

**Individualized education program/plan
for students with special needs
education**

SNIE2062

2012 E.C

1. Individualized education program/plan

1.1. What is IEP?

- ➡ Is a written **statement** of the educational program designed to meet the student's needs and is developed by a **team**.
- ➡ Is like a **road map** showing where the student is and where he or she is going.
- ➡ Is a legally binding **document** that schools must follow.
- ➡ Is a **tool** that school **professionals** use to provide educational services tailored to the needs of learners with SEN;
- ➡ Assures that the educational needs of a **particular** learner, rather than those of a group of learners, are addressed.

- ➡ Refers to both the **ongoing** process and the associated **documentation** that concerns the **education** of a learner with SEN;
- ➡ Consists of **describing**, **evaluating** and **documenting** the learner's process and performance;
- ➡ Is a way of **designing** individual educational **goals** that would help learners **access** and **progress** in the general **curriculum**;
- ➡ Outlines a **continuing** plan of action to meet the needs, and states what **resources** are needed;
- ➡ Identifies a learner's **immediate** learning needs and the special **arrangements**, which need to be made to suit the individual learner;

- ➡ Describes the arrangements made to **monitor** and **review** progress and ensure the learner's entitlement is met
- ➡ Harnesses resources to individual needs;
- ➡ Recognizes that learners have highly **specific** learning needs;
- ➡ Is a **realistic** plan that should be **uncomplicated** and can be **understood** by all those involved.
- ➡ In developing IEPs, school professionals focus on the **needs**, **not** the **disabilities**, of learners. Every IEP is unique and based on the needs of the particular learner.

1.2. Why IEP is needed?

- ✦ For some learners with SEN, in order to appropriately **access** the curriculum, an individual education program (IEP) is necessary.
- ✦ IEP is needed;
 - ➡ For learners to assure their **right** to education;
 - ➡ For teachers and specialists to deliver **effective programmes** to LSEN;
 - ➡ To overcome **barriers** to learning which cannot be overcome by **regular classroom strategies**;
 - ➡ To prevent **repetition** and **drop out**;
 - ➡ For school senior management to **ensure** that **policies** and **practices** for LSEN are implemented;

- ➡ For parents / guardians to **ensure** their **contributions** and **knowledge** are included and that they are informed of the relevant processes;
- ➡ To **unite** those directly involved with the learner by
 - ✓ sharing information,
 - ✓ identifying outcomes,
 - ✓ selecting priorities,
 - ✓ planning actions,
 - ✓ agreeing on responsibilities,
 - ✓ determining teaching and support strategies, and
 - ✓ deciding on resources (materials and personnel).

1.3. IEP Formulation

- ✦ The organization of an IEP may go through some **steps** that help its implementation and monitoring.
- ➡ The steps need the **collaboration** and **efforts** of the team members involved in it.

Step 1: Identification of the learner with learning difficulties

- ➡ The teacher is the very professional **close** to the learner in the school as well as **families** at home.
- ➡ Each and every challenge of the learner can be **visible** and easily **observed** by not only the teacher but also by the family.
- ➡ Parents/guardians may provide **information** to the teacher concerning the **challenges** and SEN of their child.
- ✓ This information will help the teacher to observe the performance and learning processes of the learner.

➡ Identification of the **competences** and **needs** of the learner should be based on information gathered by teachers, SNE teacher (if there is), principals and parents/guardians.

Step 2: Team Formulation

- ✦ Team work plays an important role in planning and carrying out the IEP.
- ✦ Many professionals are likely to be involved in providing service and support to the learner.
 - The learner,
 - parents/guardians,
 - the teacher and
 - principal form the core of an IEP team which then can be completed by other members.

- ➡ The regular school teacher and/or SNE teacher **initiates** the organizing and forming the team.
- ➡ The **composition** of the team depends on the **needs** of the learner and on the availability of additional professionals (therapists, assistants, counselors etc).
- ➡ Thus, the team is gathered to form an IEP for each learner.
- ➡ Within one school there may be **different** IEP teams, depending on the needs of the learner. This is known as **multidisciplinary approach**.

