

Section H:

THE IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS AND APPEALS

FEEDBACK

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Purpose of the Standard

To provide details of the board's IPRC process to the ministry and to the public

Most students are successful with assessment and instruction in the regular classroom. Some students require support beyond those ordinarily received through usual instructional and assessment practices. Students who have behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities may require access to additional instructional programs and/or services available through Special Education and Inclusion.

Ontario [Regulation 181/98](#) of the Education Act provides information about the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC). It sets out the procedures involved in identifying a pupil as exceptional, deciding the pupil's placement and appealing such decisions when the parents/guardians/caregivers do not agree with the IPRC.

The general function of an IPRC is to identify the specific nature of the student's learning strengths and needs and, based on the evidence presented and discussions held at the meeting, to:

- Decide whether or not the student should be identified as exceptional
- Identify the areas of the student's exceptionality, according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education and the TDSB criteria set out in this plan
- Decide an appropriate placement for the student, giving first consideration to placement in a regular class with appropriate special education programs and services and taking parental preferences into account
- Discuss recommendations for programs and/or services

- Review the identification and placement at least once each school year

Parents/guardians/caregivers and students aged 16 or older, will receive an invitation and have the right to attend the IPRC meeting either in-person or virtually. In making its decisions, the IPRC will consider a package of information prepared by the student's school, as well as information contributed by anyone else attending the meeting.

Parents/guardians/caregivers receive a copy of the IPRC package in advance, as well as a copy of the [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#), which answers frequently asked questions about the IPRC process.

In determining a student's exceptionality and placement, the IPRC considers the following:

- The student's documented cognitive profile, learning strengths and areas for growth, and/or medical diagnoses
- The categories of exceptionality defined by the Ministry of Education and the TDSB criteria set out in this plan
- The placement settings (Regular Class with Indirect Support, Regular Class with Resource Assistance Elementary, Regular Class with Withdrawal Support, Special Education Class with Partial Integration or Special Education Class Full Time) and degrees of support required by the student
- Placement preference of parents/guardians/caregivers

A student's assessment findings may suggest to the SST that a referral to the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) would be appropriate for possible identification as an exceptional pupil. A recommendation to consider a student for an IPRC requires careful analysis of the effectiveness of instructional interventions that have been tried with the student and thorough understanding of the student's identity, lived experiences, learning strengths and needs. IPRC requests are made by the school principal on recommendation of the SST or following a written request by the parent/guardian/caregiver.

The role of the IPRC is to review assessment and evaluation material about a student. The IPRC will decide if a student is exceptional and if so, the committee members will specify the type of exceptionality and decide an appropriate placement for the student: Regular Class or Special Education Class. Placement in the Regular Class could involve a special education teacher working with the student for less than half the school day. Placement in a Special Education Class would involve a special education teacher working with the student for more than half the school day.

An annual IPRC review is held for all students identified as exceptional. This is an important process that allows for review of students' progress, especially students in Intensive Support Programs (ISPs). It is the intention that a student in an ISP is there

for a short duration and will return to the regular classroom with special education support as needed. Students' progress, strengths and needs are discussed at an IPRC review. As with an original IPRC, the committee will decide if a student is exceptional and if so, the committee specifies the type of exceptionality and determines an appropriate placement for the student: Regular Class or Special Education Class. IPRC meetings are available to parents/guardians/caregivers either in-person or remotely using an AODA platform.

IPRC Decisions about Exceptionality

At the IPRC meeting, the specific nature of the student's learning strengths and needs are identified. Based on evidence presented and discussions held at the meeting, the IPRC will decide whether or not the student is an exceptional pupil, according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education.

The categories are:

Communicational

- Autism
- Learning Disability
- Language Impairment
- Speech Impairment
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Intellectual

- Developmental Disability
- Giftedness
- Mild Intellectual Disability

Behavioural

- Behaviour

Multiple

- Multiple Exceptionalities

The TDSB believes students are better served by listing each of their exceptionalities on the Statement of Decision completed at the IPRC.

Physical

- Blind/Low Vision
- Physical Disability

For detailed information about the Ministry definitions of exceptionalities and placement criteria used in the TDSB, please refer to [Section J: Special Education Placements Provided by the Board](#).

IPRC Decisions about Placement

Under Ontario [Regulation 181/98](#), when a student is identified as exceptional, the IPRC will also decide placement for the student, using TDSB criteria and taking into account parent preference. Ontario Regulation 181/98 requires school boards to consider placing exceptional students into regular classes before considering placement in special education classes.

