I HAVE MY IEP!

Supporting Students with Behavioural Challenges in Structuring an Individualized Education Plan

Reference Documentation and Guidelines

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- Université Laval
- La Capitale School Board
- L'Estuaire School Board
- Pays-des-Bleuets School Board
- Laval School Board
- Pointe-de-l'Île School Board
- Central Québec School Board
- École Wahta' (primary school)
- École Amik Wiche (secondary school)
- École Saint-François (primary & secondary school)
- Quebec Ministry of Education

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- Research Chair for Child Wellbeing and Prevention of Violence in Schools
- First Nations Education Council (FNEC)
- Quebec Center for Knowledge Transfer for Educational Success (Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative du Québec (CTREQ))
- Comité Québécois pour les jeunes en difficulté de comportement (CQJDC)
- Laval University Research Fund – Faculty of Education Sciences – Educational Success for Students with Maladjustments (FER de la Faculté des sciences de l'éducation - Réussite des jeunes présentant des difficultés d'adaptation)
- Groupe Neuro Solutions

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We would like to extend a special thank you to Nathalie Myara, Ph. D. - expert in individual education plans, dynamic assessment, educational facilitation, and Associate Professor at the Université de Montréal – for her generosity and valuable time.

INTRODUCTION

This document addresses all stakeholders involved in the process of structuring an individualized education plan (IEP) for any student presenting with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). It introduces and acts as a guideline to follow for the "I have my IEP!" tool kit. The seven sections found herein will cover the following areas:

1) **The background context which led to the creation of the "I have my IEP!" tool kit.**

2) **A definition of the term *Individualized Education Plan* and its purpose.**

3) **The IEP planning cycle and its 4 phases.**

4) **The theoretical approach to adopt with the "I have my IEP!" tool kit.**

5) **A brief overview of everyone's roles and responsibilities in the IEP process.**

6) **FAQ and basic guidelines for the "I have my IEP!" tool kit.**

7) **Acknowledgements: the project authors, partners and contributors.**

1. CONTEXT

Aspiring to successful outcomes for all students requires the adoption of inclusive practices that embrace the principles of universal education and that account for diverse learner needs (Quebec Ministry of Education and Higher Learning, 2017). In the Quebec context, students with disabilities and learning challenges can expect schools to implement support measures to foster educational success. The individualized education plan (IEP) is a planning and consensus tool that schools can use to organize and develop differentiated services for the students in question.

While the reference documentation and guidelines issued by the Quebec Education Ministry clearly specify that students should be the central driving force behind the IEP development process and in designing a plan for their own educational success, in practice it seems that collaborative IEP design and active student, parent and community involvement has proven problematic for school stakeholders (MEQ, 2004). In fact, students are rarely involved in their own IEP process and their opinions are not sufficiently taken into account (Gaudreau *et al.*, 2008; Souchon, 2008). Quebec practice does not always align with Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) which states that the opinion of the child must be taken into consideration with respect to decisions affecting the child and those opinions must be taken seriously, irrespective of age (Quebec Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission, 2015). Over the past fifteen years, sev-

eral issues surrounding parental involvement in IEP development have been addressed within the literature. As with students, parental involvement in IEP development would appear to be rare, if they are even consulted on the IEP at all. According to the Quebec Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission (2015), parents are not effectively prepared to take an active role in their child's IEP and often feel isolated, powerless or made to feel inferior in their role when confronted with school-system players who do not consider their views or expertise as the child's carer. Presently, the level of parental involvement varies greatly from one setting to another (Rousseau *et al.*, 2018); some are called in to be made aware of an IEP that has already been settled, some are called in to simply provide their approval on one, and others called in to actively contribute to its development alongside the education team (Gaudreau *et al.*, 2008).

In indigenous communities, parental involvement in children's school education needs to be considered from a sociohistorical perspective. With Canadian Indian residential school system having caused a great and deep divide, we still see echoes today in relationships between First Nations peoples and schools. As school was seen as a symbol of Western assimilation, many elders, grandparents and some parents feel disinclined to fully participate in their children's or grandchildren's school lives.

It has been acknowledged that SEBD students prove the most challenging to educate within mainstream classrooms (Rousseau *et al.*, 2015). A lack of teacher training on proper classroom management for challenging behaviours is often blamed for this phenomenon. Research suggests that taking students' views on their own school experience into account will lead to more positive school experiences, better teaching practices and, therefore, generally lead to fostering the conditions needed for inclusive education to occur (Beaudoin & Nadeau, forthcoming; Fortier, 2018; Groves *et al.*, 2010; Sellman, 2009; Swinson, 2010; Tangen, 2009). Along these lines, school staff and stakeholders report that having SEBD students develop the ability to recognize how their own behaviour affects their peers' experience and class management has proven a successful path towards more viable inclusivity (Gaudreau *et al.* 2018).

