



A Parent's Guide

To the Individual Education Plan (IEP)



SIMCOE MUSKOKA CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

June 2021

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INTRODUCTION

USING THIS GUIDE

This document has been developed to provide a guide for parents* regarding the Individual Education Plan (IEP). It describes how the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board provides programs and services to exceptional students in keeping with our values and with the Ministry of Education expectations outlined in the Education Act.

It has been developed in a Question & Answer format for ease of use. Many of the terms and expressions used in this handbook may be unfamiliar. If you have questions or require further clarification about the terms, expressions, or any items covered in this Guide, we encourage you to discuss these with the Principal of your child's school. We hope that parents and other members of our school communities will use this Guide as a resource for understanding the IEP.

In addition to this Guide, a companion document, Parent's Guide to the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), has been developed. A copy of this document may be obtained from the Principal of your child's school.

Our hope is to periodically revise this document to make it a better resource for parents. Your comments and suggestions are

most helpful. Your comments on this document are welcomed by the Assistant to the Superintendent, Special Education at 705-722-3555, ext. 274.

* Throughout this Guide, "parents" will refer to both parents or guardians.

BACKGROUND

As all children are created in the image of God, they bring with them their own unique gifts and talents. We recognise and value that all students are unique and special in their own way and that some have diverse and exceptional learning needs. At the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board, we strive to meet the learning needs of all students within an inclusive environment.

As the student's primary caregiver and educator, the role of the parent is a very important and crucial one in a student's education. Education is truly a partnership between home, school, and parish, with the ultimate goal being what is best for the student.

For students with exceptional learning needs, a special education program may best meet their learning goals. A special education program is an individualized program, developed by the school team in consultation

INTRO

with parents. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlines the accommodations required and/or programme goals the student is working towards that may differ or vary from the grade-level curriculum.

At Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board, we have developed our Special Education Program based on a philosophy of inclusion. This philosophy expresses our belief that the learning needs of all students are best served within their local school and in the regular classroom as much as possible. Inclusion means that students with exceptional needs fully participate in the activities of the school. Learning takes place in regular classrooms along with other students of the same age group. Depending on the individual strengths and needs of the student, as outlined in the IEP, the classroom environment may be augmented by teaching opportunities elsewhere in the school such as the resource room.

Our values and philosophy are articulated in our mission and vision statements as well as our strategic plan: [Our Faith ~ Our Future](#)



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

What is the Individual Education Plan?

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written document (see Section 3, Sample Forms) detailing the special education program and/or services that may be required by a particular student. In addition to capturing the essential student information, such as name, gender, date of birth, etc., the IEP also requires other details that enable the school team to develop a comprehensive profile of the student.

For most students, their education is shaped by the expectations outlined in the Ontario Curriculum for the appropriate grade and subject. For exceptional students, and many students who are not identified as exceptional, their learning strengths and needs may be better met by a programme that is tailored to their unique needs so that they can achieve their individual learning goals and expectations.

“Exceptional student” is a term used by the Ministry of Education and has very specific definitions. The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) is responsible for identifying students as exceptional. These students must have an IEP. An IEP may also be developed for other students who have not been identified as exceptional, but still require special education programs and/or services based on evidence gathered by the school team.





The requirement to develop IEPs for students is clearly defined by the Education Act and by the Ministry of Education standards that our Board follows. An IEP builds on the particular student's strengths, interests, and learning needs and will be supported by relevant and current assessment information.

The IEP also assists teachers as they continually assess an exceptional student's progress throughout the school year. The written IEP provides a framework for ongoing communication between the school and parents regarding the student's achievements.

Our IEPs reflect our Board's commitment to providing special education programs and services within the context of our Catholic values, *Our Faith ~ Our Future* strategic plan and, our vision and mission statements. At the school level, the principal is responsible for ensuring the needs of exceptional students, documented in the IEP, are implemented.

When is an IEP developed for a student?

Considerable thought and assessment go into developing an IEP. An IEP is developed for a student when accommodations are required for them to access curriculum. An IEP will be developed for one of the following reasons:

- For students who are identified as exceptional through an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC). The IPRC process is described in a companion guide, *The Parent's Guide to the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee*. If you have questions regarding the IPRC process, please contact the principal of your child's school

- For students who are not identified as exceptional through an IPRC, but who have been deemed by the Board to require a special education program and/or service. Many students have unique learning needs and would benefit greatly from a special education program, yet have not been deemed as “exceptional” through an IPRC under the Ministry of Education criteria.

