

The Program Planning Process

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS



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The Program Planning Process: A Guide for Parents and Guardians

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Contents

- Welcome to the Program Planning Process** 1
- Supporting your child in school: “only as special as necessary”** 1
- The team** 2
- Supporting successful transitions** 2
- Roles and responsibilities** 3
 - School administrators (principals or vice-principals).....3
 - Teachers and other professional school-based staff
(resource teachers, learning centre teachers,
guidance counsellors, etc.).....3
 - School board-based support staff
(student services consultants, speech-language pathologists,
severe learning disability specialists, psychologists,
program coordinators, etc.)4
 - Parent(s)/guardian(s).....4
 - Your child (when appropriate)4
- The process** 5
 - Stage 1: Screening and identification (getting information)5
 - Stage 2: Exploring instructional strategies5
 - Stage 3: Program Planning Team referral (sharing information and ideas).....6
 - Stage 4: Program Planning Meeting (collaboration).....6
 - Stage 5: Developing adaptations and/or an IPP7
 - Stage 6: Implementing the adaptations and/or an IPP
(putting the plan in place)7
 - Stage 7: Monitoring adaptations and/or an IPP
(checking in and following up)8
 - Stage 8: Reviewing Adaptations and/or an IPP8
- Monitoring your child’s progress**..... 9
- Dealing with concerns** 9
 - Meeting to address concerns 11

Information organizer	12
Before a Program Planning Meeting	12
During a Program Planning Meeting	13
After a Program Planning Meeting	16
Notes.....	16
For more information	17
Appendix 1: Stages of the Program Planning Process	19
Appendix 2: Adaptations Template (Stage 2: Teacher Exploration)	20
Appendix 3: Adaptations Template (Stage 4: Program Planning Team)	21
Appendix 4: IPP Template	23
Appendix 5: Transition Plan Template (for Students Not on an IPP)	27
Appendix 6: Adaptations Fact Sheet.....	29
Appendix 7: Transition Fact Sheet.....	31
Glossary	33
References	35

Welcome to the Program Planning Process. Together, we can make it a success!

The Program Planning Process is a team approach. The team works together to share information and plan learning opportunities and supports to meet your child's individual needs. This guide is intended to support you through the Program Planning Process and in the important role you play in your child's education.

The Program Planning Process may be started when

- your child has been assessed and identified as needing specific educational planning and support
- your child is showing gifts and talents
- there is a need to better understand your child's needs and to explore new strategies
- your child requires management of a health care need or intervention, such as an emergency health care plan or evacuation plan

The Program Planning Process has eight stages. However not all children will need to move through the entire process—sometimes needs are met by completing just the first couple of stages. You will be part of planning and decision making through each stage.

Supporting your child in school: “only as special as necessary”

“Inclusion” is an attitude and a value that promotes the basic right of all students to receive appropriate and quality educational programming and services in the company of their peers.

Every child is unique and has the right to learn and contribute as part of the school community regardless of their individual differences. For this reason, the Program Planning Process is focused on developing a program for your child that is “only as special as necessary.” This means that any support considered should be tailored to meet the unique needs of your child and not extend beyond what your child needs. Appropriate supports help your child be successful in meeting their curriculum outcomes for the year, and to develop skills, independence, and self-advocacy at school and in their community.

“The goal of inclusive schooling is to facilitate the membership, participation, and learning of all students in school programs and activities. The support services that are designed to meet student's diverse educational needs should be co-ordinated within the neighbourhood school and to the extent possible, within grade-level/ subject area classrooms.”

— *Special Education Policy* (Nova Scotia Department of Education 2008, p.13)

The following should be considered when planning support for your child:

- the specific strengths, challenges, and interests of your child
- the purpose of providing the support
- the location of the support (in or out of the classroom or a combination of both)
- the duration of the support

The team

The Program Planning Team includes those who have responsibility for your child's learning. As a parent/guardian, you are a key member of the team. You bring important information about your child's strengths, challenges, and interests. Other members of the team may include:

- principal/vice-principal
- teachers, including resource teachers
- other professional staff involved
- your child, when appropriate
- additional members, depending on learning needs of your child and personnel resources of the school board and community

Supporting successful transitions

A Program Planning Team is in place to support your child's learning for the school year or semester. The Program Planning Process may or may not be needed the following year, and may or may not involve the same team members—it depends on your child's needs. As your child grows and progresses, program planning decisions will reflect this growth.

The Program Planning Team assists in providing supports to help your child move through key transitions, or milestones. For example, moving from

- home, daycare, or preschool to school
- grade to grade, or school to school
- community to school, school to community, or school to post-secondary

It is important to be aware that course selections, programs, and services may affect your child's options after high school.

Roles and responsibilities

School administrators (principals or vice-principals)

- lead the Program Planning Process
- set up the meeting and invite you, teachers, and any other professionals who have responsibility for your child's learning
- take an active and positive role in the process
- support you, teachers, and other staff in program planning
- support learning environments that reflect diverse cultures and affirm and advance equity for all learners
- offer suggestions for supports available within the school or community
- ensure that additional programming (adaptations and/or IPP) is being followed and monitored by the teacher(s)
- make sure that meeting minutes are recorded and that you receive a copy

Teachers and other professional school-based staff (resource teachers, learning centre teachers, guidance counsellors, etc.)

- review your child's files from previous school years
- respect confidentiality at all times
- provide culturally appropriate learning opportunities that reflect the diversity of today's classrooms, including a range of developmental stages and abilities
- use knowledge of your child's strengths, challenges, and interests to support your child's learning
- attend Program Planning Team meetings
- ask for information and advice from you and other professionals
- follow the plan designed by the team
- provide the team with current classroom and school information
- offer ideas on how you can help at home
- monitor and document your child's progress and provide updates to you

A teacher assistant is one of many supports a school may consider for your child. Teacher assistants are assigned to a school to meet specific needs and to work under the direction of the teacher(s). Teacher assistants are not assigned to individual students. For further information, see *Teacher Assistant Guidelines*: studentservices.ednet.ns.ca/sites/default/files/ta-full.pdf.

