

## An Introduction to Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

### Parents & Guardians



### 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 needs
- 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
- Guides transition to secondary school

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.

### Who is involved?

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

- Principal
- Parent(s) or guardian
- Student (if appropriate)
- Case Manager (e.g., resource teacher)
- Teacher(s) or school staff
- District and community partners (e.g., CYSN worker)

### What are the different roles?

- The Principal is responsible for the implementation of the educational program
- The Case Manager coordinates the development, documentation, implementation, and evaluation of the student's IEP
- You, as partners, provide valuable information, help set goals, and support implementation
- Your **child** actively participates in sharing about his/her strengths and needs, helps create goals, and works with designated support to achieve goals
- Teachers and other school staff work with students and parents in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of goals
- District and 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 student's response to support
- **Evaluation** should be ongoing and communicated through progress reports. Support should be modified if services do not meet student need.



a place of mind

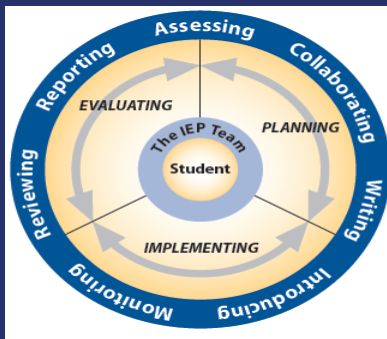
## What must an IEP contain?

Your child's IEP must have one or more of the following:

- goals set for your child that are different from the learning outcomes in their regular educational program; or
- a list of support services required; or
- a list of the adaptations to educational materials, instructional strategies or assessment methods

Your child's IEP should also include:

- present levels of performance
- the setting where the educational program is provided
- names of all personnel and the types of support services provided for your child
- the time period for IEP review



All students with special needs designations must have an IEP.

Exceptions: if the student does not require any adaptations to their instruction or learning outcomes, or if the student requires 25 hours or less (yearly) remedial instruction by a person other than the classroom teacher.

## What YOU can do

### Talk to your Child

- Ask your child what he/she enjoys about school and which areas are most challenging

### Prepare for the IEP Meeting

- Write notes regarding your child's areas of difficulties, interests, learning styles, goals, and any questions or concerns
- Identify any community partners who are working with your child and invite them to the IEP meeting

### Actively Participate!

- Introduce yourself to each team member and identify your child's Case Manager
- Ask questions to ensure clear understanding
- Share reports and medical updates
- Share your concerns and goals for your child
- Establish mutually agreed upon goals and strategies for your child
- Find out how you can support your child at home

### Review and Reflect

Does the IEP:

- Build on your child's strengths?
- Focus on the individual needs of your child?
- Include goals that are practical, realistic, and clearly stated?
- Outline who is responsible for each goal?
- Use strategies to measure and communicate your child's progress?
- Indicate the method for evaluating progress and who is responsible?

## Where can I get more information?

If at any time you have questions or concerns about your child's program, please contact your Case Manager. Working together with the IEP team is the best way to ensure the success of the plan developed for your child.



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

Please see our accompanying guide *Parents: Help Prepare Your Child for their IEP!* Here you will find more details on how you can help your child become an active participant in the IEP process.

### Information adapted from:

Parents' Guide to the Individual Education Planning (BC School Superintendents' Association)

Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines (BC Ministry of Education)

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