

Updated May 2025



# SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT GUIDE



## A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

The Near North District School Board believes that all students have the potential to learn and that all students should progress to the best of their ability.

The *Education Act* requires that school boards provide special education programs and services for students with exceptionalities. Every effort is made to address the needs of students in a regular classroom in their community school. Some students will need a variety of program modifications and accommodations to their educational program. Other students may require more specialized educational programs and services to assist them to reach their full potential.

Parents are important partners in their children's education. You are encouraged to meet frequently with the school team to discuss the educational program being planned and delivered. The *Parent's Guide to Special Education* has been prepared to help you fully participate in decision-making regarding your child's needs.

Note:

- If you wish to receive this Parent's Guide in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, audio recording, e-mail, and electronic or digital document (which is accessible using a personal computer equipped with "screen reading" software) please contact the Board at the email address or telephone number shown on the last page of this guide.
- When used in this guide, the word "parent" includes guardian.



## **Is Your Child Struggling at School?**

Is your child struggling with schoolwork or with school in general?

- Whether or not you have received a message from the school, if your child has an issue with their work, and you believe they are struggling, make arrangements to speak with the teacher.

## **How to Be Your Child's Supporter (Advocate)**

If school problems do come up, it's important that you quickly recognize and address them. Problems at school can show up as poor academic performance, lack of motivation, loss of interest in schoolwork, or poor relationships with peers or teachers. Your concerns are important and sometimes it takes some time to establish the best solution.

### **Plan your approach:**

- Gather information;
- Talk to your child;
- Organize what you want to highlight;
- Know what questions you want to ask.

Parents can contact an agency/organization within the Near North District who supports children and families with any special needs for guidance and assistance. You can have a friend or advocate attend school meetings with you.

## **2. Communicate regularly with school staff:**

Each student is different and learns differently, and no one knows your child better than you do. You may be able to provide some insight that will help the teacher and/or the special education resource teacher work more effectively with your child at school.

- Be positive and focus on one or two issues at a time;
- Share information on what your child likes to do or what they are good at (strengths);
- Share information about your child that you feel is important;
- Share information that you have gathered from outside sources that may assist with programming decisions at school;
- Listen actively – every person at the meeting has important information to share;
- Give some thought to the solutions you would like to see;
- Plan next steps together;
- Take notes of discussion items and decisions made.

It is never too early to seek help for your child. Always ask questions if there are things that you don't understand.

## **What is Special Education?**

Special Education describes a wide range of programs, services, supports and placements for students to allow them to be successful in school. Some examples are using a computer to organize their thoughts when writing an essay, using a special computer program to read books, or simply providing students with extra time for writing tests.

## **Does your child need Special Education support?**

- Ask your child if there are certain things that are always difficult at school;
- Ask the teacher if they think your child needs extra support and if the teacher can provide the extra help;
- Some medical conditions may affect learning (e.g. hearing, vision etc.), so it might help to talk to your child's doctor;
- Meet with school staff;
- Your child may be assessed to determine if they have special needs and what those needs are. There may be a short waiting list for assessments.
- If your child's doctor and/or school staff determine that your child needs to be evaluated or assessed, please try to ensure that they have a good night's rest the night before the assessment.

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

The Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) is a meeting to officially determine whether or not your child should be identified as exceptional. An IPRC may be requested by the parents or the school. Once parents have made a request in writing, an IPRC must be held. The school must inform the parents about an IPRC, and it is very important for parents to attend.

## **What is the role of the IPRC?**

The Committee:

- Decides whether or not your child has special learning needs and should be identified as exceptional.
- Identifies the areas of your child's exceptionality according to the categories and definitions provided by the Ministry of Education.
- Decides the best placement and program for your child (regular classroom with modifications and/or accommodations; regular classroom with resource programming; special education class).
- Reviews the identification and placement of your child at least once in each school year or when requested by the parent or school principal provided that the program has been in effect for at least three months.

## **What happens at an IPRC?**

The IPRC meeting usually includes the student's teacher and/or special education resource teacher, principal, parents and the student (if over 16 years of age). Using information from the staff and parents, the committee will consider an educational assessment of your child. Subject to the conditions of the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, a health or psychological assessment of your child conducted by a qualified practitioner may take place. If such an assessment is required to make a correct identification or placement decision, they will recommend a placement for the student, and the parents will be asked to sign a document agreeing to the committee's recommendations.

Some tips:

- You can bring an advocate or support person who may speak on your behalf of you and your child;
- Bring any doctor's notes or assessments about the student's medical condition or about their learning skills;
- Take a photograph of your child to help the committee remember who they're talking about;
- If a particular placement is recommended, you may ask to visit it;
- If you disagree with the decision of the IPRC, you may appeal it, but there is a time limit for the appeal. Your principal can explain the process;
- The IPRC process may seem very formal, but it means that you and your child will have a legal right to request ongoing support, which will help him or her succeed in school;
- Your child's placement will be reviewed at least once in every school year, but you can always ask for changes or for more information at the review;
- Specific procedures for the identification and placement of exceptional pupils are set out in [Regulation 181/98](#).

