



## **SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT 2011**

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## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

This “Special Education Report 2011” replaces all previous Special Education Plans of KidsAbility School Authority (the Board). This report has been written to comply with the requirements set out in Regulation 306 under the Education Act policy document entitled, “*Standards for School Boards’ Special Education Plans, 2000*”. One of the purposes of the Special Education Report 2011 is to inform the Ministry of Education and the public about special education programs and services that are provided by the Board in accordance with legislation and ministry policy on special education. The Board’s Special Education Report 2011 is designed to comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act and regulations made under the act, and any other relevant legislation.

This Special Education Report will be reviewed annually and amended, as necessary, to ensure that KidsAbility School Authority continues to provide the special education programs and services to meet the current needs of the exceptional students of KidsAbility School Authority.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AND SERVICES**

### **SECTION 2 : THE BOARD’S GENERAL MODEL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**

The Vision and Mission of KidsAbility School Authority are the foundation upon which the special education programs at KidsAbility School have been built.

**Our Mission:** KidsAbility School Authority in collaboration with families and the KidsAbility Centre for Child Development serves young children with special education needs.

KidsAbility School Authority provides:

- Services for children with communication, physical and developmental disabilities
- Early identification of the child’s strengths and special needs
- Early intervention to develop strategies that address the child’s individual needs
- Education and therapy services
- Junior kindergarten programs that are accommodated and modified to meet each child’s development
- Staff support to the family in preparing for entrance of their child into a community school
- Communication and collaboration with the local district school boards and private schools to support the transition of students from KidsAbility School into community schools

**Our Vision:** Children prepared for school success.

The Board provides half-day special education programs for children who are registered as clients at KidsAbility Centre for Child Development and who are eligible to attend a Junior Kindergarten program (must be 4 years of age by December 31 of the year in

which they begin Junior Kindergarten). KidsAbility therapists who work with the child initiate referrals to the Board and complete the applications, in consultation with the children's parents. The application does not guarantee acceptance into the school as every year there are more applications received than there are placements in the school. Applications are due in February of each year. The school selection committee, in consultation with KidsAbility therapists, reviews all applications and makes placement decisions. All parents are informed of placement decisions in March/April.

The one-year programs focus on early identification, early intervention and transition into community schools. The School operates under Section 68 of the Education Act of the Province of Ontario and is funded by the Ministry of Education. The education expectations are based on the Kindergarten program developed by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Teachers, parents, educational assistants and therapists work as teams to combine education and therapy in order to meet the unique needs of the children.

The school programs:

- Develop the child's skills in communication, social interaction, physical skills for daily routines, self-esteem, and self-confidence
- Develop the child's ability to function in a group setting
- Determine appropriate therapy equipment and learning strategies
- Provide support and strategies to families to prepare for the child's transition to a community school

### **SECTION 3: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Ministry of Education defines the roles and responsibilities for all involved in special education in Ontario. Listed are the roles and responsibilities for the Ministry of Education, the district school boards or school authorities, the school principal, the teachers of the board (special education and itinerant liaison), parents and students.

The Ministry of Education:

- defines, through the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda, the legal obligations of school boards regarding the provision of special education programs and services, and prescribes the categories and definitions of exceptionality;
- ensure that school boards provide appropriate special education programs and services for their exceptional students;
- establishes the funding for special education through the structure of the funding model. (The model consists of the Foundation Grant, the Special Education Grant, and other special purpose grants);
- requires school boards to report on their expenditures for special education;
- sets province-wide standards for curriculum and reporting of achievement;
- requires school boards to maintain special education plans, review them annually, and submit amendments to the ministry;
- requires school boards to establish Special Education Advisory Committees (SEAC);

- establishes Special Education Tribunals to hear disputes between parents and school boards regarding the identification and placement of exceptional students;
- establishes a provincial 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, blind, or deaf-blind, or who have severe learning disabilities.

The district school board or school authority:

- establishes school board policy and practices that comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- monitors school compliance with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- requires staff to comply with the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- provides appropriately qualified staff to provide programs and services for the exceptional students of the board;
- obtains the appropriate funding and reports 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 students of the board;
- reviews the plan annually and submits amendments to the Minister of Education;
- provides statistically reports to the ministry as required and as requested;
- prepares a parent guide to provide parents with information about special education programs, services and procedures;
- establishes one or more Identification, Placement and Review Committees (IPRC) to identify exceptional students and determine appropriate placements for them;
- establishes a Special Education Advisory Committee;
- provides professional development to staff on special education.

The school principal:

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and 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;
- ensures that the identification and placement of exceptional students, through an IPRC, is done according to the procedures outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and board policies;
- consults with parents and with school board staff to determine the most appropriate program for exceptional students;
- ensures the development, implementation, and review of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), including a transition plan, according to provincial requirements;

- ensures that parents 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 if necessary and that parental consent is obtained.

The special education teacher:

- carries out duties as outlined in the Education Act, regulations, and policy/program memoranda;
- follows board policies and procedures regarding special education;
- maintains up-to-date knowledge of special education practices;
- communicates the student's progress to parents;
- holds qualifications, in accordance with Regulation 298, to teach special education;
- plans and implements instructional programs, IEPs and educational assessments;
- collaborates with teachers, parents and support personnel to determine appropriate accommodations for student learning and necessary modifications made to programs as well as communicating assessment results;
- monitors, with reference to the IEP, identified individual students regarding program, placement and support structures;
- facilitates student transition to and from new programs and placements;
- provides full educational classroom experience for a specific number of students who have been identified as exceptional in one or more of several areas;
- provides input to school staff, parents, support staff and representatives of community agencies, as appropriate, regarding the needs of students in order to maximize the effectiveness of programs;
- designs and implements IEPs;
- co-ordinates IPRC meetings or case conferences as required;
- supports the transition of students through the system and into the community;
- supervises and works with educational assistants to provide program support for students.

