



**PARENTS' GUIDE**  
**TO**  
**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**SEPTEMBER 2020**

*"Together We Educate Heart, Mind and Soul."*

## Mission:

To ensure an authentic Catholic Education for all with a commitment to gospel values in a culture of leading and learning through the following aspects:

## Our Vision:

To continue to be a spiritual community of learners who celebrate diversity and bear witness to Catholic values.

## Our Values:

We value:

- the presence of God in each person;
- an inclusive Catholic culture that instills compassion;
- hope, integrity, faithfulness, respect and self-worth;
- Catholic-based spiritual development; and student success.

The Education Act requires that school boards provide, or purchase from another board, special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils. The purpose of this parents' guide is 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 pupil as "exceptional" deciding the pupil's placement, or appealing such decisions if you do not agree with the IPRC.

## What is an IPRC (Identification, Placement & Review Committee)?

Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards set up an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). An IPRC is composed of at least 3 persons, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer of the board.

## 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 of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education;
- decide on an appropriate placement for your child; and
- review the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

## Who is Identified as an Exceptional Pupil?

The Education Act defines an exceptional pupil as “a pupil whose behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program .....” Students are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education.

## 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 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 is an IEP (Independent Education Plan)?

An IEP is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student. It identifies learning expectations that are modified from or alternative to the expectations given in the curriculum policy document for the appropriate grade and subject or course, and/or any accommodations and special education services needed to assist the student in achieving his or her learning expectations.

The IEPs of students who have no modified or alternative expectations will focus only on accommodations and services. The IEP is not a daily lesson plan itemizing every detail of the student's education. The IEP also helps teachers monitor the student's progress and provides a framework for communicating information about the student's progress to parents and to the student. The IEP is updated periodically to record any changes in the student's special education program and services that are found to be necessary as a result of continuous assessment and evaluation of the student's achievement of annual goals and learning expectations.

The IEP reflects the school board's and the principal's commitment to provide the special education program and services, within the resources available to the school board, needed to meet the identified strengths and needs of the student.

The IEP must be developed for your child, in consultation with you. It must include:

- 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
- for all students with an IEP (except those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness), a plan for transition.

The IEP must be completed within 30 days after your child has been placed in the program, and the principal must ensure that you receive a copy of it.

## How is an IPRC Meeting Requested?

The principal of your child's school:

- must request an IPRC meeting for your child, upon 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.

Within 15 days of receiving your request, or giving you notice, the principal must provide you with a copy of this guide and a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

## May Parents Attend the IPRC Meeting?

Regulation 181/98 entitles parents and pupils 16 years of age or 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 an IPRC Meeting?

- the principal of your child's school;
- 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;
- your representative — that is, a person who may support you or speak on behalf of you or your child; and
- an interpreter, if one is required. (You can request the services of an interpreter through the principal of your child's school.)

## Who may Request that Others Attend?

Either you or the principal of your child's school may make a request for the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting.

## 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 attend the Scheduled Meeting?

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

- contact the school principal to arrange an alternate 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. They 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 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. 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.
- You are encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion.
- Following the discussion, after all the information has been presented and considered, the committee will make its decision.

## What will the IPRC Consider in Making its Placement Decision?

The IPRC can consider placing your child in a special education class; however, 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 preferences, the committee will decide in favour of placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services.

## 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 categories and definitions of any exceptionalities identified, as they are defined by the Ministry of Education;

- o the IPRC's description of your child's strengths and needs;
- o the IPRC's placement decision; and
- o the IPRC's recommendations regarding a special education program and special education services.

## **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 and placement decisions made by the IPRC. The statement of decision may be signed at the IPRC meeting or taken home and returned.
- If the IPRC has identified your child as an exceptional pupil and you have agreed with the IPRC identification and placement decision, 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 a review IPRC meeting any time after your child has been in a special education program for 3 months.

## **What does a Review IPRC Consider and Decide?**

- The review IPRC considers the same type of information that was originally considered.
- With your written permission, the IPRC conducting the review will consider the progress your child has made in relation to the IEP.



- 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 notice of appeal.
- 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.

## 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 Secretary of the Board.

The notice of appeal must:

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

## 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 he or she 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 over, are entitled to be present at, and participate in, all discussions.
- The appeal board must make its recommendation within 3 days of the meeting ending.
- It may:
  - Agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented; or
  - Disagree with the IPRC and made 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 (boards 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.

## What Special Education Programs and Services are Provided by the Board?

The Superior North Catholic District School Board endeavours to provide the necessary services for its exceptional children. Our focus is to integrate exceptional children as fully as possible. In our on-site approach to Special Education we currently provide the following methods of service delivery:

- Regular classroom

- Regular classroom with program modifications
- Regular classroom with support
- Regular classroom with resource withdrawal

Access to special programs and services for students with special needs is through an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)

All schools have Special Education Resource (Learning for All) Teachers to provide support to the classroom teachers and to assist them with any program modifications for students with special needs. They also provide direct instruction to individual students and small groups of students based on identified needs.

Educational Assistants are assigned to students with demonstrated and documented high needs. Funding is provided by Special Education Per Pupil Amount (SEPPA) and Special Equipment Amount (SEA) grants from the Ministry of Education. Personal special education equipment is funded by the board and the Ministry of Education. Specialized equipment may be provided for students with demonstrated and documented high needs (Special Education Amount - SEA).

## The Special Education Advisory Committee

Legislation requires that all school boards in Ontario have Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). For more information on SEAC, parents may contact their child's school for a brochure.

## What are the Ministry's Provincial and Demonstration Schools?

The Ministry operates provincial and demonstration schools throughout Ontario for deaf, blind, deaf-blind, and severely learning-disabled students, 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.

## Demonstration schools for students with ADHD and severe learning disabilities:

[Amethyst Demonstration School](#)

1515 Cheapside St. London, ON N5Y 3N9  
Phone:(519) 453-4400 Fax: (519) 453-4193

**Schools for the deaf:**

Ernest C. Drury School  
255 Ontario Street South, Milton, ON L9T 2M5  
Phone: (905) 878-2851 Fax: (905) 878-1354 TTY:(905) 878-7195

**School for the blind and deaf-blind:**

W. Ross Macdonald School  
350 Brant Avenue, Brantford, ON N3T 3J9  
Phone:(519) 759-0730 Fax: (519) 759-4741

**For additional information please contact the following schools:**

Kyle Thomson  
Principal  
St. Joseph School  
Phone: (807) 854-0811

Tim Griffin  
Principal  
Our Lady of Fatima School  
Phone: (807) 876-2213

Terri Harmer  
Principal  
Holy Saviour School  
Phone: (807) 229-1121

Aaron Baker  
Principal  
Our Lady of Lourdes  
Phone: (807) 826-3521

Kim Figliomeni  
Principal  
Holy Angels School  
Phone: (807) 824-2553

B.J. Roman-Mercier  
Principal  
St. Edward School  
Phone: (807) 887-2810

Angela Gainer  
Principal  
St. Hilary School  
Phone: (807) 886-2661

Kerry Desjardins  
Superintendent of Education  
Superior North Catholic DSB  
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Lindsay Costa  
Principal  
St. Martin School  
Phone: (807) 825-3255