

## FAQ's About IEP's

Parents and students often ask us about IEP's. In order to clarify the public's understanding of these important documents, we have listed a number of frequently asked questions (and their answers) below.

### **What is an IEP?**

An IEP is an *Individualized Education Plan* – a plan to assist specific students in areas where they would benefit from extra assistance or accommodation by school staff. While IEP's sometimes focus on enrichment, most focus on areas of need.

### **How does a student get on an IEP?**

As a rule, students requiring IEP's are identified by our School Based Team (a group of teachers including an administrator, the special education teachers and the counsellor) in consultation with Department of Education personnel. Occasionally parents or students themselves identify the need for an IEP. In all cases, a parent or guardian must approve an IEP in order for it to become valid.

### **What sorts of assistance/accommodation might a student get from an IEP?**

The strategies used to assist students vary greatly from student to student, depending on need. Some examples might include:

- Being allotted extra time to finish tests or assignments;
- Having the help of a reader or scribe in testing situations (including most standardized tests and provincial examinations);
- Being allowed use of a calculator at all times, even on math tests;
- Getting special assistance from a teacher or educational assistant;
- Being allowed use of a word processor to assist with spelling and grammar.

### **What if the student's needs are greater than can be accommodated by school staff?**

While our professional and paraprofessional staff members are highly trained in their fields, we sometimes have to call in outside experts. The Department of Education provides support by making an Occupational Therapist, a Physical Therapist, a Speech and Language Therapist, and an Educational Psychologist available to the school.

### **How do we know if an IEP is working?**

IEP's are frequently monitored by school staff and rewritten every year. Parents are asked to review an IEP at least once a year with teachers, though we welcome more frequent review if a parent requests it.

### **What are the benefits of an IEP?**

There is a common misconception that schools receive extra funding based on the number of IEP's in the school. While this is not true in the Yukon, IEP's do have significant benefits for students, including increased success and therefore a positive increase in self-confidence and self-esteem.

**If you have any further questions about IEP's, please call or drop by the school.**