

# PARENTS' GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

This guide has been prepared by  
the  
School Support Services  
(Special Education Department)  
Rainy River District School Board  
522 Second Street East  
Fort Frances, ON P9A 1N4  
Phone: (807)274-5366 or  
1-800-214-1753  
(for Atikokan Residents)  
Fax: (807)274-8391



*Notes:*

*If you wish to receive this parents' guide in a Braille, a large print, or an audio-cassette format, please contact the board at the address or telephone number shown on the last page of this guide.*

*When used in this guide, the word "parent" includes guardian.*

**TOGETHER, WE EMPOWER ALL STUDENTS TO BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES,  
TO ACHIEVE, AND TO DREAM.**

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

Ernest C. Drury School  
255 Ontario Street South  
Milton, ON L9T 2M5  
Telephone: (905) 878-2851  
TTY: (905) 878-7195

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

Sir James Whitney School  
350 Dundas Street West  
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2  
Telephone and TTY: (613) 967-2823

### **Where can parents obtain additional information?**

Additional information can be obtained from:

- The school principal; or Special Education Resource Teacher
- Special Education Coordinator  
Phone: 807-274-9855 ext. 5005  
Fax: 807-274-8391

Parents of children receiving special education programs and services are encouraged to provide input to the Board's Special Education Plan through their school councils, school principals, Special Education Resource Teachers, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) members and the Special Education Program Coordinator.

All SEAC meetings are open to the public. SEAC meetings are held each month from September to June inclusive unless otherwise indicated through local newspapers or radio. The Special Education Program Coordinator is the Board's primary contact.

Public consultation through SEAC with parents, school councils, community organizations and students is conducted prior to July 31<sup>st</sup> according to Amended Regulation 306, subsection 2 of the Education Act.

**\* Revised: April 2013**



**What are the ministry’s 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, for students who live too far from school to travel daily.

**Demonstration schools for English-speaking students with ADHD and severe learning disabilities:**

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

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

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

**School for the blind and deaf-blind:**

W. Ross Macdonald School  
350 Brant Avenue  
Brantford, ON N3T 3J9  
Phone: (519) 759-0730

**Francophone school for the deaf and for those with learning disabilities:**

Centre Jules-Léger  
281 rue Lanark  
Ottawa, ON K1Z 6R8  
Phone: (613) 761-9300  
TTY: (613) 761-9302  
and 761-9304

The Education Act requires that school boards provide, or purchase from another board, special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils. The purpose of this Parents’ Guide is to provide you with information about the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), and to set out for you the procedures involved in identifying a pupil as “exceptional”, deciding the pupil’s placement, or appealing such decisions if you do not agree with the IPRC.

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

**What is an IPRC?**

Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards set up IPRCs. 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;
- 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 Individual Education Plan?**

An IEP is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student. It 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 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 each term 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.

An IEP documents any deviations from the Ontario Curriculum

Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada  
2345 Yonge Street  
Suite 900  
Toronto, ON  
M4P 2E5  
Phone 416-488-0030  
Fax: 416-488-7523

Attention Deficit Disorder Support Group  
Cynthia Donald  
Phone: 807-274-3384

Easter Seal (Atikokan)  
Sylvia Parker  
Home 807-597-2826  
Work 807-597-6640

Handicapped Action Group Incorporated  
1201 Jasper Drive  
Suite A  
Thunder Bay, ON  
P7B 6R2  
Phone: 807-343-0414  
Fax: 807-344-6140

### **Other**

Ontario Association of Children's Rehabilitation Services  
350 Rumsey Road  
Toronto, ON  
M4G 1R8  
Phone: 416-424-3864  
Fax: 416-467-7083

Atikokan Crisis Centre  
807-597-2868 or  
1-800-465-3348

Friends of Special Needs Support Group  
Dave and Marilyn Erwin  
1104 Third Street East  
Fort Frances, ON  
P9A 1S5  
Phone: 807-274-7207

Council for Exceptional Children  
[www.provincial-cec.on.ca](http://www.provincial-cec.on.ca)

