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Helping Students Grow

Halton District School Board

Working Together Guide

A Guide for Parents, Guardians and Students

Halton District School Board



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Overview

Purpose

This guide has been prepared for parents/guardians and students to explain the process used by the Halton District School Board (HDSB) in its effort to meet the special education needs of students.

Another purpose of this guide is to provide you with information about the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process. It sets out for you the procedures involved in identifying a pupil as “exceptional,'' deciding the pupil’s placement, and the appeal process.

Philosophy

Education of our children is a responsibility shared by parents/guardians, school staff and the students themselves. Regular, ongoing communication, initiated by you or the school staff, is a valued part of the team approach. Concerns regarding social, emotional, physical and/or academic development should be communicated as soon as possible.

The parent/guardian, the teacher, the principal, or other resource personnel may recognize a student’s areas for further support. As a parent/guardian, you are aware of your child’s strengths and needs. It is appreciated when you discuss these with your child’s teacher.

The Halton District School Board is committed to serve students, families and staff. We incorporate principles of equity and inclusive education into all aspects of our operations, structures, policies, procedures, guidelines and practices, consistent with the principles of the **Ontario Human Rights Code**.

The Halton District School Board believes that all students can learn and we strive to enable every student to learn effectively, to reduce achievement gaps and to improve learning outcomes for all, regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and other historical forms of marginalization.

The Halton District School Board **Equity and Inclusive Education Policy** reflects our commitment to create and maintain a safe, inclusive learning and working environment for students, their families, employees and members of the public. Our policy informs decisions regarding board actions across multiple areas including policies and procedures; leadership; school and community relationships; religious accommodations; curriculum and assessment practices; and actions to create a school climate free from discrimination and harassment.

For additional information contact:

Special Education Services 905-631-6120
New Street Education Centre 3250 New Street, Burlington, ON L7N 1M8

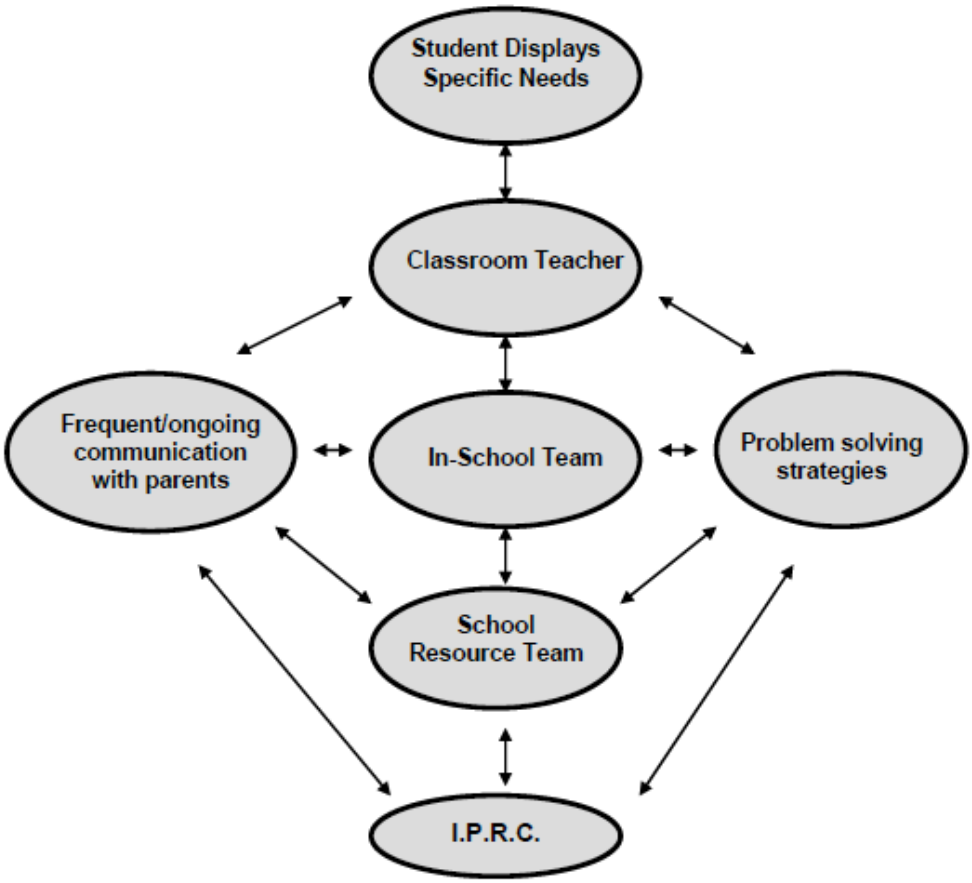
Entering a Halton School

What should the parent/guardian do if a student is entering a Halton school, and may need special education support?

Effective support of students begins from the time that a student first enters one of our schools. When you register your child, whether entering kindergarten or transferring from another school, providing the school with as much information as you can about your child's strengths, needs and current services/programs helps us to plan for a successful entry to school.

Generally, new students to Halton register and attend their home school as their first step in the process.

*** Student Focused Problem Solving and the I.P.R.C. Referral Process**



***Please see next section for a detailed Problem Solving Pathway**

What is meant by the term "exceptional student"?

An "exceptional student" is one whose communication, behaviour, intellectual or physical needs are such that they are considered by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) to meet criteria for an identification and placement.

For more information on the 5 categories of exceptionality, see Appendix A.

What is a special education program?

