



**SAGAMOK  
ANISHNAWBEK**



**BIIDAAABAN KINOOMAAGEGAMIK  
(SCHOOL)**

***A PARENT'S GUIDE  
TO  
SPECIAL EDUCATION***



**OUR VISION**

Helping young minds achieve success and become confident learners.

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

Biidaaban Kinooaagegamik provides a safe and nurturing learning environment that is conducive to the well-being of each student. We will foster Anishnaabe pride by weaving together academics and traditional knowledge so each child develops to their fullest potential.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY/POLICY**

In accordance with its vision statement, “Helping young minds achieve success and become confident learners”, Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik strives to provide educational opportunities that encourage all students to develop their individual potential in the most enabling environment and supports the inclusion and integration of the exceptional student into the regular classroom as a first choice. However, in recognition of the unique qualities and diverse needs of each student, a continuum of placements is provided.

**Note: Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik School’s Special Education policy and procedures are consistent with the Ontario Ministry of Education Special Education policy.**

### **Message from the Director**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We believe all children can learn, and we know that all children learn differently. Our Special Education programs and services are designed to meet the unique learning needs of each student identified as exceptional. Students with special needs are supported through their Individual Education Plan (IEP) and by school personnel who work to create a learning environment that promotes inclusion and full participation for all students.

Parents/guardians, you are important partners in creating a rich educational experience for your children. We know that you want the best for your children. You envision a future filled with hope and possibility for a fulfilled life.

We encourage you, as parents/guardians, to collaborate with the school team. As a collaborative team, we always keep the best interests of your child at the centre of every decision.

Regular and ongoing communication between the school and home is very important. Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik (School) welcomes the opportunity to work with you to ensure that your children are benefitting from the most effective supports and instruction,

Sincerely,

***Anna Marie Abitong***

Anna Marie Abitong,  
Director of Education

**JUNE 2017**

## THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this parent’s guide is to provide you with information about the Special Education Program and Services of Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik School. If, after reading this guide, you require more information, please contact the principal.

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*Every student can learn - just not on the same day, or the same way.*



## ACCESSING SPECIAL SERVICES FOR YOUR CHILD

If you have a concern regarding your child's progress, here is the most effective procedure to follow:

1. Contact your child's classroom teacher about your concern. Sharing information and developing a cooperative plan between home and school are invaluable in supporting and encouraging your child. This may be all that is needed to remediate learning difficulties.
2. If the teacher is unable to resolve the concern, she/he will refer your child to the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT). The SERT may do some informal testing to evaluate your child's learning needs
3. If the concern is still not resolved, the SERT may refer your child to In-school Education Team (ISET). This team will include the SERT, others who teach your child and, usually, the principal. Strategies are developed at this meeting to find in-school solutions to support your child. A meeting with you is a part of this strategy. A variety of practical plans will be developed and discussed with you.
4. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is one of the many strategies which may be recommended.
5. If testing by external personnel (i.e. .Speech-Language pathologist, psychometrist, and psychologist) is recommended, the appropriate consent forms and consultation will follow. After reviewing the results of testing and consultation, an IEP may be recommended.
6. If it is in accordance with your wishes, and documentation on your child supports the definition of exceptionality, as defined by the Ministry of Education, an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meeting will be arranged.
7. After students are identified through the IPRC process, an Individual Education Plan **must** be prepared in order to match your child's education requirements to the identified needs.

## THE EXCEPTIONAL PUPIL

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

A Special Education Program is defined in the *Education Act* as an educational program that:

- is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation; and
- Includes a plan (called an Individual Education Plan or IEP) containing specific objectives and an outline of special education services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil.

Special Education Services are defined in the *Education Act* as the facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

## CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF EXCEPTIONALITIES

**Students are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education.**

Category	Ministry of Education Definition
<b>Behaviour</b>	
<b>Behaviour</b>	A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships;</li> <li>b) excessive fears or anxieties;</li> <li>c) a tendency to compulsive reaction;</li> <li>d) an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or other health factors, or any combination thereof.</li> </ol>
<b>Communication</b>	
<b>Autism</b>	A severe learning disorder that is characterized by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) disturbances in:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rate of educational development;</li> <li>- ability to relate to the environment;</li> <li>- mobility;</li> <li>- perception, speech, and language;</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) lack of the representational symbolic behaviour that precedes language</li> </ol>
<b>Deaf and Hard-of Hearing</b>	An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.
<b>Language Impairment</b>	A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and</li> <li>b) include one or more of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- language delay;</li> <li>- dysfluency;</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.</li> </ul>
<b>Speech Impairment</b>	A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm, and stress.
<b>Learning Disability</b>	<p>One of a number of neuro-developmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills and that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an effective and accurate manner in students who have assessed intellectual abilities that are at least in the average range;</li> <li>- results in (a) academic underachievement that is inconsistent with the intellectual abilities of the student (which are at least in the average range) and/or (b) academic achievement that can be maintained by the student only with extremely high levels of effort and/or with additional support;</li> <li>- results in difficulties in the development and use of skills in one or more of the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and work habits and learning skills;</li> <li>- may typically be associated with difficulties in one or more cognitive processes, such as phonological processing; executive functions (e.g. self-regulation of behaviour and emotions, planning, organizing of thoughts and activities, prioritizing, decision making);</li> <li>- may be associated with difficulties in social interaction (e.g., difficulty in understanding social norms or the point of view of others); with various other conditions or disorders, diagnosed or undiagnosed; or with other exceptionalities;</li> <li>- is not the result of a lack of acuity in hearing and/or vision that has not been corrected; intellectual disabilities; socio-economic factors; cultural differences; lack of proficiency in the language of instruction; lack of motivation or effort; gaps in school attendance or inadequate opportunity to benefit from instruction.</li> </ul>
<b>Intellectual</b>	
<b>Giftedness</b>	An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.

<b>Mild Intellectual Disability</b>	A learning disorder characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service;</li> <li>b) an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development;</li> <li>c) a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.</li> </ul>
<b>Developmental Disability</b>	A severe learning disorder characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development;</li> <li>b) an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development;</li> <li>c) a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.</li> </ul>
<b>Physical</b>	
<b>Physical Disability</b>	A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or development level.
<b>Blind and Low Vision</b>	A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.
<b>Multiple</b>	
<b>Multiple Exceptionalities</b>	A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities that is of such a nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

## **THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)**

An IEP **must** be developed for your child, if identified as exceptional, in consultation with you. (An IEP **may** be developed when your child is not formally identified as exceptional.)

It must include:

- specific educational expectations;
- an outline of the special education program and services that s/he will receive;
- a statement about the methods by which your child's progress will be reviewed; and,
- for students graduating from grade eight a plan for transition to secondary school.

The IEP must be completed within 30 school days after your child has been placed in a special education program, and the principal must ensure that you receive a copy of it.

## **THE IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) PROCESS**

The Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) is composed of at least three persons, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer. The classroom teacher and SERT are usually members, also.

Regulation 181/98 entitles parents to be present and participate in all committee discussions about your child; and, to be present when the committee's identification, and placement decisions are made.



### ***Who Else May Attend an IPRC meeting?***

- other resource people such as the Student Support Worker, Mental Health Worker, or the representative of an agency, who may provide further information or clarification;
- your representative – that is, a person who may support you or speak on behalf of you or your child; and,
- an interpreter if one is required. (You can request the services of an interpreter through the principal of your child's school);
- either you or the school principal may make a request for the attendance of others at the IPRC meeting.

### ***The Role of the IPRC***

The IPRC will:

- decide whether or not your child should be identified as exceptional;
- identify the areas of your child's exceptionality, according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education;
- decide an appropriate placement for your child, i.e. regular class; regular class with withdrawal; special class with integration, when appropriate; special school;
- review the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

### ***Requesting an IPRC Meeting***

The principal of your child's school:

- must request an IPRC meeting for your child, upon receiving your written request;
- may, with written notice to you, refer your child to an IPRC when the principal and the child's teacher or teachers believe that your child may benefit from a special education program.



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

### ***Information Parents Receive About the IPRC Meeting***

At least 10 days in advance of the meeting, the chair of the IPRC will provide you with written notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend the meeting as an important partner in considering your child's placement. This letter will notify you of the date, time, and place of the meeting, and it will ask you to indicate whether you will attend.

Before the IPRC meeting occurs, you will receive a written copy of any information about your child that the chair of the IPRC has received. This may include the results of assessments or a summary of information.

### ***IPRC Meeting Process***

- The chair introduces everyone and explains the purpose of the meeting.
- The IPRC will review all available information about your child.
- The IPRC will:
  - consider an educational assessment of your child;
  - consider, subject to the provision of the Health Care Consent Act, 1996, a health or psychological assessment of your child conducted by a qualified practitioner if they feel that such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision;
  - interview your child, with your consent, if it would be useful to do so.
- You are encouraged to ask questions and join in the discussion.
- Following the discussion, after all the information has been presented and considered, the committee will make its decision.

### ***If parents are unable to attend the scheduled meeting.....***

If you are unable to make the scheduled meeting, you may:

- contact the school principal to arrange an alternative date or time; or
- let the school principal know you will not be attending, and as soon as possible after the meeting, the principal will forward to you, for consideration and signature, the IPRC's written statement of decisions, noting the decision of identification and placement and any recommendations regarding special education programs and services.