Step 3: Setting goals and working towards them

- ✦ The main purpose of an IEP may be
 - 1) setting individual **goals** in **specific** school **subjects**,
 - 2) setting individual goals in **social** and **emotional** areas or
 - 3) finding **suitable** ways of learning.
- ✦ While these areas are **connected** to each other none of them should be **ignored** even if the focus is on one area.
- ✦ The IEP team sets the goals and defines the **practical solutions** that will be carried out in the **class room** and other **possible environments**.
- Also the ways of **assessment** and ways of **informing** one another during the implementation of the IEP are to be defined.

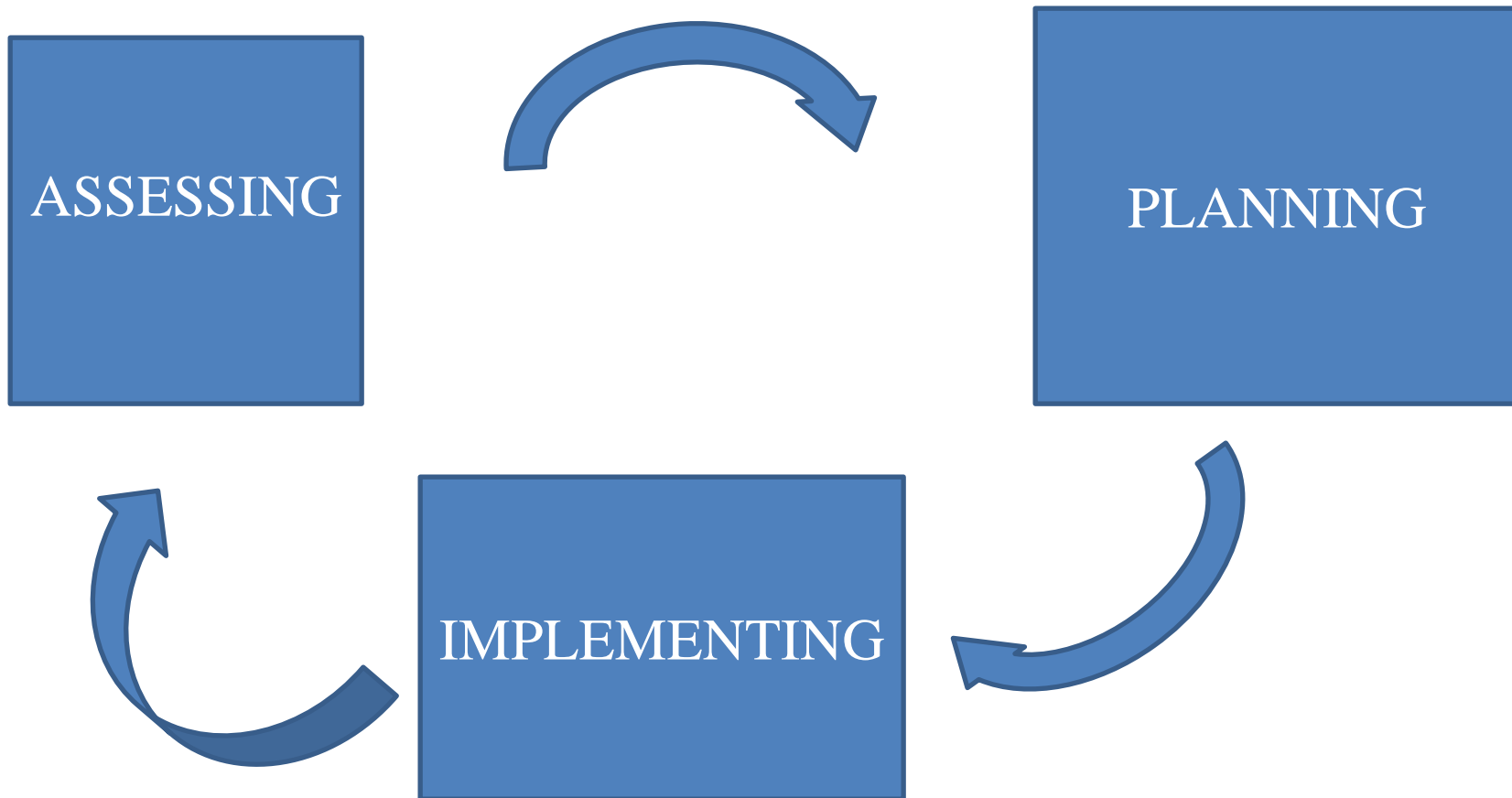
1.4. IEP Process

✦ The IEP process:

- Aims at **maximizing** the learner's **access** to and **successful participation** and **achievement** in school and community life;
- Values and respects the **diversity** of learners and their **families** within a supportive school community;
- Acknowledges the **right** of **families** to participate and make **decisions** about the nature of their involvement;
- Is part of good teaching and learning practice;

- ➡ Acknowledges areas of **individual** educational needs and the **capacity** of all learners to learn;
- ➡ Encompasses assessment, goal-setting, teaching, review and reporting as a **cyclic** process, which values **lifelong** learning from before school through to post school life;
- ➡ Enables all participants to focus on the **content** and **context** of the learners goals.
- ➡ An IEP is a process in which an IEP **team** develops an **appropriate** educational programme and a **written** document describing and defining the SEN and related **services** to be provided to an eligible learner.

The following diagram illustrates the IEP process.



1. Assessing

- ➡ Competences and weaknesses of the child
- ➡ Appropriateness of goals
- ➡ Improvement of the child
- ➡ Quality of the whole process

2. Planning

- ➡ Setting the goals
- ➡ What kind of support is given
- ➡ What activities are carried out
- ➡ How meeting is organized

3. Implementing

- ➡ Effective utilization of resources
- ➡ Engaging the child in designed activities
- ➡ Provide support
- ➡ Monitoring and evaluating the programme

- ✦ The **arrows** are to remind about the **continuity** of the whole process.
- ✦ Each procedure is to be based on the **knowledge** produced and **experience** gained at the previous stages;
- ✦ **Planning** is based on **assessing** whereas **implementing** is based on **planning**.
- ✦ **Assessing** goes on **during implementation** stage and is based on the **goals** set during **planning**.

The IEP may also take the following cyclic format:

1. Diagnose the area(s) of difficulty.
2. Plan accordingly.
3. Implement the plan.
4. Evaluate the plan.
5. Make necessary adaptations / modifications to pave way for further diagnosis.

1.5. IEP team

1.5.1 The purpose of the IEP team

- ✦ The purpose of the IEP team is to **guarantee** that the unique needs of the LSEN are met.
- ✦ IEP team members share their **experiences**, **knowledge** and combine them with **commitment** into an educational programme that helps the LSEN have access to the general **curriculum**.

- ✦ The IEP team will:
- ➡ Modify long and short term **goals** of the IEP;
- ➡ Choose teaching **methods** and **materials**;
- ➡ Develop a system to **follow up** the progress of the learner;
- ➡ Modify the **schedule** and **plan** the activities of the learner in line with the **goals** for teaching and learning;
- ➡ Share **responsibilities** for carrying out the IEP of the learner;
- ➡ Secure the **access** and **continuation** of support services; and
- ➡ Define the **time** for the **evaluation** of the IEP.

1.5.2 Composition of the IEP Team

- ✦ IEP **team members** differ from learner to learner depending on their **needs**. In general the composition of the team is the following:
 - ➡ Learner (when appropriate);
 - ➡ Parent/guardian;
 - ➡ Principal of the school;
 - ➡ Teacher (classroom and/or subject);
 - ➡ Special Education/Itinerant teacher; and
 - ➡ Others if needed.

1.5.3. The roles and responsibilities of the IEP team members

- ✦ Each team member brings important **information** to the IEP meeting.
- ✦ Members **share** their **information** and **work** together to write the learner's IEP.
- ✦ Each person's information adds to the team's **understanding** of the learner and what **services** the learner needs.

1.5.3.1. The learner

- ✦ Whenever the IEP team **determines** it is appropriate, the learner should be included in the IEP team.
- ✦ The role of the learner is to:
 - ➡ Provide input on **information** about her/himself;
 - ➡ Provide input on her/his **interests, preferences**;
 - ➡ Provide input on **future** planning; and
 - ➡ Participate in **decision-making** and **goal-setting**.