“Teachers are responsible for teaching all students who are placed under their supervision and care. This includes responsibility for safety and well-being, as well as program planning, implementation, and evaluation. This is not a responsibility that can be transferred or delegated to non-teaching staff.”

—*Special Education Policy* (Nova Scotia Department of Education 2008)

School board-based support staff (student services consultants, speech-language pathologists, severe learning disability specialists, psychologists, program coordinators, etc.)

- offer advice and support you and school staff
- may administer assessments or provide direct support to your child
- provide information about resources and services available within the school board or community
- provide support in developing additional programming in response to your child’s strengths, challenges, and interests
- monitor the effectiveness of interventions

Parent(s)/guardian(s)

- should be involved in the Program Planning Process from the beginning
- share information about their child’s strengths, challenges, and interests
- are encouraged to share relevant information about events, family life, and educational history, as well as consultations with other agencies and professionals, including reports
- are encouraged to let the team know what works for their child at home
- are encouraged to provide information that will be helpful with transitions (for example, from home to school, school to school, grade to grade, or school to community)

Your child (when appropriate)

- shares information about their strengths, challenges, and interests
- offers ideas on what they may find helpful in school
- carries out the specific parts of the plan that are their responsibility

The process

Stage 1: Screening and identification (getting information)

Who is involved? You, your child (when appropriate), your child’s teacher(s), school board based support staff, others who may be involved with your child as appropriate

What happens? By working closely with your child in the classroom, the teacher may notice that additional planning is needed to meet your child’s needs. The teacher will contact you to discuss their observations and may ask you to provide any information that may help them better understand your child. If your child has diagnosed special needs, the process may go right to Stage 3.

Why? In this stage, the teacher needs to develop a full understanding of your child’s strengths, challenges, and interests in order to support your child in meeting the Public School Program curriculum outcomes.

Stage 2: Exploring instructional strategies

Who is involved? Your child’s teacher(s), your child (when appropriate), others who may offer ideas

What happens? The teacher will try different strategies to support your child in the classroom. You will be informed that these strategies, called “adaptations,” are being explored. The teacher will keep track of what works or does not work for your child, and will make changes or try new ideas as needed. Adaptations are documented on a form that the teacher fills out in TIENET (Technology for Improving Education Network), the provincial online student information system for managing student services information. You will receive a copy of the form.

Why? Trying different ideas in the classroom will give the teacher a better understanding of what is helpful for your child. Sometimes, these in-class changes are enough to help your child succeed and the process will not need to move beyond Stage 2. If the adaptations aren’t meeting your child’s needs, it may be time to talk about additional supports in Stage 3.

A diagram of the Program Planning Process can be found in Appendix 1.

Adaptations are monitored on an ongoing basis and are reviewed at least once a year or once a semester. All adaptations are documented in TIENET.

Stage 3: Program Planning Team referral (sharing information and ideas)

You can bring a support person (advocate, Elder, etc.) with you to program planning meetings. You should let the principal know if you are bringing someone.

Who is involved? You, your child’s teacher, anyone with responsibility for your child’s learning

What happens? The teacher fills out a “Referral to Program Planning Team” form for the principal. The principal forms a Program Planning Team that can support your child. The principal can provide information if you have any questions or concerns about the referral or the Program Planning Process in general.

Why? A referral to a Program Planning Team may occur when

- your child has a diagnosed special need, needs support before starting school for the first time, or is transitioning from another school
- Stage 1 indicates your child has an immediate need for a referral
- Stage 2 adaptations have not been enough to enable your child to meet or extend the Public School Program curriculum outcomes

Stage 4: Program Planning Meeting (collaboration)

Your child may need a combination of both adaptations and IPP.

Who is involved? The Program Planning Team

What happens? The team will meet to talk about your child’s strengths, challenges, and interests. Together, the team may decide to

- try different adaptations
- get more information from doing more assessments or refer to other professionals
- develop an Individual Program Plan (IPP) (See Stage 5.)

Why? The meeting is a time when team members share information, collaborate, and decide on future actions.

Stage 5: Developing adaptations and/or an IPP

Who is involved? The Program Planning Team

What happens? The Program Planning Team will create an IPP for the school year, or semester, that addresses your child's strengths, challenges, and interests. The IPP Template on page 23 lists the criteria needed to be met before developing an IPP.

Annual and Specific Individualized Outcomes are developed in one or more of the following areas:

- Academic
- Enrichment
- Life Skills
- Social Development

Transition needs are considered when developing adaptations and IPPs.

Why? An IPP is developed and implemented for students for whom Nova Scotia's public school program curriculum outcomes are not applicable or attainable. An IPP changes what your child is expected to do in school or in certain subjects. It also documents supports provided by your child's teacher(s) and others.

Stage 6: Implementing the adaptations and/or an IPP (putting the plan in place)

Who is involved? Anyone assigned responsibility as noted in the Documented Adaptations form (see templates on pages 20–22) and/or IPP (see IPP Template on pages 23–24).

What happens? Your child's teacher(s) implements the plan, evaluates your child's progress, and shares information with you. You are encouraged to stay in touch with your child's teacher(s) to update them on progress, and to share concerns and successes.

Why? It was determined by the Program Planning Team that the adaptations and/or an IPP was appropriate to support your child's needs.

Specific Individualized Outcome(s) are statements outlining steps that lead to the attainment of the **Annual Individualized Outcome(s)**.