A special education program is one tailored to meet the needs of your child. It can reflect a change in subject content, teaching and learning strategies, rate and pace of instruction, assessment strategies, learning materials and the use of specialized equipment. 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 (IEP) containing specific objectives and an outline of special education services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil.

A special education program may be provided by the classroom teacher in the home school, or by specialized personnel in settings other than the child's home school. HDSB offers a variety of special education programs and services to the students of Halton (see Appendix B for Special Education Programs and Placements in HDSB). Regardless of placement, there are a variety of supports available to ensure school staff have the skills and resources to support your child, such as:

- Itinerant Teachers
- Professional Services Consultation Team
- Behaviour Analysts
- Child and Youth Care Practitioners
- Psycho-educational Consultants
- Social Workers
- Specialized Behaviour Support Workers
- Communicative Disorders Assistants
- Speech and Language Pathologists.

Problem Solving Pathway

The Problem Solving Pathway is a key tool in the early identification and intervention of student learning needs. While it is recommended the process is followed sequentially through the tiered steps, a parent/guardian may initiate a referral at any step.

The presentation of strengths and needs through this pathway is a snapshot in time for the student. Monitoring the progress and impact of interventions over time is essential to meeting the current and evolving needs of the student.

STEP	PROBLEM SOLVING PATHWAY
STEP 1: **PARENTS / CAREGIVERS AND EDUCATORS AS PARTNERS**	Parents/Guardians and educators are partners in the process of understanding and supporting the student and their unique learning strengths and needs. Continuous and open dialogue between home and school is essential in understanding the student/child as a whole person. The classroom educator(s) may use a variety of in-class strategies to support the student, and will gather ongoing evidence about the student's learning profile. Both the parent/guardian and/or educator can initiate the Problem Solving Process if they recognize that a student is experiencing difficulties.
STEP 2: **SCHOOL TEAM**	School Team is comprised of school-based staff including (as appropriate): • Classroom Educators • Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) • English as a Second Language Teacher • Student Success Teacher • School Administration The educator will present an overview of the student's strengths and areas of concern, referencing both observations and assessment data. The School Team will develop an action plan and strategies for support and remediation, in consultation with in-school personnel as needed. School staff will implement the recommendations and monitor impact. A referral to the School Resource Team may be recommended if: • the intervention strategies in the action plan do not result in improvement over time; and/or • additional information and support from personnel beyond the school-based team is needed.

STEP 3:

SCHOOL RESOURCE TEAM

A referral to the School Resource Team (SRT) may be initiated by the parent/guardian and/or school staff.

School Resource Team (SRT) is comprised of school-based and Professional Services staff. A whole child and multidisciplinary approach is encouraged. Possible attendees are:

- Parent/guardian
- Classroom Educators
- Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)
- English as a Second Language Teacher
- Student Success Teacher
- School Administration
- Psychoeducational Consultant
- Speech-Language Pathologist
- Behaviour Analyst
- School Social Worker (secondary)
- Child and Youth Care Practitioner (elementary)
- Instructional Program Leader

SRT identifies further actions such as additional interventions, resources and/or assessments. School and/or board staff will implement the recommended actions. A student may return to SRT for further problem solving or sharing of the results of the SRT actions.

Possible additional supports:

- Instructional Program Leader (IPL) or Instructional Resource Teacher (IRT) from:
  - Special Education Services
  - School Programs
  - Equity Team
  - Indigenous Team
- Manager of Professional Services
- Behaviour Analyst
- Individual Education Plan
- Behaviour Intervention Plan / Safety Plan
- Professional Services Consultation
- Specialized Program or Placement
- Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) Trainers
- Social Worker / Child and Youth Care Practitioner
- ESL Teacher
- Learning Resource Teacher (LRT)
- Student Success
- Psychoeducational or Speech - Language Assessment
- Community Services

Where a student meets criteria for an Identification and Placement, SRT may make a recommendation to the Identification, Placement and Review

	Committee (IPRC). If there is a possibility of a Self-Contained placement being discussed, the school will invite the SES IPL to the SRT. If appropriate, Self-Contained information slide decks may be shared with parents/guardians to support their understanding of possible options. For example, a parent/guardian considering a Self-Contained Gifted identification and placement is invited to view a presentation on the Resource Support and Self-Contained options prior to finalizing an SRT recommendation. SRT may also complete Annual Reviews of a student's Identification and Placement, when an IPRC review is waived by the parent/guardian.
STEP 4: **IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE**	A referral to the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) may be initiated by the parent/guardian at any time in the problem solving process. The principal may make a referral to the IPRC following an SRT recommendation. IPRC makes decisions with regards to Identification and Placement. The IPRC does not offer recommendations for location, programming or support.

School Resource Team (SRT)

This section is intended to help you understand how to work with the School Resource Team (SRT). Your involvement and input are valued in making collaborative decisions regarding your child's education.

What is a School Resource Team?

A School Resource Team (SRT) is a school-based team that meets regularly to discuss strategies and supports for students.

When is a student referred to the SRT?

When a student requires additional support or is experiencing challenges at school, the classroom teacher will start the Problem-Solving Pathway . This should involve consultation with parents/guardians, other staff in the school including the special education resource teacher (SERT), and the in-school team. School staff may suggest academic accommodations or other strategies to support the student. When it is deemed that additional expertise should be involved in the problem-solving process, the student is referred to the SRT. Considering a multidisciplinary and whole child approach, regional staff will be invited to the SRT, such as:

- Psychoeducational Consultant
- Speech-Language Pathologist
- Behaviour Analyst
- Child and Youth Care Practitioner
- Social Worker
- Occupational Therapist

What role does the parent play in SRT?

