

# A PARENTS GUIDE TO

## Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)



Ontario's Education Act requires school boards to provide special education programs and services for children who need them.

School Boards are required to establish Identification, Placement, and Review Committees (IPRCs) to identify those students who need special education programs and services. These committees must have at least three people, one of whom must be a school principal or a Board supervisory officer. IPRCs follow a formal process governed by provincial law (Regulation 181/98).

The Rainy River District School Board is committed to student success. We recognize that students develop and learn in different ways, and that some students will require special education programs and services, tailored to meet their individual needs.

This Parent Guide explains how IPRCs identify students who need special educational programs, outlines your rights as a parent, and describes how your involvement will help to make good educational decisions for your child.

### **The IPRC:**

- decides whether a child should be identified as “exceptional.” (An *exceptional pupil* is defined as a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that they are considered to need placement in a special education program by a committee);
- identifies the category and area of exceptionality;
- decides on an appropriate placement for the child who is identified as exceptional; and
- reviews the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

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## BEFORE THE IPRC

The school principal may refer a child to an IPRC if they and the child's teacher believe the child would benefit from a special education program. You may also ask the principal of your child's school to refer your child to the IPRC. The request must be in writing. The principal will give you a written response within 15 days of receiving your request, with an indication of when the IPRC will meet.

You will receive a letter inviting you to the IPRC meeting. It will include the date, time, and location for the meeting. IPRC meetings may be held at your child's school. You will receive this Letter of Invitation at least 10 days before the IPRC, along with a copy of this guide.

Ongoing discussion with the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) at your child's school, well in advance of the IPRC meeting, should take place with suggestions/recommendations to what placement would benefit your child's strengths and needs. For more information, refer to **Parents' Guide to Special Education Services**, which can be found on the Board's website [www.rrdsb.com](http://www.rrdsb.com) under **Programs & Learning - Special Education**.

### Parents unable to attend the meeting should:

- contact the principal of your child's school to arrange an alternate date or time; or
- let the principal know that you cannot attend. The principal will contact you following the meeting to let you know the committee's decisions, and will forward to you, for your consideration, a written statement about the IPRC's decision concerning identification and placement.

### Who attends an IPRC meeting?

The committee must have at least three people, one of whom must be a principal or a Board supervisory officer.

Additional people who may attend:

- you and your child (students are welcome to attend as appropriate; students 16 or over are entitled to attend and participate in discussions)
- the principal of your child's school
- your child's teacher and other resource people such as special education staff, Board support staff, or an agency representative who may provide further information or clarification
- a representative who may support you or our child
- an interpreter, if required (provided by the school principal upon request)

### What information will the IPRC consider?

Prior to the IPRC, the school principal will ensure that the results of any assessments have been discussed with you. You will receive a written copy of any information about your child that the Chair of the IPRC has received, such as assessment results or a summary of information. You may also provide information to the committee. If you choose, you can give your school principal, in advance of the IPRC, any written information you want the IPRC to review and consider.

## DURING THE IPRC

The Chair of the IPRC will start the meeting by welcoming you and introducing the committee members to you. You will then have the opportunity to introduce yourself and your guests.

The IPRC Chair will outline the purpose of the meeting. You will be encouraged to join in the discussion. The committee will:

- review all relevant information about your child;
  - consider an educational assessment of your child;
  - consider a health or psychological assessment of your child if required;
  - interview your child (with parent consent if the child is under 16) if it is felt it would be beneficial to do so;
  - consider any information you or your child (if over 16) submit; and
  - discuss your child's strengths and needs.
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The committee may discuss any proposal made about a special education program or services for your child. Once all the information has been presented to the committee and considered, the IPRC will decide:

a) if your child should be identified as exceptional. If yes, the committee must indicate the Category (denoted by an \*) and definition of exceptionality according to those provided by Ontario's Ministry of Education:

- **Behaviour**  
Behaviour
- **Communication**  
Autism  
Deaf & Hard of Hearing  
Learning Disability  
Language Impairment
- **Physical**  
Blind and Low Vision  
Physical Disability
- **Intellectual**  
Developmental Disability  
Giftedness  
Mild Intellectual Disability
- **Multiple Exceptionality**

b) the most appropriate **placement** for your child who has been identified as exceptional:

- Regular classroom with Indirect Service;
- Regular classroom with Resource Assistance;
- Regular classroom with Withdrawal Assistance;
- Partially Integrated (Community Class or Student Support Services class); or
- Fully Self-Contained special education class.

Preference is given to keeping a child in their home school with the appropriate program and service supports. If the committee decides that a special education placement is required, it will first consider whether placement in a regular class with appropriate special education support will best meet your child's needs and whether such a placement is consistent with your wishes. If placement in a special education class is decided, the IPRC must cite the reasons 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 the IPRC's **identification decision**; whether your child has been **identified as exceptional**;
- specify where the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional; the category and definition of the exceptionalities (according to the Ministry of Education) and;
- your child's strengths and needs;
- state the IPRC's placement decision and the reasons for placement in a special education class if that is the decision; and
- record recommendations made regarding special education program and special education services.

You will be asked to sign the IPRC *Statement of Decision*, indicating you agree with the **identification and placement** decisions made by the IPRC. You may sign the *Statement of Decision* at the IPRC meeting, or you may take it home for further consideration and then return it to your child's school principal.

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## **AFTER THE IPRC**

If the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional and you have agreed with the IPRC identification and placement decision, the principal of the school where the special education program will be provided will be notified of the need to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for your child.