Despite official recommendations on how IEPs should be planned and despite the benefits associated with student involvement and consultation, very few school staff members support the student's participation in planning out IEP objectives, nor do they often coach their students on ways to develop and practice the required competencies, nor involve students in methodological choices on how to accomplish or be successful in their own IEP (Martin, Van Dycke & Christensen, 2006; Martin, Van Dycke & Greene, 2006; Rousseau *et al.* 2018). In addition, often preoccupied by assessments and other support duties (indirect student services), specialist support staff - along with specialist teachers - are rarely included or asked to partake in the student's IEP plan. It is in this specific context that the "I have MY IEP!" tool kit was undertaken in order to better equip everyone who should be involved in IEP decision-making, planning and delivery for SEBD students. The tool kit includes some training materials as well as a range of documents to facilitate planning for each of the four IEP phases and for each the various stakeholders involved.

2. THE IEP: DEFINITIONS AND UNDERPINNINGS

2.1 THE DEFINITIONS

In order to respond to SEBD students' needs, schools are expected to design an individualized education plan, an educational services plan or a transition plan (for further information see Goupil, 2004). Whilst these all aim to deliver personalized interventions and foster student/family participation, there are nonetheless certain differences (Goupil, 2004). An individualized education plan specifically targets students who are not progressing, who are struggling to succeed academically or whose situation requires either specialized services or adapted approaches (MEQ, 2004). The individualized education plan is therefore intended as a planning, consulting and consensus tool that advocates cooperative communication in an effort to respond to the needs of a student who is experiencing learning or adjustment challenges. It involves an assessment of the student's needs and aptitudes, then the determination of behavioural and educational targets and the implementation of various measures designed to support the student's academic and personal development. Leveraging the setting and the student's needs, the individualized education plan falls within the "non-categorical" approach prescribed by

the Quebec government's Special Education Policy (MEQ, 1999).

In line with the aforementioned approach, the purpose of the "I have my IEP!" tool kit is to facilitate the process of collaborative IEP development for all students presenting with behavioural challenges within the school setting, whether emotional, social or cognitive in nature, and irrespective of whether they might be officially deemed or diagnosed as a behavioural disorder or not (e.g. attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, among others). Thus, the decision to assess the relevance of creating an IEP should occur when: 1) the regular educational measures – counting inclusive practices such as differentiated instruction - would appear to be insufficient in fostering progress or helping the student reach their full potential; 2) a united and concerted effort would be required of those responsible for the student's education and possibly along with specialized resources, and 3) the student's particular case involves making decisions that can impact the student's educational trajectory (MELS, 2004).

2.2 MINISTERIAL PRINCIPLES

The five ministerial principles outlined in the Reference Framework for the Establishment of Individual Education Plans (MEQ, 2004) stand as the theoretical foundations behind the "I have my IEP!" tool kit.

1) **Perceiving success in a differentiated manner:** this refers to acknowledging that success may translate differently from one student to another insofar as instruction, socialization and achievement are all concerned.

2) **Having students drive their own success:** Herein, the Ministry underlines the importance of accounting for student interests and other sources of motivation, and to ensure that the IEP carries significance for the student – hence generating greater levels of student motivation and commitment to the plan. Consequently, it is essential that the student be involved throughout the entire IEP process, by being given opportunities to share opinions and to help make decisions about their own journey. By identifying one's own strengths and challenges, by tracking one's own IEP targets, and by seeing a communal effort from all people involved in his or her educational wellbeing, a student will naturally feel more motivated and willing to invest energy into reaching the agreed targets.

3) **Adopting a systemic view of the student's circumstances:** This principle speaks to the importance of having a broad overview (including individual, family/social and school-related factors) of anything and everything that may influence student learning and behaviours. An awareness of risk factors and protection mechanisms can lead to more effective planning and decisions about any interventions or complementary services offered to the student.

4) **Leveraging the student's existing strengths and the school's available resources:** This involves choosing approaches and seeking solutions that align with student strengths and available support mechanisms. Herein, simply identifying the student's strengths does not suffice, those strengths need to be leveraged when it comes to adopting educational and behavioural targets, as well as when choosing the means and measures designed to achieve them through the IEP.

5) **Strengthening school-family-community joint efforts:** This element requires consideration and empathy during IEP planning sessions with parents, an understanding of their situation and mutual concern for each stakeholder's constraints. As SEBD students often receive outside assistance and consult other health and social services professionals, schools should aim to foster IEP partnerships with all such individuals.

