

F: School Years

The Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) - Frequently Asked Questions

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written plan. It is a working document that describes the strengths and needs of an individual exceptional student and the special education programs or services that are established to meet that student's particular needs. The I.E.P. can include accommodations (supports and services that will help your child access the curriculum and demonstrate learning, such as; large print books for a child with vision problems) or modifications (changes made to grade-level expectations in the Ontario Curriculum, such as; colouring the map instead of writing in the names of places).

The Ministry of Education has developed an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) Resource Guide that can be found online at www.edu.gov.on.ca

1. Why does my child need an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.)?

- Your child must have an I.E.P. if they have been identified as exceptional through an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (I.P.R.C.)
- Your child may have an I.E.P. if they require special accommodations for instructional or assessment purposes, such as: Assistive Technology (text-to-speech software) or FM system for a child with hearing problems.
- Your child may have an I.E.P. if they require modifications to the curriculum, for example: if they are still learning letter recognition, while most of the other students are reading words.

2. How is the IEP developed? Who has input and who approves it?

The IEP is developed by the school in consultation with the parents. The classroom teacher is responsible for using the IEP and they will get help from the Principal and special education teacher in writing the IEP. The Principal is responsible for making sure an IEP is developed and will sign the finished document. The I.E.P. must be completed within 30 days after your child has been placed in the program, and the principal must ensure that you receive a copy of it.

The Teacher or another school staff may talk to the parent on the phone, or in a meeting about their child. This information will be used to develop a list of the child's strengths and needs. The parent may also be asked about how the child performs tasks at home and for any ideas or tips that help the child to be successful.

When the IEP is completed, a copy will be sent home and the parent may be asked to sign a form saying that they were involved in developing the IEP.

3. What types of things should be included in an IEP?

The Ministry of Education has developed a set of standards which outline what should be in every IEP, although, each school board has their own form for the IEP. However, all IEPs will include:

- **Reason for Developing the IEP** – student identified exceptional by IPRC or student not formally identified but requires special education program/services
- **Student Profile** – name, school, Grade, etc.
- **Assessment Information** – dates and summary of student assessments by professionals, such as: Speech and Language Pathologists, Psychometrists, Physiotherapists, etc.
- **Student's Strengths and Needs** – summary of skills that the student is good at (Strengths) or that the student needs to develop (Needs)
- **Subjects or courses where the IEP is used** – All subjects or courses in which the student requires accommodations and/or modified expectations and all alternative programs. Each course should specify what expectations are used. Subjects or courses which the student requires neither accommodations nor modified expectation are not included in the IEP.
- **Accommodations** – refer to the special teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment required to enable a student to learn and to demonstrate learning. These accommodations can include: Instructional Strategies (Assistive technology, such as text-to-speech software); Environmental Accommodations (strategic seating and quiet setting); Assessment Accommodations (oral responses or verbatim scribing).
- **Provincial Assessments** – dates and results of Grade 3, 6 or 9 Provincial Tests, or reasons for exceptions from the tests.
- **Special Education Program description** – a description of what the child can do and a list of the modifications (Changes) to the curriculum expectations (each grade and subject has a Ministry of Education program that identifies what the student should learn) that the child will be learning.
- **Alternative Programs** – these are courses or programs that are developed to help students acquire knowledge and skills that are not usually part of the Ontario curriculum, for example: Anger Management, or Social Skill development. The type and length of the program, as well as the goals for the student should be listed.
- **Human Resources** – a list of people who will be providing direct instruction and/or consultation to the student and teacher, such as the special education teacher and/or support services to be provided by educational assistants or other professionals, like a Speech-Language Pathologist or Occupational Therapist. Information should include; type of service, planned frequency and location.
- **Evaluation** – when the student will be evaluated and a Report Card prepared for the parent.
- **Transition Plan** – for exceptional students over the age of 14 the IEP must include a plan to help the student prepare for transition to postsecondary activities such as work, further education and/or community living.
- **Log of Parent Consultation** – a record or form documenting all consultations with parents that occurred during the IEP development. The date and outcome of each consultation must be recorded.
- **Principal's signature** – the completed IEP must be signed by the Principal.

- **Parent (or student over age 16) Signature** – the parent will be asked to sign the IEP to confirm they were consulted in the development of the IEP.

4. Who has access to the IEP during the school year?

The IEP is a written plan and a working document for the classroom teacher. The Teacher should be making sure that all the accommodations are being provided and tracking how the student is doing in achieving the goals of the IEP. Other school staff, including the special education teacher and the Principal, will be helping the teacher and will have access to the IEP. The parent will get a copy when the IEP is developed and each time it is changed.

5. Can the IEP be modified? How often? What is the process?

The teacher should review the IEP at every reporting period. In Elementary school this is three times year. If the student is still working with the same accommodations or on the same program there may be no need to change the IEP. However, if the student has achieved the program expectations or is having more difficulties, it may be necessary to change the IEP. The parent should be consulted on any changes.

The IEP should be reviewed and changed at the beginning of each school year, and must be developed or reviewed within 30 days of the annual IPRC.

Many organizations are available to support you in understanding the I.E.P. and/or to provide additional resources.