

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

UNDERSTANDING THE IPRC PROCESS: A PARENT GUIDE

Parent Information

The purpose of this parent guide is to provide you with information about the Identification, Appendix 2.4.3 Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), and to set out for you the procedures involved in identifying a pupil as "exceptional", deciding the pupil'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 your child's school or one of our two the School Board Offices.

What does the word "exceptional" mean when it is used to describe a child?

The use of the term "exceptional pupil" is required by the Ministry of Education and Training and means "a pupil whose behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that the pupil is considered to need placement in a special education program by a committee of the board." This committee is called Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). Student are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education and Training.

What is the school board's responsibility under the Education Act?

According to the Education Act, all school-age children are entitled to a publicly supported education. Pupils who are exceptional have a right to special education programs and services, which are suited to their needs. The Education Act requires Boards to provide, or obtain from another Board, special education programs and services for all of their exceptional students. It also provides an appeal procedure for parents who disagree with the appropriateness of their child's placement in a special education program.

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 strategies that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil.

What are special education services?

Special education services are defined in the Education Act as the facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

What types of programs and placements are available?

Most students continue to attend their home school and will follow a program that has been developed by the school and system resource personnel. This may require that part of their day be spent in a smaller resource setting, or resource support may be an integrated part of in-class activity. Self-contained programs for students with specific needs are also available. In all cases, integration into the regular classroom is always a goal, where appropriate.

Schools will provide parents with information about the range of academic and extra-curricular opportunities available within the school in order to recognize the student's strengths and to meet their needs.

If I believe that my child needs special education services, how can I arrange that?

You would discuss it with the principal of your child's school. The principal may, after notifying you, refer your child to an Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), or you may write to the principal of your child's school to request that your child be referred to the IPRC. The principal must, on your written request,

refer your child to the committee. Within 15 days of receiving your request or giving you notice, the principal must provide you with a copy of the guide and advise you of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

What is an IPRC?

The Identification, Placement and Review Committee is composed of at least three persons, one of who must be a principal or supervisory officer of the board. Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards set up IPRCs.

What is the role of the IPRC?

The 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 for exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education and Training
- decide an appropriate placement for your child (information on placement options is available through the school personnel)
- review the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

What are the categories of exceptionalities and definitions?

Behaviour

A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

- a) an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships;
- b) excessive fears or anxieties;
- c) a tendency to compulsive reaction; or
- d) an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof.

Communication

1. Autism - a severe learning disorder that is characterized by: a) disturbance in: rate of education development; ability to relate to the environment; mobility; perception, speech, and language. b) lack of the representational symbolic behaviour that precedes language.
2. Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing
An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.
3. Language Impairment
A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may:
 - a. involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and
 - b. include one or more of the following:
 - i. language delay;
 - ii. dysfluency;
 - iii. voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.
4. Speech Impairment
A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm and stress.

Learning Disability

A learning disorder evident in both academic and social situations that involves one or more of the processes necessary for the proper use of spoken language or the symbols of communication, and that is characterized by a condition that:

is not primarily the result of:

- impairment of vision;
- impairment of hearing;
- physical disability;
- developmental disability;
- primary emotional disturbance;
- cultural difference; and

results in a significant discrepancy between academic achievement and assessed intellectual ability, with deficits in one or more of the following:

- receptive language (listening, reading);
- language processing (thinking, conceptualizing, integrating);
- expressive language (talking, spelling, writing);
- mathematical computations.

may be associated with one or more conditions diagnosed as:

- a perceptual handicap;
- a brain injury;
- minimal brain dysfunction;
- dyslexia;
- developmental aphasia.

Intellectual

1. Giftedness

An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.

2. Mild Intellectual Disability

A learning disorder characterized by:

- an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service;
- an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development;
- a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

Developmental Disability

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

- an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development;
- an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development;
- a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

Physical

A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or developmental level.

Blind and Low Vision

A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.

Multiple

Multiple Exceptionalities

A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities, that is of such nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

What procedures must be followed by the IPRC?