Stage 7: Monitoring adaptations and/or an IPP (checking in and following up)

IPP Reports

Teachers are responsible for reporting student progress for all students, including students who have an IPP. The IPP Report provides parents and guardians with clear information about the progress their child has made in meeting their individualized outcomes.

IPP Reports are sent home at the same time as reports for all students in the public school program. At the senior high school level, courses with the designation "IPP" are indicated on the student's transcript.

Who is involved? The Program Planning Team

What happens? Your child's progress is monitored throughout the year or semester. If needed, minor changes may be made to Specific Individualized Outcomes without the Program Planning Team's input. Such changes are documented and the teacher(s) will keep team members up-to-date on the changes. The Program Planning Team is involved if an Annual Individualized Outcome needs a change. Adaptations are also regularly monitored to ensure they are helping your child meet outcomes in each subject.

Why? Checking in on your child's progress, and keeping the Program Planning Team informed on successes and challenges, is important to ensure the IPP is meeting your child's needs.

Stage 8: Reviewing Adaptations and/or an IPP

Who is involved? The Program Planning Team

What happens? Adaptations and IPPs are reviewed for their effectiveness in meeting your child's needs. Adaptations are monitored on an ongoing basis and are reviewed by the team once a year for grades primary to 9, or once a semester for high school. IPPs are reviewed at least twice a year or once a semester.

Why? This gives everyone an update on how the implemented adaptations and/or an IPP are working and identifies where changes may be needed. It may also be an opportunity to consider removing your child from an IPP.

Monitoring your child's progress

Staying up-to-date on your child's progress is important. Seeing how your child learns, grows, and changes over time, and understanding what works and what does not work for your child, will help inform the Program Planning Process throughout your child's school years.

You can help monitor your child's progress by

- updating the teacher(s) on any new developments about your child (for example, upcoming transitions, medical appointments, changes in family circumstances, illness, death of a loved one)
- keeping notes and staying in contact with the teacher about changes you notice in your child's behaviour, strengths, challenges, or interests
- attending meetings about your child's progress (such as parent-teacher meetings and IPP review meetings) or following up with the teacher if you are unable to attend
- reviewing your child's work, including report cards, and talking with your child about their progress (Encourage your child to express their feelings about their work and, if appropriate, to fill in the Student's Comment section of their report card.)

Dealing with concerns

The members of the Program Planning Team work together as partners to make positive and effective educational decisions. There may be times when there are differences of opinion about what is best for your child. When this happens, it is important to remember that good communication is key throughout the Program Planning Process. Recognizing the intentions, perspectives, and expertise of all team members supports positive relationships and can help team members work more effectively toward solutions.

The table on the next page identifies strategies for dealing with particular concerns.

Your private account on PowerSchool's Student-Parent Portal gives you real-time access to attendance, grades, assignments, teacher comments, and school bulletins.

Your child's school will provide you with a letter (one letter for each of your children) that contains the following information:

1. The Student-Parent Portal (website address supplied to parents/guardians by school board)
2. Your confidential access ID
3. Your confidential access password

IF you have concerns or questions about ...	then ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> programming and services for your child 	<p>contact your child's teacher(s)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Program Planning Process 	<p>contact your child's principal</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Program Planning Process after speaking or meeting with your child's teacher and/or principal 	<p>contact Student Services staff at your school board</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> your child's proposed, or existing, IPP outcomes where or how the IPP is implemented 	<p>take the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contact your child's principal. If you continue to have questions or concerns, contact Student Services staff at your school board. If you continue to have questions or concerns, contact the superintendent of your school board to request a "School Board Appeal." If the School Board Appeal decision does not resolve the issue(s), you can make a request in writing to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development asking the Minister to establish a "Board of Appeal" to provide a ruling. <p>For information on the ministerial appeal process, see the <i>School Board and Ministerial Appeal Guide</i> at studentservices.ednet.ns.ca/sites/default/files/School_Board_and_Ministerial_Approval_Guide.pdf</p>

Meeting to address concerns

You may need to request a meeting with your child's teacher(s) to address particular concerns. The following tips may be helpful.

You can request a meeting with your child's teacher at any time if you have concerns.

Before the meeting

- Tell the teacher what the topic will be. This information allows the teacher to schedule an appropriate amount of time, and to be better prepared to answer your questions and address concerns.
- Be prepared. Write down questions and concerns you want to address.
- Focus your concerns on your child's learning needs. Decide what is most important and focus your energy on that.
- Take time to consider what you would like the outcome of the meeting to be. This will help you focus the discussion on finding a solution. If possible, and/or appropriate, involve your child.

During the meeting

- Be prepared to consider and share suggestions and possible solutions.
- Ask as many questions as needed to ensure you have a clear understanding of your child's program and progress.
- Take notes, especially with respect to recommendations and time frames for changes to take place. Confirm those commitments both verbally and in writing at the end of the meeting.
- If you come to an agreement that a certain change will be made, establish how you will know if the change is happening and that it is working.
- If you feel that additional information is necessary, schedule another meeting at the conclusion of your meeting.

Information organizer

The following pages provide considerations for before, during, and after a Program Planning Meeting. You can use this section to organize information you want to share with the team, as well as take notes about your child’s program and progress.

Before a Program Planning Meeting

What to expect:

- Someone from your child’s school will review the Program Planning Process with you.
- Someone from your child’s school will contact you to let you know where the meeting will be and who will be there.
- If you plan to bring a support person to the meeting, or if you feel it would be helpful to have your child attend some or all of the meeting, you should contact your child’s teacher to make them aware of who is attending.

Some questions or concerns to address during the meeting:

About your child:

What do you want others to know about your child? (For example, what works for your child at home, any relevant medical diagnosis, past school experiences, family or personal circumstances that might affect your child’s learning in some way.)

