

FSL FAQs

POPOARD Family - School Liaison Newsletter



FAQ: WHY HAVEN'T WE HAD AN IEP MEETING FOR MY CHILD YET?

There are at least three variations of this FAQ:

1) My child was recently diagnosed with ASD. We gave the school the report two weeks ago. Why haven't we been invited to an IEP meeting yet?

Three issues could contribute to what might seem like a delay in scheduling a meeting:

First, **a diagnosis is not a designation**. The district or school must determine if your child can be legitimately designated as a student with ASD to be eligible for supplementary funding. Designation may take longer, if the examiner who wrote the diagnosis is not listed as an "approved service provider" – even if the assessment and diagnosis follow prescribed guidelines.

Second, while Ministerial Order 638/95 requires that schools **must** design an IEP after a student is designated (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/resources-for-teachers/inclusive-education#ministerial>), there are caveats.

The Order does not apply where there is no adaptation or only minor adaptations needed, learning outcomes have not been modified for the student, and 25 hours or less remedial instruction are required in a year. This is not usual for a child designated as a student with ASD, but it is possible, if not plausible.

Finally, while the Order specifies that an IEP must be designed “as soon as practical,” there is little time routinely provided for this during the school day, and it may be challenging to even arrange meeting times. “As soon as practical” might mean a week or a month or even longer.

2) My child had an IEP for the last [number of] years, and it's October. Why haven't we been invited to review it yet with the school?

The same Order provides that a board “**must** ensure” that there is an **annual** review of an IEP, after it is first developed, but it does not specify “when.” Generally, staff do their best to meet with parents to review an IEP in the fall. But they sometimes struggle to do that. In recent decades, staffing at some schools is not confirmed until well into September.

It may not be possible at these schools to determine until the end of that month who is responsible for the review of the IEP, whose class will enroll your child, and who might be the Education Assistant(s) who will support your child. Staff turnover and staff shortages might limit services, and high pupil enrollment turnover may challenge the capacity of staff to respond to student needs early in the fall. And there is COVID-19 – that has affected services and may reduce the ability of staff to provide a timely review of an IEP.

**IF YOU HAVE
QUESTIONS OR
WOULD LIKE FURTHER
INFORMATION,
CONTACT POPARD'S
FAMILY-SCHOOL
LIAISON.**

**EMAIL:
FSL@AUTISMOUTREACH.CA**

**PHONE:
604-952-4994**

3) We just moved to a new [Public School District/Independent School]; our child has had an IEP for the last [number of] years. Why haven't we been invited to review . . . ?

When enrolling in a new district or independent school, the Order provides that the sending authority **must** communicate with the receiving authority “as soon as practical” after it is informed by MoE, or by the receiving authority, or by a parent, or by the student themselves that they have enrolled in the receiving district or independent school. For some children, waiting for several weeks (“as soon as practical”) for review of an IEP might be reasonable.

For other children, who have substantial and immediate needs, the consequences of waiting even a few days might be unfortunate. If you are the parents of a child for whom review and consultation should happen very soon, request a meeting with the school principal. In the instance of a move to a new school, do this well before you enroll your child at that school and provide the new school with as many documents as you can. You will find that administrators appreciate being informed of your child's needs beforehand so they can better prepare supports and minimize disruptions to your child's education.