2.3 KEY LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND CONSIDERATIONS

The establishment of an Individualized Education Plan is regulated by various laws with specific articles to delineate the school-based parties' responsibilities in handling cases where students require particular support. For instance, the Quebec Education Act stipulates that "the teacher has an obligation towards students with challenges or disabilities as much as any other student, and shall contribute to the intellectual and overall personal development of all students entrusted to his or her care." (Quebec Education Act, 2019a, Article 22). The Education Act also specifies that it remains the school principal's duty to ensure an IEP plan is put in place and is effectively adapted to suit the needs of students with disabilities, maladjustments and learning challenges:

The Individualized Education Plan shall be established in conjunction with the parents, with any staff that provide educational services to the student, as well as the student himself or herself (unless deemed unable to do so). The Individualized Education Plan serves to coordinate all actions that are undertaken with a view to better respond to the student's particular needs. The Individualized Education Plan must be in keeping with the ability and needs of the student as evaluated by the school board prior to the student's placement and enrollment at the school. It is crucial that the Consulting and Needs Assessment phase is done in keeping with the stipulations for Individualized Education Plans stating that all concerned parties shall contribute, most importantly the parents and the student. The school principal shall see to the implementation of the Individualized Education Plan and a periodical assessment of its contents, as well as keep parents informed on a regular basis (Quebec Education Act, 2019a, Article 96.14).

Furthermore, Core Competency No. 10 from the Reference Guide for Core Professional Competencies for the Teaching Profession (2020) specifies that teachers must work collaboratively with other members of school staff by being involved in both the establishment and the implementation of individual intervention plans. Then, in line with Core Competency No. 7 of the same guide (p. 33), the teacher shall be expected to:

- use differentiated approaches to teaching, such as adapting content, processes and production methods to the student's characteristics - for no matter what type of needs have been identified – in order to best support the child's development and foster opportunities for successful outcomes;

- adjust learning activities and provide support based on individual student needs and capabilities;

- use a variety of forms of encouragement to motivate students in different ways;

- gain an awareness of relevant scientific research and documentation, or relevant information from the child's parents or other specialists, on the particularities and developmental trajectories for students with any specific needs;

- be aware of and call upon any specialized support services available to help any and all students.

Lastly, the Basic School Regulations for Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Education adds that **parents of a minor must be kept informed at least once a month** when there is a risk that the student will not meet the minimum passing requirements for a program, when behaviours do not comply with the school's code of conduct, or at scheduled time intervals as stipulated in a student's individualized education plan (Quebec Education Act, 2019b, Article 29.2).

3. THE IEP PLANNING CYCLE'S 4 PHASES

"The IEP process is a dynamic and ongoing one that always strives for the student to become the driving force behind his or her own success." (MELS, 2004, p. 25). In the Reference Framework for the Establishment of Individual Education Plans, four essential phases are put forth: 1) Data collection and analysis, 2) Planning of the interventions, 3) Application of the interventions, and 4) Review of the plan. However, in relation to the "I have my IEP!" approach, the prescribed steps and associated tools would translate to a Formal Review Phase; a Consulting and Needs Assessment Phase; a Consensus Phase and an Implementation Phase (the latter including an ongoing review of the IEP itself and leading to the periodical renewal of the entire IEP cycle).

It is worth noting that the Formal Review phase predominantly involves the school principal. Having looked over the IEP request which was submitted, the principal will want to ascertain whether there is a need for an IEP by gathering information from frontline parties who are responsible for the student's educational trajectory (i.e. parents and teachers) and then make a final determination on whether or not to move ahead with the rest of the IEP process.

In FNEC (First Nations Education Council) community schools, the above-mentioned responsibility is shared between the school principal and the Special Education coordinator (who is responsible for special education at the community level). School principals and special education coordinators both fall under the authority of the School Administration Department (overseen by the Band Council) which is responsible for educational governance in First Nations community schools. Given that these two individuals report to the same authority, a cooperative and nonhierarchical working relationship is established.

All subsequent IEP phases require the active participation of all involved parties. The timeframes for the execution of each phase can vary from case to case. For instance, when drawing up a child's very first IEP, the consulting and needs assessment phase (initial data collection) would likely be longer as certain normative or functional assessments might need to be carried out by qualified professionals (Office des Professions du Québec, 2013)[1]. The Consensus Phase is generally the fastest of the four phases as it essentially consists of assembling the information and coming to a consensus on the student's profile, and then making choices about educational targets, behavioural targets and which measures will help to achieve them. Figure 1 provides an overview of the fundamental elements within each step.