Strengths What are some things your child does well?	Challenges What are some things that your child finds challenging or upsetting?	Interests What are your child's interests and goals?

During a Program Planning Meeting

What to expect:

- You will be introduced to the other team members who will clarify their roles and responsibilities for your child's education. They may also provide information about your child and how your child reacts and responds at school.
- Someone will be in charge of taking minutes. You will receive a copy of these meeting notes before the next meeting.
- You may be asked to sign various consent forms depending on what information or services are needed for your child. The forms and their purpose will be explained to you.
- If you have questions or concerns, the meeting is a great opportunity to share them so that the whole team can work together to address them.

During the meeting you may want to:

- take notes
- ask for further clarification of everyone’s roles and responsibilities
- share information, or notes made at home, that can give the rest of the team a better idea of your child’s strengths, challenges, and interests
- discuss how your child is doing at school
- share your ideas about what might work for your child
- ask about supports available to respond to the needs of your child (medical, transportation, behaviour, assistive technology, social-emotional learning, etc.)
- consider and discuss new ideas that other team members bring forward
- ask questions that will help you learn more about how your child reacts or behaves in a school setting compared to a home setting (see sample questions below)
- review the team’s recommendations and responsibilities at the end of the meeting

Self-Identification—Ancestry/Culture:

During a Program Planning Meeting, you may be asked if you would like to identify your ancestry/culture, if you have not already done so during registration. Understanding your child’s or your family’s cultural heritage can help the Program Planning Team support your child in many ways:

- The Program Planning Team can develop resources that reflect and respect your child’s cultural heritage.
- The Program Planning Team can identify ways to support your child in transition planning, course selection, and post-secondary opportunities.
- It helps schools and school boards understand the diversity of the communities they serve, so that appropriate curriculum, personnel, and resources can be included to reflect that diversity.
- It allows schools and school boards to monitor and support the success of *all* students, including those from historically marginalized communities, in ways that are equitable, accessible, and inclusive.

What would you like to share about your family or child’s cultural background to assist in programming?

These sample questions may help you get a better picture of how the other Program Planning Team members see and understand your child:

1. What is a typical day in school like for my child?

2. What are some things that motivate my child at school?

3. What are my child's strengths and challenges in the following areas?

Behavioural _____

Emotional _____

Social _____

4. What are my child's strengths and challenges in specific subject areas?

5. What adaptations are currently being used in the classroom? What strategies and resources have worked well for my child?

6. What can be done to support my child's learning, growth, and independence?

7. What are the next steps for us as a team?

Questions you would like answered during the next meeting:

After a Program Planning Meeting

After the meeting, you may find it helpful to

- review the minutes of the meeting
- ask questions about what you can do at home to support and reinforce the teacher’s expectations
- continue communication with your child about their school experience

Notes

For more information

If you have questions about the Program Planning Process or would like to learn more, your child's teacher is a good first point of contact. Staff at the school board or the Student Services Division of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development are also available to answer questions you may have.

Additional Student Services resources can be found at studentservices.ednet.ns.ca.

Contact Information

Nova Scotia School Boards

Annapolis Valley Regional School Board: avrsb.ca

Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board: cbv.ns.ca

Chignecto-Central Regional School Board: ccrsb.ca

Conseil scolaire acadien provincial: csap.ca

Halifax Regional School Board: hrsb.ca

South Shore Regional School Board: ssrsb.ca

Strait Regional School Board: srsb.ca

Tri-County Regional School Board: tcrsb.ca

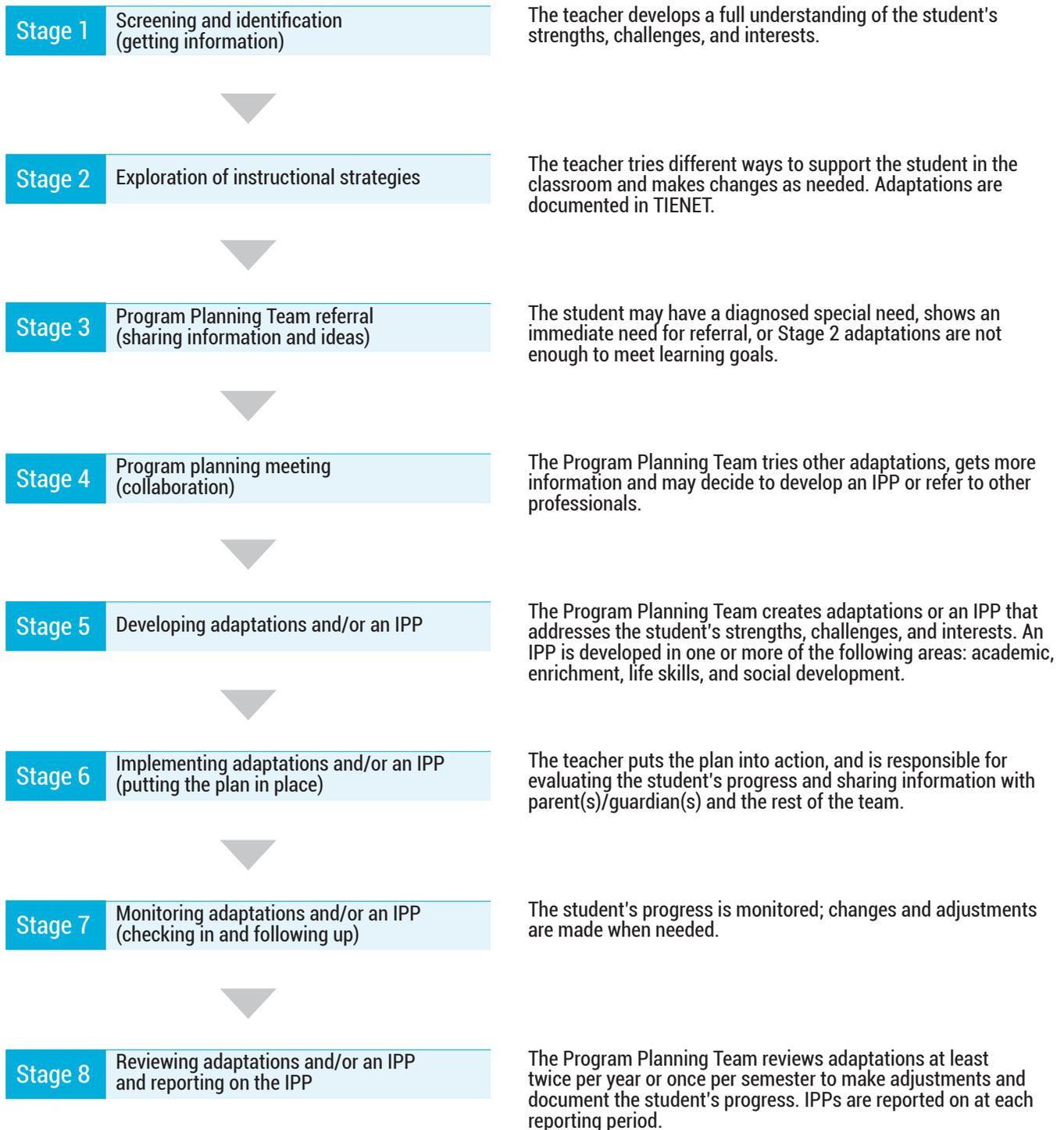
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Student Services Division

