

Hello!

Thank you so very much for participating in the February 2, 2016 Parent to Parent Information Exchange on IEPs.

The organizing committee has reviewed all questions received, both that evening and in emails. We have formulated a question and answers document below. It will be an ongoing work in progress as we continue to receive questions from parents that we feel important to share in this document. Knowledge is power and advocating for your child(ren) can be tricky as we weave our way through the system.

Here are some key points we feel should be addressed right away. If there is anything that requires clarification with either the process or the content of your IEP, this is the route to take in order of who to contact first.

- 1st contact the **teacher**
- 2nd contact the **resource teacher**
- 3rd contact **vice principal** (if there is one)
- 4th contact the **principal**

Please note: the school administrator (principal) has the ultimate responsibility to your child and the correct implementation of the IEP.

Following the principal, you may also contact:

1. Regional director for your school
 - SSD - Student Services Department (special needs consultant or director of student services)

You can view their website here <http://sservices.lbpsb.qc.ca/>

Please remember the IEP while it is a document...
It is a process... a guide... a roadmap

Questions from Developing an IEP

IEP PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, CRITERIA

1. Who is involved in writing an IEP?

Teachers, resource staff, parents, principal and when applicable the student

2. What average mark does your child need to receive in order for an IEP to be created? An IEP is not created based on a their marks, there is no “average mark” = IEP creation formula

3. If your child is failing in a particular subject, is it mandatory for an IEP to be put in place to help them succeed?

No because you must explore why they are not doing well in that subject, there could be many reasons.

4. Can a student be put on an IEP without a formal diagnosis?

Yes absolutely

5. Can parents have access to the “drop down menus” that are used by school staff to help them develop an IEP?

Yes ask your resource teacher but keep in mind they are only guides to develop goals

6. Can items be added to the IEP that are not part of the “drop down menu” that is made available to staff in order to help them develop the IEP?

Yes absolutely the drop down menu is only a guide

7. Can you have an IEP for only one subject?

Yes - it is as needed. It can also be for one particular competency within a subject ex math, french

8. Who can attend an IEP meeting?

Teachers, resource, parents and when applicable the student. Please be respectful to the school and let them know in advance if you would like to bring your outside professional (for example your speech path, psychologist or CROM/SRSOR educator etc.) to the meeting. Also, if you would like the principal, classroom aide or daycare staff member at the meeting etc., please make that request as it would not be assumed that they automatically attend the IEP meetings.

9. Who develops the IEP at the beginning of the year?

IEP is a process and the process continues from the previous year and becomes a collaborate effort between home and school throughout the fall. The new teachers need to get to know your child before they would write the new IEP, so it is safe to expect to see a new one by end of October.

10. Can recommendations from outside professionals be included in my child's IEP?

Yes where applicable

11. How does the IEP work from the school side?

It is meant to be a working document to be revisited each term and possibly more often if the need arises

12. Who has responsibility for the IEP?

Parents have responsibility, so does the teacher, resource, principal

ADAPTATIONS/MODIFICATIONS/SETTING OBJECTIVES

1. How do you figure out what strategies will help your child succeed? What are examples of different strategies?

It is not up to parents to decide alone which strategies are best used, it is up to the professionals that work with your child. There are guides that the school team can look at to see if applies to your child. The school is also welcome to reach out to the student services department (for example the ASD team) for new strategies.

Examples of strategies could be:

- allowing the child to always be either first in line or last in line for all lineups (recess, gym, art, music etc).
- Allowing the child to leave the class 5 minutes early before going out for recess or the end of the day to allow extra time to dress for outside
- In high school - allowing the child to leave the class 3 minutes early to get to their next class to avoid much of the congestion in the halls of high school
- In math - adapting the classwork/homework so they are not doing as many repetitive questions; allowing the use of a multiplication table for students who are unable to memorize multiplication facts
- Extra time on tests and exams
- Use of a reader or scribe or technology as needed

2. Who decides if a student needs academic adaptations? Does a child need to be failing a subject in order for adaptations to be put in place?