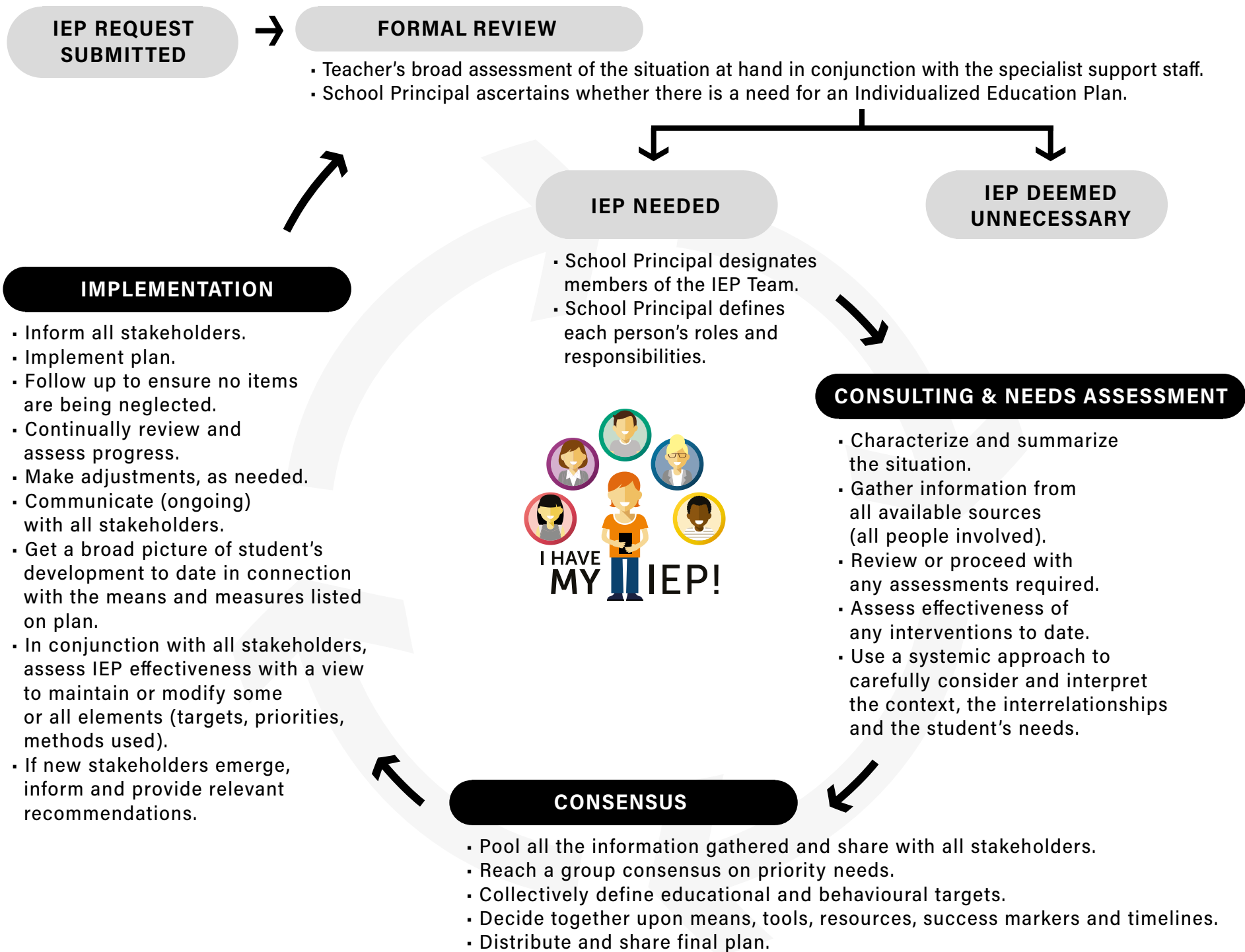[1] Quebec Professional Accreditation Body

IEP REQUEST SUBMITTED →

FORMAL REVIEW

- Teacher's broad assessment of the situation at hand in conjunction with the specialist support staff.
- School Principal ascertains whether there is a need for an Individualized Education Plan.

IEP NEEDED

- School Principal designates members of the IEP Team.
- School Principal defines each person's roles and responsibilities.

IEP DEEMED UNNECESSARY

IMPLEMENTATION

- Inform all stakeholders.
- Implement plan.
- Follow up to ensure no items are being neglected.
- Continually review and assess progress.
- Make adjustments, as needed.
- Communicate (ongoing) with all stakeholders.
- Get a broad picture of student's development to date in connection with the means and measures listed on plan.
- In conjunction with all stakeholders, assess IEP effectiveness with a view to maintain or modify some or all elements (targets, priorities, methods used).
- If new stakeholders emerge, inform and provide relevant recommendations.