Phone: 902-424-7454

Email: studentservices@novascotia.ca

Appendix 1: Stages of the Program Planning Process



Appendix 2: Adaptations Template (Stage 2: Teacher Exploration)

This template is a representation of the form on TIENET. Shaded sections describe areas omitted due to space limitations.

School board address appears here.

Documented Adaptations - Teacher Exploration (Stage 2)

Student profile information appears here (name, date of birth, etc.).

A paragraph defining adaptations appears here.

The classroom/subject teacher should use available materials and human resources to explore a variety of strategies. This exploration may include discussions and consultations with other professionals such as a resource teacher or a speech-language pathologist. It is important for teachers to record results of the various strategies used. Communication, co-operation, and collaboration among professionals and parents/guardians are essential at this stage, taking into consideration the student's racial and cultural identity, strengths, challenges, and interests. For more information see [Engaging All Learners](#).

Assessment gathers evidence about learning to inform instruction, evaluation, and reporting of progress and achievement. It captures a student's learning style and what a student knows and is able to do in relation to the programs of study. Assessment is embedded throughout the entire process of learning and instruction, and is important in identifying the most appropriate programming options. For more information, see [Comprehensive Assessment Information](#).

Timely and ongoing communication between the school and parents/guardians is a critical element in the determination of appropriate programming for individual students.

- Parent/guardian informed and contacted on (date):
- If appropriate, student informed and contacted on (date):

Adaptations are developed on the basis of specific strengths, challenges, and interests of a student and within the context of the public school program curriculum outcomes. Therefore, the student's strengths, challenges, and interests must be considered before developing specific adaptations.

Student Strengths	Student Challenges	Student Interests

Specific Adaptations
Organizational Strategies *“Organizational Strategies” is one of six areas of adaptations. Other categories include “Environmental” adaptations, “Instructional Presentation” adaptations, “Motivational” adaptations, “Assessment” adaptations, and “Resources” to help access or extend the curriculum. Your child may need one or more of these areas of adaptations. The form you will receive will show all areas where adaptations are being explored.*

Specific Adaptation(s)	Person(s) Responsible	Subject Area(s)	Review Results

Proposed Review Date:	Actual Review Date: Additional Review Dates:
-----------------------	---

Adaptations require review at least once annually (Policy 2.2, Special Education Policy) and once each semester at the high school level.

An administrator or designate's Signature is required.

Appendix 3: Adaptations Template (Stage 4: Program Planning Team)

This template is a representation of the form on TIENET. Shaded sections describe areas omitted due to space limitations.

School board address appears here.

Documented Adaptations - PPT (Stage 4)

This document must be completed prior to proceeding with a request for a PPT meeting for the purpose of developing an IPP

Student profile information appears here (name, date of birth, etc.).

A paragraph defining adaptations appears here.

The classroom/subject teacher should use available materials and human resources to explore a variety of strategies. This exploration may include discussions and consultations with other professionals such as a resource teacher or a speech-language pathologist. It is important for teachers to record results of the various strategies used. Communication, co-operation, and collaboration among professionals and parents/guardians are essential at this stage, taking into consideration the student's racial and cultural identity, strengths, challenges, and interests. For more information see [Engaging All Learners](#).

Assessment gathers evidence about learning to inform instruction, evaluation, and reporting of progress and achievement. It captures a student's learning style and what a student knows and is able to do in relation to the programs of study. Assessment is embedded throughout the entire process of learning and instruction, and is important in identifying the most appropriate programming options. For more information, see [Comprehensive Assessment Information](#). Timely and ongoing communication between the school and parents/guardians is a critical element in the determination of appropriate programming for individual students

- Parent/Guardian informed and contacted on (date):
- If appropriate, student informed and contacted on (date):

Teacher or Staff Member	Conversation Summary	Date of Conversation
	(who, about what, and how were they contacted?)	

Adaptations are developed on the basis of specific strengths, challenges, and interests of a student and within the context of the public school program curriculum outcomes. Therefore, the student's strengths, challenges, and interests must be considered before developing specific adaptations.

