



A Parent Guide to IPRC Process

IDENTIFICATION

PLACEMENT

REVIEW

COMMITTEE

Our Mission:

“As disciples of Christ, we educate and nurture hope in all learners to realize their full potential to transform God’s world.”

Our Vision:

“Our Catholic Schools: heart of the community -- success for each, a place for all.”

The Education Act requires each school board to provide Special Education programs and services for their exceptional students. The purpose of this Parent's Guide is to provide information to parents about the IPRC process. It outlines the procedures involved in identifying a student as exceptional, deciding upon the student's placement, or appealing such decisions. At any time, parents are encouraged to contact the principal of their child's school if they have any questions or wish to access Special Education services for their child. Throughout this brochure, parent will mean one or both parents or guardians.

The Board's philosophy of Special Education is based on ongoing collaboration with all stakeholders including parents, students, staff, and community partners. The commitment of collaboration and continuous gathering of feedback is reflected by the Board's Special Education Service Delivery Model and the IEP and IPRC processes. This ***informal and continuous consultation with parents, students, staff, and community partners*** represents an important first step in the Board's consultation process.

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

Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards establish an IPRC. An IPRC is composed of at least three persons, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer of the board. In WCDSB, the IPRC is composed of the Principal and the Special Education teacher of the student's school and the Special Education Liaison serving the school. Upon the written request of parents, the principal of the school refers the student to the IPRC. This committee, along with other appropriate school or resource personnel, the parent, and the student (if the student is 16 years of age or older) meets at the student's school to discuss the student's needs.

The purpose of the IPRC is to serve several key functions:

- Determine the student's strengths and needs
- Determine whether or not the student should be identified as exceptional
- Once identified as exceptional, identify the student's exceptionality according to Ministry of Education categories and definitions
- Recommend program placement, followed by the development/revision of an IEP

Discussions and recommendations related to Special Education programs and services may also take place.

At least once every school year, the identification and placement are reviewed (see How are the Decisions of the IPRC Reviewed?).

Who Is An Exceptional Student?

The Education Act defines an exceptional student as one whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he/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 student.

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 Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

Each exceptional student must be provided with an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The IEP must be developed in consultation with the parent and must include:

- the specific educational expectations for the student;
- an outline of the Special Education program and services to be received by the student;
- a statement of the methods by which the student's progress will be reviewed;
- where the student is 14 years of age (or older) the IEP must include a plan for transition to appropriate post-secondary school activities, such as work, further education and community living.

The IEP must be completed within 30 days after the student has been placed in the program, and the parent will receive a copy of the completed IEP once consultation with parents and appropriate staff has taken place.

1. What Program Placements are Available for Exceptional Students?

The Waterloo Catholic District School Board offers to its students and their parents an inclusive and integrated programming and service structure. This is based on the Board's philosophy and mission as a Catholic learning community. The focus is on the individual student and his/her optimum development within the Catholic learning environment of age-appropriate peers.

With some few exceptions, this means that every student will attend her or his neighbourhood school, and will be assigned to a regular class and classroom teacher. In the delivery of Special Education programs and services, classroom teachers are supported by a variety of support personnel and resources such as Special Education teachers, educational assistants, members of a multidisciplinary team, specialized equipment, and partial individual or small group withdrawal to a learning resource centre. These supports and teaching strategies are outlined in his/her IEP. Changes in placement within this program service model are determined through the IPRC and/or IEP processes and involve significant communication with parents. Consistent with the model, Regulation 181/98 which governs the IPRC process, and the board's philosophy, placement in a regular class is the first option considered.

Although the foundation of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board is built on the principles of inclusive education and its preferred placement for students receiving Special Education programs and services is a regular classroom, occasionally, in co-operation with parents, students are served through

time limited partial and fully withdrawal placements. In general, three types of special education programs are delivered in one or more of the following combinations:

- a) Classroom Placement
- b) Classroom Placement with Special Education Support (either in class or withdrawal)
- c) Congregated Placement/Alternative Placement

The selection of one or more of the time limited partial or fully withdrawn placements is made when the needs expressed in the student's IEP are believed to be beyond our ability to respond to them effectively within an integrated setting. Notwithstanding our limitations, in such circumstance every effort is made to increase progressively, the quality and quantity of inclusive time spent with members of the school community both socially and academically.

What are the Provincial and Demonstration Schools?

The Provincial Schools Branch is a branch of the Learning and Curriculum Division of the Ministry of Education and is responsible for the administration of four provincial and three demonstration schools for Anglophone deaf, blind, deaf blind, and/or severely learning disabled students. It also operates Centre Jules- Léger which offers educational programs for Francophone students who are deaf, deaf blind and/or severely learning disabled. Residential programs are offered at the schools Monday to Friday, for students who live too far from school to travel daily.