- ✦ In particular, the learner should be invited when the purpose of the meeting is to:
 - ➡ Develop a statement of the **transition service** needs of the learner; and
 - ➡ Consider the postsecondary goals for the learner and the transition services needed to assist the learner in reaching those goals.
- ✦ Participation allows the learner to have a **strong voice** in her/his own **education** and can teach her/him a great deal about **self-advocacy** and **self-determination**.

1.5.3.2. Parents/guardians

- ✦ Parents/guardians are key members of the IEP team because they know their child best.
- ✦ The role of parents/guardians is to:
 - Share their **knowledge** of the child's past, **strengths** and **needs** of their child;
 - Share their **wishes** and **fears**, **ideas** for enhancing their child's education;
 - Offer **insight** into how their child learns, what his or her **interests** are, and other aspects of the child that **only** a parent can **know**;
 - Share and discuss about **suggestions** of other IEP team members to **improve** the child's **performance** at school; and
 - Report on whether the **skills** the child is learning at school are also being used at **home**.

1.5.3.3. Principal of the school

- ✦ The role of the school principal is to:
 - ➡ Manage and support the IEP **process**;
 - ➡ Represent the school **system**;
 - ➡ Bring the knowledge about **management**, special education **services** and available **resources** to the meeting; and
 - ➡ Provide authority to commit **resources** and to ensure that **services** set out in the IEP will be provided.

1.5.3.4. Class or subject teacher

- ✦ At least one of the learner's regular education **teachers** (class or subject) must be a member of the IEP team.
- ✦ The role of the teacher (class/subject) is to contribute **information** and **experience** about:
 - ➡ The general **curriculum** in the regular classroom;
 - ➡ How to **modify** it to the needs of the learner;
 - ➡ How to **individualize instruction** to meet the learner's unique needs;
 - ➡ The supplementary **aids** and **services** that learners may need;
 - ➡ How to involve the learner in **extracurricular** and other activities; and

- ➡ How to modify **testing** so that learner can show what she/he has learned.
- ➡ Fill in the IEP;
- ➡ **Implement** the IEP; and
- ➡ Offer educational **experience** and **knowledge** that parents can benefit from when educating/raising their child.
- The class/subject teacher has responsibility for **working with** the **learner** to carry out the IEP.
- Therefore, she/he may:
 - ➡ **Collaborate** with the **special/itinerant** teacher;
 - ➡ **Team teach** with the special/itinerant teacher; and
 - ➡ Collaborate with other **school staff** and parents/guardians.

1.5.3.5. The special educator/itinerant teacher

- ✦ The role of the special education teacher/itinerant teacher is to:
 - ➡ Contribute important **information** and **experience** about how to educate LSEN;
 - ➡ Provide knowledge on **curriculum modification** to help the learner to learn;
 - ➡ Modify **testing** so that the learner can show what she/he has learned;
 - ➡ Provide **information** about what **supplementary aids** and **services** may be needed and where/how to get them;
 - ➡ Assist in another aspects of **individualizing instruction** to meet the learner's **unique needs**; and
 - ➡ Write the IEP.

- ✦ The special educator/itinerant teacher has the responsibility of working with the learner to carry out the IEP. Therefore, she/he may:
 - ➡ Work with the learner in a **resource room** or special class devoted to learners receiving special education services;
 - ➡ Team teach with the regular education teacher; and
 - ➡ Work with other school staff, particularly the regular education teacher, to provide expertise about addressing the learner's unique needs.

1.5.3.6. Others

- ✦ The IEP team may also include **additional individuals** with **knowledge** or **special expertise** about the learner depending on the availability of such professionals. These may include the following individuals:
 - ➡ A related services professional, e.g. **therapists**, **social/community** workers, **health** care representatives (if needed/available);
 - ➡ A professional who can **interpret** possible **evaluation results** in terms of designing appropriate instruction; and
 - ➡ A transition services **agency representative** in the case that the learner is in the transition age, e.g. from the **pre-primary** to **primary**, primary to secondary or secondary to **vocational** education.