Student Strengths	Student Challenges	Student Interests

Specific Adaptations
Organizational Strategies

"Organizational Strategies" is one of six areas of adaptations. Other categories include "Environmental" adaptations, "Instructional Presentation" adaptations, "Motivational" adaptations, "Assessment" adaptations, and "Resources" to help access or extend the curriculum. Your child may need one or more of these areas of adaptations. The form you will receive will show all areas where adaptations are being explored.

Specific Adaptations	Person(s) Responsible	Subject Area(s)	Review Results

Proposed Review Date:	Actual Review Date: Additional Review Dates:
------------------------------	---

An administrator or designate's signature is required.

Adaptations require review at least once annually (Policy 2.2, Special Education Policy) and once each semester at the high school level.

Author: Program Planning Team

Appendix 4: IPP Template

This template is a representation of the form on TIENET. Shaded sections describe areas omitted due to space limitations.

School board address appears here.

Student Profile	
Name:	Sex:
Date of Birth:	Student ID Number:
Self-Identification Aboriginal: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Ancestry: African Descent East Asian Descent European Descent Middle Eastern Decent
School:	Principal:
School Year:	Grade:
Parent(s)/Guardian(s):	Homeroom:
Home Phone:	

Individual Program Plan

Annual IPP Development Criteria (To be checked by the Chair of the Program Planning Team)
<p>Before proceeding with the development of an annual IPP, the following criteria must be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> During the current school year, the Program Planning Team has reviewed student progress in the previous year/ semester in relation to the Public School Program or the previous IPP. <input type="checkbox"/> An assessment of individual student learning needs (Comprehensive Assessment) has been completed in the current school year. <input type="checkbox"/> The Program Planning Team Meeting minutes in the Student's Confidential Record (for the current or previous school year) reflect the discussions of programming and services options, including documented adaptations. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Program Planning Process: A Guide for Parents and Guardians</i> has been provided and reviewed with parents/ guardians. <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/guardians (and student, when appropriate) have actively participated throughout the Program Planning Process leading to the decision to proceed with an IPP. Parents/guardians (and student, when appropriate) have been informed about what an IPP is, what evidence exists for an IPP to be developed, and the potential implications of an IPP. Communication, co-operation, and collaboration among professionals and parents/ guardians are essential in order to include the student's racial/cultural identity, strengths, challenges, and interests to ensure appropriate programming.
<p>Override by School Administrator</p> <p>If all of the above criteria are not met, approval to permit the development of an IPP requires the School Administrator to override the system due to one of the following 3 situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The student is transitioning into grade primary with identified special needs that will require the development of an IPP; the Program Planning Team may proceed to Stage 5 (Individual Program Plan development). <input type="checkbox"/> The student with an IPP is transitioning in from another school or jurisdiction and their IPP has been reviewed. Evidence exists in the accompanying documentation that the above criteria have been met. <input type="checkbox"/> The parents/guardians have not participated in Program Planning Team meetings and there is documentation on file that parents/guardians have been contacted in more than one way and invited to participate in the Program Planning Team meetings. Ongoing attempts will be made to involve parents/guardians.

Continued on the next page ►

Individual Program Plan

Assessments

List relevant education, medical/health, psychological, speech-language, and behavioural assessments. (Please note, do not include scores.)

Information Source(s):

Date:

Student's Specific Strengths, Challenges, and Interests

Strengths

Challenges

Interests

Description of Individual Program Plan

Specific Individualized Outcome(s)

Specific individualized outcomes are statements outlining steps that lead to the attainment of the annual individualized outcomes. Specific individualized outcomes are arranged according to the development processes involved and expected progression toward identified annual outcomes.

Course Code	Specific Individualized Outcome	Educational Strategy (e.g. specific instructional strategies, organizational techniques, assessment strategies)	Materials/ Equipment (e.g. assistive technology software and devices, alternative format materials, optical aids)	Person(s) Responsible for Implementation and Evaluation (Position)

Transition Planning

Outcomes/ Actions	Timeline	Person(s) Responsible	Strategies	Resources

Comments, Updates on Progress and Recommendations

Review Date(s):

Reporting Dates:

Program Planning Team

Name:

Position:

Name:

Position:

Name:

Position:

Signatures

Parent/Guardian Signature(s)

_____ Date

Parent/Guardian Signature(s)

_____ Date

Student Signature (if appropriate)

_____ Date

Principal's Signature

_____ Date

Appendix 5: Transition Plan Template (for Students Not on an IPP)

This template is a representation of the form on TIENET. Shaded sections describe areas omitted due to space limitations.

School board address appears here.

Student Transition Plan

Student Profile	
Name:	Sex:
Date of Birth:	Student ID Number:
Self-Identification Aboriginal: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Ancestry: African Descent East Asian Descent European Descent Middle Eastern Decent
School:	Principal:
School Year:	Grade:
Parent(s)/Guardian(s):	Homeroom:
Home Phone:	

Students who have special needs (physical-mobility, anxieties, transportation, etc.), and do not have an Individual Program Plan (IPP), require transition planning in order to participate successfully in school life and beyond the school setting (key stages of transition: from class to class, from school to school, from school to community, etc.)

The transition outcomes or actions from transition planning must be tracked, monitored, and evaluated. Outcomes are linked to strategic priorities and define specific expectations, including a timeline for review.

