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## Special Education Services

# A Guide for Parents / Guardians

### **Vision**

Creating a culture of faith, hope and love to ensure equity and well-being.

### **Mission**

To accompany our students as we strive for excellence in Catholic Education.

We educate students in faith-filled, loving, safe, inclusive schools to develop the God-given abilities of each person.



*Peterborough Victoria  
Northumberland and Clarington  
Catholic District School Board*

Please note that in keeping with Regulation 181-98 of the Education Act and the Provincial Guide to Re-Opening Schools, IPRC's continue on behalf of your child remotely, in person and by videoconferencing or by phone. As per the regulation, you can give written notice dispensing with the annual review. In the event that there is an appeal of an IPRC decision, this appeal may also take place remotely or in person in keeping with Covid safety protocols. If you have questions about this process, please contact your child's special education resource teacher or school principal for further information.

## PARENT GUIDE

# Statement of Philosophy

The Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board believes that all students can succeed, and that students each have their own unique patterns of learning. As stated in *Learning for All* (2013), students learn best when instruction, resources, and the learning environment are well suited to their particular strengths, interests, needs, and stage of readiness.

Our goal is, wherever possible, to educate individuals in regular classrooms with age-appropriate peers in their community schools. However, for those children whose complexity of needs exceeds these resources, a specialized program may be necessary to accommodate these needs. Regardless of the program or placement, as members of a Christian community, the Board promotes the inclusion of all students in the life of their school community.

The purpose of this guide is to outline procedures involved in identifying a student as an “exceptional” learner through the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), as well as to provide information, including the placement decision options, and parent rights and responsibilities throughout the process. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Special Education Department at your local school, or the central Special Education Department at the Catholic Education Centre.

## **WHAT IS AN IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC)?**

Regulation 181/98 of the Education Act requires that all School Boards set up IPRCs. An IPRC is a committee that meets to identify students who have exceptional needs and determine the placement. An IPRC is composed of at least three people, one of whom must be a Principal or a Supervisory Officer of the Board.

Parents are invited and encouraged to attend the meeting.

## **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 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, 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.

## **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?**

The IEP must be developed for your child – if he or she has been identified as an exceptional student – 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 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 you 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 the request, or giving notice, the Principal must provide you with a copy of this guide, as well as an acknowledgement of your request, and a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

## **MAY PARENTS ATTEND THE IPRC MEETING?**

Regulation 181/98 of the Education Act entitles parents and students 16 years of age or older:

- ❖ to be present at and participate in all committee discussions about your child;
- ❖ to be present when the committee's identification and placement decision is made.

Staff are encouraged to invite students to attend the IPRC meeting with their parents.

## **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 other professionals, who may provide further information or clarification;
- ❖ your representative - that is, a person who may support you or speak on behalf of you and your child, and
- ❖ an interpreter, if one is required. (You may request the services of an interpreter through the Principal of the student's school prior to the IPRC.)

## **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 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 copy of any information about your child that the chair of the IPRC has received. This may include the results of assessments or a summary of information.

## **WHAT IF PARENTS ARE UNABLE TO MAKE THE SCHEDULED MEETING?**

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

- ❖ contact the school Principal to arrange an alternative date or time; or
- ❖ let the school Principal know you will not be attending.

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 about identification and placement and any recommendations regarding special education programs and services.

## **WHAT HAPPENS AT AN IPRC MEETING?**

- ❖ The chair introduces everyone and explains the purpose of the meeting.
- ❖ The IPRC will review all available information about your child. The committee will:
  - ◆ consider an educational assessment of your child;
  - ◆ consider, subject to the provisions of the Health Care Consent Act, 1996, a health or psychological assessment of your child conducted by a qualified practitioner, if they feel that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
  - ◆ interview your child, with your consent if your child is less than 16 years of age, if they feel it would be useful to do so; and
  - ◆ consider any information that you submit about your child or that your child submits if he or she is 16 years of age or older.
- ❖ The committee may discuss any proposal that has been made about a special education program or special education services for the child. 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?**

Before the IPRC can consider placing your child in a special education class, 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.

If the committee decides that your child should be placed in a special education class, it must state the reasons for that decision in its written statement of decision.

## **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;
  - ◆ the IPRC's description of your child's strength and needs;
  - ◆ the IPRC's placement decision; and
  - ◆ the IPRC's recommendations regarding a special education program and special education services;
- ❖ where the IPRC has decided that your child should be placed in a special education class, and the reasons for that decision.



## **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 if you **agree** with the IPRC identification and placement decisions, 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 STUDENT HAS BEEN PLACED IN A SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM, CAN THE PLACEMENT BE REVIEWED?**

- ❖ A review IPRC meeting will be held at least once in each school year, unless the Principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from you 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?**

- ❖ With your written permission, the IPRC conducting the review will consider the progress your child has made in relation to the IEP. It will consider the same type of information that was originally considered by the IPRC, as well as any new information.
- ❖ 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 the 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 with the:

**Peterborough Victoria Northumberland  
and Clarington Catholic District School Board**

1355 Lansdowne Street West  
Peterborough, Ontario  
K9J 7M3

**Attention:**

Director of Education & Secretary/Treasurer

- ❖ If you **do not agree** with the decision after the second meeting, you may file a notice of appeal within 15 days of your receipt of the decision.

