



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

MEHEMEA KA MOEMOEĀ AHAU,
KO AHAU ANAKE.
MEHEMEA KA MOEMOEĀ A TĀTOU,
KA TAEA E TĀTOU.

IF I DREAM, I DREAM ALONE.
IF WE ALL DREAM TOGETHER,
WE CAN SUCCEED.

Te Kirihaehae Te Paea Hērangi
[1883–1952], Māori leader

Collaboration for Success:

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS



The Ministry of Education thanks everybody who contributed to the revision of the Ministry of Education *Individual Education Programme (IEP) Guidelines* (1998).

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Visit www.iep.tki.org.nz to access:

- online and download versions of *Collaboration for Success: Individual Education Plans*
- a collection of tools, tips and templates which have been developed by schools, parents and family/whānau and specialist staff to support practice around the IEP process

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1-3. About this resource

1. WHO IS THIS RESOURCE FOR?

This resource is for anyone involved in developing or implementing individual education plans (IEPs) to support students with special education needs.

The audience includes:

- students
- their parents/caregivers and members of their whānau, hapū, iwi, or other communities
- school staff, including teachers, teacher aides, and school leaders
- specialists.

Māori-medium schools might adopt pathways different from those suggested in this resource, in accordance with their kaupapa. “Cultural differences in the perception of special needs” may be a factor (Bevan-Brown, 2001, page 6). However, many of the principles, especially that of collaboration, are likely to be relevant. Suggestions for collaborating with Māori communities are included in section 8.

2. PURPOSE OF THE RESOURCE

Collaboration for Success: Individual Education Plans replaces the 1998 *Individual Education Programme (IEP) Guidelines* (referred to as the *IEP Guidelines* from here on). This new resource is intended as a compact reference to current New Zealand research, policy, and effective practice in supporting students with special education needs.

For support materials, see the online version, with its collection of tools, tips, and templates, at www.iep.tki.org.nz

3. RATIONALE FOR UPDATING THE IEP GUIDELINES

Important changes have taken place in the education and disability sectors since the *IEP Guidelines* were published in 1998. This new resource has been developed to incorporate the principles and practical applications of those changes. It highlights activities that lead to improved student progress and achievement.

The changes include:

- *The New Zealand Disability Strategy*, 2001
- *The New Zealand Curriculum*, 2007
- *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*, 2008
- New Zealand’s ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2008
- the National Standards, 2009
- Success for All – Every School, Every Child, 2010 (the government’s vision of a fully inclusive education system by 2014)
- the Ministry of Education’s review of literature around IEPs, 2010 (described below).

The original *IEP Guidelines* were developed to support the Special Education 2000 initiative. That initiative set out to achieve a world-class education system with learning opportunities of equal quality for all students. The relevance of Special Education 2000 remains. Where this new resource differs is in capturing recent findings that have enhanced our understanding of effective practices in education.

3.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2010, the Ministry of Education commissioned a review of the literature around IEPs to inform their future use (Mitchell, Morton, and Hornby, 2010). Summary evidence from the review appears in the relevant sections of this document.

The literature review focuses on:

- national and international developments in IEP processes
- assessment practices in special education
- research into effective, evidence-based IEP practices.

The review identifies a number of positive aspects of New Zealand practice. However, it also notes gaps between the original vision for IEPs and current implementation.

It shows that many opportunities for improvement exist. This resource aims to capture and build on those opportunities.



4. Vision, policy, and principles around IEPs

4.1 VISION: SUCCESS FOR ALL – EVERY SCHOOL, EVERY CHILD

Success for All – Every School, Every Child (2010) sets out the government’s vision of a fully inclusive education system by 2014. Confident schools, students, parents/caregivers, whānau, and communities are at the heart of this vision. The IEP process needs to support this goal.

The strategy states that all schools should be ready for all children, whatever their needs. School learning should be a positive experience for every young person, including those with special education needs.

Parents/caregivers, whānau, and communities need good information without having to fight for it. They need to see that their child belongs, has friends, is learning, and is getting the extra help needed.

4.2 POLICY

The National Administration Guidelines (NAGs) provide the policy framework for IEPs. According to the NAGs, every school must develop and implement its students’ educational programmes, including those contained in IEPs.

NAG 1 states:

Each board of trustees is required to foster student achievement by providing teaching and learning programmes which incorporate The National Curriculum as expressed in The New Zealand Curriculum 2007 or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.

NAG 1 goes on to require that all boards of trustees, through the principal and staff, identify and support students with special education needs (NAG 1 [c] iii and [d]).