## **How will I know where and when the IPRC Meeting will be held?**

- At least ten (10) days before the meeting you will receive a letter from your child's school principal inviting you to the meeting to be held at a specific location and on a specified date and time;
- You will be requested to indicate by phone, email or return mail whether you will be in attendance. Before the IPRC meeting occurs, you will receive a written copy of any information about your child that the chair of the IPRC has received. This may include the results of assessments or a summary of information.

If you are unable to attend the scheduled meeting you may:

- Contact the principal to arrange an alternative date or time; or
- Let the school principal know you will not be attending

## **What happens after the IPRC has made its decision?**

If you agree with the IPRC decision you will be asked to indicate by signing your name that you agree with the identification and placement decisions made by the IPRC. You may take the document home and think it over before signing it.

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

In consultation with the parents, the Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed by the school team. It is a written plan that describes what the school will do to help your child be successful. It is based on assessments and evaluation that show your child's learning strengths and needs. Schools must develop an IEP for every identified student.

The IEP should:

- List the student's strengths and needs discovered through assessment;
- Outline of the special education programs and services that will be provided, where and when the service will be provided, and who will provide it;
- List general classroom accommodations;
- List program modifications (changes required to grade-level expectations in the Ontario Curriculum);
- List specific educational expectations, teaching strategies and assessment methods for modified and alternative curriculum;
- Include a description of how the student's progress will be measured and reviewed;
- List a set of goals and expectations for the student and teacher to work toward over the year;
- List any special equipment to be provided;
- List relevant medical/health Information;
- List assessment data;
- State the student's current level of achievement in each program area;
- Assessment strategies for reviewing the student's achievements and progress;
- Regular updates showing dates, results, and recommendations;
- Include transition plans.

An IEP must be completed within 30 school days after your child has been placed in a special placement and the principal must ensure that you receive a copy of it. The IEP must be reviewed each reporting period.

## **What is the difference between Accommodations and Modifications?**

- *Accommodations* are strategies that will help a student meet the curriculum expectations of their grade level;
- *Modifications* are changes to the curriculum so that a student will be given work at their ability level in a particular subject or course.

## **What are Alternative Expectations?**

*Alternative Expectations* are activities and goals that are not part of the regular Ontario curriculum, but are added when needed by a student (e.g. personal care - dressing, feeding).

## **As the parent, what role do I play?**

Parents play a powerful supporting role in the IEP process. As well, be sure to ask for a copy of your child's IEP within thirty (30) days so that you can support the planned activities at home.

You know things about your child's approach to learning that no one else knows. Be sure to tell the teacher about your child's:

- Strengths
- Interests
- Growth areas
- Most important learning goals
- Transition supports needed

## **Review and update the IEP:**

Your child's progress towards his/her goals will be reviewed. Then the IEP will be updated to include different strategies, approaches, and/or resources considered necessary to help the learning process.

- Talk to your child's teacher about the goals that have been set;
- Communicate regularly with your child's teacher regarding progress;
- Look for evidence of growth towards goals on your child's report card;
- Recommend changes in goals, strategies and/or resources or support where you see a need;
- Be actively involved in discussions at school when your child is changing grades, schools or moving into the workplace.

Many organizations are available to support you in understanding an IEP, and/or to provide additional resources. Your school's principal can provide the names of the organizations that serve your area or review the list of community agencies and organizations within this Guide.

Please note that every student in Ontario has an Ontario Student Record (OSR) that travels with the student from school to school, even if the family moves to a new school board. The OSR contains all the relevant information about the student, including report cards, and information about special education assessments, IPRC's and IEPs. Because there are no standard Special Education programs across the province, the "placement" part of the IPRC may differ widely from board to board.

## Categories of Exceptionalities

The following five categories of exceptionalities have been identified in the *Education Act* definition of exceptional pupil:

1. **Behavioural**
2. **Communicational:** Autism, Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, Language Impairment, Speech Impairment, Learning Disability
3. **Intellectual:** Giftedness, Mild Intellectual Disability, Developmental Disability
4. **Physical:** Physical Disability, Blind and Low Vision
5. **Multiple:** Multiple Exceptionalities