I HAVE MY IEP!

CONSULTING & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Characterize and summarize the situation.
- Gather information from all available sources (all people involved).
- Review or proceed with any assessments required.
- Assess effectiveness of any interventions to date.
- Use a systemic approach to carefully consider and interpret the context, the interrelationships and the student's needs.

CONSENSUS

- Pool all the information gathered and share with all stakeholders.
- Reach a group consensus on priority needs.
- Collectively define educational and behavioural targets.
- Decide together upon means, tools, resources, success markers and timelines.
- Distribute and share final plan.

Figure 1. **IEP Planning Process**

4. DESIGNATED APPROACH TO THE TOOL KIT

This section presents the theoretical principles which serve as a foundation for the "I have my IEP!" tool kit, while articulating the characteristics of behavioural regulation along the self-determination continuum to ascertain the student's capacity and appropriate involvement levels.

4.1 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

With a view to ensure that the IEP process meets the student's needs, it would be crucial for the intended recipient to take part in the various stages of its design and implementation. Improving on behavioural appropriateness and adopting entirely new behaviours cannot simply occur in a child without a deeper form of recognition and personal awareness on the part of the child about the need to effectuate change. Herein, successful outcomes are contingent upon the active involvement of SEBD students in the IEP planning process. Similarly, self-determination theory also reinforces practices that help mobilize SEBD students during IEP planning efforts.

Self-determination theory is interested in how socio-contextual factors can either promote or thwart personal development via the fulfillment of three fundamental psychological needs: competence, relatedness (belonging) and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The need for autonomy herein refers to the regulation of one's own life experience wherein choices are made in harmony with one's own values and interests. The need for competence refers to a person feeling capable and effective with a setting. Lastly, the need for relatedness speaks to a sense of belonging among others or within a group or community. Field and Hoffman (1994) define self-determination as "is the ability to define and achieve goals based on a foundation of knowing and valuing oneself. It is promoted, or discouraged, by factors within the individual's control (e.g., values, knowledge and skills) and variables that are environmental in nature (e.g., opportunities for choice-making, attitudes of others (p. 164). In short, "self-determination is a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior" (Field et al., 1998, p.10).

Self-determined individuals display a range of characteristics that translate into an ability to fulfill various roles which are predominantly associated with adulthood. An general consensus exists on some of the main characteristics underpinning self-determination. The column to the left in Table 1 lists the fundamental theoretical components of self-determination as proposed by the Virginia Department of Education (2016) in its IEP planning process. The column to the right shows self-determination skill development targets (the latter being inspired by the work of Field & Hoffman, 2012) within the context of students. The entirety of the "I have my IEP!" tool kit is founded upon this theoretical framework.

For Sebag (2010), "self-determination and self-advocacy are sometimes used synonymously, and they do share an overarching goal: to move the student from the passenger's seat to the driver's seat of life" (p. 23). Throughout the IEP planning process, it is possible to support student self-determination by offering children the chance to make choices, resolve problems, make decisions, set goals, defend their rights, and exercise leadership. This proves even more relevant for SEBD students, as they tend to demonstrate less self-motivated behaviours and tend to have less confidence that their efforts will lead to positive outcomes (Cheney, 2012). In the context of SEBD-student intervention efforts led by school staff members, the focus remains heavily centred on behavioural management, with little time devoted to fostering the same self-determination skills and levels as their peers (Carter et al., 2010). Thus, it would be utopic of us to expect that students would simply develop such competencies or adopt self-motivated behaviours – as these are in fact explicitly taught skills that require multiple opportunities for concrete practice over time, and from the very outset of one's schooling (Field et al., 1998).

