



Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board

TEAMWORK

Education For All



Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board
87 Mill Street, PO Box 70
Dublin ON NOK 1E0
(519)345-2440

*A Guide for Parents,
Guardians and Students*

THE BOARD'S GENERAL MODEL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Purpose of the Standard

To provide the ministry and the public with information on the board's philosophy and service-delivery model for the provision of special education programs and services.

Philosophy of Special Education Services

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board's philosophy of inclusion is intrinsically linked to our Catholic faith and the core beliefs outlined in *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6 (2005)*.

In the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board, every effort is made to ensure that students have the opportunity to attend their home school with their age-appropriate peers. Hence, it is critical that students be included in the school community to the highest degree of independence possible. Meaningful inclusion means that students are an intrinsic part of the school community and are provided with opportunities for personal growth through a carefully planned and judiciously executed program. Such experiences will provide for active participation in the school community. The educators must make every effort to develop the full potential of every child.

We believe that....

- All students educated in our schools have the right to learn, to live and to contribute as responsible Catholics in society
- The Board is committed to the principle that all students registered within its schools shall be welcomed into their home school
- Every student has an inherent right to a caring, effective and inclusive education
- The home classroom shall be the regular classroom with appropriate support
- All students have a right to participate fully in opportunities for learning and growth appropriate to their needs, abilities and gifts
- A recognition and celebration of individual differences and unique gifts is to be encouraged and supported among pupils, parents and staff of this Catholic school board
- Parents, as prime educators of their children, will be consulted in determining the appropriate program for their child and receive ongoing information regarding their child's progress

V. MULTIPLE

1. Multiple Exceptionalities

Definition: 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.

ACRONYMS RELATED TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

ADD	-	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	-	Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
CAP	-	Central Auditory Processing
CCAC	-	Community Care Access Centre
CPRI	-	Child Parent Resource Institute
DC	-	Developmentally Challenged
EA	-	Educational Assistant
EFA	-	Education for All
HI	-	Hearing Impairment
HPCDSB	-	Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board
IEP	-	Individual Education Plan
IPRC	-	Identification, Placement & Review Committee
SEA	-	Special Equipment Amount
LC	-	Learning Coordinator
LD	-	Learning Disability
LST	-	Learning Support Teacher
MID	-	Mild Intellectual Disorder
OT	-	Occupational Therapist
ASD	-	Autism Spectrum Disorder
PDT	-	Program Development Team
PSYCH-ED	-	Psycho-Educational
PT	-	Physiotherapist
RST	-	Resource Support Teacher
S/LP	-	Speech Language Pathologist
SEAC	-	Special Education Advisory Committee
SEPPA	-	Special Education Per Pupil Amount
TVCC	-	Thames Valley Children's Centre
WISC	-	Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children
WJIII	-	Woodcock Johnson III (assessment tool)

III. INTELLECTUAL

1. Giftedness

Definition: 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

Definition: A learning disorder characterized by:

- a) an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service;
- 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

Definition: 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 designed to accommodate slow intellectual development;
- c) a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

IV. PHYSICAL

1. Physical Disability

Definition: 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 students without exceptionalities who are of the same age or developmental level.

2. Blind and Low Vision

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

- Effective and ongoing communication among parents/guardians and school/system staff is critical for the development of a relationship of trust and mutual respect
- Shared responsibility among teachers, parents, students, school and system staff will enhance the participation of exceptional students in the school community
- That the Ontario Curriculum is designed for all students and that instructional practices must reflect the abilities, needs, interests and learning styles of students of both genders and all racial, linguistic and ethno-cultural groups
- In the school community, each individual member is valued, diversity is celebrated as the norm, people are of equal worth, relationships are of mutual benefit, and belonging is nurtured
- That inclusive education is one of the foundations on which our philosophy of Catholic education is built.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The following principles are founded on Catholic teachings and take into consideration the reality that learning communities today reflect a multitude of student needs that influence learning and respect the dignity of all.