First the teachers bring their concerns regarding a student to the school resource so the situation can be looked at. Parents are consulted in this process.

No, children do not have to be failing a subject, they can be struggling.

3. What are some technology adaptations that can be put in place and included on the IEP?

Ipads, chrome books, dragon dictation, word q etc.

4. Can a child who is enrolled in an Immersion or Français Plus program, have adaptations and modifications for French?

French as a second language is a subject that is a required course of study for all students. Adaptations and modifications in French are possible, and the goal is to have the student progress in their learning of French according to their pace and at their level.

If you have registered your student in an immersion or francais plus program but French has proven to be a true struggle for them despite the adaptations and modification put in place over time, then perhaps as a parent you must ask yourself - is this really the right program for your child?

5. If a student is struggling in French, can they have adaptations put in place to allow them to receive information and show demonstration of knowledge in English?

Not in french class

COMMUNICATION AND TIME FRAMES

1. Each school year, when should I expect to receive my child's first IEP for that year?

End of October to allow the new teachers to get to know your child. Until then they are still working on the previous term 3 IEP.

2. Should parents expect to receive a new IEP for their child every term, or every year?

The new IEP draft will arrive with the report card for your review comments, or signature if you are happy with it.

3. How often should parents expect to be contacted and updated on their child's progress throughout the school year? Also, what constitutes a contact?

10 contacts per year - Initiating by parents or the school.

A contact is - report card, email, face to face, IEP meeting, phone call etc. all formal and informal contacts

4. Should I expect monthly meeting regarding my child's IEP?

Not practical

5. When, and how often can the contents of IEP be changed?

As needed, but a guarantee is per term

6. Should parents expect to be notified when a school board level professional, or school staff (other than the teacher), intends to observe their child during class? Who would these professionals be/??

Yes you can expect it. The professionals could be a speech and language therapist, school psychologist, occupational therapy . Please click here to view the services LBPSB offers

<http://sservices.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/services/page.asp>

7. Should parents expect to be notified, if their child is being taken out of class to participate in special activities or programs? (ie.reading in resource, special needs cooking class, sensory program, speech and language group, etc..)

Yes they should expect to be notified if their child is being taken out of class to participate in special activities.

Sensory program is occupational therapy, so it would be an integration aide that carries it through under their guidance and the child should be on an IEP.

8. What is the expected time frame to have the school respond to questions/concerns regarding your child's IEP?

In a reasonable amount of time. You may resubmit your email within a week's time with a polite note at the top "I am just following up since I haven't heard back yet, please see my email below."

9. What are some strategies to open better lines of communication between school resource team and parents?

Depending on the need or concern, contact should often be with the resource teacher regarding the IEP since the teacher is teaching the class. Contact could be made via a phone call, email, written note or even request of a quick meeting. Often it is best to do it in writing so you have a record of it having been sent (in the agenda or email). To create a more positive relationship, it is advisable to be positive in the tone of the email and end any email thanking them for their time. For example:

Hi Mrs. Resource Teacher,

I am writing today to ask a few questions about the draft IEP I received yesterday. When you have a moment could you please phone me so we could discuss. If it is easier to make a quick appointment I could do that also. I understand that the teachers are in class, which is why I have reached out to you and cc'd them in on this email. Please let me know what works best.

Thank you for your time,

Your name

Mom of

10. Should a parent be notified that their school has decided that an IEP is needed and will be developed for their child?

Absolutely! Parents are a vital part of that team.

11. How is the work-to-rule still affecting feedback to parents?

To date (March 11th) there are no comments on a report card.

SIGNING THE IEP/DISAGREEMENTS/RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Will my child lose resources if I do not sign the IEP?

No

2. Must parents sign the IEP for it to be enforced?

No

3. If you have an issue with your IEP, and you are not able to get it resolved at the school level (ie, teacher, resource, principal), what is your next option?