Since provincial demonstration schools are designed to serve as a resource to school boards, rather than to function as a separate education system, every effort is made to help the student return as soon as possible to an appropriate program in his/her local community.

The Demonstration Schools for Learning Disabled students are:

Trillium Demonstration School,

347 Ontario Street South
Milton, ON L9T 3X9
(905) 878-2851

Amethyst Demonstration School

1515 Cheapside Street
London, ON N5V 3N9
(519) 453-4400

Sagonaska Demonstration School

350 Dundas Street West
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2
(613) 967-2830

The Provincial Schools are:

W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind

350 Brant Avenue,
Brantford ON N3T 3J9
(519) 759-0730
1-866-618-9092

Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf

255 Ontario Street South
Milton, ON L9T 3X9
(905) 878-2851
TTY: (905) 878-7195

The Robarts School for the Deaf

1515 Cheapside Street
London, ON N5V 3N9
(519) 453-4400
TTY: (519) 453-4400

Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf

350 Dundas Street West
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2
(613) 967-2823
1-800-501-6240
TTY: (613) 967-2823

Centre Jules-Léger School for the Deaf, Blind, and Deaf-Blind

281 Avenue Lanark
Ottawa, Ontario N1K 6R8
Tel.: (613) 761-9300

How is an IPRC Meeting Requested?

The parent or school principal may refer a child to an IPRC. In the case of a parent-initiated referral, a written request by the parent must be submitted to the school principal. Within 15 days of receiving a parent request or giving a parent notice, the principal must provide the parent with this guide as well as an acknowledgement of the parent's request, and a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet. The principal and parent should come to a mutual agreement as to a reasonable period of time for assessment activities. The parent will be kept informed of the progress of the referral and assessment process.

May Parents Attend the IPRC Meeting?

Parents, and students 16 years of age or older, are entitled to be present at and participate in all committee discussions about the student and to be present when the committee's identification and placement decision is made.

Who Else Can Attend the IPRC Meeting?

Others who may attend are the student's classroom teacher, board support staff, or the representative of an agency, who may provide further information or clarification; a representative of the parent or student 16 years of age or older (e.g., a person who may support the parent or speak on behalf of the parent or student); and an interpreter, if one is required. Parental requests for the services of an interpreter can be made through the principal of the student's school.

Either the parent or the school principal may request the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting.

What Information Will Parents Receive About the IPRC?

At least 10 days in advance of the meeting, parents will receive written notice of the meeting indicating the date, time, place of the meeting, and a request for parents to indicate whether they will attend. Before the IPRC meeting occurs, parents will receive a written copy of any information that has been gathered about the student. This may include the results of assessments or a summary of information. Informed written parental consent is required for all assessment procedures.

What if Parents Are Unable to Make the Scheduled Meeting?

If parents are unable to make the scheduled meeting they may:

- contact the school principal to arrange an alternate date and time; or
- let the school principal know they will not be attending

As soon as possible after the meeting, the principal will forward to the parents the IPRC's written statement of decision for consideration. Parents will be asked to sign the Parent Notice which along with the statement of decision, documents the decisions made by the IPRC.

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 the student. The committee will:

- consider an educational assessment of the student;
- subject to the Health Care Consent Act, consider a health or psychological assessment by a qualified practitioner if it is felt such an assessment is necessary to make a correct identification or placement decision;
- interview the student, with parent consent if the student is under 16 years of age, and the committee feels it would be helpful to do so; and
- consider any information that parents submit or that the student submits if he/she is 16 years of age or older. The committee may discuss any proposal about a Special Education program or Special Education services for the student, and will discuss any such proposal at the parent's request or at the request of the student if the student is 16 years of age or older.

If the committee recommends a congregated placement/alternative placement, it must state its reasons for so doing and it must first consider whether placement in a regular class with appropriate Special Education services will meet the student's needs and is consistent with the parent's preferences.

Parents are encouraged to ask questions and join in on the discussion.

Following the discussion, after all the information has been presented and considered, the committee will make its decision related to the exceptionality and the placement of the student.

IPRC Written Statement of Decision

The IPRC's Written Statement of Decision will state:

- whether or not the student is deemed exceptional;
- area of exceptionality as defined by the categories and definitions of exceptionality by the Ministry of Education;
- student's strengths and needs;
- placement decision;
- recommendations regarding Special Education programs and services if any have been made;

In the event that the IPRC decides that a student should be placed in a congregated/alternative placement, the reasons for that decision must be stated.