Family, Faith and Community

- ✦ The Catholic tradition teaches that human beings grow and achieve fulfillment through community
- ✦ All students benefit from opportunities to give as well as to receive assistance and service
- ✦ Relationships support the pursuit of the common good
- ✦ Parent(s)/guardian(s), as primary caregivers, make a life-long commitment to the care and well-being of their children
- ✦ Active involvement of the family helps to ensure continuity and understanding of the student's needs and learning

Home & School Partnership: The Heart of the Community

- ✦ The neighbourhood school, where brothers, sisters and neighbours attend, is the heart of the community
- ✦ A sense of belonging to a community is essential for the development of self-esteem and self-confidence
- ✦ In their home school students have more opportunities to build meaningful and reciprocal relationships, which may develop into friendships and long lasting community connections

- ✦ Staff have a responsibility to support genuine friendship in schools by playing an active role in providing opportunities for relationships to develop
- ✦ School cultures value differences and diversity through a spirit of understanding and acceptance
- ✦ The partnership among the home, school and parish/community allows for enriched learning
- ✦ All members of a school community play a role in supporting the educators

Collaborative Partnerships & Informed Leadership

- ✦ The system delivery model provides for a process that strengthens collaborative partnerships between various stakeholders
- ✦ Staff have a responsibility to provide an accepting and safe environment that enables students to take risks, and ask for help in order to acquire the skills, procedures and strategic knowledge that will enable them to become independent learners (Education for All, 2005)
- ✦ The ability to provide appropriate support and services for students is enhanced through strong and focused partnerships
- ✦ Educators are called to model professional knowledge and skills
- ✦ Those who assume leadership roles are called to empower others in their efforts to serve the school community
- ✦ Engagement in learning requires shared and distributed leadership

High Expectations for Every Student

- ✦ ALL STUDENTS CAN ACHIEVE HIGH STANDARDS, given appropriate time and support
- ✦ Students are members of age-appropriate classrooms
- ✦ Students have access to necessary modifications and accommodations
- ✦ All students shall be taught at their optimal level of instruction and be given varied opportunities to participate in meaningful ways
- ✦ Students are able to reach learning expectations in different ways
- ✦ Dignity is maintained through the demonstration that every student has value and every student's value is equal

Programming for Every Student

- ✦ The educator is responsible for the instruction, assessment and evaluation of each student
- ✦ The educator must employ a variety of teaching and learning strategies based on research
- ✦ Access to differentiated levels of support is provided as required

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

Definition: 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

Definition: 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:

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

APPENDIX I

EXCEPTIONALITY GROUPINGS *(Ministry of Education and Training Memorandum January 15, 1999)*

I. BEHAVIOUR

1. Emotional Disturbance and /or Social Maladjustment

Definition: A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such 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.

II. COMMUNICATION

1. Autism

Definition: A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

- a) 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

Definition: An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.

3. Language Impairment

Definition: 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

- ✦ The educator employs the use of individualized programming and meaningful learning experiences
- ✦ The educator will assist every student to prepare for the highest degree of independence possible (Education for All, 2005)

Effective Communication and Meaningful Contributions:

- ✦ Healthy relationships are created within an environment of trust
- ✦ Communication requires the mutual and accurate sharing of information
- ✦ Members of the school community provide and give constructive feedback to one another
- ✦ Maintaining confidentiality is critical for sustaining open and ongoing communication
- ✦ The active involvement of families in the transition process (ex: grade to grade, school to school) will facilitate positive growth and development for students
- ✦ The knowledge and skills of every staff member is recognized and considered
- ✦ All members of the school staff have a shared responsibility to contribute to understanding and responding to the needs of students

This special education plan has been designed to comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act and regulations made under the act and other relevant legislation.

If, after reading this guide, you require more information, please see the board contact list at the end of the document.

ENTERING A HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

In order for your child to have a successful and smooth transition into school, it is essential that the school team and family/guardian collaborate on an entry plan.