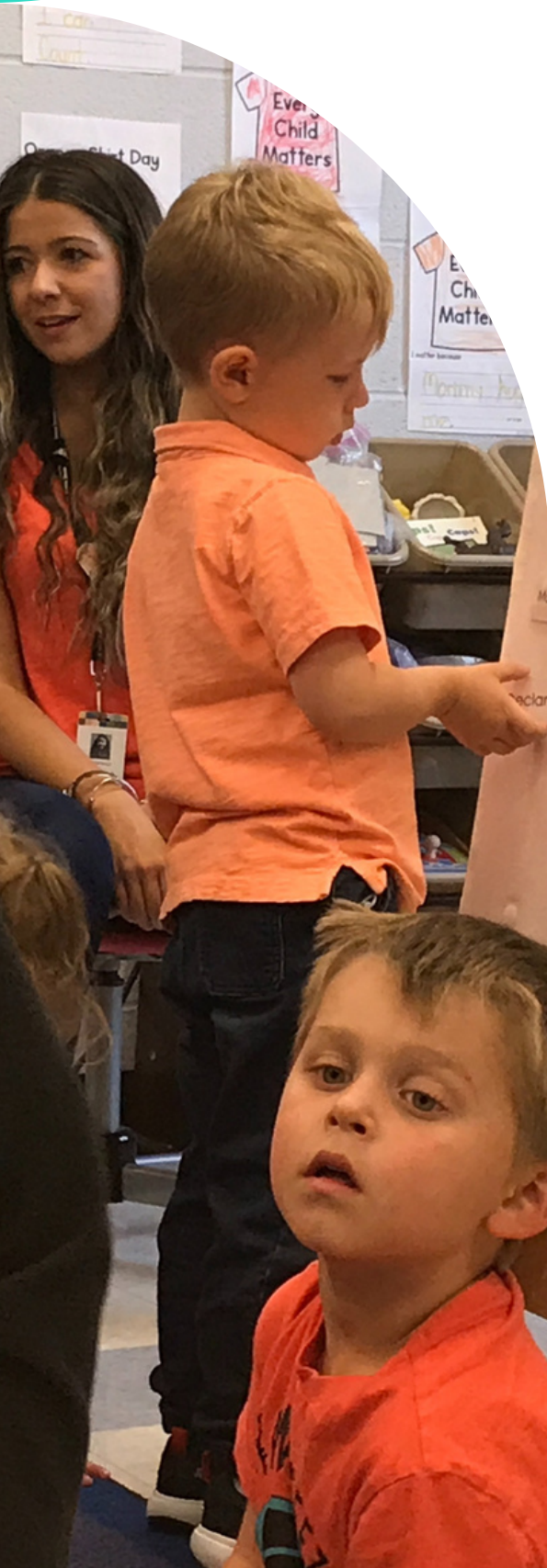
DEVELOPING AN IEP

Who is involved in developing an IEP at the school?

At the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board, we use a team approach to meet the diverse needs of our students. The IEP is developed at the student’s school. Under the leadership of the principal, IEPs are developed collaboratively by the school and sometimes board staff members, who are most familiar with learning expectations for students. We refer to these staff as the “IEP Development Team”. This team may consist of staff members, such as the classroom teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher, support staff, and board staff, who have a role, either directly or indirectly, in implementing a student’s individualized program. They possess the knowledge and qualifications necessary to develop the most effective plan for a student. The IEP Development Team members will vary from year to year and as the student’s strengths, needs and grades change.

What is the role of the parent?

The involvement of parents is always critical to student success in our school communities. At the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB, we recognize that parents have valuable information regarding their child’s strengths, needs, learning styles and interests. While developing the IEP is the responsibility of the school team, the role that parents play in consultation is also very important.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

We encourage and welcome parental involvement in assisting with the ongoing development of your child's individualized program. The information that you share with school staff about your child is of great value in this process.

When is an IEP developed?

At the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB, we are committed to the timely preparation of students' IEPs. This ensures students obtain the support needed as quickly as possible.

For staff to develop an individualized program, they need to gain an understanding and appreciation of the student's strengths, interests and learning needs. This process starts at the beginning of a new school year in our elementary schools or at the start of a semester in secondary schools.

The Ministry of Education has ensured that there are specific timelines as outlined in *Regulation 181/98 of the Education Act*. The Act requires that an IEP be developed within thirty (30) school days of an exceptional student's placement in a special education program. "Placement" is understood to mean one of the following:

- the first day of a student's attendance in a new special education program that would be specified following an IPRC



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- the first day of the new school year or semester for students who were previously, and continue to be, identified as exceptional through an IPRC
- the first day of a student's attendance in a special education program as a result of a change in placement following an IPRC.