The itinerant special education liaison teacher:

- holds qualifications, in accordance with Regulation 298, to teach special education and has demonstrated expertise working with students with a particular exceptionality;
- provides a range of support services, from direct service to consultation with students, school personnel, parents and representatives from community support agencies;
- creates and/or adapts individualized programs to address the needs of exceptional students;
- works with school personnel to facilitate the identification of exceptional students;
- collaborates with classroom teachers and special education teachers in the planning, implementation and evaluation of differentiated programs;
- assists with the development of the IEP and may participate in IPRC meetings for identified students.

The parent:

- becomes familiar with and informed about board policies and procedures that affect the child;
- participates in IPRCs, parent-teacher conferences, and other relevant school activities;
- participates in the development of the IEP;
- becomes acquainted with the school staff working with the student;
- supports the student at home;
- works with the school principal and teachers 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/program memoranda;
- complies with board policies and procedures.

**SECTION 4: EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

As indicated in the Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum No. 11, early identification is “a part of a continuous assessment process and program planning process which should be initiated when a child is first enrolled in school.” The Board's early identification process and planning for intervention begins prior to the student entering Junior Kindergarten at KidsAbility School. An inter-disciplinary team, which includes the child's parents, participates in the gathering of information and assessment results in order to determine the child's strengths, interests, needs for therapy and programming, and appropriateness for placement in KidsAbility School. Parental consent is obtained for the sharing of assessment information with other professionals.

Children must be clients of KidsAbility Centre for Child Development to be considered for placement in KidsAbility School. To refer a KidsAbility client for school placement, the child's team submits an Education Application Form to the Selection Committee in February. The referring team, including the parents, lists three primary goals for the child. These goals reflect the criteria for the referral and the child's observable behaviours and become the basis for the Individual Education Plan in September.

As part of the continuous assessment and program planning process, the child's inter-disciplinary team meets regularly to review and discuss the child's learning strengths and needs, the learning environment, intervention strategies and expectations. The child's program is accommodated and/or modified accordingly.

Parents play an integral role in the assessment and program planning process. During the “staggered entry” into junior kindergarten, the parent(s) accompanies the child to school on his/her first day at which time the child and parents meet the school team. The parent(s) contribute(s) information about the child which assists the team in program planning. The parent(s) participate(s) in the creation and revision of the child's

Individual Education Plan (IEP) throughout the school year. The home-school partnership is characterized by frequent communication and collaborative program planning throughout the child's junior kindergarten year at KidsAbility School.

## **SECTION 5: THE IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT & REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS AND APPEALS**

The Education Act requires that school boards provide, or purchase from another board, special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils. Regulation 181/98 of the Education Act provides information about the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), and sets out the procedures involved in identifying a pupil as "exceptional", deciding the pupil's placement, or appealing such decisions when the parent does not agree with the IPRC. See Appendix A for Highlights of Regulation 181/98.

The role of the IPRC is 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;
- decide an appropriate placement for the student; and
- review the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

Identification: All children who are referred to KidsAbility School are clients of KidsAbility – Centre for Child Development and have already been identified as having developmental, physical and/or communication exceptionalities, prior to entry into junior kindergarten.

Placement: The placement for children who attend KidsAbility School is a small ratio self-contained classroom. As one of six Section 68 schools in Ontario, KidsAbility School is required to operate within a children's treatment centre. The school is located within KidsAbility – Centre for Child Development in Waterloo and in Cambridge.

Review: At least one review meeting will be held within the school year to consider the progress the child has made in relation to the IEP.

## **SECTION 6: EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS**

Teachers assessing children in KidsAbility School are required to have special education qualifications and are governed by the Ontario College of Teachers. Assessment tools/methods include curriculum based assessments, the Brigance, H.E.L.P., guided observation, checklists, anecdotal records, work sampling, portfolios, and conferencing/interviewing. Assessment information is used in preparing Individual Education Plans and for reporting progress to parents throughout the school year.

KidsAbility Centre for Child Development allocates therapists to the Education Program as noted under the section Specialized Health Support Services in the school setting. Therapists are regulated under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1993.

- Speech and Language Pathologists (SLP) are registered with the College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario and use formal and informal measures to assess the child's communicative competency in the areas of speech production, expressive language skills, receptive language skills and social use of language.
- Occupational Therapists (OT) are registered with the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario and assess the child's functioning in self-care, productivity, and leisure activities using standardized and/or non-standardized assessments.
- Physiotherapists (PT) are registered with the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario and assess the child's gross motor function using mostly informal and anecdotal assessments with specific measurements of things such as range of motion and with reference to scales regarding normal progression of gross motor skills.

Other KidsAbility services may be accessed.

- The Augmentative Communication Service (ACS) team, consisting of a teacher, OT, and SLP, work with students who require augmentative systems for face-to-face and/or written communication. Children must be referred by an OT or SLP for a written communication or face-to-face communication assessment, respectively. The ACS team uses a variety of graphic based materials, assistive technology and curriculum based assessments to determine the needs of these students. They share the results of their assessments with parents and teachers through case conferences and written reports. While each team member is governed by their respective Professional College, they also follow the policies and procedures outlined by Ministry of Health, Assistive Devices Branch - Communication Aids.

The Board's special education liaison teacher uses individually administered, standardized assessments of school achievement of children and adolescents in grades 1 through 12, individually administered, standardized norm-referenced assessments of specific skill areas and general, non-standardized assessments in her role of educational liaison. The special education liaison teacher has a specialist certificate in special education with training in assessment.

