

Questions arising out of the Accountability Framework Report

Black- questions posed

Blue – Responses

Green – Ministry reference material

1. Why are 47% of the Special Education students N/A? What does this mean (e.g. on wait list, just need extra help? etc.,) Can you please further break down this number by sub-categories?

Response:

We do not have a mechanism to collect the reason for creating an IEP.

An IEP may be created at the discretion of the school principal if the student requires modifications to the program.

Students may have Non-Applicable IEPs for several reasons:

- the student was assessed but does not meet criteria for an identification, however struggles with school work
- the student has had an IEP created to ensure access to accommodations on the provincial assessment
- once IEPs are opened, there is a reluctance of closing them 'just in case' the student may need the support later on in their schooling- the IEP is carried forth
- students require ongoing accommodations that need to be noted in an IEP to ensure the information is available from year to year
- students may require specific (SEA) equipment, thus requiring an IEP
- students may require a IEP to support a SIP (Special Incidence Portion) application

From Special Education Guide 2017

An IEP is developed for a student for one of the following reasons. The relevant reason must be indicated in every IEP:

- An **IEP must be developed** for every student who has been identified as an “exceptional pupil” by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), in accordance with Regulation 181/98.
- An **IEP may be developed** for a student who has not been identified by an IPRC as exceptional, but who has been deemed by the board to require a special education program or services in order to attend school or to achieve curriculum expectations and/or to demonstrate learning.

Additional considerations:

- If a school principal determines that a student’s achievement will be assessed on the basis of modified expectations, an IEP is required, even in the absence of identification by an IPRC.
 - o If a student regularly requires accommodations (including specialized equipment) for instructional or assessment purposes, it is advisable to develop an IEP. Educators should be aware that: *in order to receive accommodations during Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments, a student must have an IEP that identifies the accommodations required;*
 - o if a Special Equipment Amount (SEA) and/or Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding application is being made to the Ministry of Education for a student, a

student must have an IEP, as supporting documentation, that identifies the accommodations required.

2. Why is only student achievement the 'lens' through which the framework is reviewed annually? Where is well being?

Student achievement reflects our core business and is the measure of success most used by the province. In our framework, we also review other aspects of student learning. For example for autistic students, self-regulation is an area of concern and one of the areas of focus that the AFSE for Autism. Each of the Accountability Frameworks speaks to different aspects of the needs of students. Currently, the province does not have a standard measure for well-being for the diversity of students that make up the special education group. It is also not a measure that has been regarded as an area to be addressed on IEPs as per ministry samples. If you recall, about a year ago, we brought to board a case study approach that spoke to student well-being. Due to varying degrees of students being able to respond to questions, it is difficult to standardize the type of responses if any that students may provide.

3. Why are only EQAO results used to measure achievement? Report cards are alluded to in Part D, but not as part of student achievements. If report cards / grades provide no evidence of achievement why do we have them?

The difficulty with using report cards as measures of student achievement for students with special needs is that much like the IEP, ***each report card is individualized to the level of the student***, thus a student in grade 6 with an IEP may receive a mark of C in a math unit on measurement, this mark is based on non-linear measures of distances (eg: number of footprints across the room), It is not feasible to compare this with another grade 6 student without an IEP who received a C in a math unit on measurement where the mark is based on correctly calculating the area of a triangle. As it is also not feasible to compare this with another grade 6 student with an IEP that received a C for the same unit but whose IEP indicates that he is using a ruler to measure the perimeter of a rectangle. All three students have the same mark next to the same unit in mathematics, however for each student the mark means something different as the report card identifies different levels of proficiency.

Thus each student in grade 6 with an IEP has a report card that is significantly different, thus using this data to report student achievement would be misleading.

4. Why IEP students take EQAO, is EQAO aware of this? As some small schools have a large portion of Special Education students because of the wonderful school community and the resources available, is it possible to report on EQAO results with the IEP students separated? When do students receive a 0?

There is a vast range of ability in students that have IEPs from gifted to severe global developmental delays. Some students are capable of completing the EQAO assessments independently, others require the permitted accommodations, while others would not be able to complete the assessments. EQAO is fully aware of this, and this is why schools have the option of exempting a student from the assessment. It is also for this reason that they have permitted students with IEPs to receive accommodations. (extra time; a scribe; a quiet workplace away from distractions). Students who do not participate receive a zero as do students who are unable to correctly complete any work on the assessment.

EQAO does report on students with IEPs separately from the mainstream students. What they typically don't do is separate these students from the scores reported publicly.