Going to SSD - student services department

<http://sservices.lbpsb.qc.ca/>

Contact your Regional director - call 514-422-3000 to find out who it is for your school

4. Can my teacher decide unilaterally to remove my child from their IEP?

No

5. Who has the final say in whether or not my child is put on an IEP?

Principal hopefully in collaboration with the parents

7. Can I, as a parent, insist that my child be put on an IEP?

You can inquire, but it is ultimately the principal's decision in collaboration with the team

7. What do you do when you there is a disagreement regarding the IEP objectives?

Breathe, stay calm. continue to negotiate.

Send follow up emails from your meetings or telephone conversations.

For example:

Good Afternoon. I am writing to follow up from our meeting this afternoon. I appreciate your time regarding updating my child's IEP. As I mentioned during the meeting, I feel that our goals this term should be more specific to his Recognizing his difficulty with And his strength in I am hoping we can come up with another alternative. Thanks again for your collaboration .

8. How often should an IEP in person meeting be scheduled?

The IEP is intended to be developed through a collaborative process between principal, school staff, and parents. There are a variety of ways in which parents can be involved in the development of an IEP. These formats may include meetings as well as communication in writing or over the phone. There is no legal requirement for a face to face IEP meeting.

9. What happens if the IEP is not signed by parents?

It is still in effect

CONTINUITY OF SERVICES / HIGHSCHOOL VS. ELEMENTARY

1. Why did all of the adaptations that had been in place in Elementary school disappear from my child's IEP in high school?

There is a large difference in curriculum delivery and what was available in elementary may not be reasonable in the high school

setting. Resource and teachers in high school also need more time to get to know your child and their needs as they pertain to high school

2. Is there a difference between the format of IEPs in elementary and IEPs in high school?

Yes the IEP format in high school is currently be revamped to model closer to the elementary format, however it may not be available for another calendar year.

3. In high school, Is there a different procedure for developing, monitoring, and evaluation?

It is a much more formal structure in high school since there are many more students to accommodate. The encouragement is more to the student involvement.

4. Do different schools use different formats for IEPs? Or, do all schools within LBPSB use the same form?

All LBPSB schools use the same form, but the high school form is currently different then the elementary form. Also, the high school form is currently be revised.

5. Can a school decide to use their own IEP format?

No

6. How can we ensure that all staff are aware of the strategies on the IEP?

When and if an opportunity presents as parents please feel free to inform the specialists that there is an IEP in place, including gym, music, art, daycare if needed.

8. Is there a way in high school to meet with all the teachers at once so you can make sure they all hear the same message at the same time?

Wouldn't that be nice. You can certainly request it and see if it is possible at your child's school. However, email is an excellent vehicle that high school teachers use.

9. Do we have to go through the same parent teacher interview process with the long line ups with our kids and not getting to see all the teachers or can we book appointments at a different time?

Wouldn't that be nice. It is a recommendation that we have put forth to the student services department. In the meantime, please ask at your child's high school, perhaps they can accommodate the request.

10. Are there IEP meetings in high school?

Schools teams meet each fall to discuss a student and establish an IEP for the year. During the school year, the resource team monitors the IEP. The law requires monthly contact between the parents and school as to a student's progress. These contacts may take place as an interview, in writing or over the phone.

11. Which are the best high schools for IEPs - how can we tell?

Attend open houses with your child, stop in and speak to the resource staff during the open house, speak to the vice principal or principal. Get the resource personnel contact information (names email etc) and ask for a private follow up meeting to further discuss your child and his or her specific strengths and weaknesses. Ask point blank question for example - does the school have students with physical handicaps that require wheelchairs? Do they have students with FM systems and/or hearing aides? Do they have lockers in a separate area (ie near resource) that are more supervised? Do they

have a resource room where when needed your child could have lunch or go when upset or overwhelmed? Please note what is good for your child, may not be good for another child.

12. Do all teachers in high school know your child is on an IEP?

They should, but feel free to send an email or mention it yourselves at meet the teacher as you are your child's advocate, or better yet if possible have your child advocate for him or herself by mentioning it.

13. If I have a child in grade 10 and they are on an IEP how does that child graduate if he/she won't get the credits?

They are very specific requirements for graduation check with the school administration and resource team. Keep that line of communication about graduation track open - even as early as grade 8 so you are not surprised in grade 10.