When a student is referred to the SRT, parents/guardians will be contacted for their consent and to be invited to participate in the SRT meeting. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to attend SRT meetings and participate in making recommendations to support their child.

What role does the student play in SRT?

The student helps educators identify their learning styles, preferences, strengths, and needs as well as monitor and communicate the success of interventions. Schools and parents/guardians will work collaboratively to ensure the student's voice is represented at SRT. Where appropriate the student will be invited to participate in SRT.

Who is on the SRT?

The School Resource Team is comprised of school staff, parents/guardians, the student, HDSB support staff and others, as appropriate.

Elementary	Secondary
• Principal/Vice Principal or designate • Special Education Resource Teacher • Minimum of one Professional Services staff May Include: • Classroom teacher(s) • Parent(s)/Guardian(s) • Student • Psychoeducational Consultant • Child and Youth Care Practitioner • Speech-Language Pathologist • Behaviour Analyst • Social Worker • Instructional Program Leader • Representatives from Education Community Partnership Programs • Outside Support Personnel • Student Success Teacher	• Principal/Vice Principal or designate • Special Education Resource Teacher • Minimum of one Professional Services staff May Include: • Classroom teacher(s) • Parent(s)/Guardian(s) • Student • Psychoeducational Consultant • School Social Worker (with student consent) • Speech and Language Pathologist (with student/parent/guardian consent) • Instructional Program Leader • Representatives from Education Community Partnership Programs • Outside Support Personnel • Student Success Teacher • Student Services (Guidance) Teacher

What happens at a School Resource Team meeting?

SRT meetings are conducted in an informal atmosphere in-person. You may request to join the meeting remotely if you are unable to attend in person. One of the school-based staff will chair the meeting, introduce everyone present, and explain the purpose of the meeting. One of the SRT members will provide an overview of the situation to be discussed. Parents/guardians are invited to share information, as are other participants. Parents/guardians are encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion.

At the end of the SRT there will likely be some agreed upon recommendations. These may include but are not limited to the following:

- suggested instructional and/or assessment strategies to support a student
- suggested behavioural or social/emotional support for a student
- recommendation that further testing or a formal assessment be completed
- recommendation that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) be developed for a student
- recommendation that a student be referred to the IPRC for formal identification as an exceptional student or a change in placement

- recommendation that a student be referred to a program within HDSB
- recommendation about community support options for a student/family

What happens after SRT?

After the SRT, the recommendations of the SRT are implemented, monitored over a period of time and then reviewed. Information on the student's progress will be communicated between family and school. A student's case may be discussed once or over several meetings of the in-school team, depending upon the student's ongoing or changing needs, the success of school-based problem-solving efforts, and the need for additional information from specialized services.

A school referral should be made to an IPRC or other program only after the interventions or accommodations agreed to at the in-school team meeting(s) have been tried and found insufficient. When it is determined that the needs of a child will be best met through a placement in an HDSB program, the SRT will make a recommendation to proceed to IPRC .

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

This document is intended to help you better understand the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Your involvement and input are valued in making collaborative decisions regarding your child's education.

What is an Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

- A written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, including a record of the particular accommodations needed to help the student achieve learning expectations.
- An IEP must be developed for a student who has been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), and may also be developed for a student who has special education needs but has not been identified as exceptional.
- An IEP is a working document that identifies learning expectations that may be modified from or alternative to the expectations given in the Ontario Curriculum documents for the appropriate grade and subject or course.
- It identifies how any Special Equipment Amount (SEA) devices are to be used/incorporated into the student's program
- It outlines the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purpose of reporting student achievement. See also Ministry of Education: Individual Education Plan Process.
- The IEP must be completed within 30 instructional days after it has been recommended, or annually within the first 30 days of a semester. The Principal will ensure you receive a copy.
- A copy of the IEP will be placed in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR) unless a parent/guardian objects in writing.

Who is on the IEP team?

- The parent/guardian
- Classroom educator
- Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)
- Principal
- Student where appropriate
- HDSB support staff as appropriate

As a parent/guardian what role do I play in my child's IEP?

Parents/Guardians play an important role in the IEP process. It is beneficial to understand and participate in each phase of the IEP process. Parents/Guardians must be consulted in the development and review of the IEP when required and are often involved at other points of the year. You will have the opportunity to sign the Parent/Guardian Contact Form and provide feedback to the school. Specifically, you could:

- Provide up-to-date information about your child as it relates to your child's learning (e.g., recent assessment reports);
- Provide important information that will assist in the development and implementation of your child's educational program (e.g., the talents and skills your child demonstrates in the home and community; your child's likes, dislikes, learning styles/preferences, interests, and reactions to various situations);
- Reinforce and extend the efforts of educators by providing opportunities for your child to practise and maintain skills in the home;
- Provide feedback on your child's transfer of skills from school to home and community settings;
- Maintain open communication with the school.

Consultation may take the form of:

- telephone calls
- letters
- e-mails
- part of regularly scheduled meetings / conferences
- formal meeting(s)

You should let the school know your preferred form of consultation and whether you prefer to respond to the school's draft of the IEP or wish to be more involved in the development of the IEP.

What role does the student play in their IEP (as appropriate to developmental stage)?

