

Meeting Summary
Meeting of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education
June 10 & 11, 2015

The Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) held a meeting on June 10th & 11th in Toronto. Below are highlights of the meeting:

June 10, 2015

- Joe Trovato, Chair of Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) welcomed members to Council and reminded them of the *Conflict of Interest* rules and the requirement to declare any potential conflict at each meeting.
- Barry Finlay, Director of the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB) provided an update on the following items:
 - At the last meeting, The French Language Policy and Programs Branch (FLEPPB) provided MACSE with an updated on *Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs: A Guide for Ontario Schools*. Barry thanked MACSE for their feedback and FLEPPB will be modifying the resource and working with SEPPB.
 - There continues to be interministerial collaboration across ministries such as the work being done on the Special Needs Strategy and the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy.
 - The number of students receiving special education programs and services continues to grow despite a decline in overall enrollment.
 - The Ministry is proceeding with the transformation of the Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correction (CTCC) programs. For the 2015-16 the Ministry approved 9 new Enhanced Education treatment (EET) programs and 8 new Community Based Youth Justice (CBYJ) programs.
 - The Special Education Grant is projected to be approximately \$2.72 billion in 2015–16, which is an increase of almost \$1.1 billion or nearly 68 percent since 2002–03.
 - During the 2015-16 school year, the ministry will continue to work with stakeholders on the evolution of the HNA funding allocation to better reflect the variation among district school boards with respect to students with special education needs and the ability of district school boards to meet those needs.
- Minister Sandals thanked MACSE members for their valuable input in revising the definitions for Giftedness, Intellectual or Behaviour Needs. She also welcomed new members and thanked Marion MacDonald for accepting the Vice-Chair position and thanked Barry Finlay for his years of service who will be retiring. The Minister also commented on how successful the SEAC conference was and thanked MACSE for their input in the planning and participation of the event.
- The Minister of Education indicated that as MACSE plans their priorities for the next year that they keep in mind Ontario's renewed vision and the four goals of:
 - Achieving Excellence
 - Ensuring Equity
 - Promoting Well-Being
 - Enhancing Public Confidence

- MACSE members were provided with an update of the Development of a Provincial Alternative Curriculum. The provincial alternative curriculum will focus on providing direction and resources to support district school boards provision of programs through the:
 - Identification of evidence-based components of effective programs, including key areas of learning and effective strategies for skills development to support future progress and;
 - establishment of provincial program categories and general areas for learning expectations
- Dr. Kathy Short and team members from ASSIST provided MACSE members with an update on the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy and the work they have done for 2011-14 (readiness phase) which had three areas of focus:
 - Creating organizational conditions, such as infrastructure, protocols and role clarity for effective school mental health;
 - Enhancing staff capacity to support student mental health; and
 - Selecting, implementing and monitoring evidence-based mental health promotion and prevention programming
- For the 2014-17 the SMH ASSIST Strategy will extend to focus on:
 - Specific populations that may require unique approaches (e.g. indigenous mental health, early years mental health); and
 - Cross-sectoral system coordination efforts in support of multi-ministry initiatives related to Ontario's Comprehensive MHA Strategy
- MACSE members were provided an overview of the development of three modules for teachers to support the educator guide *Supporting Minds*. The three modules are: Anxiety, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Mood. Members expressed their interest in viewing the modules when complete.
- Dr. Short also reminded members of the resource Leading Mentally Healthy Schools for school administrators which can be located at:

<http://www.safeacceptingschools.ca/en/resources/leading-mentally-healthy-schools>
- Ministry staff provided MACSE members with an overview of the SEAC conference and the important feedback and learning that SEPPB experience. Members were asked to provide their own comments and reactions to the conference. Further information can be obtained at the link below:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/seac/>
- All the community collaboration reports were shared with ministry staff and council members.

June 11, 2015

- MACSE members heard presentations on a variety of initiatives underway within MCYS, Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (TCU) and the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS). A written update from each ministry is now part of the Special Education Update.

- MACSE members received an update on the work being done by the Ministry of Education around Experiential Learning. Members were provided an opportunity to provide feedback on what types of supports, modifications and/or accommodations would be required to support students with special education needs:
 - Preparing for the work placement
 - During the work placement
- MACSE members reviewed their focus areas for 2014-15, which were Full day Kindergarten and early Intervention and Special Education: Exceptionalities, Guidelines, and Interventions. Next steps were mapped out to finalize the work of these groups.
- Members were provided an overview from the Safe Schools Unit of the Ministry of Education on suspension data. Data for students with exceptionalities is only reported for students who have been identified as exceptional through the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process and have an Individual Education Plan. The Safe Schools Unit has been working with school boards to build analytical capacity in using/suspension/expulsion data for planning purposes.
- MACSE conducted a priority setting exercise for the upcoming year and will be establishing two new working groups:
 - Student Achievement and Well Being
 - Aboriginal Education.
- Once finalized, the MACSE summary will be posted on the MACSE repository and will be available to members. Minutes from previous meetings, as well as MACSE's Annual Reports can be reviewed at www.macse-on.ca.
- MACSE's next meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2015.
- Members are reminded that all meeting materials from the June 2015 meeting are confidential unless otherwise stated.