

# A Guide for Parents and Students Communication

## Communication



Students, parents, and educators all play important roles in the planning and implementation of a student's educational program. Recognizing everyone's contributions and setting observable, measurable, and realistic expectations for student achievement will lead to a positive school climate, the best possible education for the student, and minimal conflict.<sup>1</sup>

## Conflict Resolution

*Conflict is natural. When it is a catalyst for needed change, it can have a positive outcome. Conflict usually starts when someone decides that current conditions are unacceptable and need to be changed. Only one person is needed to start a conflict; others may become involved – whether they wish to or not – in response to this initial impetus for change (Windle & Warren, 1999).*

When a conflict arises about a student's educational programs and services, it is essential that parents first speak to the person most involved in the student's education: the classroom teacher or the special education (resource) teachers. If the conflict cannot be resolved at this level, it may be necessary for the school principal to become involved. School board officials may also be called upon at this stage, as they bring an additional board-wide perspective to the issues in dispute.

In some circumstances, when discussions with school board officials do not resolve the issue, staff of the regional office of the Ministry of Education may be able to provide information to parents, educators, and school board officials. They may also be able to share examples of successful strategies or solutions developed by other school boards. It should be noted, however, that ministry staff cannot provide legal advice or direction either to parents or to school boards, and those seeking legal assistance are advised to contact independent legal counsel.

Various parent associations may be able to assist parents in their discussions with educators and school board officials. In addition, each school board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) has a mandate to make recommendations to the board about system-wide matters affecting the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services within the board. However, SEACs do not advise parents or school boards on matters involving individual students.<sup>1</sup>

**“Nothing motivates a child more than when learning is valued by schools and families/ community working together in partnership.”**

Michael Fullan



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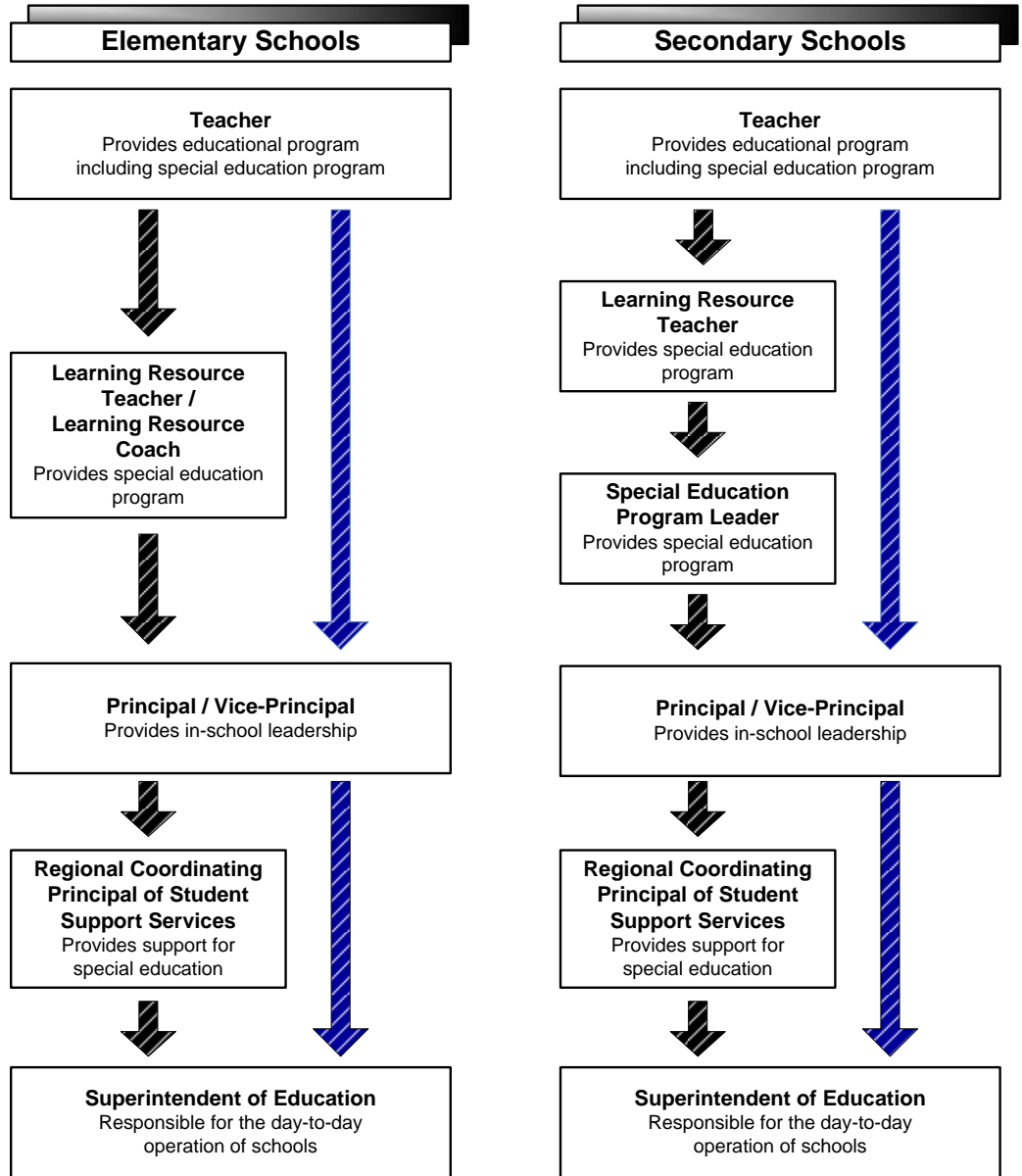
<sup>1</sup>(Source: Ontario Ministry of Education, *Shared Solutions: A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Needs*, 2007)

