



Learning and Growing Together

SPECIAL EDUCATION

REPORT

2024-25



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SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

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Section 1

MODEL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

A. FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

In the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN), Special Education is a collaborative process that encompasses the supports, services and strategies that provide the opportunities for each student to reach their potential.

The general philosophy and service delivery model for the District School Board of Niagara is based on the following premises:

- Parents/guardians are an important part of a student's success and are therefore invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's education through ongoing communication between the family and school personnel.
- An In-School Team is expected to facilitate the collaborative problem solving, decision making and planning for students who are experiencing difficulty in their learning environment.
- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is established for every student identified as Exceptional and any other student requiring an IEP as determined by the In-School Team.
- All students identified by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) as Exceptional, as defined by the Ministry of Education, are served in the most enabling environment available.
- A range of placements is available across the District School Board of Niagara.
- Age-appropriate opportunities for integration are planned, consistent with the learning needs of the student as part of the Individual Education Plan for each student.

B. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

- All students can learn and should experience learning success.
- All students with special learning needs will receive special education services to help meet those needs.
- Parents/guardians are an important part of a student's success.
- Students have a right to learn in the classroom setting that best meets their needs.
- School communities recognize the value and contribution of every student.
- Efforts to build or adapt educational services to accommodate students with disabilities in a way that promotes their inclusion and full participation are considered first. (*Ontario Human Rights Council*)

C. BOARD POLICIES

The Board's general model for Special Education is articulated within Board Policy D-9: Framework for the Provincial Special Education Services.

The Special Education Report outlined in the following pages complies with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act and all regulations made under the Act.

Section 2 IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS

IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC)

The District School Board of Niagara adheres to Ministry Regulation 181/98 and has established policies to reflect this regulation.

Regulation 181/98 outlines the responsibilities of the Board in identifying and placing students who have been identified as Exceptional. Prior to the IPRC being convened, parents/guardians will receive a Parents' Guide to Special Education. The Parents' Guide includes:

- in-depth information about the IPRC process.
- names and addresses of provincial and demonstration schools.
- lists of local associations eligible to be on SEAC.

The highlights that may affect practice are outlined below:

- the IPRC is required to define a pupil's exceptionality and lists the strengths and needs of the pupil
- if a pupil is placed in a special education class, reasons for the placement must be stated
- parents/guardians and pupils aged 16 and over have a right to participate in all discussions and advocate for themselves. They may have a representative present to speak on their behalf or otherwise support them
- parental input is welcomed at every IPRC
- the IPRC shall decide to place an exceptional pupil in a regular class when such a placement meets the pupil's needs and is in accordance with parental preference
- the IPRC may discuss Special Education programs and services and may make recommendations. The Principal shall take committee recommendations into consideration for the development of the IEP
- an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed with the parent/guardian and pupil input, where the pupil is 16 years of age or older and must be developed within 30 school days after identification/placement

IPRC Membership (3 members mandatory)

- Principal to chair
- Learning Resource Teacher (LRT)/Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)
- Classroom Teacher
- Consultant – Special Education is also available as a resource
- Although parents are not, by Ministry regulations, a member, they are an integral part of the collaborative process.

Role of the Principal - Chair

- Establish a warm, welcoming environment.
- Introduce all participants and establish the purpose of the meeting.
- Ensure that all relevant information is shared.
- Lead the discussion, keep the meeting focused and encourage input from all participants.
- Ensure that parents are included in the discussion and that they are comfortable with the decisions made.
- Summarize the decisions, explaining them clearly.
- Ensure that the necessary documentation has been completed.
- Secure signatures as appropriate.

Location

- IPRC meetings are typically held at the school attended by the student.

Section 2 IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS

Placement Decision Options

- Regular class with indirect support
- Regular class with resource assistance
- Regular class with withdrawal assistance
- Special Education class with partial integration
- Special Education class full-time

Annual Review

The date of the next Review must be noted. A Review must be held annually unless a parent/guardian chooses to dispense with the Review for that year.

Dispensing with the IPRC Meeting

There is an option for parents to dispense with the IPRC meeting when the meeting is a review. If the student has an identification and placement, parents may dispense (forego the meeting and keep things as is) and ask that the identification and placement remain the same for the upcoming year. If parents make this request, the student will continue with the current identification and placement and a meeting will be offered one year from this date. Parents are required to sign documentation to support this request.

PRIOR TO THE IPRC MEETING

Parents/guardians are offered a Parents' Guide to Special Education

- prior to an assessment and/or
- in preparation for an IPRC.

School personnel should discuss the Parents' Guide to Special Education with parents/guardians. The LRT/SERT:

- Assembles all available information (i.e., Educational Profile)
- Confirms that any assessment results have been shared with the parents/guardians
- Confirms date with Consultant if their support is needed
- Issues an invitation to the IPRC meeting in writing 10 days in advance to the parents/guardians
- Invites the potential receiving school if a change in school program is being considered
- Prepares appropriate documents for the committee

At the Meeting – Framework of IPRC Meeting

- Parent/guardian input is welcomed and necessary.
- Student input is sought as appropriate.
- Interventions/strategies are reviewed.
- Strengths/needs are discussed.
- Progress is reviewed.
- Assessment results are discussed.
- A decision is arrived at and recorded:

1. Exceptional: designation - definition of exceptionality
2. Placement: Regular class with indirect support
 Regular class with resource assistance
 Regular class with withdrawal assistance
 Special Education class partial integration
 Special Education class full time

- The most appropriate program, in response to the exceptionality and placement decision is discussed.
- Agreement of parents/guardians is secured, and a copy of the decision is provided to parents/guardians.
- The original is signed and placed in the OSR. (Ontario Student Record)

Section 2 IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS

Following the Meeting

- Completed IPRC paperwork is filed in the OSR and provides documentation for Special Education Services
- The Board is notified (Administrative Secretary - Special Education, School Support Services) of the decision by submitting a copy of the parent/guardian signed IPRC form immediately by courier.

APPEAL PROCESS

It is the District School Board of Niagara's practice to endeavor to resolve issues or disputes prior to the commencement of an appeal process.

- After information gathering and further discussion, a second IPRC may be convened. Parents/guardians may request a second meeting with the Committee within 15 days of receiving the statement of decision. The request should be sent to the Principal of the school that the student presently attends.
- The chair of the IPRC will arrange for the committee to meet, as soon as possible, with the parent/guardian or pupil (16 or over).
- After discussion, the committee decision will be forwarded in writing to each of the persons involved in the IPRC, stating whether any changes in the decision were made.
- Within 30 days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 days of receipt of the decision of the aforementioned second meeting, parents/guardians who disagree with the Committee's decision, must give written notification of their intention to appeal the decision to the Secretary of the District School Board of Niagara, 191 Carlton Street, St. Catharines, Ontario. L2R 7P4
- By filing a notice of appeal, a hearing by a Special Education Appeal Board is required.

All appeals will be handled in accordance with
Regulation 181/98 - Section VI Appeals from Committee Decisions

A parent/guardian may, by filing a notice of appeal, require a hearing by a Special Education Appeal Board in respect of a Committee decision:

- that the pupil is an exceptional pupil
- that the pupil is not an exceptional pupil
- regarding the placement of the pupil.

A notice of appeal shall indicate with which decision the parent/guardian disagrees and shall include a statement that sets out the nature of the disagreement.

The Special Education Appeal Board shall be composed of:

- i) one member selected by the Board
- ii) one member selected by the parent/guardian of the pupil
- iii) a chair jointly selected by the two members described above.

Selection of the Board and parent/guardian selectees shall take place within 15 days of receipt of the appeal by the Secretary of the Board. Selection of the chair shall be made within the next 15 days.

No member or employee of the Board or Ministry of Education shall be selected under (i) nor will anyone with prior involvement be selected.

The chair of the committee making the contested decision will provide:

- a record of the committee proceeding including the statement of decision
- any reports, assessments, or other documents.

Section 2 IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS

The Board shall provide secretarial and administrative services and in accordance with policies that apply to members of the Board, pay travelling and other expenses incurred.

The chair will arrange for a meeting and shall give notice of the meeting to the parent/guardian (pupil 16 yrs. or over). The meeting shall take place within 30 days of the selection of the chair. The meeting shall be conducted in an informal manner.

- Any person who in the opinion of the chair may be able to contribute shall be invited to attend.
- Where the Appeal Board is satisfied that views and opinions have been sufficiently presented, the meeting will end.

Within 3 days, the Appeal Board will:

- agree with the committee and recommend that the decision be implemented
- disagree with the committee and make a recommendation to the Board about the pupil's identification, placement, or both.

The Special Education Appeal Board shall send a written statement of its recommendations to:

- a parent/guardian of the pupil
- where pupil is over 16, the pupil
- the chair of the committee
- the Principal of the school in which the pupil is placed;
- the designated representative of the Board.

A written statement shall be accompanied by written reasons for the recommendations.

Within 30 days of receipt of the recommendations, the Board shall decide what action to take and shall give notice in writing of the decision. The Board shall consider the Appeal Board's recommendation but is not limited to the action recommended. The notice to parent/guardian of the Board's decision shall include an explanation of the further right of appeal provided for by Section 57 of the Act.

The Board shall implement a decision when:

- a parent/guardian consents in writing
- 30 days have elapsed, and no further notice of appeal has been received
- an appeal under Section 57 is dismissed or abandoned.

Section 2 IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS

Student ID#: _____
 Student OEN: _____
 Date of Birth: _____



District School Board of Niagara
 191 Carlton Street
 St. Catharines, ON L2R 7P4
 905-641-1550

Identification, Placement & Review Committee (IPRC) Decision

Name: _____	IPRC Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
School: _____	Grade: _____		

Current Identification: _____ Current Placement: _____

IPRC COMMITTEE MEMBERS

IPRC MEETING ATTENDEES

Documentation to Support IPRC

- Psychological Report
 Physician's Report
 Speech-Language Pathology Report
 Other: _____

Areas of Student Strength	Areas of Student Need

STATEMENT OF DECISION:

- Exceptional: _____ Not Exceptional

Additional Identification/s:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication - Deaf and Hard of Hearing
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication - Speech Impairment
<input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual - Giftedness
<input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual - Developmental Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical - Blind & Low Vision | <input type="checkbox"/> Communication - Autism
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication - Language Impairment
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication - Learning Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual - Mild Intellectual Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical - Physical Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple - Multiple Exceptionalities |
|---|---|

Placement:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular class with indirect support
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular class with withdrawal assistance
<input type="checkbox"/> Special education class full time | <input type="checkbox"/> Regular class with resource assistance
<input type="checkbox"/> Special education class with partial integration |
|---|--|

Response to Statement of Decision

I/We agree with the above Identification and Placement: Yes No

Signature of Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and/or Student (if 16 or over) _____

Date: _____

Signature of Principal/Chair _____

Date: _____

Identification, Placement & Review Committee (IPRC) Decision
 District School Board of Niagara

Section 2 IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS

Student ID#: _____
Student OEN: _____
Date of Birth: _____



District School Board of Niagara
191 Carlton Street
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7P4
905-641-1550

Identification, Placement & Review Committee (IPRC) Decision

Program: _____

Start Date: _____

Recommendations:

Exceptionality Definition(s)

Ministry Definitions of Exceptionalities

SAMPLE

Personal information and personal health information on this form is collected, used and disclosed in accordance with the *Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.E.2, as amended, the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.M. 56, as amended and the *Personal Health Information Protection Act*, 2004, c.3 Sched. A., as amended and will be used for the purpose of special education supports and services and any similar or related purpose(s). Questions about this collection, use and disclosure should be directed to the Freedom of Information Coordinator, District School Board of Niagara, 191 Carleton Street, St. Catharines, ON L2R 7P4 905-641-1550.

Original to OSR Documentation File

cc: To the Parent/Guardian and Students 16 years of age and older
To the board within 15 days of IPRC meeting date

Identification, Placement & Review Committee (IPRC) Decision
District School Board of Niagara

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Section 3 SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS PROVIDED BY THE BOARD

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The District School Board of Niagara is committed to the following guiding principles regarding their Special Education Programs and Services.

- The Board provides Special Education programs and services to students based on individual need.
- Each exceptional student as defined by the Ministry of Education is served in the most enabling environment available for the student.
- Programs and services are consistent with the Board's Framework for the Provision of Special Education Services - Policy D-9.
- Placement of a student in a regular class is the first option considered by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).
- A range of placements are available across the District School Board of Niagara.
 - Regular Class with Indirect Support
 - Regular Class with resource assistance
 - Regular Class with withdrawal assistance
 - Special Education Class with Partial Integration
 - Special Education Class Full Time
- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be established for every identified student and any other student requiring an IEP as determined by the In-School Team (IST) or ISSST (In-School Student Success Team).
- Appropriate accommodations and modifications based on a student's strengths and needs will be implemented.
- Age-appropriate opportunities for integration will be planned, consistent with the learning needs of the student as part of the Individual Education Plan for each student.
- Reporting will be consistent with the requirements of the Provincial Report Card.
- Alternative subjects or courses will be reported on the DSBN Alternative Report Card.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Services and programs provided are based on individual student strengths and needs and may result in:

- Accommodations provided by the classroom teacher to meet the students' needs.
- Development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) under the guidance of the In-School Team.
- Planned intervention of an Elementary Learning Resource Teacher (LRT) or Secondary Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)
 - Examples:
 - Joint planning with classroom teacher
 - In class support
 - Withdrawal to a resource room
- Support of the Special Education Support Services - Special Education Team.
- Special Education class placement as determined by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).
- Support for application to outside agencies (e.g., Home and Community Care Support Services).

For all exceptionalities a range of placement options is available within the regular classroom, regular class with indirect support, resource assistance and withdrawal assistance. The LRT/SERT is a qualified Special Education teacher who may support students in regular education.

Special class placements are available for some students as outlined below.

Section 3 SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS PROVIDED BY THE BOARD

The IPRC considers student strengths and needs in determining placement in the most enabling environment.

Structured Strategies Program

This program is intended to provide short-term intensive intervention for students with demonstrated need, so they can gain the skills needed to continue their education in their home school with learned strategies in place. The program is for students that require support for social and emotional regulation and social skills, as well as a highly structured environment. A blend of Ontario Curriculum and alternative programming is taught by a qualified special education teacher and the class is supported by an educational assistant. Strategies may include, levelled breaks, sensory breaks, movement breaks, social skills programming, and assistive technology.

Communication Program

This program supports students with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and significant needs in the areas of expressive and receptive communication skills. Programming is based around individual needs and addressed through alternative curriculum. Augmentative communication strategies are used to promote independence, communication, and sensory regulation. ABA Strategies and transition planning are an integral part of the program as well as, self-regulation and social skills programming. This program is taught by a qualified special education teacher and the class is supported by an educational assistant(s).

Fundamental Skills Program

This program supports students with significant intellectual disabilities and alternative programming needs at the elementary level. Students are working on significantly modified curriculum expectations and programming is supplemented with functional skill development. In the program, students gain independent living skills, receive intensive academic supports through individualized programming, and receive intensive support for physical needs as required. This program is taught by a qualified special education teacher and the class is supported by an educational assistant(s).

Multidisciplinary Support Program

This program is intended to support students with complex needs that require the support of a multidisciplinary team of professionals. Students may require support with self-regulation, behaviour and/or mental health concerns. The program has access to a social worker, youth counsellor and a central team of special education educators that regularly supports these students and families to assist them with accessing services within the school board and services within the community. The goal of the program is to ensure that students have access to the supports necessary for wellness and educational success. Students in this program have been prioritized through their participation in other programs within the board and any community programs.

Specialized School to Community Program

This program supports students with significant intellectual disabilities and alternative programming needs at the secondary level. Students may be working on modified Ontario Curriculum expectations and programming is supplemented with functional and vocational skill development as needed. In this program students gain independent living skills, receive intensive academic supports through individualized programming, and receive support for intensive physical needs as required. Transition to the community is an integral part of the program, with a focus on building connections to community supports as students approach graduation.