The same timelines apply for the development of an IEP for a student who is not identified as exceptional through an IPRC.

THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

How does an IEP and a Special Education Program link to the Ontario Curriculum?

The Ontario Curriculum outlines what content and skills are taught for each grade level and course/subject in schools throughout the Province of Ontario. For some students, this Curriculum does not best serve their learning strengths and needs. A special education program, often based on the Ontario Curriculum, or service is one that is developed to address the individual strengths and needs for these students.

The program may contain supports (accommodations) the student requires that assist the student to achieve the Ontario Curriculum. It may contain specific learning goals and expectations that address a modified or alternative educational curriculum.

What are accommodations?

An accommodation is one special education strategy that can be used to assist students in achieving the learning expectations of the Ontario Curriculum. Some students require accommodations in order to access and meet the regular grade expectations. Students requiring accommodations, but no other supports or special education strategies, are typically working on the same curriculum as other students in their class. They require accommodations in order to access the curriculum, complete work, or demonstrate what they have learned. Examples of these kinds of accommodations are:

- chunking work or assignments
- use of technology (e.g. calculator, specialized software, sensory equipment)
- repetition or simplification of instructions.

What are modified curriculum expectations?

Expectations from the standard Ontario Curriculum can be modified to best meet the student's learning strengths and needs. Typically, expectations are modified in grade level, in number, or complexity.

Examples of modifications are:

- a student in Grade 8 working on language expectations at the Grade 4 level

- reducing the number of, or simplifying in complexity the overall expectations in Grade 6 Social Studies

Curriculum modifications developed for students are outlined in their IEP through written goals.

What are alternative curriculum expectations?

Alternative curriculum expectations address the learning needs of the student that are not included in the Ontario Curriculum. Examples of alternative expectations are:

- learning self-help skills like dressing or feeding oneself
- greeting people in a socially and appropriate manner

How are program goals developed?

Both modified and alternative curriculum expectations outlined in an IEP provide the starting point from which to measure students' progress toward achieving their individualized expectations and annual goals.

These follow an assessment of the students' current levels of achievement which serves as a baseline or starting point. The Ministry requires the use of the most recent Provincial Report Card marks to serve as the baseline when initiating the development of modified programme goals so that the learning needs of the student are addressed. This baseline is maintained for the duration of achieving the annual goal or the end of the semester/school year.

GATHERING INFORMATION

What information is used to develop an IEP?

Developing an individualized program for a student requires that the IEP Development Team members have a full understanding of the student.

Much of the information shared with the IEP Development Team is confidential, as is a student's IEP. The IEP is



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

shared with the parent and educators who are supporting the implementation of the program.

Some of the sources used to gain a fuller understanding of the student:

- An assessment of the student's current performance and achievement.
- The Ontario Student Record (OSR) is a confidential file stored securely in the school office that contains relevant information about each student. When a student changes schools within Ontario, that file is forwarded to their new school. Information in the OSR is confidential and made available only to those working, either directly or indirectly, with your child.
- As a parent, you know your child in a way that others do not. The information you share with the school for the development of the IEP is of great importance and is highly valued.
- An older student often can articulate what supports they feel they need in the classroom.
- Other school staff that has worked closely with the student and have developed an appreciation and respect for the student's unique learning style and needs may be consulted. The insights and information





- they have about the way the student best learns are of great value.
- Other assessments and documentation that pertain to the student's learning needs may be accessed, including those that parents may have submitted.

THE TRANSITION PLAN

What is a Transition Plan?

A transition plan is part of a student's IEP and serves as a guide that outlines the daily, short-term and long-term changes in a student's program. The Ministry of Education requires all students with an IEP to have a transition plan.

The transition plan is reviewed and updated as part of the IEP review process. The transition plan addresses the physical, social/emotional, and learning strengths and needs of the student as they move through their academic career.

Some examples of macro transitions may include:

- entry to school
- grade to grade
- school to school
- elementary school to secondary school
- secondary school to post-secondary pathway

Micro transitions are day-to-day transitions including activity to activity and class to class.

Contained within the transition plan are:

- individual goals
- actions required to achieve those goals
- identified individuals responsible for the actions required
- specific timelines for completion

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

EVALUATING STUDENT LEARNING

How and when are the Goals in the IEP evaluated?

