

Special Education

Resource Guide



**The Individual
Education Plan
(IEP)**



June 2003

Special Education Programs and Services

IEP Resource Guide

The Thames Valley District School Board believes that most exceptional children can and should have their needs met, using a variety of strategies, techniques and resource support, in regular classes in their home schools. The application of appropriate programs, services, and placements (which may include regular class, resource assistance, congregated class, or attendance at a provincial school) are determined through the Program Development Team (PDT) and/or the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) processes, in consultation with parent(s)/legal guardian(s).

Our primary goal is to meet students' needs in their own classrooms and their home school. Parents' input is always very important in making decisions concerning their children's special education program. We work together to help your child succeed.

If you wish to receive this parents' guide in Braille, large print, or 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. Students should also be involved in the IEP process, as is appropriate. Students 16 years of age or older are required to be involved.

If, after reading this guide, you require more information, please contact the school.



The IEP

Q *What is an IEP?*

A An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written plan. It is a working document which describes the areas of strengths and needs of the individual student. It is not, however, a description of everything that will be taught to the student. It is a summary of the expectations for a student's learning during a school year. The IEP provides an opportunity for all those involved with the student to work together to provide a program that will foster student achievement and success.

Q *When is an IEP needed?*

A An IEP is needed when a student requires a special education program and/or services to meet his/her needs. It can be developed as early as a child's first entry into school or at anytime during the student's school experience. **An IEP should be directly connected to the learning expectations in the Ontario Curriculum, but there may be a need to have modifications made to those expectations that meet the needs of the student. Modifications include: expectations from a different grade level and significant changes (increase or decrease) to the number and/or complexity of the learning expectations. Alternative expectations that are not connected to the Ontario Curriculum may also be necessary. For some students who do not need modifications to the expectations but need to do some of their learning in different environments or need teachers to use different strategies of instruction, they will require accommodations that will help them access the curriculum and demonstrate learning. (see definitions on page 8.)**

Q *For whom is an IEP developed?*

A In regulation 181/98, "Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils", principals are required to ensure that an IEP is developed for each student who has been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) within 30 school days of the student's placement in a special education program. IEPs may also be prepared for students who are receiving special education programs and services but who have not been formally identified as exceptional.

Q & A



The IEP

Q

How is an IEP developed?

A

An student's IEP is developed by first:

- reviewing the student's records;
- consulting with the student, parents, school staff, and other professionals;
- observing the student;
- reviewing the student's current work; and
- conducting further assessments, if necessary.

This information is used to identify the student's strengths and needs, identify goals and expectations, and determine the strategies and resources which will be used. This information is consolidated on the IEP. *A school's Program Development Team (PDT) will meet to review this information. Parents are encouraged to be involved in PDT meetings.*

Q

Who is involved in the development of the IEP?

A

An IEP should be developed collaboratively by those who know the student best and those who will be working directly with the student. The persons involved can and should vary according to the needs of the individual student. Members may include the student, the student's parents, the student's teachers, the principal, and appropriate special education staff and support personnel. *It should be developed through the mutual efforts of and close communication among all those involved.*

Q&A



The IEP

Q

What is the parent's role?

A

The parent's role is to:

- collaborate in the IEP process;
- advocate for their child's best interest;
- provide 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;
- reinforce and extend the educational efforts of the teacher by providing opportunities to practise 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.

Q

When and how is the IEP reviewed and changed?

A

The IEP is reviewed at least once every reporting period (such as report card times at elementary or the change of semester at secondary) and when the student transfers to another school. However, the student's progress should be continuously monitored, assessed, and evaluated to determine if program and teaching adjustments are necessary. The IEP is a working document. The IEP is changed or adjusted when it has been determined that the goals and expectations are no longer appropriate for the student. Some plans will require more extensive revision than others.

Q&A



The IEP

Q

What Special Education programs and services are offered by the Board?

A

A range of programs and services are offered to pupils depending upon their identified exceptionality, strengths and needs. The IEP is generally implemented in a regular class with appropriate special education support services which are designed to address the pupil's needs.

