

Parent's Guide to Accessing Special Education Programs & Services



*Confident learners,
caring citizens.*

Algoma District School Board

ADSB Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

Confident learners, caring citizens.

Vision

In partnership with our stakeholders, the Algoma District School Board will create a collaborative learning community where all flourish as confident learners who see themselves as capable, self-directed and open to learning and as caring citizens who value good character and contribute positively to our communities.

Values

We are guided by

- ADSB character traits
- Lifelong learning
- Empathy
- Ethical relationships
- Equity and inclusion
- Accountability



ADSB Model for Special Education

The Algoma District School Board is committed to supporting the inclusion and integration of exceptional students in the regular, age-appropriate classroom. This has been, and continues to be, the first option for our students and their families. However, in consideration of the unique qualities and diverse needs of each student, we also recognize that some of the families we serve may, when appropriate, prefer to access a specialized classroom or program to enhance the achievement and well-being of their learners. This model of special education program and service delivery provides an approach that allows us to serve students with special education needs from entry into Kindergarten through to graduation from the school system.

The Purpose of This Guide

The Education Act requires that school boards provide special education programs and services for their exceptional pupils. The purpose of this guide is to provide you with information about the processes and procedures involved in ensuring that appropriate special education programs and services are in place to enhance your child's achievement and well-being, including detailed information about the *Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)* process. Please contact your child's school for further information.

Definitions

Exceptional Pupil: The *Education Act* defines an exceptional pupil as “a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program.”

Special Education Program: A Special Education Program for an exceptional pupil is defined as “an educational program that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing special objectives and an outline of educational services that meets the needs of the exceptional pupil”.

Special Education Services: Special Education Services are defined as “facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program”.

The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

An **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** outlines the special education programming and services that a student will receive at school regardless of the student's specific identification.

An Individual Education Plan (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 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 within grade level expectations, given the student's 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 the particular subject or course (if required);
- a working document that identifies alternative expectations (if required);
- a record of the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purposes of reporting achievement of modified and/or alternative expectations;
- an accountability tool for the student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), 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 **may** be developed for students who require special education programs and services to address learning needs **but do not meet criteria for identification in a specific category or exceptionality** and **must** be developed for a student who has been identified as exceptional by an *Identification, Placement, Review Committee (IPRC)*.

The IEP must be completed within 30 days after the student has been placed in the program (generally 30 days following the start of each reporting period) which **means that in most cases, the IEP will be developed by mid-October for the first semester/reporting period and late February / early March for the second semester/reporting period.**

Building an Individual Education Plan (IEP): Accommodations, Modifications, and/or Alternative Programming

In keeping with the expectations of the Ministry of Education, it is expected practice within the Algoma District School Board for teachers to utilize accommodations, modifications, and/or alternative programming (as/when appropriate) when developing Individual Education Plans for students requiring special education programs and/or services.

- **Accommodations:** The term accommodation refers to the special teaching and assessment strategies, and/or individualized equipment required to enable a student to learn and demonstrate learning. Accommodations do not alter the provincial curriculum expectations for the grade.
- **Modifications:** Modifications are changes made in the age-appropriate grade level expectations for a subject or course to meet a student's learning needs. These changes may involve developing expectations and skills required in the

curriculum for a different grade level and/or increasing or decreasing the number and/or complexity of the regular grade level expectations.

- **Alternative Programming:** Alternative expectations are developed to help students acquire knowledge and skills that are not represented in the Ontario curriculum. Alternative programming expectations are individualized for the student and generally focus on preparing the student for daily living. Examples of alternative program expectations may include social skills, orientation or mobility training, and/or self-regulation skills. Alternative programming may be provided in both the elementary and secondary panels.