Determining student progress and assessment of their learning is a continuous process. The student's progress toward meeting their individual goals and learning expectations is evaluated during regular school reporting periods.

If a student receives accommodations only for a particular curriculum subject, reporting occurs on the Provincial Report Card with no mention of the accommodations or reference to the IEP. Achievement is reported as per Ministry guidelines for the grade.

The annual modified and alternative programme goals are evaluated at the appropriate reporting period. Modified programme goals are reported on the Provincial Report Card. You will see the IEP box checked beside the subject that is modified (non-credit) and a phrase, a variation of the following, will appear in the comment box:


This (letter grade/percentage mark) is based on the achievement of expectations in the IEP that vary from the Grade X expectations and is an increase/decrease in the number of curriculum expectations.

Alternative programme goals are reported on the Alternative Report Card which in most cases accompany the Provincial Report Card.

In the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board, the student's progress toward IEP goals and expectations is formally evaluated twice a year in both elementary and semestered secondary schools. Though the IEP is usually formally evaluated only at reporting times, the classroom/subject teacher in collaboration with the IEP Development Team may make slight adjustments as required to meet the changing needs of the student.


Is consideration given during provincial testing?

Annually, Provincial testing is a standard requirement for reading, writing, and mathematics in Grades 3 and 6, in mathematics in Grade 9, and literacy in Grade 10. This testing is administered in a very specific manner in keeping with the requirements of the Educational Quality Assurance Organization (EQAO). The Ministry has given the responsibility for determining the time, testing conditions, and level of assistance the teacher can give to ensure a high level of consistency from school to school.



EQAO recognizes that special consideration may need to be given to some students during testing allowing accommodations outlined on their IEP. Details of what is permitted is outlined in the Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions and Exemptions which is updated on an annual basis.

MEETING CHANGING NEEDS



How does the IEP Change to meet the student's changing needs?

The IEP is a living document and a formal document.

As a living document, we mean that as the student progresses and develops, their individualized program will be reviewed continuously and adjusted to best suit their learning needs. As a living document, the classroom/subject teacher in collaboration with the IEP Development Team may adjust the IEP to meet the changing needs of the learner on an ongoing basis.

At the same time, it is an individualized program that was developed and agreed upon at a point in time. As a formal document, the IEP is reviewed, and the student's progress with respect to IEP goals is evaluated at specific reporting times of the year. A student's needs and abilities are constantly changing. Thus regular review and updates are important to keep the IEP program moving forward.



As the IEP changes, what is the parent's role?

When an IEP is created for a student at the start of a school year, the process of developing an individualized program for a student is not complete. As additional information becomes available, or as the needs of the learner change, ongoing discussions between the teacher, school support staff, parent and student remain key to further shaping and developing the student's program. All partners need to be aware of the goals and expectations outlined in the IEP.



SAMPLE IEP FORM

When the IEP is first developed, the parent or guardian receives a copy. As goals and expectations change, they will be provided with a revised copy.

Consultations that take place with parents and students as part of the IEPs ongoing development are documented on the IEP.

At Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB, we value parental input and look forward to their participation.

Sample IEP Form

The samples on the following pages provide you with a blank IEP form. The goals and expectations in an IEP vary greatly from student to student. If you have questions or require further clarification about the IEP, we encourage you to discuss these with the principal of your child's school.



SAMPLE IEP FORM



Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board Individual Education Plan

Student Information

Student Name:
Preferred Name:
Gender:
School:
Principal: Principal
IEP Completed: 06/07/2021

Student Number:
OEN:
Date of Birth:
Grade:
Current School Year:
IEP Coordinated By:

This is the first page of a blank IEP and is where relevant information about your child's individualized program is recorded.

Rationale for developing the IEP

Student identified as exceptional by IPRC

Student not identified by IPRC but requires special education program/services, including accommodations and/or modified/alternative learning expectations

Placement Information

Identification:
1.

Placement: Regular Class with Indirect Service

Placement Date: 02/08/2021

Last IPRC/Continuation Date: 02/05/2021

Principal Signature

This IEP has been developed according to the ministry's standards and appropriately addresses the student's strengths and needs. The learning expectations will be reviewed and the student's achievement evaluated at least once every reporting period.

Principal Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian and Student (if student is 16 or older) Signature

I was consulted in the development of the IEP

Parent/Guardian Student

I have declined the opportunity to be consulted in the development of the IEP

Parent/Guardian Student

I have received a copy of the IEP

Parent/Guardian Student

Parent/Guardian and Student Comments:

Space is provided for you to make comments regarding your child's IEP. The Principal signs the IEP and invites the parent / guardian to sign as well. A signed copy is placed in the Ontario Student Record (OSR).