Parents are important members of the team and informed parental consent is always obtained outlining the types of assessment proposed and how the information will be gathered, communicated, transmitted and stored. Copies of assessment reports are shared with parents and are filed in the child's Ontario Student Record (OSR); the privacy of that information is protected by the OSR guidelines. In addition, assessment reports are filed in the child's main file at KidsAbility Centre for Child Development. The exchange of information with any other agency is at the request of the parents and the parents provide a signed *Consent for Release of Confidential Information*.

## **SECTION 7: SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN THE SCHOOL SETTING**

Therapy services are offered by KidsAbility Centre for Child Development as a support to the child's educational program. Therapists work as part of the education program team involving the child, the child's family/caregivers, teachers, and educational assistants. The team works together to set goals and develop an intervention plan in order to assist the child to function in the school setting.

Therapy services may include physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and/or speech and language therapy, depending on the needs of the child and the availability of resources. Assessment and consultative services may also be available from social work and therapeutic recreation. Other KidsAbility services such as Seating and Mobility Services, orthopedics, orthotics clinics, and/or Augmentative Communication Services may be accessed. A variety of approaches may be used by the therapists to assist the child in meeting his/her goals. These include direct service, mediation, and consultation.

Direct service: Intervention activities are implemented by a therapist with one child or a small group of children using specialized strategies and techniques. This may occur in the classroom, gym or therapy room and may involve more than one type of therapist (e.g. an occupational therapist and a speech language pathologist may see a child at the same time).

Mediation: Intervention activities are implemented by "mediators" (e.g. parents, caregivers, teachers, educational assistants, therapy aides or volunteers) in the child's environment. The therapist is responsible for training and coaching the mediators, monitoring the child's program and evaluating his/her progress.

Consultation: Intervention occurs by the therapist sharing knowledge, resources and expertise to enable others to make changes in their roles, functions, programs, and environments (e.g. parent education workshops, team meetings, written information etc.). Consultation involves evaluation and/or monitoring of the child's progress and may occur in conjunction with another approach.

Depending on the needs of the child and the resources available, different approaches will be used at different times throughout the school year. For example, a therapist may begin with a direct service approach to identify strategies and then change to a consultation approach to share these strategies with teachers and educational assistants. The child's therapists and school team work with the family to determine the most appropriate intervention plan.

Lifting and positioning, assistance with mobility, and toileting care are performed by the teachers and educational assistants employed by KidsAbility School Authority, with consultation from the physiotherapist and/or occupational therapists employed by KidsAbility.

If students require nursing support, nutrition, catheterization, suctioning or feeding, a referral is made for School Health Support Services through Community Care Access

Centre (CCAC) in the Waterloo Region. The Principal, with the consent of the parent, applies for these services for children at KidsAbility School. Upon referral for specialized health and support services, the case manager of CCAC works closely with the family and other health professionals to coordinate the health services required by the child. KidsAbility School invites the managers of the CCAC to be present at conferences with parents to ensure parents are well informed of the involvement of CCAC and their role in providing School Health Support Services.

## **SECTION 8: CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF EXCEPTIONALITIES**

The following are the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education:

### **Behaviour**

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:

- 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

### **Communication**

#### Autism:

A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

- a) disturbances in:
  - 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:

An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.

#### Language Impairment:

A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in the 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:

- a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and
- b) include one or more of the following:
  - language delay

- dysfluency
- voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based

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:

A learning disorder evident in both academic and social situations that involves one or more of the processes necessary for the proper use of spoken language or the symbols of communication, and that is characterized by a condition that:

- a) is not primarily the result of:
  - impairment of vision
  - impairment of hearing
  - physical disability
  - developmental disability
  - primary emotional disturbance
  - cultural difference; and
- b) results in a significant discrepancy between academic achievement and assessed intellectual ability, with deficits in one or more of the following:
  - receptive language (listening, reading)
  - language processing (thinking, conceptualizing, integrating)
  - expressive language (talking, spelling, writing)
  - mathematical computations
- c) may be associated with one or more conditions diagnosed as:
  - a perceptual handicap
  - a brain injury
  - minimal brain dysfunction
  - dyslexia
  - developmental aphasia

**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:

- 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 41

Developmental Disability:

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

- 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 developmental 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 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 9: SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS PROVIDED BY THE BOARD**

KidsAbility School provides education programming and therapy for junior kindergarten aged children with developmental, physical and/or communication disabilities from the Waterloo Region. KidsAbility School has 4 classrooms in Waterloo and 2 classrooms in Cambridge. All students are enrolled in half-day programs which focus on early identification, early intervention and the transition to community schools. Students remain in this special education program for one year only.

For those children who achieve their goals early in the school year, transitioning to the community schools will take place with the support of the transition team and the special education liaison teacher.

**KidsAbility School Class Profiles**

Composite Classes

Children referred to the Composite classes have communication and physical disabilities. Some children may have developmental disabilities and have cognitive delays greater than 2 years as well as complex medical needs.

Children in the Composite classes generally require the services of Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, and Physiotherapists and some may require Augmentative Communication Services and/or Seating & Mobility Services.

### Communication Classes

Children referred to the Communication classes have moderate to severe delays in receptive and expressive language as well as some difficulty with social skills and the use of pragmatic language. Children may also have auditory processing difficulties and behavioural and sensory issues. Delays in fine and gross motor skills may also be evident. Some children in the Communication classes may present as having overall cognitive delays and some may have a diagnosis of Autism. Children in the Communication classes generally require the services of Speech Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists. A few may require the services of a Physiotherapist.

### Early Learning Classes

Children referred to the Early Learning classes have moderate to severe delays in receptive and expressive language. Some children may present with special needs in some or all of the following areas: learning and applied knowledge, motor skills, sensory needs, self-care skills and communication skills. Children in the Early Learning classes generally require the services of Speech Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists.

