

## SNAC Parent to Parent Event March 2018

### Questions and Answers

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**1. Are there different levels to classify the students in the IEP Program?**

The goals on an IEP reflect whether a student is following the Quebec Education Program (QEP) with adaptations or with modifications. You can consult the Ministry of Education for more information at

[http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site\\_web/documents/dpse/adaptation\\_serv\\_c\\_ompl/Precisions\\_flexibilite\\_pedagogique\\_en.pdf](http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/adaptation_serv_c_ompl/Precisions_flexibilite_pedagogique_en.pdf)

**2. Can you list the common list of acronyms?**

SNAC: Special Needs Advisory Committee

SLP: Speech & Language Pathologist

OT: Occupational Therapist

IEP: Individualized Education Plan

WOTP: Work-Oriented Training Pathway

Other information available on SNAC website

**3. What are the supports available for students prior to a diagnosis?**

If the school team determines that a child requires additional support in the classroom, these services can be put in place even without a diagnosis. Keep in mind that the level of support given to any child depends on the resources allocated to the school and how that school has decided to use them to help out all of the children with needs.

**4. My son is 5 years old - diagnosed ASD and was attending school until mid December 2017 but got insufficient support which resulted in him having meltdowns and begin kicked out of school with no return date. What do I do now? How can I get help for him to return to kindergarten?**

It is important to work with the principal of the school who can ask for support and guidance from the autism consultant and the consultant for inclusive education (special needs) as to the best possible interventions for your son.

**5. What is possible in the IEP for a gifted student? Would this be considered a modified or an adapted program? A gifted student may still require adaptations (e.g. a quiet space to write exams).**

Giftedness is not recognized by the ministry of education as a category of special needs. When a child is not working at grade level (above or below), the school needs to indicate this somehow by modifying the level of instruction to best meet the child's needs. Any child on a modified program would have this indicated on the IEP and should be clear that some of the objectives are to accelerate learning at a higher grade level.

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**6. Why does my child's IEP not mention discipline?**

IEPs can include goals that address behavioural issues. If there are none in your child's IEP and you feel that there should be, this can be discussed with the teacher and the resource team.

**7. Do I ever get to consult or meet with the integration aide? Is it possible to arrange a meeting with an actual aide not just a resource supervisor?**

In most schools, it is the teacher and resource teacher who will meet to address parent concerns. An integration aide may be a part of the IEP development process. It is best to discuss this with the resource teacher or school principal.

**8. What happens when there is no parental input asked for the IEP?**

The expectation is that parents will collaborate in the IEP process. This collaboration takes on different forms. In many schools, a draft IEP is created and sent to the parent for review. If you have questions or want additions/deletions, you should communicate this to the school. The school team can consider and implement suggestions based on parental input.

**9. What is a reader? What is a scribe? How does my child get one?**

These are specific accommodations that must be determined through the IEP process. A reader is someone who reads the question aloud to your child. There are both human readers and computer programs that can read questions for exams. A scribe is someone who writes for the child (when they are unable to write for themselves).

**10. Why doesn't the IEP carry over from the end of the school year into the first term?**

It does. A new IEP is created at the start of each school year (usually by the end of October), allowing the new teachers to get to know the student.

**11. How do I get a referral for an OT?**

Occupational therapists at LBPSB do assessments and consultations to help guide teachers and resource teams in supporting a student in the school setting. The request for these OT services happens through the school resource team. Some parents opt to consult a private OT and share the results with the school. From personal experience, referrals to an outside private occupational therapist isn't required; parents can consult the Order of Occupational Therapists

(<http://www.oeg.org/m-informer/trouver-un-ergotherapeute.html>) to find a private OT.

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- 12. I have a school assessment and diagnosis, but the only resource is the resource teacher because I declined meds as a first measure and asked for alternatives but was refused.**

The choice to medicate your child is a decision between you, as parents, and your child's doctor who will oversee the dosage. This should not preclude interventions happening at school as needed. Based on the child's assessment and recommendations, the resource team could consider implementing other behavioural adaptations or strategies.

- 13. What are the parameters guidelines that schools must follow when developing accommodations for the IEPs? Where exactly can I find this information? I often hear certain accommodations will not be considered - like a scribe.**

The school board must adhere to ministerial regulations concerning accommodations. It is best to address these questions to the resource teacher at your child's school. Please see SNAC website. The IEP kit that SNAC prepared is online. (add link)

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

- 14. Under what criteria is the IEP program suggested to the parents?**

Any student who is recognized by the school board as having special needs must have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). In all other cases, an IEP can be developed if the student is experiencing difficulty at school. When the classroom teacher has a concern about a student, they bring the student to the attention of the school administrator and resource team who then determines whether an IEP would be of benefit.