If you do not consent to the IPRC decision but you do not appeal it, the Board will instruct the principal to implement the IPRC 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 the 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:

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and Clarington Catholic District School Board**

1355 Lansdowne Street West  
Peterborough, Ontario  
K9J 7M3

**Attention:**

Director of Education & Secretary/Treasurer

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 who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal, one of whom is to be selected by you, the parent.
- ❖ 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 you, the parent, and Board 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 old or over, are entitled to be present at, and to participate in, all discussions.
- ❖ The appeal board must take its recommendation within three 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 your child's identification or 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 recommendations).
- ❖ 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?

Each School Board in Ontario has a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) that is made up of Trustees and representatives of local associations. The local associations have parents in their membership and belong to provincial groups, that promote the interests and well being of students living with exceptionalities.

If your child has been identified by the IPRC as an exceptional student, the following placement options are provided by the Board.

- ❖ **A regular class with indirect support.** The student is placed in a regular class for the entire day, and the teacher receives specialized consultative services.
- ❖ **A regular class with resource assistance.** The student is placed in the regular class for most or all of the day and receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a qualified special education teacher.
- ❖ **A regular class with withdrawal assistance.** The student is placed in the regular class and receives instruction outside of the classroom for less than 50 per cent of the school day, from a qualified special education teacher.
- ❖ **A special education class with partial integration.** The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31, for at least 50 per cent of the school day, but is integrated with a regular class for at least one instructional period daily.
- ❖ **A special education class full time.** The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class, where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31 for the entire school day.

Other options than these exist to meet the student's needs. For example, there may be a need to apply for admission to:

- ❖ a Provincial School for students who are blind, deaf, or deaf-blind or a provincial Demonstration School for students who have severe learning disabilities;
- ❖ a facility that provides the necessary care or treatment appropriate to the student's condition.

## WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST PARENTS?

The following list indicates many organizations that are available to provide information and support to parents of exceptional students.

Ministry Web site:

[www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/ontario.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/ontario.html)

### *Provincial Schools*

#### **Amethyst School**

1515 Cheapside Street

London, ON N5V 3N9

Telephone: 519-453-4400

Email: available on website

Website: [www.amethystschool.ca](http://www.amethystschool.ca)

#### **Sagonaska School**

350 Dundas Street West

Belleville, ON K8P 1B2

Telephone: 613-967-2830 / 1-800-501-6240

Email: available on website

Website: [www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/sagonaska/general\\_information.html](http://www.psbnet.ca/eng/schools/sagonaska/general_information.html)

#### **Trillium School**

347 Ontario Street South

Milton, ON L9T 3X9

Telephone: 905-878-2851

Email: [info@trilliumschool.ca](mailto:info@trilliumschool.ca)

Website: [www.trilliumschool.ca](http://www.trilliumschool.ca)

### *Schools for the Deaf*

#### **Ernest C. Drury School**

255 Ontario Street South

Milton, ON L9T 2M5

Telephone: 905-878-2851

TTY: 905-878-7195

Email: available on website

Website: [www.ecddf.ca](http://www.ecddf.ca)

**Robarts School**

1515 Cheapside Street  
London, ON N5V 3N9  
Telephone: 519-453-4400  
TTY: 519-453-4400  
Email: available on website  
Website: [www.robartsschool.ca](http://www.robartsschool.ca)

**Sir James Whitney School**

350 Dundas Street West  
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2  
Telephone: 613-967-2823 / 1-800-501-6240  
TTY: 613-967-2823  
Email: available on website  
Website: [www.sjw.reach.net](http://www.sjw.reach.net)

***School for the Blind and Deaf-blind*****W. Ross Macdonald School**

350 Brant Avenue  
Brantford, ON N3T 3J9  
Telephone: 519-759-0730 / 1-866-618-9092  
Email: available on website  
Website: [www.wrms.ca](http://www.wrms.ca)

***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  
Telephone: 613-761-9300 / 1-866-390-3670  
TTY: 613-761-9302 and 613-761-9304 / 1-866-390-3671  
Email: available on website  
Website: [www.centrejulesleger.com](http://www.centrejulesleger.com)

## **WHERE CAN PARENTS OBTAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?**

Additional information can be obtained from:

- ◆ the school principal – see Directory of schools for school address, and telephone numbers
- ◆ Superintendent of Schools/Special Education

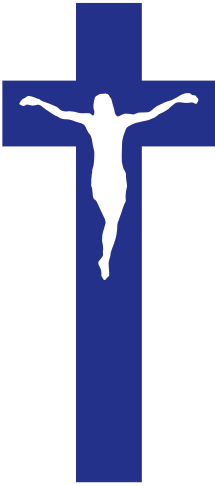
### **Contact:**

#### **Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board**

1355 Lansdowne Street West  
Peterborough, ON K9J 7M3  
(705) 748-4861 / 1-800-461-8009

**Visit our website: [www.pvnccdsb.on.ca](http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca)**

# Strategic Priorities 2021-2025



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