

Keewaytinook Internet High School

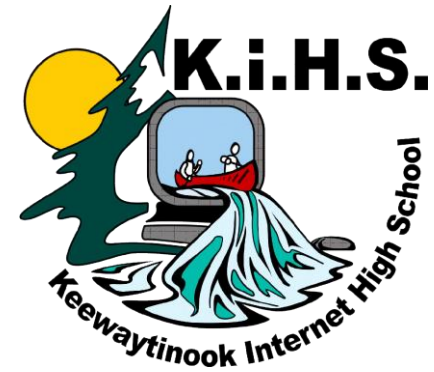
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Special Education
Guide for Parents
and Students of

Keewaytinook internet
High School

Notes: If you wish to receive this parents' guide in Braille, large-print, or audio format, please contact KiHS at the address or telephone number shown on the last page of this guide.

When used in this guide, the word “parent(s)” refers to both parent(s) and guardian(s). It may also be taken to include caregivers or close family members who are responsible for raising the child.

The word ‘mentor’ refers to the physical classroom teacher.

The word ‘teacher’ refers to the person creating and administering courses online.

The Education Act requires that school boards provide, or purchase from another board, Special Education programs and services for their exceptional pupils. The purpose of this parents’ guide is to provide you with information about the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), and to set out for you the procedures involved in identifying a pupil as “exceptional,” deciding the pupil’s placement, or appealing such decisions if you do not agree with the IPRC.

If, after reading this guide, you require more information, please see list of contacts at the end of the document.

This guide has been designed to answer your questions about Special Education and the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), and to set out for you the procedures involved in identifying a student as exceptional, deciding the student’s placement, or appealing such decisions if you do not agree with the IPRC. If you have additional questions, you may contact the Special Education Resource Teacher or the Principal.

What Special Education programs and services are provided by KiHS?

KiHS provides Special Education services in our regular classrooms through a blend of mentor and teacher accommodations and modifications. Accommodations means changes are made so the student learns or shows what they learned differently than other students. The student is still learning and demonstrating the same learning as other students. Modifications are when changes are made so the student is not learning and demonstrating the same learning as other students. Modified credits are not usually equal to other credits.

What organizations are available to provide information and support to parents of exceptional children?

There are many different organizations available to students. These organizations vary from community to community. Examples include Jordan’s Principle, Firefly, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and Health Canada.

There are also provincial organizations which may be able to assist you and/or your child. These include:

Easter Seals Ontario

Ontario March of Dimes

President’s Choice Children’s Charity

Jennifer Ashleigh Children’s Charity

Jumpstart

Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy

The Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario - Scholarships and Bursaries Program

War Amps of Canada

What happens in the appeal process?

The appeal process involves the following steps:

- KiHS will establish a Special Education appeal board to hear your appeal. The appeal board will be composed of three persons who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal, one of whom is to be selected by you, the parent.
- The chair of the appeal board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 days after he or she has been selected (unless parents and board provide written consent to a later date).
- The appeal board will receive the material reviewed by the IPRC and may interview any persons who may be able to contribute information about the matter under appeal.
- You as the parent and your child, 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's ending. It may:
 - agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented; or
 - disagree with the IPRC and make a recommendation to KiHS about your child's identification or placement; or both.
- The appeal board will report its recommendations in writing, to you and to KiHS, providing the reasons for its recommendations.
- Within 30 days of receiving the appeal board's written statement, KiHS will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations (KiHS is not required to follow the appeal board recommendation).
- You may accept the decision or you may appeal to a Special Education Tribunal. You 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.

What is an IPRC?

Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards set up IPRCs composed of at least 3 people, one of whom must be a Principal or a supervisory officer of the board. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend the meeting. At KiHS, the IPRC board is composed of the student's mentor, the Special Education Resource Teacher, and the Principal or Vice-Principal.

What is the role of the IPRC?

The IPRC will:

- decide whether or not your child should be identified as exceptional;
- identify the areas of your child's exceptionality, according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education;
- note that the student will be working either in the classroom or from home or a combination of both;
- 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. Most students at KiHS will be informally identified, that is, the mentor or a teacher will suggest to the Special Education Resource Teacher that the student may benefit from Special Education programming. KiHS staff will decide whether or not to implement an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

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)

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 Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

The IEP must be developed for your child, in consultation with you. It must include:

- a description of the student's strengths and needs and specific educational expectations;
- an outline of the Special Education program and services that will be received;
- a statement about the methods by which your child's progress will be reviewed; and
- a transition plan that includes the specific goals, actions required, person(s) responsible for actions, and timelines for each educational transition where the student requires support.

