



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Understanding Special Education in the OCDSB

Individual Education Plan
Parent Guide

Learning Support Services



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Section A

What is the purpose of this parent* guide?

The purpose of this guide is to:

- Provide parents with information about getting support for students with special needs
- Describe the model of special education in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB)
- Provide parents with information about the Individual Education Plan (IEP)

*Please note: throughout this guide any reference to parent also includes the child's guardian.

What model of special education for students in the OCDSB?

The OCDSB uses a research-based, multi-disciplinary intervention model called the Tiered Approach in working with students who require special education programs and services. This approach requires ongoing assessment and progress monitoring. Students who do not adequately progress in one tier are then provided with the next tier of support.

The Tiered Approach and the key personnel involved are depicted in the graphic below. This approach is further summarized in Table 1.1 on page 3 of this guide.

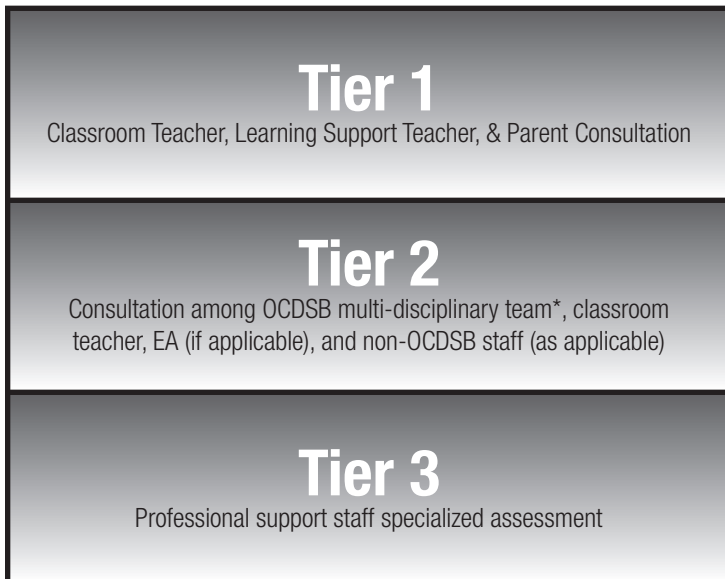


Table 1.1: Tiered Approach

Tier	Who	What	Where	How
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom Teacher Learning Support Teacher (LST)/ Learning Resource Teacher (LRT) Parent consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom based Consists of sound instruction based on successful practice for all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor progress of students in class Flag at-risk learners Provide differentiated instruction
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom teacher LRT/LST May include consultation with school multi-disciplinary team* Parent consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to students who have not progressed satisfactorily with Tier 1 instruction and interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More intensive intervention An IEP may be developed and implemented in Tier 2 with accommodations or modification to learning expectations
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom teacher LRT /LST consultation with members of school multi-disciplinary team* Parent consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For students who do not respond to instructional efforts at Tier 1 and 2 levels Referral for more extensive assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Classroom Assessment locations within the school Some withdrawal for booster skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Formal Assessment B) Classroom observation by appropriate member(s) of multi-disciplinary team* Information from A and B (above) with teacher's assessment of student's progress to interventions An IEP is developed outlining more specialized instruction

***School multi-disciplinary team consists of: Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Social Worker, Psychologist, Learning Support Consultant (LSC)**

How to know if a child has a special need?

Some indicators may include:

- your child is experiencing difficulties with school work or social-emotional adjustment to school
- your child's school work does not match his/her ability level
- your child is avoiding school work or does not seem to have any school work

How do I seek assistance for a child?

- ask for assistance directly from the classroom teacher and the school principal
- consult with school staff (e.g. classroom teacher, LST, principal, vice-principal)
- staff may initiate a referral to the appropriate Learning Support Services personnel (e.g. psychologist/psychological associates, social workers, and/or speech/language pathologists), which requires parental consultation and consent
- parent(s) may arrange assessment outside the OCDSB through private practitioners or other institutions. Assessment information may be used in program differentiation for your child.
- parents may make a written request for an Identification, Placement and Review Committee meeting (Please refer to the IPRC Guide for complete details of the process)

What is an Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

An IEP is:

- a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs (i.e. the strengths and needs that affect the student's ability to learn and to demonstrate learning)
- a record of the particular accommodation(s) needed to help the student achieve his/her learning expectations based on identified learning strengths and needs
- a working document that identifies modified or alternative learning expectations which are not represented in the Ontario Curriculum
- a record of the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purpose of reporting student achievement of modified and/or alternative expectations

An IEP is not:

- a description of everything that will be taught to the student

Why develop an IEP?