### Community Agencies and Organizations:

AGENCY	NORTH BAY & AREA	PARRY SOUND
Autism Ontario	<a href="https://www.autismontario.com/">https://www.autismontario.com/</a>	<a href="https://www.autismontario.com/">https://www.autismontario.com/</a>
People for Education (Ontario)	<a href="https://peopleforeducation.ca/">https://peopleforeducation.ca/</a>	<a href="https://peopleforeducation.ca/">https://peopleforeducation.ca/</a>
Children's Aid Society (Nipissing and Parry Sound)	1-705-472-0910 Toll Free: 1-877-303-0910 <a href="http://www.parnipcas.org">www.parnipcas.org</a>	1-705-746-9354 Toll Free: 1-877-303-0910 <a href="http://www.parnipcas.org">www.parnipcas.org</a>
Community Living	1-705-476-3288 (North Bay) 1-705-384-5384 (Almaguin Highlands) <a href="https://communitylivingnorthbay.org/">https://communitylivingnorthbay.org/</a> <a href="http://www.ahcl.org">www.ahcl.org</a>	1-705-746-9330 <a href="http://www.clps.ca">www.clps.ca</a>
Easter Seals Society Ontario	Toll Free: 1-800-668-6252 <a href="http://www.easterseals.org">www.easterseals.org</a>	Toll Free: 1-800-668-6252 <a href="http://www.easterseals.org">www.easterseals.org</a>
Epilepsy Ontario	1-905-738-9431 <a href="http://www.epilepsyontario.org">www.epilepsyontario.org</a>	1-905-738-9431 <a href="http://www.epilepsyontario.org">www.epilepsyontario.org</a>
Family Alliance Ontario	1-905-723-8111 <a href="http://www.family-alliance.com">www.family-alliance.com</a>	1-905-723-8111 <a href="http://www.family-alliance.com">www.family-alliance.com</a>
HANDS the Family Help Network	Toll Free: 1-800-668-8555 Crisis Line: 1-844-287-9072 <a href="https://thefamilyhelpnetwork.ca/">https://thefamilyhelpnetwork.ca/</a>	Toll Free: 1-800-668-8555 Crisis Line: 1-844-287-9072 <a href="https://thefamilyhelpnetwork.ca/">https://thefamilyhelpnetwork.ca/</a>



AGENCY	NORTH BAY & AREA	PARRY SOUND
Ontario Association for Infant and Child Development	<a href="http://www.oaied.ca">www.oaied.ca</a>	<a href="http://www.oaied.ca">www.oaied.ca</a>
LDAO (Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario)	<a href="https://www.ldao.ca/">https://www.ldao.ca/</a>	<a href="https://www.ldao.ca/">https://www.ldao.ca/</a>
Learning Disabilities Association of Canada - For Parents	<a href="https://www.ldac-acta.ca/causes/for-parents/">https://www.ldac-acta.ca/causes/for-parents/</a>	<a href="https://www.ldac-acta.ca/causes/for-parents/">https://www.ldac-acta.ca/causes/for-parents/</a>
Ontario Health At Home	<a href="https://ontariohealthathome.ca/region/north-east/">https://ontariohealthathome.ca/region/north-east/</a>	<a href="https://ontariohealthathome.ca/region/north-east/">https://ontariohealthathome.ca/region/north-east/</a>
North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit	Toll Free: 1-800-563-2808 <a href="https://www.myhealthunit.ca/en/index.aspx">https://www.myhealthunit.ca/en/index.aspx</a>	Toll Free: 1-800-563-2808 <a href="https://www.myhealthunit.ca/en/index.aspx">https://www.myhealthunit.ca/en/index.aspx</a>
One Kids Place	Toll Free: 1-866-626-9100 1-705-476-5437 <a href="http://www.onekidsplace.ca">www.onekidsplace.ca</a>	Toll Free: 1-855-746-6287 1-705-746-6287 <a href="http://www.onekidsplace.ca">www.onekidsplace.ca</a>
Ontario Association for Families or Children with Communication Disorders	<a href="http://www.oafccd.com">www.oafccd.com</a>	<a href="http://www.oafccd.com">www.oafccd.com</a>
Ontario Early Years – North East Region	Tel: 705-474-8910 ext. 0 <a href="https://www.earlyoncfc.org/">https://www.earlyoncfc.org/</a>	<a href="https://www.psdssab.org/">https://www.psdssab.org/</a>



PADDLE Learning Centre (providing adults with developmental disabilities lifelong education)	1-705-493-2401 <a href="http://www.paddlenorthbay.ca">www.paddlenorthbay.ca</a>	
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### **SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC):**

SEAC is a committee mandated by legislation with members of the school board, parents, local organizations and First Nation and Indigenous representatives. The committee is responsible for making recommendations to the board in respect of any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board. The committee participates in the board's annual review of the special education plan. SEAC does not advise parents or school boards on matters involving individual students.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES:**

To accommodate the variety of needs of exceptional pupils, the NNDSB offers a range of placement options:

#### **Regular Class with Indirect Support:**

- The student is placed in a regular class for the entire day, and the teacher receives specialized consultative services.