Table 1. *Self-Determination Components and Target Skills*

FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENTS OF SELF-DETERMINATION	TARGET SKILLS
• **Self-awareness and consciousness:** recognizing one's own strengths and weaknesses, abilities and limitations AND putting these unique attributes to use to gain a positive influence over one's own life. • **Choice:** ability to choose between two known entities. • **Decision-making :** ability to choose between several options. • **Problem-solving:** ability to find solutions to problems (including making choices and decisions). • **Goal-setting:** ability to set a target to achieve, then plan out its implementation and measure success. • **Self-regulation:** tracking one's own actions through self-observation, self-assessment and self-reinforcement. • **Self-instruction:** ability to build and follow own instructions to resolve problems. • **Self-representation:** ability to speak up and defend own cause. • **Self-efficacy:** belief in one's own ability to execute behaviours successfully and achieve results. • **Performance expectations:** belief that desired results will follow when the right behaviours are adopted. • **Internal locus of control:** belief that one has control over life's events.	• Understands own needs and challenges. • Understands own strengths and preferences. • Accepts and values self. • Leverages strengths when facing obstacles. • Sets priorities in line with own choices. • Makes choices. • Establishes goals and objectives. • Knows which behaviours to adopt. • Figures out ways to reach objectives. • Anticipates outcomes (for self & others). • Believes in own ability to learn and progress. • Visualizes what needs to be done. • Resolves problems. • Is aware of own rights & responsibilities. • Accepts help and makes use of available resources. • Expresses opinions. • Negotiates and defends own views. • Can self-observe, self-assess and satisfy own needs. • Compares final outcomes to expected outcomes. • Acknowledges own progress and successes. • Adjusts plans to better meet objectives. • Understands that own choices and actions will influence outcomes.

For Field & Hoffman (1994), self-determination can be facilitated or limited by internal and external factors. Among those factors, parents and school staff wield great influence over a child's experience of life and a child's belief in their own abilities. These same individuals can also greatly influence how proactive students will be throughout their own IEP process, insofar as motivation, commitment, cooperation, and willingness to adopt improved behaviours. Based on solid evidence from research, the "I have my IEP!" tool kit aims to home school staff awareness with respect to optimal conditions for effective design,

implementation and review of IEPs with a view to supporting self-determination in SEBD students and to promoting active involvement by all parties responsible for the child's education. All the information and tools contained within the "I have my IEP!" tool kit seek to support SEBD students by fostering the appropriate conditions to more effectively respond to their needs throughout the school experience, while encouraging their self-determination in the process.

4.2 STUDENT SELF-DETERMINATION CONTINUUM DURING IMPLEMENTATION OF AN IEP

Three fundamental degrees of self-determination emerge in research on self-determination approaches to individualized education plans, which aim to situate a child along a self-determination continuum with respect to the child's level of pro-activity (or involvement) in managing the IEP itself. The degrees of self-determination (shown in Figure 2) indicate the degree of responsibility and involvement that a student can take on during the IEP process. This varies based on the child's age, developmental levels, abilities and motivation, and should evolve each year (Alberta Education, 2007). Situating the student along the self-determination continuum aids in making the appropriate adjustments to various preparatory components that, in turn, help the child to not only feel prepared for an IEP meeting, but also to adopt the mindset of the end goal: driving one's own IEP meeting. On one hand, this is about properly ascertaining the student's degree of self-determination to make sound choices and see successful outcomes with respect to the child's involvement in IEP planning, and on the other hand, this is about fostering and enriching the ability to deploy self-determined strategies. It is important to find a balance between providing adequate support to the student throughout the school year but also meeting the fundamental human needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Thus, one must avoid the pitfall of underestimating a child's ability or potential by reducing his or her exposure