Strengths	Challenges	Interests

Continued on the next page ►

Outcomes/ Actions	Timeline	Person(s) Responsible	Strategies	Resources

Comments, Updates on Progress and Recommendations

Outcomes/ Actions	Timeline	Person(s) Responsible	Strategies	Resources

Comments, Updates on Progress and Recommendations

Parent/Guardian Signature(s)

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature(s)

Date

Student Signature (if appropriate)

Date

Principal's Signature

Date



Adaptations

Strategies and Resources

- > **Curriculum outcomes are statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do.**
- > **Adaptations do not change the public school curriculum outcomes; they enable students to achieve them. Any student might require an adaptation to support their learning; formal identification of a special need or disability is not required.**
- > **Adaptations that may provide enrichment can be found in the "Options in Programming" section of *Gifted Education and Talent Development* (Education and Early Childhood Development 2010) available at studentservices.ednet.ns.ca.**

An adaptation is a documented strategy or resource that accommodates the learning needs of an individual student. An adaptation is planned, implemented, monitored, and evaluated to enable a student to achieve the public school curriculum outcomes.

One or more of the following strategies and resources may be explored to support student success:

Organizational adaptations, such as

- copied notes or notes in advance
- a student buddy system
- a daily agenda and graphic organizer(s)
- regular student-teacher check ins and developing learning contract(s)

Environmental adaptations, such as

- appropriate lighting
- an organized workspace
- appropriate seating (e.g., proximity, study carrel)
- alternate locations

Instructional and presentation adaptations, such as

- adjusting the length, complexity, or timelines of assignments
- organizing learning experiences around a variety of levels, themes, or topics
- highlighting key concepts and vocabulary and providing step-by-step directions
- supplying supplementary materials (e.g., calculator, prompts, models, audio, and video)

Motivational adaptations, such as

- using a checklist so the student can monitor their own progress
- using a visual timer to help the student manage time
- developing a reward system based on the student's interests
- matching teaching, assessment, and resources to strengths, challenges, and interests

Assessment adaptations, such as

- demonstrating learning in different ways (e.g., oral presentation, learning portfolio)
- offering tests and exams in alternate formats (e.g., Braille, orally with scribe/note taker)
- providing an alternate location
- providing extra time

Resources to help access or extend the curriculum, such as

- utilizing assistive technology (e.g., a pencil grip, headphones, text-to-speech software)
- offering various formats (e.g., print, electronic, audio) or additional materials
- reviewing vocabulary or formulas at the beginning of units
- providing images and objects to enhance understanding of texts and formulas

- > **The Program Planning Team** includes those who have responsibility for the student's learning—the teacher, principal/vice-principal, guidance counsellor, parents and guardians, the student (when appropriate), and professionals supporting the student.

- > **Assessment adaptation—“verbatim scribe”:** If a scribe (note taker) is required, the scribe writes exactly what the student dictates. Scribes do not edit student responses or imply that changes are required. Assessment content is not interpreted or summarized by the scribe. Questions are read verbatim and explanations are not permitted.

For more information about adaptations, please contact

School: School Principal

School Board: Student Services Coordinator

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development:
Student Services
(902) 424-7454

Evaluation Services
(902) 424-7746

Who decides that a student requires an adaptation?

The teacher may decide that an adaptation is required to help a student achieve the curriculum outcomes. Sometimes a minor in-class adaptation is enough, especially with additional information from parents/guardians about what works well at home. If the teacher-level adaptation isn't enough, the teacher may submit a “Referral to Program Planning Team” form to the school principal. A Program Planning Team could then be formed and work together to determine other adaptations or supports.

What are the procedures for documenting and reviewing an adaptation?

Adaptations are documented in a form that the teacher fills out in TIENET, Nova Scotia's online student services information system. Adaptations are not documented on a report card or transcript.

Adaptations are monitored and reviewed throughout the school year to determine if they are helping the student achieve the curriculum outcomes. The decision to add or remove an adaptation is based on ongoing review and evaluation of their effectiveness. The teacher or Program Planning Team should consider reducing the dependency upon, or eliminating, adaptation(s) when possible.

Can an adaptation be provided for assessment purposes?

Yes. An adaptation used to support the student during instruction may be provided during assessment if the adaptation does not compromise or alter the assessment's validity. Adaptations must be documented in TIENET.

If the student required an instructional or assessment adaptation, will the adaptations continue in a post-secondary setting?

Adaptations are not documented on student report cards or transcripts, so a post-secondary institution would not be aware an adaptation was in place. Students who are transitioning to post-secondary options should be taught to self-advocate to get the support they will need to succeed in a post-secondary setting and future endeavours.

What if the student continues to struggle with the curriculum outcomes even though adaptations are in place?

The Program Planning Team may consider developing an Individualized Program Plan for the student. An IPP is developed and implemented when public school curriculum outcomes are not attainable or applicable. An IPP is written documentation of “individualized” annual and specific outcomes that are developed in one or more of the following areas: academic, enrichment, social development, and life skills. An IPP is monitored throughout the school year to ensure the plan is meeting the student's needs.

The Student Services fact sheets series and related policies, guidelines, and procedures may be found at studentservices.ednet.ns.ca.





Transition

A Lifelong Process

Transition is a process that involves changes in the passage from one environment to another and occurs at important milestones throughout a student's life, such as transitioning from home to school, from grade to grade, from school to school, or from school to community.

Planning for transition helps ensure successful entry into school, supports students to remain in school, and at the end of public schooling, provides a plan for taking the next step in their lives. Input from parents and guardians is an important part of transition planning to share information about what works well and areas where the student is struggling. All major aspects of the student's life should be considered.

- > **Transition Outcomes** must be written to meet criteria outlined in *Transition Planning for Students with Special Needs: The Early Years through to Adult Life* (Nova Scotia Department of Education 2005, 15).
- > **Self-advocacy** is facilitated when students are involved in transition planning. They become knowledgeable about and able to explain their strengths, challenges, and aspirations.
- > **The Program Planning Process** is a team approach to share information and plan learning outcomes and supports to meet students' individual needs.