Elementary Gifted Program

This program supports students with an unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth best serviced in the Elementary Gifted Program. Students access activities that promoted Higher Order Thinking Skills. Gifted programming for students in grades 5 to 8 is offered at various sites throughout the board.

Section 3 SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS PROVIDED BY THE BOARD

CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNING EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT SUPPORT TO CLASSES

The District School Board of Niagara determines access to support if the student demonstrates moderate, severe, or profound physical, behavioural, communication and/or developmental needs and requires assistance to ensure the health and safety of self or others.

The Board's Educational Assistant Allocation and Placement Committee meets throughout the year to review student/school needs and determines the Educational Assistant assignments for the next school year. This committee includes Principal representatives as well as system-based staff who are knowledgeable about the students with special education needs within their complement of schools. A review of allocation occurs in September, taking into consideration student moves that have happened throughout the summer.

CRITERIA USED FOR DETERMINING NEED TO CHANGE A STUDENT'S PLACEMENT

- In-School Team reviews the strategies outlined in the student's IEP based on current assessment data
- Accommodations and/or Modifications as outlined in the student's IEP are adjusted as necessary
- Parents/guardians are key players in the decision-making process regarding their child's program
- Consideration is given to the appropriateness of the current placement by school, parent/guardian, and Special Education Support Services
- Change of placement, if required, is through the IPRC process for students that are identified, for those that are non-identified changes to placement are made through school and parent collaboration.

When the full range of placement options of the Board has been exhausted, the Board in consultation with parents/guardians, will explore Provincial and Demonstration Schools, the transitional options of Instructional Outreach or placement in an Education and Community Partnership Program (ECP), as available. The Board will support the parents/guardians in advocating for a program within Care and Treatment facilities available in the area.

Section 4 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)

An Individual Education Plan is a written plan that outlines programming for a student with special education needs. An IEP defines a student's strengths and needs, identifying accommodations and/or modified expectations from the Ontario Curriculum or alternative expectations that make up a student's program. The IEP is a working document and as such, revisions and updates are to be expected. Parental input is sought in the development of the IEP and parents are informed about any changes to the IEP throughout the school year. A copy of the IEP is kept in your child's Ontario School Record (OSR).

All students identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) must have an IEP. Students who have not been identified as exceptional but are working with accommodations, or on modified or alternative curriculum will also have an IEP put in place.

Should a parent have questions or concerns about their child's progress, or programming the following steps are suggested:

- The parent/guardian is requested to write down any questions or concerns regarding the IEP.
- The teacher with primary responsibility for the development of the IEP (elementary teacher(s) or secondary SERT) will arrange a time to meet with you to review your concerns or questions. Agreed upon changes can be made and a copy of the revised IEP sent home.
- Should any questions and/or concerns remain unanswered, a second meeting may be arranged to include the school Principal or Vice-Principal. The Administration can assist in answering your questions and will work with you to best serve your child.

Section 4 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

Student ID#:
Student OEN:
Date of Birth:



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191 Carlton Street
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7P4
905-641-1550

IEP Cover Page

REASON FOR DEVELOPING THE IEP

- Student identified as exceptional by IPRC Student not formally identified but requires special education program/services, including modified/alternative learning expectations and/or accommodations

STUDENT PROFILE

Name: _____ Gender: ____ Date of Birth: _____
School: _____
Student OEN: _____ Principal: _____
Current Grade: _____ School Year: _____ Term: _____
Most Recent IPRC Date: _____

Decision

Placement

Program:

SAMPLE

Section 4 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

Student ID#: _____
Student OEN: _____
Date of Birth: _____



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Assessments

ASSESSMENT DATA

Listed are the relevant educational, medical/health (hearing, vision, physical, neurological), psychological, speech/language, occupational, and physiotherapy assessments.

Information Source	Date	Summary of Results

Areas of Strength

Areas of Need

Health Support Services/Personal Support Required Yes (list below) No

Section 4 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

Student ID#: _____
 Student OEN: _____
 Date of Birth: _____



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Courses and Accommodations

SUBJECTS, COURSES, OR ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS TO WHICH THE IEP APPLIES

Identify each as Accommodated only (AC), Modified (MOD), or Alternative (ALT)

1. _____ AC MOD ALT

Elementary Program Exemptions or Secondary School Compulsory Course Substitutions

Yes (provide educational rationale) No

ACCOMMODATIONS

(Accommodations are assumed to be the same for all subjects to which they are applicable, unless otherwise indicated)

Instructional Accommodations	Environmental Accommodations	Assessment Accommodations

SAMPLE

Section 4 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

Student ID#:
Student OEN:
Date of Birth:



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Courses and Accommodations

Individualized Equipment Yes (*list below*) No

Section 4 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

Student ID#: _____
 Student OEN: _____
 Date of Birth: _____



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Program

To be completed for each subject/course with modified expectations and/or each alternative program with alternative expectations

Teacher: _____	Subject/Course/Alternative Program: _____
Current Level of Achievement: Prerequisite course (if applicable) _____ Letter grade/Mark _____ Curriculum grade level _____	Baseline Level of Achievement for Alternative Program: _____

Annual Program Goal(s): A goal statement describing what the student can reasonably be expected to accomplish by the end of the school year in a particular subject, course, or alternative program.

Section 4 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

Student ID#:
 Student OEN:
 Date of Birth:



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Human Resources & IEP Team

HUMAN RESOURCES (teaching/non-teaching)

Service	Provider	Initiation Date	Frequency	Location(s)

EVALUATION

Reporting Dates:

Reporting Format

- Provincial Report Card
- Alternative Report

IEP TEAM

IEP Developed by:

Staff Member	Position	Staff Member	Position

Sources Consulted in the Development of the IEP

Date of Placement in Special Education Program (select the appropriate option)

- 1) First day of attendance in new special education program
- 2) First day of the new school year or semester in which the student is continuing in a placement
- 3) First day of the student's enrolment in a special education program that he/she begins in mid-year or mid-semester as the result of a change of placement

Date of Placement:

Completion Date of IEP Development Phase

Section 4 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

Student ID#:
 Student OEN:
 Date of Birth:



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 191 Carlton Street
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 905-641-1550

Consultation Log & Signatures

LOG OF PARENT/STUDENT CONSULTATION AND STAFF REVIEW/UPDATING

Date	Activity <small>(Indicates parent/student consultation regarding programming)</small>	Outcome	Staff Involved
------	--	---------	----------------

The principal is legally required to ensure that the IEP is properly implemented and monitored. This IEP has been developed according to the ministry's standards and appropriately addresses the student's strengths and needs. The learning expectations will be reviewed and the student's achievement evaluated at least once every reporting period.

 Principal's Signature Date

Involvement of Parent/Guardian and Student (if student is 16 or older)

- I was consulted in the development of this IEP Parent/Guardian Student
- I declined the opportunity to be consulted in the development of this IEP Parent/Guardian Student
- I have received a copy of this IEP Parent/Guardian Student

Parent/Guardian and Student Comments:

 Parent/Guardian Signature Date

 Student Signature (if 16 or older) Date

Section 5 SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF

The allocation of Special Education Staff is reviewed each year and allocated based on student needs.

ABA Facilitator

The ABA Facilitator works with administrators, teachers and multi-disciplinary teams by providing and coordinating Applied Behaviour Analysis instructional methods and resources at the board and school level. The ABA Facilitator is responsible to the Student Achievement Leader - Special Education for the performance of assigned duties.

Brailist

The Brailist is a member of a multi-disciplinary resource team reporting to the Student Achievement Leader – Special Education and works closely with the Resource Teacher - Blind and Low Vision, and in consultation with a specialist teacher of the blind or deaf-blind.

Chief Psychologist

The Chief Psychologist reports to the Superintendent responsible for Special Education. The Chief Psychologist assumes responsibility for monitoring and maintaining the system of psychological services delivery and provides resource support to Special Education, as assigned.

Consultant – Special Education

The Consultant – Special Education’s duties consist of advising and assisting Superintendents, Principals, Teachers, Designated Early Childhood Educators, Educational Assistants, and Parents/Guardians in matters related to Special Education programs and services. The Consultant – Special Education is responsible to the Student Achievement Leader - Special Education for the performance of assigned duties.

Educational Assistant (EA)

Educational Assistants are assigned to schools that have special education classes and to schools where there are students who require intensive support in regular classrooms. EAs support students with specified physical needs including visual, auditory, ambulatory, and personal care. Students exhibiting severe behavioural needs may also receive EA support to ensure the safety of themselves and others. Educational Assistants are under the supervision of the Principal and receive direction from the Classroom Teacher.

Educational Assistant – System

The Educational Assistant – System provides resources and supports for programming in schools. They also may assist with Special Education processes and projects as required. The Educational Assistant - System reports directly to the Student Achievement Leader - Special Education.

Education Assistant – Technology

The Education Assistant – Technology assists with the development, training and support for staff and students in the use of various software and assistive technologies to enhance learning outcomes.

Educational Audiologist

DSBN contracts the services of an Educational Audiologist who works collaboratively with the Resource Teacher - Deaf and Hard of Hearing to support the needs of students within the system.

Section 5 SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF

Interpreter

The role of the Interpreter is to facilitate communication between students who are deaf or hard of hearing and others within the educational environment. In addition, the Interpreter functions as an integral part of the educational team by commenting on the interpreting process. The Interpreter works under the supervision of the school Principal and in consultation with a qualified teacher of the deaf.

Intervenor

The role of the Intervenor is to assist students with Acquired/Congenital Deafblindness to access information and interact with their environment. It is a position that requires maintaining the student's rights to privacy and dignity and ensuring personal student safety, recognizing the constraints inherent in working within a school setting.

Learning Resource Teacher (LRT)

The role of the Learning Resource Teacher (LRT) is to support students achieving success by providing resource assistance (in-class), withdrawal support and/or indirect service to exceptional and at-risk students in a collaborative manner. This school-based special educator is placed in elementary schools under the direct supervision of the Principal.

Occupational Therapist

The Occupational Therapist (OT) is responsible to the Student Achievement Leader - Special Education and is a regulated health professional who assesses and provides recommendations and strategies regarding fine motor skills, sensory processing skills, visual perception, and organizational skills necessary for success in the classroom.

Psycho-Educational Consultant

The Psycho-Educational Consultant provides services of a psychological nature under the supervision of a Member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario and participates in a multi-disciplinary team to problem-solve Special Education issues and the needs of individual students. The Psycho-Education Consultant is responsible to the Chief Psychologist for the performance of assigned duties.

Resource Teacher – Special Education

The Resource Teacher – Special Education provides program strategies or suggestions, resources and services to meet the needs of students requiring accommodation/modification of program within classrooms for students with Blind and Low Vision needs, and Deaf and Hard of Hearing needs. The Resource Teachers of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Blind Low Vision are responsible to the Student Achievement Leader - Special Education for the performance of assigned duties.

Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Supervisor

The SEA Supervisor, under the direction of the Student Achievement Leader – Special Education, will lead and support all aspects of SEA funding. This role would oversee the work of the SEA Team while acting as the lead SEA contact for the Ministry of Education. Additionally, the SEA Supervisor would be responsible for the ongoing development of SEA processes in compliance with Ministry guidelines, forward planning and troubleshooting, and the coordination of various DSBN departments to ensure exceptional SEA services at the system-level, school-level, and for individual students.

Senior Manager Special Education

Senior Manager – Special Education is responsible for managing and coordinating the service delivery of Special Education supports and resources such as Board funding and allocations, and agency partnerships and protocols. The Senior Manager reports to the Superintendent of Special Education.

Section 5 SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF

Social Worker

Social Workers are responsible to the Manager of Social Work and are members of the Support Triad (Consultant, Educational Assistant and Social Worker) that assist schools in programming and planning for students with significant emotional, behavioural, or mental health issues and cultural concerns.

Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)

The SERT is a resource to classroom teachers, provides in-class, withdrawal support and/or indirect service to exceptional and at-risk students, and is able to work with parents/guardians in a pro-active manner. This school-based special educator is placed in secondary schools under the direct supervision of the Principal.

Speech Language Pathologist

The Speech-Language Pathologist is a regulated health professional who assesses and provides ongoing support for the speech and language needs of students. The Speech-Language Pathologist is responsible to the Student Achievement Leader - Special Education for the performance of assigned duties.

Low Enrolment Multidisciplinary Team

This team supports the Low Enrolment Programs throughout the board. The team has a special education consultant, ABA facilitators, , and central educational assistants. One of the key roles of this team is to build capacity with staff to provide intensive supports for students with complex needs. The team works with staff to support programming, various types of transitions, social skills and self-regulation skill building. Each team will have direct and immediate access to central resources such as a movement resource teacher, occupational therapist and psychoeducational support and other required services.

Student Achievement Leader – Special Education

The Student Achievement Leader - Special Education is responsible for the co-ordination and supervision of Special Education staff and student supports and reports directly to the Superintendent responsible for Special Education.

Superintendent for Special Education

The Superintendent responsible for Special Education supervises Special Education service delivery and support for the system. The Superintendent of Special Education reports directly to the Director of Education.

Section 6 SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT

SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT

The District School Board of Niagara has allocated funding for the purchase of specialized equipment required by students.

Examples of Specialized Equipment:

- therapy equipment (e.g., therapy balls, wedges, rolls, etc.)
- sensory equipment (e.g., weighted vests, lap pads, etc.)
- fine motor equipment (e.g., slant boards, pencil grips, etc.)

Criteria for Student Eligibility

Generally, a therapist makes a request for specialized equipment based on specific student needs. Requests are reviewed by Special Education Staff in consultation with the school principal.

Tracking Specialized Equipment

There is a central database used to track equipment assigned to meet student needs. When students move, or their needs change, equipment may be transferred or reallocated.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AMOUNT (SEA) CLAIMS

The Ministry of Education provides Special Equipment Amount funding to assist school boards with the cost of essential equipment required to support students with special needs to access the Ontario curriculum or board determined program or to attend school. All equipment must be deemed essential and be recommended by a qualified professional.

Examples of SEA Funded equipment:

- FM systems
- sensory equipment
- change tables
- ceiling lifts/portable lifts
- print enlargers
- amplification systems
- adaptive seating and workstations
- braille writers
- positioning devices
- computer hardware and specialized software
- warranties, service contracts, training associated with specific equipment

Criteria for Student Eligibility

A SEA Claim for equipment requires the following documentation:

- an assessment or assessments on file from an appropriately qualified professional such as a psychologist, audiologist, occupational therapist, or physiotherapist. The assessment must include a diagnosis of the condition that the equipment is meant to address and a recommendation regarding the specific types of equipment that the student requires to address their needs. The assessment must indicate that the equipment is essential to support the student. In some cases, more than one professional may need to be consulted.
- evidence of proof of purchase, such as a copy of any purchase orders and invoices.
- a current copy of the student's Individual Education Plan indicating the use of the equipment to support the student's program.

Section 6 SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT

Tracking SEA Claims

A letter detailing the SEA equipment is emailed to the principal and placed in the student's OSR. The District School Board of Niagara maintains a database that provides a detailed inventory of existing equipment. When a student graduates, or it is deemed that the equipment is no longer of benefit to the student, SEA funded equipment will be reallocated within DSBN.

SEA Portability

Equipment purchased through SEA funding is considered to be portable which means that it should be transferred when the student changes schools or moves to a different school board within Ontario. It is the responsibility of Special Education Support Services to contact the previous board to request the transfer of equipment and will incur any shipping or handling costs associated with the transfer of equipment.

The sending board will not be reimbursed by the Ministry, since the equipment was purchased on behalf of the student based on his/her needs. Equipment acquired through a "shared claim" does not always move to a new location with the student

Section 7 TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Transportation

Niagara Student Transportation Services (NSTS) is a consortium that services the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) and the Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB). The mandate of NSTS is to provide safe, efficient, and effective student transportation services.

