

An Introduction to Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

Community Partners



a place of mind

What is an IEP?

An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a comprehensive working document that supports goal setting, instructional planning, and evaluation for students with special needs. An IEP:

- Is a tool for collaborative planning among team members
- Highlights strengths and need
- Identifies individualized goal areas
- Documents the types of services, who will provide them, and for how long
- States procedures for monitoring and/or evaluating progress
- Identifies any adaptations: adjustments made to the instructional process, materials, or assessment
- Where students have very specific learning needs, the IEP may document a modification: a significant change in the learning outcomes expected for a specific student.
- Supports transition planning between school levels (e.g., from elementary to secondary schools).

Who is involved?

The composition of the IEP team will vary with individual student needs. Core team members include:

- Principal
- Parent(s) or guardian(s)
- Student (if appropriate)
- Case Manager (e.g., resource or LAC teacher)
- Teacher(s) or school staff
- Community partners

What are the different roles?

- The **Principal** is responsible for the implementation of the educational program
- The **Case Manager** (e.g., resource or LAC teacher) coordinates the development, documentation, implementation, and evaluation of the student's IEP
- **Parents**, as partners, provide valuable information, help set goals, and support implementation.
- The **Student** actively participates in sharing about his/her strengths and needs, helps to create goals, and works with designated support to achieve their goals.
- **Teachers** and other school staff work with students and parents in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of goals.
- **Community partners** provide specialized training and services beyond those in the school.

What is the process?

The IEP team works to develop an appropriate educational program, which may change across the school year. The process involves:

- **Planning** using information from a variety of sources (e.g., classroom work, medical records), and individuals (e.g., parents, student, previous teachers)
- **Implementation** of strategies and routines with adequate record keeping of students' response to support
- **Evaluation** should be ongoing and communicated through progress reports. Support should be modified if services do not meet student need.

Collaboration & Consultation

IEPs supports an integrated approach to goal setting. According to the BC Ministry of Education, putting the plans, strategies, and support in students' IEPs into practice works best through collaborative consultation within the school, or with other community partners. IEP goals can often support the needs or works of the community partners and likewise, the work of the community partners can be incorporated to support students' IEP goals.

School-based teams may seek information, services and supports from community partners to best provide for students' needs. Specific involvement will vary according to the student's IEP. An integrative service approach between schools and community partners can be beneficial for all involved!



Who are the community partners?

Community partners accessed by the school may be professionals in any of the following service areas:

- Behavior consultants
- Mental health clinicians
- CYSN workers
- Speech-language pathologists
- Social workers
- Probation officers
- Physiotherapists /occupational therapists
- Healthcare provider
- Homebound education professionals

What can I do?

Help develop the IEP!

- Provide information regarding the student's strengths and needs, and how these should be considered in the development of goals, objectives and strategies.

Participate in Review Meetings!

- Share student achievements and signs of progress with the IEP team.
- Discuss any concerns.
- Explain any suggested revisions to goals, objectives, and strategies.
- Identify the role you might play in supporting IEP goals.

Provide Year-End Summaries!

- Review goals in progress
- Suggest foci for the following year.

Who do I work with?

It is essential that school and community services be co-ordinated to avoid duplication, and to ensure consensus regarding goals, consistency in interventions, and an integrated approach to service delivery. Work with the case managers to:

- Keep school staff informed of the services you are providing the student
- Act as a referral source for your support
- Plan the delivery of your services
- Ensure your services are co-ordinated with, and complementary to those being offered by the school.
- Document your services on the student's IEP

Remember...

An effective IEP is developed through consultation where those who work with the student in the school collaborate with those who know the student best.



Visit <http://promisingpractices.educ.ubc.ca> for this and other resources.

Please see our 'Introduction to IEP' brochures for parents and students.

Information adapted from:

- A Resource Guide for Teachers (BC Ministry of Education)
- Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines (BC Ministry of Education)
- For more information about Individual Education Plans, visit the BC Ministry of Education Website:
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed

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