## **SECTION 10: INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)**

Under Regulation 181/98, "Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils," principals are required to ensure that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed for each student who has been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), within 30 school days of the student's placement in a special education program. The individual education plan must include:

- (a) specific educational expectations for the pupil;
- (b) an outline of the special education program and services to be received by the pupil;
- and
- (c) a statement of the methods by which the pupil's progress will be reviewed.

Every child attending KidsAbility School has an IEP written in collaboration with the parents and therapists who work with the child. The IEP describes learning expectations that are accommodated, modified from or alternative to the expectations outlined in the Ministry of Education Kindergarten Program. The IEP assists teachers in monitoring the child's progress and provides a framework for communicating information about the child's progress to parents. The child's learning program is modified on the basis of the results obtained through continuous assessment and evaluation. The IEP is updated during the school year to record any changes in the student's special education program. The Principal is responsible for ensuring compliance with all of the requirements for the development and implementation of students' IEPs.

Disputes concerning IEPs are resolved at the school level through discussion and collaboration between the parents, the principal, the teacher and child's team as appropriate.

## SECTION 11: PROVINCIAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO

Provincial and Demonstration Schools:

- are operated by the Ministry of Education
- provide education for students who are deaf, blind or deaf-blind or who have severe learning disabilities
- provide an alternative education option
- serve as regional resource centres for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind
- provide preschool home visiting services for students who are deaf, blind or deaf-blind
- develop and provide learning materials and media for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind
- provide school board teachers with resource services
- play a valuable role in teacher training

Some students attending the KidsAbility School receive consultation services from resource staff at W. Ross MacDonald School for the Blind and Deaf-Blind and Robarts School for the Deaf, to enhance classroom programming.

### W. Ross Macdonald School: School for the Blind and Deaf-Blind

W. Ross Macdonald School is located in Brantford and provides education for students who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. The school provides:

- a provincial resource centre for the visually impaired and deaf-blind
- support to local school boards through consultation and the provision of special learning materials, such as Braille materials, audiotapes, and large-print textbooks
- professional services and guidance to ministries of education on an interprovincial, cooperative basis

Programs are tailored to the needs of the individual student and:

- are designed to help these students learn to live independently in a non-sheltered environment
- are delivered by specially trained teachers
- follow the Ontario curriculum developed for all students in the province
- offer a full range of courses at the secondary level
- offer courses in special subject areas such as music, broad-based technology, family studies, physical education, and mobility training
- are individualized, to offer a comprehensive “life skills” program
- provide assistance, through home visiting, for parents and families of preschool deaf-blind children to assist in preparing these children for future education

### Provincial Schools for the Deaf

The following Provincial Schools offer services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students:

- Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf in Belleville (serving eastern Ontario)
- Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf in Milton (serving central and northern Ontario)
- Robarts School for the Deaf in London (serving western Ontario)
- Centre Jules-Leger in Ottawa (serving francophone students and families throughout Ontario)

Admittance to a Provincial School is determined by the Provincial Schools Admission Committee in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 296. These schools provide elementary and secondary school programs for deaf students from preschool level to high school graduation. The curriculum follows the Ontario curriculum and parallels courses and programs provided in school boards. Each student has his or her special needs met as set out in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Schools for the deaf:

- provide rich and supportive bilingual/bicultural educational environments which facilitate students' language acquisition, learning, and social development through American Sign Language (ASL) and English
- operate primarily as day schools
- provide residential facilities five days per week for those students who do not live within reasonable commuting distance from the school.

Transportation to Provincial Schools for students is provided by school boards.

Each school has a Resource Services Department which provides:

- consultation and educational advice to parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and school board personnel
- information brochures
- a wide variety of workshops for parents, school boards, and other agencies
- an extensive home-visiting program delivered to parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing preschool children by teachers trained in preschool and deaf education

#### Provincial Demonstration Schools

Each provincial Demonstration School has an enrolment of forty students. The language of instruction at the Amethyst, Sagonaska, and Trillium schools is English; at Centre Jules-Leger, instruction is in French.

Application for admission to a Provincial Demonstration School is made on behalf of students by the school board, with parental 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 5 and 21 years
- enhance the development of each student's academic and social skills
- develop the abilities of the students enrolled to a level that will enable them to return to programs operated by a local school board within two years.

In addition to providing residential schooling for students with severe learning disabilities, the Provincial Demonstration Schools have special programs for students

with severe learning disabilities in association with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD). These are highly intensive, one-year programs.

The Trillium School also operates Learning for Emotional and Academic Development (LEAD), a special program for students with severe learning disabilities who require an additional level of social/emotional support.

Further information about the academic, residential, LEAD, and LD/ADHD, programs is available from the Demonstration Schools through the Special Needs Opportunity Window (SNOW) website: <http://snow.utoronto.ca>

An in-service teacher education program is provided at each Demonstration School. This program is designed to share methodologies and materials with teachers of Ontario school boards. Information about the programs offered may be obtained directly from the schools.

#### Placements in Provincial and Demonstration Schools

Provincial and Demonstration Schools have been established by the Ontario government to help students who are deaf, blind, deaf-blind or students who have been identified as Learning Disabled with severe deficits which may include Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

For deaf students who use American Sign Language, the Ernest C. Drury School and the Robarts School are placement options for this board.

For blind or deaf-blind students, the W. Ross Macdonald School in Brantford is the placement option.

For students who are identified as Learning Disabled by an IPRC and who have severe learning disabilities, the Trillium School in Milton or Amethyst School in London are placement options.

