



Calgary Changemaker School

Critical Thinking + Empathy + Creativity = Changemaking

IPPs at the Calgary Changemaker School

What is an IPP?

Definition: An Individual Program Plan (IPP) is a legal document for students with a formally diagnosed and documented learning difference or medical condition recognized by Alberta Education.

Legal Purpose:

1. **Parental Consent:** The IPP verifies that the school has received parental consent to offer additional supports and accommodations and to try alternative learning strategies that may better support the student's specific needs.
2. **Acknowledgement by the School:** The IPP affirms that the school and staff understand that the student has been diagnosed with a documented learning difference and/or condition that may impact the student at school. It pledges the school's commitment to utilize the appropriate available resources, supports, accommodations, and learning strategies within the school's capabilities.

What is an IPP?

Intention: For parents with children who have needs outside of the typical range, the IPP process is intended to offer additional, structured opportunities to:

- **Communicate:** Fostering a collaborative partnership with the teaching and support staff.
- **Collaborate:** Enable parents, students, and staff to jointly:
 - Identify top priorities for the academic year.
 - Set **1-3** actionable, measurable, and meaningful short and long-term goals.
 - Determine the most effective strategies and accommodations to achieve these goals.
 - Monitor progress on goals with flexibility to adapt as necessary throughout the academic year.

Clarification: An IPP is **not** a completely personalized or modified program. It does **not** guarantee any school will have access to additional funding, an educational aide, or specialized resources for your child. It's a structured, goal-setting plan tailored for your child's unique needs.

The IPP Process, Term 1

Initial Meeting (Sept-Oct):

1. Parents provide the school and teachers with a full psycho-educational assessment or other formal document from a psychologist or medical professional providing a detailed explanation of a diagnosis or significant learning difference.
2. Parents and student meet with the homeroom teacher and/or support team to discuss, collaborate and create goals for the school year. Parents consent to applying a learning or medical code with Alberta Education and putting their child on an IPP.
3. **IPP document is sent home digitally** for editing, finalizing and signature of consent and approval by parents/student. *(Without signature of consent, plan can't be implemented).*
4. **Plan is implemented.** Student works towards goals with support from school and home.
5. *Parents are strongly encouraged to communicate via e-mail as soon as possible if there are any changes to medication or diagnosis. Parents may also request adjustments to goals, strategies or supports throughout the year via e-mail if circumstances or needs change.*

The IPP Process, Term 2



Follow-Up Meeting (January):

1. Parents and student meet with the homeroom teacher and/or support team to discuss progress on goals, make changes to supports and strategies if needed, and to make any adjustments to the document as needed.
2. **IPP document is sent home digitally** for editing, finalizing and signature of consent and approval by parents/student.
3. **Plan is continued/implemented.** Student continues to work towards goals or adjusted goals with support from school and home. Communication continues via e-mail as needed.

Check-In Meeting (April): *Optional* meeting with student, parent and teacher as a check-in.

Transition Report Sent Home (June): The Year-End IPP is sent home indicating achievements and progress that were made on goals in the final term with recommendations for the future made by the teachers or learning support team. Parent signs to indicate that they have received/reviewed the document.

Setting IPP Goals

When crafting IPP goals, we urge parents, students and teachers to adopt a holistic perspective on overall short and long-term personal development. As you consider your options, remember that goals can encompass any of the following domains:

- **Executive Functioning:** Organizational skills and decision-making.
- **Academics:** Practice and mastery in a specific curriculum area.
- **Wellbeing:** Building resilience, independence, or habits to support wellness.
- **Communication:** Self-advocacy and effective interpersonal skills.
- **Emotion Management:** Self-reflection and emotional regulation habits and skills.
- **Social Interaction:** Building and nurturing peer relationships.
- **Constructive Participation:** Engaging with academic work, classroom conversations or school activities.