Students also play an important role in the IEP process, depending on age and cognitive ability. Students over 16 must be consulted in the development and review of the IEP. Specifically, Students could:

- Help educators identify their learning styles, preferences, strengths, and needs;
- Understand what accommodations are to be provided (e.g., individualized teaching and assessment strategies, individualized equipment);
- Assist in setting annual program goals and learning expectations;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the IEP and works actively to achieve the goals and expectations contained therein;
- Participate in monitoring progress towards goals and maintains awareness of how grades and/or marks will be generated for the Provincial Report Card;
- Consider the information in their All About Me portfolio or Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) when developing the IEP.

What are the key components of the IEP?

Strengths/Needs:

Areas of strength may include information such as:

- Preferred learning styles
- Previously acquired learning skills
- Strengths in areas such as cognitive processing and communication

Areas of need should make evident the reasons a student requires a special education program and/or services. This may include:

- Cognitive and/or processing challenges
- Skills that relate to the student's exceptionality and/or impact the ability to learn

Assessment:

Information directly related to the reasons that give rise to the need for a special education program and services. May include:

- Assessments completed by a Psychologist, Speech-Language Pathologist, Special Education Resource Teacher, classroom teacher, or other professionals (e.g., Occupational Therapist, Physician, Physiotherapist, Optometrist/Opthamologist, Audiologist) which provide information about a child's individual strengths and needs.

Annual Program Goal:

- Statements on the Individual Education Plan (IEP) describing what a student can reasonably be expected to accomplish by the end of the school year in a particular subject, course, or skill area. Annual goals are only developed if the student's learning expectations are modified from the curriculum expectations for a particular subject or course, or if the student's learning expectations are alternative learning expectations (ie., not the Ontario Curriculum).

Accommodations:

- Accommodations describe the specific teaching, environmental and assessment strategies which enable a student to learn and demonstrate learning based on the curriculum appropriate for their grade. IEPs which are accommodated only do not include Program Goal pages.

Modifications:

- There are two types of modifications possible on an IEP
    - Same grade-level expectations: Reflect the knowledge and skills required for curriculum of grade level with a decrease in the number and/or complexity of the regular grade level expectations.
    - Different grade-level expectations: Reflect the knowledge and skills required for curriculum at a different grade level with a decrease in the number and skills required

**At the secondary level, a credit may or may not be granted for a course, depending on the extent to*

which the expectations in the course have been modified.

Alternative Curriculum:

- Support student development of knowledge and skills not represented in the Ontario Curriculum
- HDSB will frequently refer to Carolina Curriculum and A Functional Assessment and Curriculum (AFAC)
- Assessment of Alternative Curriculum will be reported through the IEP

Transition Planning:

- To identify, develop and implement strategies required to support students with educational transitions. This can include transitions from school-to-school or grade-to-grade. See Ministry of Education: Transitions.

What is the process in the development, implementation and review of the IEP?

Gather Information:

- Gather information from various sources including: observation, assessments, parents/guardians, Ontario Student Record (OSR), IPRC, if applicable

Set the Direction:

- Develop a common understanding of strengths and needs as they relate to learning - consider possible transition needs

Develop the IEP:

- Identify subjects, courses or alternative program areas that will be included in the special education program
- Set short and long-term goals for learning, if the IEP identifies Modifications and/or Alternative Curriculum
- Send draft copy of IEP home for parent/guardian review

Implement the IEP:

- Provide learning opportunities specific to the child's learning strengths and needs and goals set out in the special education plan

Review and Update the IEP:

- Update learning expectations at the beginning of each reporting period, if the IEP identifies Modifications and/or Alternative Curriculum *
- Record changes on the IEP
- Conduct IEP Annual Review

** changes can be made at any time throughout the year if/when necessary (ie., new or emerging needs)*

How else can I help in the IEP process?

Students are most successful when everyone works together towards achievable goals. As a parent/guardian:

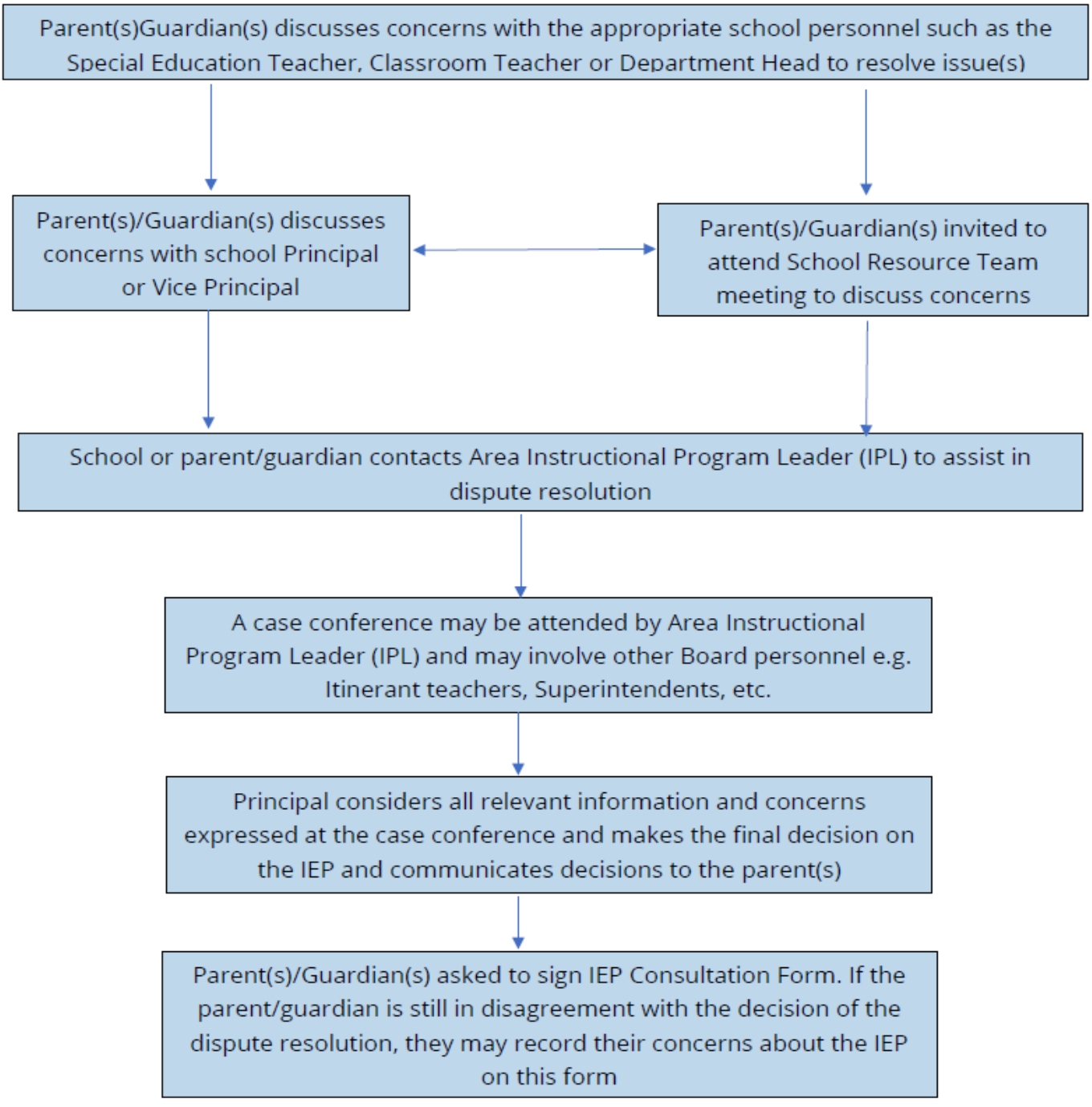
- keep the focus on your child at all times
- tell the teacher the hopes you have for your child's learning
- bring ideas and information
- ask questions
- value everyone's input

The principal of each school is responsible for ensuring that all IEPs for students in the school are created, reviewed and implemented properly.

Your input is welcomed and valued at each stage of the IEP cycle.

Process for Dispute Resolution on Significant Aspects of the IEP

It is the intention of the Halton District School Board that, at any stage of this intervention model, a satisfactory resolution may be reached while serving the needs of the student. Staff and parent/guardian should collaborate and communicate openly to seek a resolution.



Note: The Halton District School Board has a process for resolving disputes. Please see the HDSB website at [How to Resolve Issues and Concerns]

Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)

This document is intended to help you better understand the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process. Your involvement and input are valued in making collaborative decisions regarding your child's education.

IPRC stands for:

I — Identification
P — Placement
R — Review
C — Committee

The IPRC meets and decides if a student should be identified as an exceptional pupil and, if so, the placement that will best meet the student's needs.

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; See Appendix A
- Decide an appropriate identification and placement for your child. See Appendix B; and review the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

How is an IPRC meeting requested?

- You may request an IPRC meeting for your child by providing a written request to your child's principal;
- Your child's principal may, through the School Resource Team process, request an IPRC meeting when a recommendation has been made that your child may benefit from a special education program.

Within 15 school days of receiving your request, or following SRT recommendations, the principal must provide you with a link to a copy of this guide and a written statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

What information will the parent/guardian receive about the IPRC meeting?

At least 10 school 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 identification and placement. This letter will notify you of the date, time, and place of the meeting (or meeting link if virtual), 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.

May the parent/guardian attend the IPRC meeting?

Regulation 181/98 entitles parent/guardian 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.

What if the parent/guardian is unable to make the scheduled meeting?

If you are unable to make the scheduled meeting, you may:

- Contact the school principal to arrange a date or time at the next scheduled IPRC; or
- Inform the school principal you will not be attending. Following the meeting, the IPRCs written Statement of Decision regarding identification and placement, and any recommendations of special education programs and services, will be sent to you for your consideration and signature.

Who are the people that make up an IPRC?

Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards establish IPRCs. An IPRC is composed of a minimum of 3 people:

1. Chair who is a principal or vice-principal in HDSB
2. IPRC member who may be a principal, vice-principal, manager of Professional Services SERT, Classroom teacher(s), Itinerant Resource Teacher, Instructional Program Lead, Special Education Services Admin, OCT school staff who are not presenting student
3. Supervisory officer or designate of HDSB.

Parent/guardian is invited and encouraged to attend the meeting.
Also in attendance will be the coordinator of the IPRC process and/or IPRC administrative assistant.

Who else may attend an IPRC meeting?

- Principal or vice principal of your child's school;
- Other resource people such as your child's teacher, special education staff, HDSB support staff, or the representative of an agency who may provide further information or clarification, as appropriate;
- 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 of your child's school) .

Who may request that others attend?

Either you or the principal of your child's school may make a request for the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting.

What happens at an IPRC meeting?

- The Chair will introduce everyone and explain the purpose of the meeting;
- A member representing the school will present the request and supporting information which may include a summary of relevant assessments;
- Parents/Guardians will be provided with an opportunity to share insights, provide suggestions and to share additional information;
- The IPRC will review all information provided 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; 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. (See Appendix C)

The committee may 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.

