

## A Message from the Special Education Advisory Committee

On behalf of our Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), it is our pleasure to provide you with a copy of our second edition of the SEAC newsletter. Your new SEAC committee members have been appointed by the Board for a four-year term and we are already actively reviewing the programs and services provided to exceptional students. The very important role that parents play as partners in their children's education is not more evident than in the support and involvement that parents/guardians of children with special needs provide every day. As part of our consultation with parents of exceptional students, the Board distributed a questionnaire and request for input into the development of the 2007/2008 Special Education Plan. We received 246 individual responses. Not only was this a very high response rate, but the quality of your constructive thoughts and suggestions is extremely important to the development of the Plan.

Individuals and representatives from local parent organizations regularly commend our board and staff for leading the way in special education programs and services. While we recognize we are leaders in the provincial perspective, much work needs to be done. Dialogue, input and support from parents is critical to maximize student success and assist individual students with special needs in reaching their full potential. Only by working together with you and your children can we ensure "success for all".

Judy Hunda  
Chair

Ron Lessard  
Vice-Chair

### What Is SEAC?

SEAC is a Special Education Advisory Committee. SEAC's are mandated in Ontario in Regulation Number 464/97 under the Education Act, to make recommendations to the board regarding its Special Education Plan.

### Seac Meetings

SEAC meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month at the Gord Ewin Centre for Education at 275 Loach's Road. Meetings are open to the public. We welcome your attendance or written input. For further information, contact David Squarzolo at (705) 522-3308, ext. 213.

**W**elcome to the second edition of SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWS. This newsletter will be published twice a year to keep you informed and updated on the topic of Special Education at the Rainbow District School Board. This current issue has a focus on Individual Education Plans in order to prepare for the upcoming IEP meetings this fall.

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### *The Individual Education Plan (IEP): A Resource Guide, 2004* *The Ontario Ministry of Education*

**“Special Education cannot be defined in a single statement. It is a process, a journey that takes different shapes for different students at different times in their educational careers. An IEP provides the roadmap for the completion of that journey.”**

**Note:** The complete document can be found at:  
[www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/guide/resource/iepresquid.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/guide/resource/iepresquid.html)

## A Message from the Director of Education

### Special Education Programs and Services 2007-2008

All exceptional students have the right to fulfill their potential through strong support systems and stimulating program opportunities. Collaborative relationships with parents and strong community partnerships compliment the work of staff and impact the success of our exceptional students.

The Special Education Plan 2007-2008 speaks strongly to the inclusion of all students in the schools of the Rainbow District School Board. Although some parents choose a self-contained class option for their children, the majority of exceptional students will continue to be part of regular classrooms in community schools. This does not mean that they will learn in the same way or at the same rate as other students. It does mean the curriculum will be modified and accommodations will be made to instruction and assessment in order to facilitate success for all students in relation to their own learning potential and needs.

The Special Education Plan 2007-2008 meets the Standards for School Board Plans established by the Ministry of Education, Reg. 306 of the Education Act, and establishes programs and services, which are consistent with the provincial funding model. Reflected in the Special Education Plan 2007-2008 are adjustments based on community input and a careful analysis of needs on a school-by-school basis. We are pleased to be able to continue our early intervention.

We appreciate this opportunity to share a plan which recognizes the complex needs of our students, while at the same time recognizes the opportunities exceptional students have to participate as valued and active members of our school communities.

We hope that all our exceptional students will feel our support as they strive to be the best they can possibly be.

Jean C. Hanson  
Director of Education  
Rainbow District School Board

## INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (I.E.P.'s)

### IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

**Accommodations:** A term used to refer to the special teaching and assessment strategies, human supports and/or individualized equipment required to enable a student to learn and to demonstrate learning. Accommodations do not alter the provincial curriculum expectations for the grade.

**Modified Expectations:** These are changes made in the age-appropriate grade level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student's learning needs.