Regular Class Placement

Most students identified as exceptional learners can be appropriately supported in a regular classroom setting through the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), school-based special education teacher support and when required, Professional Support Services (PSS) available to schools on a referral basis.

Regular Class is an IPRC placement decision for students with special education needs who receive more than 50% of their instructional time in a regular classroom from a regular class teacher. The IPRC can choose from three Regular Class support settings: Indirect Support, Resource Assistance (Elementary), or Withdrawal Assistance.

Regular Class with Indirect Support The student will attend a regular class for the entire school day and receive direct instruction from a regular classroom teacher, who receives specialized consultative services from a special education teacher.

Regular Class with Resource Assistance (Elementary) The student will attend a regular class and receive direct, specialized instruction, individually or in a small group from a special education teacher within the regular classroom.

Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance The student will attend a regular class and receive instruction outside the regular classroom for part of the school day from a special education teacher(s).

In **elementary** schools, Regular Class placement is at the neighbourhood school with support delivered through resource assistance. Indirect Support and Resource Assistance or Withdrawal Assistance is provided by a Special Education and

Inclusion teacher on staff. The model of Resource Assistance is responsive to each student's needs.

In **secondary** schools, there are two regular class placement settings available:

Regular Class with Indirect Support - provided by the regular subject teachers liaising with the school's Special Education Curriculum Leader (CL) or Assistant Curriculum Leader (ACL) about student needs. Teachers are expected to support students through strategies outlined in their IEP.

Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance - provided through either non-credit support and/or credit special education course options for students with IEPs. These include:

- Secondary Resource Program (RSE-non credit)
- Secondary Learning Strategies (GLE- credit)
 - Students with IEPs may earn up to four GLE credits during their high school years.

School-based support is provided by a special education teacher on staff. Support can also include course modifications that permit credit accumulation and access to compulsory and/or optional credit courses designed to provide further learning opportunities.

Special Education Class Placement

According to the [Ministry of Education](#), before the IPRC considers placing the student in a special education class, it must consider whether placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services will:

- meet the student's needs
- be consistent with the parent's preferences

The [OHRC Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities](#) confirms the need for special education setting options: Before considering placing a student in a self-contained or specialized classroom, **education providers must first consider inclusion in the regular classroom.**

In most cases, with appropriate supports, a student will be accommodated in the regular classroom. However, every student is unique. To provide appropriate accommodation to all students with special education needs, education providers must, with the assistance of parental input, assess each student's particular strengths and needs, and consider these against a full range of placements, programs and services. Ultimately, appropriate accommodation will be decided on an individual basis.

Special Education Class is the IPRC placement decision for those students with special education needs for whom 50% or more of instructional time is delivered by a special education teacher in a special education classroom, where the pupil-teacher ratio conforms to [Regulation 298 \(R.R.O.1990, Section 31\)](#). There are two settings for Special Education Class placement – **Partial Integration** or **Full Time**.

Special Education Class with Partial Integration The student will attend a special education class and will be integrated within a regular class for part of the student's instructional program (for a minimum of one instructional period daily). This placement can be delivered through a special education Intensive Support Program (ISP) with daily opportunities for integration.

In TDSB secondary schools, an IPRC decision for Special Education Class with Partial Integration recommends placement in a special education program at an integrated secondary school site with both regular and special education programs. In addition to the Secondary Resource Program (RSE) and Secondary Learning Strategies (GLE) courses, support may also include course modifications that permit credit accumulation and access to compulsory and/or optional credit courses designed to provide further learning opportunities. The Principal of the secondary school shall decide whether the credit will be granted based on the degree of modifications required by the student to access the course concepts, skills and knowledge. The student and parents/guardians/caregivers will be consulted during this process and the school principal makes the final decision regarding the credit.

Special Education Class Full Time The student will attend a special education class for the entire school day.

For TDSB elementary/secondary school students, these Intensive ISPs are characterized by smaller class sizes (with prescribed pupil-teacher ratios) and appropriate support staff personnel. They serve instructional groupings of learners who have large skill and knowledge gaps and similar kinds of specialized, exceptionality- related resource and/or service needs. They offer programming and instruction targeted to the individual and shared needs of the students in the class, and the specialized resources/services designed to address those needs. The location for a full-time special education class may be other than the student's home school.

In most cases, student need for Special Education Class placement is expected to be for a limited duration and reviewed annually. Successful reintegration into the regular program is the ultimate goal. Throughout a full-time placement, efforts are made to increasingly integrate the student in regular school programs and activities.

