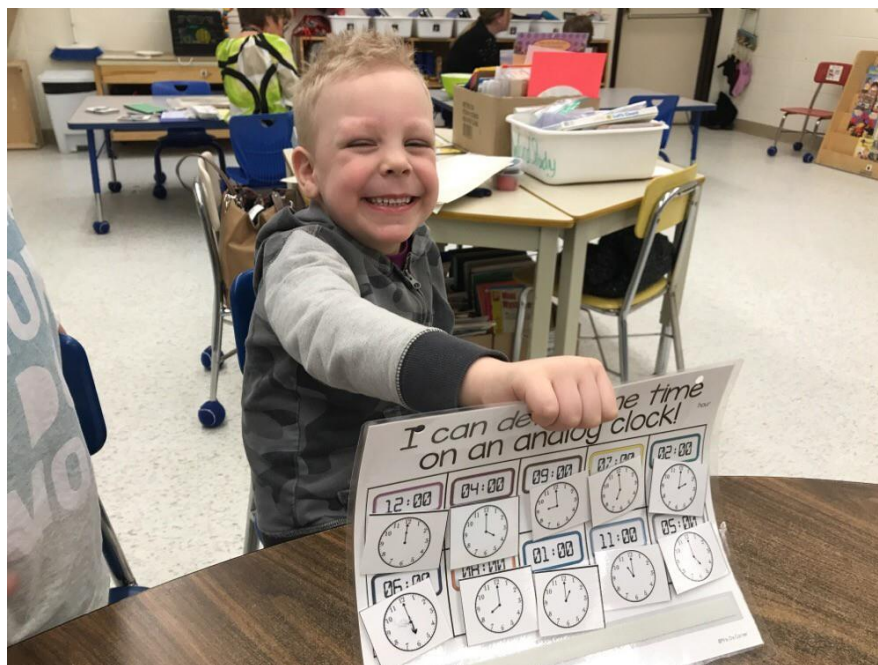
- The Board will establish a special education appeal board to hear your appeal. The appeal board will be composed of three persons (one of whom is to be selected by you, the parent) who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal.

- The Chair of the appeal board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 days after the Chair has been selected (unless parents and Board both provide written consent to a later date).
- The appeal board will receive the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview any persons who may be able to contribute information about the matter under appeal.
- You, the parent, and your child if he or she is 16 years or older, are entitled to be present at, and to participate in, all discussions.
- The appeal board must make its recommendation within 3 days 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 Board about your child's identification, placement, or both.
- The appeal board will report its recommendations, in writing, to you and to the school board, providing the reasons for its 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 (board's are not required to follow the appeal board recommendation).
- 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 secretary of the Special Education Tribunal. Information about making an application to the tribunal will be included with the appeal board's decision.

Appeal Action

Within 30 days of receiving the appeal board's written statement, the Board will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations (boards are not required to follow the appeal board recommendation).

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



What are the Ministry's Provincial Demonstration Schools?

The ministry operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools throughout Ontario for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, who are blind or have low vision, who are deafblind, and/or who have severe learning disabilities, as well as those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Residential programs are offered at the schools Monday to Friday, for students who live too far from school to travel daily.

SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND DEAF-BLIND W. ROSS MACDONALD SCHOOL 350 Brant Avenue Brantford, ON N3T 3J9 Tel: 519-759-0730 or 1-866-618-9092 www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/wross/index.html	SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, BLIND, AND DEAF-BLIND French-language Provincial School for the Deaf and Demonstration School for students with severe learning disabilities CENTRE JULES-LÉGER 281 Lanark Avenue Ottawa, ON K1Z 6R Tel: 613-761-9300 TTY: 613-761-9302 http://www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/cjl.html
SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF THE ERNEST C. DRURY SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF 255 Ontario Street, South Milton, Ontario L9T 2M5 Tel: (905) 878-2851 TTY: 905-878-7195 www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/ecd/index.html THE ROBERTS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF 1515 Cheapside St London, Ontario N5V 3N9 Tel: 519-453-4400 TTY: 519-453-4400 THE SIR JAMES WHITNEY SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF 350 Dundas Street West Belleville, ON K8P 1B2 Tel: 613-967-2823 or 1-800-501-6240 TTY: 613-967-2823 www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/sjw/index.html	PROVINCIAL DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS The Ministry of Education provides the services of four provincial Demonstration Schools for Ontario children with severe learning disabilities. AMETHYST SCHOOL 1515 Cheapside St London, Ontario N5Y 3N9 Tel: (519) 453-4400 www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/amethyst/index.html CENTRE JULES-LÉGER 281 Avenue Lanark Ottawa, Ontario K1Z 6R8 Tel: (613) 761-9300 TTY: (613) 761-9302 and 761-9304 SAGONASKA SCHOOL 350 Dundas Street, West Belleville, Ontario K8P 1B2 Tel: (613) 967-2830 www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/sagonaska/index.html TRILLIUM SCHOOL 347 Ontario Street, South Milton, Ontario L9T 3X9 Tel: (905) 878-8428 www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/trillium/index.html

What organizations are available to assist parents?

The ministry and local associations are available to assist parents who have questions or require additional information to support their child with special needs.

Autism Ontario www.autismontario.com	Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons www.cfpdp.com
Canadian Hearing Society of Ontario www.chs.ca	Canadian National Institute for the Blind www.cnib.ca
Cochrane Timiskaming Children's Treatment Center www.ctctc.org	Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre www.ctrc.on.ca
Community Living Timmins www.communitylivingtimmins.com	Developmental Services Ontario www.dsontario.ca
Down Syndrome Association of Ontario www.dsao.ca	Easter Seals Canada www.easterseals.ca and www.access2card.ca
Kunuwanimano Child & Family Services www.kunuwanimano.ca	HANDS The Family Help Network www.thefamilyhelpnetwork.ca
North East Community Care Access Centre www.healthcareathome.ca	Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario www.ldao.ca
North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services www.neofacs.org	North East Local Health Integration Network www.nelhin.on.ca
Porcupine Health Unit www.porcupinehu.on.ca	One Kids Place www.onekidsplace.ca
Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada www.tourettesyndromeontario.ca	Timiskaming Health Unit www.timiskaminghu.com
VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children www.voiceforkids.com	

Where can parents/guardians obtain additional information?

Additional information can be obtained by contacting:

- Your **school principal**, or
- **Superintendent of Special Education**,
District School Board Ontario North East,
153 Croatia Avenue
Schumacher, ON P0N 1G0
(705) 360-1151 or 1(800) 381-7280