



## **Section Ten**

### **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**



## **Section 10 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS**

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### **Current Regulatory and Policy Context for IEPs**

#### ***Under Regulation 181/98 section 6(3) of Education Act:***

- Principals/designates are required to prepare an IEP for identified exceptional students;
- The IEP must be prepared within 30 working days of the commencement of the student's placement in a special education program;
- The IEP must include:
  - o specific learning expectations for the student;
  - o an outline of the special education program and services to be provided;
  - o how the student's progress will be evaluated; and
  - o a transition plan for all students with autism or other exceptionalities age 14 or older.
- Principals/designates must consider any recommendation regarding program and services made by the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC);
- Parents (and students who are 16 years of age and older) must be involved in the development of the IEP and receive a copy

### **What is an Individual Education Plan?**

An IEP is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a student. It is a working document which identifies learning expectations that are modified from or alternative to the expectations given in the curriculum policy document for the appropriate grade and subject or course, and/or any accommodations and special education services needed to assist the student in achieving his or her learning expectations. The IEPs of students who have no modified or alternative expectations will focus only on accommodations and services. The IEP is not a daily lesson plan itemizing every detail of the student's education.

The IEP also helps teachers monitor the student's progress and provides a framework for communicating information about the student's progress to parents and to the student. The IEP is updated periodically to record any changes in the student's special education program and services that are found to be necessary as a result of continuous assessment and evaluation of the student's achievement of annual goals and learning expectations.

The IEP reflects the school Board's and the Principal's commitment to provide the special education program and services, within the resources available to the school Board, needed to meet the identified strengths and needs of the student. The Principal is responsible for ensuring compliance with all of the requirements described in this document for the development and implementation of students' IEPs.

*Source: Ministry of Education. Special Education in Ontario, K to 12: Policy and Resource Guide, 2017*

***An IEP is...***

- a collaborative team effort – see Section 10 – Consultation with parents and students
- a summary of the student's strengths, interests, and needs, and of the expectations for a student's learning during a school year that differ from the expectations defined in the appropriate grade level of the Ontario curriculum;
- a written plan of action prepared for a student who requires modifications of the regular school program modification or accommodations; to the regular school program
- a tool to help teachers monitor and communicate the student's growth;
- a plan developed, implemented, and monitored by school staff;
- a flexible, working document that can be adjusted as necessary;
- an accountability tool for the student, his or her parents, and everyone who has responsibilities under the plan for helping the student meet his or her goals and expectations;
- an ongoing record that ensures continuity in programming; and
- a document to be used in conjunction with the provincial report card.

***An IEP is not...***

- a description of everything that will be taught to the student;
- an educational program or set of expectations for all students;
- a means to monitor the effectiveness of teachers; or
- a daily plan.

## Reason for Developing an IEP

In the Ministry of Education's document **Individual Education Plans**, an IEP will be developed for one of the following reasons:

- An IEP must be developed for every student who has been identified as an "exceptional student" by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), in accordance with Regulation 181/98.
- An IEP may be developed for a student who has not been formally identified as exceptional, but who has been deemed by the board to require special education programs or services in order to attend school or to achieve curriculum expectations and/or whose learning expectations are modified from or alternative to the expectations set out for a particular grade level or course in a provincial curriculum policy document.
- An IEP must be developed, as supporting documentation, if a Special Equipment Amount (SEA) funding claim is submitted by a school Board on behalf of a student who has not been identified as exceptional by an IPRC, but who is receiving a special education program and services.
- The applicable reason for developing the student's IEP must be indicated in the IEP (e.g., an IEP may be developed for students who have not been formally identified as exceptional).