### **Blind/Low Vision**

Canadian National Institute for the Blind  
Ontario Division  
1929 Bayview Avenue  
Toronto, ON  
M4G 3E8  
Phone: 416-486-2500  
Fax: 416-480-7503

Ontario Foundation for Visually Impaired Children Incorporated  
15 Gilmour Crescent  
Kitchener, ON  
M2M 4N5  
Phone: 519-741-0653  
Fax 519-741-0653 + Star 51

### **Physical Disability**

Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy  
1630 Lawrence Avenue West  
Suite 104  
Toronto, ON  
M6L 1C5  
Phone: 416-244-9686  
Fax: 416-244-6543

Ontario Brain Injury Association  
P. O. Box 2338  
St. Catharines, ON  
L2M 7M7  
Phone: 1-800-263-5404 or  
905-641-8847  
Fax: 905-641-0323  
Ontario March of Dimes  
237 Camelot Street  
Thunder Bay, ON ?  
P7A 4B2  
Phone: 807-345-6595

Easter Seal Society  
Suite 1  
134 May Street South  
Thunder Bay, ON  
P7E 1B3  
Phone: 1-800-267-3778 or  
807-622-1401  
Fax: 807-623-1138

and/or changes in delivery of instruction for every student who interacts with Special Education Services. Typically only those students requiring service beyond those covered through Special Education Per Pupil Allotment (SEPPA) funding have IPRC documentation completed annually.

### **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 attend the IPRC meeting?**

Regulation 181/98 entitles parents and pupils 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 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.

Before the IPRC meeting occurs, you will receive a written 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, 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;

Shanahan Center  
Thunder Bay  
807-345-4327

St. Joseph's Hospital  
Thunder Bay  
807-343-2407

**Gifted**

Association for Bright Children  
Joanne Lee  
2 Bloor St. West  
Suite 100-156  
Toronto, ON  
M4W 2G7  
Voice Mail: 416-925-6136  
Fax: 905-569-8299

The Association for the Gifted (Ontario) (T.A.G.O.)  
Julian Kitchen, President  
266 Lippincott Street  
Toronto, ON  
M5S 2P5  
Phone: 416-978-0985  
Fax: 416-978-6775

**Development Disabilities**

Fort Frances and District Community Living  
P. O. Box 147  
Fort Frances, ON  
P9A 3M5  
Phone: 807-274-5556  
Fax: 807-274-5009

Down Syndrome Association of Ontario  
Box 215  
Freelton, ON L0R 1K0  
Phone: 905-659-3946 ext.51  
Fax: 905-659-3946

The Roehler Institute  
4700 Keele Street  
Kinsmen Building  
North York, ON  
M3J 1P3  
Phone: 416-661-9611  
Fax 416-661-5701

People First of Ontario  
489 College Street  
Suite 308  
Toronto, ON  
M6G 1A5  
Phone: 416-920-9530

School Support Services for Autism  
Spectrum Disorders  
Sudbury  
1-877-996-1599

Early Years Intervention for  
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders  
Kenora

### **Learning Disabilities**

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario  
365 Bloor Street East  
Suite 1004  
P. O. Box 39  
Toronto, ON  
M4W 3S3  
Phone: 416-929-4311  
Fax: 416-929-3905

Spina Bifida And Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario  
69 Yonge Street  
Suite 500  
Toronto, ON  
M5E 1K3  
Phone: 416-214-1056 or  
1-800-387-1575  
Fax: 416-214-1446

### **Deaf/Hard of Hearing**

Canadian Hearing Society  
271 Spadina Road  
Toronto, ON  
M5R 2V3  
Phone: 416-964-9595  
Fax: 416-928-2506

Ontario Association of the Deaf  
Christopher Kenopic, President  
489 College St, Suite 407  
Toronto, ON  
M6G 1A5  
Phone: 416-413-0944 (voice)  
416-513-1893 (TTY)  
416-513-1894 (TTY)  
Fax: 416-413-4822  
Email: oad@globalservenet

CAP-D Assessments:  
Dr. Max Settliffe NWHU

### **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 other assessments of your child 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 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 strengths 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, 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 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 you **have agreed** with the IPRC identification and placement decision, 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.