In accordance with the Education Act, school boards may provide home-to-school or school-to-school transportation to students who are within the Board's jurisdiction or control. In all cases (other than those situations specified in the Education Act), transportation is a privilege, not a right, and it may be withdrawn at any time.

The approved Board student transportation policy sets the eligibility criteria and students may be provided transportation on the basis of distance, hazardous walking routes or approved program attendance. Transportation may also be provided to students with exceptional needs with the approval from the authorized department.

The Special Education Support Services' Department in consultation with the school and NSTS will determine if a student is eligible for transportation due to exceptional needs and defines the specific transportation requirements to maintain the safety of all students. (i.e., individual transportation, bus monitor etc.)

NSTS applies the Board approved transportation policy and plans and administers service using contracted school buses, taxis or through a Public Transit Commission.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the school is aware of any health condition that may require immediate medical attention. The school provides this information for inclusion on the bus route copy so that the bus driver can respond accordingly in urgent situations. Transportation is an integral part of a student's school experience and should account for their personal abilities and needs. An Individual Student Transportation Plan (ISTP) is a key part of ensuring students have successful experiences in school.

In situations where a student does not qualify for transportation under the policy eligibility criteria, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the student gets to and from school safely.

Information regarding students' specific transportation arrangements is available at www.nsts.ca.

Section 7 TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS



Individual Student Transportation Plan

Rationale:

Transportation is an integral part of a student's school experience and should account for their personal abilities and needs. An **Individual Student Transportation Plan (ISTP)** is a key part of ensuring students have successful experiences in school.

Insert
Photo
Here

Student & School Contact Info		Date Implemented:	
Student:		Grade:	
Home Address:	School & Address:		
Parent & Contact Info:	School Phone:		

Bus & Route Information (Route # _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Modified Day:	Home/Corner Pick up time: _____	School Pick up time: _____	ETA Home/Corner Drop off time: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Big Bus - Corner Stop <input type="checkbox"/> Big Bus - Home Stop <input type="checkbox"/> Small Bus - Corner Stop <input type="checkbox"/> Small Bus - Home Stop	<input type="checkbox"/> Seatbelt Required* <input type="checkbox"/> Booster Seat Required <input type="checkbox"/> Car Seat Required* <input type="checkbox"/> Support Harness Required*	*Note any use of specialized or restrictive seating for transportation must involve taking proper measurements for safety reasons by a licensed professional (OT/PT) and approved by a parent/guardian before being prescribed.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Climate controlled vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptive Stroller <input type="checkbox"/> High-back <input type="checkbox"/> Reclining <input type="checkbox"/> Manual <input type="checkbox"/> Motorized	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Considerations:			

Student Information				
<input type="checkbox"/> Completely Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Blind / Low Vision	<input type="checkbox"/> Deaf / Hard of Hearing
<input type="checkbox"/> Autism Spectrum Disorder	<input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/> Epilepsy / Seizure	<input type="checkbox"/> Asthma	<input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour
<input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity to sensory stimuli	<input type="checkbox"/> Shunt	<input type="checkbox"/> ELL	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

Section 7 TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Student Safety	
Does the student pose a safety risk while in transit? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Explain:	

Strategies to Support Transportation			
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Seating <input type="checkbox"/> Front of bus <input type="checkbox"/> Back of bus <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Section <input type="checkbox"/> Window Seat <input type="checkbox"/> Aisle Seat	<input type="checkbox"/> Sitting alone away from peers and staff (providing personal space)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sitting with a rider to help with regulation and staying seated	<input type="checkbox"/> Must be met by staff / parent / caregiver on drop off / pick up at door to bus (hand off)
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of chewelry	<input type="checkbox"/> Transition Tool / Item used while riding and seated	<input type="checkbox"/> Sensory Kit and/or Squeeze it Kit while riding	<input type="checkbox"/> Companion Animal
<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal prompts to go to and remain seated in upright position	<input type="checkbox"/> Guide to seat (e.g., holding hand, side by side escort, gestures)	<input type="checkbox"/> Use of visuals / picture system to prompt expected behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/> Limiting verbal dialogue to avoid escalation
<input type="checkbox"/> Conversing with student (e.g., friendly greetings, singing a familiar song)	<input type="checkbox"/> Use of Walker / Cane / Braces for mobility <input type="checkbox"/> collapsible <input type="checkbox"/> non-collapsible	<input type="checkbox"/> Step Stool Access	<input type="checkbox"/> Auditory Equipment (e.g. listening device)
Other Strategies to use:			

AUTHORIZATION/PLAN REVIEW

INDIVIDUALS WITH WHOM THIS PLAN IS TO BE SHARED: DSBN Teaching and Support Staff, Niagara Student Transportation Services

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Section 8 TRANSITION PLANNING

Transition Planning

The transition from school to work, further education, and community living can be particularly challenging for some students. The probability of a successful transition is significantly increased when schools work with parents/guardians, employers, community agencies, and providers of further education to develop coordinated transition plans for exceptional students. (*Transition Planning: A Resource Guide 2002*) Transition plans can include a variety of supports and may take place for different reasons. (e.g., school change, classroom change, transitions during school, staff changes). All students that are supported by an Individual Education Plan will have a transition plan in place.

Some examples of effective transition practices in the District School Board of Niagara include, but are not limited to:

Preschool Transition Process – DSBN staff work with local Preschool Resource Consultants and various community agencies to ensure preschoolers with educational needs enter DSBN schools successfully. Developing transition plans, sharing information and providing support to families new to DSBN are key components to the Preschool Transition Process

Transition for Students with Autism – Many individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have difficulty coping with novel and unexpected events or transition between activities and environments, leading to anxiety and/or behaviours. Appropriate planning for transition is vital in helping a student with ASD to prepare for and adjust for changes and should begin well in advance of the expected change for the student. In the DSBN, transition plans are included in the student's IEP and can include school to school, classroom to classroom and activity to activity supports.

Grade 8 to Grade 9 Transition – A transition form is completed for every student entering grade 9. This information is shared with the receiving school staff to ensure that the learning strengths and needs of each student are considered before the student even starts secondary school. For students with special education needs, a transition plan is developed as part of the individual education plan and transition meetings are held with staff from both the elementary and secondary school.

Transition for Students who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing – DSBN Resource Teachers – Deaf and Hard of Hearing, works collaboratively with the Infant Hearing Program, service agencies such as Speech Services Niagara (SSN), VOICE Auditory Verbal Therapists, American Sign Language Consultants and the Provincial Schools for the Deaf – Home Visiting Teachers to ensure a smooth transition to a school within the DSBN, and establish program goals for students.

Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disabilities (TAY Protocol) - The DSBN works closely with other community agencies and other Ministries to ensure that proper transition planning takes place for students with developmental disabilities. At age 14, students will be offered an Integrated Transition Planning Process that the school will facilitate to assist families and students in planning longer term for transition to community opportunities. Through this process the **Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services** and The Ministry of Education (MOE) are working together to provide a more streamlined integrated transition planning process to support young people who are preparing for transition to adulthood.

Transition to Employment - The Transition to Employment program helps individuals 16+ build employment skills, secure employment and retain employment for 1 year following hiring. Employment Consultants work with individuals across the Niagara Region to set and meet their employment goals in an individualized manner with a case management approach to serving others. Along with this, students are supported with on-boarding, employment related costs, and work with the employer to accommodate and retain employment.

Section 1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities are an essential part of delivering special education programs and services. The roles and responsibilities within special education are outlined below.

The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education:

- sets out, through the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services
- prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality
- requires through the Education Act that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils
- establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model.
- requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education through the budget process
- sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement
- requires through regulation that school boards to maintain special education plans, review them annually, and submit amendments to the ministry
- requires school boards through the Education Act and regulation to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs)
- establishes a Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to special education programs and services
- operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, who are blind, who are deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

The District School Board

The District School Board:

- establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda
- monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda
- requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda
- provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for the exceptional pupils of the board
- plans report on the expenditures for special education
- develops and maintains a special education plan that is amended from time to time to meet the current needs of the exceptional pupils of the board
- reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education
- provides statistical reports to the ministry as required
- prepares a parent guide to provide parents/guardians with information about special education programs, services, and procedures
- establishes one or more IPRCs to identify exceptional pupils and determine appropriate placements for them
- establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee
- provides professional development to staff on special education
- adheres to all applicable legislation.

The Special Education Advisory Committee

The Special Education Advisory Committee:

- makes recommendations to the board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board
- participates in the board's annual review of its special education plan
- participates in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education
- reviews the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education

Section 1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Administrator

The School Administrator:

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda, and through board policies
- communicates Ministry of Education and school board expectations to staff
- ensures that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to teach special education classes
- communicates board policies and procedures about special education to staff, students, and parents/guardians
- ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, through an IPRC, is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and board policies
- consults with parents and school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional pupils
- ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including the transition plan
- ensures that parents/guardians are consulted in the development of their child's IEP and that they are provided with a copy of the IEP
- ensures the delivery of the program as set out in the IEP
- ensures that appropriate assessments are requested and that, if necessary, parental consent is obtained.

The Teacher

The Teacher:

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda
- follows board policies and procedures regarding special education
- works with the special education teacher to acquire and maintain up-to-date knowledge of special education practices
- works with special education staff and parents/guardians to develop the IEP for an exceptional pupil
- where appropriate, work with other school board staff to review and update the student's IEP
- provides the program for the exceptional student in the regular class, as outlined in the IEP
- communicates the student's progress to parents/guardians.

The Special Education Teacher

The Special Education Teacher, in addition to the responsibilities listed above under "The Teacher":

- holds qualifications, in accordance with the regulations under the Education Act, to teach special education
- monitors the student's progress with reference to the IEP and modifies the program as necessary
- assists in providing educational assessments for exceptional pupils.

The Early Childhood Educator

The early childhood educator, in coordination and cooperation with the classroom teacher:

- plans for and provides education to children in Kindergarten
- observes, monitors, and assesses the development of Kindergarten children
- maintains a healthy physical, emotional, and social learning environment in the classroom
- communicates with families
- performs duties assigned by the principal with respect to the Kindergarten program.

Section 1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Parent/Guardian:

- is familiar with and informed about board policies and procedures in areas that affect the child
- participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities
- participates in the development of the IEP
- is acquainted with the school staff working with the student
- supports the student at home
- works with the school principal and educators to solve problems
- is responsible for the student's attendance at school.

The Student:

- complies with the requirements as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy documents, including policy/program memoranda
- complies with board policies and procedures
- participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other activities, as appropriate.

Section 2 CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF EXCEPTIONALITIES

Categories of Exceptionalities

The following five categories of exceptionalities have been identified in the Education Act definition of *exceptional pupil*:

- behavioural
- communicational
- intellectual
- physical
- multiple

These broad categories include the following definitions, as clarified in the memo to school boards of January 15, 1999:

Category	Ministry of Education Definition
Behavioural	
Behavioural	<p>A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships; b) excessive fears or anxieties; c) a tendency to compulsive reaction;
Communicational	
Autism	<p>A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) disturbances in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – rate of educational development; – ability to relate to the environment; – mobility;
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	<p>An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.</p>

Section 2 CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF EXCEPTIONALITIES

Category	Ministry of Education Definition
Communicational	
Language Impairment	<p>A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and b) include one or more of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – language delay; – dysfluency; – voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.
Speech Impairment	<p>A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm, and stress.</p>
Learning Disability	<p>One of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are at least in the average range; • results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support; • results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills; • may typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; executive functions (e.g., self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making); • may be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities; • is not the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction.

Section 2 CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF EXCEPTIONALITIES

Category	Ministry of Education Definition
Intellectual	
Giftedness	An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.
Mild Intellectual Disability	A learning disorder characterized by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service; an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development; a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.
Developmental Disability	A severe learning disorder characterized by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development; an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development; a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.
Physical	
Physical Disability	A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or development level.
Blind and Low Vision	A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.
Multiple	
Multiple Exceptionalities	A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities that is of such a nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

Section 3 PROVINCIAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO

PROVINCIAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS:

- are operated by the Ministry of Education and Training;
- provide an alternative education option;
- serve as a regional resource for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, who are blind or have low vision, who are deafblind or who have severe learning disabilities;
- provide outreach and home-visiting service to parents of preschool children who are Deaf or hard of hearing, are blind or have low vision, or are deafblind;
- provide school board teachers with resource services;
- provide professional development for teachers.

Provincial Schools

Branch 255 Ontario
Street South Milton,
ON L9T 2M5

Phone: 905-878-2851

PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO

SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

W. Ross Macdonald School

350 Brant Ave
Brantford, ON
N3T 3J9 Phone:
(519) 759-0730

- Provides education for blind, visually impaired and deaf/blind students.
- Curriculum consistent with Ontario Curriculum.
- Full range of courses (elementary and secondary).
- Comprehensive life skills programs.
- Students transported weekly.
- Pre-school visiting program.

Resource Support

- Provides consultation and special learning materials (i.e., braille, largeprint).

SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF

Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf (Belleville - serves Eastern Ontario)

350 Dundas Street West, Belleville, Ontario K8P 1B2, Phone: (613) 967-2823

Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf (Milton - serves Central and Northern Ontario)

255 Ontario Street South, Milton, Ontario L9T 2M5, Phone: (905) 878-2851

Robarts School for the Deaf (London - serves Western Ontario)

1090 Highbury Avenue, London, Ontario N5Y 4V9, Phone: (519) 453-4400

Centres Jules-Leger (Ottawa - serves Francophone students)

281 Lanark Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1Z 6R8, Phone: (613) 761-9300

Section 3 PROVINCIAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO

- Elementary and secondary school programs.
- Focus on language acquisition, learning and social development through American Sign Language (A.S.L.)
- Students transported weekly.
- Curriculum-Ontario Curriculum.
- Pre-school visiting program.

DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO

The Ministry of Education and Training provides the services of three English language provincial demonstration schools for Ontario children with severe learning disabilities. Application for admission to a provincial demonstration school is made on behalf of students by the school board, with parent/guardian consent. The Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities (PCLD) determines whether a student is eligible for admission. Although the primary responsibility to provide appropriate educational programs for students with learning disabilities remains with school boards, the Ministry recognizes that some students require a residential school setting for a period of time. The demonstration schools were established to provide special residential education programs for students between the ages of five and twenty-one years. The activities associated with the residential components of the programs are designed to enhance the development of each student's academic and social skills. One of the basic objectives of each of these schools is to develop the abilities of the students enrolled to a level that will enable them to return to programs operated by local school boards within two years.

Transportation to Provincial and Demonstration Schools is provided by the Board from which the student comes. The District School Board of Niagara provides transportation for our students who attend one of these schools.

Teachers may obtain additional information from the Resource Services Departments of the Provincial Schools and the groups listed below.

Amethyst Demonstration School

1090 Highbury Avenue, London, ON,

Phone: (519) 453-4400

Trillium Demonstration

School 347 Ontario St

South, Milton, ON L9T 3X9,

Phone: (905) 878-2851

Sagonaska Demonstration School

350 Dundas Street West,

Belleville, ON,

Phone: (613) 967-2830

Section 1 EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) believes that early identification procedures and intervention strategies are a very important aspect of the overall programming for students. Consultation with parents/guardians begins at or before the child enrolls in the DSBN and will continue throughout the student's school life. Therefore, the DSBN has put in place procedures for early identification, continuous review, and interventions that are in partnership with parents/guardians.

THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA, EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

Principles for Early Identification: (Note: The six items reflect and parallel the six principles set out in the Ministry Memorandum 11 and reflect the DSBN's beliefs.)