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature (if 16 or older)

Date

SAMPLE IEP FORM



Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board
Sources/Strengths/Accommodations/Assessments

Student Information

Student Name:

Current School Year:

Grade:

Date of Birth:

School:

Sources Consulted in the Development of the IEP

- Provincial Report Card
- Other sources (list below)
Details here.

Assessment Summary

Source	Report Date
Academic Assessment Description: Details here.	05/31/2017
SLP Report (Board SLP) Description: Details here.	03/20/2018
Psychological Report Description: Details here.	04/27/2018

Relevant Medical Conditions

Yes (list below) No

Health Support Services/Personal Support Required

Yes (Indicate type below) No

Student's Strengths and Needs

Strengths	Needs
Details here.	Details here.

This is a sample of what may appear on page 2 of the IEP. A student's strengths and needs help to determine which instructional, environmental and assessment accommodations are being implemented.

Accommodations for Learning, Including Required Equipment

Instructional Accommodations

Details here.

Environmental Accommodations

Details here.

Assessment Accommodations

Details here.

If the student has accommodations (AC) for any subject / course, they are listed here.

Provincial Assessments

This is a provincial assessment year Yes No

Name of Assessment:

Exemption with Rationale Yes (provide explanatory statement from relevant EQAO document) No

Permitted Accommodations: Yes (list below) No

SAMPLE IEP FORM



SIMCOE MUSKOKA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board
Courses and Human Resources

Student Information

Student Name:

Current School Year:

Grade:

Date of Birth:

School:

IEP Development Team

Member	Position
	Teacher
	Special Education Resource Teacher

Subjects, Courses or Alternative Programs to which the IEP Applies

Course	Program Type
Reading	AC
Writing	MOD
Mathematics	AC
Science and Technology	MOD
Self-Regulation	ALT

This is a sample of the summary of subjects/courses in which the student is enrolled. It will identify whether the subject / course is accommodated only (AC), modified (MOD) or whether the subject is Alternative programming (ALT).

Evaluation

Reporting Dates: November 2020 February 2021 June 2021

Reporting Format: Provincial Report Card and Alternative Report Card

Human Resources (teaching/non-teaching)

Human Resource	Type of Service	Frequency	Location
Special Education Resource Teacher	Program Consultation to the Regular Classroom Teacher	0 - 75 minutes	Regular Classroom

SAMPLE IEP FORM



Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board

Program
Writing

Should a student have modified or alternative programming, each subject / course will have a section that specifically list the 'learning expectations' as performance tasks or culminating tasks that allow the student to work towards achieving the annual program goal.

Student Information

Student Name:
Grade:
School:

Current School Year:
Date of Birth:

Baseline Level of Achievement

Letter Grade/Mark:

Source:

Instructional Grade
Level:

Description of Achievement Level

Date from last report card:
Details here.

Annual Program Goals

Details here.

	Learning Expectations	Strategies, Resources and Support Services	Assessment Methods
	Details here.	Details here.	Details here.



Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board

Program
Self-Regulation

Student Information

Student Name:
Grade:
School:

Current School Year:
Date of Birth:

Baseline Level of Achievement

Source:

Description of Achievement Level

Date:
Details here.

Annual Program Goals

Details here.

	Learning Expectations	Strategies, Resources and Support Services	Assessment Methods
	Details here.	Details here.	Details here.

SAMPLE IEP FORM



Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board Transition Plan

The final pages will outline actions of a Transition Plan and the Consultation that has occurred with various stakeholders, including parents / guardians.

Student Information

Student Name:
 Grade:
 School:

Current School Year:
 Date of Birth:

Student Interests	Student Strengths	Student Needs
	Details here.	Details here.

Transition Goals

Transition Type:			
Transition Goal: Details here.			
Actions:			
	Actions	Responsibility	Timelines
	Details here.	Special Education Resource Teacher	Details here.



IEP Consultation Log

Student Information

Student Name:
 Preferred Name:
 School:

Current School Year:
 Date of Birth:
 Grade:

Log Information

Date	Person Contacted	Type of Contact	Actions or Outcomes
06/30/2021	Parent/Guardian	Phone call	Details here.

The information gathered on this form is gathered pursuant to the Education Act. The information will be used for the purpose of planning and programming. Any general questions about the information gathered on this form may be discussed with the principal of your child's school. School phone numbers are listed alphabetically in the phone book under Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board or through the Board's website: www.smcdsb.on.ca