

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Newsletter

It's **IEP** (Individual Education Plan) time. For many parents, that might as well be a foreign language. So...to borrow a few words from the "Sound of Music", Let's start at the very beginning, a very good place to start...

WHAT IS AN IEP?

- It's a written plan that describes the special education and/or services needed by a student to reach learning goals. It's based on the student's strengths and needs.
- The recommendations in the plan could be delivered in the regular classroom or could be delivered in a specialized class.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD NEEDS EXTRA SUPPORT?

- Ask your child. Are there particular things that are always difficult at school?
- Ask the teacher. Are there ways that the teacher can provide extra help?
- Ask the principal for a School Team Meeting. Prepare for the meeting with your questions and any documents that you think might help. An IEP may be one of the recommendations that come out of the meeting.

WHICH CHILDREN NEED AN IEP?

- Students having difficulty with the curriculum
- Students progressing at a slower pace than expected
- Students achieving much more than expected
- Students with medical or behavioural issues that are causing them difficulty with learning or interacting at school
- Any child who has been identified as exceptional with an IPRC must have an IEP. (Check with your school or the Ministry of Education about the various categories of exceptionality).

WHAT IS IN AN IEP? AND WHO WRITES IT?

- The teacher writes the IEP and will consult with parents and Learning Support staff as needed.
- The IEP has in it the following information:
- The student's strengths and needs
 - What special education services the student will receive, where and when s/he will get it and who will provide it
 - How the student's progress will be measured
 - Goals for the student and teacher to work toward
 - Special education equipment, if any, to be provided

WHAT IS A *SMART* IEP?

- **SMART** is an acronym that stands for specific, measurable, active and achievable, realistic and relevant, and time-limited.
 - A **SMART** annual goal can be: Will work toward achieving Grade 1 expectations for math, with significant modifications in problem solving skills.
 - A **SMART** expectation in achieving that goal can be: Will solve simple problems involving counting, joining, and taking one group away from another, and will describe and explain the strategies used.

SOME NUTS AND BOLTS INFORMATION

- An IEP has to be developed within 30 school days of a student being placed in a special education program. (The program may be some accommodation in the regular classroom or it may be a program outside the regular classroom.)
- That means that a new IEP is developed at the beginning of every school year. It also means the IEP is adjusted at the beginning of each school term.
- The parent gets a copy of the IEP and every parent is encouraged to monitor the child's progress.
- The IEP isn't set in stone. It will change as the student's needs and circumstances change. In fact, it can be tweaked any time during the school year.

SOME PLACES TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Individual Education Plans (IEP) Samples developed by The Council of Ontario Directors of Education (**CODE**)
The IEP samples are designed to provide content to inform the collaborative development of IEPs. The samples are not intended to be copied but are being shared to help provide examples of information and wording that can be used to plan effectively for students with special education needs. <http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/IEP-PEI/en.html>
- People for Education listing of IEP resources. <http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/search-results/?q=iep>

Please Share this Newsletter Post a copy on the parent bulletin board. Put a copy in the teacher's lounge

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Individual Education Plan

By OCDSB Learning Support Services

A fulsome description of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and the processes in addressing special education students is available on the OCDSB web site.

Please refer to the following link

www.ocdsb.ca/med/pub/OCDSB_Publications/IEP_Guide%20April%202012.pdf



Top 10 Considerations with the Development of the Individual Education Plan

In keeping with the legislative requirements of Regulation 181/98 and IEP Resource Guide (2004),:

1. every student identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee shall have an IEP developed
2. a student who has not been identified as exceptional and has special education needs may have an IEP developed
3. the development of the IEP occurs within the first 30 days of the student receiving special education programs/services
4. the principal ensures that parents and the student, if the student is 16 years of age or older, are consulted
5. in practice, consultation with parents takes many forms and may include completion of parent questionnaire, or meeting at the school, or telephone communication
6. the reporting of stated goals on the IEP are aligned with the District's progress and provincial report card timelines
7. revisions to an IEP are noted at the beginning of the second semester, especially when there are modified learning expectations specific to some courses
8. the time assigned to consultation and IEP revisions would be in the 30 days from the start of a semester
9. a form documenting all consultations with parents and the student (aged 16 and over) during the IEP development, must be prepared and attached to the IEP
10. the communication at the school to all teachers, educational assistant(s) and early childhood educators working with a student who requires the development of the IEP shall occur in the first two weeks of the 30 day period.

The IEP needs to be developed collaboratively, both by those who know the student best and by those who will be directly with the student. The membership of an IEP team vary and may include the student, the student's parents, the student's teachers, the guidance counsellor, the principal, appropriate special education staff and support personnel and staff from community agencies, as appropriate.

SEAC - Looking Back, Looking Forward

Welcome back to a new school year. This past year SEAC dealt with many items. There was the new Special Education Policy, review of the suspension of students, and the launch of this newsletter to highlight a few.

For this year SEAC has on its Long Range Agenda;

- Discussion regarding special education support for students in French immersion programs
- Kindergarten intake programming
- Extended Day special education programming
- Discussion regarding special education professional development
- Community Resource Handbook - Transition Post 21
- Transition planning for students with a developmental disability
- OCDSB Framework for Student Well-being
- Mental Health

Did you know?

Any student who has learning differences at school (including those who are struggling and students who are gifted) can benefit from having an IEP.

Many students who are "exceptional" (special education needs) will need and benefit from having an IPRC as well. An IPRC refers to an "Identification, Placement and Review Committee Determination Record" and its related processes.

To learn more about IPRCs, go to the board's website at www.ocdsb.ca/programs/se/iprc/Pages/default.aspx

City of Ottawa Special Needs Recreation eGuide.

www.ottawa.ca/sites/ottawa.ca/files/fw_special_needs.pdf

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