### ***What the IPRC's Written Statement of Decision Includes.***

The IPRC's written statement of decision will state:

- whether the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional;
- where the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional:
  - the categories and definitions of any exceptionalities identified, as they are defined by the Ministry of Education;
  - the IPRC's description of your child's strengths and needs;
  - the IPRC's placement decision (i.e. classroom, self-contained classroom, etc.);

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

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

If the IPRC has identified your child as exceptional and you have **agreed** with the IPRC identification and placement decision, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for your child will be developed.

### ***Review of Placement***

A review IPRC meeting will be held within the school year, unless the principal, receives written notice from you, the parent/guardian, dispensing with the annual review.

You may request a review IPRC meeting any time after your child has been in a special education program for three months.

### ***Consideration/Decision of the IPRC Review***

- the IPRC considers the same type of information that was originally documented;
- with your written permission, the IPRC conducting the review, will consider the progress that your child has made in relation to the IEP;
- the IPRC will review the placement and identification decisions and decide whether the recommendations should be continued or whether a different decision should now be made.

### ***Disagreeing with the IPRC Decision***

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

- within 15 days of receipt of the decision, request that the IPRC hold a second meeting to discuss your concerns; or
- within 30 days of receipt of the decision, file a notice of appeal with:  
Director of Education, Anna Marie Abitong  
P.O. Box 610, Massey, Ontario P0P 1P0

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

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

### ***Appealing an IPRC Decision***

If you disagree with the IPRC's identification of your child as exceptional or with the placement decision, you may, within 30 days of receipt of the original decision or within 15 days of receipt

of the decision from the second meeting described above, give notification of your intention to appeal the decision to:

Director of Education, Anna Marie Abitong  
P.O. Box 610, Massey, Ontario POP 1P0

The notice of appeal must:

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

## **MINISTRY'S PROVINCIAL AND DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS**

The Ministry operates provincial and demonstration schools throughout Ontario for students who are deaf, deaf-blind, and for students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and severe learning disabilities. Residential programs are offered at the schools Monday to Friday, for students who live too far from school to travel daily.

For more information about these schools, contact the Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) or principal.

## **ORGANIZATIONS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST PARENTS**

Many parent organizations are available to provide information and support to parents of exceptional children.

- Association for Bright Children (ABC) [www.abcontario.ca](http://www.abcontario.ca)
- Autism Ontario [www.autismontario.com](http://www.autismontario.com)
- Canadian Mental Health Association [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)
- Community Living Ontario [www.communitylivingontario.ca](http://www.communitylivingontario.ca)
- Ontario Association for Infant and Child Development [www.oaicd.ca](http://www.oaicd.ca)
- North Shore Tribal Council (representing local First Nations) [www.mamaweswen.com](http://www.mamaweswen.com)
- Ontario Association for Families with Communication Disorders [www.oafccd.com](http://www.oafccd.com)
- Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario [www.sbhao.on.ca](http://www.sbhao.on.ca)
- Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) [www.ldao.ca](http://www.ldao.ca)
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind [www.cnib.ca](http://www.cnib.ca)
- Canadian Hearing Society [www.chs.ca](http://www.chs.ca)
- Council for Exceptional Children [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)

# TIPS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Biidaaban Kinooaagegamik School considers, you the parents, as valued partners when planning for your child's education. Collaboration and open communication between the school and home are essential to a good working relationship. Here are some things to consider when you have questions about your child's education or you have a planned meeting with the school:

- keeping a file at home that contains school information about your child is always a good idea. Report Cards, Individual Education Plans, assessments and IPRC forms are all important documents that can help when you meet with the school.
- your child's teacher is always the best person to contact regarding your child's progress. This can be done by phone, through a visit or an email. You can arrange a time to speak to your child's teacher(s) when you have questions or information to share. Arranging a meeting is always possible and will support ongoing planning to address your child's needs.
- to prepare for a meeting, write down a few questions you have or the information you wish to share, prior to meeting with the school. This way you are sure to cover all of the topics you want to discuss and can stay focused on your goal.
- feel free to bring someone with you to the meeting: a friend, support person, parent advocate or community partner. Informing the principal prior to the meeting would be best practice.
- ask for clarification and explanations when needed. Special Education practices and processes can be overwhelming and the school wants to ensure that you understand and have all of your questions clarified.
- the principal can request support staff (i.e. Student Support Worker, Mental Health Worker, etc.) to attend meetings. The role of support staff would be to offer support and further programming suggestions regarding your child's education.

Effective communication is the key to building relationships of mutual trust and cooperation. Although educators and parents share the same goal, each views the student's educational needs from a different perspective. The goal of the partnership between home and the school is to provide a welcoming nurturing environment where your child can achieve success and reach their fullest potential.

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