Accessing Special Education Programming / Services For Your Child

The following steps may provide a helpful overview of the process of accessing special education programs and services for your child:

1. **Collaboration Among Home & School:** When a concern is brought forward from the school or to the school, special education begins. Sharing information and developing a collaborative plan between home and school is invaluable in supporting and encouraging your child. This may be all that is needed to remediate learning difficulties.
2. **School-based Consultation:** If it appears that further consultation is required, the teacher may suggest that the **In-School Educational Programming Team (ISEPT)** discuss your child's needs to help find school-based strategies and interventions that will support your child's learning.
3. **System-based Consultation:** The school may also contact special education department staff to help with assessing needs, offering suggestions and/or strategies for intervention, discussing further assessment options (either informal or formal), and/or recommending specialized consultation with members of the board team or an outside agency.
4. **Individual Education Plan (IEP):** Depending on the circumstances and the assessment data available, the school principal, in consultation with the special education department, may also recommend that a 'non-exceptional' Individual Education Plan (IEP) be put in place for your child. The IEP will outline appropriate programming and services (including accommodations, modifications, and/or alternative programming) that will be provided.
5. **Formal Assessment:** For some students, a formal assessment can help to provide the school with specific information to be used for identification and/or programming. If the student is an appropriate candidate for an assessment to be provided through the school board, the school will follow the ADSB's existing referral process for assessments. In cases where the needs of the student are complex and a more

comprehensive diagnosis is required, (e.g. the learning difficulty is accompanied by behavioural, socio-emotional, or mental health concerns) a referral to an external agency for more specialized diagnosis may be most appropriate. Some families prefer to seek assessments from private practitioners. Your school can help provide you with information on the assessment referral process.

6. **Report Sharing:** Once an assessment has taken place, a report is written to provide the results of the assessment and the information will be shared with you. How the report is shared will depend on whether the assessment was conducted through the school board, or through a private practitioner or external agency.
 - a) **Internal Assessments provided through ADSB:** If the assessment was provided through the school board, the results will be shared with you by the assessor and a Special Education Assignment Teacher (SEAT). Once the results have been shared, you will need to give your permission for the report to be included in your child's *Ontario Student Record (OSR)* folder, which will enable school staff to use the information in the report to ensure appropriate programming and/or services are in place.
 - b) **External Assessments (e.g. Private Practitioner, External Agency):** If you have chosen to have a private assessment conducted outside of the school board, or if assessment through a community agency was considered most appropriate for your child, the practitioner or agency that conducted the assessment will share the results with you directly. You will need to provide a copy of the report to the school to enable school staff to use the information in the report for programming and/or identification.
7. **Non-Exceptional / IEP Only:** If results of the assessment indicate that your child requires special education programming and/or services but does not meet the criteria for a specific identification, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) may still be recommended in the category of "Non-Exceptional" or "IEP only". If your child already has a Non-Exceptional IEP (see #4) in place, it will be updated with information from the report.
8. **IPRC:** If the results of the assessment indicate your child's profile meets criteria for identification in a specific category of exceptionality (see pg. 7-10) an Identification, Placement, Review Committee (IPRC) meeting will be arranged.

For most students, who will continue to receive programming and services in the regular classroom, the IPRC will take place at the school level.

In some cases, if the student demonstrates an appropriate learning profile and the family is interested in considering these options, placement in a specialized program or specialized classroom may be considered. The IPRC may take place at the system level in these circumstances.

Both identification and placement must be reviewed by an IPRC on a regular basis (at least yearly).

- 9. Iterative Programming:** The Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlines the special education programming and services that a student will receive at school. The IEP includes an outline of special education programs and services, specific educational expectations (if applicable), information about methods to review progress, and a transition plan is formally developed, in consultation with you as the parent, for each reporting period or semester (September – January, February - June).

Categories, Exceptionalities, and Definitions

At present, approximately 30-31% of students (approx. 3250 students) in the Algoma District School Board receive special education programs and services as outlined in an *Individual Education Plan*.

The chart below outlines the categories of exceptionality and the specific identifications within each category.

Exceptionality	Definition
Category: Non-Exceptional	
IEP Only	An IEP may be developed for students who require special education programs and services to address learning needs but do not meet criteria for identification in a specific category or exceptionality. This type of IEP is generally referred to as non-exceptional, non-identified, or IEP only. The IEP will outline accommodations, modifications or alternative programming provided to the student.
Category: Communication	
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 and that: - 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; - 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; • 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; • 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 of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making); • 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; • 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
Autism	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.
Language Impairment	A learning disorder characterized by impairment in comprehension and/or 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: a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; 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.

Deaf & Hard of Hearing	An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.
Speech	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.
Category: Intellectual	
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.
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.
Category: Behaviour	
Behaviour	A learning 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.
Category: Physical	
Physical	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 & Low Vision	A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.
Category: Multiple	
Multiple	A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical handicaps, that is of such 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.

Placements

There are five types of placement options internally available to meet the needs of exceptional students in the ADSB. Several external options (e.g. Provincial/ Demonstration Schools, Section 23 programs) may also be available to ADSB students based on need.

Placement decisions are made by the IPRC, which will determine the placement that best suits the **needs of the student**. Placement for non-exceptional students is always within the regular classroom.

Regular Classroom Placements

- **Indirect Support:** Students are enrolled in a regular class and receive direct instruction from the classroom teacher to whom the Board provides specialized consultative services.
- **Resource Assistance:** Students are enrolled in a regular class and receive direct instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a special education teacher in addition to the classroom teacher. Note: this placement does not imply that the student will receive specialized instruction on a daily basis, but that they will receive specialized instruction on an established schedule.
- **Withdrawal Assistance:** Students are enrolled in a regular class and receive instruction outside the regular classroom for part of the school day from a special education teacher. Generally, this placement applies for students that receive services from an itinerant teacher (e.g. Itinerant Teacher of the Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing) or participate in a time-specific program (e.g. Empower Reading).

Specialized Program or Specialized Classroom

Specialized placements are provided based on the need for specialized supports that go beyond the degree of support that can realistically be provided within a regular classroom.

The duration of the special placement will be determined by the success of the programming, the nature of the needs, and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) wishes.

A Special Education Department committee reviews the progress of students in specialized placements on a regular basis and makes recommendations to the IPRC of the continued need for the specialized placement.

- **Withdrawal:** ADSB offers several programs in which students with special education needs continue to be enrolled in an age-appropriate classroom but receive intensive instruction through a withdrawal model for part of the school day from a specialized program teacher. Some programs operate on a “clustered” model (e.g. Integrated Support Program) that includes students that are transported to the host site from a variety of schools, while others operate on an “internal” model that is available at specific schools to support students already enrolled at the school.
- **Special Education Class with Partial Integration (Partial Integration):** Students with special education needs who are enrolled in and attending a self-contained special education classroom with integration into a regular classroom for at least one instructional period daily.
- **Special Education Class Full Time (Fully Self-Contained):** Students with special education needs who are enrolled in and attending a special education class in accordance with Regulation 298, section 31 for the entire school day. Opportunities for integration into age-appropriate classes are arranged.

Specialized Program/Classroom Options – Elementary Sites

Integrated Support Program (ISP):

Withdrawal

Model Description: This model operates as a program, not a class. Students that participate in this program are enrolled in the regular, age-appropriate class with accommodations and/or modifications as required.

Students are “withdrawn” from the regular classroom to participate in blocks of specialized programming focused on building self-regulation and social skills as outlined in the *Individual Education Plan*. Skills to support academic achievement (e.g. assistive technology, intervention/remediation) may also be provided depending on individual student needs.

In addition, the ISP room may function as a “resource room” for students to access an alternative space when necessary.

Current Program Locations:

Ben R. McMullin (Junior/Intermediate)
Pinewood Public School (Primary/Junior)
Isabel Fletcher Public School (Primary/Junior)

Specialized Programming Teacher

Withdrawal

Model Description: This model operates as a program, not a class. Students that receive support through the *Specialized Programming Teacher* model are enrolled in the regular, age-appropriate class with accommodations and/or modifications as required.