1. The ability to communicate effectively is important for school success. Reading and writing are strongly influenced by the ability to understand and use language. Language is not just another subject. It is the means by which all other subjects are pursued. Also, research indicates that early childhood is a critical or sensitive period during which emerging language problems can most readily be addressed. Therefore, early identification and support for students whose language skills are delayed or disordered is critical.
2. Parent-School Partnership is key. Consultation and collaboration with the parents/guardians begin during the process of enrolling in the DSBN and continues throughout the student's school life. Parent/guardian questionnaires and discussions at enrollment for all students, as well as formal transition procedures for students entering school with known special education needs, helps to establish an early connection between home and school. Students entering school with known special education needs often enter with the support of the Pre-School Transition Process – see Section 8, Transition Planning pg. 28.
3. Screening is a non-intrusive process, which involves a variety of strategies to ensure that important learning needs of all students entering the DSBN have been systematically considered. Areas for screening reflect key aspects of emotional, social, intellectual, and/or physical development. Screening maintains the comfort of the child, respects the importance of teaching/learning time in the classroom, and facilitates timely interventions. The Functional Screening and Strategies for Kindergarten Success is one tool available to schools to support Early Learning.
4. Continuous assessment from different perspectives, as appropriate, produces a profile of the learner to assist with planning interventions and curriculum adaptations that support student success. Assessment is continuous and the established partnership between regular and special education facilitates meeting the needs of individual students and coordinating the educational practices within regular education and special education programs. (For further information see Section 2 – Educational and Other Assessments, pg. 42)
5. Screening selects students for further curriculum-based assessment, increased frequency of school-parent communication, and consultation/assessment by appropriately qualified and certified/licensed professionals. These students receive on-going monitoring, assessment, and intervention to meet their changing needs. Screening is never the basis for long-term prediction or comprehensive planning.
6. The classroom teacher is the key school staff member in the selection and screening of students for early assessment, intervention, and monitoring. The teacher is supported by a number of resources in the curriculum and special education departments, including a comprehensive plan for system assessment.

Section 1 EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Process

Early Identification is a process for screening all students and selecting those students who may be at-risk of not experiencing success in school, including some students who may require further special education supports in the future. The process targets key developmental issues to be observed in order to quickly select those students who require timely and relevant curriculum-based assessment in order to establish intervention strategies. A variety of assessment tools are used in every classroom, please refer to Section 2 – Educational and Other Assessments, pg. 42 for further information.

Step one: Use assessment tools to determine students who may be at risk. These assessment procedures indicate skill strengths and needs which are developing at a critical period of growth or are key to establishing school success.

Step two: The teacher continues the regular curriculum-based assessment and teaching practices. These are supplemented with parent-teacher communication, planned strategic observation of the student, and discussions with school resource staff. (e.g., In-School Team, Instructional Coaches, and Administration.) PRIME (Mathematics Assessment Tool), and BAS (Benchmark Assessment of Reading), Heggerty are some of the classroom assessment tools used to support programming decisions.

Step three: An Informal intervention plan is implemented at school, supported by the home, with on-going monitoring and revision, as needed.

Step four: Teacher communication with the parent/guardian and the In-School Team facilitates on-going program revision to meet changing needs and establishes a basis for timely access to specialized resource staff, as well as certified/licensed professionals when needed. An Individual Education Plan may be suggested to support the learning needs of non-identified learners, to support early intervention and strategies.

Step five: Variations of steps two through five are on-going until the student achieves success, or the student enters the special education processes of formal assessment, identification, and programming.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS IN NEED OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AT SCHOOL ENTRY

The District School Board of Niagara recognizes the importance of the first contact parents/guardians have with the school system. Therefore, Administration is expected to meet the DSBN's obligation not only to enroll all children who have the right to attend; but to welcome those who may have special education needs. Once the student has been registered, the school and parents/guardians will work with Special Education Support Services resource staff to collect and review information related to the child's needs and determine a plan for school entry. This is often done through the Preschool Transition Process explained further in Section 8, pg. 28.

Strong partnerships exist with agencies serving pre-school children with special education needs. Discussions held long before the child comes to school help identify strengths and needs that can be planned for during transition.

Section 1 EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

IN-SCHOOL TEAM (IST)

The District School Board of Niagara expects that an In-School Team (IST for Elementary) or In-School Student Success Team (ISSST for Secondary) will be established for each school within the DSBN, in accordance with its Policy: Framework for the Provision of Special Education Services and Administrative Procedure for In-School Team.

The In-School Team is regarded as the formalized, ongoing problem-solving forum. The IST develops and reviews plans designed to enable students who are experiencing difficulty in their learning

The following expectations are to be met when establishing an In-School Team:

MEMBERSHIP

Core membership on the team should include:

- Administrator
- LRT/SERT
- Classroom teacher
- Guidance Counsellor (secondary)
- Student Success Teacher (secondary)

To add support to the problem-solving process, additional participants may include:

- Additional Classroom Teachers
- Educational Assistant
- Elementary Divisional Leader
- Secondary Program Leaders
- Special Education Support Staff
- Social Worker and/or Youth Counselor
- Student (if appropriate)

INPUT

Input may be invited in written form or through discussions/meetings/case conferences from:

- Student (if appropriate)
- Parents/guardians
- Agency representative

TIME

In-School Team meetings must be:

- regularly scheduled (recommended weekly). Additional meetings may be called on short notice, if necessary, to meet emerging needs or special circumstances;
- scheduled at a time that will facilitate the attendance of all members involved;
- time limited and student specific.

Section 1 EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA IN-SCHOOL TEAM REFERRAL

Date of Referral: _____

Student: _____

D.O.B. _____

Teacher: _____

Grade: _____

IEP: Yes No ELL PBSP SP

What is your understanding of the student and their skills/gifts, strengths, interests and abilities?

What is the student working on? (Academic, Behavioural, Social-Emotional)

INFORMATION GATHERING	DATE(S)	DISCUSSION/ACTION REQUIRED
Supports/strategies in place and duration		
Pertinent information from OSR (i.e., assessments, previous report cards, student information forms, etc.)		
Contact(s) with parents/guardians		
Review of previous medical history with parent, guardian, OSR, or other sources		
Consultation with staff (LRT/SERT, teachers, division/department leads, social worker, etc.)		
Outside Agency Involvement		
Other Sources		

Action Plan: _____

Follow Up IST Meeting Date: _____

Section 2 EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

School Board personnel administering specialized assessment work within the standards and ethical practice guidelines established by their respective Colleges. They are governed by the *Education Act* and the *Regulated Health Professions Act* and must comply with the *Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)*.

Assessments provide a framework for educational programming purposes and may involve any combination of the following:

- formalized standardized tests;
- informal measures such as observation;
- curriculum/classroom-based assessment;
- review of the Ontario Student Record (OSR);
- interviews with teachers, parents/guardians, or other professionals.

Protection of Privacy of Information

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are informed that information obtained from assessments is maintained in accordance with the requirements of the College of Psychologists, the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario, CASLPO or the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario plus the *Municipal Freedom of Information and the Protection of Privacy Act*. A separate consent form, *Consent to Disclose Information Form* must be signed by the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to share information with outside agencies.

LITERACY/NUMERACY ASSESSMENT

Assessment informs and directs instruction. The results obtained from the assessment of essential literacy and numeracy skills and concepts will enable teachers to provide both a profile of student growth and development, and responsive programs to meet the needs of all learners. Classroom-based literacy and numeracy assessment is maintained for each student in elementary school. Literacy assessments such as, Benchmark Assessment of Reading (BAS), the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness, and Remediation Plus will be used to monitor student progress and determine appropriate intervention. PRIME is an example of a classroom-based numeracy assessment that may be used for some students.

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

Alternative Assessment tools such as the Brigance and the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills (ABLLS) are commercially produced assessment resources that both schools and central staff may use for determining student strengths, needs and the next steps needed to ensure program goals are measurable and student achievement is improving.

SPEECH-LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Speech-Language assessments assist teachers in understanding the oral language and social communication needs of students, and the interrelationships between listening, speaking, reading and writing. A student may be referred for a Speech-Language assessment through the In-School Team if there are any questions concerning a student's ability to: follow directions, participate in classroom conversations, understand and retell stories, socialize with peers, organize ideas sequentially, speak on topic, use appropriate vocabulary, word order and grammar, speak clearly and fluently, and learn sound skills necessary to read and write.

The assessment may:

- provide a Speech-Language Pathologist's opinion about the student's communicative ability;
- determine the existence and severity of a communication difficulty as related to language learning, literacy development, behaviour and general ability to participate in the classroom program;
- support teachers in developing appropriate language and social communication strategies for Individual Education Plan (IEPs);
- assist in determining appropriate placement and/or referral to an outside agency;
- provide support for additional assessment.

Section 2 EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

SPEECH ASSESSMENTS

When a student [J.K.– Gr. 12] demonstrates difficulties specific to the area of speech (i.e., concerns evident with regard to articulation, voice and/or fluency in the presence of age-appropriate oral language skills), an in-depth assessment may not be necessary. A speech assessment with a Speech-Language Pathologist may be requested by school staff in consultation with parents.

- Although written consent is not required, the LRT/SERT must obtain verbal consent and complete the Informed Consent for Speech and/or Language Services with a Parent/Guardian. The original form is filed in the OSR, and a copy sent home.
- Following assessment, parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will receive a Speech Evaluation Report. Copies will be placed in the OSR and Speech-Language File. Strategies for home and school programming may be provided.
- Students with articulation, voice and/or fluency concerns who meet criteria for direct speech therapy may be referred to School Based Rehabilitation Services provided by the Niagara Children's Centre.
- Application for service is completed at the school, signed by the parent/guardian and school principal. They are then forwarded to Special Education Support Services and subsequently to the Niagara Children's Centre.

Niagara Children's Centre is the provider of direct therapy to students and as per their established criteria determine which students will receive therapy.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Psychological assessments provide information about a student's cognitive, academic, social, emotional and behavioural functioning in order to facilitate learning. Various intellectual tests, and other tests of cognitive and psychological processing, and tests of social, emotional or behavioural functioning are utilized in conjunction with a review of the Ontario Student Record (OSR), observations, and interviews with the student and individuals involved with the pupil's education. This type of assessment applies a psychological framework regarding a student's development and learning in order to assist with program planning.

The psychological assessment may:

- determine the existence and severity of the learning and/or behavioural difficulty of a student;
- support teachers in developing appropriate learning and behavioural strategies for Individual Education Plans (IEPs);
- assist Identification, Placement and Review Committees (IPRC) with identification and programming supports to assist with decisions for students.

A copy of all Psychological and Speech/Language Assessments will be kept in the students Ontario Student Record. Students and parents have access to the Ontario Student record for the purposes of examination. Parents and students over the age of 18 can request that documents be removed from the Ontario Student Record as needed. Copies of Psychological and Speech/language assessment reports are also kept in clinical files as per the PHIPA. These files are kept on file for a period of time after students graduate as per PHIPA guidelines.

Section 3 COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES

The District School Board of Niagara has strong working relationships with a variety of community partners representing agencies and ministries beyond the education sector. These relationships support students by assisting school staff members, the staff of Special Education Support Services, and parents/guardians plan for smooth transitions for students entering the school system, returning to the school system, or for students within the school system and beyond that require additional supports and resources.

LINKS WITH SERVICE AGENCIES/MINISTRIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

The District School Board of Niagara has a variety of community partners. The Special Education department enjoys active relationships with the following agencies and ministries:

FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES (FACS)

FACS provides a wide range of services to support children, adolescents, and families. Nursery School/Early Learning Centres and Parenting Centres, as well as the Family Counseling Centre provide some of the services offered.

FACS is mandated by the Child and Family Services Act to investigate the abuse and neglect of children and to provide protection, foster care, and adoption services.

The DSBN partners with Family and Children Services and other Children's Aid Societies to provide Education and Community Partnership Program (ECPP) classrooms for students who have these needs. These ECPP classrooms are listed below:

Family and Children Services (Niagara) – Stepping Stones, Welland (Eastdale Secondary School Site)

Little House –St. Ann's (Gainsborough Elementary School Site)

Resilience Connections Niagara- St Catharines

The Superintendent responsible for Special Education and the Student Achievement Leader of ECPP Classrooms work collaboratively to facilitate the transition of students.

SPEECH SERVICES THROUGH THE NIAGARA CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Children who are 4 years of age and under and experiencing speech and language difficulties may be referred by their parents/guardians, physicians, or other professionals directly to Speech Services through the Niagara Children's Centre (NCC). The DSBN and Speech Services through NCC work diligently to enhance the transition to school. The Assistant Student Achievement Leader meets with community agencies throughout the year to ensure that we are planning for student success.

Section 3 COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES

NIAGARA CHILDREN'S CENTRE (NCC) - SCHOOL AGED SERVICES AND CLINICS

The Niagara Children's Centre provides treatment, therapy, and communication programs to school aged children so that they can accomplish functional and meaningful outcomes to enhance quality of life, achieve individual potential and participate fully in life at home, school and in the community.

School aged interventions are not intended to be continuous. Children who have lifelong need for management of physical disabilities are given episodic care when they experience physical change and/or equipment alterations. Equipment supports include customized seating systems and mobility devices. Orthopedic management is provided through a range of service, including medical consultations, casting, splinting and gait analysis. Home programming is an integral part of this service.

Children with acquired conditions and changing conditions are seen for assessment, brief intervention, and transition to community partners. Physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, social work and a developmental pediatrics team work together with the family and child.

Children who cannot talk or whose speech is very difficult to understand may receive augmentative and alternative communication assessment and intervention. Children with physical disabilities who cannot write using pen and paper are provided with specialized equipment for written communication.

Individualized therapy assessment and intervention is provided by clinicians, within group settings for children who attend the NCC School.

NIAGARA CHILDREN'S CENTRE - SCHOOL AUTHORITY

The Niagara Children's Centre School provides individualized education programming in a group setting to children 4-21 years of age with multiple learning exceptionalities.

Specialist teachers, therapists and other professionals utilize a family-centered approach to building student success in literacy, numeracy, augmentative and alternative communication for learning.

NCC School is not designed to be a permanent educational environment for students. The successful transition of students to community school environments with replicable teaching strategies for participation in learning is of utmost importance. Integration of students into community school environments is achieved by collaborating and working alongside the educational staff of the District School Board of Niagara.

CONTACT NIAGARA

Contact Niagara was created in 2000 in order to provide parents/guardians with a single point of access to a wide variety of services within the Niagara Region. Currently, Contact Niagara provides information and connects people to services for children and people of all ages who have a developmental concern. Contact Niagara is funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS). Resource coordinators at Contact Niagara help individuals to understand the services available and guide them through an interview process to identify and connect them with services opportunities.

Section 3 COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES

Bethesda Services

Bethesda Services provides support for children, youth, and adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. They offer a broad range of funded services and supports under the Ontario Autism Program. They provide family-centred, comprehensive developmental assessments for children/youth with a developmental disability or if an Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis is suspected. They also provide behavioural consultations, educational opportunities, and clinical and recreational group services. All of these services can be initiated for children under 18 through Contact Niagara. The DSBN, in partnership with Bethesda Services, provides support for additional clinical and recreational group services being offered during the summer.

Community Living Agencies and Niagara Support Services

These agencies provide a variety of services for individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. Child Care and Nursery School programs for pre-school aged children (2.5 to 6 years of age) are provided for children with special needs in an inclusive setting. The Association for Community Living and Niagara Support Services provide parent-directed services that support the child with special needs and his or her family. The DSBN has developed a framework to transition students supported by these agencies from various pre-school settings to schools within DSBN. Niagara Support Services offers a classroom for students with complex special learning needs, in grades 4-8 with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, to further develop self-regulation and daily living skills.

Pathstone Mental Health

Pathstone Mental Health is the lead agency for children's mental health services in the Niagara Region for children and youth from 0 – 18 years and their families. The work of all stakeholders at Pathstone is guided by their mission statement: "We strengthen the quality of life for children, youth and families who are dealing with mental health challenges".