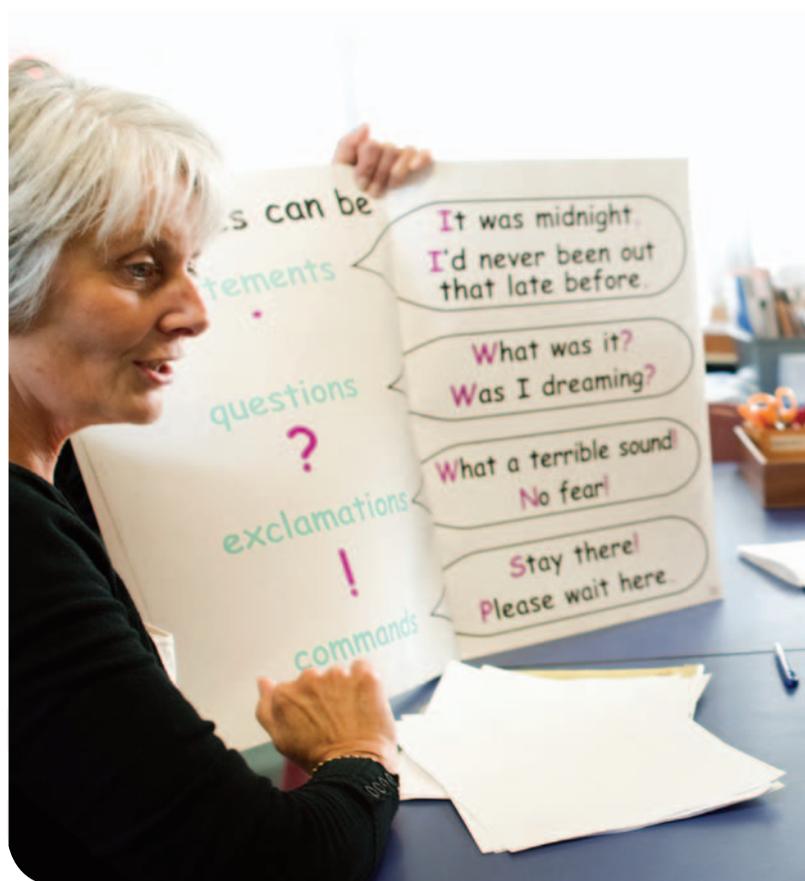
4.3 PRINCIPLES

The principles that inform IEP processes apply to all teaching and learning. They are backed up by recent research and extensive experience. By following these principles, schools, students, parents/caregivers, whānau, and their communities can be confident that an IEP will result in positive outcomes for all.

All teaching and learning occurs within the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa. These curricula are relevant to all students, including those with special education needs. (See section 5.)

- The student is recognised as an active, capable learner. IEPs are a way of adapting the school programme to fit the student rather than expecting the student to fit the school programme. (See section 6.)

- The special education needs of many students can be met by class- and school-wide strategies. Only some students with special education needs require an IEP, and few need one that captures every aspect of their learning. (See section 7.)
- Collaborative decision making is at the heart of supporting all students with special education needs. The student and their classmates, parents/caregivers, whānau, and communities are supported to be active participants in the IEP team and process. All educators involved in a student’s learning are included. (See sections 8 and 9.)
- Student engagement, learning, and achievement depend on the relationship between the teacher and student.
- Language, identity, and culture count. Knowing where learners come from, and building on what they bring with them, is essential.
- Teachers draw on a range of effective assessment approaches, using the principles of assessment for learning. They use overall teacher judgments (OTJs) to inform teaching and learning programmes for all students. (See section 10.)



5. Curriculum context

“It [the IEP process] is about writing students into The New Zealand Curriculum rather than writing students out.”

Principal quote, 2011

Teaching and learning for all students in New Zealand schools, including those with special education needs, takes place within the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa. These curricula are the basis of the IEP process and the criteria for judging the quality of all teaching and learning.

5.1 THE NEW ZEALAND CURRICULUM AND TE MARAUTANGA O AOTEAROA

The New Zealand Curriculum:

applies to all English-medium ... students ... irrespective of their gender, sexuality, ethnicity, belief, ability or disability, social or cultural background, or geographical location.

The New Zealand Curriculum, 2007, page 6

Every aspect of the curriculum, including its vision, principles, values, and key competencies, is important. A key vision is to equip all students to be “confident, connected, actively involved, and lifelong learners” (page 8).