## Provincial Schools Contact Information

Ministry of Education  
Provincial Schools Branch  
255 Ontario Street South  
Milton, Ontario L9T 2M5  
Tel.: (905) 878-285  
Fax: (905) 878-5405

### Schools for the Deaf:

Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf  
255 Ontario Street South  
Milton, Ontario L9T 2M5  
Tel.: (905) 878-2851  
Fax: (905) 878-1354

Robarts School for the Deaf  
1090 Highbury Avenue  
London, Ontario N5Y 4V9  
Tel.: (519) 453-4400  
Fax: (519) 453-7943

Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf  
350 Dundas Street West  
Belleville, Ontario K8P 1B2  
Tel.: (613) 967-2823  
Fax: (513) 967-2857

### School for the Blind and Deaf-Blind

W. Ross Macdonald School  
350 Brant Avenue  
Brantford, Ontario N3T 3J9  
Tel.: (519) 759-0730  
Fax: (519) 759-4741

### School for the Deaf, Blind, & Deaf-Blind

Centre Jules-Leger  
281 rue Lanark  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Tel: (613) 761-9300  
Fax:(613) 761-9301

### Provincial Demonstration Schools:

The Ministry of Education provides the services of 4 provincial demonstration schools in Ontario for children who have severe learning disabilities:

Amethyst School  
1090 Highbury Avenue  
London, Ontario N5Y 4V9  
Tel.: (519) 453-4400  
Fax: (519) 453-2160

Centre Jules-Leger  
281 rue Lanark  
Ottawa, Ontario K1Z 6R8  
Tel.: (613) 761-9300  
Fax: (613) 761-9301  
TTY: (613) 761-9302 and 761-9304

Sagonaska School  
350 Dundas Street West  
Belleville, Ontario K8P 1B2  
Tel.: (613) 967-2830  
Fax: (613) 967-2482

Trillium School  
347 Ontario Street South  
Milton, Ontario L9T 3X9  
Tel.: (905) 878-8428  
Fax: (905) 878-7540

**SECTION 12: SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF**

Information on the types and number of staff who provide special education programs and services at KidsAbility School may be found in the chart below. The chart outlines the types of Special Education and Support staff employed by the board.

	<b>Special Education Staff</b>	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Staff Qualifications</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Teachers of exceptional students</b>		
1.1	Teachers for resource-withdrawal programs	2.1	Special Education Specialist Certificate
1.2	Teachers for self-contained classes	6.0	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Other special education teachers</b>		
2.1	Itinerant teachers	1.0	Special Education Specialist Certificate
2.2	Teacher diagnosticians		
2.3	Coordinators		
3.4	Consultants		
<b>3.</b>	<b>Educational assistants in special education</b>		
3.1	Educational assistants	10	E.A. Diploma preferred
<b>4.</b>	<b>Other professional resource staff</b>		
4.1	Psychologists		
4.2	Psychometrics		
4.3	Psychiatrists		
4.4	Speech-language pathologists		
4.5	Audiologists		
4.6	Occupational therapists		
4.7	Physiotherapists		
4.8	Social Workers		
<b>4.9</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>19.1</b>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Paraprofessional resource staff</b>		
5.1	Orientation and mobility personnel		
5.2	Oral interpreters (for deaf students)		
5.3	Sign interpreters (for deaf students)		
5.4	Transcribers (for blind students)		
5.5	Intervenors (for deaf-blind students)		
5.6	Auditory-verbal therapists		
<b>5.7</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>		

### **SECTION 13: STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

KidsAbility School Authority is committed to on-going professional development for all education staff in order to provide “best practices” in the delivery of its special education services. The Board allocates funds in its annual budget for conferences, workshops, short courses and in-service programs.

Every year, in consultation with the Principal, each teacher is required to prepare an Annual Learning Plan (ALP) which includes the teacher’s professional growth objectives, proposed action plan, and timelines for achieving those objectives. Educational Assistants are also asked to identify their professional development needs annually.

Teachers receive ongoing training regarding Ministry of Education legislation and policy related to special education and general education; training is provided at monthly staff meetings and through the distribution of written materials. Teachers may be assigned to attend specific Ministry of Education training sessions, after which information from these sessions is shared with their colleagues at KidsAbility School.

KidsAbility School Authority is represented on the Continuing Education Committee at KidsAbility Centre for Child Development. Through this partnership, the education staff benefits from on-site professional development. As well as attending the annual KidsAbility professional activity day, education staff may attend “KidsAbility Rounds” at which Centre staff and School staff share new knowledge and skills learned from conferences, courses or workshops. Inter-disciplinary professional expertise is shared at KidsAbility Rounds. Recent topics of KidsAbility Rounds attended by education staff include fetal alcohol syndrome disorder, Smart Boards, literacy, cortical visual impairment, computer applications, etc.

### **SECTION 14: EQUIPMENT**

Each classroom has adapted equipment such as chairs, tables, desks, adapted computer hardware, software, communication devices, and personal care equipment, depending of its students’ needs. Equipment and adapted toys for the development of gross motor skills are shared by the classes for their swim and physical education programs.

In addition, specialized equipment such as standers, walkers, benches, adapted chairs, and other therapy equipment is available through KidsAbility-Centre for Child Development and may be used with children in the classroom setting for a trial period to determine appropriateness. The goal is to determine what specialized equipment is essential to allow the child to function in a school setting and, wherever possible, to ensure that this equipment is in place prior to the child’s transition to a community school.

The Board may access funding for the purchase of specialized equipment through the Special Equipment Amount (SEA), administered by the Ministry of Education. This

equipment provides students with accommodations to access the Ontario curriculum and/or a board-determined alternative program and/or to attend school. Any equipment that is purchased with SEA funding goes with the child when he/she makes the transition to a community school in Ontario that is publicly-funded.