*Source: Ministry of Education. Special Education in Ontario, K to 12: Policy and Resource Guide, 2017*

## Implementation Plan

To ensure effective implementation and monitoring of the student's IEP, Lakehead District School Board uses the IEP Engine, an internet database used to electronically facilitate the IEP process.

| Stage                                | Action   |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Preliminary Work</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• consultation (school board staff, school councils, SEAC)</li><li>• Ministry of Education IEP Review 2006 – all boards requested to submit 10 IEPs for review</li><li>• review current practice</li></ul> |
| <b>Developmental Process</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• developed revised alternative report card to support IEP reporting</li><li>• included transition planning section for students with autism</li></ul>   |
| <b>Implementation Process</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• schedule in-service sessions (administrators, facilitators, special class teachers, SEAC members)</li></ul>  |
| <b>Monitoring and Review Process</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• determine monitoring process</li><li>• review and update as required</li></ul>   |

The proper implementation and monitoring depends on appropriate sharing of information among those involved with the student and on regular evaluation of the student's achievement and progress towards meeting the goals and expectations set out in the IEP. To this end, the principal must ensure that the staff member assigned to coordinate the development and implementation of the IEP has:

- reviewed the IEP with the principal;
- met with the student's classroom teachers, teacher-advisor and/or guidance counselor, and support staff, as appropriate, to discuss implementation of the activities described in the IEP and the responsibilities associated with each of those activities;
- informed classroom teachers, parents, and the student who is 16 years of age or older of the modified or alternative learning expectations in the student's program and of the special education strategies and resources required to facilitate the student's learning, as set out in the IEP, (Classroom teachers of subjects and courses to which the IEP applies must be made aware of the IEP as it relates to the student's instruction in the subject areas for which they are responsible.) discussed with the teacher-advisor and classroom teachers the importance of parental involvement in support of the plan;
- established a plan, including a timetable, for evaluating and monitoring the student's progress towards achieving his or her learning expectations;
- shared information about the monitoring plan with parents and the student (if 16 or older) and with school and support staff.

*Source: Ministry of Education. Special Education in Ontario, K to 12: Policy and Resource Guide, 2017*

The principal must ensure that the most recent IEP in the OSR is developed within 30 working days of the placement of an exceptional student in a particular program. An IEP must be developed with input from the parent(s)/guardian(s) and from the student if 16 years of age or older. The parents/guardian(s) must be provided with a copy; the student must also be given a copy if 16 years or older. The IEP will be placed in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR).

### **Transition Plans**

Transition plans are included in the IEP and are developed to assist students making successful transitions by outlining goals, actions required to meet those goals, and by identifying individuals responsible for specific actions and timelines to guide the plan.

A transition plan must be developed for all students who have an IEP, and will be developed in consultation with parents/guardians, the student, the school team, community partners and central staff where appropriate.

Consideration will be given to the physical, emotional and learning needs of the student.

## **Dispute Resolution**

Lakehead District School Board encourages parents and Board staff to work together to create a successful plan. Shared Solutions A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Student With Special Education Needs 2007 can be used for preventing and resolving conflicts.

The IEP is a collaborative effort involving the parent, the student, the principal, the classroom teacher and the facilitator. The student's progress is monitored and adjustments made to the IEP, as required. The IEP is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and parental input.

Dispute resolution will most likely be avoided if the IEP is developed in collaboration with the parent and the student.

As a result of ongoing communication with parents/legal guardians, there are usually no disputes to resolve. If a significant issue of concern regarding the student's IEP arises, the school will document the concern(s) on the Parent/Student Consultation Form. Ongoing communication between the school and home will resolve the area of concern.

- Step 1**            parent(s) consult facilitator/teacher (facilitator may set up meeting with service provider, and parent(s) to resolve issue/concern)
  
- Step 2**            if issue/concern is not resolved, facilitator will invite principal and system support, if required, to add insight into student's IEP programming
  
- Step 3**            if issue/concern continues to persist, parent/principal takes issue/concern to Superintendent responsible for Special Education
  
- Step 4**            if the area of concern is not resolved at the school level, the concern will be resolved at the system level.

## The IEP Process

### IEP Process Checklist

- The principal assigns one teacher (facilitator) the primary responsibility for coordinating the development, implementation, and monitoring of the student's IEP.