Te Marautanga o Aotearoa states:

Through the school working together with its community, whānau, hapū, and iwi, graduates of Māori-medium schools will ... reach their full potential ... be confident to pursue their own lifelong learning pathways ... participate positively in the community ... live successful and fulfilling lives.

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, 2008, pages 2 and 3 of online English version, page 8 of printed te reo version

5.2 BALANCED PROGRAMMES

Schools need to design balanced programmes for all students. They should explore “the natural connections that exist between learning areas and that link learning areas to the values and key competencies” (*The New Zealand Curriculum, 2007, page 16*). Making such links will bring out the best ways to support students’ learning and help them to reach their full potential.

ADAPTATIONS AND DIFFERENTIATIONS TO THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

For information on using “adaptations and differentiations” to make the curriculum more accessible to students with special education needs, see section 9.3.



6. What is an IEP?

IEP stands for “individual education plan”.

The “IEP process” is the ongoing collaborative process by which IEPs are developed, implemented, and reviewed. (See sections 8 and 9.)

The table below summarises what an IEP is (its key characteristics), contrasted by what it is not. Also see section 9.4: “Contents of the IEP”.

6.1 ADDRESSING CONFUSION AROUND IEPS

The 2010 literature review reveals that, nationally and internationally, confusion has grown around IEPs and their use. It also records various barriers to effective IEP practices, including schools:

- not including the student enough or paying sufficient attention to their particular goals and aspirations
- not involving and supporting parents/caregivers and whānau enough in the IEP process
- placing too much emphasis on creating IEP documents that are overly long and unwieldy
- using IEP documents as “tick box” plans instead of embedding them in everyday practice.

Teachers [in New Zealand] often viewed IEPs as an administrative task, rather than as a tool to develop more effective instruction and learning.

Mitchell et al., 2010, page 18

IEPs suffer from having multiple purposes ascribed to them, the same IEP document frequently being expected to serve educational, legal, planning, accountability, placement, and resource allocation purposes (Mitchell et al., 2010, page 22).

SOLUTIONS

The research indicates that the emphasis needs to shift to collaboration and teaching and learning. Sections 8 and 9 of this resource include various strategies for achieving effective practice. In particular, see section 8.3: “Facilitating collaboration”.

For more examples of effective IEP practices, see the online collection of tools, tips, and templates: www.iep.tki.org.nz

AN IEP IS ...	AN IEP IS NOT ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a plan that shows how the school programme will be adapted to fit the student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a document that shows how the student will fit the curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a plan that brings together knowledge and contributions, from the student and those who best know them, about the student’s learning needs, aspirations, personality, and cultural background 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a document prepared by professionals to be signed off by a student’s parents/caregivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an individualised supplement to the full-class learning programme, which enriches the student’s classroom, school, and community experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a different, separate curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a forward-looking plan that records student achievements, where they want to go, what supports are needed (including support for team members), and what success might look like 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a document that lists barriers to learning with no solutions • a document written specifically for funding or referral purposes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a succinct outline of a few priority learning goals and strategies to meet them within the classroom programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an exhaustive list of learning goals, activities, teaching strategies, and resources covering all the key competencies and learning areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a ‘living’ document that team members regularly update to reflect the student’s changing development and that the team refers to for guidance on their responsibilities and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a document that is completed at a meeting and then not looked at or used until the next meeting

7. Who needs an IEP



The special education needs of many students can be met by class- and school-wide strategies. Only some students with special education needs require an IEP, and few need one that captures every aspect of their learning.

Use IEPs only when additional teaching strategies are needed to address a student’s particular learning goals. (See section 9.3: “Adaptations and differentiations to the school and classroom curriculum”.) Before considering these alternative approaches, apply the full range of regular teaching strategies (for example, co-operative learning, experiential learning, buddy systems).

IEPs are necessary only when:

- accurate and up-to-date assessment (see section 10) indicates that optimal teaching and learning require differentiations within the New Zealand Curriculum or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa
- barriers to learning have been identified, requiring adaptations to regular teaching strategies or to the school or classroom environment (see section 9.3)
- times of transition require extra attention to planning, teaching, and learning.

7.1 TRANSITIONS

Transitions include times when a student enters school, changes class, changes school, or prepares to leave school. IEPs can be designed specifically for these transitions. When this is the case, they are sometimes called Individual Transition Plans.

The 2010 literature review states:

The literature suggests that key components of transition planning are individualised planning, active involvement of student and family members, interagency collaboration, and transition-focused instruction.