## **SECTION 15: ACCESSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING**

KidsAbility Centre for Child Development was built in 1995 with a completely accessible design for adults and children with disabilities. KidsAbility School is very fortunate to be housed in this completely accessible facility. All light switches, outlets, and fire stations are 40" from the floor for wheelchair accessibility; there are fire alarms for hearing impaired; the floors of the treatment rooms and classrooms are insulated to increase a child's comfort; there is a single-level floor plan with no curbs or ramps; there is universal accessibility throughout the building. The Education Program can schedule times for use of a therapeutic pool, the wheelchair accessible playground and paths, a pavilion for gross motor activities and therapy pods for speech-language therapy.

The 2 Cambridge classrooms are located within KidsAbility Centre for Child Development in the YMCA of Cambridge. The design of the facility also addressed accessibility and the classrooms are without accessibility barriers.

The KidsAbility Accessibility Plan is available on the KidsAbility website.

## **SECTION 16: TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is provided for all students who attend KidsAbility School. Stock Transportation partners with KidsAbility School Authority to ensure that drivers are aware of the special needs of the children and that all safety regulations have been observed. The Board provides in-service training for all drivers to inform them of the medical conditions such as allergies or seizure disorders, specific precautions for lifting and/or transferring a child, ways to communicate with children with communication disabilities, etc.

In addition, Stock Transportation and the Board offer a "First Ride" program prior to the first day of school. The purpose of the program is to prepare the new students for travelling to and from school by bus. First Ride includes a video about bus safety and an opportunity for a short bus ride.

## **SECTION 17: THE BOARD'S SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The goal of the KidsAbility Special Education Parent Advisory Council is to provide advice and input to enhance and improve services to children at the School. The council is made up of 6-9 members, including parents, the Principal of KidsAbility School, and staff representatives from the School. Membership on the council and attendance at the meetings are open to parents who have children who have been or who are currently clients of KidsAbility. The council meets four to five times during the school year.

Minutes of council meetings are posted on the school bulletin board and on the KidsAbility website.

## **SECTION 18: TRANSITION PLANNING**

Regulation 181/98 requires that the IEP of an exceptional student who is 14 years of age or older must include a plan for the student's transition to appropriate post-secondary activities such as work, further education and community living.

KidsAbility School transitions Junior Kindergarten students to the co-terminous boards. The transition process begins in the fall and involves receiving school boards, parents, community agencies and staff. After much planning involving consultants, therapists, parents and teachers, a KidsAbility Transition Meeting takes place in May or June of the student's year at KidsAbility School.

The purposes of the Transition Meeting:

1. Sharing by KidsAbility School staff of the educational intervention programming for the student
2. Sharing by KidsAbility therapy staff of recommendations for the student
3. Providing opportunities for parents to share information and ask questions about the school placement for September
4. Supporting parents through coaching in the transfer to the community school
5. Identifying any future services.

All parents receive **The Bridge to Transition - A Parent's Guide: Transitioning from KidsAbility School to Your Community School.**

**SECTION 19: COORDINATION OF SERVICES WITH OTHER MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES**

**Transition into KidsAbility School**

All students at KidsAbility School are clients of KidsAbility – Centre for Child Development. The referring multi-disciplinary team provides the school with the child’s most recent assessment reports.

Students may be involved with community services such as K-W Habilitation Services, Community Care Access Centre and Community Living Cambridge. A transition to school protocol has been created in partnership with local school boards and preschool services in Waterloo Region.

**KidsAbility School Entry Process and Timeline  
For Parents**

Referral to KidsAbility School is made by therapists of KidsAbility – Centre for Child Development.	November - February
Applications are submitted by therapists to the Principal of KidsAbility School.	End of February
Offer of placement is sent to parents for placement in school program for September.	March
Parents return confirmation of placement at KidsAbility School. Parent notifies community school of acceptance at KidsAbility School.	End of March
Parents are invited to registration night. Registration form is mailed with invitation and parents are asked to complete and bring the birth certificate and immunization record to registration night.	April
Registration and parent information night is held at KidsAbility School.	May
Therapists are identified and allocated to KidsAbility School by KidsAbility – Centre for Child Development.	June
Parents complete information to be returned to KidsAbility School office.	June
Staggered entry for KidsAbility School students is confirmed by teachers.	June
First Ride Program provided by Stock Transportation for all new students. Pick up and drop off times are confirmed by Stock Transportation.	End of August

Parents meet with teachers, educational assistants, and school therapists at the staggered entry meetings scheduled for the first week of school.	1 <sup>st</sup> week in September
The Special Education Liaison Teacher of KidsAbility School is available for consultation as transitioning occurs.	September

### **Transition from KidsAbility School to Community Schools**

KidsAbility School is committed to the successful transitions of students to community school environments, with replicable strategies for participation in learning. The transfer of knowledge takes place from KidsAbility teachers and therapists to teachers in the broader educational community.

#### **KidsAbility School Process For Transitioning Students to Community Schools from KidsAbility School**

WRDSB/WCDSB are notified of the students attending KidsAbility School.	October
Written legal guardian permission for release of information to/from a specified agency, school board or individual is obtained by KidsAbility School.	November
KidsAbility School confirms receiving school for September entry. Letters are sent to receiving Principals informing them of students to be attending their school. Principal of KidsAbility School meets with Special Education Consultants from WRDSB and WCDSB to give student information profiles. Parents register for fall Kindergarten placement at a WRDSB/WCDSB school.	January
WRDSB/WCDSB Special Ed. Consultants and Resource Staff visit classrooms.	February - May
Transition meetings are held at KidsAbility School. Teachers share the student's educational profile and therapists share school based recommendations. Participants include parents, KidsAbility School teacher, receiving school staff, WRDSB/WCDSB personnel and therapists from KidsAbility – Centre for Child Development. Representatives from Community Care Access Centre and/or K-W Rehabilitation may attend the meeting. Permission for release of OSR to the community school is obtained.	April - May

OSRs & literacy folders are sent to community schools. Arrangements are made with WRDSB/ WCDSB for transfer of SEA equipment. Visits by parent and child are arranged by the parent and Principal, if needed, to assist with transition.	June
Visits by parent and child are arranged by parent and Principal for further transitioning to the new school, if necessary.	End of August
KidsAbility School Special Education Liaison Teacher is available for consultation as transitioning occurs.	September

### Parent Involvement

KidsAbility School is committed to a multidisciplinary, family-centred approach that involves specialist teachers, therapists and other professionals creating opportunities for student success in literacy development, augmentative and alternative communication, and using technology for learning. KidsAbility School is a family-centred that ensures parents/guardians are an integral member of the team in planning and decision making.