#### 1. Gather the Information

- Review the student's records (including the previous IEP and the IPRC statement of decision)
- Consult with the student, parents, school staff, and other professionals
- Observe the student
- Review the student's current work
- Conduct further assessments, if necessary
- Consolidate and record information

#### 2. Set the Direction

- Establish a collaborative approach (**including the classroom teacher, student and parents**)
- Establish roles and responsibilities

#### 3. Develop the IEP

- Identify and record the student's strengths and needs
- Identify goals and expectations along with the classroom teacher
- Determine strategies and resources
- Develop a transition plan
- Establish a monitoring cycle

#### 4. Implement the IEP

- Share the IEP with the student, parents, school staff, and other professionals (providing a copy to parents and to the student, if 16 or older)
- Put the IEP into practice
- Continuously evaluate the student's progress
- Adjust goals, expectations and strategies as necessary

#### 5. Review and Update the IEP

- Update the IEP periodically (at least once per reporting period)
- Review and update the IEP at year-end and when the student transfers to another school
- Store the IEP in the Ontario Student Record

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Although the principal shall assign to one teacher the primary responsibility for coordinating the development of the IEP, all team members have important roles and responsibilities in the IEP process.

The roles and responsibilities of various team members in the development, implementation, and monitoring of IEPs are outlined below. The lists attempt to cover all aspects of an IEP, but responsibilities and tasks will vary with the individual student. They may not all be required in each situation.

*Responsibilities that are mandated by Regulation 181/98 are marked with an asterisk (\*).*

### **Principal**

- ❑ **assigns to one facilitator the primary responsibility for the student's IEP;**
- ❑ facilitates collaborative planning, evaluating, and updating;
- ❑ ensures that IEPs are completed within 30 days of a student's placement in the program;\*
- ❑ ensures that IEPs are implemented, evaluated, and updated as required (at least once per year)
- ❑ ensures that the recommendations of the IPRC (with respect to special education program and services, e.g., support personnel, resources, equipment) are taken into account in developing the IEP;\*
- ❑ consults, in the preparation of a transition plan, with such community agencies and postsecondary institutions as he or she considers appropriate;\*
- ❑ ensures that a copy of the IEP is provided to the parents and to the student, if he or she is 16 years of age or older;\* and
- ❑ ensures that the updated IEP is stored in the OSR, unless a parent of the student objects in writing\*.

### **Classroom Teacher**

- ❑ **collaborates in the IEP process;**
- ❑ provides input to the information-gathering stage (background information, assessment information, work samples, observations, etc.);
- ❑ demonstrates awareness of the parents' expectations for their child's program
- ❑ plans and carries out instructional programs for the student;
- ❑ modifies or differentiates the expectations for the student's learning as required by the IEP;
- ❑ implements accommodations required by the student to achieve the learning expectations;
- ❑ develops strategies for assessing and communicating the student's progress; and
- ❑ maintains ongoing communications with the student's parents, other teachers, and other professionals involved with the student.



### **Special Education Teacher**

- ❑ **collaborates in the IEP process;**
- ❑ provides diagnostic assessments as appropriate to determine the student's strengths and needs, if required;
- ❑ generates ideas and suggestions for program modification or differentiation or accommodations;
- ❑ provides advice about materials and resources;
- ❑ provides support to the student's classroom teachers as appropriate;
- ❑ plans and carries out instructional programs for the student as appropriate;
- ❑ develops strategies for assessing and communicating the student's progress; and
- ❑ maintains ongoing communications with the student's parents and other teachers.

### **Student Support Professional**

- ❑ **collaborates in the IEP process;**
- ❑ supports the student with learning activities under the direction of the teacher;
- ❑ assists with appropriate modifications and accommodations as described in the IEP under the direction of the teacher;
- ❑ monitors and records the student's achievements and progress relative to the expectations described in the IEP under the direction of the teacher; and
- ❑ maintains ongoing communications with the student's teachers

### **Support Services Personnel**

- ❑ **participates in the IEP process and serves on the IEP team, if requested;**
- ❑ help determine the student's learning strengths and needs;
- ❑ develop strategies for incorporating into classroom routines the learning and therapy that meet the student's needs;
- ❑ train staff to implement strategies;
- ❑ provide advice about materials and resources;
- ❑ provide technical assistance;
- ❑ act as a resource for and support to the student's family;
- ❑ maintain ongoing communications with the student's teacher and the IEP team; and
- ❑ conduct assessments as necessary, with informed parental consent.