The IEP must be completed within 30 days after your child has been placed in the program, and the Principal must ensure that you receive a copy of it.

How is an IPRC meeting requested?

The Principal of your child's school:

- must request an IPRC meeting for your child, upon receiving your written request;
- may, with written notice to you, refer your child to an IPRC when the Principal and the child's teacher or teachers believe that your child may benefit from a Special Education program.

Within 15 days of receiving your request, or giving you notice, the Principal must provide you with a copy of this guide and a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

What can parents do if they disagree with the IPRC decision?

If you **do not agree** with either the identification or placement decision made by the IPRC, you may within 15 days of receiving the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss your concerns, OR you may also within 30 days of receipt of the decision, file a notice of appeal. If you ask for a second IPRC meeting and still disagree with a decision, you may still file a notice of appeal as long as you file the notice within the 30 day period.

If you do not consent to the IPRC decision but you do not appeal it, the board will instruct the Principal to implement the IPRC decision.

How do I appeal an IPRC decision?

If you disagree with the IPRC's identification of your child as exceptional or with the placement decision of the IPRC, you 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 your intention to appeal the decision to KEEWAYTINOOK INTERNET HIGH SCHOOL 1046 Memorial Ave., Thunder Bay, ON P0V 1C0.

The notice of appeal must:

- indicate the decision with which you disagree; and
- include an explanation of your reasons for disagreeing.

What happens after the IPRC has made its decision?

- You will receive a copy of the statement of decision.
- If you **agree** with the IPRC decision, you will be asked to indicate, by signing your name, that you agree with the identification and placement decisions made by the IPRC.
- If the IPRC has identified your child as an exceptional pupil and if you **agree** with the IPRC identification and placement decisions, the Chair of the IPRC 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 your child.

No IPRC decision regarding placement can be implemented unless:

- you agree with the decision,
- the time limit for filing an appeal has passed.

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 you, the parent, dispensing with the annual review.
- You may request a review IPRC meeting any time after your child has been in a Special Education program for 3 months.

What does a review IPRC consider and decide?

- With your written permission, the IPRC conducting the review will consider the progress your child has made in relation to the IEP. It will consider the same type of information that was originally considered by the IPRC, as well as any new information.
- 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.

May parents attend the IPRC meeting?

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

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

Who else may attend an IPRC meeting?

- the Principal or vice-Principal of KiHS
- other resource people such as teachers, Special Education staff, or the representative of an agency, who may provide further information or clarification;
- your representative-that is, a person who may support you or speak on behalf of you or your child; and
- an interpreter, if one is required. (You may request the services of an interpreter through the Principal.)

Who may request that they attend?

Either you or the Principal 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 you with written notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend as an important partner in considering your child's placement. This letter will notify you of the date, time, and place of the meeting, and it will ask you to indicate whether you will attend.

Before the IPRC meeting occurs, you will receive a written copy of any information about your 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 you are unable to make the scheduled meeting you may:

- contact the Principal or SERT to arrange an alternative date or time; or
- let the Principal or SERT know you will not be attending. As soon as possible after the meeting, the Principal will forward to you, for your 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?

- Everyone is introduced and the reason for the meeting is explained.
- The IPRC will review all available information about your child. The members will:
 - consider an educational assessment of your child;
 - consider (subject to the provisions of the Health Care Consent Act, 1996), a health or psychological assessment of your child conducted by a qualified practitioner, if they feel that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
 - interview your child, with your consent if your child is less than 16 years of age, if they feel it would be useful to do so; and
 - consider any information that you submit about your child or that your child 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 child. Committee members will discuss any such proposal at your request or at the request of your child, if the child is 16 years of age or older.
- You 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 your child in Special Education class, it must consider whether placement in a regular class with appropriate Special Education services will:

- meet your child's needs; and
- be consistent with your preferences.

At KiHS, all students are placed in the KiHS classroom. The IPRC will decide if they would benefit from receiving indirect services. If, after considering all of the information presented to it, the IPRC is satisfied that placement in a regular class will meet your child's needs and that such a decision is consistent with your preferences, the committee will decide in favour of placement in a KiHS classroom. In extenuating circumstances, the IPRC may decide it is in the best interests of the student to access their work from home.

What will the IPRC's written statement of decision include?

The IPRC's written statement of decision will state:

- whether the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional;
- where the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional
 - the categories and definitions of any exceptionalities identified, as they are defined by the Ministry of Education;
 - the IPRC's description of your child'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 your child should work in an alternative space, the reasons for that decision.