Much collaboration takes place with the community schools to assist in the planning for students being transferred from KidsAbility School for the following school year. The principal is responsible for the co-ordination of the transition process.

In April, May and June, a transition meeting is held for each child to facilitate a smooth transition to the child's receiving school. Parents, KidsAbility School team members and receiving school personnel are present to share information, including the current IEP, and therapists' school-based recommendations. The case manager from Community Care Access Centre is invited to attend if the team is recommending School Health Support Services for the child in the receiving school.

The purpose of the transition meeting is:

- to share the educational intervention programming for the student;
- to share therapists' recommendations for the student;
- to give parents an opportunity to share information and ask questions about school placement for September;
- to support parents in the child's transition to the community school; and
- to identify any future services necessary.

It is with the cooperation of many agencies within the Waterloo Region and the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Family and Community Services that KidsAbility School Authority is able to help children cultivate their potentials as they prepare for school success.

**SECTION 20: SUBMISSION AND AVAILABILITY OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT**

A copy of the Board's current comprehensive special education report is available in the school office and may be reviewed by the public on request. The report is also available on the KidsAbility website at [www.kidsability.ca](http://www.kidsability.ca).

## **APPENDIX A**

### **IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT & REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS HIGHLIGHTS OF REGULATION 181/98**

## IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT & REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS HIGHLIGHTS OF REGULATION 181/98

### REQUIREMENTS OF REGULATION 181/98

The *Education Act* requires that school boards provide, or purchase from another board, special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils. This attachment provides information about the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), and sets out the procedures involved in identifying a pupil as “exceptional”, deciding the pupil’s placement, or appealing such decisions when the parent does not agree with the IPRC.

**Note:** The word “parent” when used, includes guardian.

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### WHAT IS AN IPRC?

[Regulation 181/98](#) requires that all school boards set up an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). An IPRC is composed of at least three persons, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer of the board.

### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE IPRC?

The IPRC will:

- ▶ 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;
- ▶ decide an appropriate placement for the student; and
- ▶ review the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

### WHO IS IDENTIFIED AS AN EXCEPTIONAL PUPIL?

The *Education Act* defines an exceptional pupil as “a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program....” Students are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education.

### WHAT IS A SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

A special education program is defined in the *Education Act* as an educational program that:

- ▶ is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation; and
- ▶ includes a plan (called an Individual Education Plan or IEP) containing specific objectives and an outline of special education services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil.

## **WHAT ARE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?**

Special education services are defined in the *Education Act* as the facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

## **WHAT IS AN IEP?**

The IEP must be developed for a student, in consultation with the parent. It must include:

- ▶ specific educational expectations;
- ▶ an outline of the special education program and services that will be received;
- ▶ a statement about the methods by which the student's progress will be reviewed; and
- ▶ for students 14 years and older (except those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness), a plan for transition to appropriate postsecondary school activities, such as work, further education, and community living.

The IEP must be completed within 30 school days after the student has been placed in the special education program, and the principal must ensure that the parent receives a copy of it.

## **HOW IS AN IPRC MEETING REQUESTED?**

The principal of the student's school:

- ▶ must request an IPRC meeting for the student, upon receiving a written request from the parent;
- ▶ may, with written notice to the parent, refer the student to an IPRC when the principal and the student's teacher or teachers believe that the student may benefit from a special education program.

Within 15 days of receiving a written request, or giving the parent notice, the principal must provide a copy of the board's Parents' Guide to Special Education to the parent, as well as an acknowledgement of the parent's request and a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

## **MAY PARENTS ATTEND THE IPRC MEETING?**

Regulation 181/98 entitles parents and pupils 16 years of age or older:

- ▶ to be present at and participate in all committee discussions about the student; and
- ▶ to be present when the committee's identification and placement decision is made.

### **WHO ELSE MAY ATTEND AN IPRC MEETING?**

- ▶ the principal of the student's school;
- ▶ other resource people such as the student's teacher, special education staff, board support staff, or the representative of an agency, who may provide further information or clarification;
- ▶ a representative of the parent or student 16 years of age or older – that is, a person who may provide support or speak on behalf of the parent or student; and
- ▶ an interpreter, if one is required, e.g., sign language, oral, specific language.

### **WHO MAY REQUEST THAT OTHERS ATTEND?**

Either the parent or the principal of the student's school may make a request for the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting.

### **WHAT INFORMATION WILL PARENTS RECEIVE ABOUT THE IPRC MEETING?**

At least 10 days in advance of the meeting, the chair of the IPRC will provide to the parent, written notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend the meeting as an important partner in considering their child's placement. This letter will provide notification of the date, time, and place of the meeting, and it will ask the parent to indicate whether they will attend.

Before the IPRC meeting occurs, the parent will receive a written copy of any information about their child that the chair of the IPRC has received. This may include the results of assessments or a summary of information.

### **WHAT IF PARENTS ARE UNABLE TO MAKE THE SCHEDULED MEETING?**

If the parent is unable to make the scheduled meeting, he or she may:

- ▶ contact the school principal to arrange an alternative date or time; or
- ▶ let the school principal know he or she will not be attending, and as soon as possible after the meeting, the principal will forward to the parent, for their consideration and signature, the IPRC's written statement of decision noting the decision of identification and placement and any recommendations regarding special education programs and services.