SCHOOL BOARD PROFESSIONALS

1. Who can attend an IEP meeting? Does the school psychologist come? You can expect teachers, resource teachers, parent and when applicable the student. The principal is also able to attend if requested. A school psychologist would only attend if requested or if a report is to be presented.

2. Are school psychologists shared amongst a number of schools? Yes

3. Do school psychologists conduct evaluations?

Yes on a priority list determined by the school resource team

4. What type of services are provided by LBPSB Student Services?

Psychology, Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Special Needs Consultants, Behaviour Consultants, Guidance Counsellors, Work skills consultants just to name a few... Please visit their website for more information:

<http://sservices.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/services/page.asp>

5. What is the average wait time for being assessed by a school board professional? (i.e. Speech therapist, psychologist, occupational therapist, etc...)

Professionals in Student Services work diligently to complete assessments in a thorough and efficient manner. An assessment is a process that occurs over time. The process begins with a referral for service that is made by the school resource team to the professional assigned to that school who will then carry out an assessment in a specific area (e.g., speech and language, psychology, etc). Parents must provide written consent and provide information about their child's developmental history prior at the start of the process. The professional will then work directly with the child, may observe the classroom, and may also speak with teachers and parents to gather more information. The time between the referral being made and the assessment being completed depends on several factors including the type of assessment, the purpose of the assessment, and the number of other referrals pending at the school.

OUTSIDE PROFESSIONALS

1. What community resources/funding may be available to help support child and family?

It truly depends on your community
CROM / SRSOR

First connect yourself with a social worker at your local CLSC and she/he would be able to point you in the direction of what is available to you based on your family situation. Ex, Respite care, respite funding, shadow or aide for summer camps, local support groups etc.
Community resource centres

Private learning centers
Local recreational facilities example ymca,
LDAQ - Learning Disabilities Association of Quebec
MAB MacKay Centre
MOSD

2. What is CROM and SRSOR?

West Montreal Readaptation Centre (CROM in French) is a rehabilitation centre for people with an intellectual disability (ID), autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or pervasive developmental disorder (PDD).

The centre provides habilitation, rehabilitation, residential and community integration services in English and French to more than 800 children and close to 1,000 adults.

With its head office in Lachine, WMRC also operates a specialized children's facility in Beaconsfield and a great number of specialized resources across Montreal's West Island and elsewhere.

<http://crom.ca/en/who-we-are/>

SRSOR is for families who live off of the island of Montreal
The CRDITED Les Services de Réadaptation du Sud-Ouest et du Renfort (SRSOR) is a public institution in the health and social service network which offers adjustment, rehabilitation and social integration services to over 2000 persons with an intellectual impairment or a pervasive developmental disorder. The purpose of these services is to enable these users to participate in social life and to support their families and friends.

<http://www.srsor.qc.ca/english/presentation-of-the-srsor/>

3. How receptive is the school to bringing people from outside, (i.e. CROM or SRSOR) to consult?

They are invited to participate, but not to consult as it is truly the school staff that is putting the practices in place and need to ensure that the adaptations are reasonable for the teaching. Written reports are always welcome and encouraged. They are welcome to come in and observe or collect data which could help them with their home support, this is done of course with the permission of the parents as well as the school ahead of time.

4. What should I do if I would like to have outside professionals to aid in the development of my child's IEP? Can they attend meetings or can I bring in their reports regarding my child?

Written reports are encouraged to share with the school via the parents. Any and all in person involvement would need to be cleared with the principal ahead of time.

Questions from Monitoring an IEP

1. What are the things we can do if we are not happy with what is or isn't being implemented?

You need to follow the proper chain of command as explained on page 1.

2. Who is allowed to speak at the meeting?

It is a collaborate process, everyone is allowed to participate.

3. How to get more time with staff ?

Depends on the circumstance. It is easier if the relationship is collaborative and respectful.