### **Student**

- ❑ **identifies and explains his or her goals, priorities, and preferences;**
- ❑ demonstrates an understanding of the IEP and works actively to achieve goals and expectations;
- ❑ monitors progress towards goals; and
- ❑ considers his or her IEP when developing and reviewing an annual education plan (students in Grade 7 and on,).

The nature and degree of a student's involvement in the IEP process will vary. However, members of the IEP team should ensure students understand the purpose of their IEP and how the goals and expectations in the plan are individually tailored, evaluated, reviewed, and updated. They should also ensure that students know that they can participate in the IEP process: by becoming, where appropriate, members of the team and attending team meetings; by revealing their learning priorities and

preferences; by helping to set their own learning goals and expectations; and by monitoring their own progress. Students should understand how important it is for them to take an active role in their learning.

## **Parents**

- ❑ **collaborate in the IEP process;**
- ❑ advocate for their child's best interest;
- ❑ provide up-to-date medical information about their child;
- ❑ share important information about their child's likes, dislikes, learning styles, interests, and reactions to situations, and about the talents and skills their child demonstrates in the home and community;
- ❑ provide information for transition plan expectations – dreams, goals, etc.
- ❑ reinforce and extend the educational efforts of the teacher by providing opportunities to practice and maintain skills in the home;
- ❑ provide feedback on the transfer of skills to the home and community environments; and
- ❑ maintain open communications with the school.

**Members of the IEP team should involve parents in the collaborative process as early as possible.** The educational priorities identified by family members are important to the student's overall learning experience.

In addition to the responsibilities outlined above, parents play an important role in the IEP process by communicating to the IEP team a picture of the life of their child thus far, suggesting ways to avoid potential problems, and helping the team achieve continuity of programming for the student.

## **Principals and teachers can support parental involvement by:**

- ❑ ensuring that, as required by Regulation 181/98, **parents are sent a copy of the IEP;**
- ❑ communicating openly and regularly with parents in language that is free of jargon;
- ❑ clarifying how parents can participate in the IEP process;
- ❑ giving parents the opportunity to specify how, and to what degree, they wish to become involved in their child's educational program;
- ❑ checking regularly with parents to share effective strategies and gather feedback;
- ❑ contacting parents by telephone as well as in writing to notify them of meetings of the IEP team;
- ❑ advising parents of the topics that will be discussed at the IEP meeting and who will attend;
- ❑ staying alert to possible parental concern or confusion (asking questions, if necessary); and
- ❑ clarifying information where necessary to ensure that parents understand their child's IEP and the IEP process

## Checklist of Standards for Developing & Writing an IEP

| Standard  | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|-----|----|----------|
| Reason for Developing an IEP                                    |     |    |          |
| Student Profile Information                                     |     |    |          |
| The Student's Strengths and Needs                               |     |    |          |
| The Special Education Program                                   |     |    |          |
| • Current Level of Achievement                                  |     |    |          |
| • Annual Program Goals  |     |    |          |
| • Learning Expectations   |     |    |          |
| Special Education Strategies,<br>Accommodations and Resources   |     |    |          |
| • Teaching Strategies and Accommodations                        |     |    |          |
| • Human Resources   |     |    |          |
| • Individualized Equipment                                      |     |    |          |
| Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting                            |     |    |          |
| • Assessment Methods and Accommodations                         |     |    |          |
| • Evaluation and Reporting of Student<br>Achievement            |     |    |          |
| Provincial Assessments  |     |    |          |
| • Accommodations for Participating in Provincial<br>Assessments |     |    |          |
| • Exemptions from Provincial Assessments                        |     |    |          |
| Transition Plan   |     |    |          |
| Parent/Student Consultation                                     |     |    |          |
| Staff Involvement in the Development of the IEP                 |     |    |          |
| Information Services  |     |    |          |
| Date of the Completion of the IEP                               |     |    |          |
| Date of Review  |     |    |          |
| Date of Revisions   |     |    |          |