

IDENTIFICATION PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

FALL 2018



UNDERSTANDING THE IPRC PROCESS: A PARENT/CAREGIVER GUIDE

Purpose of this Parent/Caregiver 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/caregivers 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. Finally, information is provided regarding 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/caregivers in an atmosphere of respect, 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 Identification, Placement and Review Committee

Each WRDSB school has an IPRC which is approved by the WRDSB Trustees on a yearly 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.

This guide has been prepared to help you to better understand the three important functions that this committee plays. The IPRC will: (1) Decide whether or not your child is identified as exceptional with regard to their 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 of such severity that they require ongoing special education support 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.

- Behaviour
- Communication
- Intellectual
- Physical
- Multiple

Defining “Placement”

The WRDSB provides a range of special education services for exceptional students. Many students continue to participate in a regular classroom environment while receiving special education services, while other students may require placement in a special education classroom. Thus, consistent with Ministry guidelines, the WRDSB has defined the two available IPRC placement options as the following:

Regular Classroom/Resource Support

- Student receives indirect support and is in the classroom for the entire day
- Student receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a special education teacher
- Student receives instruction outside of the classroom for less than 50% of the school day and spends the remainder of the day in the regular classroom
- Student receives support through itinerant services (Behaviour, Learning Disability, Enrichment, Hearing, Vision, Alternative Education, and Speech & Language) and is in the regular classroom more than 50% of the day

Self-Contained Classroom

- Student is in a special education class for 50% or more of the school day and is integrated in a regular class for at least one instructional period per day (or some variation)
- Student is in a special education class for the entire school day

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:

- You, the parent/caregiver and/or a student age 18 and older
- The principal

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

- The statement will be received by the parent/caregiver at least two days prior to the IPRC meeting and include the date, time and place of 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/caregiver consent is not required for this assessment)
- Other assessments can be considered (Psychological, Health, Speech and Language, parental/caregiver consent is required for these assessments)
- You are entitled to have a representative/advocate present at the IPRC meeting, who may speak on your behalf
- The IPRC may interview students (The student's and 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
- If English is not your first language, it is the Board's responsibility to provide an interpreter (Contact the school principal if language or other interpreters are required, it is also the Board's responsibility to provide an interpreter if disability hinders communication)

During the IPRC Meeting

- The IPRC meeting is meant to be cordial and collaborative. You (and your advocate) are encouraged to be present, engage in dialogue, ask clarifying questions and make recommendations regarding special education programs and services
- While the Committee will make the final decisions, your opinions and preferences will be taken into consideration
- The IPRC, having considered all information, will make its decisions
- 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
- 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 days of the start of a special education placement for all students identified by an IPRC. Development of the IEP will be done with the involvement of the parents/caregivers.

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 to review and sign.

Review Process

Once your child has been declared exceptional and placed in a special education program, you can request a review IPRC meeting any time after your child has been in the program for 3 months.

An annual IPRC Review Meeting will be held within each 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 Meeting. At this meeting a teacher or teachers meet with you to discuss in detail your child's progress in their 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 review IPRC. A formal IPRC Review Meeting is held with a three-person IPRC committee chaired by the principal and/or appropriate designate. In instances where your concerns have not been met it is recommended that you attend a formal annual IPRC Review.

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 original IPRC Process. You should expect the same processes in terms of notification, meeting, 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 Ardelt 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/caregiver) who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal
- The chair of the Special Education Appeal Board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, no later than 30 days after they have 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 Special Education Appeal Board must make its recommendation within 3 days of the meeting
- The Special Education Appeal Board 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 Special Education 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 Special Education 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 Special Education 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 Special Education Appeal Board's decision.

For Further Information

A current copy of the Special Education Plan (description of programs and services) is available on the WRDSB

Website: www.wrdsb.ca

Organizations Available to Help Parents

Many parent groups and provincial associations are available to provide information and support to parents. WRDSB has a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), which is mandated by the Education Act. For more information on role or composition of SEAC please consult the WRDSB Website www.wrdsb.ca or call the Education Centre 519-570-0003.

Further Contacts

Coordinating Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being

519-570-0003 Ext. 4205

Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being

519-570-0003 Ext. 4334

System Administrator, Learning Services - Special Education

519-570-0003 Ext. 4171

WRDSB Website: www.wrdsb.ca