The committee may discuss any proposal that has been made about a special education program or services for the child either brought forward by the school, parent/guardian, student (if student is over 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.

Who is identified as an exceptional pupil?

The Education Act defines an exceptional pupil as "a pupil whose behavioural, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that they are 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. (See Appendix A)

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. (See Appendix B)

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 will the IPRC consider in making its placement decision?

Before the IPRC can consider placing your child in a 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.

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 regular class with appropriate special education services.

If the committee decides that your child 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 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;
    - IPRC's description of your child's strengths and needs;
    - IPRC's placement decision; and
    - IPRC's recommendations regarding a special education program and special education services.

What happens after the IPRC has made its decision if you are in agreement?

- You will be asked to indicate your agreement by signing the written Statement of Decision;
- The board will promptly notify the principal of the school at which the special education program is to be provided and your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be updated;
- You may request an IPRC Review meeting any time after your child has been in a special education program for three months.

What happens after the IPRC has made its decision if you are not in agreement?

- If you disagree with the IPRC decision that the student is or is not exceptional, or with the placement for the student, advise your child's school principal and do not sign the Statement of Decision you receive following the meeting;
- You may ask the Principal in writing for a second meeting with the IPRC to discuss the decision. This must be done within 15 days of receiving the Statement of Decision;
- After the second discussion with the IPRC, you will again receive a written Statement of Decision.
    - If you are now in agreement, you should sign the Statement and return it; or
    - If you disagree with the IPRC, you may, within 15 school days of receipt of the decision from the second meeting, give written notice of appeal; or
    - If you disagree with the IPRC and do not wish to discuss the matter with the IPRC, you may give written notice of appeal. This must be done within 30 school days of receipt of the Statement of Decision.

How do I appeal an IPRC decision?

If you disagree with the IPRC's identification / non-identification of your child as exceptional or with the placement decision of the IPRC, you may, within 30 school days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 school days of receipt of the decision from the second meeting described above, give written notification of your intention to appeal the decision to:

Chief Executive Officer, Halton District School Board
J.W. Singleton Centre
2050 Guelph Line Burlington, Ontario L7P 5A8

The notice of appeal must:

- Indicate the decision with which you disagree (identification, non-identification, and/or placement); and
- Include a statement that sets out your reasons for disagreeing.

What happens in the appeal process?

The Appeal Board has three members who must not be a member or employee of the Board or the Ministry of Education and who must not have any prior involvement with the matter under appeal.

The Appeal Board shall be composed of:

a. One member selected by the Board;
b. One member selected by a parent/guardian of the pupil; and
c. A chair, selected jointly by the above members or, where those members cannot agree, by the appropriate district manager of the Ministry of Education.

The appeal process involves the following steps:

- The chair of the Appeal Board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 school days after they have been selected (unless parent/guardian 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, the parent/guardian, and your child if 16 years old or over, are entitled to be present and to participate in all discussions;
- The Appeal Board must make its recommendation within three school days of the meeting's ending;
- The Appeal Board 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 your child's identification or placement or both.
- The Appeal Board will report its recommendations in writing to you and to the HDSB, providing the reasons for its recommendations;
- Within 30 school days of receiving the Appeal Board's written statement, the HDSB will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations. Boards are not required to follow the Appeal Board recommendation.

What does an IPRC Annual Review consider and decide?

- An IPRC Annual Review must occur for all students with an identification and placement, and must be completed by May 31st of the school year;
- If, during SRT discussions, the school and parents/guardians are in agreement with the current identification and placement, and no change is required, parents/guardians may complete an IPRC Annual Review Dispense Request (Waiver);
- 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.

Local Associations

What local associations are available to assist the parent/guardian?

Many local associations are available to provide information and support to the parent/guardian of exceptional children. You are invited to reach out to a local association for more information on services and resources available.

Below are the local associations who form the HDSB's Special Education Advisory Committee:

NAME OF ASSOCIATION	DESCRIPTION
Autism Ontario - Halton www.autismontario.com **SEAC Representatives:** Amanda Winch Jennifer Legare (alternate)	Autism Ontario is the province's leading source of information and referral on autism, and one of the largest collective voices representing the autism community. The work we do helps all autistic individuals and families in their communities have access to meaningful supports, information, and connections so they are equitably and seamlessly supported across their life course.
Association for Bright Children (ABC) Halton www.abcontario.ca **SEAC Representative:** Sapna Gaba	The Association for Bright Children of Ontario (ABC Ontario) is an all-volunteer, provincially incorporated registered charity, which provides information, advocacy, and support to parents/guardians of bright and gifted children and adolescents through networking and local workshops offered by its chapters across the province. It offers the parents'/guardians' voice to the local school board, educators, professional groups, and the Ontario Ministry of Education. The ABC Ontario Halton Chapter is supported by volunteers and parents/guardians of gifted children in the Halton area including Oakville, Milton, Burlington, Halton Hills, Georgetown, and Action. Both the ABC Ontario and the ABC Halton chapter offer: • Information and resources on the neurodiversity of giftedness; • Assistance and support in navigating the gifted identification process of learners; • Information regarding available special education programs and supports offered at the Halton District School Board, through the Ontario Ministry