1.6. IEP team meeting

- ✦ Planning the whole IEP is based on the **knowledge** the IEP team has about the **learner**, **learning processes** and **support** available.
- ✦ Each member of the team brings his/her own **expertise** in the planning.
- ✦ Prior the meeting the **school** system **schedules** the IEP meeting. The school must:
 - ➡ **Contact** the participants, including the parents;
 - ➡ **Notify** parents early enough to make sure they have an **opportunity** to attend;
 - ➡ **Schedule** the meeting at a **time** and **place** agreeable to parents and the school; and
 - ➡ Tell the parents the **purpose**, **time**, and **location** of the meeting.

- ✦ In the meeting:
- ➡ The situation of the **learner** is described;
- ➡ Every member of the IEP team gives **valuable information** about the learner and her/his situation;
- ➡ It is important to **value** the **ideas** and **input** of every team member;
- ➡ Discussions on how to **meet** the **needs** of the learner are held; and
- ➡ The learner's IEP is **filled** in.

1.7. Designing the IEP

- ✦ When designing the IEP you have to **focus** on the following areas:
 - Date of **initiation** and **formulation** of the IEP
 - Some **historical** background
 - **Competencies**
 - Description of learner's **situation** in school and **difficulties** in learning
 - Goals
 - ✓ Long term goals
 - ✓ Short term goals
 - Methods
 - Materials provided
 - Arrangements and learning environment
 - Support
 - Assessment
 - Evaluation of the IEP **procedure**

1.7.1 Competencies

- ✦ Planning should be based on the **strengths** and **skills** of the learner.
- ✦ The **academic**, **social** and **psychological** competences should be recognized.
- ✦ Description of learner's **situation** in school and **difficulties** in learning.
- ✦ How the learner is **currently doing** in school/outside the school is highly important in planning.
- ✦ It is also important to pay attention to different kind of **challenges** with the learner's **performance** (in the areas of **academic**, **emotional** or **interpersonal skills**).

1.7.2. Goals

- ✦ In the **beginning** of the **planning** the goals are set generally.
- ✦ The focus is in the **skills** and **abilities** that are needed to achieve the academic goals set in **specific subject**.
- ✦ Goals have to address learner's **individual needs** and are **operationally** defined.
- ✦ The IEP goals should **target** functional skills and be in line with the general **curriculum**.
- ✦ In order to incorporate a learner's goals and **objectives** into **class room** practices, they should be **functional**, **generative**, and developmentally **appropriate**.
- ✦ IEP goals must be **assessed** and **changed** according to learner's development and needs.

Long term goals

- ✦ Are to be set in the **beginning** of the planning.
- ✦ May stay the same for at least **one academic** year.
- ✦ Attention should be paid to both the **skills** and **challenges** in the learner's profile.
- ✦ The academic goals set in an IEP must be in line with the **national curriculum**, defined and reformulated according to learner's individual abilities and needs.

• Short term goals

- ✦ Are more **practical** but still in line with long term goals.
- ✦ During the IEP meeting the **questions** of **changing** or **reformulating** the goals based on **continuous observation** by people working with the learner should be discussed.

1.7.3 Methods

- ➡ Reflect the long and short term goals, which determine **how to teach** the learner.
- ➡ Define, what are the most effective and suitable **ways of supporting** the learner to reach the goals defined.
- ➡ Define what **strategies/methods** are needed to teach the learner.
- ➡ What kind of **teaching adaptations** are needed?

1.7.4. Materials provided

- Refer to individual and general material that is **offered** to the learner.
- What kind of supplementary **aids** are needed/available?
- To what **extent** can the learner use the same materials as his or her peers?
- What kind of **alternative** material is available?
- How and by whom can the material be **reformulated**?

1.7.5 Arrangements and learning environment

- ➡ Define what are the most **effective** and **suitable ways** of supporting the learner to reach the goals defined?
- ➡ Refer to class room **situation** or **school** itself.
- ➡ What kind of **practical** solutions can be **found** to help the learner to benefit from the **guidance** available (**suitable** place to sit and concentrate, appropriate equipment, assistance needed)?
- ➡ The **experiences** of IEP team members are equally valuable and important in this discussion and **pedagogical** answers should be found.

1.7.6. Support from the school and outside the school

- ➡ Define what **kind** of support is needed/available.
- ➡ **Itinerant** teachers play a vital role to provide support.
- ➡ **Parents** can provide educational support to their child with the guidance of teachers.
- ➡ Define if any **other** support available e.g. from the health care sector, social workers, community workers is needed/available.