Pathstone Mental Health, which is fully accredited through the Canadian Council of Accreditation, offers a continuum of mental health treatment services that includes Brief Services, Early Years Services, Walk-In Clinics, Outpatient Counselling, Outreach Services, School-based Services, Day Treatment (ECP) classrooms, Residential Treatment, High Risk Services, Youth Justice Programs and Crisis Services.

In particular, Pathstone Mental Health works in collaboration with the DSBN and the School-based team. The DSBN makes direct referrals for clinical supports for children and youth requiring intensive treatment services.

Pathstone Mental Health has fourteen (14) Day Treatment (ECP) classrooms. Within these classrooms, the teacher is provided by the DSBN and the child and youth worker in the classroom is provided by Pathstone Mental Health. All students in these classrooms and their families are also provided treatment by the social worker/therapist assigned to their specific classroom and may also be referred to one of the agency's consulting psychiatrist/psychologists.

Pathstone Day Treatment Classrooms are located at:

- Merrittville site (4 elementary classrooms)
- Westlane Secondary School (2 classrooms)
- Eastdale Secondary School .
- Catharines Collegiate (2 classrooms)
- Port Colborne High School
- Princess Elizabeth (elementary classroom)
- Thorold Secondary School
- Lifetime Learning Centre (2 classrooms)

Section 3 COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES

Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI)

In developing a Service Plan for an individual /family, a Service Provider may feel that residential services through CPRI would best meet the needs of the student and would be the most appropriate resource for a particular student. In such a case, the service provider will call Contact Niagara and request a referral to CPRI for residential assessment. The DSBN, with parental/guardian consent, provides documentation (school reports, psychological assessment reports, etc.) to the service provider who is making the referral for residential placement.

YOUTH JUSTICE

John Howard Society (JHS) – Community based Youth Justice

The J.H.S. provides a Shifting Gears Classroom housed in St. Catharines for elementary school students in grades 6 – 8 and a second class for grades 7- 10.

Detention and Correction Facilities

The DSBN provides teaching staff for students in ECPP classrooms in the following detention and correction facilities.

- Niagara Detention Centre
- Peninsula Youth Centre

Copies of these agreements are available through the Student Achievement Leader of ECPP Programs.

Section 4 SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In school support is offered to students with exceptional physical/medical needs through funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

The District School Board of Niagara is committed to a strong partnership with The Niagara Children's Centre (NCC), who is responsible for School Based Rehab Services. They assist in ensuring students receive all the necessary supports they require to participate fully in the learning environment.

Some students require physiotherapy, occupational therapy and/or speech therapy in order to access the school and the curriculum. Through consultation with and referral to the Niagara Children's Centre, these services are provided to students who require them. These health care professionals assess environmental, and equipment needs and make recommendations to the SESS team. In some cases, training is provided to ensure that procedures are carried out correctly. Some students with medical needs under the care of the DSBN require feeding, suctioning, and diabetes supports. Through consultation with and referral to the Ontario Health atHome, (OHH), these services are provided to students who require them during the school day. Nurses provided through the OHH also provide training for less complex procedures that are provided by DSBN staff.

To address the needs of students requiring medication during the school day, the District School Board of Niagara has developed Administrative Procedure (3-32) regarding the provision of medication.

Section 4 SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

TYPE of Specialized Health Support Service	Agency or Position of Person WHO PERFORMS THE SERVICE (NCC, Board Staff, Parent, Student)	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA for Students to Receive the Service	Position of the Person WHO DETERMINES ELIGIBILITY to Receive the Service and the Level of Support	Criteria for Determining WHEN THE SERVICE IS NO LONGER REQUIRED	Procedures for resolving disputes about the eligibility and level of support
NURSING Including but not limited to: - Manual expression of the bladder - Stoma care - Postural drainage	- OHH staff performs the service if indicated in PPM 81 - OHH contracted provider may train school staff to carry out procedure as per PPM 81	- Must attend school within Niagara Region - Must have an Ontario Health Card Number - Service required to enable school attendance	- OHH Case Manager determines how, when, and where the service will be provided (in consultation with school personnel and parents)	- Student no longer needs special help, or the program can be carried out by school personnel - Student is not benefitting from the planned care	The OHH appeal process
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	- School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre assigns service for intensive clinical treatment - School Based Rehab, NCC consults with board personnel and trains them to carry out general maintenance	- Condition must be such that he/she can be treated adequately at school with services available through SHSS - Student's needs cannot be met on an out-patient basis without significant disruption to the student's education	-School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre Case Manager determines how, when, and where the service will be provided (in consultation with school personnel and parents)	- Student no longer needs special help, or the program can be carried out by school personnel - Student is not benefitting from the planned care	School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre appeal process
PHYSIOTHERAPY	- School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre assigns service for intensive clinical treatment - School Based Rehab, NCC consults with board personnel and trains them to carry out general maintenance	- Must be referred by a representative of school - Service required to enable school attendance	- School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre Case Manager determines how, when, and where the service will be provided (in consultation with school personnel and parents)	- Student no longer needs special help, or the program can be carried out by school personnel - Student is not benefitting from the planned care	School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre appeal process
NUTRITION	- OHH Home Care staff	- Ontario Health Card - Service required to enable school attendance - Nutritional concern is related to a medical condition	-OHH Case Manager determines how, when, and where the service will be provided (in consultation with school personnel and parents)	- Student specific goals achieved or no longer appropriate	OHH appeal process

Section 4 SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

TYPE of Specialized Health Support Service	Agency or Position of Person WHO PERFORMS THE SERVICE (NCC, Board, Staff, Parent, Student)	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA for Students to Receive the Service	Position of the Person WHO DETERMINES ELIGIBILITY to Receive the Service and the Level of Support	Criteria for Determining WHEN THE SERVICE IS NO LONGER REQUIRED	Procedures for resolving disputes about the eligibility and level of support
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY Preschool S/L Services NCC	- School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre Speech-Language Pathologist provide therapy for children with articulation phonology voice/fluency disorders structural or oral motor concerns	- Speech disorders include: - oral motor - structural - phonological difficulty - voice/fluency disorders	- Board Speech-Language Pathologist assesses the student and makes a request for service from School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre - School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre Speech Language Pathologist determines how, when and where the service will be provided	- Student no longer needs specialized help. - Student is not benefitting from the planned care	School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre appeal process
SPEECH CORRECTION AND REMEDIATION	- Teachers, LRT's, Parents	Mild Articulation Delay - referral through IST to DSNB Speech-Language Pathologists for screening and consultations	-School Board Speech-Language Pathologist	- Student no longer needs special help	Case Conference involving school personnel & parents
PROVISION OF PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS ORAL AND TOPICAL	-School staff provide prescribed medication and administer rescue medications consistent with Board policy - the student as authorized - the parent as authorized	- Medical orders - Medical Condition	- Prescribed by physician or other health care professional and requested by the parent (see Admin. Procedure 3-32)	- Student no longer needs special help or is no longer benefitting from the planned care	Case Conference
INJECTION	- OHH Health Professional - the student as authorized - the parent as authorized	- Prescription - Medical condition	- Physician	- Student no longer needs special help or is no longer benefitting from the planned care	Case Conference and OHH appeal process
CATHETERIZATION (clean and intermittent)	- Educational assistant (trained by nursing agency assigned by OHH) - Sterile Intermittent (by nursing agency assigned by OHH)	- Medical orders - Medical Condition	- Physician, OHH Case Manager determines how, when, and where treatment/services will be provided (in consultation with parents and school personnel)	- when appropriate student will be taught to perform procedures	Case Conference and OHH appeal process

Section 4 SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

TYPE of Specialized Health Support Service	Agency or Position of Person WHO PERFORMS THE SERVICE (NCC, Board Staff, Parent, Student)	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA for Students to Receive the Service	Position of the Person WHO DETERMINES ELIGIBILITY to Receive the Service and the Level of Support	Criteria for Determining WHEN THE SERVICE IS NO LONGER REQUIRED	Procedures for resolving disputes about the eligibility and level of support
SUCTIONING	Shallow Surface - Educational Assistant Deep Suctioning Nursing agency assigned by OHH	- Medical orders Medical Condition	- Physician and Home Care Coordinator decide how, when, and where treatment/services will be provided (in consultation with parents and school personnel)	- Student no longer needs special help	Case Conference OHH appeal process
LIFTING AND POSITIONING	- School Personnel (Educational Assistant) -School Based Rehab, NCC, occupational therapist or physiotherapist train board personnel to safely provide assistance	- all students in need according to Policy/Program Memo # 81	- School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre Case Manager determines how, when, and where treatment/services will be provided (in consultation with parents and school personnel) - Case Occupational Therapist	- Student no longer requires special care or is no longer benefitting from the planned care	Case Conference at school level with appropriate personnel
ASSISTANCE WITH MOBILITY	- School Personnel (Educational Assistant) perform this service - School Based Rehab, Niagara Children's Centre Physiotherapists train Board personnel to provide assistance with mobility	- all students in need according to Policy/Program Memo # 81	- Case Physiotherapist	- Student no longer requires special care or is no longer benefitting from the planned care.	Case Conference at school level with appropriate personnel
FEEDING	Tube Feeding - OHH assigned nursing agency Oral Feeding - Educational Assistant	- all students in need according to Policy/Program Memo # 81	- Physician - OHH Case Manager	- Student no longer requires special care or is no longer benefitting from the planned care.	Case Conference at school level with appropriate personnel
TOILETING	- Educational Assistants, OHH is not involved in toileting unless teaching catheterization to EA or therapists addressing equipment and transfers	- all students in need according to Policy/Program Memo # 81	- Physician - OHH Case Manager	- Student no longer requires special care or is no longer benefitting from the planned care.	- Case Conference at school level with appropriate personnel

Section 4 SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

TYPE of Specialized Health Support Service	Agency or Position of Person WHO PERFORMS THE SERVICE (NCC, Board Staff,	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA for Students to Receive the Service	Position of the Person WHO DETERMINES ELIGIBILITY to Receive the Service and the Level of Support	Criteria for Determining WHEN THE SERVICE IS NO LONGER REQUIRED	Procedures for resolving disputes about the eligibility and level of support
OTHER All services in Children’s Residential Care/Treatment Facilities	Aides/Health Professional employed by MCSS	- all students in need according to Policy/Program Memo # 81	- MCSS	- Student no longer requires special care or is no longer benefitting from the planned care.	

Note: Should a need develop for a service which has not already been designated, the matter should be referred by the School Board to the Ministry of Education for its consideration in consultation with the Ministry of Health.

Section 4 SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE
SUPPORT SERVICES
Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant

SERVICES DE SOUTIEN À DOMICILE
ET EN MILIEU COMMUNAUTAIRE
Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant

Application for School Health Support Services (SHSS)

Contact the Home and Community Care Support Services HNHCB
at 1-800-810-0000

Patient Name _____

HCN _____ VC _____ DOB _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

**** Mandatory: A valid Health Card Number (HCN) and up to date Version Code (VC) are required by HCCSS HNHCB in accordance with the Long-Term Care Act, 1994 to determine a student's eligibility for HCCSS Services ****

Medical Diagnosis _____

Language Spoken in Home (if other than English) _____

Contact Information

1. Parent/Guardian (Please print name) _____ Legal Guardian Yes No

Living with Yes No Relationship _____

Home # _____ Work # _____ Cell # _____

2. Parent/Guardian (Please print name) _____ Legal Guardian Yes No

Living with Yes No Relationship _____

Home # _____ Work # _____ Cell # _____

Family Physician (Please print name) _____ Phone _____

Other Medical/ Professional Personnel _____ Phone _____

Please note that if Parent/Guardian information is not completed on this form, the application will be considered incomplete

School Information

Public Catholic Specify Board _____

School _____ Address _____ City _____

Resource Teacher _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Services Requested Nursing Nutrition

Mandatory – supporting documentation e.g. Medical Orders must accompany referral

Print

Clear

Ontario 

Version 21-001

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Section 4 SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS



Request for Ontario Health atHome Services

Patient Name _____ HCN _____ VC _____ DOB _____	
Address _____ City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____	
Patient Phone _____ Contact Name _____ Contact Phone _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Community: Fax completed form to 1-866-655-6402 <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital: Fax completed form to OHaH hospital office (see pg. 2); Hospital Referrals: Unit/floor _____ Planned Hospital Discharge Date _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Bundle Holder Referral for Service – Hospital Site _____ Bundle Type _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> The patient or lawfully authorized substitute decision maker has consented to this referral <input type="checkbox"/> Please contact the person below (rather than the patient) for assessment, due to: <input type="checkbox"/> Patient Preference <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Difficulties <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive Status <input type="checkbox"/> Language Difficulties <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
Contact Person _____ Relationship _____	
Phone (Home) _____ Phone (Cell) _____ Phone (Work) _____	
Primary Care Physician _____ Phone _____	
Primary Diagnosis _____ Date _____	
Secondary Diagnosis _____ Diagnosis Discussed With Patient <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No With Family <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Prognosis <input type="checkbox"/> Improved <input type="checkbox"/> Remain Stable <input type="checkbox"/> Deterioration Prognosis Discussed With Patient <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No With Family <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Surgical Procedure _____ Date _____	
Current Medications <input type="checkbox"/> Medication List Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Health Profile Attached WSIB Claim <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Allergies _____ Special Diet _____	
Wound Care (Include location) _____	
<i>Note: If not specified, nurse will assess and provide recommendations. Wound care products may be substituted to a comparable product based on supply list.</i>	
Weight Bearing <input type="checkbox"/> Full <input type="checkbox"/> Partial <input type="checkbox"/> Feather <input type="checkbox"/> None Activities Permitted _____	
Completion of additional forms are required for the following protocols (select link to open form): Central Vascular Devices Vancomycin & Aminoglycoside Prescriptions Protocol for First Dose IV	
<input type="checkbox"/> Activities of Daily Living <input type="checkbox"/> Community Support Services/ Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Home Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility/ Risk of Falls <input type="checkbox"/> Social Isolation	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavioural Supports (e.g. BSO) <input type="checkbox"/> Dementia/ Memory Impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Options <input type="checkbox"/> Pain Management <input type="checkbox"/> Strengthening
<input type="checkbox"/> Chronic Disease Management <input type="checkbox"/> Health Link Patient <input type="checkbox"/> Medication Management <input type="checkbox"/> Palliative Care/ End of Life - PPS% _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Speech Language Pathology	
Medical Orders: <input type="checkbox"/> Same Day Request <input type="checkbox"/> Additional information attached. Total Number of Pages _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indwelling Urinary Catheter Care: Insertion Date: _____ Size: _____ Type: _____ Standard maintenance for Indwelling or Suprapubic Catheter: Change latex catheter monthly and PRN, Change silastic and silicone – silicone coated catheters every 3 months and PRN. Irrigate catheter with 50-100 mL Normal Saline PRN. <i>Note: if size/type not specified, standard foley catheter kit will be provided with #14 & 16 silicone coated catheter for nurse to use discretion</i>	
Thank you for your referral. Ontario Health atHome will assess and work with your patient to develop a care plan that includes service location, frequency and health teaching to support independence. For questions please call 1 800 810 000 from 8:30 am to 8:30 pm, 7 days a week.	
Name _____ (Please Print) <input type="checkbox"/> MD <input type="checkbox"/> NP Telephone _____	
Signature _____ Date _____ CPSO/CNO Reg. # _____	

Version 23-001

Section 4 SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS



Application for School Based Rehabilitation Services (SBRS OT, PT, Speech)

A. Student Information (please print)	
Surname:	First Name:
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy):	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
Home Address:	City: Postal Code:
Medical Diagnosis (if applicable):	
Language spoken at home (if other than English):	
B. Contact Information (please print)	
1. Parent/Guardian (please print name):	1b Legal Guardian: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Relationship: Living with: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Primary #: Secondary #:
2. Parent/Guardian (please print name):	2b Legal Guardian: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Relationship: Living with: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Primary #: Secondary #:
3. Family Physician (please print name):	Phone:
4. Other Medical/Professional Personnel:	Phone:
C. School Information (please print)	
<input type="checkbox"/> DSBN <input type="checkbox"/> NCSB	School:
Address:	
School Contact:	Phone: Fax:
D. Services Requested	
<input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety/Accessibility
<input type="checkbox"/> Physiotherapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment
<input type="checkbox"/> Speech Therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Re-referral
Please provide supporting documentation for all referrals	(Medical orders or information forms) must accompany referral when available
E. Reason for Referral	

Section 4 SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

-2-

Name of Student: [REDACTED]	DOB: [REDACTED]
-----------------------------	-----------------

F. Release of Information & Consent to Assessment

I do hereby give consent to the school to release/share information, including Third Party records, relevant to the care and status of my child to Niagara Children's Centre as deemed necessary for assessment of School Based Rehabilitation Services. I consent to the following:

- Niagara Children's Centre will enter the referral information into it's electronic health record;
- Niagara Children's Centre will share referral information with their contracted Service Providers;
- Niagara Children's Centre will exchange and share information with [REDACTED] school/school will exchange and share information with Niagara Children's Centre.