	of Education and other Halton community professionals; ● Events that support the families of bright and gifted children with networking opportunities for both guardians and learners; ● Workshops and conferences for educators and parents/guardians ● Parents/guardians can also join in on the discussion with other parents/guardians of gifted and bright children in the community through our active social media ABC Halton Parents Chat Facebook Group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/1838878789738804/
Centre for Diverse Learners-Halton **https://diverselearners.ca** **SEAC Representative:** Jelena King	Our mission is to provide advocacy, education, and services for individuals with Learning Disabilities (LDs) and/or ADHD to empower them to reach their full potential. We aim to build a world where individuals with learning disabilities are included, empowered and celebrated. We offer a variety of services and supports to families: ● Tutoring in reading, math, assistive technology, keyboarding, and general homework support; ● Programs in social skills, executive functioning, self-advocacy, transition support to high school; post-secondary, and employment ● Youth support group; ● Parent Support: Informational workshops and conferences, stress management, IEPs advice, help to navigate the special education system, advocacy support, and a supportive ear just to listen!
Community Living Burlington **www.clburlington.ca** **SEAC Representative:** Sierra Kernick Nadina Toric (alternate)	The mission of Community Living Burlington is to enrich the quality of life and to promote full and meaningful inclusion in our community of people who have a developmental disability. OUR VALUES: **DIGNITY:** Each person is unique, to be respected and empowered **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Everyone at Community Living Burlington is responsible for the safety, security and well-being of the people we support.

	HUMAN RESOURCES & LEADERSHIP: We value the staff & volunteers that enable the organization to achieve the highest quality of service to the people we support. **ADVOCACY & INCLUSIVENESS:** We value, promote and protect the right to full participation within our community. **SERVICE:** We are committed to an exceptional service approach based on the uniqueness of each person we support. **PARTNERSHIPS & OUTREACH:**We value and promote collaboration with our community. OUR PROGRAMS ● Children Inclusion Services 0-12 years Program ● Employment Services and the GROW Program ● LifeShare Program ● Residential Programs ● 24-hour Residential Support and Supported Independently Living ● Virtual Programs ● RESPITE Afterschool and Saturday Respite Care
Community Living Oakville **Community Living Oakville** **SEAC Representative:** Shania Jagnandan	Community-based, building community partnerships to provide people the opportunity to participate in a variety of social, recreational and volunteer activities - supports people to develop and build skills toward independence and connect people to members and services in the community * interested persons must apply through Developmental Services Ontario
Easter Seals Society www.easterseals.org **SEAC Representatives:** Melissa Dockeray Omer Mirza (alternate)	Easter Seals Ontario is a registered charitable organization that helps children and youth with physical disabilities from all backgrounds, providing programs and services to help kids develop greater independence so that they can break out into the world and carve their own paths. For 100 years, Easter Seals Ontario has been raising the voices of children and youth with physical disabilities. Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Program has

	parent/guardian volunteers advocating for the interests of students with special education needs, and providing advice to school boards about how to improve programs and services to meet the needs of students with physical disabilities. These Easter Seals Ontario representatives can also assist families by sharing information about special education programs and services.
Halton Down Syndrome Association www.haltondownsyndrome.com **SEAC Representatives:** Sophia Siddiqi	Established in 1984, Halton Down Syndrome Association (HDSA) is a Registered Charity working to improve the quality of life for people with Down syndrome and their families. HDSA is an active and vibrant leader in advocacy, awareness, education and support within the Halton community. Our mission is to empower individuals with Down syndrome to reach their full potential through all stages of life. We offer four Peer Groups (Early Years: 0-6, Elementary: 4-14, High School: 14-21 & Graduate: 21+ to allow our members and their families to network, connect & socialize with peers of their own age. Peer groups are run by volunteers and offer monthly social events, programs and workshops to help develop skills and offer transitional support.
VOICE for Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing www.voicefordeafkids.com **SEAC Representative:** Erin Sproule	VOICE is an organization that develops and implements programs and services encompassing advocacy, family support, and public education. VOICE has connected hundreds of parents/guardians and families of children with hearing loss and has become one of the largest support organizations of its kind. VOICE offers multiple programs for parents/guardians, educators, teens, children, and newly arrived families. We work through programs of advocacy, support and education to connect those with hearing loss and ensure success in their lives.

SEAC Members at Large Kajsa Klassen Katie Schleifer Tara Conley	

For information on the members of HDSB SEAC, see Appendix C.

Additional Information

What are the Ministry of Education's Provincial and Demonstration Schools?

The Ministry of Education operates Provincial and Demonstration Schools throughout Ontario for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or low vision, deaf/blind, and/or who have severe learning disabilities, as well as those with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Residential programs are offered at the schools Monday to Friday for students who live too far from school to travel daily.

English-language Demonstration Schools for students with severe Learning Disabilities

Amethyst School
1515 Cheapside Street
London, ON N5V 3N9
Tel: 519-453-4400

Sagonaska School
350 Dundas Street West
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2
Tel: 613-967-2823

Trillium School
347 Ontario Street South
Milton, ON L9T 3X9
Tel: 905-878-2851

Provincial Schools for the Deaf, Ernest C. Drury School
255 Ontario Street South
Milton, ON L9T 2M5
Tel: 905-878-2851
TTY: 905-878-7195

Robarts School
1515 Cheapside Street
London, ON N5V 3N9
Tel: 519-453-4400
TTY: 519-453-4400

Sir James Whitney School
350 Dundas Street West
Belleville, ON K8P 1B2

Tel: 613-967-2823 or 1-800-501-6240
TTY: 613-967-2823

Provincial School for the blind and deafblind
W. Ross Macdonald School
350 Brant Avenue
Brantford, ON N3T 3J9
Tel: 519-759-0730 or 1-866-618-9092

French-language Provincial School for the Deaf and Demonstration School for students with severe learning disabilities

Centre Jules-Léger
281 Lanark Avenue
Ottawa, ON K1Z 6R8
Tel: 613-761-9300
TTY: 613-761-9302

Where can a parent/guardian obtain additional information?