Contact the principal of your school to discuss your child's needs. It may be beneficial for school personnel to observe your child in his/her current setting. A case conference will be arranged with you, the principal, the Special Education Coordinator, and any other agency personnel.

Staff at the case conference will outline the options and recommend a suitable program for your child. They will also recommend any special services that are needed and may schedule an Identification, Placement and Review Committee meeting once the student is actually enrolled in the school.

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE ARE CONCERNS ABOUT
A STUDENT?**

MODEL FOR PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

The classroom teacher is responsible for planning and carrying out instruction for each student in his or her classroom based on the individual's present level of functioning, strengths and needs.

Assistance for the classroom teacher in determining what needs to be done and how to do it, is provided through a variety of supports at the school and system levels. Recognizing that meeting individual needs is a complex task, we recommend that a problem-solving approach be taken by all those engaged in a collaborative team approach to planning and carrying out the individual educational plans. Students, parents, teachers, principals and support staff must all work toward common goals. Open, on-going and frequent communication is critical to the process of planning and carrying out personalized educational plans for students.

The following is an outline of how the process could take place. Naturally, there will be some variation in individual cases.

Step 1:

The classroom teacher has concerns about a student's progress. This could be academic, social, emotional or behavioural. After attempting to deal with the concern him/herself, the teacher decides to talk to the resource teacher. The classroom teacher fills out the School Team Meeting Request Form indicating the concern, what has been tried and the student's general performance and gives it to the resource teacher.

Step 2:

The classroom teacher, principal, and resource teacher meet, as planned, and discuss the concern. The meeting focuses on strategies which could be tried. They agree on one or two strategies which they will attempt to implement. Each agrees what he/she will do and for how long (e.g. 6 weeks). Record information on Record of School/System Team Meeting

Step 3:

The classroom teacher implements strategies agreed upon and keeps the resource teacher informed regarding outcomes. The resource teacher checks with the classroom teacher once or twice regarding progress.

**WHERE CAN PARENTS/GUARDIANS OBTAIN
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?**

Additional information can be obtained from:

- The school principal;
- Special Education Coordinator
Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board
P.O. Box 70 Dublin ON N0K 1E0
(519) 345-2440
- Superintendent of Education
Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board
P.O. Box 70 Dublin ON N0K 1E0
(519) 345-2440

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.

Demonstration Schools for English-speaking students with severe learning disabilities, including learning disabilities associated with ADHD.

Amethyst School
1090 Highbury Avenue
London ON N5Y 4V9
(519) 453-4408

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

Trillium School
347 Ontario Street South
Milton ON L9T 3X9
(905) 878-8428

Schools for the deaf

Ernest C. Drury School
255 Ontario Street South
Milton ON L9T 2M5
(905) 878-2851

Robarts School
1090 Highbury Avenue
P.O. Box 7360, Station E
London ON N5Y 4V9
(519) 453-4400

Sir James Whitney School
350 Dundas Street West
Belleville ON K8P 1B2
(613) 967-2823

School for the blind and deaf-blind

W. Ross Macdonald School
350 Brant Avenue
Brantford On N3T 3J9
(519) 759-0730

French-language school for the deaf and Demonstration School for French-speaking students with severe learning disabilities, including learning disabilities associated with ADHD.

Centre Jules-Leger
281 rue Lanark
Ottawa ON K1Z 6R8
(613) 761-9300

Step 4:

At the end of trial period, classroom teacher, principal, and resource teacher meet again to assess situation. At this time they may decide: (i) the situation has improved and end the process or; (ii) try further strategies and continue process at this level. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) may be implemented at this time

Step 5:

If the concern appears to be ongoing or the student is making little progress a decision to obtain an individual assessment might be made. Consent for Service and Access to the Ontario School Record (OSR) would be sent home for a signature before proceeding. After testing is completed another school team meeting is held to discuss results.

Step 6:

Update IEP, choose to refer for psycho-educational assessment or choose to call an IPRC. If IPRC referral is made the TEAMWORK - Education For All - A Guide for Parents, Guardians and Students handbook must be sent to parents a minimum of 15 days prior to IPRC meeting date.