A specific caseload of students are “withdrawn” from the regular classroom to participate in blocks of specialized programming with the *Specialized Programming Teacher*. Specialized programming support will often focus on building self-regulation and/ social skills (outlined in an *Individual Education Plan*) or providing additional support for modified academics in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Some students may require support in both areas. Skills to support academic achievement (e.g. assistive technology, intervention/remediation) may also be provided depending on individual student needs and caseload.

The *Specialized Programming Teacher* model is offered at specific schools to support the needs of students within their home school setting. Specific programming support is tailored to the needs of the students supported by the SPT at the individual site.

Current Program Locations:

Blind River Public School
Central Avenue Public School
Kiwedin/Northern Heights Public School
East View Public School
H.M. Robbins Public School
White Pines Intermediate
Superior Heights Intermediate
Korah Intermediate

Practical Learning Classroom (PLC):

Self-Contained

Model Description: This model operates as a self-contained classroom. The Practical Learning Classroom focuses on Alternative programming rather than Ontario Curriculum expectations.

The model is primarily focused on alternative programming in areas such as self-care, independent living skills, social skills, self-regulation, and/or communication skills.

Students also receive academic instruction focused on functional academic areas (e.g. e.g. safety signs and symbols; using money at a store).

Students may also be integrated with their same age peers in program areas such as phys.ed, or the arts, and participate fully in school-wide events and activities.

Students participating in this program often continue into a non-credit, life-skills focused program in secondary school. Prior to admission, parent(s)/guardian(s) must be informed that, as the program focuses on alternative programming, students enrolled in the PLC will likely continue to further life skills (e.g. non-credit) programming at the secondary level.

Program Locations: Anna McCrea Public School (Junior/Intermediate)

Structured Learning Classroom (SLC): **Self-Contained**

Model Description: This model operates as a self-contained classroom. The *Structured Learning Classroom (SLC)* focuses on developing communication, self-regulation, and social skills, along with instruction in functional academics (literacy and numeracy) for students with high needs that are placed in this type of classroom.

All students placed in the SLC have a formal identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder with significant self-regulation, social skills and communication needs.

The Structured Learning Classroom focuses on Alternative programming rather than Ontario Curriculum expectations.

Current Program Locations: Greenwood Public School (Primary/Junior)
Parkland Public School (Primary/Junior)
Boreal FI Public School (Junior/Intermediate)
FH Clergue FI Public School (Junior/Intermediate)
River View Public School (Junior/Intermediate)

Developmental Education Classroom **Self-Contained**

Model Description: This model operates as a self-contained classroom. The *Developmental Education Classroom (DEC)* focuses on supporting the development of

communication, social, self-help and self-regulation skills along with instruction in functional academics (literacy and numeracy).

Students in this program work towards alternative program expectations, including functional literacy and numeracy, rather than the Ontario Curriculum expectations.

Students may be integrated into the regular age-appropriate classroom for a variety of learning opportunities.

Current Program Locations: Blind River Public School (Primary/Junior)
Central Avenue Public School (Primary/Junior)
Elliot Lake Intermediate (Intermediate)

Specialized Program/Classroom Options – Secondary Sites

Developing Alternative Realistic Expectations (DARE)

Non-Credit

The *DARE* program is a non-credit program designed for Grade 9 and 10 students that have a mild cognitive delay. Students enrolled in this program may be identified with a variety of exceptionalities including MID, ASD with mild cognitive delay, and/or a Developmental Disability with appropriate adaptive functioning. This is a transitional program that provides students with a functional academic program while also developing hands-on, everyday life skills that will be needed for future work readiness.

Note: students entering this program require the adaptive functioning skills needed to independently follow the regular routines of a secondary school (e.g. independent lunch hour, class transitions, bus transportation).

Program Location: White Pines

Field School:

Non-Credit

The *Field School* program is a non-credit workplace program designed to help students reach a readiness level for employment, community placement, or further education (through programs such as the *Community Integration through Cooperative Education Program* at Sault College). Students are assigned to one of the three Field School sites and rotate through various job placements while also working on functional academics, social skills and life skills within a classroom setting. Beginning in Grade 11, this program is available to students that have demonstrated the requisite level of independence to function effectively in a work environment.

Program Location: Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre
Station Mall
White Pines

Community Education Program:**Non-Credit**

The Community Education Program provides alternative programming focused on developing self-care, social, self-regulation, and communication skills, along with functional academic (literacy and numeracy) skill development. Students participate fully in all school-wide events and activities. Regular outings and excursions within the community are an important aspect of the program.

Program Location: Superior Heights

Students at Risk Today (START):**Credit**

This credit-earning program, available to students from across the ADSB, supports students with various needs and may provide a re-engagement opportunity for students who have not met with success in mainstream programming. Students in START may have mental health challenges, behaviour concerns, attendance needs or substance abuse issues. START focuses on social skills needed for students to be successful in mainstream classes, in a work placement, and in the community. Class sizes are smaller, with increased adult support, to enable students to work to their full potential. In the START program, students have individualized timetables, and have access to counselling and other social-emotional learning opportunities.

Program Location: Korah, Superior Heights, White Pines

Learning for Emotional and Academic Development (LEAD):**Non-Credit**

These classes are designed to meet the special education needs of smaller communities at the secondary level. Programs are individual to each school based on needs. Any number of different exceptionalities may be included in these classes, with the maximum number of students being 14-16, depending on the severity of the exceptionality. The focus is on individual instruction with as much integration into the regular classroom as appropriate. Students follow an individualized academic program with a strong focus on social and life skills. Students are accepted into the program based on prioritized and identified needs of the school(s).

Program Locations:

Central Algoma Secondary School
Elliot Lake Secondary School
W. C. Eaket Secondary School
Michipicoten High School

Further information about specialized placements available at elementary and secondary sites may be found in the ADSB Special Education Plan.

Ministry's Provincial & Demonstration Schools

The Ministry of Education also operates Provincial Schools and Provincial Demonstration Schools in the province of Ontario. They exist to:

- provide education for students who are deaf or blind, or who have severe learning disabilities;
- provide an alternative education option;
- serve as regional resource centres for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;
- provide pre-school home visiting services for students who are deaf or deaf-blind;
- develop and provide learning materials and media for students who are deaf, blind, or deaf-blind;
- provide school board teachers with resource services; and,
- play a valuable role in teacher training throughout the province.

Provincial and Demonstration schools throughout Ontario provide programs and services for deaf, deaf-blind, and severely learning-disabled students. Residential programs are offered at the schools Monday to Friday, for students who live too far from school to travel daily.

The following is a list of Provincial Schools and Provincial Demonstration schools within the Province of Ontario.

Provincial Schools for the Deaf	<i>Provincial Demonstration Schools (LD)</i>
Ernest C. Drury School 255 Ontario Street South Milton, ON L9T 2M5 Phone: 905-879-2851 TTY: 905-878-7195	Trillium School 347 Ontario Street South Milton, ON L9T 2X9 Phone: 905-879-8428
Robarts School P.O. Box 7360, Station E London, ON N5Y 4V9 Phone and TTY: 519-453-4400	Amethyst School 1090 Highbury Avenue London, ON N5Y 4V9 Phone: 519-453-4408
Sir James Whitney School 350 Dundas Street West Belleville, ON K8P 1B2 Phone and TTY: 613-967-2823	Sagonaska School 350 Dundas Street West Belleville, ON K8P1B2 Phone: 613-967-2830
<i>Provincial School for the Blind & Deaf-Blind</i>	<i>Francophone School for the Deaf and for Those with Learning Disabilities</i>
W. Ross Macdonald School 350 Brant Avenue Brantford, ON N3T 3J9 Phone: 519-759-0730	Centre Jules-Léger 281 rue Lanark Ottawa ON K1Z 6R8 Phone: (613) 761-9300

When attending these schools, students are transported to the nearest airport. They are accompanied by a guide at the airport and transported to the provincial schools each Monday. They return home every Friday.

