

## Administrative Procedure 363 – Appendix B

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### Tips for Parents for Participating in the IPP Process

Individualized program planning (IPP) 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 learning team.

You can participate in the IPP process by:

- providing information about your child's past experience 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 IPP process ; and
- actively participating in IPP planning meetings, using strategies like those described below.

### Before IPP meetings

- Discuss the positive elements in the individualized program plan with your child.
- Find out about your child's involvement and role in the meeting. Decide if your child will benefit from participating in the meeting or at least part of the meeting.
- Review the comments from your child's last report card, and goals and objectives from the last IPP. 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 school program?
  - Will the IPP 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 IPP 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.
- Discuss any specific concerns you have about your child.
- Share any home conditions that may impact your child's performance or behaviour at school and any recent documents or medical updates.
- 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 IPP meetings

- Establish mutually agreed upon goals and strategies for your child.
- Find out how you can support your child at home.
- Take notes on recommendations and timelines, such as additional services or assessments.
- Verbally summarize your understanding and interpretation of the decisions made, actions to be taken, timelines, and roles and responsibilities of each participant.
- Give feedback to the people working with your child in areas where you noted positive effort, growth or change.
- Sign the IPP to indicate your agreement with the plan. If you do not agree with the IPP and do not wish to sign, the school has an obligation to document the reasons for your decision and what actions are taken to resolve the issue.
- Ask for a copy of the IPP to refer to at home.
- Decide on the next meeting date.

## After IPP meetings

- Give your child feedback from the meeting.
- Discuss what needs to happen in order to reach the IPP goals. Discuss what your child's role is and also how the school staff and your family will support the plan.

## To review the effectiveness of your child's IPP, consider these questions

- How does the IPP build on my child's strengths?
- How does the IPP address the individual needs of my child?
- Does the IPP focus on key goals for my child?
- How are accommodations tailored to the strengths, areas of need and learning style of my child?

- What is an appropriate balance for my child? (Each student should participate in the regular curriculum as much as possible with accommodations to support success.)
- Does the IPP use more than one source of assessment data to determine strengths and areas of need?
- Does my child have social and behaviour needs that should be addressed in the IPP?
- How does the IPP address planning for transition?
- If there are several teachers responsible for my child's education program, are there procedures for all of them to have access to the IPP so they can use it to plan instruction, monitor progress, and contribute to evaluating and changing goals and objectives?
- Does the IPP use a number of strategies to measure and communicate my child's progress?
- Is progress on IPP goals monitored frequently? If objectives are met, are new ones set? If my child is not demonstrating progress, does the team review the program and make changes?

For more information and strategies for participating in your child's education, check out *The Learning Team: A handbook for parents of children with special needs* (2003), [www.education.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/spec-ed/partners](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/spec-ed/partners). This resource is also available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre at [www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca](http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca) or 780-427-5775.

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