SCHOOL TEAM MEETING

School Team

Mandatory Members

- Principal, Vice Principal (or designate)*
- Teacher
- Special Education Resource Teacher
- Special Education Coordinator (or designate)*

*Designate must hold the same qualifications as a school principal.

Optional Members

- Head of Special Education/ Guidance (secondary)
- Parent/Guardian
- Board Behaviour Support Staff
- System Special Education Resource Teacher
- Psychological Services (Psychologist or Psychometrist)
- Community Agencies (if involved)
- Educational Assistant
- School Based Social Worker

The School Team is an in-school problem solving group that meets to assist classroom teachers to plan for individual children for whom solutions have not been reached working alone or with the special education resource teacher. The School Team concept recognizes the shared responsibility for children within the school and the need to collaborate with colleagues to find solutions to complex issues in today's schools.

The principal schedules these meetings regularly to discuss those cases referred by any member of the team. The resource teacher coordinates the schedule of cases to be discussed and keeps minutes of the meetings. The principal or designate chairs the meeting and may invite consultants, coordinators, parent/guardian or community resource persons to attend, if necessary.

The format of School Team meetings is informal but narrowly focused on specific concerns and practical approaches to solving the problem. Decisions are recorded in the minutes and dates when follow-up will occur.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SCHOOL TEAM MEMBERS

Classroom Subject Teacher

- a) to develop a differentiated instructional program to meet individual needs of students in the classroom
- b) to call a meeting with resource teacher for program assistance
- c) to provide a written summary of student needs and modifications tried to date
- d) to participate in the problem-solving process at School Team Meeting for students in classroom
- e) to collaborate with the resource teacher informally and frequently regarding students being tracked on the Record of School/System Team Meeting

Resource Teacher

- a) to document on the Record of School/System Team Meeting and continue on-going tracking
- b) to collaborate with the classroom teacher to design a personalized classroom program (strategies, techniques, resources)
- c) informal assessment
- d) inform *principal of need for a School Team Meeting
- e) to participate in the problem-solving process at all School Team Meetings and record minutes
- f) to collaborate with the classroom teacher informally and frequently regarding students being tracked on the Record of School/System Team Meeting and to record outcomes at regular intervals

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST PARENTS/GUARDIANS?

Many parent organizations are available to provide information and support to parents of exceptional children. Some examples are listed below:

- Autism Ontario, Huron Perth Chapter, London Chapter
- Community Living Organizations
- Integration Action For Inclusion London and Area (IAI)
- Thames Valley District Alliance of Home & School Councils
- Association for Bright Children
- The Learning Disabilities Association
- Parent-to-Parent for Down Syndrome
- Epilepsy Huron-Perth-Bruce
- VOICE for the Hearing-Impaired Children
- VIEWS for the Visually Impaired, London Chapter
- Thames Valley Children's Centre
- Easter Seal Society
- Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders
- Child and Parent Resource Institute
- Madame Vanier Children's Services
- Southwestern Regional Autism Program
- Bluewater Family Support Services
- District School Council
- Rural Response for Healthy Children
- Community Care Access Centre
- Community Support for Families
- CPRI
- Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario
- Huron Perth Centre for Child & Youth (Clinton/Stratford)
- Family & Children Services—Huron and Perth