Q

What organizations are available to assist parents?

A

Many parent organizations are available to provide information and support to parents of exceptional children. Some examples are listed below:

- Autism Society Ontario London & District Chapter
- Community Living Organization
- The Integration Action Group London Chapter (IAG)
- Thames Valley District Alliance of Home & School Councils
- London & Middlesex Association for Bright Children
- The Learning Disabilities Association of London & Area
- Parent-to-Parent for Downs Syndrome
- Epilepsy London & Area
- VOICE for the Hearing-Impaired Children
- VIEWS for the Visually Impaired, London Chapter
- Thames Valley Childrens' Centre
- Easter Seal Society
- Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders
- Chippewas of the Thames
- Oneida First Nation (O.K.T.)
- Munsee-Delaware Nation
- Child and Parent Resource Institute
- Madame Vanier Children's Services
- Southwestern Regional Autism Program
- Bluewater Family Support Services
- District School Council

Q&A



Important Information to be Included in an IEP

- Goals and specific expectations for the student
- Student's strengths and needs
- Relevant medical / health information
- Relevant formal (standardized) assessment data
- Student's current level of educational achievement in each program area
- Program modifications (changes to the grade-level expectations in The Ontario Curriculum)
- Accommodations required (supports or services that will help the student gain access to the curriculum and demonstrate learning)
- Special Education and related services provided to the student
- Assessment strategies for reviewing the student's achievements and progress
- Regular updates, showing dates, results, and recommendations
- Transition plan - for students 14 years of age and older, except those identified solely as Gifted

Definitions

ACCOMMODATION

An accommodation is a change in the way a program or course is delivered to a student so that he/she can gain better access to the program. Accommodations may include changing the length of time needed to complete an assignment/test, using assistive technology, altering the instructions to match a student's style of learning, or photocopying notes. Most students receiving accommodations are working on grade level expectations of The Ontario Curriculum.

MODIFICATION

A modification refers to a change in the curriculum because the grade level curriculum is inappropriate to the level of the student's abilities. For example, a student whose language program (reading, writing) is significantly lower than that expected for the grade level will have modifications made to his/her program.

ALTERNATIVE EXPECTATIONS

Alternative expectations are expectations that are not derived from a provincial curriculum policy document or that are modified so extensively that The Ontario Curriculum expectations no longer form the basis of the student's educational program. Learning expectations in the areas of life skills, behaviour management, or orientation and mobility training for the visually impaired are examples of alternative expectations.

Acronyms Related to Special Education

ADD	-	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	-	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
CCAC	-	Community Care Access Centre
CPRI	-	Child Parent Resource Institute
DC	-	Developmentally Challenged
EA	-	Educational Assistant
HI	-	Hearing Impaired
IEP	-	Individual Education Plan
IPRC	-	Identification, Placement and Review Committee
ISA	-	Intensive Support Amount
ISC	-	Intensive Support Class
LC	-	Learning Coordinator
LD	-	Learning Disability
LST	-	Learning Support Teacher
MID	-	Mild Intellectual Disorder
OT	-	Occupational Therapist
PDD/ASD	-	Pervasive Developmental Disorder/ Autism Spectrum Disorder
PDT	-	Program Development Team
PT	-	Physiotherapist
S/LP	-	Speech/Language Pathologist
SEAC	-	Special Education Advisory Committee
SEPPA	-	Special Education Per Pupil Amount
TVCC	-	Thames Valley Children's Centre
TVDSB	-	Thames Valley District School Board

The participation and involvement of members of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) has been appreciated in the development of the IEP Resource Guide.

Contacts Notes

Thames Valley District School Board
1250 Dundas Street
P.O. Box 5888
London Ontario N6A 5L1 (519) 452-2000

Teacher: _____

Learning Support Teacher: _____

Other Relevant Staff: _____

Principal: _____

Items for the initial discussion meeting:

My child's strengths / talents / skills:

My child's needs:

Relevant medical / health information:

Relevant assessments / evaluations:

Home / Community involvement:
