

Province of British Columbia

Individual Education Planning for Students with Special Needs

A Resource Guide for Teachers

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Ministry of
Education



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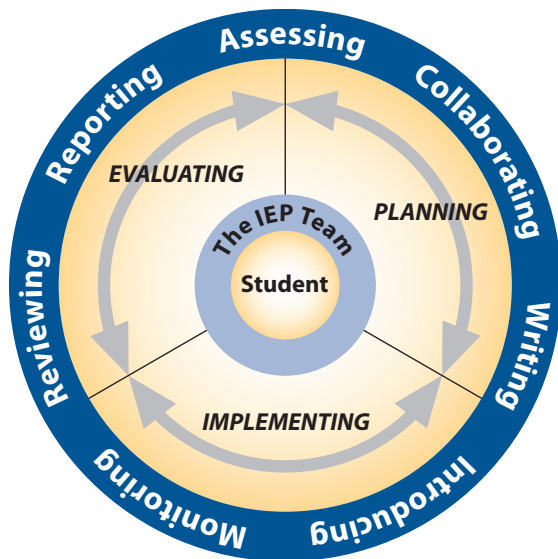
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I. Introduction

Purpose

This resource guide is an updated version of the 1996 Ministry of Education resource guide *Individual Education Planning for Students with Special Needs*. It provides information and strategies that align with professional practice and current legislation. The guide is designed for teachers involved in developing and implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Content and Organization



While the content in this resource is organized sequentially, the circular diagram at left represents the cyclical process of IEP development, which includes stages of PLANNING, IMPLEMENTING and EVALUATING.

Within these stages are seven essential components: Assessment, Collaboration, Writing, Introducing, Monitoring, Reviewing and Reporting. Ideally, schools engage in these stages to develop and use the written IEP as an effective tool for the individualized program for a student.

The information in this resource is presented using the following format:

- The Big Idea, which describes the overarching theme or concept
- Key Points that should be considered in the process
- Practices that have proven to be effective

Definitions of terms, links to legislation, Ministerial Orders, clarifications and additional resources may be found directly by clicking on the highlighted text within the document.

Appendices include an array of useful, reproducible tools to assist teachers in planning, implementing and evaluating IEPs.

II. Determining Which Students Require an IEP

The Individual Education Plan order (M638-95) provides direction about who should and who should not receive an IEP. It states that a board must ensure that an IEP is designed for a student with special needs as soon as practical after the student is so identified by the board. The order indicates three circumstances where an IEP for a student with special needs is not necessary. Those instances are where:

- the student with special needs requires no adaptation or only minor adaptations to educational materials, or instructional or assessment methods
- the expected learning outcomes established by the applicable educational program guide have not been modified for the student with special needs
- the student with special needs requires in a school year 25 hours or less remedial instruction by a person other than the classroom teacher, in order for the student to meet the expected learning outcomes

(To view the order see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m638-95.pdf)

Looking at the inverse circumstances of this may help clarify which students are entitled to an IEP. A student with special needs is entitled to an IEP if:

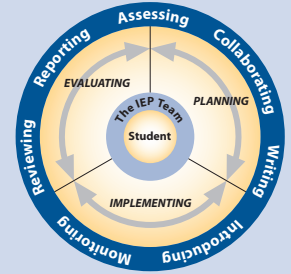
- the student with special needs requires more than just minor adaptations to educational materials, or instructional or assessment methods, or
- the student with special needs is working on outcomes other than the prescribed outcomes of the curriculum, or
- the student with special needs is working on the regular outcomes with little or no adaptations, but receives 25 hours or more of remedial help from someone other than the classroom teacher to meet the expected learning outcomes

Some students, although not identified as having a special need, may require adaptations and remedial help from someone other than the classroom teacher. It is not a requirement that these students have an IEP. In this case, it is good practice to put in place a learning plan to document specific needs of these students. Local school boards may have established practices and templates for learning plans.

III. Purpose and Process

The Big Idea

An IEP is a documented plan developed for a student with special needs that summarizes and records the individualization of a student's education program.



Key Points

- An IEP provides accountability for:
 - individualized goals
 - the means to achieve these goals
 - additional services and how they will be delivered
 - responsibility for various aspects of the IEP
- An IEP assists teachers in monitoring student growth and progress.
- An IEP provides an ongoing record to assist with continuity in programming and transition planning.
- An IEP guides the implementation of learning support services inside or outside the classroom to align the educational program with the needs of the student.
- Development of an IEP may be undertaken by one teacher in consultation with parents, a small group or an expanded team, depending on the complexity of the student's needs.
- An IEP team might include any of the following participants:
 - teacher(s)
 - case manager
 - specialist staff
 - school counsellor
 - community specialists
 - parent(s) or legal guardian
 - the student, if appropriate
- The IEP process, when it works well, involves a dynamic cycle of planning, monitoring and evaluating.

Practices

An IEP documents:

- individualized goals linked to the student's assessed special needs, and in some cases, shorter term objectives
- strategies to be used
- services and resources to be provided
- measures for tracking achievement
- adaptations and/or modifications

An IEP may set out a blend of adaptations, modifications and inclusion in the regular curriculum.

Program areas in which a student is following the course or subject curriculum outcomes without any adaptations or modifications do not need to be included in the IEP.

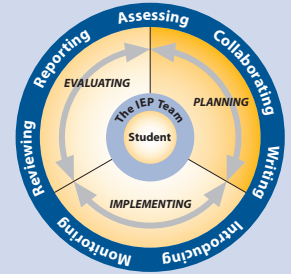
Many students require only minor adjustments to the learning outcomes, which can be documented in a one-page IEP. Students with more involved needs require detailed and comprehensive plans.

For students with complex special needs who require a significantly different educational program, several goal areas may need to be addressed. Although the IEP content in these cases may be lengthy, focusing on the key aspects of the plan will keep it manageable.

IV. Planning

The Big Idea

Assessment and collaboration should precede the actual writing of an IEP document.



Assessment

Key Points

- The purposes of educational assessment are twofold. Assessment *for* learning provides information that directs further instruction. Assessment *of* learning monitors student achievement.
- Assessments exist in a variety of forms: observation, reviewing historical data, interviewing, and informal and formal testing.
- A variety of assessments should be used to inform the development of appropriate IEP goals and planning of services.
- Assessment not only considers a student's current level of performance and learning style but also methods of instruction being used, features of the learning environment, and the appropriateness of the curriculum for that student.

Practices

Teachers will improve students' assessment results and access to the curriculum when they accommodate different learning styles. There are three main learning styles. A student may prefer one or a combination of all.

- visual - learns best by seeing (e.g., watching demonstrations or videos)
- auditory - learns best by listening (e.g., through verbal interactions with others or with self)
- kinesthetic - learns best by doing

Most informal and formal assessment methods can be grouped within four general categories: **Reviewing**, **Interviewing**, **Observing** and **Testing** (RIOT).

Reviewing

Understanding a student's needs can be informed by reading various records with both current and historical information:

- permanent record files and special services files
- school documentation (e.g., school-based team notes, discipline records)
- teacher marks/records
- performance logs

Interviewing

Valuable insight can be gained from talking to a variety of people:

- parents, who have rich insights and knowledge about their children
- current and past teachers and other relevant service providers
- students themselves (e.g., questionnaires, self-assessments, response journals or learning logs)

Observing

Watching, listening and examining student work and monitoring responses to instruction are all important sources of assessment information. Various tools can be used to document observations:

- checklists of student performance and/or behaviour
- rubrics and rating scales
- product/work samples
- portfolios
- audio or video recordings
- functional assessments

Testing

Testing, both formal and informal, is an important part of the assessment process and can include a variety of tests:

- quizzes, probes and diagnostic skill inventories
- criterion-referenced tests
- norm referenced tests
- alternative test formats – oral, graphic, electronic

Collaboration

Key Points

- Collaboration is a process in which people work together to solve a common problem or address a common concern. Collaboration is founded on clear communication and a willingness to work toward a common purpose.
- Through collaboration a commitment to action can be built.
- The planning of an IEP can draw on the knowledge and expertise of several people, depending on the needs of the student. Consultation is a process of seeking expert information and advice. It is foundational to the collaborative process.
- By authority of the Individual Education Plan Order schools are required to offer parents, and where appropriate, the student, an opportunity to be consulted on IEPs.
- Collaboration on an IEP should begin as soon as practically possible after a student is identified as having special needs.

Practices

Collaboration is best achieved in an atmosphere that is respectful, trusting and honest. This atmosphere is created through open communication and discussion of realistic expectations for the student. Especially when the first IEP is developed and when preparing for transitions, realistic discussion with the family and student is needed about goals for the future.

A case manager may be named to coordinate and manage the collaborative process. IEP team meetings are the most common form of collaboration. Collaboration can take place in person or through email, telephone calls and/or correspondence. Appendix 2 provides a variety of templates for written communications.

Key features for effective meetings include:

- use of clear, concise, jargon-free language
- sufficient time for participants to introduce themselves and explain roles and responsibilities
- clear identification of the purpose of the meeting
- appropriate review of the student's school, social and medical history
- distribution of minutes noting key information and follow-up action

IEPs are usually developed by a teacher in collaboration with parents. Parents/caregivers have a wealth of information about their child which can help with the selection of appropriate IEP goals and strategies. In order to facilitate parental input the teacher should:

- explain the IEP process prior to meetings and/or consultations so that parents know what to expect (see Appendix 2A, Parent Letter – Description of the IEP Process)
- provide a letter or pre-planning form that allows for input to be shared in writing, in a telephone interview or at a planning meeting
- share information in advance so that parents are prepared to fully participate

In some cases, the student's special needs may require the collaboration of other school or district staff, community specialists or supports for the parent. The size of the IEP team depends on the complexity of the student's needs. An IEP team may include:

- school and/or district support services (e.g., learning assistance or resource teacher, teacher assistant, school counsellor, ESL teacher, other teachers, librarians, office staff, school psychologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech-language pathologist, peer tutors, mentors)
- community services (e.g., before- and after-school care provider, probation officer, child welfare worker, nurse, behaviour consultant, experts on social/emotional/physical or developmental needs)
- an interpreter so that the parent can feel supported and/or better understand and communicate

Including the student in the collaborative process is important and should be done in a manner respectful of the student's developmental age and ability. This could include participation at meetings or selective portions of meetings. See Appendix 3 for a variety of reproducible forms and checklists to support student input.

Meaningful Consultation

The resource *Supporting Meaningful Consultation with Parents* was produced in 2007/08 by the British Columbia Council of Administrators of Special Education (BC CASE) in partnership with the Ministry of Education. Meaningful consultation is defined as follows:

"At its heart, meaningful consultation is about interactive, two-way communication and dialogue. Such consultation is undertaken to seek information, advice and/or informed opinion for consideration **prior** to decision making."

This resource is available on the BC CASE website (www.bc-case.org/).

Writing

Key Points

Although local boards of education determine the template to be used for writing an IEP, the Individual Education Plan Order requires IEPs to include the following content:

- the goals or outcomes set for that student for that school year where they are different from the learning outcomes set out in an applicable educational program guide, and/or
- a list of the support services required to achieve goals established for the student, and/or
- a list of the adaptations to the educational materials, instructional strategies, or assessment methods

The IEP should also contain:

- the names of all personnel who will be providing the educational program and the support services for the student during the school year
- the setting and conditions for the proposed educational program, for example, in-class or a pull-out environment
- the present level of educational performance of the student
- the period of time and process for review of the IEP
- evidence of evaluations or review, which include any revisions made to the plan and the tracking of achievement in relation to goals and objectives
- plans for the next transition point in the student's education and linkages to graduation transitions during grades 10 to 12

Practices

When writing an IEP, the team or case manager should include:

- a manageable number of realistic or achievable goals
- measurable objectives
- relevant strategies
- the means to assess, evaluate and track progress toward the goals

For assistance in planning for students with complex needs, see Appendix 5: Setting SMART Goals and Objectives.

Goals

An IEP contains goals or learning outcomes that correspond to the identified special needs of the student for that particular year. Recommendations from reports (medical or school psychologist) may be important information for setting goals.

Goals can be written to address both the immediate and long term (e.g., independent learning, transitioning, and graduation with a Dogwood, Adult Dogwood, School Completion Certificate).

The student's strengths can also be referenced in the IEP goals. To promote the student's self-esteem, a goal might be included to specifically address a student's talent or an area of personal interest, passion or expertise.

Clear IEP goals can be created and communicated by using the **SMART** concept:

Specific:	written in clear, unambiguous language
Measurable:	allow student achievement to be described, assessed and evaluated
Achievable and action-oriented:	are realistic for the student and written in terms of what the student will do
Realistic and relevant:	are meaningful for the student, focused on positive and achievable changes
Time-limited:	can be accomplished within a specific period (weeks, months, school year)

For more tips on writing SMART Goals, see Appendix 5.

Objectives

After formulating the goals, the next step is to write specific objectives. Objectives are set for a short period of time, such as a term, a semester, or a specific number of months. They are focused, concrete steps toward achievement of the goals.

Objectives break down the goal into specific, measurable and observable skill/knowledge components. Well-written objectives provide clear guidance as to what the student is expected to achieve and provide a clear basis for monitoring student progress.

Creating Measurable Objectives

Specify a grade or age level performance: for example, make reference to a performance standard, rubric or developmental sequence.

Indicate a rate: for example, state that the student will perform the task 3 out of 4 times, 80% of the time, or 5 minutes out of every 10, with 75% success.

Define the factors surrounding the behaviour: for example, state "when asked to work independently...," "when dealing with female authority figures...," "always after lunch..." or "in math class...".

Strategies

The strategies that will be used to help the student achieve the goals and objectives must also be included in the IEP. The strategy section often indicates:

- the approach and/or resources to be used
- where the activity will take place, how often, on what days, or in what time frame
- the staff person who will work with the student

An IEP usually includes one or more of the following types of strategies:

- provides intensive, direct instructional intervention (e.g., remedial or compensatory)
- extends content for enrichment
- adapts the learning environment to enhance mobility or meet sensory needs
- provides alternative approaches to instruction and/or evaluation
- uses adaptive or assistive technologies
- provides specialized services (e.g., Braille, orientation and mobility, speech reading, sign language instruction)

If the student is preparing for transition between schools or after secondary school, the following considerations are important:

- input from the family and student regarding needs, preferences, interests and concerns
- key support people or agencies that will be part of the student's life in the next setting
- support for communication within the new setting
- opportunities for the student to explore/experience new settings in advance of the transition
- the connection of the family to service agencies, if relevant
- exposure to vocational experiences prior to leaving school

Strategy Development Tips

- Remember to consider a student's learning style when developing strategies.
- Use differentiated instruction and alternative formats in the classroom to normalize the student's educational experience. See Universal Design for Learning on the CAST web site (www.cast.org/).
- Foster opportunities for peer mentorship.
- Involve relevant organizations to support best/effective practices (e.g., Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders (POPARD), Special Education Technology BC (SET BC)).
- Use tools (e.g., a class sociogram or personality inventory) to better understand the student's social and emotional needs and facilitate his or her sense of worth and belonging in the group.
- Staff training, mentoring, or other types of support may be needed to successfully implement the strategies.
- See Appendix 3: Tools for Teachers and Students.

Evaluation

Once goals, objectives and strategies have been identified, the next step is to plan for appropriate observation and data collection (essentially the performance criteria for the student) so that the effectiveness of strategies can be determined and the student's progress measured and reported. Examples of evaluation tools include:

- portfolio collections of work
- checklists of student performance and/or behaviour (can be completed by teachers and teacher assistants)
- rubrics and rating scales
- functional assessments
- student self-assessments

Fitting Together Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Evaluation in an IEP

Scenario A:

Frank is not yet using language to communicate.

Goal: Frank will increase his communication via a communication board in social interactions with peers.

Objective: Frank will have his picture board with him at all times. He will respond to his peers by pointing to an appropriate picture on his board 90% of the time when asked simple questions by his peers.

Strategies:

- Teacher will practise questions with Frank briefly during morning greeting.
- Teacher assistant will prompt Frank visually if needed.
- Speech-language pathologist will model with the class how to ask “yes” and “no” questions as well as other questions that can be answered using a picture board.
- Frank will practise with office staff when he delivers attendance each morning.
- Parents will use the picture board to help Frank share school news at home.

Evaluation: Speech-language pathologist will conduct assessment of Frank’s functional skills with his communication board at the end of each reporting period.

Scenario B:

Michelle experiences significant physical agitation in response to her sensory environment.

Goal: Michelle will decrease hand-flapping.

Objective: In class, Michelle will use alternative behaviour to hand-flapping, for example, use a squeeze ball, fuzzy pencil-grip, putty or sandpaper on the desk, four out of five times.

Strategies: In a pull-out session, Michelle will be presented with one object at a time that allows for sensory input (e.g., fidget, fuzzy pencil) to determine which ones are reinforcing for her. Michelle will try the object(s) in class.

Evaluation: Teacher will create a daily log for staff to record Michelle’s positive and negative responses. Teacher will share the log with parents once a week so that successful strategies can be implemented at home.

Scenario C:

Rhianna has a significant delay with reading and writing skills.

Goal 1: Rhianna will complete written assignments in English 10.

Objective: Rhianna will use graphic organizers to create chapter summaries.

Strategies: In resource class, Rhianna will learn about and use graphic organizers to summarize chapters of her independent reading novel. The resource teacher will provide graphic organizers for use in English 10.

Evaluation: The classroom teacher will give feedback on Rhianna's completed summaries using a performance rubric (see BC Performance Standards).

Goal 2: Rhianna will use her talents to be actively engaged in school activities.

Objective: Rhianna will use her artistic talent to illustrate the key themes from her independent reading novel and share her creative process with others in her class. She will also work on the school yearbook.

Note that for this goal Rhianna will be working in an area of personal interest and strength. She can proceed on this goal without the need to break it down into objectives.

Strategies: Rhianna will use a storyboard template to sequence the major themes in her novel, illustrating each one using the medium of her choice (e.g., watercolour, pastel).

Once complete, Rhianna will be invited to scan the work for a PowerPoint presentation to her classmates.

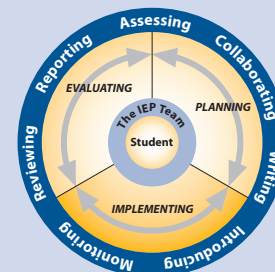
Rhianna will be contacted by the yearbook sponsor teacher and invited to join the production team.

Evaluation: Portfolio collection of work and feedback from the yearbook sponsor teacher.

V. Implementing

The Big Idea

With assistance from other IEP team members, teachers have the primary responsibility for introducing and monitoring the educational program outlined in an IEP.



Introducing

Key Points

- Once developed, an IEP is only useful when it is introduced well and put into practice.
- Introducing an IEP will be most effective when the adults involved are supportive, observant, intuitive, willing to adapt, and proactive to potential problems.

Practices

Introducing new strategies in an IEP should start with a discussion with the student, as an understanding of his or her role in the IEP often determines the level of student success.

Strategies implemented for students with special needs may be used with any student. This practice increases the value of choice, provides broader access to the curriculum for all, increases student engagement, acknowledges a variety of learning styles, and de-stigmatizes the student with special needs. This practice is referred to as Universal Design for Learning. See Appendix 1: Terms Related to IEP Development.

Quality communication among all IEP team members is key to the success of introducing and monitoring new strategies. IEP implementation in secondary schools is more complex, as most students have multiple teachers. Secondary schools need a clear process to communicate the result of new strategies. See Appendix 4B: Learning Assistance and Classroom Supports for Secondary Schools.

Teacher assistants may be responsible for introducing the IEP strategies under the direction of the classroom teacher or case manager. For further information, see the CUPE/BCTF joint publication entitled *Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers and Teacher Assistants* (<http://bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=5920>).

New strategies and routines should be introduced in small steps in order to observe and monitor the student's responses. Observation tools and assessments can be used to monitor the student's responses. See Appendix 4: Tools for Planning and Implementing.

Staff members who need support to learn and successfully implement strategies should be directed to resource materials, offered mentoring opportunities or given relevant training.

Monitoring

Key Points

- Monitoring is the process by which educators gather and assess data about the student's response to strategies and progress toward IEP goals.
- Monitoring includes observation and consistent data collection using both formal and informal assessment methods.
- Monitoring provides the feedback necessary to identify possible adjustments to the goals, strategies and interventions being implemented.

Practices

When IEP objectives are well written and clear, the monitoring process is not onerous. Data can be gathered through a variety of assessments and formats (See RIOT, p.7).

When monitoring, it is important to observe such variables as:

- the student's level of engagement
- the nature of the student's responses to strategies and interventions (e.g., the student resists leaving the classroom for learning assistance)
- the student's emotional/physical state that day
- school or home-related activities that may have an effect on the student's performance
- the student's self-assessment of his/her own responses to strategies

Successful strategies can be recorded to build a repertoire of effective techniques for the student and perhaps the whole class.

Any member of the IEP team, including the student or parent, can collect data for use in providing feedback.

Members of the IEP team should share observations about the effectiveness of the new strategies and consider how to shape them to better fit the students and the classroom context.

Before abandoning a strategy that does not seem to work, teachers should consider if there are other factors at play. Questions to ask include:

- Did this student have the necessary readiness skills to achieve these objectives?
- Were there barriers to the student's success that were not fully understood?
- Have there been other changes in the student's life outside of school?
- Has a situation created a new challenge for the student?

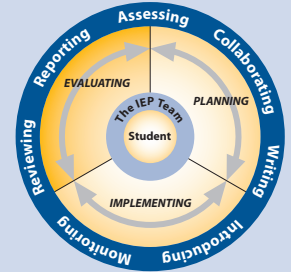
For teachers who are responsible for implementing an IEP but who were not involved in its planning:

- locate and review the student's files
- meet with the case manager to review details of the IEP and ask questions to clarify
- meet with case managers and/or staff to discuss special needs of students in the class
- make plans to inform itinerant teachers, new staff, teachers-on-call, and educational assistant substitutes about the student
- provide input for the IEP and make plans for the next IEP review meeting

VI. Evaluating

The Big Idea

Evaluating the effectiveness of an IEP is completed through an IEP review. Reviewing an IEP not only provides direction for future planning but informs the reporting of progress to parents.



Reviewing

Key Points

- The purpose of an IEP review is to help determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of the IEP, share information about student progress and help identify effective strategies in preparation for transitions.
- The Individual Education Plan Order states that an IEP must be reviewed at least annually. This can occur at any time during a school year.

Practices

Effective practice suggests more frequent reviews, for example, as part of the reporting cycle. This enables important adjustments throughout the school year.

An annual IEP review does not mean that a whole new IEP is developed; rather, information about a student's progress is discussed to determine whether strategies are effective, goals or objectives have been achieved and to plan for next steps.

Key components of an IEP review include:

- involvement of the parent and (where appropriate) the student
- examination of assessments and discussion of observations by team members
- consideration of problems and concerns of IEP team members
- revision of goals, objectives, strategies, services and materials
- identification of priorities for the next instructional period
- referrals for new assessments and services
- recording of the next IEP review date

Conducting an IEP review at the end of the school year will help provide continuity for a student transitioning to the next grade, school or to adult life.

Consider involving the student, where appropriate, in at least part of the IEP review to share his or her achievements and to participate in planning.

A teacher or case manager usually arranges IEP review meetings. The meetings are often held in person but may also be carried out by conference call or other means.

Reporting

Key Points

- Progress reports provide a snapshot of how the student is progressing toward his or her educational goals, those identified in the IEP and/or those for the course, subject or grade.
- Reports should be objective, concise and free of jargon.

Practices

Any teacher or district professional providing a portion of the student's program must provide written reports on student progress for inclusion with classroom teacher's report.

When students with special needs in grades K to 3 are working toward learning outcomes set out in the curriculum for the subject or grade, anecdotal comments will be provided, as for all students.

For students with special needs in grades 4 to 12, structured written comments or letter grades may be used to report student progress. The IEP team should determine the most appropriate form of reporting. If letter grades are used in grades 4 to 12 to report on progress toward goals in the IEP or any goals *other* than those of a specific course, subject or grade, this fact must be indicated in the body of the student progress report.

When students with special needs in grades 10 to 12 are working toward a School Completion Certificate or Dogwood certificate, progress must be reported using letter grades.

For more information see: *Student Progress Reporting Order (M191/94)*
Reporting Students Progress: Policy and Practice at
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom_assessment/09_report_student_prog.pdf

VII. Frequently Asked Questions

The IEP Process

Q: Are IEPs required for students without identified special needs?

A: No. IEPs are required only for students who have been identified as having special needs. School staff may create additional IEPs or learning plans for students who need support; however, local policies and practices should be used as a guideline.

Q: Who can have access to the assessment records relating to a student's special needs?

A: Student records are confidential and should be treated as such. The classroom teacher(s), school district and school professionals working with the student, parents of the student and students who are 18 or older may have access to a student's file. Check with your principal or administrator of special education to determine local processes about sharing information with other professionals.

Q: Are there shortcuts to the IEP process to make it less time-consuming?

A: Many students require only a simple plan to coordinate adaptations in their education program. In these cases, the IEP process is a straightforward record of the decisions resulting from collaboration. For some students, the IEP process needs to include in-depth planning and modifications with specialized support to develop functional and/or behavioural competencies. The complexity of the process depends on the specific needs of the students.

Q: How do classroom teachers know that a student in the class has an IEP?

A: By law, a copy of the student's current IEP must be kept on file (Ministerial Order 190/91 – Permanent Student Records Order). Schools and districts have local processes to manage this important information. For information about your local school or district processes, ask your school principal.

Q: Who in the school or district should be contacted if there is concern about the performance of a student who does not have an IEP?

A: Individual districts and school will have developed processes to guide teachers in this situation. Consultation, assessment and collaboration with school-based colleagues to identify differentiated instructional techniques are often the first step. Some schools may write a learning plan to document these interventions. If difficulties persist, a referral can be made to the school-based team or the school principal for further direction.

Q: When a student with an IEP from another school enrolls in a class mid-year, what is the best process to continue to deliver the plan?

A: It is good practice to review the student's IEP as soon as practicable after the student arrives. During the review, plans should be made to provide continuity while at the same time assessing the student's needs in the new learning environment. For local district protocols regarding new students previously identified as having special needs, contact your district's administrator of special education.

Q: What professional development is available regarding IEP development?

A: BC has guidelines about IEP development and implementation. Standards of practice are clearly outlined in the *BC Special Education Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines*. Section C addresses IEP development. There are also a number of helpful web sites on IEP preparation. However, be cautious when surfing the internet. Policies for IEPs in other jurisdictions may be different than those outlined in BC. Please consult with your local administrator of special education for current sources of professional development which will align with policy in BC and your district.

Q: What is the accountability hierarchy between the local board of education and classroom teacher?

A: In legislation the local board of education has responsibility for determining the special need(s) of the individual student, developing the IEP and arranging the appropriate services. School board personnel work closely with the school principal and specialist teachers to provide the necessary support and expertise. The classroom teacher has responsibility for collaborating in IEP development and for implementing the plan with the student.

Q: What role do teacher assistants play in the IEP process?

A: Teacher assistants (also referred to as educational assistants, special student assistants, special education assistants or student support workers) provide invaluable service to the student and the classroom teacher. A teacher assistant may have current and in-depth knowledge of the student to contribute to discussions and planning. For further information, see the CUPE/BCTF joint publication entitled *Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers and Teacher Assistants* (<http://bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=5920>)

Planning: Assessment

Q: How do classroom teachers choose the appropriate assessment methods for planning purposes?

A: Educators should choose assessment methods based on a variety of factors, such as specific skills being assessed, practicality for that classroom, available materials and learning style of the student. Further consultation with colleagues may help determine the best method for the student.

Q: When evaluating a student's progress, is it fair to provide accommodations for the student?

A: The purpose of providing accommodations to a student with special needs is to provide equal access to the curriculum and fair assessment of their learning. By not providing adaptations, students may be unfairly penalized for having learning difficulties, creating serious negative impacts on achievement and self-concept.

Q: When using an interview process to gather information from parents, current or past teachers, other staff, or the students themselves, how can confidentiality be addressed?

A: The BCTF Code of Ethics states that teachers respect the confidential nature of information concerning students and may share it only with authorized persons or agencies directly concerned with their welfare. Information gathered through interviews with various people can be integrated into a fair and balanced summary of the student's strengths and needs without direct quotations, so that the student and family's privacy and dignity are maintained.

Q: Sometimes there are differences between the student's own goals, preferences, perceived strengths and needs, and those of the parents and/or staff. How should these differences be resolved?

A: Whether or not a student's self-assessment is realistic can form the basis of some of the work to be undertaken with the IEP. The school counsellor and school psychologist are valuable resources to help the student develop a realistic self-concept and support parents and teachers to have realistic expectations.

Q: Should a student be aware that s/he is being observed for assessment? If yes, when? And are there any recommendations as to how to communicate this process to the student?

A: Students will know about some assessments, for example, spelling tests and math tests. Assessment such as running records of reading or curriculum probes will happen for all, so students with special needs do not require advance preparation. If the student will be taken out of class for formal testing, consent should be sought from the parent following local policy. It is best to let the student and parent(s) know when this will happen and to introduce the student to the person with whom he/she will work. Observations, however, can often be carried out without direct knowledge of the student so that the observer can record the natural functioning of the student in a given context.

Q: What are the best ways to assess behavioural/social performance?

A: Assessing behavioural and social performance involves observing and recording students' interaction with others, their moods, dispositions and attitudes, and patterns of attention, alertness and fatigue. Teachers should write down exact, simple descriptions of the behaviours without judgement or interpretation. A file of anecdotal evidence is a powerful source of information about the student's challenges and abilities within the social learning context. The Ministry of Education provides BC performance standards for reading, writing, numeracy, social responsibility and healthy living as points of reference for observations (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/).

Planning: Collaborating

Q: What should teachers bring to an IEP meeting?

A: Teachers should be prepared to talk about the student's successes and challenges and to help identify priorities for goal areas, as well as adaptations and strategies that have been effective or unsuccessful. They should bring anecdotal and classroom assessments and work samples to illustrate the student's learning profile.

Q: Where can teachers find ideas on what strategies to incorporate into a student's program?

A: Appendix 4 in this resource guide includes checklists of adaptations which are constructive approaches to supporting the student's engagement with academic tasks and ability to cope.

Q: What if the classroom teacher is unsure of how to implement strategies under consideration during IEP planning?

A: Teachers may have a repertoire of strategies and materials to suit the needs of their students. However, it is not uncommon to have to learn a new strategy or technique. Teachers and other adults working with the student can be offered the support of a mentor or specific training in a new technique or procedure. This learning process is an important part of ongoing professional development.

Q: What if parents don't want to participate in IEP planning?

A: By law, boards of education are required to offer parents the opportunity to be consulted about their child's IEP. When parents are not willing or able to be involved, the school is still responsible to create a realistic and relevant IEP. Even unsuccessful attempts to engage parents in IEP development should be documented.

Planning: Writing

Q: Who can help teachers write goals and objectives based on accurate assessment data?

A: Typically, goals and objectives will be developed collaboratively among the adults who work with the student. The school principal or district specialists may provide support in writing goals and objectives that link with formal and informal assessments.

Q: Who gets a copy of the IEP?

A: The distribution of a student's IEP is determined by local policy. Typically, copies are distributed to the student's classroom teacher(s), the student's parent(s), and participating specialists. By law, one copy of the current IEP must be placed in the permanent student record file.

Q: Should the IEP be signed by the parent and a member of the school-based team?

A: There is no provincial requirement for signatures on an IEP. It should be clear to parents that IEPs are not written contracts, but rather working documents into which they have input along with the staff who work directly with the student. Some schools include signatures on a separate page to document who was present and who received a copy of the IEP.

Implementing: Introducing

Q: What are some effective practices to use when implementing a new strategy with a new student?

A: When introducing a new strategy, a teacher may wish to create a simple means to collect data on the student's use of and/or response to the new strategy. This will help provide meaningful feedback to others involved in implementation. It may be helpful to discuss new strategies with students prior to implementation, as some students with special needs have difficulty with change.

Q: Why is it important to integrate a student with special needs into regular classroom activity when possible?

A: Accommodating an individual's strong need for belonging and reinforcing the person's inherent value as a contributing member of the learning community underpins an individual's sense of worth and competence. Meaningful interaction between peers with a diverse variety of strengths and needs provides the opportunity to develop complex social skills.

Q: If a student will spend a significant amount of time outside the regular classroom, how can the classroom teacher support the student's inclusion as a member of the class?

A: Teachers use a number of approaches to include a student as a member of the class in spite of significant time being spent out of the classroom to work on individual program elements. It is helpful to identify a few activities that the student enjoys that are part of the regular routine for the class and to make a conscious effort to accommodate those interactions. Listening to a story and offering a comment, reading quietly or joining in during computer time are some examples where the student can participate on an equal basis with peers.

Implementing: Monitoring

Q: How should student progress on IEP goals be monitored?

A: A variety of assessment methods can be used to monitor a student's changing knowledge or skill performance. Observations and assessment are designed to capture the degree to which objectives outlined in the IEP are achieved. When monitoring progress, the teacher can focus on:

- What is it that we want the student to know/do?
- To what extent?
- How will we know if this is achieved?

Assessment to monitor a student's progress should take into account these valued outcomes:

- knowledge – knowing and understanding content
- reasoning – using knowledge to figure things out and solve problems
- performance skills – doing something where it is the process that is important
- dispositions – developing valued feelings, attitudes, interests and motivations

For comprehensive information on assessment see the recent Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP) publication *Rethinking Assessment with Purpose in Mind* (www.wncp.ca/english/subjectarea/classassessment.aspx).

Evaluating: Reviewing

Q: What documentation and material should be brought to the annual IEP review meeting?

A: At the review meeting, it is important to be prepared to talk about the student's response to the supports in place, successes and continuing needs. Data, progress reports and/or portfolio evidence should be shared, as well as notes on what has been achieved, what works and what needs adjustment.

Q: Who is responsible for the agenda for this important meeting?

A: Often a case manager arranges the meeting and sets the initial agenda. This person could be the classroom teacher or someone else in the school.

Evaluating: Reporting

Q: *What kind of progress reports can parents expect if their child has special needs?*

A: The parents of a student with special needs are provided with progress reports on the same schedule as students without special needs. When a student with special needs is expected to achieve or surpass the learning outcomes set out in the prescribed curriculum (provincial or BAA course), regular grading practices and reporting procedures are followed.

Students with special needs in grades K-3 who are working toward individualized goals or objectives in an IEP receive structured written comments. Students in grades 4-12 may receive either structured written comments or letter grades. The most appropriate form of reporting for these students should be determined by the IEP team.

If letter grades are used, it should be stated in the body of the student progress report that the grade is given in relation to individualized goals and objectives and not in relation to Provincial Learning Outcomes. The specific IEP goals and objectives addressed in each course should be included in the body of the student progress report.

It should be noted that if letter grades are not used in reporting student progress in grades 10-12, it is impossible for that student to receive a transcript, School Completion Certificate or Dogwood Certificate.

For more information about reporting student progress refer to the document *Reporting Student Progress: Policy and Practices* (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom_assessment/09_report_student_prog.pdf)

Q: *What about credentials in the graduation years?*

A: Students with special needs whose programs include modifications to learning outcomes may be awarded a School Completion Certificate. Students receiving School Completion Certificates may also receive transcripts showing all successfully completed credit and non-credit Grades 10-12 courses. Instructions on how to report grades and how to request a transcript for a School Completion Certificate are available on the Ministry of Education web site at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/transcript/transcripts_ordering.htm.

Appendix 1: Terms Related to IEP Development

Accommodations

Accommodations are the means to facilitate a variety of forms of representation, expression, and/or engagement that may be necessary to help each student in the classroom succeed. Both differentiations and universal design provide varied approaches to setting goals, providing choice in use of materials and media, and flexibility in gathering assessment data. Adaptations and/or modifications are each a form of accommodation. Use of accommodations allows a teacher to use a personally responsive approach to meeting the needs of the student.

Adaptations

Adaptations are teaching and assessment strategies especially designed to accommodate a student's needs so he or she can achieve the learning outcomes of the subject or course and demonstrate mastery of concepts. Essentially, adaptations are “best practice” in teaching. A student working on learning outcomes of any grade or course level may be supported through use of adaptations.

Adaptations do not represent unfair advantages to students. In fact, the opposite could be true. If appropriate adaptations are not used, students could be unfairly penalized for having learning differences, creating serious negative impacts to their achievement and self-concept.

An education plan with adaptations retains the learning outcomes of the regular curriculum and is provided so that the student can participate. Students with education programs that include adaptations are assessed using the standards for the course/program and receive credit toward a Dogwood Diploma for their work in the Graduation Program.

Adaptation can be made to:

- the environment in which learning and teaching will occur
- the processes to be used (level of support, instructional method, mode of learning and assessment)
- the depth of the content to be learned
- the products that will record the student's individual achievement

Assessment *for* Learning

Assessment *for* Learning is a term used to describe the collection of a wide range of data that highlights a student's strengths and weaknesses, and provides insight into a student's learning.

The purpose of assessment for learning is formative – to provide feedback about a student's learning that can be used to advise the next stage of learning/remediation.

Assessment *of* Learning

Assessment *of* Learning is a term used to describe an evaluation, often an exam, that includes questions drawn from the material studied during a set period of time. It is usually done at the end of a unit, course, grade or program. The purpose of assessment of learning is summative, intended to measure learning and report to parents and students about the student's progress in school.

Board Authorized Authority (BAA)

Board Authorized Authority is the district level authority to officially adopt a Grade 10, Grade 11 or Grade 12 course that meets the requirements set by the Minister in the Course Information Booklet (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/courseinfo/). For more information see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m285-04.pdf.

Case Manager

A case manager is the person assigned to coordinate the collaborative process involved in developing, writing, and introducing and evaluating an IEP. A case manager promotes quality and effective interventions and outcomes. Case management is characterized by advocacy, communication and resource management.

Collaboration

Collaboration is a process in which people work together to solve a common problem or address a common concern. A successful collaborative process is characterized by the following features: it is voluntary, there is mutual trust and open communication among the people involved, identification/clarification of the problem to be addressed is a shared task, the goal is shared by all participants, each participant's contribution is valued equally, all participants' skills are employed in identifying and selecting problem-solving strategies, and there is shared responsibility for the program or strategy initiated.

Conditions

Conditions are the circumstances or setting in which a student may work. There are a wide variety of conditions for learning. Two key learning conditions to consider include "in context" and "in isolation." For example, a student may need to learn to read consonant-vowel-consonant words in isolation first and then practise them in context of appropriately levelled text.

Consultation

Consultation is a process of seeking information and advice. It is founded on clear communication and facilitates collaboration and problem solving. As such, it is not a one-time process. Consultation may include the family or families, the student, other professionals and outside agencies.

Criteria

Criteria are a set of elements that describe what constitutes success with a given skill or acquisition of knowledge. Criteria will state:

- the content of what the student is to learn
- the observable behaviour – what the student does to indicate that she/he has learned
- the level at which the student needs to perform or exhibit the behaviour, knowledge, etc. (e.g., 8 out of every 10 times observed)
- the conditions for the behaviour to occur – the circumstances under which the student will work

Criterion-Referenced Test

Criterion-referenced evaluation is based on comparing a student's performance to a specified criterion such as a performance standard. Its purpose is to gauge individual mastery and to determine if the student can or cannot perform at a certain standard. How well others perform on the same standard is not considered.

Curriculum

Curriculum is a logically organized, developmentally appropriate set of learning outcomes categorized by subject or grade. View the prescribed curriculum for BC schools at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/irp.htm.

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction employs strategies to accommodate a range of abilities and learning styles. Differentiation can address content, process, procedures, presentation strategies, or assignment tools.

Evaluation

Evaluation involves interpreting, analyzing and reflecting on observation and assessment data for the purpose of reporting progress and making decisions about logical next steps for the student. The goal of evaluation is to determine student progress, celebrate the student's success, and address the student's needs.

Functional Assessment

Functional assessment is an assessment of a student's functioning within a context. Functional assessment is a two-part process:

- 1) Observing the student's functioning while taking note of environmental conditions such as physical factors (e.g., heat, light, noise) and instructional factors (e.g., pace, teacher expectations, peer interaction). During observation, the teacher or other qualified professional develops a working hypothesis about the reasons for the student's responses and the possible impact of various environmental conditions.
- 2) Identify replacement skills and behaviours that can be taught and that would meet the same function or need expressed by the student, but that enable him or her to improve his or her independence, adjustment and learning. At the same time, staff identify possible changes to environmental conditions (see above) that would support the student's progress.

IEP Goals

An IEP goal is a statement of what a student will be able to accomplish academically, developmentally and/or functionally, usually over a year's time. Goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-framed (SMART).

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

An Individual Education Plan is a documented plan developed for a student with special needs that describes individualized goals, adaptations and/or modifications and the support services to be provided, and includes measures for tracking achievement. More information is contained in the BC Ministry of Education's Special Needs Student Order (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m150-89.pdf).

Individual Education Plan Order

The Individual Education Plan Order (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m638-95.pdf) is legislation that governs IEP development.

IEP Team

The IEP team supports the planning and implementation of individually appropriate goals and strategies directly related to the student's assessed special need.

Inclusion

Inclusion is the meaningful participation and promotion of interactions with others. Inclusion is based on the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs. Inclusion is a practice based on the values of pluralism and diversity that supports placement in regular settings to encompass three important program elements:

- *Access* – the student's ability to participate in a setting with confidence and safety
- *Engagement* – the student's ability to take an active part in the activities offered and to engage socially with peers and adults
- *Options* – the provision of various activities appropriate to the student's abilities/skills

The practice of inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with full integration in regular classrooms and may include times when students work one-to-one with an adult or in small groups to focus on skill development.

Instructional Approach

Instructional approach refers to the method by which a teacher plans for, organizes, implements and evaluates instruction. Teachers can use direct instruction (e.g., tell, explain, demonstrate) or exploration and discovery models (e.g., mediate, facilitate, experience).

Integration

Integration is the educational practice of including people with special needs in educational settings with their peers who do not have special needs and providing them with the necessary accommodations determined on an individual basis to enable them to be successful there. Integration is one of the major strategies to achieve inclusion. The principle of "placement in the most enabling learning environment" applies when decisions are made about the extent to which an individual student is placed in regular classrooms, or assigned to an alternate placement.

Interpreter

An interpreter is a person whose role is to translate a conversation between people speaking different languages. The ultimate goal of an interpreter is to assist all parties to clearly understand each other.

Kurzweil

Kurzweil is a computer software program designed to assist students in reading, writing and studying strategies. The program has many customizable features that may assist students in developing literacy skills at all levels.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are the acquired skills, knowledge and attitudes that are intended as a result of the teaching and learning activities planned for the individual student or group of students.

Learning Support Services

Learning support services is a term often used in reference to special education services. It refers to services within a school or school district that provide for direct and/or consultative support for the individual student with special needs and their teachers.

Meaningful Consultation

“Meaningful Consultation includes families in making decisions about their child’s education. It is facilitated by ongoing dialogue and participation in planning processes with school teams. It is characterized by willingness on the part of the school and the family to openly discuss decisions and options available, and a willingness to listen to each other and work collaboratively toward best/balanced decisions.... It is usually not a one-time process, but should fulfill a specific need for input.... The process of meaningful consultation does not suggest a right of veto.... When done well, parents feel that the school team is listening and that their experience, knowledge and ideas have been taken into consideration.”

(Meaningful Consultation, BC CASE 2008)

Modifications

Modifications are instructional and assessment-related decisions made to accommodate a student’s educational needs that consist of individualized learning goals and outcomes which are different than learning outcomes of a course or subject. Modifications should be considered for those students whose special needs are such that they are unable to access the curriculum (i.e., students with limited awareness of their surroundings, students with fragile mental/physical health, students medically and cognitively/multiply challenged). Using the strategy of modifications for students not identified as special needs should be a rare practice.

Monitoring

Monitoring is a progressive process of observing and recording a student’s performance and behaviour so as to better understand his or her progress, capabilities and responses to strategies.

Normative Standards

Normative standards are a set standard of achievements derived from the average or median achievements of a large group. Normative standards are used to compare the student to other students (above average, average, below average). In contrast, performance criteria describe acceptable performance or a progress standard appropriate to the student’s current and developing abilities.

Norm-Referenced Test

A norm-referenced test is a form of assessment of learning that compares the students' performance in relation to a large population. Most standardized achievement and aptitude tests are norm-referenced instruments. A teacher could use a norm-referenced test, for instance, to compare the reading abilities of students before forming reading groups.

Objectives

IEP objectives are measurable, intermediate steps between the present levels of educational performance and the annual goals that are established for that student. The objectives are developed based on IEP goals and serve as milestones for measuring progress toward the goals.

Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s)

Parent or legal guardian are defined in the *School Act* (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/revisedstatutescontents.pdf) as “in respect of a student or of a child registered under Section 13, a) the guardian of the person of the student or child, b) the person legally entitled to custody of the student or child, or c) the person who usually has the care and control of the student or child.”

Peer Mentorship

Peer mentorship describes the practice of teaming students together as assistants to one another in an educational or social context.

Portfolio

A portfolio is a collection of student work compiled to provide insights to the student, teacher and parents on progress and accomplishments.

Rating Scale

A rating scale is a tool that estimates acquisition of a skill. Generally, the scale has three to five intervals to show progress toward mastery. Rating scales may be used for assessing a variety of skill-based goals such as work habits.

Rubric

A rubric is a grid accompanied by a rating scale that teachers can use to rate or mark off what the student currently knows or is able to do. The BC Performance Standards are rubrics that have been created to assess skill levels of the individual student in relation to the widely held expectations for the student's grade placement. Teachers can also create their own rubrics for use with their students.

School-Based Team

A school-based team is a school-based problem-solving group that assists classroom teachers to develop and implement instructional and/or management strategies and to co-ordinate support resources for students with special needs in the school.

Specialist

Specialists are professionals who have the training, skills and expertise within their area of educational specialty to provide services to students and schools. School psychology, speech/language pathology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy are all specialist services. Specialty roles also include teachers of the visually impaired or the deaf and hard of hearing, and instructors specializing in orientation and mobility. Districts determine the roles and responsibilities for personnel providing these specialized services.

Strategies

IEP strategies are methods, techniques and resources that will be used in order to implement the goals and objectives in the IEP.

Some examples of strategies are:

- special resources (e.g., reading material appropriate to the reading level or learning style)
- assistive technology (e.g., DVDs)
- enrichment units that extend learning
- a variety of teaching and learning methods (e.g., special groupings, peer partners, mentoring, independent study)

Student with Special Needs

A student with special needs is “(a) student who has a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, has a learning disability or has special gifts or talents, as defined in *Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines*, Section E (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg.htm).

Transitions

Transitions refer to the passage of a student from one environment to another: home to school, grade to grade, school to school, school district to school district, school to community life, and school to post-secondary education. Transition planning is important to successfully enable students to make major transitions during their lives.

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach to teaching and learning in which teachers consider the scope of student abilities and learning styles when developing all aspects of the curriculum.

UDL provides a blueprint for creating flexible goals, methods, materials and assessments that accommodate learner differences. “Universal” is meant to underscore the need for multiple approaches to meet the needs of diverse learners. A UDL curriculum offers: 1) multiple means of representation, 2) multiple means of actions and expression, and 3) multiple means of engagement. To learn more about UDL, visit Teaching Every Student (www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/).

Appendix 2: Tools for Collaboration with Parents

Collaboration with parents works best using the principles of meaningful consultation as described below in a statement from the BC Council of Administrators of Special Education (BC CASE).

“Meaningful consultation includes families in making decisions about their child’s education. It is facilitated by ongoing dialogue and participation in planning processes with school teams. It is characterized by willingness on the part of the school and the family to openly discuss decisions and options available, and a willingness to listen to each other and work collaboratively toward best/balanced decisions.... It is usually not a one-time process, but should fulfill a specific need for input.... The process of meaningful consultation does not suggest a right of veto.... When done well, parents feel that the school team is listening to them and that their experience, knowledge and ideas have been taken into consideration.” —*Meaningful Consultation*. BC CASE, 2008

Teachers provide information and support to help parents understand the child’s education plan and participate effectively in the IEP process. This appendix provides resources for **teachers** to use to invite parents to:

- share about the student’s successes and challenges and concerns
- reflect on the student’s current and long-term needs
- share from their unique perspectives about their children
- collaborate on IEP development and implementation

Teachers may choose to provide a form for the parent(s) to work on independently, or use one of the forms in a structured interview and scribe the parent’s input.

Index of Tools for Collaboration with Parents

2A: Parent Letter – Description of the IEP Process

2B: Parents’ IEP Input Guide

2C: Family Goal Setting

2D: Teacher/Parent Communication

2E: Tips for Parents for Participating in the IEP Process

2F: Tips for Parents on Helping Their Children Develop Self-Advocacy Skills

2A: Parent Letter – Description of the IEP Process

Dear Parent(s),

This information sheet briefly explains the process of Individual Education Plan (IEP) development.

When a student has a disability and needs special education and related services, an IEP is developed.

An IEP is a very important document for children with disabilities and for those who are involved in educating them. The purpose of the IEP is to support student success.

An IEP is a written plan that includes certain information about the child and outlines the learning activities and aspects of the educational program designed to meet his or her unique needs.

An IEP describes individualized goals, adaptations and/or modifications and the services to be provided, and includes measures for tracking achievement.

Provincial policy tells us what information must be included in an IEP, but it does not specify what an IEP should look like. No one form is required or even suggested. Individual schools and school districts design their own IEP forms.

An IEP is created by school staff using a collaborative process that includes parental consultation and input. Most often planning involves the parent(s), the classroom teacher and/or the resource teacher. Often the school principal or vice-principal will have input. Sometimes other professionals, such as the school counsellor or the speech-language pathologist, will attend or provide input.

Parents are key participants on an IEP team. They know their child well and can talk about their child's strengths and needs. They can offer insight into how their child learns, what his or her interests are, and other aspects of the child that only a parent can know. As partners in the process of IEP development, parents gain valuable insight into their child's successes and challenges at school.

Parents of a student with special needs, in accordance with British Columbia's special education policy, must be offered the opportunity to collaborate on their child's IEP. Each school has developed its own practices to support parent participation in this process. Parents can direct any questions to their child's teacher or the school principal.

2B: Parents' IEP Input Guide

Your contribution to planning for your child is important in developing a meaningful IEP. This form is for you to write down observations and points for school staff to consider. If you need additional space, feel free to attach another sheet of paper.

The main achievement(s) of last year was (were):	
Recommendations you feel are important from the last report card were:	
Progress you have seen with individual goals:	
One or two concerns are:	
What my child likes best about school, in his or her own words:	
What my child would like to accomplish this year, in his or her own words:	
What my child says would help him or her learn better at school:	

2C: Family Goal Setting

Identifying priorities is important in developing a meaningful IEP. This form will provide important information for school staff to consider. If you need additional space, feel free to attach another sheet of paper.

Student's Name _____ Date: _____

Parent's Name _____

My child has these strengths:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

My child has these needs:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

My first priority for my child this year is:

Family Goal Setting, cont'd

This is what I will do at home to help my child make progress:

How I will know my child has made progress:

Another important priority for my child this year is:

This is what I will do at home to help my child make progress:

How I will know my child has made progress:

Parent's Name _____ Date: _____

2D: Teacher/Parent Communication

You are invited to share information that would assist in developing an educational program to meet the needs of your son/daughter. Please give thought to the topics below and return the sheet to the teacher.

Student's Name _____ Date: _____

Physical development (e.g., medical information we should know, special interests and talents):

Social development (e.g., friends, interactions with others, behaviour, clubs, sports):

Artistic (e.g., interests, talents):

Emotional development (e.g., self-image, previous school experiences, concerns):

Other (e.g., recent changes in friends/commitments/family):

2E: Tips for Parents for Participating in the IEP Process

The development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is the process by which families, teachers and other school staff work as a team to meet the individual needs of students with special education needs. As a parent, you are an important member of your child's IEP team.

You can participate in the IEP process by:

- providing information about your child's past experiences and his or her goals, interests and areas of need
- having regular contact with your child's teacher
- taking an active role in the decisions made for your child
- learning about the services and resources available
- working with your child at home to support the goals set through the IEP process
- actively participating in IEP planning meetings, using strategies like those described below

Before IEP meetings:

- Discuss the positive elements in the individualized program with your child.
- Find out about your child's role and involvement in the meeting. Decide if your child will benefit from participating in the meeting or a part of the meeting.
- Review the comments from your child's last report card, and goals and objectives from the last IEP: What progress have you seen? Note any areas of concern.
- Ask your child questions such as the following. (If your child attends the meeting, he or she may be able to give this input directly.)
 - What do you like best about school? What do you feel are your successes?
 - Are there any problems that we need to find some solutions to? What are some changes that would help you learn better at school?
 - What goals do you have for yourself?
- Be prepared. Write a list of questions and concerns that you want to discuss, including questions like the following. Prioritize your concerns.
 - Whom should I call if I have concerns about my child's program?
 - Will the IEP be reviewed at every report card time?
 - What kinds of changes in our home does the school need to know about?
- If you need additional support, consider arranging for another person to accompany you. This person can offer a different perspective, hear important points you may miss or take notes.

At IEP meetings:

- Ask if there are any new assessments, reports or observations.
- Ask about your child's strengths, interests, areas of growth, areas of need and friendships.
- Ask any other questions you have about your child's progress or programming.
- Share your present and future goals for your child.
- Give feedback to the people working with your child in areas where you noted positive effort, growth or change.
- Share any home conditions that may impact your child's performance or behaviour at school and any recent documents or medical updates.

- Discuss any specific concerns you have about your child.
- Share samples of your child's work completed at home, if you think this can contribute to a better understanding of your child. Teachers often have samples of student work to share, but if not, ask to see samples.

At the close of IEP meetings:

- Verbally summarize your understanding and interpretation of the decisions made, actions to be taken, timelines and roles and responsibilities of each participant.
- Find out how you can support your child at home.
- Take notes on recommendations and timelines, such as additional services or assessments.
- Ask for a copy of the IEP to refer to at home.
- Take note of the next meeting date.

After IEP meetings:

- Give your child feedback from the meeting.
- Discuss what needs to happen in order to realize the IEP goals. Discuss what your child's role is and also how the school staff and your family will support his/her progress.

To review the effectiveness of your child's IEP, consider these questions:

- How does the IEP build on my child's strengths?
- How does the IEP address the individual needs of my child? (Think about the domains of learning and development: social/emotional, physical, cognitive, artistic and cultural.)
- Does the IEP focus on key goals for my child?
- What is an appropriate balance for my child? (Each student should participate in the regular curriculum as much as possible with appropriate accommodations to support individual and shared learning goals.)
- Have we used more than one source of assessment data to determine the strengths and areas of need?
- If there are several teachers working with my child, are there procedures for all of them to know about the IEP and their roles and responsibilities (e.g., to plan instruction to match learning style/preferences, implement a strategy, monitor progress and contribute to evaluating and changing goals and objectives)?
- Does the IEP specifically include strategies to measure and communicate my child's progress?
- If objectives are met, will new ones be set? If my child is not making progress, does the team review the program and make changes?

Adapted from Tips for Parents for Participating in the IEP Process, Alberta Education, Alberta, Canada (2006)

2F: Tips for Parents on Helping Their Children Develop Self-Advocacy Skills

- Talk with your child about his or her special education needs and what this means for learning. You can clarify understanding of the special needs by consulting with staff who conducted assessments and by reading articles and books.
- Provide specific feedback that helps your child understand how he or she learns best, such as “You seem to remember better when you get a chance to see the information.”
- Explain assessment results so that your child understands his or her abilities and needs, and the implications for schooling and life.
- Stress that your child is not alone with his or her difficulties. Parents, grandparents, siblings and school staff can all help with learning.
- Describe the assistance that is available to your child in a concrete, realistic, positive manner.
- Role play ways to handle difficult situations at school.
- Seek resources for support and information. Assist your child, as he or she matures, to access those resources and become a self-advocate for his or her own education needs.
- Encourage your child to be an active participant in the learning team by participating in IEP conferences (where appropriate) and setting realistic goals as he or she progresses in school.
- Introduce your child to books that deal with challenges similar to those he or she faces.
- Children’s literature can illustrate human relationships, conditions and situations in a rich and affecting way. Books afford children the opportunity to make connections between the events and characters in the stories and their own lives. This often lessens their sense of loneliness, confusion or isolation.

Adapted from Tips For Parents on Helping Their Children Develop Self-Advocacy Skills. Alberta Education, Alberta Canada (2006)

Appendix 3: Tools for Teachers and Students

The teacher's role is to assess, adapt instruction, monitor progress, and collect observations about students' responses to instruction, motivation, preferences, strengths, talents and needs. Getting to know students well will facilitate this process.

This appendix contains tools for teachers to use to:

- gather direct evidence of students' self-concept and coping strategies, as well as perceived strengths, talents, needs and goals
- promote students' self-understanding and self-advocacy
- guide students' input at IEP meetings, as appropriate

Index of Tools for Teachers and Students

3A: Informal Student Interview

3B: Knowing My Strengths and Challenges

3C: What Works For Me Inventory

3D: Goal-Setting Organizer

3E: Student's Goal Planning

3F: Be Your Own Self-Advocate

3G: Self-Advocacy Checklist for Elementary/Middle School

3H: Asking for Help Ticket

3I: Suggestions for Student Participation in IEP Meetings

3A: Informal Student Interview

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Birth date: _____ Age: _____

Schools previously attended:

Best year in school? Why?

Worst year in school? Why?

Impression of present school year (easy parts/hard parts).

Ways to change school to make it better?

Favourite friends in school/adult friends at home:

Family – parents, siblings:

What will you be when you are older?

Favourite fun activities at home/at school:

Three wishes you might have:

Ways we can help you the most:

Additional comments:

Informal Student Interview: BCTF, The Vital Link, Volume 9, Number 1, Fall 2003

3B: Knowing My Strengths and Challenges

Name: _____ Date: _____

Learning Strengths	Learning Challenges

List some things you are good at doing outside of school – draw a picture in the box of one of these strengths.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

List some things you find challenging doing outside of school – draw a picture in the box of one of these challenges.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Adapted from Alberta Education, Alberta, Canada (2006)

3C: What Works for Me Inventory

Name: _____ Date: _____

A. How I look after myself

How much sleep do I need?

What kind of food helps me stay alert?

What times of day do I need to eat?

What time of day do I have the most energy?

What time of day do I have the least energy?

What type of exercise makes me feel energized?

What kinds of activities help me relax?

B. Tools that help me learn

What writing tool works best for me (e.g., pen, pencil, colour of ink, computer)?

What kind of paper helps me keep organized (e.g., wide-ruled, unlined, wide margins, pre-punched)?

What colour paper do I find the easiest to read?

What binder system works for me?

What other supplies help keep me organized (e.g., white out, self-stick notes, ruler)?

What calculator works best for me (e.g., size, features)?

What spell checker works for me?

What is my favourite dictionary?

What other reference books help me learn?

What computer programs are helpful to my learning?

C. In the classroom

What seat in the classroom works best for me?

What do I read best from?

chalkboard overhead projector chart paper my own copy

Does the type of printing make a difference (e.g., printed, handwritten or typed)?

Does the size and spacing of print make a difference?

D. Which directions work best for me?

Rank in order from 1-12, 1 being the best, OR place a checkmark beside the strategies that work best for you

- teacher explains aloud
- teacher writes directions on the board
- teacher does example on the board
- teacher asks another student to demonstrate
- teacher asks all students to try a sample at their desks
- I read the directions while the teacher reads them
- I read the directions on my own
- teacher shows me at my desk
- another student explains a second time and answers my questions
- I watch what another student does
- I try it on my own and then check with the teacher
- I try it on my own and then compare with another student

E. Tricks I use to keep myself organized

F. Tricks I use to keep myself focused and on task in class

G. Special things that teachers can do to help me learn

Adapted from Alberta Education, Alberta, Canada (2006)

3D: Goal-Setting Organizer

Name: _____ Date: _____

Is your goal:
 Specific?
 Measurable?
 Action-oriented and achievable?
 Realistic and relevant?
 Time-framed?

Goal	My goal is to...
Rationale	I chose this goal because...
Action Plan	To reach this goal I will...
Measurement	How will I know if I am successful?
Evaluation	Did I reach my goal? What would I do differently in the future?

Adapted from Alberta Education, Alberta, Canada (2006)

3E: Student's Goal Planning

Date: _____

Goal Statement

My personal goal at school is to:

Strengths/Advantages I have which will help me towards reaching this goal:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Specific steps I plan to take to reach this goal:

1. _____
2. _____

People who could encourage and support me:

Obstacles I need to avoid in working towards my goal:

1. _____
2. _____

I will celebrate my achievement by:

3F: Be Your Own Self-Advocate

Be Your Own Self-Advocate

Being a self-advocate means that there are times when you need to ask for things, such as an alternative assignment, an extension on a deadline or notes from a class you missed. The idea is to let the teacher know that you have thought about the situation and are prepared to contribute to the solution.

When you go to your teacher with a solution, you let them know that you are taking responsibility for your situation and that you don't expect them to solve the problem for you. Be flexible. You may need to negotiate a solution that is acceptable to everyone involved.

When you need something changed in the classroom, it's your responsibility to bring it to the attention of your teacher. Plan and practise what you want to say. Always go with a solution and a positive attitude.

1. State the problem and give an example.
2. Let people know you are working on this problem (so they don't think you're trying to avoid work or are not trying hard enough).
3. Briefly explain your solution to the problem.
4. Ask for their help in using the accommodation.

You might find yourself saying:

"I am working on my reading skills, but I have trouble with exam questions. I understand better when someone reads the questions to me. One of the peer tutors is willing to tape the test questions for me. Would you be willing to give this a try?"

"I work hard to spell correctly, but I need to use a spell checker. I always have one with me in class. Is it okay for me to use it on tests?"

"I need extra time to show all that I know on a test. If I could have an extra half hour to finish the social studies test, my result would be a better reflection of what I know. I'd be willing to stay through the lunch hour to do this."

Alberta Education, Alberta, Canada (2006)

3G: Self-Advocacy Checklist for Elementary/Middle School

Name: _____ Date: _____

- I know what kind of special learning needs I have.
- I can describe my special learning needs to my teacher.
- I let people know what I am thinking for my IEP.
- I ask for help when I need it.
- I ask questions in class.
- I have started to take on more challenges at school.
- I hand in my homework, frequently on time.
- I am proud of myself and don't let others tease me.
- I use a system to organize my binder and notebooks.
- I have learned new ways to study for tests.
- I make an effort to build good friendships.
- I am learning new strategies and using accommodations.
- I have some ideas for what kind of job/career I would like to have.
- I feel positive about the future.
- _____
- _____
- _____

Self-Advocacy Checklist for Elementary/Middle School Alberta Education, Alberta, Canada (2006)

3H: Asking for Help Ticket

Dear _____,

These are some things that I am having difficulty with:

- understanding my textbook
- knowing what my homework is
- getting my homework done
- listening in class
- taking notes
- passing tests
- completing assignments
- other _____

Could we meet to talk about some possible strategies?

Two meeting times that work for me:

Student signature: _____

Adapted from Alberta Education, Alberta, Canada (2006)

3I: Suggestions for Student Participation in IEP Meetings

Before the meeting:

Write and distribute invitations to members of the IEP team.

Create name cards for those attending the meeting.

During the meeting:

Greet everyone and thank them for coming.

Explain the purpose of the meeting.

Tell why it's important YOU be involved in your own IEP process.

Explain your learning needs; take time to talk about your strengths and challenges.

Share your dreams/plans for the future.

It may be helpful to explain medical information that affects your learning/participation.

Explain the types of services/support you receive.

Listen to others' views and ideas.

Participate in discussion of what goals to work on.

Say what works for you in class.

Help decide when the IEP review will take place.

Be prepared to ask questions to clarify any comments.

Thank everyone for attending.

After the meeting:

Write or e-mail a thank-you note to members of the IEP team.

Meeting Guide for Students Adapted from Alberta Education, Alberta, Canada (2006)

Appendix 4: Tools for Planning and Implementing

Consistency in implementation is essential to the success of a new strategy. Collaboration with colleagues will reveal a variety of tools that will enhance the implementation of an IEP. This appendix includes forms and checklists, including activity matrices and summary sheets that can be shared among staff working directly with a student.

Tools for Implementing and Planning

- 4A: Adaptations Checklist
- 4B: Learning Assistance and Classroom Supports for Secondary Students
- 4C: Matrix of In-Class Work
- 4D: _____ Learns Best When...
- 4E: Meaningful Routines Activity Matrix
- 4F: Multi-Subject Matrix
- 4G: IEP Matrix: Strategies to Support Success
- 4H: What Works For Me – Note Page for Teachers and Teacher Assistants
- 4I: What Works For Me: List of “My Favourite Strategies”

4A: Adaptations Checklist

PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENT OF ROOM:

- seat student near the teacher
 - seat student near a positive role model
 - stand near the student when giving directions or presenting lessons
 - avoid distracting stimuli (e.g., air conditioner, high traffic area)
 - arrange different work areas in the room
 - additional accommodations:
-

LESSON PRESENTATION:

- pair students to check work, provide peer tutoring
 - write key points on board
 - provide visual aids, large print, films, charts, graphics
 - teach through multi-sensory modes: visual, auditory, kinesthetic
 - repeat directions to the student after they are given to the class, then have him or her repeat and explain directions to teacher
 - provide written outline of lesson with main ideas
 - allow student to record lessons for reviewing later
 - have student review key points orally
 - accompany oral directions with written directions for child to refer to
 - provide a sample to help students, post the sample, refer to it often
 - use underlining, highlighting, to find main ideas/details in text
 - break longer presentations into shorter segments
 - additional accommodations:
-

ASSIGNMENTS:

- give extra time to complete tasks
 - simplify complex directions
 - reduce the reading level of the assignments
 - require fewer correct responses to achieve completion (quality vs. quantity)
 - provide study skills training/learning strategies
 - shorten assignments, breaking work into smaller segments
 - allow computer-printed assignments prepared by the student or dictated by the student and prepared by someone else
 - use self-monitoring checklists, charts, cue cards, etc.
 - reduce homework assignments, particularly lengthy reading tasks
 - allow printed instead of cursive handwriting on assignments
 - monitor student's self-paced assignments (daily, weekly, bi-weekly)
 - arrange for homework tasks to get home with clear, concise directions
 - recognize and give credit for student's oral participation in class
 - additional accommodations:
-

TEST TAKING:

- allow open book exams
 - give exam orally
 - give take-home tests
 - use more objective items (e.g., fewer essay responses)
 - allow student to give test answers on tape recorder
 - give frequent short quizzes, not long exams
 - allow extra time for exam
 - read test items to student
 - scribe test answers for student
 - avoid placing student under pressure of time or competition
 - additional accommodations:
-

ORGANIZATION:

- provide peer assistance with organizational skills
 - set up a one-binder system for notes and assignments
 - assign a volunteer homework buddy
 - allow student to have an extra set of books at home
 - prepare advance study/assignment schedules with student
 - send daily/weekly progress reports home
 - develop a reward system for in-school work and homework completion
 - provide student with a homework assignment notebook
 - additional accommodations:
-

BEHAVIOURS:

- keep classroom rules simple, clear, and available for reference
 - use timers to facilitate task completion
 - structure transitional/unstructured times (e.g., recess, hallways, lunchroom)
 - praise specific behaviours
 - use self-monitoring strategies
 - give special privileges/positive reinforcements; increase their immediacy
 - make “prudent use” of negative consequences
 - allow for short breaks between assignments
 - cue student to stay on task (nonverbal signal)
 - mark student’s correct answers, not his mistakes
 - implement a classroom behaviour management system
 - allow legitimate movement, student time out of seat (e.g., to run errands)
 - ignore inappropriate behaviours not drastically outside classroom limits
 - contract with the student
 - implement reasonable time-out procedures
 - additional accommodations:
-

4B: Learning Assistance and Classroom Supports for Secondary Students

Student Grade/Year Initiated

i. Adaptations for Students with Learning Difficulties	Gr 8	Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr11	Gr 12
Teach new strategies					
Monitor to see that student applies strategies in assignments and homework					
Pre-teach or re-teach difficult concepts					
Help student to create webs to link information together					
Provide lower level reading materials that deal with similar topics as regular texts					
Provide audio tapes of difficult reading assignments and/or review notes					
Develop outlines and study guides with the student for each chapter					
Create a glossary of terms and develop an understanding of course vocabulary					
Select appropriate computer components for drill and practice of new skills or to build basic skills					
Create visuals and diagrams to develop and remember concepts					
Teach memory strategies					
Edit written work i) using spell checker/word processor ii) proof reader (peer) iii) using a sequential steps cue card					
Provide concrete examples or manipulatives to develop concepts					
Arrange adaptations for tests i) type of questions ii) time extensions iii) feedback at frequent stages iv) alternate settings v) 1-1 supervision					
Teach self-advocacy					

ii. Adaptations for Students With Attention Difficulties	Gr 8	Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr 11	Gr 12
Break long-term assignments into several smaller, more manageable components					
Monitor time use, complete progress charts					
Organize schedules for assignments and homework					
Monitor homework and assignment completion					
Ensure that the daily planner is completed (or use a daily assignment book)					
Teach student to self-monitor					
Cue to stay on task and reinforce success					
Review instructions, task directions individually					
Organize notes, supply outlines					
Check that notes are complete and accurate					
Arrange a peer buddy so student can access notes					
Adjust the amount of note-taking, copying required					
Highlight important concepts and information					
Connect with other teachers when problems arise					
Support student in preparing for studying i) teach test-taking and study skills ii) prepare study schedules iii) prepare study guides					
Contact parents on a regular basis					

iii. Adaptations for Students with Cognitive Difficulties	Gr 8	Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr 11	Gr 12
Vary amount of material to be learned					
Simplify instructions					
Pre-teach or re-teach difficult concepts					
Reduce or substitute required assignment					
Select test items specific to ability level					
Use oral or performance-based evaluation					

Adapted from Learning Assistance Teacher Handbook – Saskatoon

4C: Matrix of In-Class Work

Lesson Plans and Adaptations for the Week of _____

Subject	Class output	Student's output – independent	Student's output – with assistance (TA, peer mentor, teacher)
Journal			
Spelling			
Novel Study			
Quiet Reading Time			
Math			

4D: _____ Learns Best When...

A list of proactive instructional and support practices can help ensure program consistency and implementation. An example of such a list follows:

_____ (student's name) **learns best when:**

- There are multi-sensory components involved in the activity (sound, movement, contrasting visuals and touch)
- Others use an exaggerated, animated voice
- She can anticipate the activity (counting down to the activity or use of object cues)
- She has ample time to respond (10-15 seconds)

_____ (student's name) learns best when...

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

4E: Meaningful Routines Activity Matrix

A matrix can present the core components of the work of the student in the classroom or the specific adaptations to be used to support learning.

Example:

Meaningful Routines for _____ Jillian _____ (student's name)

Context (across)	Classroom	School	Community
Goals (below)			
Integration into regular routines	In silent reading: The student listens to story on computer, controlling the page turns with a switch.	Cheering at house league games by using a noisemaker or activating the Big Mac with a switch.	Participation in swim lessons.
Personal Care/Life Skills	Lunch routine – social time in the classroom with peers during the lunch break.	Arrival and departure routines will be practised in the resource room.	Weekly trip on the HandyDart to attend swim lessons.
Recreation/Leisure	Participate in computer lab classes, activating Cross Country Canada with switch.	Tell a knock-knock joke by activating the Big Mac.	Outside play time with the class during daily recess break – free time to drive wheelchair using a switch to stop and go.
Social Responsibility	Play music and help dry paint by activating on-off switches for CD player and hair dryer.	Participate as a reading buddy with partner class – share electronic books using the switch to turn pages.	Help create (with parents) Christmas crafts for sale to raise funds for a local charity.

Meaningful Routines Activity Matrix

Meaningful routines for _____

Context (across)	Classroom	School	Community
Goals (below)			

4F: Multi-Subject Matrix

A multi-subject matrix can be used to provide information about the student’s personal goals and strategies to be used throughout his/her program. On the same form, the teacher can indicate whether the strategy was effective and record observations about the student’s response to the intervention.

IEP Matrix: Strategies to support success (example)

Student: Rhiannon

Timetable	IEP Objectives and Strategies				
	Self-advocate by asking for help: “I need help to get started.”	Take tests in sections.	Use an editing rubric on written work.	Use graphic organizers to guide thinking.	Stay on task: teacher stops instruction every 2-5 minutes and has students quickly discuss what they have just heard with a classmate.
Resource Block	✓	✓	✓	✓	
English 10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Principles of Math story	✓	✓		✓ Problem solving sequence	✓
History	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phys. Ed.	✓	✓			✓
Teacher’s feedback ✓ = Effective X = Need new strategy					

Observations:

4G: IEP Matrix: Strategies to Support Success

Student:

Timetable	IEP Objectives and Strategies				
Teacher's feedback ✓ = Effective X = Need new strategy					

Observations:

4H: What Works For Me – Note Page for Teachers and Teacher Assistants

	Accommodation/ Strategy	Quality of Student Response	Impact on Progress
Start-up			
Revisions to “shape” the strategy			
Did it work?			
Would you recommend it and why or why not?			

Appendix 5: Setting SMART Goals and Objectives

SMART Goals

It may be helpful to make use of a construct such as “SMART” for developing IEP goals and objectives.

Specific:	written in clear, unambiguous language
Measurable:	allow student achievement to be assessed and evaluated
Achievable and Action-oriented:	realistic for the student and written in terms of what the student will do
Relevant and Realistic:	meaningful for the student, focused on positive and achievable changes
Time-related:	can be accomplished within a specified period (months, semester or school year)

In order to assess the clarity of a goal or objective, it is helpful to ask:

- Is the language explicit, easily understood and concise?
- Is it directly linked to the student’s current level of performance?
- Is it consistent/relevant with the vision for the student?
- Is it challenging but achievable within the school year?
- Is it measurable or can objectives be created that are measurable?
- Is it consistent with the student’s past achievement and current rate of progress?

SMART Objectives

Some goals can be achieved by focusing on one specific step. Most goals should be broken down into objectives. These statements break the overall goal into smaller, manageable components or steps. Objectives are accomplished in a shorter time period (typically six to eight weeks). The same principles of clarity and measurability apply to both goals and objectives.

Performance objectives will:

- describe what the student will do
- describe the conditions under which the learning will occur
- state criteria for successful performance and evaluation
- give the anticipated date of completion

Some questions to ask when developing performance objectives are:

- Is the objective attainable in a reasonable time frame?
- Taken together, do the objectives represent the essential components of the goal outcome?
- Is the objective measurable?
- Does the objective include conditions for learning, assessment criteria and completion date?

Adapted from Alberta Education, Alberta, Canada (2006)

Verbs for Writing SMART Goals and Objectives

The following is a list of verbs to use in writing SMART goals and objectives. Choose verbs that express an action – verbs that state how students demonstrate what they know or are able to do, or what attitudes or habits of mind they have learned. The chosen verb should describe observable and measurable behaviours.

Certain verbs are to be avoided because they cannot be demonstrated. Some examples are: know, understand, appreciate, think, believe, acquire, remember, feel, value, consider, be aware of, learn.

Verbal/ Linguistic Verbs	Adapt	Discuss	Give in own words	Prescribe	Retell
	Address	Display	Indicate	Present	Reword
	Amend	Distinguish	Inform	Pretend	Rewrite
	Answer	Draft	Interview	Produce	Revise
	Argue	Elaborate	Introduce	Publish	Specify
	Articulate	Embellish	Invent	Question	State
	Associate	Enrich	Justify	Quote	Suggest
	Compose	Enunciate	Label	Read	Summarize
	Convert	Expand	List	Recall	Synthesize
	Convince	Explain	Listen	Recite	Teach
	Create	Express in other terms	Make up	Recognize	Tell
	Critique	Extend	Memorize	Recommend	Translate
	Debate	Form	Modify	Redirect	Transmit
	Defend	Generalize	Name	Relate	Use
	Define	Generate	Paraphrase	Repeat	Write
	Demonstrate	Give examples	Point out	Report	
	Describe		Predict	Restate	
	Devise			Respond	
	Interpersonal Verbs	Advise	Design	Identify	Perceive
Articulate		Discuss	Illustrate	Plan	Share
Assign		Display	Improve	Play	Show
Coach		Educate	Interpret	Practise	Solve
Communicate an opinion		Empathize	Interview	Present	Spell out
Compose		Encounter	Instruct	Project	Teach
Contribute		Evaluate	Justify	Receive feedback	Train
Create		Experience	Listen	Record	Translate
Demonstrate		Explain	Motivate	Relate	Write
		Give feedback	Organize	Role play	

Intrapersonal Verbs	Access Advocate Amend Analyze Apply Appraise Assess Assimilate Award Choose Communicate an idea Compare/ Contrast	Concentrate Conclude Contribute Create Critique Decide Defend Demonstrate Describe Determine Discriminate Draw Evaluate Explain	Explore Focus Illustrate Imagine Interpolate Interpret Judge List Make Narrate Plan Point out Position Practise	Prepare Propose Rank Rate Recognize Recount Redraw Reflect Report Review Revise Rewrite Select Self-reflect	Share Show Suggest Support Tell Track Use Validate Write
Logical/ Mathematical Verbs	Analyze Appraise Apply Arrange Brainstorm Break down Calculate Cause/Effect Check Classify Combine Compare Compute Conclude Contrast Convert Count	Criticize Decide Decipher Deduce Demonstrate Derive Detect Determine Develop Devise Differentiate Discern Discover Discriminate Distinguish Estimate Evaluate	Examine Exercise Extrapolate Find examples Find relationships Find unknown Formulate Grasp Hypothesize Infer Integrate Interpret Link Measure	Modify Observe Order Outline Plot Ponder Predict Prove Puzzle Rank Resolve Select Separate Sequence Simplify Solve Test	Track Translate Unify Verify
Musical/ Rhythmic Verbs	Amplify Arrange Blend Classify Compare/ Contrast Compose Create	Demonstrate Elevate Enhance Explain Express Harmonize Hear Hum	Illustrate Incorporate Interpret Listen Make up Modify Orchestrate Perform	Play Practise Present Produce Represent Retell Select Show	Sing Stage Train Modify Write about

Body/ Kinesthetic Verbs	Act out Adjust Apply Arrange Bend Blend Build Categorize Change Choose Classify Collect information Combine Compare Compile Complete Conduct Construct Count Create Demonstrate Design Determine	Develop Devise Discover Display Divide Document Dramatize Engage Erect Examine Execute Exercise Experiment Fill in Find Fold Form Fuse Gauge Group Imitate Inspect Interpret Invent	Investigate Jump Keep records Leap Locate Make Make up Manipulate Match Measure Model Modify Move Operate Order Organize Participate Perform Pick Plan Point Post Practise	Prepare Present Produce Put Put in order Put to use Put together Rearrange Reconstruct Record Reorder Reorganize Restructure Role Play Rotate Search Select Separate Shake Show Simulate Sort Spin	Spring Stage Stand Stretch Subdivide Survey Tabulate Take apart Touch Trace Track Train Transfer Turn Twist Uncover Underline Use Vault Write
Visual/ Spatial Verbs	Build Cast Change Chart Convert Compose Copy Create Decorate Demonstrate	Design Diagram Distinguish Divide Draw Elaborate Embellish Enlarge Expand Form	Formulate Graph Identify Illustrate Improve Integrate Interpret Invent Label List	Make Mark Mind map Model Organize Originate Outline Produce Rearrange Recognize	Render Reorder Represent Reproduce Show Sketch Transform

Appendix 6: Tools for Collaboration between Professionals

The following is a selection of collaboration tools which may be helpful in writing IEPs.

6A: IEP Planning Meeting

6B: IEP Review Meeting

6C: IEP Year End Summary

6D: Checklist for Writing the IEP

6A: IEP Planning Meeting

Student's Name _____ Date _____

<p>Strengths</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Needs</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Goals and Objectives</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Strategies</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Participants</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

6B: IEP Review Meeting

Student's Name _____ Date _____

Signs of Progress:

Concerns:

Revised Goals and Objectives:

Revised Strategies:

Participants:

6C: Year End Summary

Student's Name _____ Date _____

Successes/Achievements:

Successful Strategies:

Goals in Progress:

Focus for Next Grade:

Participants:

6D: Checklist for Writing the IEP

Goals reflect area of need for this student	
Transition plans/goals when applicable (strategies to prepare the student for new settings within school, between schools and beyond school)	
Goals are broken down into objectives/steps to reach the goal	
Objectives identify a skill, context and time-frame	
Objectives are written in terms of observable student learning	
Data is measurable and can be easily collected for the purpose of monitoring progress and informing evaluation of achievements	
Strategies address the skill to be taught	
Strategies are chosen to reflect the student's disability/access issues/past experience	
Strategies are written to describe what the adults will do	
Team members will be able to report clearly on the student's progress and needs	
Date for review included	
Evidence that the parent(s) and student were consulted about the preparation of the IEP using the principles of meaningful consultation	

From School District 91 Nechako Lakes

Appendix 7: A Guide to Adaptations and Modifications

In British Columbia, three principles of learning guide practice in the development of Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs), which contain the provincially prescribed learning outcomes for grades and subjects. These are:

- Learning requires the active participation of the student.
- Students learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
- Learning is both an individual and group process.

These same three principles should guide the differentiation of instruction, assessment methods and/or materials – particularly the principle that people learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.

Today's classrooms are diverse and inclusive by nature. Differentiation of instruction and assessment and the principles of universal design are now recognized practices for teachers.

Both differentiation and universal design provide systematic approaches to setting goals, choosing or creating flexible materials and media, and assessment. To undertake differentiation and universal design, teachers need to be aware of a range of accommodations (multiple means of representation, of expression and/or of engagement) that may be necessary to help each student in the classroom succeed. These accommodations may take the form of adaptations and/or modifications.

Many students with special needs and significant learning challenges will be able to achieve the learning outcomes for subjects or courses with no or minor adaptations. Some may be able to achieve the learning outcomes of some subjects or courses with adaptations. A small proportion will need to work on individualized outcomes and goals different than the curriculum; this is referred to as modification.

Adaptations

In BC policy, all students should have equitable access to learning, opportunities for achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs (Policy Document: Special Education: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/special_ed.htm). Adaptations are teaching and assessment strategies especially designed to accommodate a student's needs so he or she can achieve the learning outcomes of the subject or course and demonstrate mastery of concepts. Essentially, adaptations are “best practice” in teaching. A student working on learning outcomes of any grade or course level may be supported through use of adaptations.

Adaptations do not represent unfair advantages to students. In fact, the opposite could be true. If appropriate adaptations are not used, students could be unfairly penalized for having learning differences, creating serious negative impacts to their achievement and self-concept.

Examples of Adaptations

Accommodations in the form of adaptations occur when teachers differentiate instruction, assessment and materials in order to create a flexible learning environment. For example, a student could be working on below grade level learning outcomes in Language Arts and at grade level in all other subjects or courses, some of which require reading materials at the lower reading level.

Adaptations include, but are not limited to:

- audio tapes, electronic texts, or a peer helper to assist with assigned readings
- access to a computer for written assignments (e.g., use of word prediction software, spell-checker, idea generator)
- alternatives to written assignments to demonstrate knowledge and understanding
- advance organizers/graphic organizers to assist with following classroom presentations
- extended time to complete assignments or tests
- support to develop and practise study skills (e.g., in a learning assistance block)
- use of computer software that provides text-to-speech/speech-to-text capabilities
- pre-teaching key vocabulary or concepts; multiple exposure to materials
- working on provincial learning outcomes from a lower grade level

Best practice in teaching suggests that a record of successful adaptations for any student should be kept within a student's file to both document current practice and support future instructional needs. In the case of a student with special needs who has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or English as a Second Language students who have Annual Instructional Plans, successful adaptations are recorded in these plans to document how the student is being supported currently and also so other teachers will know what works well for that student.

For students with special needs, adaptations that are used for tests and exams must be included in their IEPs in order for them to be considered for adaptations to the provincial exam conditions (adjudication).

Students whose educational programs include adaptations will generally be working toward graduating with a Dogwood Diploma.

Grading and Reporting When There are Adaptations

Grading for students who have been provided with adaptations should be in relation to the outcomes of the curriculum. If the learning outcomes that a student is working toward are from the curriculum of a grade level lower than the current grade placement, this should be indicated in the IEP or learning plan and in the body of the student's progress report. Further information on this subject is available in the ministry document:

Reporting Student Progress: Policy and Practice

(www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom_assessment/09_report_student_prog.pdf)

Modifications

This section may not apply to students in ESL programs unless they are also identified as a student with special needs as determined by ministry and district processes.

Accommodations in the form of modifications instructional and assessment-related decisions made to accommodate a student's educational needs that consist of individualized learning goals and outcomes which are different than learning outcomes of a course or subject.

When to Use Modifications

The decision to use modifications should be based on the same principle as adaptations – that all students must have equitable access to learning, opportunities for achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs. Before modifying the outcomes for a student, schools should review all instructional interventions tried and consider assessment information, utilizing a process that is ongoing and consultative – similar to IEP development practices overall.

Modifications should be considered for those students whose special needs are such that they are unable to access the curriculum (i.e., students with limited awareness of their surroundings, students with fragile mental/physical health, students medically and cognitively/multiply challenged). Using the strategy of modifications for students not identified as special needs should be a rare practice.

In many cases, modifications need only form part of an educational program for a student with special needs, and they need not be a permanent or long-term solution. Whether to use modifications should be reviewed on a regular basis. Decisions about modifications should be subject or course specific wherever possible. For example, a student with an intellectual disability may require modifications to a specific subject area such as mathematics; however, modifications may not be required to meet the provincial outcomes in physical education.

Although decisions about modifications to a student's courses or subjects may take place in grades earlier than Grade 10, a formal decision that an overall program is modified does not need to occur until Grade 10. The decision to provide modifications, particularly at the secondary school level, will result in students earning a School Completion Certificate upon leaving school rather than credits toward graduation or a Dogwood Diploma. Therefore, the critical decision of whether a student's education program should include modifications should not be made in isolation by a single classroom teacher. The decision should be carefully and thoughtfully made, in consultation with parents, school administration, and/or instructional support personnel. This decision should address longer term educational, career and life goals of students and encompass plans for attaining these goals.