- 15. How is the transition from elementary to high school done?**

There are a number of things that can be done to assist with the transition from elementary to high school. SNAC did an entire presentation last year on this topic. You can view the Q&A document from this presentation on our website

<http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/extra/img/232FINALTransitiontoHighSchoolQuestionandAnswerDocumentApproved.pdf>

- 16. How do you initiate the IEP process as your child approaches kindergarten?**

When you register your child for kindergarten, there is a section on the registration form that asks if you have any concerns about your child. That is the moment to inform the school and share any assessments that you may have (e.g., speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychology etc). This information is then shared with Student Services who assist schools in better understanding the needs and supports required. It is strongly encouraged to share as much of this information with the school during registration time in January or as soon as possible. Should the school

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determine the need for services, the school team will begin the process of developing an IEP.

#### **17. Should parents have to call IEP meetings or does the school?**

The school calls the IEP meetings.

#### **18. Is it normal for staff to remove strategies from previous years of an IEP without informing the parents?**

Goals and strategies change as the child's needs change. It is possible for things to be removed from an IEP when it is deemed that they are no longer needed. While you may not be directly informed of this, you should be able to tell by comparing the most recent IEP to previous ones. If something is removed that you feel should still be in place, it is best to address that directly to the school resource team.

#### **19. What is considered "special needs"?**

The Ministry of Education classifies students as being in one of two categories: at risk due to difficulties related to learning or behavior or students who have social maladjustments or handicaps. Students with a social maladjustment or handicap are assigned a codes that relates specifically to their area of disability (e.g. language disorder, visual impairment, autism).

#### **20. Does the high school IEP follow the child through adult education?**

The youth and adult sector are quite different. There is no system of identification of special needs and no requirements for an IEP in adult education. Although the IEP does not follow from secondary school into adult education, there is an expectation that services will be adapted to meet the students' needs. Adult centres do have limited complementary services available (e.g., special education technicians, guidance counsellors) who can help classroom teachers implement strategies with students previously recognized in the youth sector as having special needs.

#### **21. How does a child get assigned a code?**

Codes are assigned by the school board and verified by the Ministry of Education (MEES). This occurs in a series of steps.

Step 1:

- Student discussed by Resource Team; Professionals study reports or referral for assessment made (Psych, OT, SLP)
- Team Discussion as to the strengths, limitations and need for services (RT, aide, tech, etc)

Step 2:

- Review of proposed code/designation by SSD coding team

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- Memo to school regarding student's code

Step 3:

- Declaration and Verification of Codes to the MEES

Codes are assigned in accordance with specific criteria required by the MEES. First, there must be a diagnostic conclusion drawn by a professional that outlines the severity of the disability, Second, significant challenges or limitations stemming from the disability must be observed in a school setting. Third, there must be services in place to address the student's needs. The Student Services Department is responsible for overseeing the coding process and providing documentation to the Ministry for review and final approval.

**22. How do you talk to your child about a diagnosis? Some tips for helping them understand without thinking there is something wrong with them? Can you present on this?**

There are many resources on this subject available. Some of the ones we have found more useful are the works of Richard Lavoie.

[http://www.idonline.org/lavoie/Explaining\\_Learning\\_Disabilities\\_to\\_Your\\_Child](http://www.idonline.org/lavoie/Explaining_Learning_Disabilities_to_Your_Child)

<https://themighty.com/2017/08/tips-to-talk-to-your-child-about-their-diagnosis/>

**23. Does testing for dyslexia occur through the schools or through the healthcare system?**

There is no one test for dyslexia; it is a conclusion arrived at by a professional who evaluates a student's cognitive, language, and academic skills. A diagnosis of a specific learning disability such as dyslexia is made when a student is assessed by a qualified professional such as a psychologist or speech-language pathologist. The school resource team can request such an assessment when a teacher observes that a student is experiencing academic difficulties. The schools then seeks parental consent so that the appropriate school board professional can carry out this assessment. Speak to your pediatrician or local CLSC for a referral through the healthcare system. There are likely long waitlists for this route however. It is also possible to also have an assessment done by a professional in private practice. It is always encouraged that the results of any outside assessment are shared with the school for their consideration in planning interventions.