An IEP may be developed for a student who requires a special education program and/or services. In these cases, an IEP is required when:

- the school principal determines that a student's achievement will be assessed on the basis of modified expectations

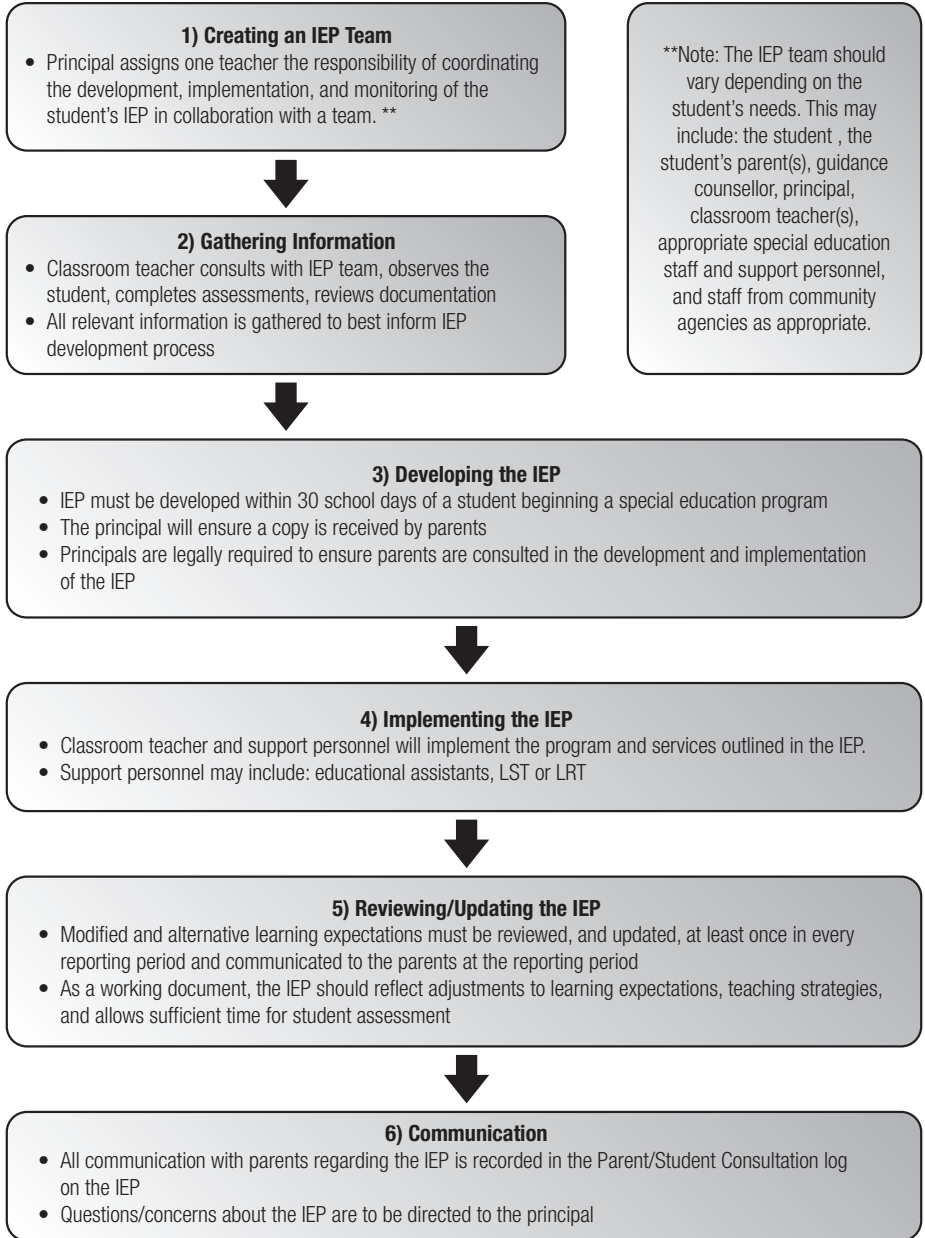
AND/OR

- the student regularly requires accommodations for instructional or assessment purposes

What must be included in the IEP?

- an outline of the special education program and services that will be provided
- specific educational expectations
- teaching strategies and assessment methods specific to the student
- for students 14 years and older (except those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness), a plan for transition to appropriate post-secondary school activities such as work, further education, and community living will be developed
- for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, transitions plans will include any and all transitions where the student requires support (e.g. transitions between activities and/or settings)

What is the process involved in developing an IEP for a student?



What is considered in the development of the IEP?