Mitchell et al., 2010, page 22

7.2 IEPs IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Research into IEPs in secondary schools has raised questions around their usefulness at this level, especially because of the many teachers involved. The literature review suggests having a lead teacher who takes responsibility for collecting assessments and other information from all teachers of the student. This suggestion applies across all school settings.

The review also cites recent moves in the United Kingdom to:

- reduce the number of students for whom IEPs are developed
- focus instead on whole-school strategies for meeting special education needs (for example, by adapting regular teaching strategies)
- introduce the idea of “group education plans” for students with similar needs.

8. Collaboration – the heart of the matter

This section looks at:

- IEP team members (8.1)
- the power of collaboration – and what it depends on (8.2)
- facilitating collaboration, including with Māori and Pasifika communities (8.3)
- how team members might participate in the IEP process (8.4).

8.1 IEP TEAM MEMBERS

The 2010 literature review concluded that all those involved with the student's learning should be part of IEP development and implementation. Team members might include:

- the student – who is at the heart of the IEP team
- their parents/caregivers and members of their whānau, hapū, iwi, or other communities
- school staff, including teachers, teacher aides, and school leaders
- specialists.

There is extensive evidence for the effectiveness of active parent involvement in improving children's academic and social outcomes ... To the maximum extent possible, students should be involved in developing their own IEPs.

Mitchell et al., 2010, page 56

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa says:

For learners to succeed, the school, the home, the hapū, iwi, and community must work together constantly.

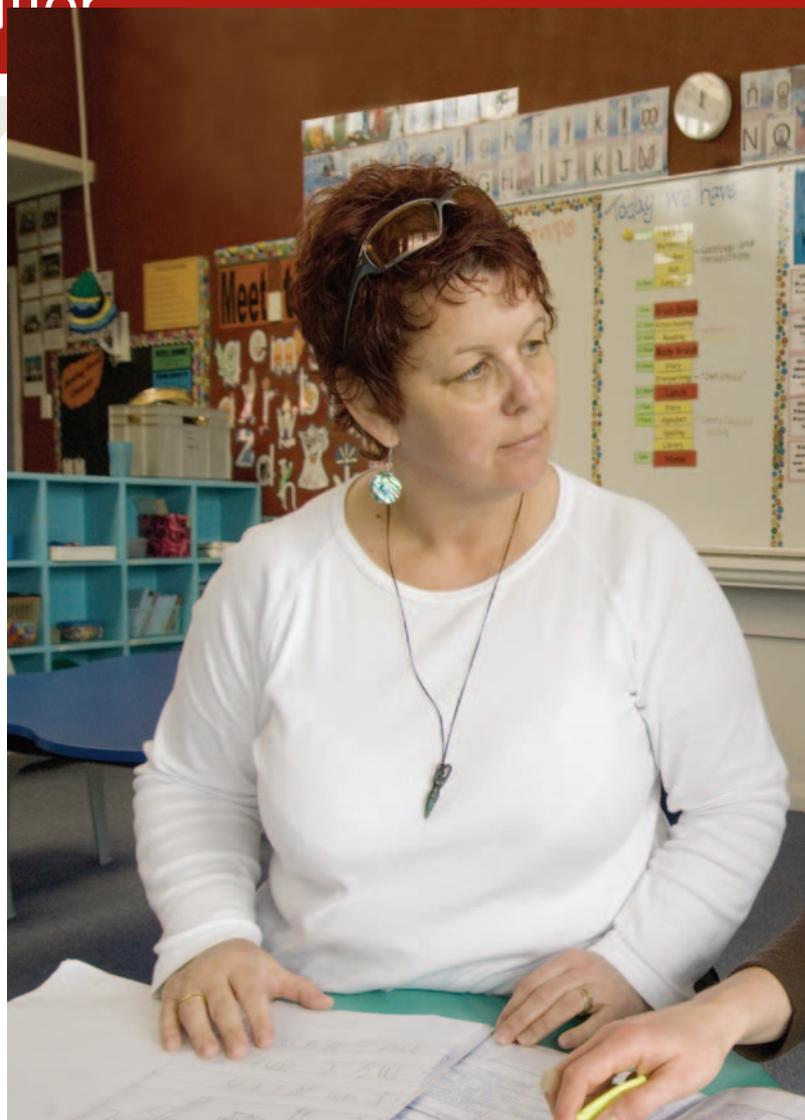
Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, 2008, page 2 of online English version, page 5 of printed te reo version

TEAM SIZE

When deciding who should be involved in the team, teachers need to consider the impact of group size on people's ability to participate. Too large a group can prevent effective input and collaboration. Too small a group can result in too narrow a view. It's a balancing act.