Appeal Board Hearing-Parent Meeting	<p>The Chair of the Board will arrange a meeting at a convenient place and at a time that is no more than 30 days after the Chair has been selected (unless parents and Board both provide written consent to a later date).</p> <p>The Chair of the IPRC of which the decision is being appealed shall provide the Appeal Board with the record of the Committee proceedings, including the Statement of Decision and any reports, assessments or other documents considered by the Committee.</p> <p>Any person who, in the option of the Chair of the Appeal Board, may be able to contribute information under appeal, shall be invited to attend meeting.</p>
Appeal Board Decision	<p>The Appeal Board must make its recommends within three days of the meeting.</p> <p>The Appeal Board shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree with the Committee or recommend that its decisions be implemented; or • disagree with the Committee and make a recommendation to the Board about the pupil's identification or placement or both.
Report of Decision	<p>The Appeal Board must report its recommendations, in writing, to the parent and the Board, providing the reasons for its recommendations.</p>
Board Decision	<p>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. The Board is limited to the actions that the Appeal Board recommend or could have recommended.</p>
Special Education Tribunal	<p>The Board must include in the written report, an explanation of the further right of appeal to a Special Education Tribunal.</p> <p>The parent 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.</p>

*Principal or Principal Designate

- to call School Resource Team meeting and act as chairperson
- to facilitate the problem-solving process regarding students referred to School Team Meeting
- to request formal assessment and parental permission if needed
- to initiate System Team Meeting if required
- to convene IPRC Meeting if necessary
- to monitor process of tracking by resource teacher and classroom teacher for all students on the Record of School/System Team Meeting

*Designate must hold the same qualifications as a school principal.

SYSTEM TEAM MEETING

System Team

The System Team should be called on when it is clear that the concerns will require system personnel's involvement because of resources or expertise required.

Mandatory Members

- *Principal, Vice Principal (or designate)*
- Teacher
- Special Education Resource Teacher
- Special Education Coordinator (or designate)*
- Parent/Guardian

Optional Members

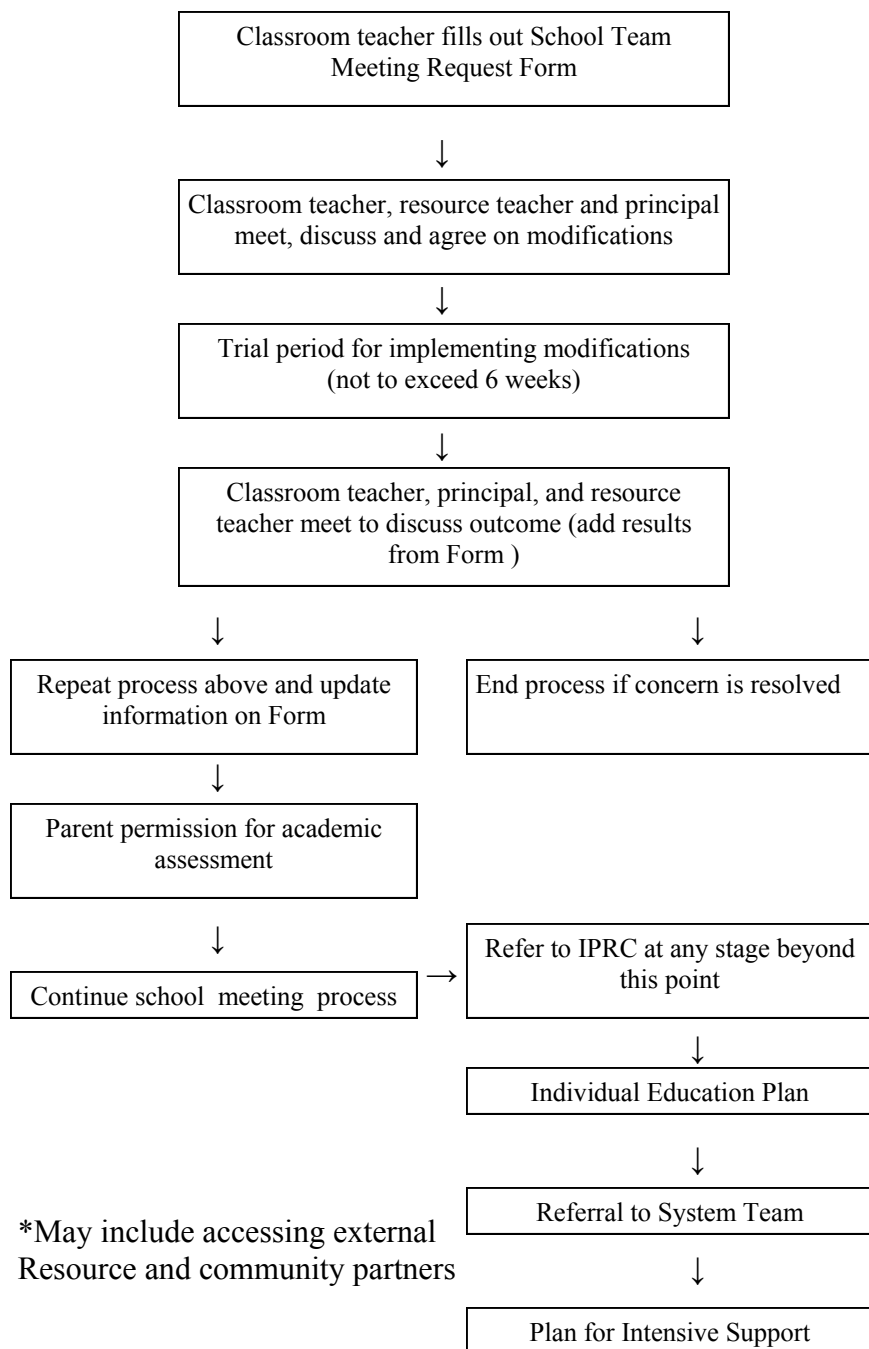
- Head of Special Education/ Guidance (secondary)
- Superintendent of Education
- Board Behaviour Support Staff
- System Special Education Resource Teacher
- Psychological Services (Psychologist or Psychometrist)
- Community Agencies (if involved)