The IEP for your child is developed by school staff in consultation with you. The IEP includes:

- an outline of the special education program and services that will be received;
- specific educational expectations;
- any necessary accommodations which refer to the special teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment required to enable your child to learn and to demonstrate learning. Accommodations do not alter the provincial curriculum expectations for the grade;
- any necessary modifications to the curriculum which are changes made to the grade-level expectations for a subject or course to meet a student's learning needs. These changes in the curriculum may include a different grade level and/or increasing or decreasing the number and/or complexity of the regular grade level curriculum expectations;
- a statement about the methods used to review progress; and
- a plan for transition to post-secondary school activities (e.g. work, further education, and community living) for students 14 and older.

The IEP must be completed within 30 school days after your child has been placed in the special education program. The principal will see that you receive a copy of the IEP as well the document An IEP Guide for Parents which outlines the purpose of the IEP, process and information about the IEP.

### **What if I do not agree with the IPRC's decision(s)?**

You may ask to meet with the IPRC again. You must do so within 15 days of receiving the original IPRC decision. The purpose of this follow-up meeting is to review the decisions made by the IPRC in light of your concerns – or your child's concerns, if he or she is 16 years or older.

The meeting will be held as soon as possible after the request has been received. At this meeting, you will be able to explain your concerns to the committee. The committee will carefully listen and try to resolve your concerns. The IPRC will decide whether to change its decision(s) or not while you are present. If you remain dissatisfied, you may appeal the decision(s) of the IPRC.

### **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 Heather Campbell, Director of Education, Rainy River District School Board.

The notice of appeal must:

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

### **Who are the members of the appeal Board?**

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

- one member selected by the Rainy River District School Board;
  - one member selected by you, the parents/guardian; and
  - a Chair selected jointly by the other two members, or the appropriate district manager of the Ministry of Education, if the two members are unable to agree on the Chair.
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## What does the appeal Board do?

The Chair of the appeal Board will arrange a meeting within 30 days. At this meeting, the appeal Board will receive and review the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview anyone who may contribute information about the matter. You and your child (over the age of 16) will be invited to attend and participate in all discussions.

Within three days of the meeting ending, the appeal Board will make its recommendation(s). 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 and reasons, in writing, to you and to the Board.

## How are the appeal Board's recommendations implemented?

- The Board will decide what action to take with respect to the recommendations, within 30 days of receiving the appeal Board's written statement. (Please note: school boards are not required to follow the appeal Board recommendation)
- You can accept the Board's decision or appeal to a Special Education Tribunal by writing to the tribunal's secretary. Information about applying to the tribunal will be included with the appeal Board's decision.

## How are Identification and Placements reviewed?

You may request a review, once your child has been in a special education program for three months. The review IPRC will review the original placement and identification decisions in light of new information and decide whether they should continue or whether a different decision is in order.

A review IPRC meeting will be held every school year.

- If your child's placement is not in a regular classroom setting for the majority of the school day, and the school recommends continuing with the current placement and identification, then you will receive a Letter of Confirmation of Continued IPRC Identification and Placement which allows parents the option of:
  - requesting a formal IPRC meeting; or
  - deciding not to meet if you feel your child is being well served by the current identification and placement.

## What special education programs and services are provided?

The Board offers a full range of program options in special education for students of all exceptionalities. Program options include regular classroom settings with support in the class, and/or withdrawal from the classroom for instruction, or a special education partially integrated class. Integration opportunities are provided for all students with special education needs. Student Services resource staff are available to support the development of quality programs for the student with special education needs.

For more information about special education services and programs, you can review the Board's Special Education Plan, available online at the Board's website [www.rrdsb.com](http://www.rrdsb.com), at your local school or by contacting:

- the principal of your child's school;
- your Superintendent of Education; or
- Special Education Services:

Rainy River District School Board  
Education Centre  
522 Second Street East Fort Frances, ON  
(807) 274-9855 ext. 5015

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## **Working Together to Support Students with Special Education Needs**

Under Ontario's Education Act, every student with special education needs is entitled to special education programs and services to meet their needs. The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is a legally mandated committee of the Board. It plays a vital role in ensuring that students with special education needs receive appropriate educational services. The SEAC may make recommendations to the Board concerning the establishment and development of special education programs and services. The SEAC also provides information, advice and assistance to parents and guardians whose children may require additional support.

### **Special Education is committed to:**

- supporting a preventative approach in programming for students;
- providing the most enabling environments for all students with special education needs;
- providing a full continuum of service delivery options in response to student needs;
- providing resource staff to support the development of quality programs for students with special education needs;
- the integration and inclusion of students with special education needs through meaningful participation and interaction with others in the school community;
- collaborative planning between special education resource and regular staff; and
- monitoring and establishing partnerships.

### **You're invited!**

All parents and interested community residents are welcome to attend and observe our Special Education Advisory Committee meetings.

The SEAC usually meets the second Wednesday of each month beginning at noon at the Rainy River District School Board Education Centre, 522 Second Street East, Fort Frances.

The meeting schedule is available on the Board website: [www.rrdsb.com](http://www.rrdsb.com)

### **Need more information?**

Want to know more about SEAC or the Board's special education programs and services? Please phone:

**Special Education Administrator**

(807)274-9855 ext. 5015

**Visit the Board's website at [www.rrdsb.com](http://www.rrdsb.com)**

This publication is available in accessible formats upon request.

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