5. We talk of 'next steps' but what are our targets over the next year for each exceptionality?

Our targets for each exceptionality differ depending on the type of data that is possible to collect. Where student achievement data is possible to be used as a measure, we try to do this. In some circumstances, it necessary to speak to the strategies that will be implemented. For example, with respect to the ME/DD grouping, setting targets for students is done on an individual basis as the diversity of their needs is great. Thus, in this particular case we are looking increasing teacher understanding of functional literacy and the implementation of the specific strategies that will lead to increased student engagement, participation and learning. It is difficult to implement these unilaterally within a classroom as each student is at a different level of ability and each student will only be able to use a portion of the program. Targets are set for the student by the classroom teacher. Collecting data on the collective group in all classes would provide confounded information since each child's goals are different. In this instance, we are collecting data on teacher use of the new program/strategies as well as student engagement as measured through pre and post teacher surveys. Thus, our target is an increase but since we are creating a baseline, any increase in use/implementation of this strategy is a movement in a positive direction.

6. Our 'next steps' seem focused on those areas where we are below the provincial average, regardless of the result - why is this?

The focus of our next steps is in alignment with the Renewed Math Strategy as math is also a focus of achievement for those special education student who are able to write the EQAO assessments. The goals pertain to a general nature as the work of the AFSE for each exceptionality narrows in on the specific exceptionality.

7. What is the definition of Language Impaired? If we could please have definitions for each exceptionality listed in the report.

Please see below:

Categories of exceptionalities in Ontario – Ministry Reference

The following are the five categories of exceptionality recognized by the province of Ontario and used in Identification Placement and Review Committees. There may be some flexibility within the categories for the purposes of identifying a student as “exceptional” under the Ministry definition.

1. behaviour
2. communication
3. intellectual
4. physical
5. multiple

These broad categories include the following definitions:

1. Behaviour

A learning disorder characterized by specific behaviour problems over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance, and that may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

- an inability to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships;
- excessive fears or anxieties;
- a tendency to compulsive reaction;
- an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or
- other health factors, or any combination thereof.

2. Communication

Autism

A severe learning disorder that is characterized by:

- disturbances in:
 - rate of educational development;
 - ability to relate to the environment;
 - mobility;
 - perception, speech, and language; lack of the representational symbolic
- behaviour that precedes language.

Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

An impairment characterized by deficits in language and speech development because of a diminished or non-existent auditory response to sound.

Language Impairment

A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or the use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors, and which may:

- involve one or more of the form, content, and function of language in communication; and
- include one or more of:
 - language delay;
 - dysfluency;
 - voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based.

Speech Impairment

A disorder in language formulation that may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical, or sensory factors; that involves perceptual motor aspects of transmitting oral messages; and that may be characterized by impairment in articulation, rhythm, and stress.

Learning Disability

A learning disorder evident in both academic and social situations that involves one or more of the processes necessary for the proper use of spoken language or the symbols of communication, and that is characterized by a condition that:

- is not primarily the result of:
 - impairment of vision;
 - impairment of hearing;
 - physical disability;
 - developmental disability;
 - primary emotional disturbance;
 - cultural difference;
- results in a significant discrepancy between academic achievement and assessed intellectual ability, with deficits in one or more of the following:
 - receptive language (listening, reading);
 - language processing (thinking, conceptualizing, integrating);
 - expressive language (talking, spelling, writing);
 - mathematical computations; and
- may be associated with one or more conditions diagnosed as:
 - a perceptual handicap;
 - a brain injury;
 - minimal brain dysfunction;
 - dyslexia;
 - developmental aphasia.

3. Intellectual

Giftedness

An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.

Mild Intellectual Disability

A learning disorder characterized by:

- an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service;
- an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development;
- a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

Developmental Disability

A severe learning disorder characterized by:

- an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development;
- an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development;
- a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment, and economic self-support.

4. Physical

Physical Disability

A condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of pupils without exceptionalities who are of the same age or development level.

Blind and Low Vision

A condition of partial or total impairment of sight or vision that even with correction affects educational performance adversely.

5. Multiple

Multiple Exceptionalities

A combination of learning or other disorders, impairments, or physical disabilities that is of such a nature as to require, for educational achievement, the services of one or more teachers holding qualifications in special education and the provision of support services appropriate for such disorders, impairments, or disabilities.

8. We have no results for N/A in the report but they make up 47% of the cohort - why? Where is the data related to this cohort? What is the resource allocation to this cohort?

These students are part of the overall Special Education students in Part A of the report. This group of students may receive indirect support from the special education teacher, resource support, or withdrawal support.

8. Part C - Safe Students report - do we have any information on whether students with IEPs are being bullied / feel safe? We only speak to suspensions.

