

Special Education

A Communication Guide for Parents and Students

When I have a concern, where do I begin?

Student success is a priority. Together parents, students and support teams collaborate to ensure student success.

The best place to begin is with the person closest to the issue (e.g. classroom teacher, special education resource teacher (SERT), bus driver, etc). To assist with resolving issues or concerns, you should:

- Gather as much information about the situation as possible; and
- Contact the school and arrange a meeting with the staff member(s) to discuss your concern.

Most issues can be resolved by having meaningful and purposeful conversations. Keeping the lines of communication open is the best strategy.

What role do I, as the parent, play in communicating concerns regarding my child's program or special education services?

We welcome your participation in communicating your concern.

I. Plan Your Approach.

- Gather your information.
- Be clear about the facts ahead of time.
- Organize what you want to highlight.
- Know what questions you want to ask.

Remember:

- It may be helpful to contact an agency/organization in York Region who supports children and families with special needs.
- You are welcome to involve a friend or advocate at any time.
We welcome their participation in communicating your concern.

Parent Guides

There are other resources that may be of interest to you:

- [A Parent's Guide to Identification, Placement and Review Committee \(IPRC\)](#)
- [The Individual Education Plan \(IEP\) A Guide for Parents](#)
- [Parent Guide to Special Education Funding for Assistive Technology and Equipment for Students with Special Needs](#)

2. Communicate with School Staff

- Be positive.
- Focus on one or two issues at a time.
- Share information you feel is important about your child.
- Share information that you have gathered from outside sources that may assist with programming decisions at school.
- Listen actively – every person in the discussion has important information to share.
- Give some thought to the solutions you would like to see.
- Plan next steps together.
- Take notes of discussion items and decisions made.

Remember:

- Your concern is important – sometimes getting to the best solutions takes time.
- Keep communicating – continuing communication is important.

How can I reach Board personnel?

Education Centre Aurora

Calling from:

Aurora & King
Newmarket & East Gwillimbury
Georgina
Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Whitchurch-Stouffville

Switchboard

905-727-3141
905-895-7216
905-722-3201
416-969-8131

Automated

905-727-0022
905-895-7227
905-722-6255
416-969-7170

Frequently Called Numbers

Education & Community Services

Student Services Coordinators:

North
Central
East
West

Phone Number

905-727-0022, ext. 2266/2555

(905) 895-5155
(905) 884-4477
(905) 940-7800
(905) 764-6830

Special Education
Student Transportation Services
Trustee Services
Ministry of Education

(905) 727-0022, ext. 3235
(905) 713-3001, ext. 4551
905-727-0022, ext. 2327/2262
(416) 325-2929 or 1-800-387-5514

What if I don't feel my concern has been adequately addressed?

We understand your desire to resolve issues involving your child. If you feel your concern has not been addressed, follow these steps and speak with the next person indicated on the charts below:

Elementary Schools

Teacher

Provides support and/or program for all students

SERT

Provides special education support and/or program

Principal/Vice-principal

Responsible for student progress

Student Services Coordinator

Located at the Community Education Centre.
Provides support for Special Education, Identification and Programs

Super Intendent of Education

Located at the Community Education Centre.
Responsible for the day to day operation of all schools

Associate Directors

Located at the Community Education Centre
Responsible for education and community services

Director's Office

Located at the Community Education Centre
Responsible for education and community services

Board of Trustees

Sets policy for the operation of all public schools in York Region

Ministry of Education

Administers the system of publicly funded elementary and secondary school education in Ontario

Secondary Schools

Teacher

Provides support and/or program for all students

SERT

Provides special education support and/or program

Special Education Department Head

Principal/Vice-principal

Responsible for student progress

Student Services Coordinator

Located at the Community Education Centre.
Provides support for Special Education, Identification and Programs

Super Intendent of Education

Located at the Community Education Centre.
Responsible for the day to day operation of all schools

Associate Directors

Located at the Community Education Centre
Responsible for education and community services

Director's Office

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Board of Trustees

Sets policy for the operation of all public schools in York Region

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Administers the system of publicly funded elementary and secondary school education in Ontario

What resources are available to assist me with the needs of my child?

In York Region the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) plays an important role in advising the Board about the programs and services required by students identified with exceptional learning needs.

SEAC may make recommendations to the Board concerning the establishment and development of special education programs and services. There are many agencies and associations represented on SEAC and each provides assistance and resources to parents.

You may access information about SEAC at www.yrdsb.ca and select Special Education.

The following agencies and organizations are currently represented on the Board's SEAC:

- Association for Bright Children - York Region North
- Association for Bright Children - York Region South
- Autism Ontario - York Region
- Children's Treatment Network
- Community Living Central York
- Community Living Georgina
- Down Syndrome Association of York Region
- Early Intervention Services of York Region
- Easter Seals Ontario
- Learning Disabilities Association - York Region
- VIEWS for the Visually Impaired
- VOICE of Hearing Impaired Children
- York South Association for Community Living
- York Support Services Network