Special Education Class placements are typically located in designated neighbourhood schools. The number and location of the classes are determined by the profiles and numbers of students requiring them across the TDSB. In some

cases, IPRC placement in a Special Education Class Full Time may be in a congregated school setting. These programs support communities of learners whose complex educational needs require alternative curriculum and specialized services, facilities and resources. The goal is to maximize student independence and communication skills.

External Options for Full Time Support

For students with very complex learning needs that require highly specialized instructional expertise, the IPRC may suggest that the student be referred to a provincial committee for admission to one of the Provincial Schools. These include Provincial Schools for Blind, Deaf or Deafblind students and Provincial Demonstration Schools for students with severe learning disabilities. Referrals to Provincial and Provincial Demonstration Schools are coordinated by the TDSB in conjunction with parents/guardians/caregivers. In some very complex cases that meet specified admission criteria, parents/guardians/ caregivers may choose to investigate other options to meet their child's needs. [Special Education and Inclusion - Education and Community Partnership Program \(ECPP\)](#) can provide different kinds of care or treatment appropriate to a student's needs.

Parents/guardians/caregivers can initiate direct applications for admission to ECPP agencies. ECPP also has a central intake process that can be initiated through the home school. School board staff may be able to assist in gathering the required documentation for central intake or for direct parental contact with agencies.

IPRC Recommendations about Special Education Services or Programs

The committee may make additional recommendations regarding special education programs and special education services. These recommendations may include referral to a School Support Team (SST) for consideration of additional assessment information, resources and strategies to support the educational programming of the student.

Family of Schools and Original IPRCs

Each of the four regional Learning Centres in the TDSB are organized into clusters of schools called Family of Schools. Within each Family of Schools, a team is established to meet as the IPRC for the schools within the Networks in that Learning Centre.

These IPRCs meet when students are being considered for the first time (an Original IPRC) or for an IPRC Review. When a change in exceptionality, a move between schools, or a substantial increase or change in support may be needed for a student, then an IPRC is required.

Principals are invited by Special Education and Inclusion to be the Chair of a Family of Schools IPRC. Principal Chairs are expected to have a deep understanding of Anti-Ableism, Anti-Oppression, Anti-Black Racism, Anti-Indigenous Racism, Human

Rights, Equity, Inclusion and Special Education. At times, a Supervisory Officer may join the IPRC as an additional member or as Chair designate. Meetings take place either in-person or virtually in one of the Family of Schools.

The Family of Schools IPRC is made up of the following members:

- Principal (Chair) not associated with the student or the student's school
- Special Education and Inclusion Coordinator (associated with the Family of Schools)
- Psychological Services Professional (generally not associated with the student)

The IPRC Process

Only students enrolled in and already attending a TDSB school are eligible for an IPRC. Principals work with families to ensure they feel supported through this process.

Principals also acknowledge and validate parents/guardians/caregivers voice, identity, culture and any parental concerns prior to attending the IPRC.

Parents/guardians/caregivers should fully understand all documentation, placement options and pathways that the IPRC may lead to. For more information regarding secondary pathways and requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), the Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) and the Certificate of Accomplishment, please refer to the [Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Program Requirements](#).

IPRC Referral Steps

Parents/guardians/caregivers or the principal may request an IPRC:

- The principal makes a request on the recommendation of the School Support Team. Parental requests must be made in writing to the principal
- The principal completes the IPRC Referral and submits all the required documentation to the appropriate Special Education and Inclusion representative, using the web-based SAP CRM application
- Where new documentation becomes available after the initial submission, the principal ensures that it is shared with the IPRC and parents/guardians/caregivers
- Within 15 days of a written request by parents/guardians/caregivers for an IPRC, the principal must provide parents/guardians/caregivers with a

copy of the [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#) and a written statement of approximately when the committee will meet

- At least ten days before an IPRC meeting, parents/guardians/caregivers must receive a written invitation, with notice of the time and place of the meeting and a copy of all documentation to be considered at the IPRC
- Principals must inquire in advance of the meeting whether the parents/guardians/caregivers have any additional documentation for consideration by the IPRC. The principal must then forward this documentation to the IPRC, to be received at least five days prior to the meeting

Documents Required for an IPRC

The following documentation is generally required for an IPRC:

- An educational assessment (as per [Regulation 181/98, s. 15 \[1\]](#))
- The most recent Provincial Report Card/Kindergarten Communication of Learning (and where the most recent Report Card is the Progress Report Card, the previous Provincial Report Card must also be included)
- An Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- A psychological assessment (with respect to most exceptionalities) and/or other relevant professional assessments (e.g., medical diagnosis, audiology report)
- A completed Individual Learning Plan (ILP) from the most recent School Support Team (SST) meeting reflective of culturally relevant and responsive strategies, and containing a recommendation to proceed to IPRC
- Other relevant information gathered by the SST
- Student work samples that reflect that the teacher's pedagogy is responsive to the child's identity and lived experiences and is culturally relevant (part of the school presentation)

- Any documents which parents/guardians/caregivers may deem relevant to an IPRC
- A record of consultation with parents/guardians/caregivers

Central IPRC

Central IPRCs (original or review) are arranged when identification issues of greater complexity or involving unusual circumstances arise. The Chair of a Central IPRC is a Centrally Assigned Principal for Special Education and Inclusion. Meetings take place either in-person or virtually at a local school.

The Central IPRC is made up of the following members, all of whom are associated with the Learning Centre:

- Centrally Assigned Principal of Special Education and Inclusion (Chair)
- Special Education and Inclusion Coordinator (associated with the Learning Centre)
- Manager of Psychological Services (associated with the Learning Centre)

School-Based IPRC (for the Annual Review)

Annual Review IPRC meetings must be planned for all identified students. Level 1 Review IPRCs are held at the student's current school when the current placement is on-going and there are no expected changes in exceptionality, moves between schools, or substantial increases in support required. The Chair of the Review IPRC is the School Principal or Vice Principal designate.

The School-Based Review IPRC is made up of the following members:

- School Principal (Chair) or Vice-Principal (designated Chair) and any two of the following:
- Special Education and Inclusion Consultant (associated with the school)
- School Special Education Teacher
- School Classroom Teacher

Process for Annual Review IPRCs

Annual Review IPRCs are planned yearly for all students who have been identified by an IPRC as exceptional. Level 1 and Level 2 Reviews are held at the student's own school. Level 3 IPRC Reviews are generally at a school within the Family of Schools other than the student's own school. Typically, Central Reviews are held at a Learning Centre Board site.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are encouraged and entitled to attend the annual review for their child. Although parents/guardians/caregivers can give written notice to the school principal to waive the annual review, this opportunity to engage the school in discussion in establishing goals and support for the upcoming year is essential for programming.

- Parents/guardians/caregivers may request a Review IPRC be held any time after a student has been in a special education program for three months
- The most recent Provincial Report Card/Kindergarten Communication of Learning and other current educational or professional assessments are considered at the Annual Review. It is expected that the student's progress, strengths and needs will be discussed within the context of the IEP, where parental permission has been provided

As indicated in the Ministry of Education document, [Learning for All](#), educational assessments may include a range of tools, including classroom observation, classroom assessments, commonly used school board assessments and teacher-created assessments

Attendance at the IPRC

- Parents/guardians/caregivers and students 16 years of age or older are invited and entitled to attend and participate. Every effort is made to accommodate the schedules of all attendees. Meetings can be held either face to face or virtually using an AODA-compliant platform
- The school principal arranges for an interpreter to assist the parents/guardians/ caregivers where appropriate
- A referring school administrator and the teacher(s) and support staff who know the student best and who can speak about the student's strengths, needs, programming, interventions and assessments must attend
- Resource staff may attend where clarification of information is required. Typically, the TDSB Professional Support Services (PSS) staff who have authored a report do not attend the IPRC
- An advocate for the parents/guardians/caregivers may provide support or speak on their behalf

Presentations to an IPRC

- The IPRC Chair ensures introductions of all in attendance are made, sets the tone of a welcoming and supportive environment, and invites parents/guardians/ caregivers and any other attendees to participate in the discussions about the student

- Parents/guardians/caregivers introduce themselves as they are critical to this process and their voices and concerns are valued as they know their child best
- The student's school administrator provides context for the IPRC through a general overview of the student's educational history, honouring the child's identity, lived experiences and strengths
- The school staff provides a detailed summary of the student's current strengths and needs, academic performance and presenting issues. Culturally relevant and responsive teaching strategies and interventions that have been implemented are shared, indicating their degree of success, along with current assessment data. Edited and unedited work samples must be available to provide a sense of the student's potential and ongoing classroom performance, and the student's OSR should be available

Functions of the IPRC

The IPRC will:

- Describe and provide a statement of the student's strengths and needs
- Following the discussion at the IPRC, after all the information has been presented and considered, make its decision
- Determine whether a student is exceptional and specify the area(s) of exceptionality
- Decide an appropriate placement for the student - Regular Class or Special Education Class
- Decide the support setting for the student based on the placement:
 - o Regular Class – with indirect support, resource assistance or withdrawal assistance
 - o Special Education Class – with partial integration or full time
- Discuss and make written recommendations regarding any additional special education programs and services needed
- Where the committee has decided that the student should be placed in a special education class, state the reason for that decision
- Provide, in writing, a Statement of Decision and any program/services recommendations made

Deferral of IPRC Decisions

On rare occasions, the IPRC may defer its decision(s). A deferral is possible if the IPRC needs more time to review information, receive new information or consider its decision. This sometimes happens when there is new information introduced or professional reports pending (i.e., medical, psychological, speech/language, occupational therapy or physiotherapy, etc.) which have implications for IPRC decision-making.

Resolving Identification or Placement Conflict/Issues

In situations where there is disagreement, effective communication is essential to clarify information and resolve conflict/issues. The goal is to have the best interests of the student foremost in all discussions. The Ministry of Education document [Shared Solutions](#) is an excellent resource for all parties to reference should disputes arise.

TDSB also has a [Parent Concern Protocol](#) that outlines steps to be taken in addressing concerns with the school staff and administration. The Parent Concern Protocol establishes procedures for addressing parent/guardian/caregiver concerns related to education. A concern can be a school-related problem or issue affecting a child, families or the community.

As part of the IPRC process, the following types of communication take place:

- Principals ensure that parents/guardian/caregivers receive a copy of the [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#)
- Parents/guardians/caregivers consult with the school principal and/or special education staff to clarify decisions of the IPRC
- The Centrally Assigned Principal of Special Education and Inclusion for the appropriate Learning Centre provides information to all parties to assist with procedures and protocols

Where parents/guardians/caregivers would like reconsideration of a decision made by an IPRC, they may ask to have the IPRC reconvened to present new information or clarify the IPRC findings. Should a resolution not be achieved, the parents/guardians/caregivers may proceed with a formal appeal.

IPRC Appeal Process

The appeal process is fully detailed in [Regulation 181/98 \(VI, s. 26\)](#). As part of the IPRC process, principals ensure that parents/ guardians/caregivers receive a copy of the [Parent's Guide to Special Education](#) which outlines the entire IPRC process, including how to appeal decisions.

In the TDSB, 4,037 IPRC referrals were initiated during the 2023-2024 school year; there were 0 appeals this year; 929 Central IPRC Reviews that were completed and 9,291 annual IPRC Reviews that took place as many parents/guardians/caregivers had requested in writing to waive the annual IPRC Review.

English Language Learners (ELL) with Special Education Needs

TDSB has a protocol for identifying English Language Learners (ELL) who may also have special education needs. If information from the student's home country, from an initial assessment, or from early teacher observation indicates that the student may have special education needs, the student will be referred to the appropriate school team.

When special education needs have been identified, students are eligible for ELL or English Literacy Development (ELD) services and Special Education and Inclusion services simultaneously.

The TDSB has a process consisting of three phases which details considerations that may help determine if a psychological assessment should be recommended for English Language Learners whose progress is of concern. This process is found in the TDSB document entitled [English Language Learners: School-Based Considerations Prior to Referral for Psychological Assessment](#).

Additional information can be found here: [English Language Learners and Special Education Support in TDSB Elementary Schools Q and A document](#).

Students with special education needs can benefit and thrive in French as a Second Language (FSL) programs. Teachers in FSL programs use assessment strategies to identify strengths and learning needs, provide Differentiated Instruction (DI), and implement a tiered approach of strategies through the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to ensure students are set up for success. Teachers in FSL programs develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with special education needs in FSL, if it is deemed necessary.

The Ministry of Education's policy document entitled [Including Students with Special Education Needs in French As A Second Language Programs \(2015\)](#) states that, "the foundational belief that all students can learn applies to students across all subjects and program areas" (page 3).

TDSB's French as a Second Language Department has adapted the following documents from Ontario's Modern Language Council to help teachers program for students with special education needs:

- [Including Students with Special Education Needs in French As A Second Language Programs](#)
- [Fact Sheet – Special Education & Inclusion in FSL Programs](#)

Inclusion in Core French Programs

Core French is a mandatory part of elementary and secondary school programs. For most students, there will be no exemption from Core French. Please refer to the [Operational Procedure PR597](#) for more information.