## Who Should I talk to?



**Please Note:**  
School board staff and community partners may attend at points in the process.

↓ The blue arrow indicates the path that may be taken when Special Education resources are not required.



**“We prepare all students for a successful life.”**



### Parent Notes and School Contact Information

## Tips for Shared Solutions

- ◆ Be positive:
  - Think that everyone can win and that a solution can be found.
  - Be open to the ideas and suggestions of others.
  - Be willing to explore creative ways of reaching a shared solution.
- ◆ Share information that you feel is important about your child.
- ◆ Keep the focus on the student's strengths, needs and interests.
- ◆ Focus upon one or two things at a time.
- ◆ Request a summary of actions, decisions, and responsibilities.
- ◆ Communicating effectively with the school is an ongoing process.
- ◆ Sometimes getting to the best solution takes time.
- ◆ Identifying and solving an issue is a shared responsibility.
- ◆ The student's progress and well being should be the primary focus of discussions between parents/guardians and educators.
- ◆ Give some thought to the outcome you would like to see. Remember there may be more than one way to achieve this outcome.



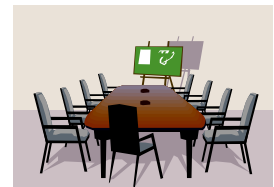
### Remember<sup>2</sup>

- \* *Your concern is important – sometimes getting to the best solution takes time. Planning for your child's success is an ongoing process.*
- \* *Keep communicating – continuing communications is important.*
- \* *Focus on the actions/outcomes/decisions that are in the best interest of your child.*

<sup>2</sup>(Source: York Region District School Board *Special Education, A Communication Guide for Parents and Students.*)

## Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

**What is SEAC?** SEAC is a committee mandated by legislation. This makes it a standing committee of the Board. The members of the committee include representatives of local associations (defined in the regulation), members of the school board, and Native representatives, and may include additional members who do not belong to any of these groups.



### Responsibilities of SEAC

- ◇ To make recommendations to the board in respect of any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board;
- ◇ To participate in the board's annual review of its special education plan;
- ◇ To participate in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education;
- ◇ To review the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education.
- ◇ SEAC does not advise parents or school boards on matters involving individual students.

**SEAC Meetings** SEAC holds regular monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM. The meetings are usually held in the Stormont Room at the UCDSB office in Brockville. Meetings may also be held in schools to acquaint SEAC members with staff and the facilities and specific programs our schools provide. All meetings of the Special Education Advisory Committee are open to the public to attend as observers.