8.2 THE POWER OF COLLABORATION – AND WHAT IT DEPENDS ON

The literature review notes the power of collaborative ways of working:



Collaborative problem-solving and decision-making focused on teaching and learning for students with disabilities have the potential to create fundamental change in the ways that teachers teach and students learn.

Mitchell et al., 2010, page 24

The review adds that successful collaboration depends on factors such as:

- setting clear goals
- defining respective roles but accepting joint responsibility for decisions and their outcomes
- taking a problem-solving approach
- establishing mutual trust and respect for one another's ideas and expertise
- being willing to learn from others
- aiming for consensus decision making
- giving and receiving feedback in an open, non-judgmental way
- developing procedures for resolving conflicts.



8.3 FACILITATING COLLABORATION

Partnerships and collaboration do not just happen. The literature review includes ideas for facilitating collaboration, including those below.

- Get to know the student's background and maintain effective relationships with their community beyond the IEP process (for example, through home visits or regular meetings).
- Liaise with the student, parents/caregivers, whānau, and other relevant community members on where, when, and how the IEP should be developed.
- Organise meetings or hui somewhere other than at school (for example, marae, community centre, home) to discuss and develop the IEP.
- Before IEP meetings, provide participants with relevant, helpful information (including question starters), using appropriate technology to distribute it.
- Ensure that meeting times do not conflict with any other commitments of team members.

- Help with childcare and transport to meetings if necessary.
- Provide necessary training to team members (for example, around the IEP process, participation skills, or the student's cultural background).
- Involve a meeting or hui facilitator, who might not be part of the IEP team.
- Use jargon-free communication and the student's home language as much as possible, involving interpreters when necessary.

COLLABORATING WITH MĀORI COMMUNITIES

Community collaboration is a fundamental concept to Māori. Partnerships with Māori communities – including whānau, hapū, and iwi – are often successful when schools have an awareness of the tikanga around collaboration and help community members feel safe to participate.

Research into whānau views around special education revealed that “where services and schools have this awareness [of tikanga] ... whānau are unanimously positive and appreciative” (Wilkie, Berryman, Himoana, et al., 2001, page 180).

The same research found that “where due regard for the Treaty [of Waitangi] and the principles is in evidence, whānau can access and appreciate the resources and services to support them with their special needs children” (page 179). Several whānau thought that schools and other services should “link Māori whānau ... with other local whānau experiencing the same or similar special needs. In this way, their concerns could be shared” (page 180).

FOLLOWING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE TREATY OF WAITANGI

The literature review discussed possible use of the Te Pikinga ki Runga framework in IEP development.

The framework is based on the three principles of the Treaty of Waitangi: partnership, protection, and participation. In particular, there is a need to pay close attention to the unequal power relationships that can exist in any partnership ... Protection speaks to the importance of both protecting and “enhancing student self-concept and cultural identity” ... Participation speaks to the importance of presence and being seen as a valued member of the classroom and learning community.

Mitchell et al., 2010, page 35



COLLABORATING WITH PASIFIKA COMMUNITIES

The literature review notes “the importance of acknowledging the cultural capital of Pasifika students and their families in the school setting” (Mitchell et al., 2010, page 36). Doing so may entail significant learning on the part of other IEP team members.

“Pasifika people have multiple world views and diverse cultural identities” (*Pasifika Education Plan*, 2009), including their own frameworks for collaboration. Schools need to identify and collaborate with the leaders of the specific island nations from which their students come. As is the case with Māori communities, working with parents alone is not enough. These individuals are likely to feel isolated without the support of their community.

The literature review notes that the face-to-face talanoa method is a possible framework for collaboration. This Tongan method “uses traditional Pasifika values and rituals important to maintaining relationships and communication” (Mitchell et al., 2010, page 36). The Cook Islands tivaevae model is another example.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

On the role of teachers, the literature review states:

Teachers represent the largest and most knowledgeable resource in programming for the needs of students. The quality of their relationship with parents/carers and community agencies plays a large part in the overall outcomes for students.

Mitchell et al., 2010, page 36

8.4 HOW TEAM MEMBERS MIGHT PARTICIPATE IN THE IEP PROCESS

How team members participate in the IEP process will vary from one teaching and learning situation to another.