The IEP team must consider a range of options to determine the ones that will best meet the student’s needs. The options for each subject or course are:

- no accommodations or modifications
- accommodations only
- modification to curricular expectations
- alternative expectations

Accommodations Only (AC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student requires specific strategies to enable him/her to achieve regular grade expectations • information on student progress must be reported on the Provincial Report Card • teachers will not check the IEP box on the report card because the letter grade/percentage mark is based on regular grade expectations
Modifications (MOD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the expectations are from a different grade level or involve changing the number and/or complexity of the grade level expectations • accommodations may still be required • the Provincial Report Card will report on achievement of modified expectations • the IEP box will be checked and a statement indicating that comments and marks are reflective of the expectations outlined in the IEP will be included on the report card
Alternative (ALT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the expectations have been developed to acquire knowledge or skills not in the Ontario Curriculum • an Alternative Report Card will be used to report on achievement of alternative expectations

Section B

What is the purpose of this section?

- To describe the function of Assessments and Case Conferences in the IEP process
- To outline the programs provided by the OCDSB

What is the key purpose of assessments for students with special needs?

- To ensure that they are provided with the most effective programming possible for assessing learning
- Recent research focuses on the following three approaches to assessment:
 - Assessment of learning
 - Assessment for learning
 - Assessment as learning

(Education for All, 2005)

What do assessments involve?

Assessment may include the following:

- the process of systematically gathering information about student learning and/or cognition from a variety of techniques and tools
- gathering relevant information about the student from the parent/guardian/student and school personnel
- talking to the student about school, interests, and educational or vocational goals
- gathering information from community professionals (e.g. doctor, public health nurse, or social agencies, where appropriate) with written permission from the parent/student
- observing the student in the school or classroom setting
- examining samples of the student's school work
- conducting formal standardized tests and/or informal tests

What are the different types of assessments?

In addition to school assessments, a student may be referred for one or more of the following assessments for the purpose of program planning:

Assessment Type	Purpose	Conducted By
Educational Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on academic skills particularly in Language and Mathematics examine the nature of academic strengths, weaknesses, and learning styles provide data regarding the student's current grade level functioning 	Learning Support Teacher who have qualifications in special education
Assessments for Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) and Blind/Low Vision (B/LV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> determine areas of strength and weakness may be done in conjunction with an audiologist 	Itinerant Teacher for Deaf/Hard of Hearing (ITD/HH) and Blind/Low Vision (ITB/LV)
Psychological Assessment**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> determine intellectual capabilities, specific strengths and weaknesses in intellectual/cognitive abilities as well as learning and problem solving approaches examine social and emotional development and adaptive functioning 	Psychologists or psychological associates who are registered members of the professional college in their province
Speech and Language Assessments**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess speech and language development to determine specific areas of strength and weakness 	Speech and Language Pathologists who are registered members of the professional college in their province
Social Work Assessments**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on social, family, and developmental history 	Social workers who are registered members of the professional college in their province
Health Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> parents may be asked to have their child assessed to determine whether any health-related issues are affecting the child's learning 	Family doctors or medical specialists
Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on fine and gross motor abilities focus on adaptations to the learning environment which enable student's access to the curriculum. Examples of relevant equipment and materials include computers, writing aids, and augmentative devices. school staff initiate the referral for CCAC services 	Qualified therapists through the School Health Support Services of the Champlain Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)

** Written consent will be obtained prior to the initiation of the assessment

What is a case conference?

Once assessments are completed, a case conference is an opportunity for all parties involved to discuss the results. If possible prior to a case conference, the parent may be provided with copies of the assessment report(s) prepared by school personnel and/or Learning Support Services staff. These reports summarize findings and recommendations. Parents are encouraged to provide the school with relevant documentation. It is very important that the reports and recommendations about the student are clearly understood. Should there be any questions upon the completion of the case conference, during which all assessment report(s) have been studied, another meeting with school staff and/or Learning Support Services personnel (and the student, where appropriate) is encouraged.

A wide range of recommendations may be made including:

- strategies and intervention within the regular classroom
- significant program changes within the regular classroom
- withdrawal programs for additional support
- individual/group counselling
- support from community resources outside the school