### **WHAT HAPPENS AT AN IPRC MEETING?**

- ▶ The chair introduces everyone and explains the purpose of the meeting.
- ▶ The IPRC will review all available information about the student. They will:
  - consider an educational assessment;
  - consider, subject to the provisions of the [Health Care Consent Act, 1996](#), a health or psychological assessment conducted by a qualified practitioner if they feel that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
  - interview the student, with the parent's permission, if the child is less than 16 years of age, if they feel it would be useful to do so; and

- consider any information that the parent submits about their child or that the student submits if he or she is 16 years of age or older.
- ▶ The committee may discuss any proposal that has been made about a special education program or special education services for the student. Committee members will discuss any such proposal at the parent's request, or at the request of the student if the student is 16 years of age or older.
- ▶ Parents are encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion.
- ▶ Following the discussion, after all the information has been presented and considered, the committee will make its decision.

### **WHAT WILL THE IPRC CONSIDER IN MAKING ITS PLACEMENT DECISION?**

Before the IPRC can consider 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; and
- ▶ be consistent with parental preferences.

If, after considering all of the information presented to it, the IPRC is satisfied that placement in a regular class will meet the student's needs and that such a decision is consistent with parental preferences, the committee will decide in favour of placement in a regular class with appropriate special education services.

If the committee decides that the student should be placed in a special education class, it must state the reasons for that decision in its written statement of decision.

### **WHAT WILL THE IPRC'S WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DECISION INCLUDE?**

The IPRC's written statement of decision will state:

- ▶ whether the IPRC has identified the student as exceptional;
- ▶ where the IPRC has identified the student as exceptional;
- ▶ the categories and definitions of any exceptionalities identified, as they are defined by the Ministry of Education;
- ▶ the IPRC's description of the student's strengths and needs;
- ▶ the IPRC's placement decision; and
- ▶ the IPRC's recommendations regarding a special education program and special education services;
- ▶ where the IPRC has decided that the student should be placed in a special education class, the reasons for that decision.

### **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE IPRC HAS MADE ITS DECISION?**

- ▶ If the parent agrees with the IPRC decision, he or she will be asked to indicate, by signing their name, agreement with the identification and placement decisions made by the IPRC. The statement of decision may be signed at the IPRC meeting or taken home and returned.
- ▶ If the IPRC has identified the student as an exceptional pupil and the parent agreed with the IPRC identification and placement decision, the board will

promptly notify the principal of the school at which the special education program is to be provided of the need to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the student.

**ONCE A CHILD HAS BEEN PLACED IN A SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM, CAN THE PLACEMENT BE REVIEWED?**

- ▶ A review IPRC meeting will be held within the school year, unless the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided receives written notice from the parent, dispensing with the annual review.
- ▶ The parent may request a review IPRC meeting any time after their child has been in a special education program for 3 months.

**WHAT DOES A REVIEW IPRC CONSIDER AND DECIDE?**

- ▶ The review IPRC considers the same type of information that was originally considered.
- ▶ With the parent's written permission, the IPRC conducting the review will consider the progress the student has made in relation to the IEP.
- ▶ The IPRC will review the placement and identification decisions and decide whether they should be continued or whether a different decision should now be made.

**WHAT CAN PARENTS DO IF THEY DISAGREE WITH THE IPRC DECISION?**

- ▶ If the parent does not agree with either the identification or placement decision made by the IPRC, he or she may:
  - ▶ within 15 days of receipt of the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss their concerns; or
  - ▶ within 30 days of receipt of the decision, file a notice of appeal with the secretary of the board.
- ▶ If the parent does not agree with the decision after the second meeting, he or she may file a notice of appeal within 15 days of receipt of the decision.

If the parent does not consent to the IPRC decision and does not appeal it, the board will instruct the principal to implement the IPRC decision.

**HOW DOES THE PARENT APPEAL AN IPRC DECISION?**

If the parent disagrees with the IPRC's identification of their child as exceptional or with the placement decision of the IPRC, he or she may, within 30 days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 days of receipt of the decision from the second meeting described above, give written notification of their intention to appeal the decision to the secretary of the board.

The notice of appeal must:

- ▶ indicate the decision with which the parent disagrees; and
- ▶ include a statement that sets out his or her reasons for disagreeing.

## WHAT HAPPENS IN THE APPEAL PROCESS?

The appeal process involves the following steps:

- ▶ The board will establish a special education appeal board to hear the appeal. The appeal board will be composed of three persons (one of whom is to be selected by the parent) who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal.
- ▶ 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 he or she has been selected (unless parents and board both 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.
- ▶ The parent, and student, if he or she is 16 years old or over, are entitled to be present at, and to participate in, all discussions.
- ▶ The appeal board must make its recommendation within 3 days of the meeting ending. It may:
  - agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented; or
  - disagree with the IPRC and make a recommendation to the board about the student's identification, placement, or both.
- ▶ The appeal board will report its recommendations in writing, to the parent and to the school board, providing the reasons for its recommendations.
- ▶ Within 30 days of receiving the appeal board's written statement, the school board will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations (boards are not required to follow the appeal board recommendation).
- ▶ The parent may accept the decision of the school board, or may appeal to a Special Education Tribunal. The parent may request a hearing by writing to the secretary of the Special Education Tribunal. Information about making an application to the tribunal will be included with the appeal board's decision.

*Appendix A represents a summary of information, provided in Ontario Regulation 181/98, and should be read in conjunction with this Regulation. If any discrepancy exists between this document and the Regulation, the information in Regulation 181/98 applies. The information is taken directly from the Ministry of Education website:*

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/hilites.html>