**24. What is the difference between the resource teacher and the integration aide?**

A resource teacher is a qualified teacher with university-level training. The resource teacher works with the child either inside or outside of the classroom (e.g. a resource

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block). The resource teacher also is responsible for developing the interventions for the child and consulting with the classroom teacher. They can also help to oversee the work of the integration aides. An integration aide is a support worker who works in the classroom to assist the teacher and the students. Aides are typically not assigned to a specific child but rather assist whomever needs help in the classroom under the teacher's guidance.

**25. Why do integration aides only get 25 hours?**

Contractually, integration aides are hired to work in classrooms to assist students, typically up to 5 hours per day which translates into a 25 hour work week.

**26. Is there continuity of an integration aide within 1 year or several years?**

The schedule of the integration aide is determined by the resource team to meet the needs of the school. While it is possible that the same aide will end up working in classes with the same child/children over multiple years, there are absolutely no guarantees. It depends on the priority pool assignments and on the school's allocation of their resources for any given year.

**27. Are we allowed to bring in external tools/resources to help our children?**

No. However, it is encouraged that any outside assessments or reports are shared with the school principal or resource teacher so they may consider some of the recommendations.

**28. My child is not coded, doesn't have any specific issues to address tonight so I always thought the IEP was just to sign and return. Is there something else I should be doing. It feels like being difficult when others have bigger issues.**

You are your child's best advocate. If you are satisfied with the goals and strategies outlined in your child's IEP, then there is no need for further action. All you need to do is sign the IEP and return it. However, if you have concerns, however small, then it is a good idea to raise them with the team at the school. As long as you raise any concerns in a respectful manner and are working with the team in the best interest of your child, you are not being difficult.

**29. If I understood properly, the IEP is first given at the end of the first semester? So what happens for the child for the beginning of the first semester?**

IEPS are created at the start of every school year. If the student already had an IEP during the previous academic year, the teachers will use the previous one as a guideline of support until such time as the school develops a new one.

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- 30. IEPs do not carry over from school year to school year? So are you starting from scratch this year?**

See answer above.

- 31. When are IEP meetings usually called? What months? At what point, if we haven't heard, should we start asking about one?**

IEP are created or reviewed at each reporting period. Meetings are often held after the reporting period. Parents can contact the resource teacher should they have questions ahead of time. It is expected that the school will have a minimum of 10 contacts with parents each year. These are listed on the IEP.

- 32. Whose responsibility is it to implement an IEP?**

Legally, the Principal of each school is the person responsible for the implementation of the IEP. The strategies contained in the IEP are implemented by classroom teachers, resource teachers, support workers and professionals, as appropriate.

- 33. How often should a child be assessed? Does the school do a re-assessment?**

There is no set time for a child to be reassessed. Reassessing a child very much depends on the needs of the child and whether something major has changed in the student's profile. It is the school team that makes the request for a professional to reassess the child and contacts the parent to obtain their consent for such as assessment.

- 34. When and how do I escalate if a school isn't meeting my child's needs?**

Advocating for students with special needs can be a challenge. It would be important to ask questions in a spirit of curiosity in an effort to understand rather than to accuse or adopt an aggressive tone. You may also contact a SNAC representative for guidance and support. [snac@lbpearson.ca](mailto:snac@lbpearson.ca)

- 35. My child had an evaluation/assessment done by someone from the school board, but we have never received a copy of it. How do we get a copy of the results?**

Upon request, parents can receive a copy of their child's assessment. They can ask the school for a copy or contact the Student Services Department.

- 36. Is there a ratio to determine the number of integration aides per school?**

There are no determined ratios; services are allocated to schools based on student needs. The school board receives dedicated funding from the government based on the numbers of students with special needs that are registered with the school board. The school board also supplements this funding by allocating additional funds to support students with special needs. Each school then receives an allocation for support

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services (aides and technicians) and the distribution of those services is carried out by the school-level special needs committee comprised of the school principal and teachers.

**37. If a child does not have an integration aide in elementary, can they have one in high school?**

Yes, if needed. Again, the school-level committee reviews the needs of all students and allocates integration aides to classes with the greatest needs.

**38. What is the role of an integration aide if the child's issue is behavioural instead of educational?**

Behavioral issues do affect academic achievement, so integration aides support both behavioral and learning needs, as required. Working in collaboration with the classroom teacher and the resource teacher, the integration aide provides the support needed in the classroom.