What Happens After the IPRC Decision?

- If parents agree with the decisions made, they will be asked to indicate this by signing the Parent Notice Form which states the decisions made related to exceptionality and placement and seeks consent for placement; no IPRC committee placement decision will be implemented unless a parent has consented to the decision, or the time limit for filing a notice of appeal in respect of the decision has expired and no such notice has been filed
- If the IPRC has identified the student as exceptional, and parents agree with the identification and placement decision, the student's school will develop or revise an IEP for the student

How are the Decisions of the IPRC Reviewed?

- a review IPRC meeting or annual review meeting will occur at least once a year unless the principal of the school receives written parental notice dispensing with the annual review
- parents can request a review IPRC meeting any time after the student has been in a Special Education program for 3 months

What Does a Review IPRC Consider and Decide?

- the review IPRC, or annual review, considers the same type of information that was originally considered; it will also consider any new information to that presented to the initial IPRC
- with written parental permission, the review will consider the progress the student 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 be made

What Can Parents Do If They Disagree with Decisions made at the IPRC?

If the parent does not agree with either the identification or placement decision made by the IPRC, the parent may,

- within 15 days of receipt of the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss their concerns; or

- within 30 days of receipt of the decision, file a notice of appeal with the Director of Education who is also Secretary of the Board;
- If parents do not agree with the decision after the second meeting, parents may file a notice of appeal within 15 days of receipt of the decision;
- If parents do not consent to the IPRC decision and do not appeal, the principal will be directed to implement the IPRC decision

The notice of appeal must:

- indicate the decision with which the parent disagrees; and
- include a statement that sets out the parent's reasons for disagreeing.

What Happens in the Appeal Process?

The appeal process involves the following:

- The board will establish a Special Education appeal board to hear the appeal. The appeal board will be composed of 3 people (one of whom is selected by the parent who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal)
- The Chair of the appeal board will schedule a meeting at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 days after they have been selected as Chair (unless both parents and the board give written consent to a later date)
- The appeal board will receive the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview people who may be able to provide information about the matter under appeal. The parent and the child; if he/she is 16 years of age or older, 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 make a recommendation to the board about the student's identification, placement or both

The appeal board will provide a written report of its recommendations to the parent and to the board. The report will include the reasons for its recommendations.

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

Parents can accept the decision or appeal to a Special Education Tribunal. Parents may request a hearing by writing to the secretary of the Special Education Tribunal. Information about making an appeal to the tribunal will be included in the appeal board's decision.

What Organizations are Available to Assist Parents?

Many community organizations are available to provide information and support to parents. Community organization members of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) are:

- Community Living Cambridge
- Waterloo Region Family Network

- Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy
- Waterloo Regional Police
- Waterloo Regional Down Syndrome Society
- Autism Society Ontario, Waterloo Region
- Family & Children's Services of Waterloo Region
- CNIB Southwest Region

Where Can Parents Obtain Additional Information?

Parents are encouraged to contact their school principal or the superintendent of Learning Services-Special Education at the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, 35 Weber St. W., Kitchener, Ontario (519) 578-3660 for further information. Parents are also invited to check the Community Resources, Links and Partnerships section of the WCDSB Special Education website. If parents require the IPRC Parent Guide in Braille, large print or audio format they are encouraged to contact Learning Services-Special Education at the Waterloo Catholic District School Board 35 Weber St. W., Kitchener, Ontario (519) 578-3660.

Areas of Exceptionality

There are 5 categories of exceptionality: Behaviour, Communication, Intellectual, Physical and Multiple.

They are defined as follows:

I. 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:

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

II. Communication

1. Autism

a) severe learning disorder that is characterized by

- disturbances in:
- rate of educational 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 the 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:
 - language delay;
 - dysfluency;
 - 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.

5. 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 is characterized by a condition that:

- a) is not primarily the result of:
 - impairment of vision;
 - impairment of hearing;
 - physical disability;
 - developmental disability;
 - primary emotional disturbance;
 - cultural difference;
- b) results in 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; and
- c) may be associated with one or more conditions diagnosed as:
 - a perceptual disability;
 - a brain injury;
 - minimal brain dysfunction;
 - dyslexia;

- developmental aphasia

III. 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:

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

3. Developmental Disability

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

- a) an inability to profit from a Special Education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development;
- b) an ability to profit from a Special Education program that is designated to accommodate slow intellectual development;
- c) a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support

IV. Physical

1. Physical Disability

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 the same age or development level.

2. Blind and Low Vision

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

V. Multiple

1. Multiple Exceptionalities

A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities, that is of such a 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.

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Waterloo Catholic District School Board



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