



**PVNC
Catholic**

Special Education Services

**A Guide for
Parents/ Guardians**

Updated June 2026

Statement of Philosophy

The PVNC Catholic District School Board believes that all students can succeed, and that students each have their own unique patterns of learning. The ministry recognizes that every student is unique and that each must have opportunities to achieve success according to their own interests, abilities, and goals (*Special Education in Ontario, K-12*).

Our goal is, wherever possible, to educate individuals in 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.

For more information about Special Education Services and Programs, please review the Board's Special Education Plan available online at the Board's website, <https://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca>. If you have additional questions, please contact your child's school.

The Ontario Education Act

The Ontario Education Act requires that school boards provide special education programs and services for their exceptional students. The purpose of this Parent/Guardian 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/guardian rights and responsibilities throughout the process.

Who is identified as an exceptional pupil?

Like many children, children with special needs may require teaching instructional strategies that differ from their peers in order to learn, to optimally develop skills, and to reach their full potential.

Many types of special needs exist and in education these are referred to as “exceptionalities.” An “exceptional” student is defined in the Education Act 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 IPRC?

An IPRC is an Identification, Placement and Review Committee. Regulation 181/98 of the Education Act requires that all School Boards have these committees. An IPRC is composed of at least three people, one of whom must be a Principal (Chair) or a Supervisory Officer of the Board. The other two members are either special education resource teachers or classroom teachers appointed by the Chair.

This committee makes the formal decision about whether a student is exceptional and whether they require a special education program. Parents/Guardians (and students who are 16 years of age or older) are invited to attend the IPRC meeting.

What is the role of the IPRC?

First, the IPRC will decide whether or not your child should be identified as exceptional.

Second, if your child is exceptional, the committee has to identify the areas of your child's exceptionality, according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education;

Third, the IPRC considers the strengths and needs of your child in order to determine an appropriate special education placement for your child.

After the initial IPRC meeting, you are invited by the school to review your child's identification and placement annually.

How is an IPRC meeting requested?

An IPRC meeting can be initiated in two ways:

- If it is believed that your child may benefit from a special education program, the Principal of your child's school may, with written notice to you, refer your child to an IPRC; OR
- If you believe your child may benefit from a special education program, you also can request an IPRC by sending a written request to your child's Principal.

Within 15 days of receiving the request, or giving notice, the Principal will respond and provide you with a copy of

this Parent/Guardian Guide and a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

May I attend the IPRC meeting?

Yes. Parents/Guardians (and students 16 years of age or older) are invited to be present at, and participate in all committee discussions and be present when the committee's identification and placement decision is made.

Who else may attend the IPRC meeting?

Other than the committee members, your child's teacher(s), special education staff, Board support staff, or other professionals may be invited to attend.

You may also invite representatives to support you or speak on behalf of you or on behalf your child, or who can, at your request, provide further information or clarification.

A sign language or language interpreter can be made available if one is required. An interpreter can be requested through the Principal of your child's school prior to the IPRC meeting.

Who may request that others attend the IPRC meeting?

Either you, or the principal of your child's school may request others to attend the IPRC meeting.

What information will I receive before 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 will indicate when and where the meeting will take place. In the letter, you will also be asked to indicate whether you will attend the meeting.

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 I am 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.

If you do not wish to attend, the Principal will send to you the IPRC Statement of Decision informing you of the outcome of the IPRC after the meeting. You are asked to sign and return the Statement of Decision to the school Principal.

What happens at an IPRC meeting?

After the chair introduces everyone and explains the purpose of the meeting, the IPRC will review all

available information about your child including any results of assessments, and any other information that you submit about your child or that your child submits if he or she is 16 years of age or older.

The IPRC may discuss any proposal that has been made about a special education program or special education services for the child.

With your consent (if your child is less than 16 years of age), and if the IPRC feels it would be useful, they could request to interview your child.

You will be encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion. Following this, the committee will make its decision about whether your child is an exceptional student and in what category. If your child is identified as exceptional, the committee will then also make a decision about your child's "placement."

What is a "placement"?

In making its placement decision, the IPRC considers a range of options, such as:

- **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 a 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.

In Secondary, some students may access resource assistance by a Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) in a resource room.

