The Individual Education Plan
An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student to achieve his/her learning expectations.

An IEP is not a daily lesson plan itemizing every detail of the student’s education. Rather, it identifies:

• the accommodations and/or special education services needed to assist the student

• learning expectations that are modified from, or alternative to, the expectations outlined in the Ontario curriculum policy document for the appropriate grade and subject or course

Accommodations are changes in teaching and assessment strategies and in human or equipment supports that help a student learn without changing the knowledge and skills the student is expected to demonstrate.

Modifications are changes made to the age-appropriate, grade-level expectations for a subject or course, in order to meet a student’s specific needs. They often reflect a decrease in the number and complexity of expectations.

Alternative expectations are developed to help students acquire knowledge and skills not represented in the Ontario Curriculum. These include skills like organization, time management, social skills, mobility training, personal care, etc.

The IEP is a working document used to plan the program for a student and to monitor, assess and support the student’s continued progress. Through on-going assessment and evaluation, it is reviewed and updated regularly to note changes in the student’s special education program and services.

The IEP also provides a framework for communicating information about the student’s progress. There is a clear link between the learning expectations outlined in the IEP and what is reported on in the student’s Progress Report Card and Provincial Report Card.
When Is an IEP Developed?
Students identified as Exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) must have an IEP completed within 30 school days of placement in a special education program.

An IEP may be developed for students who have not been formally identified by an IPRC. For TDSB students, Resource support can be provided for one reporting period without the development of an IEP.

An IEP is initiated for non-Exceptional students when the principal, in consultation with members of the In-School Support Team (IST) or School Support Team (SST) determines that:

- Continued Resource support beyond one reporting period is required by a student
- A student regularly requires accommodations for instructional or assessment purposes and/or
- A student’s achievement will be assessed on the basis of modified or alternative expectations

It is ultimately the principal’s decision whether or not to introduce an IEP and to decide when it is no longer needed.

Requirements for IEPs
All IEPs must comply with Ministry of Education requirements for IEP development and implementation. The principal ensures that:

- IEPs are developed for every student identified as Exceptional by an IPRC, within 30 days of student placement in a special education program.
- Parents/guardians (and/or students aged 16 or older) are consulted in the development of the IEP and receive a copy.
- Transition Plans are developed and implemented for all students with an IEP.
- IEPs are reviewed and updated at least once every reporting period.

The principal’s signature on the IEP indicates that the IEP meets Ministry of Education standards, that it lists accommodations and learning expectations based on the student’s strengths and needs and that it takes into account IPRC recommendations.

The parental signature indicates that the parents/guardians were consulted in the development of the IEP (or declined the opportunity to be consulted) and that they have
received a copy. Their comments are noted in the Parent/Student Consultation section of the IEP.

**Transition Planning**

A Transition Plan is required for all students with an IEP, whether or not they are deemed to be Exceptional by an IPRC. The Transition Plan must be developed and reviewed as part of the IEP, in consultation with parents/guardians and/or student (aged 16 and older and having the cognitive ability to understand).

Transition planning is targeted and is carried out using a “tiered” approach.

While all students make similar transitions from one situation or activity to another, they don’t all require the same kind or degree of support.

Transitions can be small, such as adjusting to new or different people, instructional strategies, activities or locations within a school. Transitions can also be big, such as adjusting to changes in school location, educational program components (like secondary rotary) or in school/life pathways. Transition Plans should reflect these differences.

**Transition Plans must include:**

- Realistic transition goals and required supports, related to the specific strengths, needs and interests of the student

- Present and future actions required to achieve the stated goals

- Roles and responsibilities of those who are completing or assisting in each of the identified actions

- Timelines for the implementation and/or completion of each of the identified actions

Transition Plans must also consider long-term goals addressing pathways beyond school, such as planning for transition from school to further education, from school to employment and/or from school to community living.

If a student does not need transition support, the Transition Plan should state that no action is required at this time.

**IEP Dispute Resolution**

Parents/Guardians and students (aged 16 and older and having the cognitive ability to understand) are consulted in the development of the IEP.
While IEPs are developed collaboratively with parents/guardians, Ministry of Education guidelines clarify that decisions related to program planning should be made by those who teach the student, assess progress and prepare the report card. IEP program goals are expected to be curriculum oriented, tied to learning expectations being evaluated for the report card. Goals should be few in number, with reasonable targets expressed in terms of observable achievement.

The principal must give every consideration to parental requests and incorporate them into the IEP when appropriate, but the principal is not obliged to accept parental suggestions. When not including a request, the principal must inform parents/guardians of the reasons.

If disagreement occurs between parents/guardians and staff over aspects of the IEP, resolution takes place through the principal, by way of:

- Discussion with parents/guardians and teacher(s), to identify areas of concern and seek solutions
- Consultation with the School Support Team, including parents/guardians, student (where applicable) and appropriate staff
- Consultation with the Supervising Principal of Special Education and/or Family of Schools Superintendent

The central focus in all discussions is to have the best interests of the student foremost. The shared goal is for finding a workable resolution.

If disagreement persists and all avenues are exhausted without resolution, parents/guardians may ask the Ministry of Education for assistance, by written request.