**Alternative Expectations:** These are developed to help students acquire knowledge and skills that are not represented in the Ontario curriculum. Examples include speech remediation, social skills, orientation/mobility training, and personal care programs. The course expectations are individualized for the student and generally focus on preparing the student for daily living.

## What is an IEP?

### An IEP is ...

- A written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on a thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs – that is, the strengths and needs that affect the student's ability to learn and to demonstrate learning.
- A record of the particular **accommodations** needed to help the student achieve his or her learning expectations, given the students' identified learning strengths and needs.
- A working document that identifies learning expectations that are modified from the expectations for the age-appropriate grade level in a particular subject or course, as outlined in the Ministry of Education's curriculum policy documents.
- A working document that identifies alternative expectations, if required, in program areas not represented in the Ontario curriculum.
- A record of the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purpose of reporting student achievement of **modified and/or alternative expectations**.
- An accountability tool for the student, the student's parents, and everyone who has responsibilities under the plan for helping the student meet the stated goals and learning expectations as the student progresses through the Ontario curriculum.

### An IEP is not ...

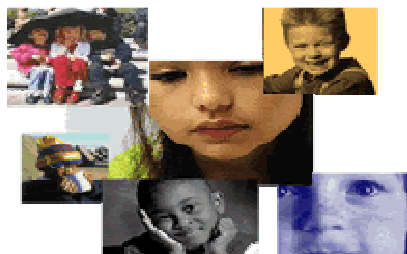
- A description of everything that will be taught to the student.
- A list of all the teaching strategies used in regular classroom instruction.
- A document that records all learning expectations, including those that are not modified from the regular grade level curriculum expectations.
- A daily lesson plan.

The Individual Education Plan (IEP): A Resource Guide 2004  
The Ontario Ministry of Education

## The IEP: How Parents Can Help

- ✓ Communicate regularly with the student's teacher and attend meetings.
- ✓ Keep records of information that may be helpful, especially meetings or discussions that may have taken place outside the school.
- ✓ Share insights about the student's likes, dislikes, relevant medical information and assessments the school may not have.
- ✓ Ask questions. Clarify definitions, jargon, and the roles of those participating. Ask for an explanation of procedural issues that are unclear.
- ✓ Assume the best. Professionals share your goal to develop your child's full potential.

Weber & Bennett, Special Education in Ontario Schools (5<sup>th</sup> edition) 2004



## Changes to the IPRC/IEP Process for 2007-08

With the ever increasing demands on everyone's time the IPRC /IEP meeting process was conceived as a win-win solution at the Rainbow District School Board. Given the Rainbow District School Board's commitment to maximizing the time staff spends supporting exceptional students and the Board's desire to more actively engage parents in the development of their child's IEP, the Board has instituted a combined IPRC/IEP process.

The Identification Review and Placement Committee (IPRC) meeting has become for many (not all) students/parents a fairly straight forward process. The identification and placement are not often altered after the initial meeting and since the Ministry standards state strengths and needs should come directly from assessment data, they too do not often change.

In the interest of truly valuing the time of both parents and educators, when all vested parties are gathered for the IPRC meeting it makes sense to have them remain and use the opportunity to get valuable input for the student's current IEP. September is the optimum time as it is the beginning of the school year and the development phase of the student's new Individual Education Plan (IEP). This consultation process between parents and educators is one required in the Ministry standards document, but in the past has proved rather challenging to meet.

In September 2006, 12 elementary schools were chosen to pilot this new September IPRC/IEP meeting process. It was met with such success that it is now being implemented system wide for all Rainbow District elementary schools.

In the first few weeks of September 2008, parents of elementary students will have the opportunity to attend an IPRC / IEP meeting. Exceptions to this will include any students in grade 8 heading to secondary school, any student transferring to another school and any students who may be changing placement in September. These IPRC meetings will continue to be done in the spring of the school year.