Section C

The Roles and Responsibilities of Special Education Staff

Staff	Role
<p>Learning Support Teacher (LST) / Learning Resource Teacher (LRT)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • play a major role in the delivery of special education and deals with the overall administrative and educational needs of students with special education needs within the school • undertake a variety of roles including consulting with and assisting classroom teachers and other special education teachers with early identification, curriculum differentiation and modification, assessment, intervention strategies, the development and coordination of the IEPs and in-class or withdrawal support for special education students • liaise with members of the multi-disciplinary team • provide the highest level of support offered in a school based program • work with a variety of special needs students who require intensive support in core academic areas
<p>Educational Assistant</p>	<p>Role may vary from assignment to assignment, but usually includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting the planning, organizing, and implementing of the behaviour/social/ instructional program in cooperation with the classroom teacher • assisting students in various ways to achieve behaviour, social, and/or academic goals • specialized skills and qualifications are required for specific assignments (e.g. Braille, American Sign Language, catheterization) • assisting in crisis intervention
<p>Learning Support Services Staff</p>	<p>All members of the department work in collaboration with teaching personnel and parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide supports and services to meet the individual needs of student and schools.</p> <p>Under the direction of the superintendent and the leadership team, Learning Support Services is comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative and support personnel • Braillist • Educational assistants • Itinerant teacher for Autism Spectrum Disorder • Itinerant teacher for Assistive Technology • Itinerant teacher of the Blind/Low Vision (ITB/LV) • Itinerant teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing (ITD/HH) • Itinerant teacher of Learning Disabilities • Learning Support Consultant (LSC) • Psychology personnel • Social worker • Speech/language pathologist

Additional Information

Additional information regarding special education and learning support services can be obtained from the school principal.

Specific information from OCDSB Learning Support Services:

Special education for the OCDSB	613-596-8713
Psychological Services	613-596-8775
Social Services	613-596-8265
Speech and Language Services	613-596-8211 x8650

Information about special education (needs statements, reviews, programs, and services, etc.) may be found on the OCDSB website: www.ocdsb.ca (Click on Programs, then Special Education, then Special Education Report).

For information on any of the organizations on the Special Education Advisory Committee, please call Board Services at 613-596-8255.

Organizations

Association for Bright Children (Ottawa Region Chapter)

<http://www.abcontario.ca/chapters/ottawa>

613-860-1398

Autism Society of Ontario, Ottawa Chapter

<http://www.autismontario.com/ottawa>

613-230-6305

Brain Injury Association (Ottawa Valley)

<http://www.biaov.org>

613-233-8308

Canadian Dyslexia Association

<http://www.dyslexiaassociation.ca>

613-853-6539

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (Ottawa)

<http://www.cnib.ca>

613-563-4021

CHADD – Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

<http://www.chaddcanada.org/>

CHEO – Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario – Programs and Supports

<http://www.cheo.on.ca/en/programsinfo>

613-737-7600

CCAC – Community Care Access Centre (Ottawa)

<http://www.ccac-ont.ca/>

613-310-CCAC (310-2222)

Down Syndrome Association (National Capital Region)

<http://www.dsancr.com>

613-737-0658

Easter Seals Ontario

<http://www.easterseals.org>

613-226-3051

Epilepsy Ontario (Ottawa-Carleton)

<http://www.epilepsyottawa.ca>

613-594-9255

Family Reception Centre (Ottawa)

<http://www.ocdsb.ca>

613-239-2416

Family Services (Ottawa)

<http://www.familyservicesottawa.org>

613-725-3601

Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton

<http://www.ldao-c.ncf.ca>

613-567-5864

Ministry of Education (Regional Office)

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/>

613-225-9210

Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders

<http://www.oafccd.com>

519-842-9506

Ottawa-Carleton Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities

<http://www.ocapdd.on.ca>

613-569-8993

Ottawa Children's Coordinated Access and Referral to Services

<http://www.coordinatedaccess.ca>

613-729-0577 ext. 1251

Ottawa Public Health Information

http://ottawa.ca/residents/health/index_en.html

613-580-6744

Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre

<http://www.octc.ca/main/index.asp>

1-800-565-4839

Ottawa Deaf Centre

<http://www.ottawadeafcentre.org/Contact.htm>

613-667-0315

TTY: 613-667-0316

Service Coordination Ottawa

https://www.ocapdd.on.ca/English/Services/How_To_Apply/

613-748-1788

Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario

<http://www.sbhao.on.ca>

1-800-387-1575

Tourette Syndrome Foundation (Ottawa)

<http://www.tsottawa.com/>

613-823-1471

VIEWS for the Visually Impaired

<http://viewson.ca>

905-608-0237

VOICE for the Hearing Impaired

<http://www.voicefordeafkids.com/>

613-746-8683

Youth Services Bureau

<http://www.ysb.on.ca/>

613-729-1000

Resources

Ontario Ministry of Education. Individual Education Plan: Resource Guide. 2004

Ontario Ministry of Education. *Education for All*. The report of the expert panel on literacy and numeracy instruction for students with special education needs, kindergarten to grade 6. 2005

Ontario Ministry of Education. *Learning for All. K-12*. 2009

Ontario Ministry of Education. *Growing Success – Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools First Education, Covering Grades 1-12*. 2010

Ontario Ministry of Education. *E-learning Ontario*. Policy document.

The website for the Ministry of Education is: www.edu.gov.on.ca

The website for the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) is www.eqao.com

You may also obtain more information by contacting a member of the OCDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) at 613-721-1820



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