4. Who decides what level your child is at?

The classroom teacher

5. How can we convince teachers that the goals are too challenging? Not too high but not too low?

By reviewing the SMART process and seeing how the child reacts to the goals

6. How could the report card be more specific with goals and adaptations?

The team should be following the SMART goals:

- S- Specific
 - M- Measurable
 - A- Achievable
 - R- Relevant
 - T- Time Limited
-
- Well written goals will describe what the child will do, when and how he/she will do it and what the time frame will be for achieving it.
 - Keep the following tips in mind...You want your child's goals to be very specific about the action. For instance: *raise his/her hand for attention, use a classroom voice, complete homework, keep hands to him/herself*
 - Then you need to provide a time frame or location/context for the goal. For instance: *during silent reading time, while in the gym, at recess time, by the end of 2nd term*
 - Then decide what determines the success of the goal. For instance: *how many consecutive periods will the child remain on task? How many gym periods? How fluent will the child read the words - without hesitation and prompting? What percentage of accuracy? How often?*

7.How can things be more simplified from elementary to high school?

Transition plans are in process and are well written out and do take place. You can also arrange a meeting before school ends (Grade 6) and before school starts with the high school staff.

8.Who do you speak to if the resource teacher is not informed enough and is looking to the parents for direction - specifically from adapted to modified?

Speak directly with the Principal and encourage the involvement of the special needs consultant from the Special Services Department

9.How can we ensure our child's IEP doesn't make him fall behind his peers?

The child is on an individual path of learning, the IEP is successful if the child is happy and his or her needs are being met . If you are concerned about him falling behind his peers then raise those questions when the IEP is being updated.

10.Who is ultimately responsible for the IEP?

Principal

11.Whose opinion has more weight? Teacher or outside professional?

In school staff are the ones implementing the strategies of the IEP in collaboration with the parents. What the outside professional suggests may not be reasonable for the school to implement, though all suggestions should be considered and respected.

12.Can we request more in person meetings to stay informed?

Yes but be reasonable in your requests, much can be done via email or a phone call also.

13.How can we make sure the strategies are being used?

Ask your child and follow up with the teacher or resource staff if needed.

14.How does French exemption work?

French, Second Language is a Ministry compulsory subject for all students at every grade level. In the case of a student with special needs on *high school leaving track* – that is, a student meeting academic success in all subjects required for certification except French, the school may consider making an exemption request to the Ministry of Education.

15.Where could you find more info on which strategies are modified or adapted?

Here is the link to the webcast page of the SNAC website. In January 2014 SNAC offered a presentation on adapted vs modified by LBPSB staff. You may view it and the powerpoint presentation here

<http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/webcasts/page.asp>

16.Where are there parent support groups? Can you start one?

West Island Intellectually handicapped Association offers both a daytime and an evening monthly support group <http://wiah.qc.ca/>
[ADHD Parent Support Group on Facebook](#) - they meet monthly with wonderful speakers

[ABA and Autism in Montreal on Facebook](#) - online

[Montreal Special Needs Families Support Group on Facebook](#) - online though they do meet occasionally

If you know of others, please share them with us snac@lbpearson.ca

17.How do we speak to our child about their success?

Rather than how, a better question is when to which we reply as often as possible.

18.How do we know if our student is adapted or modified?

By both the IEP and on the report card. If you are still unclear ask the teacher or resource teacher.

19.Monitoring of the IEP - is it done across all subjects? Does that include gym and music?

Yes in theory it should be. Please feel free to remind resource to update the specialists on your child's needs and the fact that an IEP is in place.

20.Parents signing the IEP - is it true that it is a courtesy and not legally required?

You are given the opportunity to sign as a partner, but the strategies in the IEP will be followed whether it is signed by a parent or not.

21.How do we inform parents that they can have input on the IEP?

Please refer to SNAC website - IEP resource kit. There is information on how to plan for your IEP meetings etc.

<http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/IEP-Documents/page.asp>

22.Can we switch between modified and adapted at any time?

If the students' needs change yes.

23.If children with special needs on an IEP are not graded (the typical way) how does that child receive a D in gym?

Perhaps the expectation in that subject area is too high and it too should be considered for adaptation or modification.