- **A regular class with withdrawal assistance.**
The student is placed in a regular class and receives instruction outside of the classroom for less than 50 percent 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 for at least 50 percent 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 for the entire school day.

How does the IPRC decide on placement?

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 happens after the IPRC has made all its decisions?

The recommendations of the IPRC will be given to you in a written Statement of Decision. This Statement of Decision will inform you if the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional, and if so the category of exceptionality according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities as defined by the Ministry of Education. It will also provide a description of your child's strengths and needs. The Statement of Decision will also indicate the recommended placement and the IPRC's recommendations about the programs and special education services your child may need.

If you **agree** with the identification and placement decisions made by the IPRC, you will be asked to sign your name on the Statement of Decision. This may be signed at the IPRC meeting or taken home and returned.

If the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional and if you sign consent to the Statement of Decision, the school will begin the process of developing an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for your child.

What can I do if I agree with my child's Identification and Placement, but have questions about their program?

In this case, it isn't necessary to call an IPRC as identification and placement does not need to be addressed. Whenever you have questions regarding your child's programming/IEP, the place to start is with your child's teacher.

What is an IEP?

An IEP is an Individual Education Plan that is designed to address the learning strengths and needs of your child. An IEP must be developed for every child that has been identified as an exceptional student, in consultation with you.

An IEP must be developed and completed within 30 days after your child has been placed by an IPRC, and the Principal must ensure that you receive a copy of it.

In addition, an IEP may be developed for students who have not been identified as exceptional but may require special education programs/services.

The IEP must include:

- A description of the student's strengths and needs and 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
- A transition plan that includes the specific goals, actions required, person(s) responsible for actions, and timelines for each educational transition where the student requires support.

What specifically does an IEP address?

An IEP is not an outline of everything your child will be learning in a term or semester. It is a working document that identifies learning expectations which may be accommodated, modified or include alternative learning goals in a particular subject or course. Only expectations that differ from your child's grade will be listed.

What are accommodations and modifications?

Accommodations are changes to teaching strategies, supports, and/or services that are required in order for a student to access the grade level curriculum and demonstrate learning, that are different from what is provided for the other students in the class.

Accommodations do not alter the provincial learning expectations for the grade level or course.

Modifications are changes made to the grade level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs. Modifications may include the use of expectations at a different grade level and/or an increase or decrease in the number and/or complexity of expectations relative to the curriculum expectations for the regular grade level.

If a student has only accommodations on their IEP, the IEP box will not be checked off on the Provincial Report Card. If the student has modifications, the IEP box will be checked.

What are “alternative” expectations?

Alternative learning expectations are developed to help students acquire knowledge and skills that are not represented in the Ontario curriculum expectations. As they are not part of a subject or course outlined in the provincial curriculum documents, alternative expectations are considered to constitute alternative programs or alternative courses.

How often can the IEP be revised or updated?

The IEP is a working document, and is reviewed and updated at least once every term. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to collaborate with the school team in the development and revising of the IEP and to discuss your

child's progress, on an ongoing basis.

Once a student has been placed in a Special Education Program, can the identification or placement be reviewed?

Yes. A review IPRC meeting must 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 a parent/guardian or student (16 years of age or older), saying they do not require this annual review for this school year.

You may also request a review IPRC meeting any time after your child has been in a Special Education Program for three months.

What does a review IPRC consider and decide?

The IPRC conducting the review will consider the same type of information that was originally considered by the IPRC, as well as any new information. It will consider the progress your child has made in relation to the IEP.

With this 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 I do if I 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 Statement of Decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss your concerns. 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.

In the absence of a second IPRC meeting, you may, within 30 days of receipt of the Statement of Decision, file a notice of appeal with the secretary of the Board.

If you do not consent to the IPRC decision but you do not appeal it, the principal will implement the IPRC decision and notify the parent/guardian.

How do I appeal an IPRC decision?

Within the timelines described above, written notification of your intention to appeal the decision must be sent to:

**Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and
Clarington Catholic District School Board**
1355 Lansdowne Street West Peterborough, ON
K9J 7M3

Attention:
Chief Executive Officer/Chief Education Officer

In the notice of appeal, you must indicate the decision(s) with which you disagree; and your reasons for disagreeing.

