



**Waterloo Region  
District School Board**

# **IDENTIFICATION PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE PROCEDURES**

## **Understanding the IPRC Process**

### **A PARENT GUIDE**

*This guide reflects the changes contained in Regulation 181/98*

(Amended September 2014)

# ***UNDERSTANDING THE IPRC PROCESS: A PARENT GUIDE***

## **Purpose of this Parent Guide**

While the regular school program is designed for the majority of students, some children require special education services to meet their learning needs. Where learning needs are extraordinary, an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meeting may be scheduled to make decisions about identification and placement.

This guide is intended to provide parents with an understanding of the IPRC process. Definitions are included to assist in explaining the main concepts involved. The guide also describes the steps that occur before, during and after the IPRC meeting. Also included in this guide is information regarding parent support groups and provincial associations that are available to support families who have a child with exceptional learning needs.

## **Philosophy of Partnering**

The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) is committed to working collaboratively with parents. Developing respectful relationships through honesty and open dialogue, parents are encouraged to approach their child's teachers and the principal to engage in discussion about the child's strengths and needs. In order to understand the unique qualities and needs of the whole child, the sharing of information between parents and school staff is necessary and important. Ideally, discussion and information sharing should occur prior to initiating the IPRC process.

## **Role of the IPRC**

The letters **IPRC** stand for *Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)*. Each school has a committee, which is approved by the elected trustees of the School Board on an annual basis. The committee is composed of at least three school board personnel. One of these members must be a principal or supervisory officer of the board and/or designate. Contributors may include appropriate representation from both sending and receiving schools to ensure that relevant information is available for sound decision making.

This guide has been prepared to help you to better understand the three important functions that this committee plays. The IPRC committee will (1) decide whether or not your child is identified as exceptional with regard to his/her educational needs, (2) decide on placement of your child, and (3) review these decisions within a year. The terms "exceptional", "placement", and "review" are defined as follows:

## **Defining "Exceptional"**

Children are considered to be "exceptional" when their learning needs are such that they require ongoing special education supports and changes to the regular program in order to be successful. The Ministry of Education has defined children as fitting into one of five categories of exceptionality, as listed below.

- Behaviour
- Communication
- Intellectual
- Physical
- Multiple

### **Defining “Placement”**

The WRDSB provides a range of special education services for exceptional students. Many students with special education needs continue to participate in a regular classroom setting while receiving special education services, while other students may require placement in a special education program. The WRDSB aligns with the Ministry of Education guidelines and has defined the five available IPRC placement options as the following:

- **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 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 in a special education class, where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31, for the entire school day.

Placement decisions are made in the best interests of the child and take into consideration all placement options that could meet the child’s needs.

### **Defining “Review”**

The Ministry regulation governing IPRC’s ensures that the decisions of the IPRC will be reviewed at least once per school year in a scheduled IPRC review meeting, unless waived by the parent.

## Steps in the IPRC Process

### Before the IPRC Meeting

An IPRC can be requested in writing by:

- The parent/guardian and/or a student age 18 and older;
- The principal.

Within 15 days of receiving your request or the school giving notice, the principal will provide a copy of this guide and a written statement of when the IPRC meeting will take place.

- The statement will include the date, time and place of the meeting.
- If you are unable to attend the scheduled meeting, contact the school principal to arrange an alternative date or time.
- Let the principal know if you will or will not attend the IPRC.

The IPRC considers as much information as is available to it, at the time of the meeting.

- Virtually any information can be considered. An Educational Assessment, which is a summation of your child's educational progress to date, is required. Parental consent is not required for this assessment.
- Other assessments can be considered: Psychological, Health, Speech and Language, etc. Parental consent is required for these assessments.
- You are entitled to have a representative/advocate present at the IPRC meeting, who may speak for you.
- The IPRC may interview students. For this to occur, the student's and/or your consent are required.
- Prior to the IPRC meeting, you will be provided with copies of all the written information and reports which will be considered, unless both you and the school agree to have the information shared at the meeting.
- If English is not your first language, it is the Board's responsibility to provide an interpreter. Contact your principal if language or other interpreters are required. It is also the Board's responsibility to provide an interpreter if a disability affects communication.

### During the IPRC Meeting

- The IPRC meeting is to be cordial and collaborative. Parents/guardians (and their advocate) are encouraged to be present, engage in dialogue, ask clarifying questions and make recommendations regarding special education programs and services.
- Although many other items may be discussed during an IPRC meeting such as program objectives, transportation, facilities, equipment, supplies, care or treatment, these items are not open to decisions within the formal IPRC process.
- While the Committee will make the final decisions, your opinions and preferences will be taken into consideration by the Committee.
- The IPRC, having considered all information and engaged in discussion, will make its decisions.
- The IPRC may recommend that an exceptional student, age 21 and older remain in a secondary school program.
- At the conclusion of the meeting, you will be verbally informed of the decisions of the IPRC.
- If you agree with the IPRC's decision, you may choose to sign your agreement on the forms provided at the end of the meeting.

### **After the IPRC Meeting**

If, at the conclusion of the IPRC meeting, you choose not to sign the forms:

- You may wait until you receive the written statement and decide whether you agree or disagree with the IPRC's decision.
- If you agree with the IPRC's decisions, sign the forms and return them to the IPRC chairperson. If you do not consent to the IPRC decision and you do not appeal it, the board will instruct the principal to implement the IPRC decision.