**39. What is the track if a modified child does not get the high school certificate?**

If a child is not working towards a secondary school diploma, there are other options a child can pursue. In the youth sector, they may follow a WOTP (work-oriented training pathway) which leads to qualifications to directly enter the job market. There are two type of work-oriented programs; pre-work or semi-skilled programs. Please consult the SNAC website for more information <http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/WOTP/page.asp>. Continuing education is also another option to pursue when students are over the age of 16. Adult education centers offer credit courses that can lead to a diploma, and there are also non-diploma programs available. Please consult <http://www.lbpce.ca/Adult-Education/Special-Needs-Programs>. Vocational training programs for specific trades are also open to students who have earned partial high school credits. Depending on the program, students with Secondary III or IV credits can pursue a number of trades. Consult <http://www.lbpce.ca/> for more information.

**40. Who do we reach out to if the IEP process at school is not working?**

You begin by discussing with the classroom teacher, the resource teacher and ultimately the school principal.

**41. How do we get more information about how the IEP process should work?**

Please see the IEP Resource Kit available on the SNAC website.

**42. How does an IEP impact a student when going onto high school?**

The IEP will follow a student from elementary to high school. Each year, the resource team and principal will review the objectives, strategies and supports a student needs

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and these will be reflected on the IEP. Staff from elementary schools and high schools do communicate about students to assist with the transition. Depending on whether the student is following the QEP with adaptations or modifications, students will be directed to the most appropriate pathway for them.

**43. Is there any type of stigma associated to being on an IEP in terms of school opportunities after elementary school?**

Having an IEP does not automatically preclude students from being considered for or taking part in particular high school programs or activities. Students with special needs participate in the programs most appropriate for them based on their unique profile of strengths and challenges.

**44. Can you please tell me more about the differences between an adapted IEP and a modified IEP?**

The Quebec Education Program (QEP) outlines the specific objectives that students must meet at each level of their education (i.e., Cycle 1, Cycle 2, etc.). Students with an adapted IEP are following the age-appropriate curriculum but require supports that allow them to be successful. Students following a modified program are working either above or below cycle. A student following a modified program will have one or more subjects in which they have objectives on the IEP that differ from the QEP. For more information, please consult

[http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site\\_web/documents/dpse/adaptation\\_serv\\_c\\_ompl/Precisions\\_flexibilite\\_pedagogique\\_en.pdf](http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/adaptation_serv_c_ompl/Precisions_flexibilite_pedagogique_en.pdf)

**45. Who is “the resource team”?**

Each school has a resource team which includes the school principal, resource teacher, and various Student Services professionals. School personnel who work directly with the student being discussed (e.g., classroom teacher, integration aide, technician, daycare staff) may also take part in resource team meetings. Many school resource teams meet weekly.

**46. If a child is diagnosed (with Autism for example) do they visit the daycare before they start kindergarten?**

After the registration process, once the school board is informed that a new student may require services, professionals from Student Services and school personnel contact parents to plan visits to observe children attending daycare or preschool. Many elementary schools also invite incoming Kindergarten students and parents to visit the school prior to school entry.

**47. Are IEPs generated by specific/dedicated software? We were told that they can only use a drop down menu and can't add in something specific.**

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A drop down menu option is offered, however, schools can also write in specific objectives and strategies. IEPs are meant to be personalized to the student's specific needs.

**48. If a child is following a modified program, can it be changed to an adapted program if they improve?**

Absolutely. The IEP can be changed at any time. It is also important to note that a student may be following a modified program in one subject, and following the regular program with adaptations in another. The IEP should change based on the student's needs. If their needs change, then the IEP may change as well.

**49. Is there any specific number of guaranteed IEP meetings or parent teacher meetings per year?**

If your child is on an IEP, 10 contacts are expected during the school year. A contact can consist of a phone call, an email, or a face to face meeting.

**50. Who develops the IEP?**

The IEP is typically developed by the resource teacher, classroom teacher, and support staff (as appropriate) in collaboration with parents.

THANK YOU  
TO EVERYONE WHO ATTENDED  
and for your  
FANTASTIC QUESTIONS !

**Please attend our meeting  
to select the parent members  
of the 2018-2019 SNAC committee**

**Wednesday September 26, 2018 @ 7pm  
Main Boardroom  
LBPSB Head Office  
1925 Brookdale Avenue  
Dorval**