

IEP (Individual Education Plan) Resource



What is an IEP?

IEP is an acronym for **Individual Education Plan**. It is:

- A written plan detailing the special education services a student needs, based on a comprehensive assessment of their strengths and learning needs
- A document that includes a detailed transition plan that outlines specific goals, required actions, responsible individuals, and timelines for each educational transition where student support is necessary
- A plan of action documenting accommodations and/or modifications, and/or alternative programming
- A tool to help educators monitor and communicate the student's programming
- A plan developed, implemented, and reviewed by the School Team in conjunction with the student and parent/guardian
- A flexible, working document that can be adjusted as necessary throughout the school year
- An ongoing record that ensures continuity in programming

An IEP is not:

- a description of everything that will be taught to the student
- a list of all the teaching strategies used in regular classroom instruction
- a document that records all the student's learning expectations
- a daily lesson plan

What is the parent/guardian's role in the IEP process?

Parents and guardians offer valuable insights into their child's development, making them essential to the IEP process.

They are encouraged to:

- share information about their child with the school team (talents, abilities, interests, likes, dislikes, extra-curricular activities, hopes and dreams, etc.)
- collaborate and engage in the IEP process
- advocate in the best interests of their child
- provide up-to-date medical information that is relevant to the school team
- support educational efforts of the school team by providing opportunities in the home to practise and maintain skills
- maintain open communication with the school team on an ongoing basis

Why does a student have an IEP?

An IEP must be developed for every student who has been identified as an exceptional learner by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).

In addition, an IEP may be developed for a student who has not been formally identified as an exceptional learner (through the IPRC process) but who requires a special education program and/or services to access the provincial curriculum and/or attend school.

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Who develops a student's IEP?

Creating an IEP is a collaborative process that involves school staff (the development team) and the student (where appropriate), the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and other professionals involved with the student (collaborators).

A student's IEP should be developed, implemented, and monitored by the classroom teacher, learning resource teacher, school principal and sometimes other educators. Throughout the development process, collaboration occurs with the student, student's parent(s)/guardian(s), other school board staff and/or other professionals in a collaborative manner.

What is an “accommodation”?

Accommodations refer to the specialized teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment required to enable a student to learn and to demonstrate learning. Accommodations do not alter the provincial curriculum expectations for the grade.

What is a “modification”?

Modifications are changes made to the age-appropriate grade level expectations for a subject or course to meet a student's learning needs. These changes may involve increasing or decreasing the number and/or complexity of the regular grade level or developing expectations and skills from the curriculum from a different grade level.

What does “alternative programming” mean?

Alternative programming or alternative expectations support students in learning skills not covered by the Ontario curriculum, such as life skills, motor skills, or personal care. These programs are separate from standard subjects and may include things like speech therapy or social skills training. Most students receive these in addition to regular or modified curriculum expectations.

What is a transition plan?

A transition plan is a detailed and coordinated plan designed to assist the student in making successful educational transitions. It is developed in collaboration with the student, their parent(s)/guardian(s), the school team, and may involve community agencies and post-secondary partners.

What is PPM 140?

PPM No. 140, “Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)” (2007), mandates transition planning for students with ASD as appropriate.

It also requires:

- Use of relevant ABA methods to support transitions, where suitable,
- Documentation of these methods in the student's transition plan.

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What is PPM 156?

PPM No. 156, “Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs” (2013) mandates transition plans for all students with an IEP, from Kindergarten to Grade 12, including those who are gifted or not formally identified as exceptional. The policy applies to major school transitions and allows the plan to note if no support is needed.

How often is an IEP reviewed?

Consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s) must occur and an IEP must be reviewed, updated and sent home:

- within the first 30 school days
- at least once per report card period
- following an Identification, Placement & Review Committee meeting (IPRC), if applicable

If major changes are made to the Annual Goals, Learning Expectations and/or Accommodations portions of the IEP, a revised copy of the IEP will be sent home and the “Parent/Guardian/Student IEP Consultation” page will record communications between parent/guardian and the school team.

References

Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Resource Guide, 2017

Grand Erie Special Education Plan

PPM 140 “Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)” (2007)

PPM 156 “Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs” (2013)