Parent/Guardian or Student (if 16 years or older) Printed Name: [REDACTED]

Parent/Guardian or Student Signature (if 16 years or older): [REDACTED]

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): [REDACTED]

Principal/Designate Signature: [REDACTED]

*Please note that the name and signature of the parent/guardian or student should match information given in section B or the application will be considered incomplete. The principal/designate signature is also required for the application to be considered.

Referral Form to be completed & submitted as per designated School Board procedures

Section 5 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

The District School Board of Niagara is an educational community that is constantly striving for excellence, through continuous commitment to students and the provision of learning experiences that are challenging and relevant. Therefore, our staff development goal is to provide on-going in-service and job-embedded learning opportunities for all staff.

In order to ensure that Staff Development meets the varied needs in the system, there is a combination of:

- school based support (e.g., job-embedded, working in classrooms with school staff and students)
- board provided workshops/programs (e.g., LRT in-service, EA mentoring, Deaf Hard of Hearing Awareness, and many others)
- opportunities to attend Ministry and Third-Party Conferences and Training (e.g., Geneva Centre, Association for Special Education Technology, London Region Special Education Regional Coordinator and Consultant Conference)

The Special Education Support Services Department provides training to specific staff groups in Behaviour Management Systems, First Aid, and the Smart Start Program for staff working with students with special education needs. We have initiated specialized Assistive Technology training for students and staff is provided to ensure effective integration of these resources into classroom programming. Special Education Support Services works to provide in-service that reflects the Learning for All resource rolled out through the Ministry of Education. Curriculum initiatives ensure all students' learning profile considerations are incorporated into professional development opportunities.

Section 6 ACCESSIBILITY (AODA)

Accessibility (AODA)

The District School Board of Niagara has a multi-year capital expenditure plan for improving accessibility to its buildings, grounds, and administrative offices, including resources dedicated to providing barrier-free access in the coming years. The DSBN's Plan includes increasing accessibility to as many school buildings as possible and provides specific facilities to accommodate students with special needs.

In consideration of the number and age of the DSBN's facilities, this plan improves accessibility each year in designated facilities across the District to service the needs of the students, staff, parents/guardians and the general public in the District School Board of Niagara. In preparing this plan, first, a database of the Board's facilities with respect to physical conditions relative to accessibility was developed and then analyzed by a working group of DSBN Special Education Services and Plant Department staff. This information was then reviewed, and input was received from school Administrators and Superintendents of Schools for each Area. From this, a group of facilities were identified as accessible and a list of candidate facilities for accessibility improvements, in consideration of physical feasibility, geographic location and education program delivery was developed.

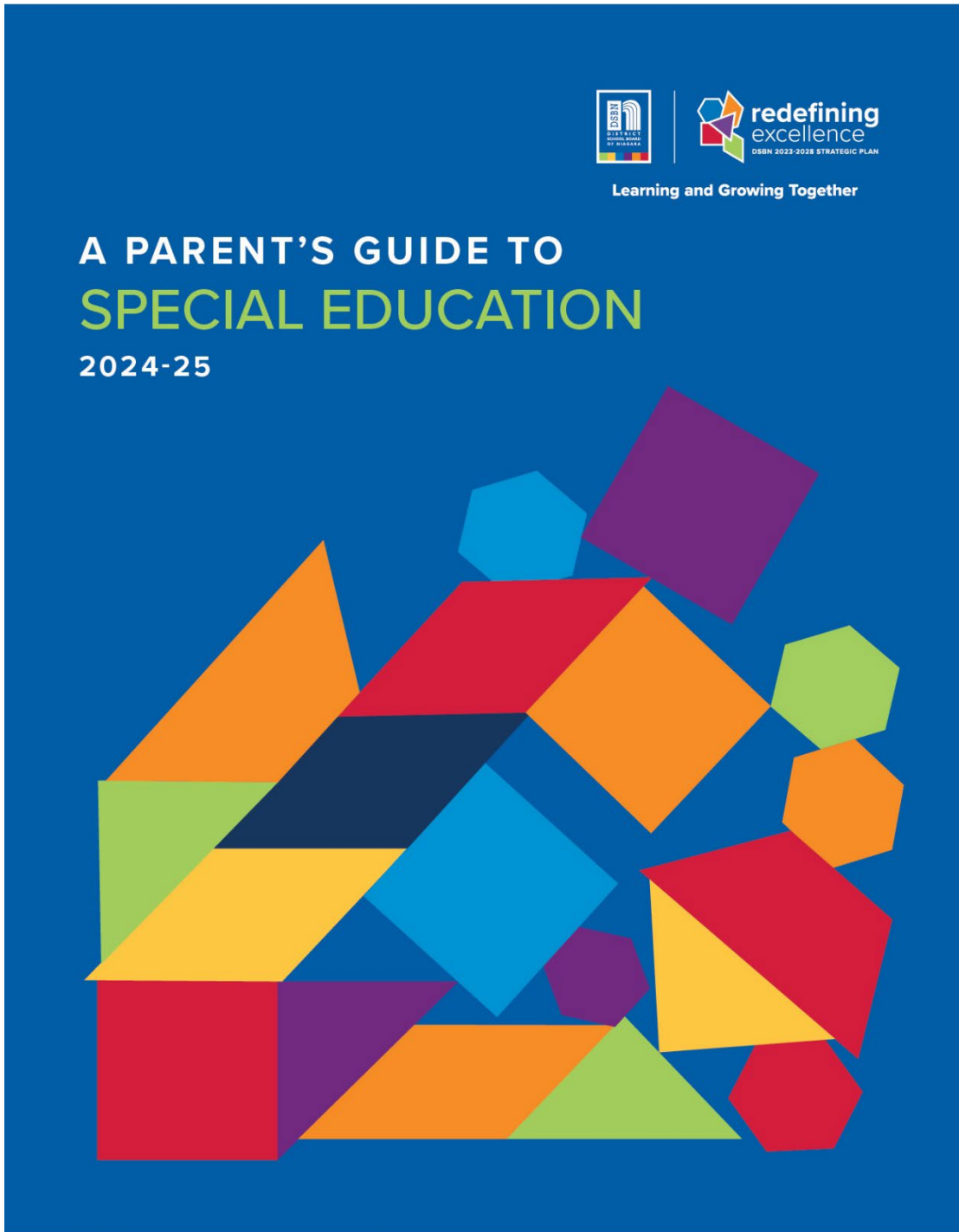
Each year the plan is reviewed and adjusted to meet the needs of the system with the goal of making all DSBN facilities physically accessible by 2025 to comply with Disabilities Act 2005.

In addition to the Accessibility Plan, school boards were also required to respond to the Customer Service Standard of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The DSBN developed a policy (C-3) in compliance with the AODA and also trained all staff. As additional Standards become Regulations in the Province, the DSBN will develop appropriate measures as required.

Further accessibility information for Ontario Public Service sectors can be viewed at <https://www.ontario.ca/government/accessibility>, as well www.opsba.org/index.php?q=advocacyandaction/accessible_schools_customer_service_guide.

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PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



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A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A Message from the Director

Dear Parents/Guardians,

At the District School Board of Niagara, our primary focus is student achievement and the mental health and well-being of our students. We serve over 42,000 students and are committed to offering support, resources and programs necessary for all of our students to reach their full potential and achieve their goals.

We know that each child learns differently. The DSBN provides a wide range of supports and accommodations that are designed to meet the unique learning needs of each student. Educators in our school are equipped to provide differentiation for students in programming, instructional strategies as well as assessment. As required, students are supported through the implementation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and given access to a school team that works collaboratively with students, parents, as well as system staff to create a learning environment that promotes inclusion and full participation for all students.

Parents and Guardians are important partners in creating a rich educational experience for students. Regular and ongoing communication between the school and home helps create the conditions for successful experiences and outcomes. Our schools welcome the opportunity to work with families and community agencies to ensure students benefit from our collective focus on their achievement and well-being.

We value our community partners and the commitment of the DSBN Special Education Advisory Committee to inform and support the very important role we play in serving our students. Through this collaborative partnership of families, DSBN staff and community resources, we can be confident that we are truly valuing the uniqueness of each individual student and redefining excellence in the DSBN.

Sincerely,

Kelly Pisek
Director of Education

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

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24	Provincial Schools
25	Tips for Parents

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Overview of Special Education



The Framework and Guiding Principles of Special Education within the District School Board of Niagara

The provisions of special education programs and services within the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) are mandated by the Education Act; the regulations contained within Regulation 181/98 is the provincial legislation which determines special education operating procedures within Ontario. The practices and procedures of the District School Board of Niagara strive to encompass both diverse and individualized supports, while reflecting the intent of this legislation.

In the DSBN, Special Education is a collaborative process that encompasses the supports, services, and strategies that provide the opportunities for each student to reach their potential. Each student is a unique individual with their own strengths and needs and some students may require special education supports and services to achieve success. The DSBN has a full continuum of services available to help support the unique needs of each child.

Parents and families are an integral part of a successful education. You are invited and encouraged to be involved through ongoing communication with the school. Your knowledge and input is of utmost importance when planning supports for your child within the education setting. The goal for each child is to ensure that they are served in the most enabling environment that lends itself to their individualized success. The DSBN strives to build a school community that values the learning differences and contributions of each and every student.

The Parent's Guide to Special Education

The District School Board of Niagara values parents as a key stakeholder in their child's education. We have worked to create a guide that is inviting, provides information about our special education services and supports a framework for a positive, collaborative environment.

The Ministry of Education requires that all school boards have available a guide for parents to inform them of Special Education services in their board.

This Parent Guide is available in Braille, large print and audio format. Please contact the Board to request one of these alternate formats if required.

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A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Programming & Planning



Programming and Planning Supports for Students with Special Education Needs

The District School Board of Niagara is committed to offering a wide range of both special education services and programs to students board-wide. We provide supports and programs that are responsive to the strengths and needs of each student ensuring a successful learning environment for all. Working together and collaborating as a team to support every child is essential to achieving success.

Special Education Services

Special Education Services refers to the facilities, resources and equipment necessary for developing and implementing a student's special education program. The District School Board of Niagara is committed to providing a full range of services to meet the needs of all students. These services can include, but are not limited to, LRT/SERT support, technology and accessibility equipment, Speech Language Pathology or Psychological Assessment, and/or consultation, Youth Counsellor and/or Social Work support.

Special Education Programs

All special education programs are based on the results of continuous assessment and evaluation, and must be outlined on an **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**. The DSBN believes that all students have the right to learn in a program setting that best supports and meets their needs. There are a variety of programs available within the District School Board of Niagara to help support students with smaller classroom sizes and smaller teacher to student ratio. These teachers are qualified special education teachers.



Programming & Planning



The Individual Education Plan I.E.P.

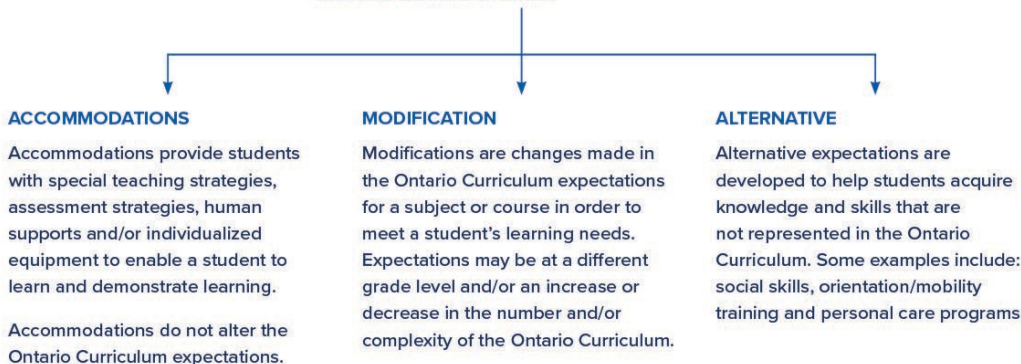
An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written plan that outlines programming for a student with special education needs. An IEP defines a student's strengths and needs, and identifies accommodations and/or modified expectations from the Ontario Curriculum or alternative expectations that make up a student's program. The IEP is a working document and as such, revisions and updates are required and should be expected. Parental input is essential and welcomed in the development of the IEP. The school will work with you to develop a program that supports your child and ensures that you are kept up to date regarding changes and revisions. A copy will be kept in your child's Ontario Student Record.

When students struggle with some aspects of learning, the In-School Team may decide, in consultation with you, to begin an Individual Education Plan to support programming for your child. IEP's can be created to support programming that is accommodated, modified and/or alternative. All programming must be assessed, monitored, and reviewed on an ongoing basis and reported on through either the Ontario Provincial Report Card (accommodated, modified programming) or an Alternative Report Card (alternative programming).

For students who have been formally identified through the IPRC process, an IEP is a mandatory and valuable programming plan to set goals, strategies and plan assessment that serve the individual needs of your child specifically.

IEP PROGRAMMING

During the IEP development process the school team will consider a variety of programming options for students. Some of the options are listed below. Each subject, course or program will be categorized into one of the following areas for students on an IEP.



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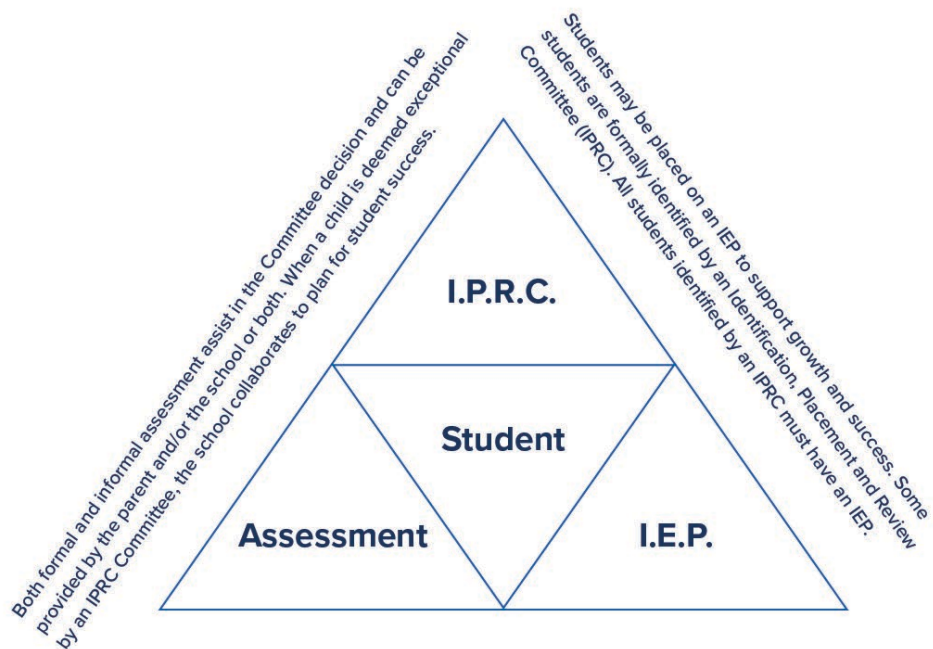


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Programming & Planning



Programming and Planning Supports for Students with Special Education Needs



The IEP is the working document that outlines the student's program and special education supports. Both formal and informal assessment inform the document, and ongoing classroom-based assessment is required.