What happens in the appeal process?

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. As a parent/guardian, you are able to select one of these individuals. 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.

Within 30 days of the Appeal Board being selected, a meeting will take place at a convenient time and place, unless both the parents/guardians and the school Board provide written consent to a later date.

You and your child, (if 16 years of age or older), are entitled to be present at, and to participate in all discussions.

The Appeal Board must make its recommendations to the school Board within three days of the meeting ending.

What can the Appeal Board decide?

The Appeal Board may agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented or it may disagree with the IPRC and make its own

recommendations 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, and will provide the reasons for its recommendations.

What will happen after the Appeal Board's decision?

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. School boards are not required to follow the appeal board recommendations.

You may choose to accept the decision of the School Board or you may appeal to a Special Education tribunal. If you choose to appeal, 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.

Where can I go for more assistance?

For more help please contact your child's teacher and/or the Principal at the school your child is attending or will attend.

If additional assistance is required, please contact the Superintendent of Education for your child's school at:

Peterborough Victoria Northumberland Clarington Catholic District School Board

1355 Lansdowne Street West Peterborough, ON

K9J 7M3

(705) 748-4861 / 1-800-461-8009

Where can I get more information?

You may visit the Special Education page of the Ministry of Education to access all legislation, guidelines and regulations.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/special-education>

What is SEAC?

Each school board in Ontario has a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) that is made up of representatives from local community organizations, from the school Board and from the community.

SEAC makes recommendations to the Board about special education programs and services for exceptional students in the Board.

Updated SEAC membership information can be found on the PVNCCDSB website:

<https://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/programs-services/special-education-services/special-education-advisory-committee/>

What Special Education placements are provided by PVNC Catholic?

Placement	Elementary/ Secondary	Identification
Regular Class with indirect support	Elementary & Secondary	Any exceptionality
Regular class with resource support	Elementary & Secondary	Any exceptionality
Regular class with withdrawal support	Elementary & Secondary	Any exceptionality
Special education class with partial integration	Secondary	Intellectual Physical Communication: Autism Multiple
Special education class full time	Elementary & Secondary	Communication: Autism

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

- A Provincial or Demonstration school:
- A facility that provides the necessary care and/or treatment appropriate to the student's condition.

What are Provincial or Demonstration Schools?

The Ministry of Education operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools throughout Ontario for deaf, blind, deaf-blind and severely learning-disabled students.

Candidate students are placed in Provincial Schools through an application and screening process. Members from the central Special Education team assist the candidate student's home school in assembling the application support materials and documentation. When a student is accepted for placement in a Provincial School, the student's home school Board calls an IPRC that will then place the student.

If you would like more information about Provincial and Demonstration Schools, visit the Provincial Schools website at: <https://www.pdsbnet.ca/>

Demonstration Schools for students with severe learning disabilities:

Amethyst School

1515 Cheapside Street, London, ON N5V 3N9

Telephone: 519-453-4400

Website: <https://ame.pdsbnet.ca/>

Sagonaska School

350 Dundas Street West, Belleville, ON K8P 1B2

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

Website: <https://sag.pdsbnet.ca/>

Trillium School

347 Ontario Street South, Milton, ON L9T 3X9

Telephone: 905-878-2851

Website: <https://tri.pdsbnet.ca/>

Provincial Schools for the Deaf:

Ernest C. Drury School

255 Ontario Street South, Milton, ON L9T 2M5

Telephone: 905-878-2851

TTY: 905-878-7195

Website: <https://ecd.pdsbnet.ca>

Robarts School

1515 Cheapside Street, London, ON N5V 3N9

Telephone: 519-453-4400

TTY: 519-453-4400

Website: <https://rob.pdsbnet.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

Website: <https://sjw.pdsbnet.ca/>

Provincial 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

Website: <https://wrms.pdsbnet.ca/>

French-Language Provincial School for the Deaf and Demonstration School for students with severe learning disabilities:

Centre Jules-Leger

281 Rue Lanark, Ottawa, ON K1Z 6R8

Telephone: 613-761-9300 / 1-866-390-3670

Website: <https://ccjl.ca/>