to achievable undertakings. Quite the contrary, **we must actively seek more opportunities for student skill development by exposing them to a range of situations and resources that can provide the chance to fulfill the aforementioned fundamental needs** (by using the "I have my IEP!" tool kit) and can provide a sense of self-determination with respect to their own learning experience and educational success. Consequently, the student's degree of self-determination greatly influences the type of support and coaching provided throughout the IEP planning and implementation process. As such, the "I have my IEP!" tool kit documentation clearly specifies which tools and activities should be used or undertaken in line with each of the three degrees in question. While students are somehow involved in each and every aspect of IEP planning, those capable of leading their own IEP consensus meeting would naturally also need to play a more active role during the preceding Consulting and Needs Assessment Phase in order to be adequately prepared (e.g. completing some self-assessments, drafting a plan for the meeting) as well as during the subsequent Implementation Phase (e.g. helping assess the effectiveness of various strategies and methods, actively participating in the IEP Review process). Lastly, the "I have my IEP!" tool kit also contains an assessment tool for use by school staff members to guide them in determining a student's degree of self-determination.
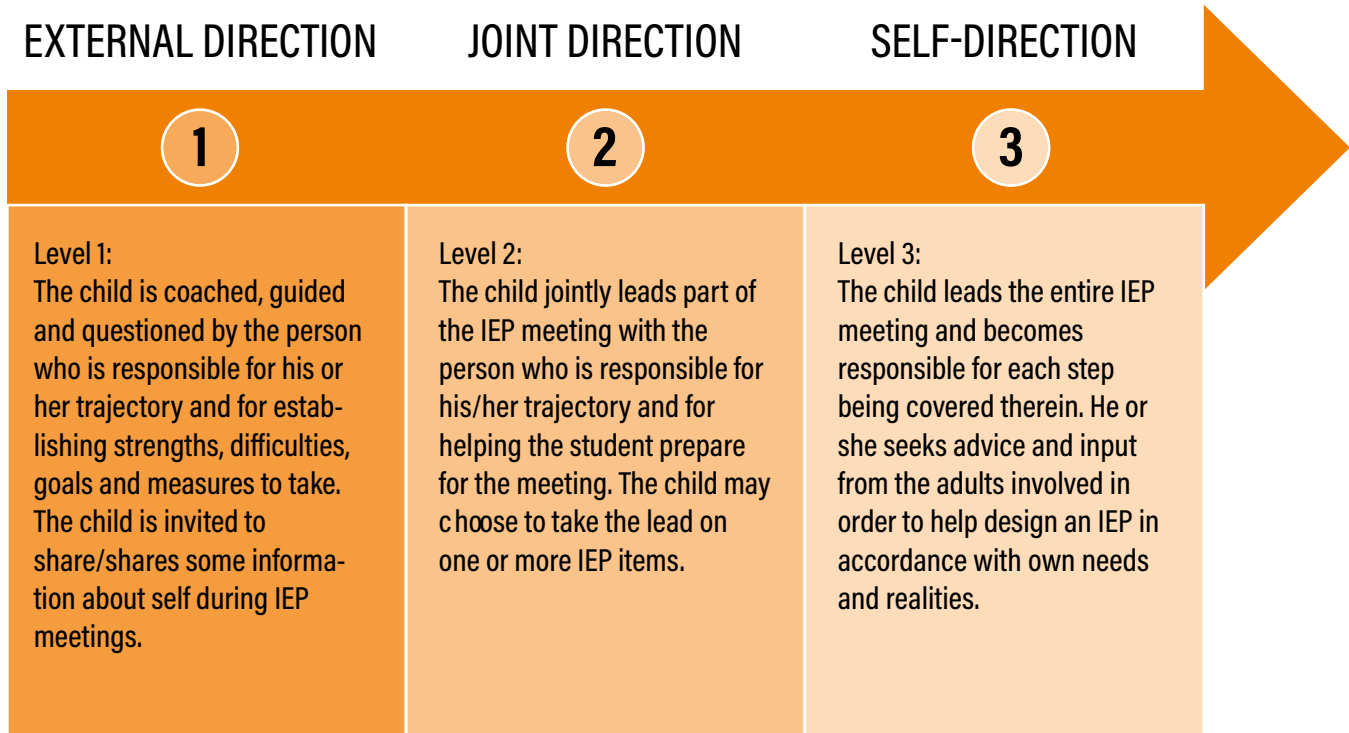
EXTERNAL DIRECTION	JOINT DIRECTION	SELF-DIRECTION
1	**2**	**3**
Level 1: The child is coached, guided and questioned by the person who is responsible for his or her trajectory and for establishing strengths, difficulties, goals and measures to take. The child is invited to share/shares some information about self during IEP meetings.	Level 2: The child jointly leads part of the IEP meeting with the person who is responsible for his/her trajectory and for helping the student prepare for the meeting. The child may choose to take the lead on one or more IEP items.	Level 3: The child leads the entire IEP meeting and becomes responsible for each step being covered therein. He or she seeks advice and input from the adults involved in order to help design an IEP in accordance with own needs and realities.

Figure 2. **The three fundamental degrees of self-determination observed in students during the implementation of an IEP (based on Mason, McGahee-Kovac & Johnson, 2004, p. 19)**

5. IEP – VARIOUS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Quebec Education Act specifies that the IEP must be constituted by a school principal yet drawn up in conjunction with the parents, the student and any school staff that provide educational services to the student (MELS, 2004). All these individuals - who hence have a role to play in the pursuit of the student's educational targets – are defined as the IEP parties. Evidently, there is no point in systematically or routinely assigning an elected staff member (e.g. a school specialist) to every IEP that is drawn up at a school when the latter may not be mandated or necessarily deemed a useful resource for the specific student or IEP plan.

This section contains a brief overview of the roles and responsibilities attributed to the various people involved in an IEP. A more comprehensive outline of each role is provided in the "I have my IEP!" tool kit for each IEP user.

5.1 THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S ROLE

It is the school principal's duty to put together an IEP for all students with disabilities, social maladjustments and learning challenges. The principal is responsible for all decisions made in relation to an IEP and for ensuring its proper implementation and follow-up. Nonetheless, a principal may opt to assign or delegate some responsibilities to other personnel. For instance, a principal may elect another member of staff to be in charge of IEP follow-ups or to have the student's teacher, school psychologist or psychoeducator runs an IEP meeting and support the student during the principal's absence. The principal is also charged with entreating active involvement from everyone who partakes in an IEP by assigning them each tasks to foster student development and self-determination.