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Programming & Planning



Transition Planning

All students that have an Individual Education Plan will have a transition plan to support them. Transitions from within the school environment, between schools/grades, school to work, further education and community opportunities require supports and planning to allow student success. The probability of a successful transition is significantly increased when schools work with parents/guardians, employers, community agencies, and providers of further education to develop coordinated transition plans for exceptional students. Transition plans can include a variety of supports for students.

Below are some examples of transition processes that are in place at the District School Board of Niagara:

Preschool Transition Process: DSNB Staff work with local preschool resource consultants and various community agencies to ensure preschoolers with educational needs enter DSNB schools successfully. Developing transition plans, sharing information, and providing support to families new to the DSNB are key components to the Preschool Transition Process.

Grade 8 to 9 Transition: A transition form is completed for every student entering Grade 9. This information is shared with the receiving school staff to ensure that the learning strengths and needs of each student are considered before the student starts secondary school. For students on an IEP, this may include a meeting with both the elementary and secondary school staff to set an individualized transition plan to support the student in their move to secondary school.

Transition for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: The Resource Teacher – Deaf and Hard of Hearing, works collaboratively with the infant hearing program, service agencies such as Niagara Children's Centre (NCC) VOICE Auditory Verbal Therapists, and the Provincial School for the Deaf to ensure a smooth transition to school with the DSNB.

Integrated Transition Planning: The DSNB works closely with other community agencies and other government ministries to ensure that proper transition planning takes place for students with developmental disabilities. At age 14, students/families will be offered an Integrated Transition Process that the school will facilitate to assist families and students in planning longer term for transition to community opportunities. The Ministry of Children and Youth Services, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and The Ministry of Education have created a framework and collaborative plan to provide a more streamlined integrated transition planning process to support young people with developmental disabilities who are preparing for transition to adulthood.

While these are some of the main processes that have been put in place to ensure planning opportunities and parental input for students, transition planning takes place day-to-day for many students within the DSNB. We recognize that the needs of every child are different and individual plans and considerations are required.

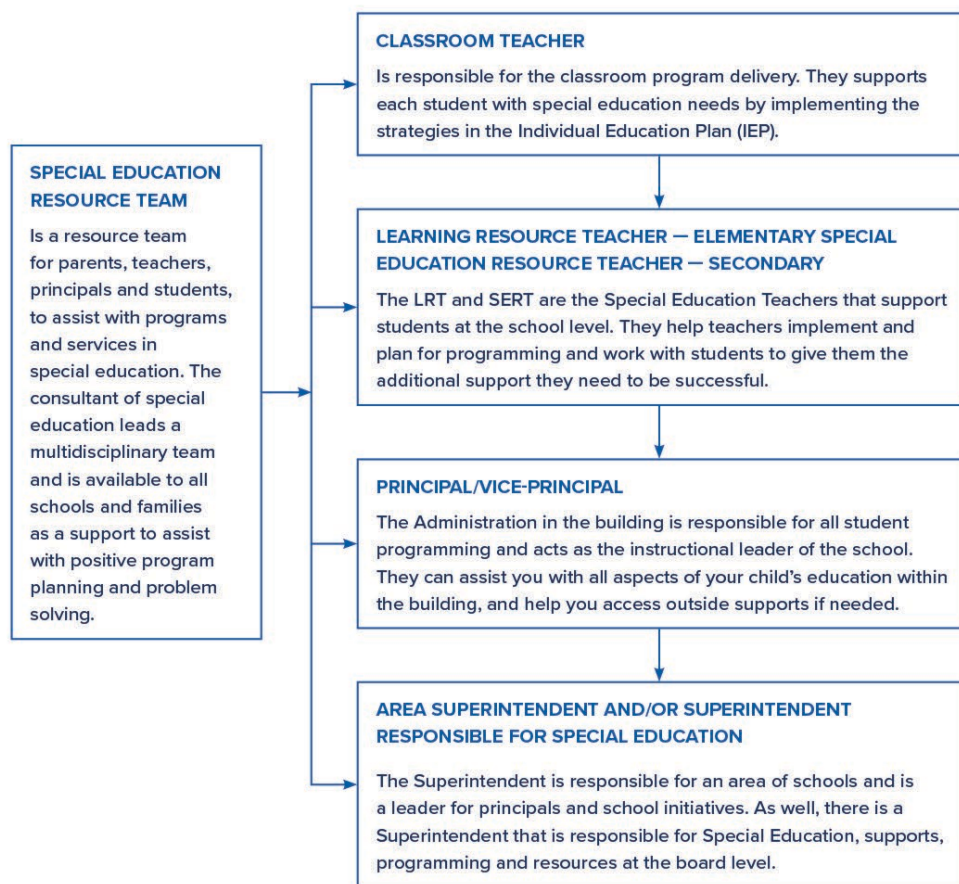
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Consultation Sequence for Special Education Questions and Concerns



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Collaborating With Your School



Collaborating with Your Child's School

Collaboration with parents as partners is essential to a supported learning environment for every child. Your continued involvement with your child's education is very important. To ensure that we are programming effectively for your child's strengths and needs in the educational setting, we value your knowledge and input.

Communication is the key to a collaborative and effective relationship. Keeping the lines of communication open between the school and home sets the stage for student success. The school is ready to support you and your child with their learning needs from the moment they enter the DSBN. There are many transition processes in place to ensure that families and students feel supported in their education.

Early and ongoing assessment of students takes place in all classrooms to ensure that students are being programmed for effectively. If you or your child's teacher feel that your child is having learning difficulties, early communication is key. There are a variety of early intervention strategies that can be implemented to assist students in being successful and we want to work with you to determine the best supports to assist your child.

Each school in the District School Board of Niagara has an In-School Team with the principal as chair. This formalized on-going problem solving forum is in place to assist the school in determining supports and next steps for every child in the building. The team develops and reviews plans designed to enable students who are experiencing difficulty to succeed. At the secondary level, it is referred to as the In-School Student Success Team to reinforce the collaboration among the Student Success and Guidance resource departments.

If the In-School Team determines that additional supports may be needed, they have access to a Multidisciplinary Team at the system level that provides ongoing support for students, teachers, staff, and schools.

DSBN Staff that may be part of the In-School or Multidisciplinary Team:

CLASSROOM STAFF	SCHOOL STAFF	SYSTEM STAFF
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom Teacher• Educational Assistant• Special Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principal• Vice-Principal• Learning Resource Teacher (elementary)• Special Education Resource Teacher (secondary)• Student Success Teacher (secondary)• Guidance Teacher (secondary)• Instructional Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Achievement Leader, Special Education• Consultant, Special Education• Resource Teacher• Central Educational Assistant• Speech Language Pathologist• Psychologist or Psychological Associate• Youth Counsellor• Social Worker• ABA facilitator

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A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

IPRC Process



Identification Placement and Review Committees

What is an IPRC?

An Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) meet to determine whether a student is exceptional and what placement and program will best support the student. This committee of educators will meet with you to discuss the special education needs of your child. If your child is over 16 years old, they are invited to participate in the meeting. In collaboration with you, the team will make decisions on how best to meet the needs of your child. This meeting takes place annually to review the decision, but can be held more frequently when change and collaboration is needed.

The committee has three required team members: a principal chairs the meeting and two other staff members take part. As the parent/student, you play an important role in helping the committee make good decisions about your child and the support options that are available within the District School Board of Niagara. You are encouraged to ask questions at the meeting and to provide the IPRC with any relevant information you consider important to the decisions of the IPRC.

Along with the Principal, the committee could have any of the following educators present as committee members:

- Classroom Teacher or Learning Resource Teacher/Special Education Resource Teacher for the school
- Special Education Teacher, Consultant or Resource Teacher
- Vice-Principal of the school
- Other School/Board staff that have a good understanding of your child

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IPRC Process



The IPRC Committee will:

- Determine whether or not your child should be identified as exceptional according to the Ministry of Education's definitions of exceptionalities.
- Decide on an appropriate placement based on the strengths and needs of your child. The committee has a duty to discuss and describe the strengths and needs of your child when making the IPRC decisions.
- Be responsible for making initial decisions about exceptionality, placement, and program, as well as review these decisions each year. The Ministry of Education allows for a review to take place after three months if the parent or school feel that it is in the child's best interest, however, a yearly review is required.
- Move forward with its decision when the parent or student (16 years or older) is comfortable with the recommendations.

What role do I play in the IPRC Meeting?

- Parents have the most valuable input when it comes to their child, and we encourage each parent to share, collaborate, and be involved in their child's education and planning. As well, students 16 years and older can participate as a valuable partner in planning their educational program.
- The committee will ask for your input and discuss the options that are available in the District School Board of Niagara. You are encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification if needed. We strive to ensure that you understand the options being provided and move forward only when you have consented to the IPRC Decision.
- The Education Act requires that we inform you that you can appeal the IPRC decision if you have not been able to resolve your concerns with the school. You have **15 days** once the decision is made to request that another IPRC be held to discuss your concerns. If you do not agree with the decision after this second meeting you may file a notice of appeal within 15 days, to the **Secretary of the District School Board of Niagara, 191 Carlton St., St. Catharines, ON, L2R 7P4**. You can also appeal to the Secretary of the District School Board of Niagara with 30 days of the original IPRC meeting, as an alternative to the above.

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IPRC Process



Appeal Process

The DSBN strives to meet the needs of all learners through a collaborative process with parents. During the IPRC process your input is both valued and necessary for us to move forward with the identification and placement decision. If there is ever a time that you are feeling uncomfortable with the discussion, have re-considered, or would like to have further discussion with the committee, please speak with the principal of your child's school. We believe that working together to come to the right decision is needed for all parties.

The Ministry of Education requires that we inform you of your right to appeal the Identification Placement and Review Committee decision should you disagree. The following is the process should you feel unsuccessful when speaking with the principal and the Student Achievement Leader for Special Education:

- Within 15 days of receipt of the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss your concerns: or
- Within 30 days of receipt of the decision, file a notice of appeal with the Secretary for the District School Board of Niagara, 191 Carlton St., St. Catharines, ON, L2R 7P4.
- If you do not agree with the decision after the second meeting, you may file a notice of appeal within 15 days of your receipt of the decision.

The notice of appeal must:

- indicate the decision with which you disagree; and
- include a statement that sets out your reasons for disagreeing.

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IPRC Process



What happens when the appeal process is implemented?

The appeal process involves the following steps:

- The DSBN will establish a special education appeal board to hear your appeal. The appeal board will be composed of three persons who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal, one of whom will be selected by you, the parent.
- The chair of the appeal board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 days after they have been selected unless parents and board 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.

Parents, and students who are 16 years old or over, are entitled to be present at the meeting, and to participate in all discussions. After the meeting, the appeal board must make its recommendation within three days of the meeting's ending. The appeal board may agree or disagree with the recommendation. If they agree, they will recommend that the decision be implemented. If they disagree, they will make a recommendation about your child's identification or placement or both. The appeal board will report its recommendations to you in writing, outlining the reasons for its recommendations.

If the DSBN does not follow the suggested recommendations you may appeal to the Special Education Tribunal. The following steps should be followed:

- Request a hearing by writing to the secretary of the Special Education Tribunal.
- All necessary information to make an application to the Special Education Tribunal will be included in the appeal board's statement of decision.

While this procedure and process is in place to ensure that parents' and students' rights are protected with regards to special education Identification Placement and Review Committee decisions, we encourage you to inform the school principal, and subsequently the Superintendent of Special Education Support Services if further assistance is needed prior to beginning an appeal process.

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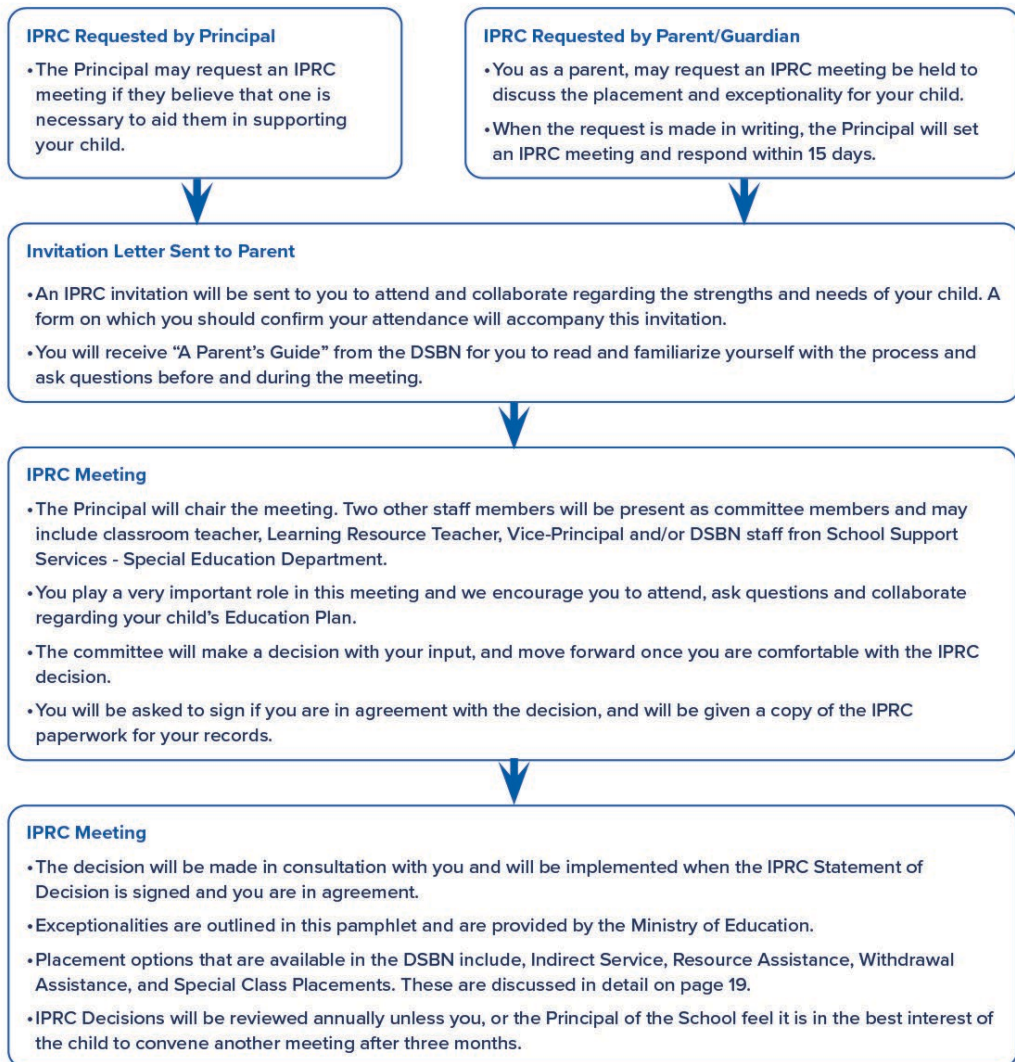


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IPRC Process



Identification Placement and Review Committee Process



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IPRC - Exceptionalities



Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

CATEGORY	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION DEFINITION
BEHAVIOURAL	
Behavioural	<p>A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships; b) excessive fears or anxieties; c) a tendency to compulsive reaction; d) an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof.
COMMUNICATIONAL	
Autism	<p>A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) disturbances in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – rate of educational development; – ability to relate to the environment; – mobility; – perception, speech, and language; b) lack of the representational symbolic behaviour that precedes language
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	<p>An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.</p>
Language Impairment	<p>A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/ or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and b) include one or more of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – language delay; – dysfluency; – voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.