For example:

- a classmate might suggest ideas for including the student at school or might support their friend at IEP meetings
- parents/caregivers and their communities could have well-established strategies for communicating with and supporting their child, which they could share with others
- a physiotherapist might identify physical adaptations to the classroom to give the student improved access to learning experiences
- a teacher aide might keep observational data
- a specialist teacher could teach specific learning tasks within the classroom.



9. The IEP process - building true collaboration

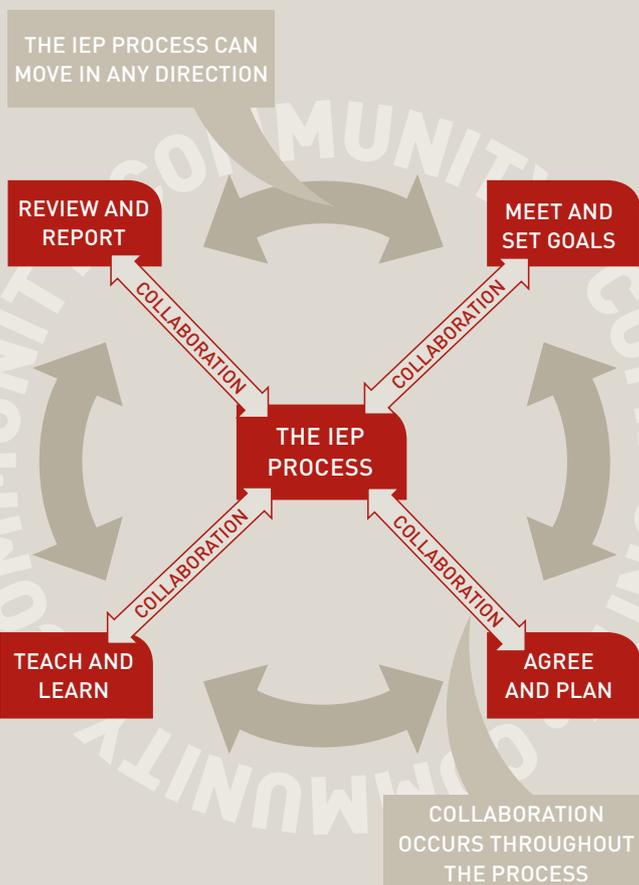
This section looks at:

- a diagram of the IEP process (9.1)
- IEP team meetings (9.2)
- adaptations and differentiations to the school and classroom curriculum (9.3)
- contents of the IEP (9.4)
- implementing the IEP (9.5)
- reviewing and reporting on the IEP and planning process (9.6).

For practical support materials on the IEP process, see the online version, with its collection of tools, tips, and templates at www.iep.tki.org.nz

9.1 DIAGRAM OF THE IEP PROCESS

Like all curriculum design in New Zealand, the IEP process is “a continuous, cyclic process” (*The New Zealand Curriculum*, page 37). It brings together a team of people closely involved with the student to collaboratively plan a programme to meet the student’s needs. The diagram below visualises this process.



9.2 IEP TEAM MEETINGS

IEP team meetings form only a small part of the IEP process, taking place especially at the “Meet and set goals” stage of the diagram. Before meetings, members of the team have been gathering assessment and monitoring information. (See section 10.)

DECIDING ON TEAM PROCESSES

At the first IEP meeting, the IEP team decides on team processes, including:

- communication between all members
- the frequency of meetings
- member responsibilities. (See section 8.4: “How team members might participate in the IEP process”.)

SETTING THE IEP VISION AND PURPOSE

At the start of the collaborative planning process, the team (including the student if possible) needs to agree on the IEP’s vision and primary purpose. The purpose might be classroom programme extension, alternative education, or transition into or out of a classroom or school.

SETTING THE IEP GOALS

The IEP team then sets goals to support the overall purpose. The IEP team needs to:

- identify the student’s current strengths and successes across various settings
- identify and agree on a few clear, achievable, measurable goals that build on current strengths and reflect next learning steps (to a maximum of four or five goals – even having one priority goal is fine)
- identify a few success criteria for each goal that show what success might look like
- identify opportunities for the student to engage with new ideas and practise new learning through various tasks and settings
- initiate ongoing planning to support the achievement of goals, for example, adaptations and differentiations. (See section 9.3.)



FOCUS QUESTIONS

Asking questions, such as those below, can help guide the process of setting goals and deciding how best to meet the student's needs.

- What is important and therefore worth spending time on?
- In what ways can the classroom programme meet the student's educational needs and enrich their classroom, school, and community experiences (for example, by supporting them to make friends)?
- What adaptations are necessary to the classroom or school environment? (See section 9.3.)
- What attitudes do we need to foster in adults and peers to support the student?
- What skills or knowledge do team members need to develop?
- Who is going to do what?