Further information regarding Provincial Schools and Provincial Demonstration Schools is available in the Algoma District School Board Special Education Plan.

The Identification, Placement, Review Committee (IPRC) Process

An Identification, Placement, Review Committee (IPRC) determines whether a student should be **identified** as exceptional according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education, decides the appropriate **placement** for the student; and **reviews** the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards establish IPRCs. An IPRC is composed of at least three persons, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer of the Board.

Convening An IPRC Meeting

An IPRC meeting may be convened in one of two ways.

- 1. Upon receiving a written request from a student's parent(s)/guardian(s), the Principal of the school must refer the student to an IPRC.**

This usually occurs when a parent has received documentation or other assessments from an outside professional, which, in discussion with the school, is found to be compatible with the Board criteria for identification.

- 2) The Principal may also, on written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s), refer the student to an IPRC.**

This usually occurs when an assessment has occurred, and the student's profile meets the criteria for Identification in a specific category.

Who May Attend the Initial IPRC Meeting?

An IPRC is composed of at least three people, one of whom must be a Principal or a Supervisory Officer of the Board. The other members of the committee can be any other staff including other Principals, professional services staff or teachers. Although parents are not, by Ministry regulation, a member of the committee, they are an integral part of the collaborative process.

The parent(s)/guardian(s), as well as a student who is sixteen years of age or older, has the right to attend the IPRC meeting.

Either the parent or the Principal of the student's school may make a request for others to attend the IPRC meeting. These may include:

- if required, other resource people such as the student's teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher, Board support staff, or the representative of an agency, who may provide further information or clarification;
- a representative of the parent or student 16 years of age or older – that is, a person who may provide support or speak on behalf of the parent or student; and
- an interpreter, if one is required, e.g., sign language, oral, specific language.

Prior to The Initial IPRC Meeting

Within 15 days of receiving your request, or giving you notice, the principal must provide you with a copy of this guide and a statement of approximately when the IPRC will meet.

At least 10 days before the IPRC meeting date, the Principal of the school will provide written notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend the meeting as an important partner in considering your child's identification and placement.

This letter will provide notification of the date, time, and place of the meeting, and it will ask you to indicate whether you will attend.

Prior to the IPRC, background information will be collected from a variety of sources, which may include, but not limited to, the OSR, information from parent(s)/guardian(s), assessment information, assessments from external sources (which will be reviewed by appropriate Special Education staff), information from outside agencies (where appropriate), medical information, and/or information based on the observations and insights of the classroom teacher.

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.

If parent(s)/guardian(s) are unable to attend the scheduled meeting.....

- contact the school principal to arrange an alternative date or time; or
- notify the school principal you will not be attending but the meeting may occur in your absence. The principal will forward to you, for consideration and signature, the IPRC's written statement of decision, noting the identification and placement and any recommendations regarding special education programs and services.

The Initial IPRC Meeting

The role of the Chair (usually the principal) is to:

- Establish a warm, welcoming environment
- Introduce all participants and establish the purpose of the meeting
- Lead the discussion and encourage input from all participants
- Ensure that all relevant information is shared
- Keep the meeting focused and bring closure to the discussion
- Summarize the decisions, explaining them clearly
- Ensure that the necessary documentation has been completed
- Secure signatures as appropriate.

During the meeting, the Committee will review available information about your child. They will:

- consider educational assessments;
- consider a health or psychological assessment conducted by a qualified practitioner if they feel that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
- interview your child, with your permission, if the child is less than 16 years of age, if they feel it would be useful to do so;
- consider any information that the you submit about your child or that the student submits if he or she is 16 years of age or older; and
- consider any information submitted to the Committee that it considers relevant.

The IPRC may also discuss any proposal made about a special education program or special education services for the student. However, the role of the IPRC is to determine identification and placement – the committee does not make decisions regarding programming and services.

You, as the parent, 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 on Identification and Placement.

Following the IPRC meeting, parents will receive a copy of the IPRC Statement of Decision and a copy will be placed in your child's OSR.

Statement of Decision

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;
 - the IPRC's description of your child's strengths and needs;
 - the IPRC's placement decision; and

- the IPRC's recommendations regarding a special education program and special education services;
- where the IPRC has decided that your child should be placed in a special education class, the reasons for that decision.

If you **agree** with the IPRC decision, you will be asked to indicate, by signing your name, that you agree with identification and placement decisions made by the IPRC. The statement of decision may be signed at the IPRC meeting or taken home and returned.

If the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional and you have **agreed** with the IPRC identification and placement decision, the board will promptly notify the principal of the school at which the special education program is to be provided, of the need to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for your child.

If you require additional time to consider the IPRC decision, the signing of the form is delayed until you are ready to sign your agreement, or you indicate your plan of action as a result of your disagreement with the decision.

However, if the IPRC is not signed within 31 days of receipt and the process to reconvene or an appeal has not been initiated by you as the parent(s)/guardian(s), the Principal will notify you in writing that the IPRC decision/placement is being implemented.

The IPRC Review Meeting (Annual)

An IPRC Review Meeting is held with you each school year, unless the principal of the school at which the special education program is being provided, receives written notice from you, the parent(s)/guardian(s), dispensing with the meeting. This usually occurs **if/when** no changes in identification or placement are anticipated.

You may request a IPRC Review Meeting any time after your child has been in a special education **placement** for three months. The IPRC Review considers the same type of information that was originally considered.

The IPRC will review the placement and identification decisions and decide whether they should be continued or whether a different decision should now be made.

Disagreeing with the IPRC Decision

If you **do not agree** with either the identification or placement decision by the IPRC, you may:

- within 15 days of receipt of the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss your concerns; or
- within 30 days of receipt of the decision, file a notice of appeal with:

**Lucia Reece, Secretary of the Board
Algoma District School Board
644 Albert Street East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2K7**

If you **do not agree** with the decision after the second meeting, you may file a notice of appeal within 15 days of your receipt of the decision.

If you do not consent to the IPRC decision and you do not appeal it, the board will instruct the principal to implement the IPRC decision.

Appealing an IPRC Decision

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

**Lucia Reece, Director of Education & Secretary of the Board
Algoma District School Board
644 Albert Street East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2K7**

The notice of appeal must:

- indicate the decision with which you disagree; and
- include a statement that sets out your reasons for disagreeing.

The Appeal Process

The appeal process involves the following steps:

- the board will establish a special education appeal board to hear your appeal; the appeal board will be composed of three persons (one of whom is to be selected by you, the parent/guardian) who have no prior knowledge of the matter under appeal;
- the chair of the appeal board will arrange a meeting to take place at a convenient time and place, but no later than 30 days after he or she has been selected (unless parents/guardians and board both 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(s)/guardian(s), and your child, if he or she is 16 years old or over, are entitled to be present at, and to participate in, all discussions; the appeal board must make its recommendations within three days of the meeting ending; it may:

- agree with the IPRC and recommend that the decision be implemented; or
- disagree with the IPRC and make recommendations to the board about your child's identification, placement, or both;
- the appeal board will report its recommendations in writing, to you and to the school board, providing the reasons for its recommendation;
- within 30 days of receiving the appeal board's written statement, the school board will decide what action it will take with respect to the recommendations (boards are not required to follow the appeal board recommendation);
- you may accept the decision of the appeal board, or you may appeal to a Special Education Tribunal. You may request a hearing by writing to the secretary of the Special Education Tribunal. Information about making an application to the Tribunal will be included with the appeal board's decision.

Special Education Advisory Committee

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Algoma District School Board holds monthly meetings during the school year. SEAC information and meeting dates are published on the ADSB web site: www.adsb.on.ca

SEAC meetings enable each member to provide input on the particular needs of the association they represent, to bring valuable information from their association, to work collaboratively with the Board to ensure that the needs of all exceptional students are met, and to advise the Board about Special Education programs and services.