*Designate must hold the same qualifications as school principal.

A Referral to System Team should be completed and sent to the Special Education Coordinator who will initiate the meeting.

The System Team meeting is chaired by the principal or designate and focuses on the issues to be discussed in a problem-solving mode. A record will be kept by the resource teacher in the same format as described for the school team.

MODEL FOR PROGRAM ASSISTANCE



PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN APPEALING DECISIONS MADE BY IDENTIFICATION PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC)

Subject	Procedures
Disagreement with IPRC decision	A parent of a pupil may request a hearing by the Special Education Appeal Board if the parent disagrees with the determination of the IPRC with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the identification of the pupil as an exceptional pupil; • the decision that the pupil is not an exceptional pupil; • the placement of the pupil.
Initiation of Appeal	The parent may, within 30 days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 days of receipt of the decision from the second meeting of the IPRC, give written notification of intention to appeal the decision to the Secretary of the Board. The notice of Appeal must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • indicate the decision with which the parent disagree; and • include a statement that set out the reasons for disagreeing
Appeal Board Membership	The Special Education Appeal Board shall be composed of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one member selected by the Board in which the student is placed; • one member selected by a parent of the pupil; and • a Chair, selected jointly by members selected under above clauses a) and b) or where those members cannot agree, by the appropriate District Manager of the Ministry. No person who has had prior involvement with the matter under appeal may be selected under subsection (1).

- 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'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 and Training
- 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

ONCE A CHILD HAS BEEN PLACED IN A SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM, CAN THE PLACEMENT BE REVIEWED?

- A review IPRC meeting will be held annually from the previous IPRC. Should you choose to waive your right to attend the annual review, you must notify the principal in writing.

WHAT IS AN IPRC?
(Identification, Placement & Review Committee)

Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards set up IPRC's. An IPRC is composed of at least three 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 and Training;
- decide 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 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 need placement in a special education program . . ." Students are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education and Training.

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 IEP? (Individual Education Plan)

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 students identified with Autism, 14 years and older (except 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.

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/GUARDIANS ATTEND THE IPRC MEETING?

Regulation 181/98 entitles parents/guardians and students 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/GUARDIANS 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.

WHAT IF PARENTS/GUARDIANS 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. 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 that your child submits if he or she is 16 years of age or older.