The principal of the school shall, within 15 days of your child's referral to the IPRC, provide you with a copy of the parent guide outlining the procedures and processes of the IPRC and will let you know approximately when the committee expects to meet for the first time to discuss your child.

An educational assessment will be obtained to help the IPRC with its decisions. If the committee feels that a health assessment or a psychological assessment of your child is also required for the committee to make its decisions, it may request these assessments. The IPRC can request information that is contained in the Ontario Student Record, but only with your written permission.

Before any decisions regarding your child's possible placement, the IPRC shall consider whether placement in a regular classroom with special education services would meet your child's needs and that this is consistent with your preferences. If the committee agrees that placement in a regular classroom is best and you agree, then the committee shall decide in favor of a regular classroom placement 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.

Who can attend an IPRC meeting?

Parents are entitled to be present at the meeting and participate in all committee discussions about your child, and to be present when the committee's identification and placement decision is made. You are welcome to bring a supportive person with you. This could be a friend, a professional or an Association representative. Either you or the principal of your child's school may make a request for the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting.

This may include:

- a resource person 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;
- your representative - that is, a person who may support you or speak on behalf of you or your child; (For your information, a list of support people is listed with this guide.)
- an interpreter, if one is required. (You can request the services of an interpreter through the principal of your child's school.)
- Anyone is welcome to attend, but you are asked to let the principal know if others will be attending in order for time and space provisions to be made.

What information will parents receive about the IPRC meeting?

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.

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 or 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, Central Office will forward to you, for your consideration and signature, the IPRC's written statement of decision noting the 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. The members will:

- consider an educational assessment of your child;
- consider, subject to the provisions of the Health Care Consent Act, 1996, a health or psychological assessment of your child conducted by a qualified practitioner if they feel that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
- interview your child, with your consent if your child is less than 16 years of age, if they feel it would be useful to do so; and
- 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.

The committee may discuss any proposal that has been made about a special education program or special education services for the child. The committee 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.

You are encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion. Following the discussion, after the information has been presented and considered, a decision will be made.

As soon as possible after the decision is made, the chair of the IPRC shall send a written statement to you, and to your child, if 16 years of age or older, to the principal who referred your child, and to the school board's representative on the committee.

What is in this written statement of decision?

The statement of decision states whether the committee has identified your child as an exceptional pupil. If your child is identified as exceptional the statement gives the placement decision, assessment of your child's strengths and needs, as well as the category and definition of your child's exceptionality. If you are in agreement with the decision, your written signature will be requested for the placement to begin.

How soon can the placement decision take place?

The decision cannot be implemented until you consent in writing to the placement, or the time period for filing a notice of appeal has expired. The principal of your child's school is notified about the placement and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed.

What is an Individual Education Plan?

An Individual Education Plan or IEP outlines the specific educational objectives for your child, outlines the special education services needed by your child, and explains how your child's progress will be evaluated. The IEP is developed through collaboration with the principal, the classroom teacher, the resource teacher and the parents, and the student if 16 years of age or older. This will be completed in 30 days after the placement begins. You are encouraged to participate in the development of the IEP and you will receive a copy.

For students 14 years and older (except for those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness), a plan for transition to appropriate post-secondary school activities, such as work, further education, and community living must be included.

How often is my child's placement reviewed?

A committee shall review the identification and placement of your child at least once each school year. You are entitled to waive this yearly review if you agree with the continuation of the program. (In addition you may in writing request a review or the principal of the school that your child attends may request a review after your

child's placement has been in effect for three months.) Before any changes in placement are made, you will be involved in the discussion. You must agree in writing to such changes in placement.

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 the 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 Director of Education (refer to back of Guide for the correct address.)

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 and you do not appeal it, the board will instruct the principal to implement the IPRC decision, following the 30-day appeal period.

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 the Director of Education (refer to back of Guide for the correct address).

The notice of appeal must:

- indicate the decision with which you disagree; and
- include a statement that sets out your reasons for disagreeing.