Transition planning may be necessary for any students who have an Individual Program Plan (IPP). It may also be important for students who do not have an IPP but whose special needs related to transitioning must be addressed. Transition Outcomes (which, if needed, are included in an IPP) and Transition Plans (developed for students who do not have an IPP) are developed and documented in TIENET (Technology for Improving Education Network), Nova Scotia's online student services information system.

Effective transition planning involves

- clear understanding of a student's strengths, challenges, interests, and goals while at the same time, respecting diversity and equity
- identification of areas requiring transition support, such as self-advocacy, academics, employment, and social-emotional skills
- collaboration through the Program Planning Process between home, school, and community
- knowledge of community-based programs and services
- accurate record keeping on TIENET to track, monitor, and review the Transition Plan and process

Home-to-school transition planning should consider, but is not necessarily limited to

- inviting and supporting parents and guardians to become active participants in the Program Planning Process, including sharing information about preschool programs and services
- planning for individualized programming and services before attending school, when appropriate
- collaborating and sharing information between school staff and the student's support services (e.g., early intervention, pre-school programs, health professionals)
- supporting students to become comfortable with their new school, the routine, and their teachers

Grade-to-grade and teacher-to-teacher transition planning should consider, but is not necessarily limited to

- reviewing and updating individual assessment and programming information with new teachers
- ensuring documentation on TIENET is kept current
- supporting students and parents and guardians to become comfortable with new surroundings and new staff by arranging orientation activities
- addressing student concerns associated with anticipated changes

> Additional information can be obtained from *Transition Planning for Students with Special Needs: The Early Years through to Adult Life* (Nova Scotia Department of Education 2005), available at studentservices.ednet.ns.ca.

> To gain knowledge of community-based programming and services, the Program Planning Team will need to assess what their community has to offer to meet the educational, employment, and other requirements of youth.

School-to-school transition planning should consider, but is not necessarily limited to

- arranging meetings to address potential transition needs
- organizing and implementing orientation activities for individuals and groups of students
- exploring career interests and focusing on the establishment of a career plan, particularly as the student transitions to junior high and then to senior high
- supporting students in the selection of credits relative to strengths, challenges, interests, graduation requirements, and their post-high-school plans and options

School-to-community transition planning should consider, but is not necessarily limited to

- initiating planning as early as possible (age 14 or younger, when appropriate)
- identifying post-secondary school goals (such as education, employment, housing, transportation, financial management, and recreation)
- guiding students to provide them with opportunities to explore potential career options
- identifying school and community services that may assist the student in achieving personal goals by developing transition outcomes based on what the student wants to do and how they want to live and take part in the community
- assisting with the coordination of student assessments to provide what may be required for post-high-school program admissions, grants, or disability support programs and services

For more information about transition planning, please contact

School: School Principal

School Board: Student Services Coordinator

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development:
Student Services
(902) 424-7454

The Student Services fact sheets series and related policies, guidelines, and procedures may be found at studentservices.ednet.ns.ca.



Glossary

adaptations: Strategies or resources used by your child’s teacher(s) or the Program Planning Team to address challenges and support your child’s strengths within the Public School Program. Adaptations are documented and reviewed to ensure they are supporting your child effectively.

advocate: Anyone who provides encouragement and support for you and/or your child (for example, an Elder, a family or community member, or a friend).

assistive technology: A range of strategies, services, and low-to-high tech tools that support your child’s ability to meet the Public School Program learning outcomes, or the outcomes of an Individual Program Plan.

cultural proficiency: An approach to teaching and learning that encourages both educators and students to learn about and understand how to effectively interact with people whose culture differs from their own.

Emergency Care Plan: A written plan developed by the Program Planning Team with health care professionals that outlines the steps to be taken in the event of a medical emergency for your child. The plan is signed by a health care professional, the parents/guardians, and the student if appropriate.

Health Care Plan: A written plan developed by the Program Planning Team for a student’s ongoing daily support and/or management of a health care need or intervention. The plan is signed by a health care professional, parents/guardians, and the student if appropriate.

inclusion: Inclusion is an attitude and a value system that promotes the basic right of all students to receive appropriate and quality educational programming and services in the company of their peers.

Individual Program Plan (IPP): A written plan documenting Annual Individualized Outcomes and Specific Individualized Outcomes developed to meet a student’s strengths, challenges, and interests. The IPP is developed and implemented for every student for whom the outcomes of the Public School Program is not applicable and/or attainable.

informed consent: Demonstrating an understanding of the information related to the activity for which consent is sought, and agreeing in writing, to allowing the activity to happen. Consent is voluntary and you can withdraw it at any time.

PowerSchool: The student information system used by all schools in Nova Scotia for scheduling, attendance, storing grades, and student-parent communication.

Program Planning Team: Those who have responsibility for your child's learning, including: principal or vice-principal, teachers, including resource teachers, other professional staff as required, your child (when appropriate), and you. Depending on the learning needs of your child and the personnel resources of the school board and community, other members may be added to the team.

self-advocacy: Making one's strengths, challenges, needs and aspirations known in a clear and effective way.

self-identification: Identifying yourself as being of a particular cultural or ancestral heritage. Self-identification can assist the Program Planning Team in selecting appropriate and relevant resources, interventions, as well as identifying additional team members.

TIENET (Technology for Improving Education Network): A web-based tool designed to manage student services information including Individual Program Plans, adaptations, and other confidential student services information in Nova Scotia public schools.

transition planning: Part of the Program Planning Process that involves identifying strategies, resources, and supports to help your child transition from one environment to another (for example, the transition from elementary to junior high school). Transition planning outcomes are developed based on your child's strengths, challenges, and aspirations, and are documented in the IPP, or in a Transition Plan for students not on an IPP.

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