24. Is there a standardized process for monitoring an IEP?

Yes through the updating procedure each term, but it is truly school to school.

25. Is there a way to put on the IEP that SNAC exists?

No - though it is a wonderful compliment thank you!

26. Who monitors the IEP from grade to grade?

Resource and principal - there is a transition meeting where outgoing and incoming teachers are also encouraged to attend. This is done on a school by school basis, meaning not every school will have their transition meetings in the exact same way.

27. What is the time frame for monitoring the goals?

At end of each term

28. What can I as a parent do if there is a disconnect between teaching staff and administration?

Encourage resource to reach out to professionals at student services.

29. What do we do if I am confused about the report card or my child's programming?

If there is confusion around your child's programming or the report card we encourage discussion with school personnel. Please use SMART goal process as a guide to this discussion.

Questions from Elements of a Successful IEP

1.How to effectively discuss with teachers your concerns?

Possible future workshop on strategies and mock IEP process. ask questions with curiosity and not defensiveness allows it to become effective.

2.Can I see a draft IEP before the IEP meeting?

Yes, you can request information about the IEP prior to the IEP meeting.

Parental rights and responsibilities are outlined in the SNAC IEP Kit.

3.Do the objectives of IEP have to be agreed to by parents and school before IEP meeting concludes?

No. It is encouraged that it is a collaborative process in the meeting, however the IEP is able to go forward without the parent signature and approval.

4.How do you speed up obtaining an IEP if not being done?

Ask the resource teacher or principal

5.Does a child have to be on an IEP throughout school life?

No only as needed

6. Is a child's involvement (and how much) important to a successful IEP?

When the child is old enough to understand, he or she should be aware of the goals at all times as they help monitor the delivery

7.How do we prioritize goals while making a IEP?

Priority is based on the current realistic needs of the child

8.How does one make sure that everybody is on board with the making of an IEP?

Collaboration is a very important element in this process. The classroom teachers are the people that implement the IEP throughout the day so look to them to make sure the goals created are SMART goals they can monitor effectively.

9.More promotion/information about IEPs - information is not easily provided.

Please check the IEP resource kit available on our SNAC website here - <http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/IEP-Documents/page.asp>

10.How can we make school more open to parents' input for developing an IEP?

Question with curiosity. breathe and be open minded. Always thank the teachers for taking your call, email, or meeting. Fill out the All about Me page or something similar so the school is aware of how far your child has come so they can reasonably address in the IEP the goals of the current struggles so you can together come up with reasonable goals for the term.

11.How do you make sure the IEP follows from elementary to high school?

There is automatically a transition team put in place. You are also welcome and we encourage you to make an appointment with the high school at end of grade 6 and beginning of grade 7.

12.Can parents request 'sensory' items to help with behavioural aspects of IEP (ex. stress toy..)?

Yes it is a very useful strategy.

13.Can a 'code' be of more help to a child on an IEP?

If warranted, not every child on an IEP has a code nor do you have to have a code to be on an IEP

14.Is there a funding impact for students on an IEP – Adapted vs Modified?

Funding is not a matter of IEP, it is a matter of coding. Please see <http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/webcasts/page.asp>

15.Specific and concrete objectives: How Many on an IEP?

A realistic number would be 3 or 4 per term. You want short term goals but also 1 or 2 longer term goals. It truly depends on the need and ability of the child.

16.What is the meaning of 'if required'?

Often on an IEP you will see terms such as if required or when required. It means that the support should be in place for that moment that the child needs it. An example could be extra time on a test or exam. Perhaps the child finishes his or her tests within the allotted time of the other students 95% of the time, well the option of “extra time if required” is on the IEP so that in the event he or she doesn't finish, they can have more time the next time to complete the test.

A graduate with special needs from LBPSB says:

“Give me the opportunity to try things to do on my own. If I need help I'll ask but then be there to help!”

Thank you again so very much for your help in creating this document. Please feel free to send in any new questions to snac@lbpearson.ca so we may continue to guide and empower other families with children on an IEP.

Last updated March 11, 2016