2016-2017 (Spring 2017)

SCCSC – Grades 6 & 8

Group (IEP):	Since September, how often have you been bullied at school?			
	Never	2-3 Times	4-6 Times	7+ Times
No IEP N=4103	69.6%	20.7%	4.9%	4.9%
Not Sure N=4146	67.0%	21.3%	5.9%	5.9%
IEP N=2031	62.5%	24.3%	5.9%	7.3%

SCCSC – Grades 6 & 8

Group (IEP):	How safe do you feel in your school?			
	Very Safe	Safe	Unsafe	Very Unsafe
No IEP N=4103	39.3%	56.6%	2.9%	0.6%
Not Sure N=4146	35.5%	60.1%	3.2%	0.5%
IEP N=2031	40.2%	55.2%	3.0%	0.7%

SCCSC – Grades 6 & 8

Group (IEP):	How safe do you feel walking/travelling to and from school?			
	Very Safe	Safe	Unsafe	Very Unsafe
No IEP N=4103	25.4%	54.7%	10.5%	1.9%
Not Sure N=4146	24.0%	53.8%	11.6%	1.8%
IEP N=2031	26.9%	51.8%	11.8%	2.0%

2016-2017(Fall 2016)

Safe Schools Survey – Grades 9-12

Group (IEP):	Since September, how often have you been bullied at school?			
	Never	1-3 Times	4-6 Times	7+ Times
No IEP N= 3036	85.7%	10.5%	1.7%	2.1%
Not Sure N= 1102	85.6%	11.0%	1.2%	2.2%
IEP N= 1124	82.2%	11.0%	2.4%	4.4%

Safe Schools Survey – Grades 9-12

Group (IEP):	How safe do you feel in your school?			
	Very Safe	Safe	Unsafe	Very Unsafe
No IEP N= 3036	29.2%	63.0%	4.4%	1.3%
Not Sure N= 1102	31.5%	59.8%	3.8%	1.7%
IEP N= 1124	30.5%	59.2%	5.1%	2.7%

Safe Schools Survey – Grades 9-12

Group (IEP):	How safe do you feel walking/travelling to and from school?			
	Very Safe	Safe	Unsafe	Very Unsafe
No IEP N= 3036	20.9%	62.2%	11.3%	2.2%
Not Sure N= 1102	18.9%	61.5%	12.0%	2.3%
IEP N= 1124	23.0%	58.2%	11.4%	3.4%

9. I would like to see annual trend data since 2010 by grade - the number of students in each of the categories included in the table on page 24.

Number of Students by Exceptionality 2010 to 2017

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Autism	5.01% (846)	5.53% (943)	6.05% (1030)	6.71% (1162)	7.6% (1307)	8.22% (1430)	9.38% (1602)	10.36% (1763)
Behaviour	1.50% (254)	1.42% (242)	1.37% (234)	1.12% (194)	1.05% (180)	1.09% (190)	0.98% (167)	1.1% (188)
Blind and Low Vision	0.14% (23)	0.13% (23)	0.14% (24)	0.1% (18)	0.13% (23)	0.11% (20)	0.11% (18)	0.09% (15)
Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing	0.48% (81)	0.49% (84)	0.47% (80)	0.47% (82)	0.51% (87)	0.57% (100)	0.59% (100)	0.57% (97)
Developmental Disability	1.05% (177)	0.97% (166)	0.98% (167)	0.94% (162)	0.94% (162)	0.84% (147)	0.79% (135)	0.83% (141)
Giftedness	16.84% (2845)	16.62% (2833)	14.53% (2474)	15.36% (2659)	14.91% (2565)	14.54% (2530)	14.39% (2457)	14.15% (2408)
Language Impairment	2.31% (390)	2.71% (462)	2.85% (485)	3.63% (629)	4.11% (708)	4.41% (767)	4.71% (805)	4.94% (840)
Learning Disability	33.74% (5700)	31.17% (5313)	28.60% (4869)	25.04% (4334)	22.96% (3951)	20.47% (3563)	18.97% (3239)	17.16% (2920)
Mild Intellectual Disability	5.21% (880)	4.46% (760)	4.09% (696)	3.61% (625)	3.17% (546)	2.74% (477)	2.42% (414)	2.19% (373)
Multiple Exceptionalities	1.32% (223)	1.25% (213)	1.1% (187)	1.13% (195)	1.05% (180)	0.97% (169)	1.09% (186)	1.07% (182)
Not Applicable	31.95% (5397)	34.85% (5941)	39.36% (6701)	41.51% (7186)	43.15% (7425)	45.55% (7928)	46.10% (7871)	47.1% (8016)
Physical Disability	0.46% (77)	0.39% (66)	0.44% (75)	0.36% (63)	0.42% (72)	0.47% (82)	0.46% (79)	0.43% (73)
Speech Impairment	0.01% (1)	0.01% (1)	0.01% (1)	0.01% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.01% (1)	0.01% (2)	0.01% (2)
Total	100% (16894)	100% (17047)	100% (17023)	100% (17311)	100% (17206)	100% (17404)	100% (17075)	100% (17018)

10, How are resources allocated to these students given that they appear to make up about 20% of our total student population. What criteria / measurement do we use to determine how our limited resources are distributed between schools. What types of resources beyond EAs are part of Special Ed supports (e.g. CYWs etc.,)? What are the total numbers for each type of resource - elementary vs secondary.

