

What is an IPRC

IPRC stands for Identification, Placement and Review Committee. As a parent of a child with additional needs, it will be important for you to understand the IPRC process.

What is an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)?

An IPRC is a committee that meets and decides if a student should be identified as exceptional (has additional needs) according to established Ministry of Education categories. If identified as exceptional, the committee decides which placement will best meet the student's needs.

As the name suggests, the IPRC includes distinct parts:

- 1) **Identification:** Identifies students who may need special education programs. A student can be identified as needing special education programs within the following exceptionalities: behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple.
- 2) **Placement:** Identifies the program placement that will best meet the student's needs. Special education placements are described below.
- 3) **Review:** The student's special education needs must be reviewed through the IPRC at least once per school year. A parent may also request a review IPRC once their child has been in a placement for three months.
- 4) **Committee:** The committee (IPRC) is made up of at least three people, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer of the school board.
- 5) **Special Education Placements:** The IPRC will decide if the student's placement will be in a regular classroom with special education support or in a special education classroom.
 - If the student is placed in the regular classroom, the type and amount of special education support will be decided.
 - If the student is placed in a special education classroom, the amount of integration into the regular classroom will be decided.

Who requests an IPRC?

The principal of the student's school is responsible for requesting an IPRC if:

- 1) He or she has received a written request from the parents. Neither the school board nor the principal can deny this request. The principal must also give the parents a copy of the school board's *Parent Guide to Special Education* within 15 school days of receiving the request.
- 2) The principal and the student's teacher(s) believe that the student would benefit from special education programs and/or services, they have appropriate documentation to support the need for an IEP and the parents have been notified in writing.

Who attends the IPRC?

- The committee is made up of at least three school board employees; one must be a principal or supervisory officer. Usually the school principal from the student's school will attend along with the school resource teacher and/or the student's classroom teacher.

- Other school board staff (e.g. psychology staff, Speech and Language Pathologist) and representatives from outside agencies may be present to provide further information or clarification.
- Parents can bring someone along to support them or speak on their behalf.
- An interpreter may be present, if one is required.

What information do parents receive before the IPRC meeting?

At least 10 days before the IPRC, parents receive an invitation from the IPRC chair about the date and time of the IPRC.

Parents can give the school principal any information about their child's strengths and needs they want included in the package. The principal will forward it to the chair of the committee.

What happens at the IPRC?

- The chair introduces everyone and discusses the process.
- Information about the student's strengths and needs is presented to the committee.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to the discussion as they know their child best.
- After all the information has been presented, considered, and discussed, the committee will make a decision about a student's identification as exceptional or not and, if yes, his or her placement. The committee can put off making a decision if more information is needed. A second meeting will be scheduled and parents will be invited to attend.

What happens next?

- If parents agree with the decision, they can sign the statement of decision at the meeting or take it home to sign and return.
- If parents do not agree with the decision, they may request a second IPRC or appeal the decision. Both these options have strict timelines which will be explained in the school board's *Parent Guide to Special Education* and the Ministry of Education website.

What if parents cannot attend the IPRC?

It is very important for parents to attend their child's IPRC, especially the first IPRC. If parents are not available on the date set, they should speak to the school principal.

Tips for parents

- The IPRC process will be new to you. Take the time to learn about it. School staff is there to help you understand it.
- Do not hesitate to ask for clarification about anything that is not entirely clear to you.
- Ask the school principal about all the placement options available in the school board.
- It can be helpful to communicate in writing and to keep a copy of all documentation.

This information sheet serves as an introduction to the IPRC, with your child's first IPRC in mind. More detailed information is available from your child's school and from the Ministry of Education website,

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/hilites.html>.