As previously mentioned, in FNEC (First Nations Education Council) community schools, joint responsibility for the IEP is shared between the school principal and the Special Education Coordinator who work together in designing and implementing the individualized education plan.

5.2 THE STUDENT'S ROLE

In keeping with the approach that underpins the "I have my IEP!" tool kit, the student plays an active role in each of the IEP phases. Supported by various IEP parties, the student is involved in the process of gathering information, assessing the situation at hand, setting behavioural and learning targets, making methodological choices, as well as partaking in follow-ups and IEP reviews. Depending on the child's current level of self-determination, the level of student involvement may range from simply sharing perspectives or opinions on select elements of the IEP, through to leading an IEP planning session.

5.3 THE PARENTS' ROLES

Parents are tasked, just as teachers are, with supporting a student in their day-to-day progress on IEP learning and behaviour targets. Throughout the entire IEP process, parents and teachers should be equally involved in every phase, with parents sharing their observations and their intimate knowledge of the child with school personnel on a regular basis. Parents should have a say and be involved in choosing the learning and behaviour targets, as well as helping determine the best means and measures by which to support the child in achieving them. As with everyone who is involved in an IEP, parents are then responsible for following the IEP directives and reporting on student progress so that the IEP can be amended along the way. A parent's point of view is crucial; parents exert a considerable influence over the child's behavioural choices and motivation levels. Every effort should be made to develop strong IEP partnerships with them.

5.4 THE HOMEROOM TEACHER'S ROLE

The Homeroom Teacher acts as a point of contact for the student among teaching staff and within the school setting. The homeroom teacher is charged with guiding the student throughout the IEP process, in such as way as to build engagement and, hence, support self-determination efforts. The homeroom teacher's involvement in each phase of the IEP is crucial in order to monitor progress on learning and behaviour targets, to ensure the proposed means and measures are effectively tailored to the student's needs and to make sure that the IEP plan is in fact being applied in the classroom. The homeroom teacher is also responsible for reporting student progress and regularly communicating with parents.

5.5 SPECIALIST SUPPORT STAFF

The support team is comprised of several specialist support staff who make significant contributions to IEP development. These individuals can provide perspectives and qualified insights, and direct the various stakeholders to a plethora of tools and resources to help support the child in order to meet their needs and steer students towards successful outcomes (MEQ, 2002). When time and the mandate permits, these individuals might work conjointly with the student and homeroom teacher towards certain IEP targets at various times throughout the IEP process. The specialist support staff can play a frontline role in fostering and developing self-determination.

Article 5 of the Basic School Regulations (Quebec Education Act, 2019b) lists the types of services that should be made available in schools to support educational program delivery. Among them, depending on a student's specific needs, the following specialist services may be included in different phases of an IEP: psychology, psychoeducation, special education, remedial services, speech therapy, health and social services, guidance counselling, spiritual guidance, community engagement, sports service providers, and cultural and social support. Specialist's respective IEP roles will be outlined in a dedicated document within the "I have my IEP!" tool kit[2].

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1. Further information available on *référentiel sur les services éducatifs complémentaires* (MEQ, 2002)

5.6 OTHER TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS

Other teachers and educators would refer to any teaching professional who instructs or teaches the student, along with other educational service providers who regularly work with the student. In the primary school setting, this would-be specialist subject teachers (i.e. physical education teachers, language teachers, art teachers, and so on) as well as childcare and after-school services. In the secondary school setting, this would be all the student's regular teachers who are not involved in any IEP Consensus meetings as well as other school monitors and supervisory personnel. While these stakeholders are not involved in the student's IEP meeting (consensus phase), they are nonetheless involved in daily or weekly work contexts with the student. SEBD students often show signs of difficulty across a range of school and after-school contexts. Hence, it is entirely valid to both seek out their input and to keep them apprised of developments on the agreed IEP targets, means and measures. Consequently, they will be able to contribute to setting up IEPs and ensuring that concerted joint efforts lead to better quality intervention plans and more successful outcomes.

6. CONCLUSION

This reference paper serves as a foundational overview on how the «I have my IEP!» toolkit embraces the notion of self-determination to approach Individualized Education Plans. When an IEP is used in the quest for successful educational outcomes for a student presenting with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, it is crucial for all concerned parties to actively contribute and make use of the various tools at their disposal. Throughout the IEP process, both students and parents will require guidance on how to use their respective IEP tools – in fact, input from anyone connected to the child's development should be sought.

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