What is the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)?

The Law · https://inclusionactionontario.ca/docs/what-is-the-iprc/

The Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) identifies a student as meeting the definition of an "exceptionality", under the Education Act. Either the principal or a parent can ask for an IPRC.

The Committee also makes a decision about a student's placement in the school system. It can place a student in a special education classroom under regulations for students with these identified exceptionalities, but it must consider a regular classroom as a first option. The Committee is obligated to recommend a regular classroom placement where the Committee is satisfied the placement in a regular class would meet the student's needs and is consistent with parental preferences.

There are five placement options:

1. **A regular class with indirect support** where the student is placed in a regular class for the entire day. The teacher receives specialized consultative services.
2. **A regular class with resource assistance** where the student is placed in a regular class for most or all of the day. The student receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a qualified special education teacher.
3. **A regular class with withdrawal assistance** where the student is placed in a regular class and receives instruction outside the classroom, for less than 50 per cent of the school day, from a qualified special education teacher.
4. **A special education class with partial integration** where the student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class in which the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31, for at least 50 per cent of the school day. The student is integrated with a regular class for at least one instructional period daily.

5. **A full-time special education class** where the student-teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31, for the entire school day.

Where the IPRC decides that a special education class is most appropriate, the Committee must provide written reasons for its decision. It can make recommendations about special education programs and services, but cannot require these be made available.

Parents can ask for an internal review or appeal of IPRC decision to the Special Education Appeal Board, which is more of a meeting than a hearing. The SEAB makes recommendations to the school board trustees. The trustees then make the decision. Finally, an appeal to the Special Education Tribunal may occur. The full process IPRC process is explained here. The appeal process is described here.

The IPRC is a process that is less and less used, as it is administratively burdensome and primarily used when families want a segregated placement. Boards generally do not require them to provide an Individual Education Plan. They will provide an IEP when it is clear a student has disability related needs that must be accommodated under the Human Rights Code. It can be helpful for accessesing additional instructional support in the regular classroom, however, particularly options 2 or 3 above. For families that do undergo an IPRC process, we recommend advocating for option 2, rather than 3, since option 3 requires the removal of the student from the classroom setting. This transition can be very disruptive to the student as well as isolating a student unnecessarily. Alternatively, option 3 may assist if the student prefers to be in a smaller group setting from time to time.

The Toronto District School Board has a unique placement body known as the Special Education Review and Placement Committee (SEPRC). This committee functions outside the legislation. It considers placement into segregated settings prior to the student being enrolled with the board, but enrollment is expected in the coming school year. It is intended to be used for very few cases, specifically for students with complex medical and/or physical needs. Inclusion Action in Ontario considers this to be a highly problematic process which segregates students as early as four years old, and usually, for the entire duration of the student's time at the board. It also means the board side-steps the duty to accommodate as understood under the Human Rights Code.

For a recent critique about the IPRC and its historical context, we recommend you read this 13 page paper published November 2020: “A Relic of the Past: Identification, Placement and Review Committees in Ontario’s Education System” .