Additional information can be obtained from:

- Your child's teacher(s), principal or vice-principal
- Special Education Services, Halton District School Board
  3250 New Street Burlington, Ontario L7N 1M8
  Phone: (905) 631-6120
  www.hdsb.ca

Summary of Parent's/Guardian's Responsibilities and Rights

There are many people involved in supporting your child. Parents/guardians and school staff should strive for a close working relationship to support the needs of your child.

- At any time you may request a meeting with the teacher to discuss your child's program. It is important that you are acquainted with the school staff working with your child, and discuss how you can work together to support the work at home and at school.

- You may request accessible formats of written communications.

- You, and the student 16 years of age or older, shall be invited to participate in the development of the Individual Education Plan (IEP). You must be provided a copy of the IEP. (see Individual Education Plan section)

- Any written information regarding your child that is available to the School Resource Team and/or the IPRC should also be available to you. School staff should discuss this information with you, and answer any questions you might have. You should, likewise, provide the School Resource Team with any written information you wish to have considered during the problem solving process. (see School Resource Team section)

- You will be given adequate notice, in writing, of the time and date for an IPRC meeting. You will be invited to participate in the meeting. (see Identification, Placement and Review Committee section)

- You may bring a representative to speak on your behalf or otherwise support you. This also applies to students 16 years of age or older. If you plan to bring someone with you, you should give the principal the name(s) in advance of the meeting. (see Local Associations section for organizations that may offer support)

- You must be given written notice of the IPRC decisions. You may request a review of the placement after three months, if you have concerns.

- Your consent to the IPRC decision is necessary before your child is placed. However, if you do not agree with the IPRC decision, but do not ask for a discussion meeting or request an appeal within 30 school days, the Board is allowed to place your child.

- You may appeal the identification, the non-identification, and/or the placement decisions of the IPRC, if you do not agree.

- Your consent is required before staff from community agencies can be consulted.

- When you share documentation from an external agency with your child's school, your verbal or written consent is required for HDSB Professional Services staff (i.e., Psycho-educational Consultant, Speech and Language Pathologist, Social Worker, Behaviour Analyst) to review this information.

- Your consent is required before a Psychoeducational, Speech-Language/Communication or Behavioural assessment can be done.

- You are entitled to review with Special Education staff the results of an assessment and you will be provided with a copy of the report upon request. Results will be shared with school staff only with your consent.

- HDSB staff are here to support your understanding of special education services, and board policies and procedures in areas that affect your child. Please do not hesitate to request information or guidance.

Appendix A - Categories of Exceptionalities and Definitions

A comprehensive overview of the Categories and Criteria of Exceptionalities can be found here.

The following chart outlines the categories of student exceptionalities in the Halton District School Board and is consistent with those of the Ministry of Education.

Behaviour	A learning and/or social-emotional 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 Spectrum Disorder*** 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 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:

Communication cont'd	(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 One of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills that a) Affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are at least in the average range; b) Results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support; c) Results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills; d) May typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; memory and attention; processing speed; perceptual-motor processing; visual-spatial processing; executive functions (e.g. self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making); e) May be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g. difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities; f) Is not the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school

	attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction. For further information refer to PPM 8 section of the Ministry website at: **Policy/Program Memorandum 8 | Ontario.ca**
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.
	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 a 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.

Appendix B - Special Education Placements in Halton

Special Education placement describes the type of classroom setting used to provide a special education program for a student. There are two general categories of 'placement' for students:

- Regular class with resource support; and
- Self-contained class, meaning the student spends all, or a majority of their day in a specialized classroom setting, probably not within their home school.

A comprehensive overview of self-contained programs and placements can be found here.

Regular Class

- ➔ *with **Indirect Service***
  - ◆ The student is placed in a regular class for the entire day, and the teacher receives specialized consultative services OR;
  - ◆ Secondary Gifted Cluster - A congregated grouping of students with an identification of Giftedness and a Gifted program flag at designated secondary (high) schools. Students will be scheduled with non-identified learners in particular courses at the secondary school level. The Ontario curriculum in each of the clustered classes will be differentiated in breadth, depth, and pace from the curriculum being offered in the regular class.
- ➔ *with **Resource Assistance***
  - ◆ The student is placed in the regular class for most of the day and receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, from a qualified special education teacher.
- ➔ *with **Withdrawal Assistance***
  - ◆ The student is placed in a regular class and receives instruction outside of the classroom, for less than 50% of the instructional time, from a qualified special education teacher.

Self-Contained - A Special Education Class

- ➔ ***Partially Integrated***
  - ◆ The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, Section 31, for at least 50% of the school day.
- ➔ ***Fully Self-contained***
  - ◆ The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class, where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, Section 31, for the entire school day.

Appendix C - Special Education Advisory Council Members

View the Special Education Advisory Committee Members List

Halton District School Board

Our schools work in partnership with students, family and community, programming for individual educational strengths and needs to facilitate growth.

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For more information:
Special Education Services Department
New Street Education Centre
3250 New Street
Burlington, Ontario L7N 1M8
Phone: 905-631-6120