### **Emotional/Behavioural Disorders**

Canadian Mental Association  
P. O. Box 446  
612 Portage Avenue  
Fort Frances, ON  
P9A 3M8  
Phone: 807-274-2347  
Fax: 807-274-2473

Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health Centres  
40 St. Clair Avenue East  
Suite 309  
Toronto, ON  
M4T 1M9  
Phone: 416-921-2109  
Fax: 416-921-7600

Ontario Council for Children with  
Behaviour Disorders  
Joyce Mounstevan, President  
60 Cliffwood Road  
Willowdale, ON  
Phone: 416-397-3612  
416-491-3296

Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada  
Rosie Wartecker, Executive Director  
194 Jarvis Street, Suite 206  
Toronto, ON  
M5B 2B7  
Phone: 416-861-8398  
Toll Free: 1-800-361-3120  
Fax: 416-861-2472

### **Pervasive Developmental Disorders**

Autism Society Ontario  
1 Greensboro Drive  
Suite 306  
Etobicoke, ON  
M9W 1C8  
Phone: 416-246-9592  
Fax: 416-246-9417

Geneva Centre For Autism  
250 Davisville Avenue  
Suite 200  
Toronto, ON  
M4S 1H2  
Phone: 416-322-7877  
Fax: 416-322-5894

Child Care Resources /Autism School Support Program  
Thunder Bay/Fort Frances  
807-624-2540



As a single point of access to all children's services contact: Integrated Services Northwest (ISN)  
Fort Frances/RR 274-9797  
Atikokan 597-4484

Family and Children Services Atikokan—807-597-2700  
Fort Frances—807-274-7787  
Rainy River—807-852-3387 or 1-800-475-7764

Atikokan and District Association Developmental Services  
114 Gorrie St.  
Atikokan, ON  
807-597-2259

Fort Frances and District Association for Community Living  
Barry McTavish, Transition Program Coordinator  
340 Scott St.  
Fort Frances, ON  
807-274-5556 ext. 16

Community Care Access Center  
Fort Frances  
274-8561

Riverside Outpatient Services  
Fort Frances  
274-4815

Northwoods, NWHU  
Debbie Cousineau  
Fort Frances  
274-9827

Weechi-it-te-win Family Services  
1457 Idylwild Drive  
Fort Frances, ON  
Phone 807-274-3201 or 1-800-465-2911

Easter Seals (Atikokan)  
Sylvia Parker  
Home 807-597-2826  
Work 807-597-6640

Easter Seals (Fort Frances)  
Gordon McTaggart  
Phone 807-274-6883

### **Once a child has been placed in a special education program, can the placement be reviewed?**

A review IPRC meeting will be held within the school year unless the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from you, the parent, 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?**

- The review IPRC considers the same type of information that was originally considered.
- With your written permission, the IPRC conducting the review will consider the progress your child has made in relation to the IEP.
- 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 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 Secretary, Rainy River District School Board.
- 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 and 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 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 Heather Campbell, Director of Education, Rainy River District School Board.

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 (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, 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 make its recommendation within 3 days of the meeting ending. It may:
  - agree with 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, 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 re-

quest 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?**

All schools, except Nestor Falls and McCrosson-Tovell, have a Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) to provide support to the classroom teachers. The SERT may also provide direct instruction to individual students and small groups of students, as well as standardized achievement testing and referral for diagnostic services.

Classroom teachers provide program modifications and accommodations for students with special needs in the regular classroom.

Reading Intervention Programs—Reading Recovery (Primary), Later Literacy (Grade 7—10)  
Special Education Assistants are assigned to students with demonstrated and documented high needs. Funding is provided by the Ministry of Education through funding grants.

All schools have a speech/language program which is delivered by a Communication Assistant under the direction of a Speech/Language Pathologist.

Secondary programs include school to work transition, special education co-op, resource assistance, and life skills.

Personal special education equipment is funded jointly by the Board and the Ministry of Education (SEA) and provided for students with demonstrated and documented high needs.

### **What organizations are available to assist parents?**

Many parent organizations are available to provide information and support to parents of exceptional children.