SEAC meetings also provide the opportunity for Special Education department personnel to keep SEAC members up to date on Board initiatives, activities, and programs and services for students with special education needs. SEAC may make recommendations to the Board on a variety of topics related to special education, and participates, both in the annual review of the Special Education Plan, and in the review of the annual budget and finances for Special Education. Meetings of the SEAC are open to the public.

The chair of the SEAC reports all correspondence to the membership. Often, letters of concern are received from other school boards to provide information or request the support of the Algoma SEAC. The Algoma SEAC will also write letters promoting special education to the Ministry of Education.

The System Administrator for Special Education, the Superintendent of Education, and two trustees attend all meetings and so are able to respond directly to concerns from the members about pending legislation, new programs, budget questions, etc.



**ALGOMA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
2022-2026**

Name	Organization/Interest	Work Phone
MICK, Pat *CHAIR*	Member-At-Large	(705) 779-2403 patriciamick41@gmail.com
SNIDER, Clint	Algoma Family Services	705-945-5050 ext 2032 csnider@algomafamilyservices.org
TUOMI, Margaret	Autism Ontario	(705) 542 1794 mrstuomi@gmail.com
KALLONEN, Kate	Autism Ontario (Alternate)	(705) 2531157 katekallonen@outlook.com
BARBEAU, Margaret	Community Living Algoma	(705) 253-1700 mbarbeau4@icloud.com
IACOE, Sergio	Community Living Algoma (Alternate)	(705) 253-1700 ext 3005 Sergio.lacoe@cla-algoma.org
GAUTHIER, Amanda	THRIVE Child Development Centre	(705) 759-1131 ext 229 agauthier@kidsthive.ca
BURNS, Sarah	Thrive Child Development Centre (Alternate)	(705) 759-1131 ext 290 sburns@kidsthive.ca
SIMON, Velma	Member-At-Large	(705) 989-6662 velma.simon@saultcollege.ca
KITTS, Sherri	North Shore Tribal Council	(705) 946-3933 ext 217 skitts@gardenriver.ca
LAMBERT, Rachelle	North Shore Tribal Council (Alternate)	rlambert@batchewana.ca
EVANS, Sheryl	Trustee – ADSB	(705) 943-9072 evanss@trustee.adsb.ca
WHITLEY, Heather	Trustee- ADSB	(705) 206-4175 whitleyh@trustee.adsb.ca
MYERS, SUSAN	Trustee- ADSB (Alternate)	(705) 256 - 6128 myerss@trustee.adsb.ca
ADMINISTRATION (Resource to SEAC)		
VALLEE, Brent	Superintendent of Education – ADSB	705-945-7297
VIITA, Kristen	System Administrator – ADSB	705-945-7111 ext 10258
LAPPAGE, Krista	System Administrator – ADSB	705-945-7111 ext 10255
PHILLIPS, Charlene	Recording Secretary - ADSB	705-945-7297

Updated May 1, 2025

Questions and Concerns:

The following provides a step-by-step listing of ADSB staff to whom questions or concerns regarding special education programs and/or services should be addressed:

- a) Classroom teacher
- b) Special Education Resource Teacher/Special Education Lead
- c) Principal or Vice-Principal
- d) Special Education Assignment Teacher (SEAT)
- e) System Administrator for Special Education
- f) Superintendent of Special Education
- g) Director of Education
- h) Trustee/Chair of the Board
- i) Ministry of Education

Additional Information:

- **Website – www.adsb.on.ca**
Additional information related to special education programs and services is available on the Algoma District School Board's website. Please follow the Special Education tab for information specifically related to special education.
- Dial toll free to the Sault Ste. Marie Education Centre at **1-888- 393-3639** or dial direct at **705-945-7111**.
- **Kristen Viita**, System Administrator for Special Education - 705-945-7111 ext. 10258
- **Krista Lappage**, System Administrator for Special Education – 705-945-7111 ext 10
- **Brent Vallee**, Superintendent of Special Education
Algoma District School Board
644 Albert Street East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2K7
Phone: 705-945-7297