You will receive a written statement of the decisions of the IPRC. This statement will include:

- Whether or not the IPRC committee has identified your child as exceptional.
- The categories and definitions of the exceptionality, as defined by the Ministry of Education.
- The IPRC's description of your child's strengths and needs.
- The IPRC's placement decision.
- The IPRC's recommendations for a special education program and special education services (i.e. personnel, materials).
- Where the IPRC has decided your child should be placed in a special education classroom, the reasons for that decision.

### **Individual Education Plan**

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) must be developed within 30 school days of the start of a special education placement for all students identified by an IPRC. The development of the IEP will be completed with the involvement of the parents.

The IEP is an educational plan to meet the learning needs of your child.

It includes:

- Specific short and long term educational expectations for your child.
- An outline of the special education program and services to be received by your child.
- A statement of the methods by which your student's progress will be reviewed, and if applicable.
- A transition plan.

You will receive a written copy of the IEP after it is completed at which point you may suggest revisions and/or request a meeting to further discuss the IEP.

### **Review Process**

Once your child has been declared exceptional and placed in a special education program, you can request an IPRC Review meeting any time after your child has been in the program for 3 months. An annual IPRC Review meeting will be held within the school year, unless you inform the principal in writing of your desire to waive the annual review.

In an effort to ensure that the maximum amount of communication and information sharing takes place, a planning meeting should occur prior to the formal annual IPRC Review. At this meeting a teacher or teachers meet with you to discuss in detail your child's progress in his/her special education program and to focus on any changes that should be made in the upcoming year. This provides an opportunity to contribute to and share in the development of the IEP.

At this time you will be asked if you wish to have a formal annual IPRC Review. A formal IPRC Review meeting is held with a three-person committee chaired by the principal. In instances

where your concerns have not been met it is recommended that you attend a formal annual IPRC Review meeting. However, if you are satisfied with the identification and placement for your child for the next year, you will be given the opportunity to sign a form waiving the formal meeting.

The IPRC Review considers the same type of information and uses the same processes as the initial IPRC process. You should expect the same processes in terms of notification, meeting plans, written decisions, IEP, and appeal processes that applied in the original IPRC process.

### **Appeal Process**

If you do not agree with either the identification or placement decision made by the IPRC, you may:

- Within 15 days of the receipt of the written decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss your concerns, or
- Within 30 days of receipt of the original written decision, file notice of appeal in writing to:

**Director & Secretary  
Waterloo Region District School Board  
51 Ardel Avenue  
Kitchener, ON  
N2C 2R5**

The notice of appeal should include the decision with which you disagree and statement of your reasons for disagreement.

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 (one of whom is to be selected by you, the parent) who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal.
- 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 parents and board both 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 are entitled to be present at, and to participate in, all discussions.
- The appeal board must make its recommendation within 3 days of the meeting ending. It may agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decisions be implemented, or disagree with the IPRC and make a recommendation to the board about your child's identification, placement, or both.
- The appeal board will report its recommendations 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 recommendation).
- You may accept the decision of the school board, or you may appeal to a Special Education Tribunal. You may request a hearing in 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.

## **Statistics Regarding the IPRC Process and Appeals for Previous Year**

As of June 2014, 3 000 students were identified as exceptional student through the IPRC process as outlined. At this time, the board does not track determinations made via the review process versus a first-time IPRC meeting. No appeals were filed during the 2013-2014 school year.

## **For Further Information**

A current copy of the Special Education Plan (description of programs and services) is available on the Board website at <http://www.wrdsb.ca/learning/programs/special-education/special-education-plan/>

## **Organizations Available to Help Parents**

Many parent groups and provincial associations are available to provide information and support to parents. There is a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) mandated by the Education Act. Listed below are the Waterloo Region District School Board SEAC members:

- Association for Bright Children
- Autism Ontario
- Cambridge Association for Community Living
- FASworld Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Family & Children's Services of Waterloo Region
- Learning Disabilities Association of Kitchener-Waterloo
- MOSAIC Counselling and Family Services
- Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy
- Parents for Children's Mental Health – Waterloo Region
- Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada
- VIEWS – Blind/Low Vision
- VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children
- Waterloo Region Family Network
- Waterloo Regional Down Syndrome Society
- Trustee Representatives

## **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). A list of these schools follows:

### **Demonstration Schools for English speaking students with severe learning disabilities:**

Sagonaska School  
Trillium School  
Amethyst School

### **Schools for the deaf:**

Ernest C. Drury School  
Robarts School  
Sir James Whitney School

### **Schools for the blind and deaf-blind:**

W. Ross Macdonald School

**Francophone school for the deaf and for those with learning disabilities:**  
Centre Jules-Léger

**Further Contacts**

Scott Lomax  
Superintendent of Learning Services  
519-570-0003 Ext. 4205

Scott Miller  
Assistant Superintendent of Learning Services - Special Education and Program  
519-570-0003 Ext. 4334

Stuart Cross  
Learning Services Administrator – Special Education  
519-570-0003 Ext. 4171

Waterloo Region District School Board  
Special Education fax number 519-570-2038

Website: <http://www.wrdsb.ca>



## Categories of Exceptionalities and Definitions

### BEHAVIOUR

A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a 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.
- d) An inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof.

### COMMUNICATION

#### Autism

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.

#### Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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

#### Language Impairment

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 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.

#### Speech Impairment

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.

#### Learning Disability

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.
- 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.

## **INTELLECTUAL**

### **Giftedness**

A 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.

### **Mild Intellectual Disability**

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.

### **Developmental Disability**

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.

## **PHYSICAL**

### **Physical Disability**

A condition of physical limitation or deficiency that requires special supports in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age.

### **Blind and Low Vision**

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

## **MULTIPLE**

### **Multiple Exceptionalities**

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 provisions of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.