Who will attend this IPRC /IEP meeting? Typically the participants would include the parent, principal, special education teacher, current classroom teacher and student if appropriate. The IPRC discussion would be around the student's identification, placement, strengths, needs and any exemptions. The IEP discussion would address the specifics on special education programs and services to be delivered during the upcoming school year.

Parents would be encouraged to take this opportunity to contribute any ideas or give input on their child's learning style and possible suggestions for general accommodations. They could also seek clarification on educational terminology used such as accommodation vs. modification and alternative programs. This may also be the optimum time for parents to ask what they should be expecting to see each term on an IEP and what specifics to look for on the document.

I believe this time is a wise investment in each child. Real collaboration will occur at the right time to be most effective. Together parents and Special Education Teachers at Rainbow District School Board will have a true opportunity to work as a team as they develop each child's Individual Education Plan.

Pat Camilucci, IEP Lead Teacher  
Rainbow District School Board

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## Individual Education Plans: A Lesson Partnership

Every student in the publicly funded school system who receives special education services must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Each IEP is a truly *individualized* document because it is designed for that student, and that student alone. The IEP process creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related service personnel, and students (when appropriate) to work together to increase the chances for academic success. The IEP can be a testament of quality education for students with special education needs.

Information gathering for the IEP should include a review of the student's records (i.e., IPRC statements of decisions and recommendations), relevant assessment data, consultations with school personnel and other professionals, and any information gained through observation of the student. Consultations with parents and students are an important part of the process.

The Ministry recommends a collaborative teach approach, where information on a student's strengths and needs can be shared and plans can be made on teaching strategies, accommodations, technology supports, and assessment techniques. Parents and students 16 and over must be consulted on the development of the IEP, and sign a form to affirm they were consulted in the development process.

The principal must see that the IEP is complete, that copies are sent to the parents and student (if 16 or older), and that all relevant school personnel are aware of the IEP's content. The principal is responsible for ensuring that the IEP is implemented. However, parents also need to check that all teachers are aware and understand the contents of the IEP. Parents and students should collaborate with teachers to make sure the provisions are implemented. If students themselves understand and accept the IEP provisions, this can go a long way toward successful implementation.

The IEP must be reviewed and learning expectations updated at least once in every reporting period (i.e., each term where there is a report card). According to The IEP Resource Guide (2004), "If certain strategies cease to be effective, it is imperative that the staff working with the student seek out and implement new teaching methods and accommodations". Once again, parents and students are to be consulted if there are significant changes to the student's learning expectations or accommodations.

In 2000 the Ministry of Education issued standards for Development, Program Planning and Implementation of IEPs. Between 2001 and 2003, the Ministry conducted reviews of IEPs prepared by school boards across Ontario. On the basis of information gathered through these reviews, and consultations with educators and parents, a revised IEP Resource Guide was published in 2004.

Diane Wagner and Carter Hammett, LDAO

**Parents play a vital role in the development and education of their children  
and in the success of Ontario's schools.**

**... Ontario Education Minister,  
Kathleen Wynn**

## Collaboration Is Key: A Message from Our IEP Lead Teacher

In Rainbow Schools, everyone wins when parents and educational staff come together during the development of the IEP in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding. The collaborative planning that takes place when all vested parties meet, results in an IEP that reflects the student's current level of achievement, learning strengths and needs, as well as the services that are needed to improve performance and the specific goals that are set in order for the student to progress through the curriculum.

For parents of children who have an exceptionality, the IEP meeting is a prime opportunity to communicate with the school staff regarding their child's exceptionality and educational needs. For educational staff, this meeting is an ideal time to learn more about their student and to involve parents in the learning process in a meaningful and constructive way.

One of the most important sources of information for the IEP team is the child. Prior to the IEP development, parents should discuss concerns about school with their child and be prepared to share this information with the team.