9.3 ADAPTATIONS AND DIFFERENTIATIONS TO THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

The 2010 literature review summarises what are sometimes called "adaptations and differentiations" to make the curriculum more accessible (Mitchell et al., 2010, pages 64–65).

Adaptations are changes to the school and classroom environment, teaching and learning materials, and associated teaching strategies. These changes support students to access and respond to the school and classroom curriculum.

Differentiations are changes to the content of the school and classroom curriculum and expected responses to it. These changes support students to experience success.

Possible changes are grouped below under the headings of content, teaching and learning materials, and responses expected for students. You will need to discuss such changes in your planning meetings (section 9.2), and they are likely to feature in the IEP (section 9.4).

CONTENT

- Leave out very complex content or present it in a simpler way.
- Reduce the size or breadth of the school and classroom curriculum.
- Use the same activity but include IEP objectives.
- Overlap learning areas to help students grasp the connections between them.
- Include activities that reflect the student's preferences.

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Present content in different ways by substituting or modifying regular teaching materials.

- Provide written and visual equivalents of spoken material (for example, sign language, speech-to-text software, transcripts or captions for videos, diagrams and charts).
- Provide spoken or tactile equivalents of written or visual material (for example, spoken description of visuals, text-to-speech software, Braille, three-dimensional objects, tactile graphics).
- Provide materials such as adapted computer keyboards or alternatives to a keyboard and mouse (for example, switch access with corresponding software).
- Use interactive web tools and social media (for example, interactive comic strips or animations, discussion forums, chats).

RESPONSES EXPECTED FOR STUDENTS

- Allow more time to interact with and respond to learning materials and activities.
- Provide opportunities for the students to express what they know in multiple ways (for example, through text, speech, movement, illustration, storyboards, video, interaction with web tools).

9.4 CONTENTS OF THE IEP

The IEP first states its long-term vision and purpose. (See “Setting the IEP vision and purpose” under section 9.2.) To support that purpose, it needs to clearly cover all the areas below.

The team agrees on the format of the IEP. The format might be visual (for example, involving photos of successful task or goal completion), written, or both. It should reflect the IEP’s primary purpose.

TEAM COMMUNICATION, ROLES, AND NEEDS

- Record how the team have agreed to communicate.
- Show team agreement about roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing the IEP.
- Identify the needs of team members – that is, what skills, knowledge, or attitudes they need to support the student and one another.

CLASSROOM PROGRAMME

- Record which learning and teaching needs will be met by the classroom programme.
- Note agreed priorities for the student’s learning within the classroom programme, including strengths, goals and associated success criteria, and opportunities for practice. (See “Setting the IEP goals” under section 9.2.)
- Identify any exceptional learning or teaching needs and how these needs will be met. (See section 9.3: “Adaptations and differentiations to the school and classroom curriculum”.)

SPECIALIST SUPPORTS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Link specialist supports to the classroom programme, including strategies and resources (for example, assistive technology).
- Review assistive technologies that the student currently uses to achieve their learning goals.
- Record any additional learning needs in relation to assistive technology.

ASSESSMENT AND REVIEWS

- Include a statement that identifies what has happened since the previous IEP. (See section 9.6.)
- Show assessment of the student’s achievement against success criteria. (For more information on assessment, see section 10.)
- Include an agreed review date.

9.5 IMPLEMENTING THE IEP

After the initial planning meeting, those directly responsible for implementing the IEP determine how to weave it into class, school, and community programmes. (These people may vary depending on the learning context.) They add relevant decisions and details to the IEP.

Between meetings, less formal, collaborative conversations between team members take place to fine-tune the teaching strategies. Detailed notes may be needed to guide day-to-day delivery of the IEP, including assessment (see section 10).

9.6 REVIEWING AND REPORTING ON THE IEP AND PLANNING PROCESS

In New Zealand, no policy exists on how often the IEP and collaborative planning process should be monitored or reviewed. The participants in the process agree on when to review the IEP.

The IEP must become a “living” document that clearly reflects each student’s changing needs. The diagram of the IEP process in 9.1 reflects this expectation.

Team members gather assessment information (see section 10) before meeting to review the IEP. They summarise this information in the IEP. The questions they need to consider include:

- Have the IEP goals been met?
- Have the agreed adaptations and differentiations (for example, assistive technology) effectively supported the student to access the class, school, or community programme?
- Have team processes supported the IEP outcomes?