Examples of Modifications

An educational program for a student might include a combination of accommodations which includes modifications. For example, a student could be working on grade level learning outcomes in Physical Education and Health and Career Education and below grade level learning outcomes in Mathematics, all with adaptations while at the same time working on individualized learning outcomes that meet the student's IEP goals in all other subjects. The individualized outcomes address functional life skills and foundational academic skills.

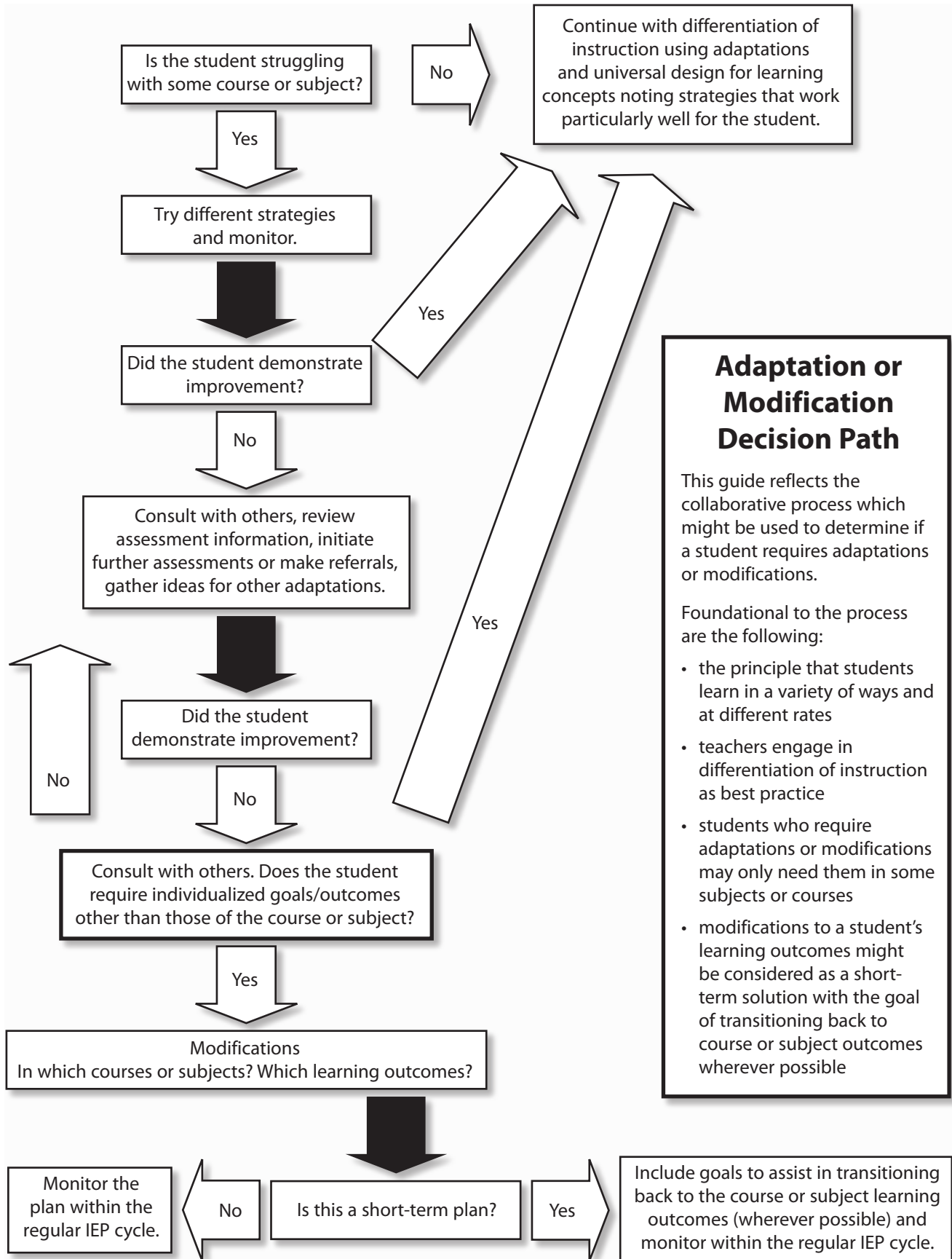
For students with special needs, modifications that consist of individualized learning outcomes or goals must be included in the IEP. Some further types of modifications include:

- Content and evaluation related to the course or subject but at a lower level of conceptual difficulty that is based on a student's individualized outcomes or goals: when students do well on this specially designed material, they have a chance to feel successful. For example, while students in a Grade 3 class are researching for presentations on the solar system, a student with special needs in this class uses a computer to drag and click planets into a template of the solar system and learns to say the names of each planet. At the secondary level, a Grade 9 student with special needs learns how to count change and manage a personal budget while other students are introduced to algebraic expressions.
- Only portions of the learning outcomes are addressed so that a student may participate in the classroom and feel success even though he or she is working at a conceptual level significantly different from the other students. For example, in a science class a student with special needs learns to identify safe and dangerous chemicals used in the lab, while other students carry out a chemistry experiment.
- Although related to the outcomes of the curriculum, the goals for a student with special needs are significantly different. For example, while other students are learning how to read and respond to text in a Grade 4 classroom, a student with special needs is learning how to listen to stories at a pre-primary level and when to turn the page at the appropriate time using assistive technology.

Grading and Reporting When there are Modifications

If schools are using BCeSIS or Student Achievement Data Exchange (SADE) to record progress for students in grades 4 to 12, a value is required to be entered to maintain student records over time. For more information about BCeSIS, please contact your local school district. For more information about SADE, please see the following link: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/datacollections/sade/.

Progress reports to parents for students with special needs who are working toward individualized outcomes or goals in an IEP rather than the outcomes of the curriculum for that subject or course may be done using structured written comments or letter grades. The most appropriate form of reporting for the student should be determined collaboratively at the school level. If letter grades are used when modifications have been made, the body of the student progress report should state that the evaluation is in relation to the individualized outcomes or goals and not in relation to learning outcomes for the subject or course. The specific IEP outcomes or goals evaluated should be included in the student progress report. Further information on this subject is available in the Ministry document: *Reporting Student Progress: Policy and Practice* (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom_assessment/09_report_student_prog.pdf)



Appendix 8: Resources

- Amundson, S. J. (1998). *TRICS for written communication – Techniques for rebuilding and improving children's school skills*. Homer, Alaska: O.T. KIDS, Inc.
- Bateman, B. (2006). *Writing measurable IEP goals and objectives*. Verona, WI: Attainment Company, Inc.
- Dawson, P., & Guare, R. (2003). *Executive skills in children and adolescents: A practical guide to assessment and intervention*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Dornbush, M. & Pruitt, S. (1995). *Teaching the tiger*. Duarte, CA: Hope Press.
- Dunn, K., Curtis, M. (2008). *The incredible 5 point scale: Assisting students with autism spectrum disorders in understanding social interactions and controlling their emotional responses*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.
- Goldberg, D. (2005). *The organized student: Teaching children the skills for success in school and beyond*. New York: Simon & Schuster Adult Publishing Group.
- Koomar, J., Kranowitz, C., Szlut, S., & Sava, D. (2001). *Answers to questions teachers ask about sensory integration*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons Inc.
- Kranowitz, C. S. (2005). *The out of sync child: Recognizing and coping with sensory integration dysfunction*. New York: Perigee Books.
- Male, M. (2003). *Technology for inclusion: Meeting the special needs of all students*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, Pearson Education Group.
- Miller, L. (2006). *Sensational kids: Hope and help for children with sensory processing disorders*. New York: Penguin Group (USA).
- Porter, L. (2002). *Educating young children with special needs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
- Reithaug, D. (2005). *A guide to develop IEPs for reading*. Retrieved from www.setbc.org/download/LearningCentre/Topics/MakingItWork_Section2.pdf
- Richard, G. J. (1998). *The source for syndromes* (Volumes 1 & 2). East Moline, IL: LinguiSystems, Inc.
- Social thinking and perspective taking*. www.socialthinking.com
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms* (2nd ed.) Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Roles and responsibilities of teachers and teacher assistants*. BCTF/CUPE Joint Paper.
- Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada. *Understanding tourette syndrome: A handbook for educators*.
- Wood, J. W. (1996). *Reaching the hard to teach*. Richmond, VA: Virginia Commonwealth University.

Ministry Links

Ministry of Education
www.gov.bc.ca/bced/

Reporting on K-12 Education: Summary of Key Information
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/site_inx.php

Graduation and School Completion

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/avid/

Course Information for the Graduation Program
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/courseinfo/

Graduation Program Requirements
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/

Graduation Transitions
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/grad-transitions/welcome.htm

Handbook of Procedures for the Graduation Program
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/handbook/

School Completion Certificate Program
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/completion/

Curriculum

British Columbia Performance Standards
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/

LearnNow BC
www.learnnowbc.ca/

Integrated Resource Packages – English/French
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/

Special Education

Diversity in BC Schools – A Framework
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/diversity.htm

Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg.htm

Special Education Resource Documents
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/sped_res_docs.htm

Languages

ESL Learners: A Guide for Classroom Teachers
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/esl/

French Programs – Related Links
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/frenchprograms/

Ministry of Education Policy

Ministry of Education Policy Site
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/

Board Authority Authorized Courses
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/board_authority.htm

Graduation Requirements Policy – English/French
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/graduation_req_sec_2.htm

Special Education Policy
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/special_ed.htm

Student Reporting Policy
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/student_reporting.htm

School Act and Ministerial Orders

School Act Ministerial Orders may be viewed at:
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e.htm

Graduation Requirements Order
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m205-95.pdf

Individual Education Plan Order
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m638-95.pdf

Special Needs Student Order
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m150-89.pdf

Student Progress Report Order
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/m191-94.pdf

Provincial Resource Programs

For a complete list of all the Provincial Outreach Programs visit
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/special_ed_policy_manual.pdf#page=101

POPARD - Provincial Outreach Program for Autism Spectrum Disorder. Provides consultation, training and ongoing support to schools to meet the special needs of students with autism spectrum disorder.
www.autismoutreach.ca/

Provincial Outreach for Deaf-Blindness. Consultation, training and ongoing support to school districts, including suggestions for IEP development, for students who are Deafblind.
www.sd38.bc.ca/BCDeafblindOutreach/

Provincial Outreach Program for Deaf & Hard of Hearing. Provides consultation, training, and ongoing support to schools to meet the special needs of students who are Deaf.
www.deafoutreachbc.ca/

Provincial Outreach for Cochlear Implants & ATEP. Consultation, training and ongoing support to schools to meet the special needs of students with cochlear implants. (pdf)
www.auditoryoutreach.ca/

Provincial Outreach for Students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Provides consultation, training, and ongoing support to schools to meet the special needs of students with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.
www.fasdoutreach.ca/

PISP - Provincial Integration Support Program. Provides support to school teams in the inclusion of students with severe/profound multiple physical and cognitive disabilities.
www.pisp.ca/

SETBC - Special Education Technology BC (Provincial Centre). Provides provincial co-ordination and support for all programs, services and resources offered by SET-BC.
www.setbc.org/

Related Internet Resources

Alberta Special Education

www.education.alberta.ca/admin/special/resources.aspx

Accessible Resource Collection (ARC) The Accessible Resource Centre – British Columbia is a BC Ministry of Education funded response to the increasing demand for digital or alternate format alternatives to print in BC classrooms. The goal of ARC-BC is to provide BC students with perceptual disabilities and the educators supporting them with high quality digital alternate format materials based on the BC K-12 curriculum.
www.arc-bc.org/

BC Council of Administrators of Special Education (BCCASE) The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) is an international professional educational organization that is affiliated with the Council for Exceptional Children whose members are dedicated to the enhancement of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of each individual in society.
www.bc-case.org/

Center for Applied Technology Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework for designing curricula that enable all individuals to gain knowledge, skills and enthusiasm for learning. UDL provides rich supports for learning and reduces barriers to the curriculum while maintaining high achievement standards for all.
www.cast.org/

Every Principal's Guide to Special Education in British Columbia

www.bcssa.org/topics/SpecEd.FC2002.pdf

Teaching to Diversity (BCTF) Teaching to Diversity: ESL, Learning Assistance, Special Education is a subsite of the BCTF web site. It is designed to support educators of school-aged students of all abilities with information, strategies and resources related to special education, learning assistance and ESL.
<http://bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=10564>