IEPs are a constant reference tool for both teachers and parents. The IEP is typically developed at the beginning of the school year or semester but can be changed or altered at any time, to better reflect the student's needs and progress. It is a working plan used by educational staff on an ongoing basis.

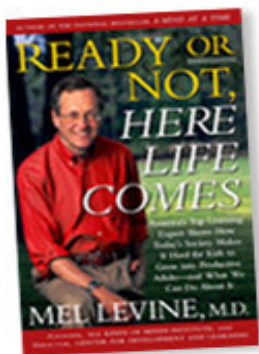
Parents and students are encouraged to conference with staff. This dialogue provides valuable input which may assist with the development of the IEP and more specifically, the general accommodations. It is very important that only a few accommodations be listed on the IEP each term/semester, so that the accommodations can be delivered and measured for effectiveness. At the end of each reporting period, the accommodations are reviewed and either maintained, polished, altered or discarded. This is a process. It takes time to solidify the key accommodations required by the individual student. It is very beneficial for parents to implement the IEP accommodations at home with their child.

Feedback from parents or students about the effectiveness of the IEP is most welcome. When all IEP team members focus on the child and his or her individual educational needs, communicate regularly and work collaboratively, much can be accomplished!

Patricia Camilucci  
Special Education, IEP Lead Teacher

**DONA AUBIN**, Special Education Teacher with the Rainbow District School Board, was recently elected as chair of the Sudbury Chapter of The Canadian Council for Exceptional Children. Congratulations Dona on your new position! The Council for Exceptional Children is an international organization who is committed to those who work with special students - educators, support personnel and parents - recognizing that these dedicated people need the resources, tools and professional opportunities to perform their jobs well.

## Book Review – Ready or Not, Here Life Comes by Dr. Mel Levine



Dr. Levine's latest book focuses on the way in which we need to go about preparing kids for the real world and career success. Every parent wants to know, "What will he be like when he's in his twenties?" After decades of observing children grow into young adults, Dr. Mel Levine, nationally known pediatrician and author, addresses the question of why some youngsters make a successful transition into adulthood while others do not.

Dr. Levine urges that schools teach "life prep," equipping adolescents with what they will need to succeed as adults. He identifies these skills as falling within four growth processes, "the four I's": inner direction, or self-awareness; interpretation, or understanding the outside world; instrumentation, or the acquisition of mental tools; and interaction, or the ability to relate to other people effectively. It is these abilities that ensure a successful transition into the startup years of early adulthood. Parents, schools, and adolescents themselves can all work together to improve work-life readiness, and Dr. Levine shows how. He even offers advice for young adults who find themselves unable to navigate the world of careers.

Insightful, wise, and compassionate, *Ready or Not, Here Life Comes* is a powerful commentary on our times and a book that can help adolescents and startup adults -- with an assist from parents and educators -- to spring from the starting gate of adulthood.

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## The Down Syndrome Association of Sudbury

### Executive:

Chalita Degiosa- President  
Lauri Christison- Vice President

Colette Julien-Leclair- Treasurer  
Sara Neva- Secretary

### Our Vision

To live in a community that embraces diversity and values everyone's genes equally.

### Our Goals

1. To advocate on matters relating to the rights, abilities and potential of individuals with Down Syndrome.
2. To raise awareness about individuals with Down Syndrome as valued members of our community.
3. To advocate on matters relating to quality education for individuals with Down Syndrome.
4. To provide understanding, support, information, resources and encouragement to individuals with Down Syndrome and their families.
5. To stimulate the interest and awareness of the community as to the needs and abilities of individuals with Down Syndrome.

## IEWS/CNIB Parent Support Group

**Do you have a child with low vision or blindness?**

**You are welcome to join us.**

**Location :** CNIB, 303 York St., Sudbury

**Time :** 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm

### Meeting Schedule

**Dates:** Wednesday, September 12, 2007  
Wednesday, October 10, 2007  
Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Wednesday, January 9, 2008  
Wednesday, February 13, 2008  
Wednesday, April 9, 2008  
Wednesday, May 14, 2008

The meetings are set for the second Wednesday of the month. Please note: not every month is included in the schedule. Everyone is welcome. Please come and share your ideas as well as receive information from other parents/guardians and workshops.