SCHOOL REPORTING ON STUDENT PROGRESS

The IEP process informs but does not replace school reporting on student progress to parents/caregivers and whānau. For students with special education needs, as for all students, schools are obliged to work with their community to develop reporting policies and practices.

10. Assessment – what, who, and how

10.1 WHAT

The overall purpose of assessment is the same for all students, including those with special education needs.

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve students' learning and teachers' teaching as both student and teacher respond to the information that it provides.

The New Zealand Curriculum, 2007, page 39

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Assessment is a process of learning *for* learning. It does not occur in isolation, nor is it an end in itself. It helps to plan next learning and teaching steps.

Effective assessment, as described in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (page 40):

- benefits students
- involves students
- supports agreed teaching and learning goals
- is planned and communicated
- is suited to the purpose
- is valid and fair.

10.2 WHO

Assessment for students with IEPs generally involves more people than assessment for other students. Most if not all members of the IEP team contribute to the process.

The role of the student in assessment is vital though often not fully recognised. Student self-assessment offers powerful feedback to teachers about their teaching. It also empowers students to take more responsibility for their learning.

Parents/caregivers and other whānau, hapū, iwi, and community members have lifelong experience of the student and can provide invaluable information about them in different contexts.

Specialists bring broad experience of students with similar special education needs across a range of settings. They are likely to offer a wealth of strategies to support the student and wider IEP team.

10.3 HOW

The IEP team – precisely because it is a team – is in a perfect position to draw on information from a range of assessment sources, both informal and formal. Contributions from all team members are valuable and should inform future teaching and learning.

Sources of assessment information might include:

- day-to-day activities such as learning conversations
- structured interviews with the student or structured observations in various settings
- quick notes taken by the teacher during informal observations
- student self-assessments and peer-assessments
- detailed analyses of the student's work by teachers and other team members
- portfolios of the student's work, including ePortfolios
- specialists' reports
- observations or records put together by parents/caregivers or other whānau
- narrative assessment (see below).

OVERALL TEACHER JUDGMENTS

Overall teacher judgments (OTJs) of achievement and progress are central to assessment for learning. They involve collecting and interpreting assessment information from a variety of sources, using a range of approaches. Evidence may be gathered by:

- conversing with the student to find out what they know, understand, and can do
- observing the process a student uses
- gathering the results from formal assessments, including standardised tools.

NARRATIVE ASSESSMENT

An effective approach to assessing students with significant special education needs is narrative assessment. Narrative assessment uses learning stories to capture progress in students' learning. It "records the often subtle interactions between the student, their learning environments, their peers, their learning support team, and their learning activities" (Ministry of Education, *Through Different Eyes*, 2009).

11. Speaking of success



Effective IEP processes help shape the future for students with special education needs. The experiences of these students at school, including the relationships they form, are the foundation for their life in the wider community.

Success for IEP team members might sound like this ...

- **The classroom teacher:** “I see all students as active and capable learners. I’m an effective teacher – I know all the students in my class, what they bring to their learning, and how I can best support them to learn. I feel confident about using adaptations and differentiations to support them. I report on their progress and achievement.”
- **The student:** “You know who I am – you value and accept the way I am and notice what I do. You know what I have learned and how I learn best. I know what I can do and what I need to do next. I know what I am working towards and how this will help me get to where I want to be later. I have friends. I am happy at school.”
- **The parents/caregiver, whānau, hapū, iwi, and other communities:** “We feel that time is made for us. We are involved in the team process, our views are respected, and our contribution to our child’s education is acknowledged. We are listened to and well-informed as part of the team. We are confident that you know and care for our child. Our child is making progress and achieving. We know what their achievement looks like and how we can support it.”
- **The school leader(s):** “I have the information I need to make decisions about the quality of teaching and learning in my school. I look at the school and classroom environment and consider the ways to overcome barriers to learning that students may encounter. I’m confident that I can accurately report on the progress and achievement of all students in my school.”
- **The wider team:** “I am a valued member of an effective collaborative team. I understand the student, their strengths, and their needs. I understand my role and my contribution to the teaching, learning, and progress of the student.”

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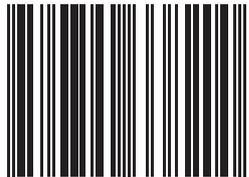
In this pocket you should find a page which details resources you can use to support the information in this booklet.

These resources and a download version of this booklet can be found at IEP Online www.iep.tki.org.nz



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