#### **Regular Class with Resource Assistance:**

- The student is placed in the regular class for most or all of the day and receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a qualified special education teacher.

#### **Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance:**

- The student is placed in the regular class and receives instruction outside of the classroom for less than 50 per cent of the school day, from a qualified special education teacher.

#### **Special Education Class with Partial Integration:**

- The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, Section 31, for at least 50 per cent of the school day, but is integrated with a regular class for at least one instructional period daily.

**Special Education Class Full-time:**

- The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class, where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, Section 31, for the entire school day.

Other options exist to meet the student's needs for example, there may be a need to apply for admission to:

- A provincial school for students who are blind, deaf, or deaf-blind or a provincial demonstration school for students who have severe learning disabilities. Residential programs are offered at the schools Monday to Friday. More information can be found at: <https://www.pdsbnet.ca/>
- A facility that provides the necessary care or treatment appropriate to the student's condition.

**Specialized Settings****Special Education Classes – Primary/Junior**

Class Name	Location	Description	Recommended Class Size (FTE)
Learning Assistance Program – Elementary (LAP)	Silver Birches	Multiple exceptionalities, severe medically fragile Primary/Junior	6
Primary Communication Class (PCC)	Woodland	Communication: Autism Primary	8
Junior Communication Class (JCC)	Woodland	Communication: Autism Junior	8
Primary Developmental Disabilities Class (PDD)	Silver Birches	Developmental Disabilities Primary	8-10
Junior Developmental Disabilities Class (JDD)	Sunset Park	Developmental Disabilities Junior	8-10
Alternative Classroom for Exceptional Students (ACES)	Land of Lakes	Developmental Disabilities Primary/Junior	8-10
The Learning Centre – West (TLC)	Parry Sound Public	Developmental Disabilities Primary/Junior	8-10
Skills for Early Learning (SEL)	Woodland	Pre-school Skills Development	8

## Special Education Classes – Intermediate/Secondary



Class Name	Location	Description	Recommended Class Size (FTE)
Personal Life Management Program - East (PLMP)	Almaguin Highlands	Multiple, Developmentally Disabled and/or Communication Autism	8-12
Senior Communication (SCC)	Chippewa	Communication: Autism	Up to 12
Senior Personal Life Management Program – West (PLMP)	Parry Sound High	Multiple, Developmentally Disabled and/or Communication Autism	8-12
Intermediate Personal Life Management Program – West (PLMP)	Parry Sound Intermediate	Multiple, Developmentally Disabled and/or Communication Autism	8-12
Intermediate Communication (ICC)	Chippewa	Communication: Autism	8-12
Senior PLMP North	West Ferris	Multiple, Developmentally Disabled and/or Communication Autism	8-12
Intermediate PLMP North	West Ferris	Multiple, Developmentally Disabled, MID and/or Communication Autism	8-12



Intensive small group programs with short-term placements for students are available at the following locations:

Program	School Location
CAS Arbour House	McIntyre Street, North Bay
Child and Youth Mental Health Unit, NBRHC	North Bay Regional Health Centre, North Bay
CAS School of Success	Elmwood Street, North Bay, Almaguin Highlands Secondary School, South River and Sundridge Centennial Public School, Sundridge
CAS Learning for Life (L4L) and SEEDS	Parry Sound Intermediate and High School, Parry Sound
Country Haven	Parish Street, Emsdale
One Kids Place (OKP) Transition to School	McKeown Avenue, North Bay
CMHA Cedar Space	Almaguin Highlands Secondary School, South River and Parry Sound High School, Parry Sound
HANDS John Street Residence	John Street, North Bay

### **Programs for Hearing Impaired Students:**

An itinerant specialist teacher of the hearing impaired provides instruction and support services for hearing impaired students in their home schools.

### **Programs for Blind and Deaf-Blind Students:**

An itinerant specialist teacher of the blind and deaf-blind provides instruction and support services for blind and deaf-blind students in their home schools with additional intervener support.

### **Programs for Gifted Students:**

The needs of gifted students are met within the regular classroom through a variety of modifications and accommodations as outlined on the IEP. Students are encouraged to assume leadership roles and pursue studies in more breadth and depth. Clustering for enrichment activities at the school or family of schools' level may be an option.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF**

Special Education Support Staff, include the following:

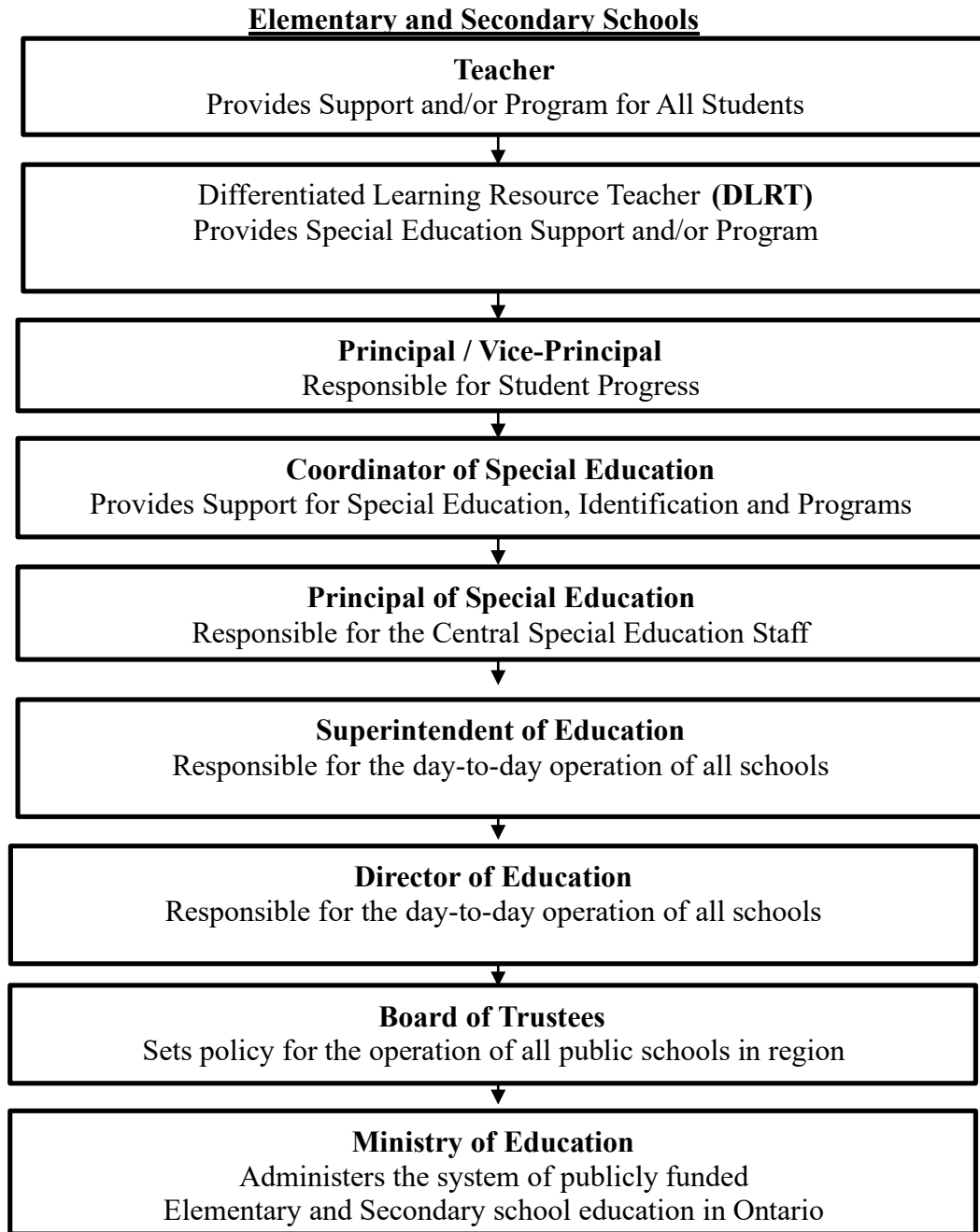
- Principal of Special Education
- Coordinators of Special Education
- Itinerant Specialist Teachers
- Psychologist
- Psycho-educational Consultants
- Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) Consultants
- Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) Coaches
- Behaviour Analyst (R.B.A, Ontario)
- Behaviour Assistants
- Speech Language Pathologists
- Communicative Disorders Assistants
- Educational Assistants

**Partnerships with community agencies support school health services and provide:**

- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Speech Language Therapy
- Recreational Therapy
- Autism Spectrum Disorder Services

## Still Looking for Assistance?

If you have concerns, follow the steps in the chart below and contact the person indicated in the chart.