Hope to see you there. For more information contact Deb Barclay at 522-4415

## Websites for Parents & Educators

### **Rainbow District School Board**

<http://www.rainbowschools.ca>

(Check out the Special Education Plan by following the links: Programs to Special Education, Parents – the link to the plan is at the bottom of this page.)

### **Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)**

[www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)

### **Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario**

<http://ldao.ca>

### **Ontario Provincial Education Network (OPEN)**

To become a member please go to <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/tools/eduminister/eng/openlist>

By registering with OPEN, you will receive updates on important education initiatives and may be asked to participate in surveys or asked to provide feedback on education initiatives. If you have further questions or comments please e-mail OPEN at [openlist@edu.gov.on.ca](mailto:openlist@edu.gov.on.ca)

### **Schwab Learning**

[www.schwablearning.org](http://www.schwablearning.org)

### **Special Needs Opportunity Windows (SNOW)**

<http://snow.utoronto.ca>

### **Parent's Advocacy in the School**

<http://www.parentsadvocacy.com>

### **Tourettes Syndrome Information**

[www.k12academics.com/tourettes.htm](http://www.k12academics.com/tourettes.htm)

**LOCAL CONTACT INFORMATION**

**ADD/ADHD PARENT SUPPORT GROUP**

Laurentian Hospital  
41 Ramsey Lake Road  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 2R1  
(ph: 523-4747) – Sadie Marr

**AUTISM SOCIETY OF ONTARIO**

(Sudbury and District)  
225 Riverside Drive  
Sudbury, Ontario , P3E 1H4  
(ph: 688-9303)

**CANADIAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION**

**(Sudbury and District B)**  
2141 Lasalle Blvd, Unit F  
Sudbury ON P3A 2A3  
(ph: 670-1993)

**CANADIAN HEARING SOCIETY (SUDBURY)**

1233 Paris Street  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 3B6  
(ph: 523-5695)

**CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

111 Elm Street  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 1T3  
(ph: 675-7252)

**THE CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND**

303 York Street  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 2A5  
(ph: 675-2468)

**CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**

245 Mountain Street  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3B 2T8  
(ph: 674-1451)

**COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (Sudbury Chapter)**

c/o K. Taylor Horeck  
165A D'Youville Street  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3C 5E7  
(ph: 673-5620)

**COMMUNITY LIVING GREATER SUDBURY**

Plaza North-Box 2, 4544 Highway 69N  
Val Therese, Ontario, P3P 1P9  
(PH: 969-4986)

**DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF SUDBURY**

P.O. Box 2855, Station "A" Sudbury,  
Ontario, P3A 5J3  
(ph: 673-8303)

**EPILEPSY SUDBURY-MANITOULIN**

303 York Street  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3B 2A5  
(ph: 688-0188)

**LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF SUDBURY**

Mailing Address  
P.O. Box 21038, Plaza 69  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 6G6  
(ph: 522-0100)  
[www.ldasudbury.ca](http://www.ldasudbury.ca)

**PARENTS ASSOCIATION FOR THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED**

1204 St. Jerome Street  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3A 2V9  
(ph: 560-8000)

**TOURETTE'S ASSOCIATION Sudbury**

192 Eugene Street  
Sudbury, Ontario, P3B 3S7  
(ph: 524-0734)



Return to:  
Rainbow District School Board  
Attention: SEAC  
69 Young Street  
Sudbury ON P3E 3G5  
Fax: (705) 674-3167

**FEEDBACK FORM**

We encourage you to send us comments on any aspect of our special education programs and our SEAC Newsletter content.

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