For further information on SEAC:

Upper Canada District School Board  
225 Central Avenue W, Brockville, ON K6V 5X1  
phone 613-342-0371 or 1-800-267-7131, or  
fax: 613-342-6493 or  
e-mail: seac@ucdsb.on.ca

# Upper Canada District School Board

## How do I reach board staff?

Office	Capital Region	Gateway Region	Rideau Region	St. Lawrence Region
<b>Contacts</b>				
<b>ELEMENTARY Schools</b>	Arklan PS Beckwith PS Caldwell ES Cambridge PS Carambeck ES Chesterville PS Elma PS Kemptville PS Maple Ridge School Merrickville PS Morewood PS Naismith ES Oxford-on-Rideau PS Pakenham ES Plantagenet PS R. Tait McKenzie PS Rockland PS Russell IS Russell PS South Branch ES Winchester ES	Central PS (Cornwall) Eamer's Corners PS East Front PS General Vanier IS Gladstone PS Kinsmen/V. Massey Laggan PS Longue Sault PS Martintown PS Maxville PS North Stormont PS Pleasant Corners PS Rothwell-Osnabruck Roxmore PS S.J. McLeod PS St. Lawrence IS Tagwi IS Viscount Alexander PS Williamstown PS Section 23: • Day Treatment Centre • Growing Together - PCPS • Laurencrest • SD&G Adolescent Program	Chimo ES DJ Schouler PS Drummond PS Glen Tay PS Lombardy PS Linklater PS Maple Grove PS Meadowview PS Montague PS North Elmsley PS Pineview PS Queen Elizabeth PS Rideau Centennial ES Rideau Vista PS South Crosby PS Sweet's Corners ES The Stewart School Thousand Islands ES Wolford PS Section 23: • Cordick Education & Treatment Centre	Algonquin PS Benson PS Boundary PS Centennial'67 PS Central PS (Prescott) Commonwealth PS Front of Yonge ES Inkerman PS Iroquois PS Lyn PS Maynard PS Morrisburg PS North Edwardsburg PS Nationview PS Prince of Wales PS South Edwardsburg PS Toniatia PS Vanier PS Westminster PS
<b>SECONDARY Schools</b>	Almonte DHS Carleton Place HS North Dundas DHS North Grenville DHS Rockland DHS Russell HS TR Leger	CCVS Char-Lan DHS General Vanier IS Glengarry DHS Rothwell-Osnabruck St. Lawrence IS Tagwi SS TR Leger Vankleek Hill CI	Athens DHS Gananoque SS Perth & DCI Rideau DHS Smiths Falls DCI TR Leger	Brockville CI Seaway DHS South Grenville DHS Thousand Islands SS TR Leger
<b>Phone</b>	<b>613-258-9393</b>	<b>613-933-5256</b>	<b>613-275-2928</b>	<b>613-925-3244</b>
<b>Toll Free</b>	<b>1-888-402-3522</b>	<b>1-888-779-2559</b>	<b>1-800-766-8474</b>	<b>1-877-466-0664</b>
<b>Fax</b>	<b>613-258-6321</b>	<b>613-933-5275</b>	<b>613-275-2406</b>	<b>613-925-3134</b>
<b>Regional Office Staff</b>				
❖ Superintendent	Ext. 2551	Ext. 4279	Ext. 2230	Ext. 3303
❖ Executive Assistant	Ext. 2501	Ext. 4216	Ext. 2231	Ext. 3301
<b>Student Support Services Regional Staff</b>				
❖ Coordinating Principal	Call Gateway Office →	Ext. 4261	Ext. 2203	Ext. 3304
❖ Chief Psychologist	Ext. 2504 ←	Call Capital Office	Ext. 2233	Ext. 3333
❖ Executive Assistant	Ext. 2502	Ext. 4231	Ext. 2251	Ext. 3302

### Brockville Board Office

225 Central Avenue W.  
 Brockville, ON K6V 5X1  
 613-342-0371  
 1-800-267-7131  
 Fax 613-342-6493  
[www.ucdsb.on.ca](http://www.ucdsb.on.ca)

### System Principal, Student Support Services

Ext. 1246

### Executive Assistant, SSS

Ext. 1222

### Special Education Transportation

Ext. 1360

Please contact us for additional copies of this document.