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IPRC - Exceptionalities



Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

CATEGORY	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION DEFINITION
Speech Impairment	A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm, and stress.
Learning Disability	<p>One of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are at least in the average range; - results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support; - results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills; - may typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; executive functions (e.g. self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making); - may be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities; - is not the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction.
INTELLECTUAL	
Giftedness	An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

IPRC - Exceptionalities



Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities

CATEGORY	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION DEFINITION
Mild Intellectual Disability	A learning disorder characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service; b) an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development; c) a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.
Developmental Disability	A severe learning disorder characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development; b) an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development; c) a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.
PHYSICAL	
Physical Disability	A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or development level.
Blind and Low Vision	A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.
MULTIPLE	
Multiple Exceptionalities	A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities that is of such a nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

IPRC - Placements



Special Education Placement Options within the DSBN

The District School Board believes that when discussing placements for students, the regular education classroom should always be the first consideration. We also believe that choices and options should be available to families to assist in meeting the unique educational needs of some students. A variety of placement options are available within the DSBN as outlined below.

Regular Education Classroom with Indirect Support:

- Your child's strengths and needs are addressed through an Individual Education Plan to support programming for your child.
- The Regular Education Teacher and the Special Education Teacher in the school will collaborate and strategize together to best educate your child.
- The Regular Education Teacher delivers all programming and curriculum to your child.

Regular Education Classroom with Resource Assistance:

- Your child's strengths and needs are addressed through an Individual Education Plan to support programming for your child.
- The Regular Education Teacher is assisted as needed by a Special Education Teacher, in delivering the curriculum to your child in their classroom.
- Your child may receive specialized instruction individually or in small groups within the regular classroom from a special education teacher.

Regular Education Classroom with Withdrawal Assistance:

- Your child's strengths and needs are addressed through an Individual Education Plan to support programming for your child.
- The Regular Classroom Teacher delivers the majority of your child's program, and is assisted by the Special Education Teacher as needed.
- The Special Education Teacher may work both in your child's classroom or work privately/ in groups with your child to help them reach their full potential.
- Your child receives some instruction outside the regular classroom for less than 50% of the day.

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

IPRC - Placements



Special Education Class with Partial Integration:

- Your child's strengths and needs are addressed through an Individual Education Plan to support programming for your child.
- The Special Education Teacher delivers the majority of your child's program.
- The Regular Education Teacher will deliver portions of your child's program within a regular education classroom, as appropriate, to help your child reach their fullest potential.
- The Education Act requires that Special Education Class sizes are smaller than Regular Education Class Sizes to allow for more intensive educational supports.
- The student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298 of the Education Act for at least 50% of the day.

Special Education Class - Full-Time:

- Your child's strengths and needs are addressed through an Individual Education Plan to support programming for your child.
- The Special Education Teacher delivers all of your child's program to help them reach their full potential.
- The Education Act requires that Special Education Class sizes are smaller than Regular Education Class Sizes to allow for more intensive educational supports.
- The student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298 of the Education Act for 100% of the day.

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

IPRC - Programs



Special education programs offered at the DSBN

The District School Board of Niagara offers many program options for families and students to help them reach their full potential. While the regular education classroom is always considered first, we recognize that some students require different programming options. The following programs offer the support of a Special Education Teacher, and in many cases the support of educational assistants. The DSBN believes that a range of placement options ensures that a variety of settings are available to support the specific programming needs of students.

STRUCTURED STRATEGIES PROGRAM

This program is intended to provide short-term intensive intervention for students with demonstrated need, so they can gain the skills needed to continue their education in their home school with learned strategies in place. The program is for students that require support for social and emotional regulation and social skills, as well as a highly structured environment. A blend of Ontario Curriculum and alternative programming is taught by a qualified special education teacher and the class supported by an educational assistant. Strategies may include, leveled breaks, sensory movement breaks, social skills programming and assistive technology.

COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

This program supports students with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and significant needs in the areas of expressive and receptive communication skills. Programming is based around individual needs and addressed through alternative curriculum. Augmentative communication strategies are used to promote independence, communication, and sensory regulation. ABA Strategies and transition planning are an integral part of the program as well as self-regulation and social skills programming. This program is taught by a qualified special education teacher and the class supported by educational assistants.

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS PROGRAM

This program supports students with significant intellectual disabilities and alternative programming needs at the elementary level. Students are working on significantly modified curriculum expectations and programming is supplemented with functional skill development. In the program, students gain independent living skills, receive intensive academic supports through individualized programming, and intensive support for physical needs as required. This program is taught by a qualified special education teacher and the class supported by educational assistant/s.

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

IPRC - Programs



SPECIALIZED SCHOOL TO COMMUNITY PROGRAM

This program supports students with significant intellectual disabilities and alternative programming needs at the secondary level. Students may be working on modified Ontario Curriculum expectations and programming is supplemented with functional and vocational skill development as needed. In this program, students gain independent living skills, receive intensive academic supports through individualized programming, and receive support for intensive physical needs as required. Transition to the community is an integral part of the program, with a focus on building connections to community supports as students approach graduation.

ELEMENTARY GIFTED PROGRAM

This program supports students with an unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth best serviced in the Elementary Gifted Program. Students in the program will have an Individual Education Plan that outlines the Alternative Expectations that the student will be completing, in the area of Higher Order Thinking Skills. An emphasis on analysis, synthesis and problem solving are focuses of the program.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY SUPPORT PROGRAM

This program is intended to support students with complex needs that require the support of a multidisciplinary team of professionals. Students may require support with self-regulation, behaviour and/or mental health. The program has access to a team that regularly supports these students and families with accessing services within the school board and within the community. The goal of the program is to ensure that students have access to the supports necessary for wellness and educational success. Students in this program have been prioritized through their participation in the Structured Strategies Program.

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Community Partners



Community partners and organizations

Many community organizations are available to assist parents/students with information and support them through special education processes.

All school boards are required to maintain a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) that participates in monthly meetings to advise the District School Board of Niagara in making decisions about their Special Education programs and services.

The following community partners are members of the Special Education Advisory Committee for the District School Board of Niagara:

- Autism Ontario
- Bethesda Services
- Community Living
- Down Syndrome Niagara
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder - Ontario Network of Expertise
- Inclusion Action in Ontario
- Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara
- Niagara Children's Centre
- Niagara Support Services
- Pathstone Mental Health

Collaborating with community agencies to better support students and families is of utmost importance. It is always best practice to inform the school principal of people that will be attending a meeting to support you.

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Provincial Schools



Ministry Provincial and Demonstration Schools

What are the Ministry's Provincial and Demonstration Schools?

The Ministry operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools throughout Ontario for students who are deaf, blind, deaf-blind, and severely learning-disabled including students with learning disabilities associated with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). These programs are offered at the schools Monday to Friday, for students who live too far from school to travel daily.

Demonstration schools for English-speaking students with severe learning disabilities, including learning disabilities associated with ADHD.

AMETHYST SCHOOL 1090 Highbury Avenue London, ON • N5Y 4V9 Telephone: (519) 453-4408	SAGONASKA SCHOOL 350 Dundas Street West Belleville, ON • K8P 1B2 Telephone: (613) 967-2830	TRILLIUM SCHOOL 347 Ontario Street South Milton, ON • L9T 3X9 Telephone: (905) 878-2851
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Schools For The Deaf

ERNEST C. DRURY SCHOOL 255 Ontario Street South Milton, ON • L9T 2M5 Telephone: (905) 878-2851 TTY: (905) 878-7195	ROBARTS SCHOOL 1090 Highbury Avenue • Box 7300 London, ON • N5Y 4V9 Telephone and TTY: (519) 453-4400	SIR JAMES WHITNEY SCHOOL 350 Dundas Street West Belleville, ON • K8P 1B2 Telephone and TTY: (613) 967-2823
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School For The Blind And Deaf-Blind

W. ROSS MACDONALD SCHOOL
350 Brant Avenue
Brantford, ON • N3T 3J9
Telephone: (519) 759-0730

Where can parents obtain additional information?

- School Principal
- Student Achievement Leader - Special Education

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES - DSBN
130 Louth Street, St. Catharines, L2S 2T4
Telephone: 905-227-5551

Section 7 PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Tips for Parents



Planning Tips For Parents

The DSBN considers parents a valued partner when planning for their child's education. Collaboration and communication between the school and home are essential to a good working relationship. Here are some things to consider when you have questions about your child's education or you have a planned meeting with the school:

- Keeping a file at home that contains school information about your child is always a good idea. Report Cards, Individual Education Plans, assessments and IPRC forms are all important documents that can help when you meet with the school.
- Your child's teacher is always the best person to contact regarding your child's progress. This can be done by phone, through a visit or email. You can arrange a time to speak to your child's teachers when you have questions or information to share. Arranging a meeting is always possible and will support ongoing planning to address your child's needs.
- In preparing for a meeting, write down a few questions you have or the information you wish to share, prior to meeting with the school. This way you are sure to cover all of the topics you want to discuss and can stay focused on your goal.
- Feel free to bring someone with you to the meeting: a friend, support person, parent advocate or community partner. Informing the principal prior to the meeting would be best practice.
- Ask for clarification and explanations when needed. Special Education practices and processes can be overwhelming and the school wants to ensure that you understand and have all of your questions clarified.
- The principal can request resource staff from Special Education Services to attend case conferences and meetings. The role of this person would be to offer support and further programming suggestions regarding your child's education.

Effective communication is the key to building relationships of mutual trust and cooperation. Although educators and parents share the same goal, each views the student's educational needs from a different perspective. The goal of the partnership between home and the school is to provide a welcoming, nurturing environment where your child can achieve success and reach their fullest potential.

Section 8 SPECIAL EDUCATION CONSULTATION PROCESS

Special Education Consultation Process

Collaboration, relationships and communication are essential to effective special education programs and services and an efficient use of resources. The DSBN has representatives on many community committees and has various community representatives on established committees of the board. These forums provide information regarding the needs of the community and contribute to the board's development and delivery of special education services.

Redefining Excellence: DSBN's Multi-year Strategic Plan 2023-2028

In an effort to hear every voice, the DSBN invited the voices, opinions and feedback of students, staff members and members of our surrounding educational community. In 2023 a multi-year strategic plan that is progressive and responsive to the needs of students and staff was created and is reflective of our special education goals. It affirms our five strategic priorities: Learning, Belonging, Thriving, Walking Together, and Spaces. The DSBN respects and upholds the importance of equity, inclusion, dignity and human rights in all learning environments. We aim to provide differentiated strategies and programming to accommodate each learner in a way that promotes their inclusion and full participation in learning.

Involvement of SEAC in the Annual Review of the Special Education Plan

Regulation 464/97 requires that each board establishes a Special Education Plan and Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). In accordance with this regulation the DSBN annually reviews the special education plan in detail with the SEAC and considers all recommendations. The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meets monthly to discuss current issues related to special education and discusses effective practices and supports for students. The committee is provided with the opportunity to collaborate on special education initiatives and participate in the board annual special education budget process. Each July a revised Special Education Plan is submitted to the Ministry of Education and provided on the DSBN website. The Special Education Advisory Council reviews the Special Education Plan. The following is a result of the feedback received:

Feedback Received	Result/Action
<input type="checkbox"/> The SEAC committee received a copy of the Special Education Plan at the beginning of the school year to review and provide feedback.	The Special Education Plan was reviewed and SEAC did not submit any feedback.
<input type="checkbox"/> Updates were made to reflect changes and additions to Support Staff and Programs and Services	Supporting pages for the special education plan have been updated.

Section 9 THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)

The District School Board of Niagara has established and will maintain a standing committee of the Board dedicated to advising the DSBN on issues related to Special Education. This committee has been established in keeping with Regulation 464/97 of The Education Act.

Meeting Times/Locations

- The regular meetings of SEAC are held on the second Thursday of every month during the school year commencing at 5:30 p.m.
- All SEAC meetings are open to the public.
- A majority of the members of a SEAC is a quorum, and "a vote of a majority of the members present at a meeting is necessary to bind the committee."
- The committee will hold 10 meetings through the year, as per their mandate from the Ministry of Education.
- The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is provided with the opportunity to:
 - collaborate on department initiatives related to Special Education;
 - participate in the Board's annual review of the Special Education Plan;
 - participate in the Board's annual budget process related to Special Education;
 - be heard before the Board;
 - have access to information, documents, and facilities necessary for functioning.

Membership

- The committee is made up of representatives of local associations of parents/guardians and advocates for children with exceptional needs. Local associations operate within the geographical region of the District School Board of Niagara and are affiliated with an incorporated organization that operates throughout Ontario to further the interests and well-being of one or more groups of exceptional children or adults.
- Associations that meet the criteria are invited to choose a representative and alternate to participate in committee meetings. If the member is unable to attend it is expected that the alternate will attend. Attendance is closely monitored. Any association missing more than three consecutive meetings will be expected to forfeit their seat on SEAC. Where there is a duplication of local associations, as is the case with five Community Livings across the Niagara Region, the associations have been asked to select one representative who takes responsibility for communicating with the other groups and carrying forward concerns from them.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of SEAC are nominated and elected by the representatives. The local associations who are members of the District School Board of Niagara SEAC represent:

- Autism Ontario – Niagara Chapter
- Bethesda Services
- Niagara Support Services
- Niagara Children's Centre
- Community Living
- Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara
- Pathstone Mental Health
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder-Ontario Network of Expertise
- Down Syndrome Niagara
- Inclusion Action in Ontario

In addition, SEAC invites for consideration applications for membership from community agencies which have a mandate to support at-risk/exceptional students of elementary and secondary school age. The District School Board of Niagara Parents' Guide to Special Education contains an insert with a list of the associations that are on SEAC. The DSBN website also lists the members and their affiliations.

Section 9 THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)

Roles and Responsibilities

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) members are consulted on matters related to service delivery, range of service, department resources, and are asked to advocate on behalf of the exceptionalities represented. The committee is provided with professional secretarial and office support. Two trustees from the Board are regular members of the committee. The Superintendent of Special Education Support Services, the Student Achievement Leader of Special Education Support Services, Senior Manager of Special Education Support Services, as well as an elementary and secondary Principal provide resource support to the committee. Other consultative and resource staff attend as required. SEAC advises the Board by way of a motion, letter or through the trustee representatives. All minutes of SEAC are routinely forwarded to all members of the Board through the Committee reports at Board meetings. During the school year, SEAC may discuss and provide input on a variety of items /issues including:

- Autism/ABA
- Preschool Transition
- Individual Education Plans
- Special Education Budget
- Accessibility Plan
- Special Education - Technology
- Differentiated Instruction
- Framework and Delivery Model of Supports
- Equity Policy and Framework
- Equity and Inclusive Education

SEAC members are encouraged to share information about the DSNB's programs and services with their organizations and at the same time to bring input from their organizations to the SEAC meetings. SEAC's involvement in the budget process is facilitated by:

- invitations to the Superintendent of Business to attend SEAC meetings, upon the request of SEAC members and/or the suggestion of the Superintendent responsible for Special Education Support Services to give updates about funding and budget;
- issues as they affect the District School Board of Niagara (e.g., provincial grants, one-time assessment grants, staffing needs, etc.);
- sharing of pertinent information/documents (e.g., copies of items presented to and discussed at the Board Finance Committee meetings - possible priorities for increased or decreased spending, funding revenues, etc.);
- overall and particularly as they apply to Special Education, the budget for the upcoming year as approved by the Board.

Parents/guardians and other members of the public may make their views known to SEAC by corresponding to the Chair of SEAC or through the office of the Superintendent responsible for Special Education Support Services.