Setting IPP Goals

Crucial Aspects of Goal-Setting: Meaningful, Measurable, Manageable

MEANINGFUL

- **Student Ownership:** Remember, the student stands at the forefront of their own growth and learning journey. While educators and parents can offer invaluable support and guidance, genuine progress stems from the student's personal commitment and effort.
- **Goal Relevance:** Ensure that the goal is meaningful to the student. The most successful IPPs are aligned with the student's priorities as well as those of the teachers and parents.
- **Broad Application:** Strive for goals that transcend subject boundaries and contribute to the student's holistic growth. Prioritize goals that don't just cater to current academic needs but also set the stage for future life successes.

Setting IPP Goals

Crucial Aspects of Goal-Setting: Meaningful, Measurable, Manageable

MANAGEABLE

- **Attainability:** Goals should play to the student's strengths while addressing their challenges. Consider the student's current abilities and limitations and their age or developmental stage.
- **Timeline:** The student, parents and staff should all agree that the goal can be reasonably achieved within the allotted time frame with flexibility to adapt as needed.
- **Ongoing Discussion:** Progress is not always linear and circumstances, conditions and priorities can change throughout the year. It's important to openly communicate and collaborate when the student effort or level of teacher support required is higher than expected to achieve the goals.

Setting IPP Goals

Crucial Aspects of Goal-Setting: Meaningful, Measurable, Manageable

MEASURABLE

- **Measurable Outcomes:** Every goal should have identifiable markers of progress and achievement. It's essential to clarify what achievement looks like from the perspectives of the student, parents, and teachers.
- **Clarity:** Goals should be broken down into short and long-term, using concise, clear and specific wording that everyone can understand.



Strategies & Supports

- **Tailored & Universal Supports:** Within our Individual Program Plan (IPP) documents, we outline both personalized strategies crafted just for your child and the universal supports extended to all students. There might be instances where these lists overlap, emphasizing our commitment to catering to individual needs while ensuring every student benefits from our broad-ranging supports.
- **Emphasis on Universal Supports:** We highlight our universal supports not only to emphasize our inclusive educational approach but also to offer clarity. Other schools may not provide a similar learning environment, as small of class sizes, or extend so many supports to all of their students. Recognizing how these unique offerings benefit your child is vital for when your child graduates or otherwise moves to a different school.
- **Demystifying Financial Implications:** An IPP is **not** tied to student funding. Specific Alberta Education codes within the "severe" category can sometimes allow us to access additional funding but this does not guarantee exhaustive 1:1 assistance, a fully customized program, or private tutoring of any kind.

Embracing Diversity & Fostering Empathy

The Power of Awareness: Research indicates that children who are informed about their diagnosis or unique learning differences benefit in the short and long run. By understanding their specific needs and strengths, they are more receptive to support and goal-oriented.

READ: [HOW TO TALK TO MY CHILD ABOUT THEIR LEARNING DIFFERENCES - CHILD MIND INSTITUTE](#)

Awareness in Action: We must foster an environment where students recognize that everyone has distinct challenges and strengths. Realizing that individuals have varying needs is crucial. It's also important to understand that people might sometimes behave in ways that seem unexpected. For example, what appears as rudeness or bullying might arise from different values or expression methods. A sharp comment might simply be one student's way of stating facts over niceties. In these situations, the goal isn't to excuse hurtful actions but to comprehend their roots and promote patience, acceptance, and growth.



Embracing Diversity & Fostering Empathy

At our school, we celebrate the many ways that make each student unique, be it faith, background, family structure, physical appearance, or neurodiversity. By encouraging students to share openly about their individual differences and the distinct strengths and challenges they bring, we cultivate an atmosphere of understanding and empathy (and Changemaking). This also helps students appreciate the richness of our diverse world.

The IPP document is just **one** tool we use to provide a targeted, structured, and supportive experience for parents and children with needs outside of the typical range.

However, at the Calgary Changemaker School, we are also committed to tailoring our learning environment in a way that seamlessly supports *all* learners. We believe in celebrating the strengths and addressing the challenges of *every* student, ensuring each individual is able to learn, grow and shine in their own unique way.