## SCHOOLS IN THE NEAR NORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Alliance	705-475-2326	700 Stones St., North Bay, ON P1B 6C1
Almaguin Highlands	705-472-5563	21 Mountainview Rd., South River, ON P0A 1X0
Argyle	705-475-2316	Box 1, #11767 Hwy 522, Port Loring, ON P0H 1Y0
Britt	705-773-7999	841 Riverside Dr. Hwy. 526, Britt, ON P0G 1A0
Chippewa Intermediate/Secondary	705-475-2341	539 Chippewa St. W., North Bay, ON P1B 6G8
Evergreen Heights	705-636-5955	Box 149, #2510 Hwy 592 N Emsdale, ON P0A 1J0
F.J. McElligott	705-472-5720	Box 100, 370 Pine St., Mattawa, ON P0H 1V0
Ferris Glen	705-475-2323	30 Voyer Rd, RR #2, Corbeil, ON P0H 1K0
Humphrey	705-732-4801	120 Hwy. 141, Seguin, ON P2A 2W8
Land of Lakes	705-475-2324	Box 538, 92 Ontario St., Burk's Falls, ON P0A 1C0
Laurentian Learning Centre	705-472-5419	647 McKay Ave, North Bay, ON P1B 7V7
M.T. Davidson	705-472-5970	G/D, 249 Lansdowne St., North Bay, ON P0H 1H0
MacTier	705-773-7980	Box 552, 398 High St. Mactier, ON P0C 1H0
Magnetawan	705-387-3939	Box 100, 31 Sparks St., Magnetawan, ON P0A 1P0
Maple View	705-472-5612	790 Norman Ave., North Bay, ON P1B 8C4
Mapleridge	705-472-5751	Box 340, 171 Edward St., Powassan, ON P0H 1Z0
Mattawa District	705-472-5241	376 Park St. Box 330, Mattawa, ON P0H 1V0
McDougall	705-773-7971	69 Hwy. 124, McDougall, ON P2A 2W7
Northern Secondary School	705-472-5322	175 Ethel St., Sturgeon Falls, ON P2B 2Z8
Parry Sound High School	705-773-7979	111 Isabella St., Parry Sound, ON P2A 1N2
Parry Sound Public	705-773-7985	21 Beatty St., Parry Sound, ON P2A 2H5
Phelps Central	705-472-5567	19 Glenvale Dr., Redbridge, ON P0H 2A0
Silver Birches	705-475-2322	65 Marshall Ave. E., North Bay, ON P1A 3L4
South River	705-475-2325	Box 370, 137 Ottawa Ave., South River, ON P0A 1X0
South Shore Education Centre	705-475-2317	60 Beatty St., Nipissing, ON P0H 1W0
Sundridge Centennial	705-472-5101	Box 419, 118 Main St., Sundridge, ON P0A 1Z0
Sunset Park	705-475-2330	1191 Lakeshore Dr., North Bay, ON P1B 8Z4
Vincent Massey	705-475-2340	15 Janey Ave., North Bay, ON P1C 1N1
West Ferris Intermediate/Secondary	705-475-2333	60 Marshall Dr., North Bay, ON P1A 2P2
Whitewoods	705-472-5224	177 Ethel St., Sturgeon Falls, ON P2B 2Z8
Whitestone Lake	705-389-2590	9 Moore Dr., RR #1, Dunchurch, ON P0A 1G0
Woodland	705-475-2321	1325 Cedargrove Dr., North Bay, ON P1B 4S3



## COMMONLY USED TERMS

<b>ABA</b>	Applied Behaviour Analysis
<b>ABI</b>	Acquired Brain Injury
<b>ADD</b>	Attention Deficit Disorder
<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
<b>ADP</b>	Assistive Devices Program
<b>AEP</b>	Annual Education Plan
<b>ARC</b>	Accommodation Review Committee
<b>ASP</b>	Autism Spectrum Disorders
<b>ASL</b>	American Sign Language
<b>AT</b>	Assistive Technology
<b>BEA</b>	Behaviour Expertise Amount
<b>BSW</b>	Behaviour Support Worker
<b>CAP</b>	Central Auditory Processing
<b>CAS</b>	Children's Aid Society
<b>CAT</b>	Canadian Achievement Test
<b>CCAC</b>	Community Care Access Centre
<b>CCTV</b>	Closed Caption Television
<b>CD</b>	Conduct Disorder
<b>CDC</b>	Child Development Counsellor
<b>CEC</b>	Council for Exceptional Children
<b>CF</b>	Cystic Fibrosis
<b>CHS</b>	Canadian Hearing Society
<b>CNIB</b>	Canadian National Institute for the Blind
<b>CP</b>	Cerebral Palsy
<b>CYW</b>	Child and Youth Worker
<b>DD</b>	Developmental Disability
<b>DLRT</b>	Differentiated Learning Resource Teacher
<b>DMD</b>	Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy
<b>DOB</b>	Date of Birth
<b>DSM</b>	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
<b>DSW</b>	Developmental Service Worker
<b>EA</b>	Educational Assistant
<b>ECE</b>	Early Childhood Education
<b>EQAO</b>	Education Quality & Accountability Office
<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>FA</b>	Facilities Amount
<b>FAS</b>	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
<b>HI</b>	Hearing Impaired
<b>IBI</b>	Intensive Behaviour Intervention