Special services provides support to about 17,000 students though the allocated ministry funding as well as the additional funds that have been allocated to Special Education.

Special education supports are provided to all students with an IEP within 5 different placements:

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

Teacher resources are distributed according to number of IEPS in schools as well according to number of high needs students in intensive support programs. Each ISP class has a dedicated teacher. There are approximately 60 in secondary schools and about 155 in elementary schools.

We have 172 CYWs allocated to schools in the following areas:

1. School based (secondary)
2. Students with SIP designations (Elementary and Secondary)
3. Behaviour ISPs
4. Autism ISPs
5. Urban Priority Grants

We have 942 EAs that are distributed based on high needs students as identified by schools through the Support Staff for Student Needs application. ME/DD classes are given priority based on the intense needs of the students.

Worker Type	Elementary	Secondary	Total
Educational Assistant	522	420	942
Child and Youth Worker	68	104	172

11. What is the average wait time to get an IEP and how many students are on the wait list?

We don't typically have wait times for IEPs as a principal can open an IEP when a student requires support in consultation with the School Based Learning Team. (See question #1)

If your question is in reference to psychological assessments, the waitlist data is listed in the following chart:

Mid-year data:

Year	Direct Service				Indirect Service	Total	Backlog	Referrals greater than 2 yrs.
	Assessment	Counselling	Small Group	Subtotal	File Review			
2017-18	288	147	5	440	618	1058	1063	86
2016-17	297	168	19	484	639	1123	1009	85

The mid-year data included in the chart above outlines the types of services provided to students. Only 27% is related to formal assessments. We collected information on referrals longer than two years as shown above. We expect these will be completed before the end of the year.

12. Again, trend data from the last 5 years to see the average wait times and the number of students on the wait list?

The following chart shows the number of referrals for a full year. You will notice that the backlog has been decreasing by about 200 assessments year upon year.

FULL YEAR data

Year	Formal requests						Formal referrals received	Backlog
	Direct service				Indirect service	TOTAL		
	Assessments	Counselling	Small group	Subtotal	File review			
2016-17	749	303	80	1132	1096	2228	2055	1078
2015-16	774	299	76	1149	1391	2540	2308	1251
2014-15	883	261	103	1247	1373	2620	2471	1483
2013-14	937	302	46	1285	1247	2532	2182	1632
2012-13	906	266	24	1196	1018	2214	2147	1978
2011-12	1029	177	74	1280	1346	2626	3077	2045
2010-11	1046	278	48	1372	1255	2624	2869	1594

Referrals come in throughout the year. They are also completed throughout the year. (Essentially, if we were to stop accepting referrals for a 6 month period, we could exhaust the backlog). The difficulty is

that once reinstated, we would probably receive an increased number of referrals and end up in the same situation.

With respect to wait times, we do not have a mechanism at this time to determine average wait times due to the prioritization of referrals based on student needs. We respond to emergency cases in a prompt manner, especially when there is need to place a student in a specific program for support. This means students who may be receiving supports in class or with a special education teacher are pushed further down the list for the short term. This where a case management system would allow us to prioritize and redistribute workload in real time and allow us to be much more efficient.

Answers to Follow-up questions for tonight regarding distribution of our limited resources.

You state that "Teacher resources are distributed according to number of IEPs in schools as well according to number of high needs students in intensive support programs. Each ISP class has a dedicated teacher. There are approximately 60 in secondary schools and about 155 in elementary schools.

First we allocate to the ISP classes, then we distribute the rest of the staff throughout the schools. This allocation is driven by the number of IEPs in each school community.

We have 172 CYWs allocated to schools in the following areas:

1. School based (secondary)
2. Students with SIP designations (Elementary and Secondary)
3. Behaviour ISPs
4. Autism ISPs
5. Urban Priority Grants"

1. Please breakdown the 172 CYWs by type of allocation.

	Elementary	Secondary
CYW Subtotals	72	100
School Based Secondary	2	37
Students with SIP Designations	35	58
Behaviour	23	
Autism	12	
Urban Priority Grants		5
SAL		2

2. What is the ratio of the number of IEP students in a school to the resources allocated?

The teacher allocation is based on number students with IEPs, there is no specific ratio.

3. Given that 47% of our students are N/A what is the process for identification and resource allocation for them?

Many of the students in this category do not meet the criteria for formal identification. These students with an IEP are all received. Type of support is dependent on placements as outlined in #10 of the questions previously posed.

4. How many principal requests have been made for resources that we have not been able to meet in the last year (I am aware of multiple schools in the ward I represent alone)?

This information will take some time to gather and can be sent to you at a later time once we have had time to collate this information.