1.7.7 Assessment

- ✦ Assessment is guided to **focus** on both learner's **achievements** and learning **processes**.
- ➡ Define how the learner's progress will be evaluated/measured
- ➡ Define **when** the evaluation will be done
- ➡ Define **who** evaluates if **remediation** work is necessary and who does it

IEP example

- Though, there is no one standard form for an IEP, below is an example of an IEP Form
- It must be emphasized that every school and even every IEP team may design their own form.

1.8. Implementing the IEP

- Once the IEP is written, it is time to carry it out.
- This includes all supplementary **aids** and **services** and programme modifications that the IEP team has identified as necessary for the learner to advance appropriately toward his or her IEP goals and to be involved in the progress of the general curriculum.

Suggestions in implementing a learner's IEP:

- ✦ Every individual involved in providing services to the learner should **know** and **understand** his or her **responsibilities** for carrying out the IEP.
- ➡ This will help ensure that the learner receives the **services** that have been **planned**, including the specific **modifications** and **accommodations** the IEP team has identified as necessary.
- ✦ Teamwork plays an important part in carrying out the IEP.
- ➡ Many professionals are likely to be involved in providing **services** and **support** to the learner.
- ➡ Sharing **expertise** and **insights** can help make everyone's job a lot easier and can certainly improve results for LSEN.

- ✦ Schools can encourage **teamwork** by giving time **for teachers**, support staff, **parents** and/or other **professionals** to plan or work together on such matters as adapting the general curriculum to address the learner's **unique** needs.
- ✦ Communication between **home** and **school** is important.
- ➡ Parents can **share** information about what is **happening** at home and build upon what the child is learning at school.
- ➡ If the child is having **difficulty** at school, parents may be able to offer insight or help the school explore possible reasons as well as possible solutions.

- ✦ It is helpful to have someone in charge of **coordinating** and **monitoring** the services the learner receives.
- ✓ In addition to SNE, the learner may be receiving any **number** of **related** services.
- ✓ Having a person in charge of overseeing that services are being **delivered** as **planned** can help **ensure** that the IEP is being **carried** out appropriately.

- ✦ Regular **progress** reports will help **parents** and **schools** monitor the child's progress toward his or her annual goals.
- ✓ It is important to know if the child is **not** making the **progress expected-or** if he or she has **progressed** much **faster** than expected.
- ✓ Together, **parents** and **school** personnel can then address the child's needs as those needs become evident.

1.9. Assessing the IEP

- ✦ The IEP is **monitored** by assessing a learner's **progress** against the **targets**.
- ➡ This means **judging, reflecting** and **making** decisions about how to proceed.
- ➡ It is a **continuous** process rather than a one off activity.
- ✦ The purpose of this assessment process is to **inform teachers** and **parents** about the learner performance and progress, and indicate what **further action** might be taken.

Principles of assessment

- ✦ When utilizing the IEP, it is important for teams to **assess** learners using **multiple** measures containing **meaningful skills** or **processes**. These processes result in learning **outcomes** that are **broad** functions instead of **specific** behaviors, and can be **modified** to assist in designing individual interventions
- ✦ What need to be assessed?
 - Academic skills
 - Social skills
 - Behavioral skills
 - Metacognitive skills.

Principles of assessment

- ✦ The principles of assessment are to be listed or described in the IEP form.
- ➡ Assessment should be **based** on the **goals** set in personal programme.
- ➡ Pick goals that are either **measurable** or can be assessed clearly in **descriptive** ways.
- ➡ Observe and **evaluate** continuously how progress **toward** the goals is developing
- ➡ Include **self-assessment**

- ◆ At the time an IEP is developed, the IEP team must **specify** and **document** plans for progress monitoring, including:
 - What will be monitored;
 - Who will monitor;
 - When and where the monitoring will be conducted;
and
 - How the data will be reported.

1.10. Signing the IEP form

- ✦ By signing the IEP all participants show their **commitment** to IEP process as follows:
 - ➡ the school **authorities** confirm their **efforts** to provide individual **support** to the learner;
 - ➡ parents/guardians **accept** the changes in the curriculum and ways of assessment and
 - ➡ the learner expresses his/her commitment to goals set.