<b>HNA</b>	High Needs Amount
<b>IEP</b>	Individual Education Plan
<b>IPRC</b>	Identification, Placement and Review Committee
<b>ISA</b>	Intensive Support Amount (Funding Term)
<b>ISNC</b>	Integrated Services for Northern Children

<b>LD</b>	Learning Disability
<b>LDAO</b>	Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
<b>MCSS</b>	Ministry of Community and Social Services
<b>MD</b>	Muscular Dystrophy
<b>MID</b>	Mild Intellectual Disability
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>NLD</b>	Non-verbal Learning Disability
<b>OAC</b>	Ontario Academic Credit
<b>OAD</b>	Ontario Association of the Deaf
<b>OCDC</b>	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
<b>ODD</b>	Oppositional Defiant Disorder
<b>O&amp;M</b>	Orientation and mobility
<b>OSR</b>	Ontario School Record
<b>OST</b>	Ontario Student Transcript
<b>OT</b>	Occupational Therapist
<b>PDD</b>	Pervasive Developmental Disorder
<b>PT</b>	Physiotherapist
<b>SBT</b>	School Based Team
<b>SEA</b>	Special Equipment Amount
<b>SEAC</b>	Special Education Advisory Committee
<b>SEPPA</b>	Special Education per Pupil Amount (Funding Term)
<b>SERT</b>	Special Education Resource Teacher
<b>SIP</b>	Special Incidence Portion
<b>TBI</b>	Traumatic Brain Injury
<b>VI</b>	Visually Impaired
<b>YCJA</b>	Youth Criminal Justice Act



Programs and services for all students in Ontario, including those who are exceptional, are provided in agreement with the requirements of the *Education Act* and related Regulations, and with principles articulated in the following Ministry of Education policy documents:

#### Key Ministry Policy and Resource Documents Pertaining to Students with Special Education Needs

The following ministry **policy documents** outline program requirements for all elementary and secondary schools, and all students, including students with special education needs, in Ontario.

- *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools – Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (2013)* sets out the career development policy for Ontario schools, which involves the implementation of a comprehensive Kindergarten to Grade 12 education and career/life planning program designed to help students achieve their personal goals and become competent, successful, and contributing members of society.
- *Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements (2016)* sets out the requirements that govern the policies and programs of publicly funded elementary and secondary schools throughout Ontario. Section 3.3 (“Students with Special Education Needs”), section 3.4 (“Provincial and Demonstration Schools”), section 3.5 (Education Programs from Students in Care and/or Treatment, Custody, and Correctional Facilities”), and section 7.4 (“Alternative [Non-Credit] Courses”) are of particular relevance to educators working with exceptional students, but the policies outlined throughout the document are relevant to all students, including students with special education needs. Other sections of particular interest are as follows:
  - “ Section 6.1.3 (“The Secondary School Literacy Graduation Requirement”), along with Appendix 3 (“The Secondary School Literacy Graduation Requirement – Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals, and Exemptions”), Sections 1, 3 and 4. (The policies outlined in PPM No. 127, “The Secondary School Literacy Graduation Requirement”, 2009, are incorporated here.)
  - “ Section 6.4, “The Certificate of Accomplishment”
  - “ Section 7.2.5, “Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)” “
  - Section 10.1, “E-Learning”
- The Ontario curriculum policy documents for the various subjects and disciplines provide grade-by-grade expectations for students in elementary and secondary schools in Ontario. In each of the elementary and secondary curriculum policy documents, there is a section summarizing policies and approaches related to planning programs for students with special education needs, including those who require accommodations only and those who require modified expectations as well as accommodations.
- *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools – First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12 (2010)* sets out policies and practices related to assessment, evaluation, and reporting in all schools and for all students. Chapter 6 (Reporting Student Achievement”) and Chapter 7 (“Students with Special Education Needs:

Modifications, Accommodations, and Alternative Programs”) outline policies and practices for assessment, evaluation, and reporting that specific to students with special education needs. In conjunction with the release of *The Kindergarten Program* (2016), the ministry has released the policy document *Growing Success - The Kindergarten Addendum: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools* (2016).

- *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (2017) provides the strategic policy context within which the Ministry of Education, school boards, and schools will work together to improve the academic achievement of Indigenous students.

The following ministry **resource documents** also contain information relevant to special education.

- *Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students with Special Education Needs Through Progressive Discipline, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2010) sets out a framework that system and school leaders may use to strengthen schools’ ability to provide a caring and safe environment, in which responses to behavior issues are shaped by informed consideration of students’ needs and circumstances.
- *Effective Educational Practices for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Resource Guide* (2007) is designed to support educators in elementary and secondary schools in planning and implementing effective instructional programs for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). It contains information, strategies, and practices that can be put to use in the school and the classroom.
- *Foundations for a Healthy School: Promoting Well-Being is Part of Ontario’s Achieving Excellence Vision* (2014) is designed to help contribute to a learning environment that promotes and supports child and student well-being. This goal emphasizes the need to focus not just on academic success, but also on the whole child and student – their cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development.
- *Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs: A Guide for Ontario Schools* (2015) builds on one of the guiding principles of *A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2013), which is the “FSL programs are for all students”. An examination of current research literature, data, policies, and school board practices highlights the benefits of second-language learning for students with special education needs and supports the engagement of stakeholders in decision making that reflects inclusive FSL programs and case-by-case decision making the best interests of individual students.
- *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2013) outlines an integrated process of assessment and instruction designed to improve student learning at both the elementary and secondary levels.
- *Shared Solutions: A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Education Needs* (2007) is designed to help parents, educators, and students with special education needs address conflicts.
- *Supporting Bias-Free Progressive Discipline in Schools: A Resource Guide for School and System Leaders* (2013) was developed jointly by the Ministry of Education and the Ontario

Human Rights Commission. The document is intended to guide school and system leaders in fostering a bias-free approach to progressive discipline, prevention and early intervention practices to support positive student behavior among all students.

- *Supporting Minds: An Educators' Guide to Promoting Students' Mental Health and Wellbeing* (Draft Version, 2013) provides educators with the information they need to support students with mental health and addiction problems through early recognition and effective classroom strategies.
- *Education Funding: A Guide to the Special Education Grant* provides an overview of special education funding in Ontario. The purpose of the guide is to provide a clear explanation of the funding model for parents, the public, and other partners in education.

## **Post-Secondary Education– What to Expect**

Colleges and universities welcome students with exceptionalities. They strive to provide an accessible, barrier-free learning environment. Applicants must meet the minimum stated requirements for admission and may apply for consideration under their accessibility admission policy.

As a post-secondary student your child will need to be their own advocate. It is your student's responsibility to contact the Accessibility Services or Disability Services office within their college or university to complete a Self-Identification form. Proper documentation from an appropriate registered health care professional is required before services can be provided.

Post-secondary students can apply for disability-related funding under OSAP and includes: Ontario Bursary for Students with Disabilities, Canada Student Grant for Persons with Permanent Disabilities, and Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Persons with Permanent Disabilities.

To be eligible for disability-related Canada Student Grants the student must have a permanent disability, which is defined as a functional limitation that:

- is caused by a physical or mental impairment that:
- restricts the student's ability to perform the daily activities necessary to participate in studies at post-secondary level or the labour force; and
- is expected to remain with the student for their whole life.

Assessment criteria changes but usually students diagnosed with a learning disability are required to have a psycho-educational assessment conducted by a registered psychologist or psychological associate and must be completed when the student was at least 18 years of age or within the past five (5) years.

## **Glossary of Terms**

**Curriculum**: The province of Ontario has outlined the program or curriculum that must be followed to educate children at each grade level. The curriculum describes the expectations (skills and knowledge) that students must acquire as well as achievement level (mark or grade). The curriculum is divided into different subject areas (e.g. Language, Mathematics, Social Studies) for elementary and secondary school students.

**Education Act**: The Education Act is the provincial law that governs education in Ontario. All school boards must operate according to this law. The Act includes legislation – overall laws passed as Bills by government and regulations – made by the Minister of Education to give more details as how the Act is to be applied.

**Exceptional Student**: According to the Education Act an exceptional student is a student who has been formally identified by an Identification and Placement Review Committee (IPRC). An exceptional student has significant needs in the areas of behaviour, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple disabilities and meets the provincial and school board criteria for identification. A student who has been identified as “exceptional” must be provided with the supports and services required to meet the exceptional needs.

**Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**: Every board is required to have a SEAC. This committee is composed of volunteers from community organizations and trustees. The purpose of this committee is to advise the school board on special education issues.





Since 1962, the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (OHRC) has provided persons with disabilities with the right to access goods, services, employment, etc. without discrimination.

### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**

The goal of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (2005) is to make Ontario accessible by 2025 through the development of accessibility standards.

### **Additional information**

1. Contact your child's School Principal

2. Contact:

Special Education Coordinator - North

Email: [Kimberley.Gignac@nearnorthschools.ca](mailto:Kimberley.Gignac@nearnorthschools.ca)

Phone: 705.472.7015 ext. 5017

Or

Coordinator of Special Education - East/West

Email: [Lisa.Paradis@nearnorthschools.ca](mailto:Lisa.Paradis@nearnorthschools.ca)

Phone: 705.386.2387 ext. 6000 or 1.800.278.4922

Principal of Special Education

Email: [Alison.Clarke@nearnorthschools.ca](mailto:Alison.Clarke@nearnorthschools.ca)

Phone: 705.472.8170 ext. 5073 or 1.800.278.4922

## References

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