

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE
MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

June 8 & 9, 2011

Kenora / Nipigon/ Nipissing Room
MacDonald Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario

Members

John Wilhelm, Chair
Warren Kennedy, Vice-Chair
Lynn Ziraldo, Past Chair
Tracy Grant
Ruth Jones
David Mason
Christian Mclary
Marlene Pike
Raoul Romain
Marianne Saade
Robert Savage
Janette Seymour
Dr. Arlette Lefebvre
Joe Trovato
Cheryl Lovell
Kim Pearson
Dawn Clelland
Catherine Luetke

Regrets:

Jean-Baptiste Arhanchiague
Susan Blekkenhorst
Bonny Cann

Non Voting Members

Susan Capling, Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS)
Christine Hughes, Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS)
Jane Cousens, Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) (Regrets)
Mary Iannuzziello, Ministry of Health and Long-term Care (MOHLTC) (Regrets)

Attending Guests/Presenters

Deputy Minister Kevin Costante
Deirdre Smith, Ontario College of Teachers
James Moloney, Ontario College of Teachers
Bruce Drewett, Project Director
David Moore, Project and Policy Coordinator
Hong-Son Duong, Coordinator, Financial Policy
Michelle Braakman, Manager, Early Learning
Jill Worthy, Education Officer, Early Learning
Tanya Weber-Kinch (MCYS)
Jane Cleve (MCYS)
Carol Latimer (MCSS)

Autism Spectrum Disorder Reference Group**Attendees**

Lynn Ziraldo
Dr. Shelia Laredo
Marg Spoelstra
Neil Walker
Susan Menary (via teleconference)
Dr. Elizabeth Starr (via teleconference)

Regional Office

Len Godin, Barrie Regional Office
Royal Piche, Toronto Regional Office
Moira Sinclair, Toronto Regional Office

Provincial Schools Branch

Nancy Sanders, Director (Regrets)

French-Language Policy and Programs Branch

Lillian Patry (Regrets)

Special Education Policy and Program Branch

Barry Finlay, Director
Anita Bennett, Manager
Julie Williams, Manager
Maureen Cox, Education Officer
Venetta Miranda, Council Secretary
Ramona Omidvar-Khullar (recorder)
Ruth Swan, Education Officer
Zheng Xu, Education Officer
Christine Riedel, Education Officer
Trudy Blugerman, Senior Policy Advisor
Fausto Iannialice, Senior Policy Advisor
Alain Broux, Senior Policy Advisor
Arkadi Toritsyn, Senior Policy Advisor

June, 8 2011: Meeting started at 9:00 AM

ITEM	WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS	John Wilhelm, Chair
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John Wilhelm greeted members and welcomed four new members, Catherine Luetke representing Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Kim Pearson representing Physical Disabilities, Cheryl Lovell representing Trustees and Dawn Clelland representing Blind and Low Vision.

ITEM	REMARKS FROM DEPUTY MINISTER	Kevin Costante
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MACSE Chair John Wilhelm welcomed the Deputy Minister of Education and introduced all MACSE members to the Deputy. The Deputy recognized the good work of the Council and thanked them for their ongoing commitment and advice. He welcomed the new members of MACSE and thanked Chair John Wilhelm for accepting an additional term as Chair. The Deputy acknowledged MACSE's two priority areas for the coming year; supporting transitions of students with special education needs and mental health.

Transitioning can be stressful for all students and particularly for students with special education needs. There are lots of good practices and transition models that are working well in the community and it is important to build on successes. The Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) *Supporting Transitions For Students With Special Education Needs* will result in continuity of programs and services for students with special education needs and support improved student achievement and well being.

Directly, or indirectly, mental health affects many people in Ontario. As 70% of mental health problems and illnesses have their onset during childhood or adolescence and there is a window of opportunity to access these children. The 2011 provincial budget announcement of new funding to support mental health and addictions services geared at children and youth will give our schools the tools and resources they need to be able to initially identify mental health issues and to seek further assistance where required. The strategy is being led by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) in collaboration with 14 different ministries with a stake in mental health issues. The four ministries of Education, Children and Youth Services, Attorney General and Health and Long Term Care are playing lead roles in the development of the strategy.

The Deputy also talked about the Full Day Early Learning Kindergarten Program which will be fully implemented by 2014.

Member Comments:

- A member noted that students with mental health issues may also have other issues and should not necessarily be considered under the exceptionality of behaviour.
- It was noted that training and support is critical to successful implementation of the PPM on transitions.
- The revised Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) program may provide opportunities for students who were missing school due to mental health issues.

ITEM	SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE	Barry Finlay, Director, Special Education Policy and Programs Branch
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Barry Finlay, Director of the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB), introduced his staff members in attendance at MACSE and provided an update on the various work underway within special education.

Barry discussed the progress that is being made with respect to working collaboratively with other ministries in order to maximize the benefits for children and youth. Child and youth mental health continues to be a focus as the Ministry of Education works with its partner ministries on implementing the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. The Ministry of Education will retain its focus of education, which means building the knowledge base of educators. An increase in funding to community based child and youth mental health services will support the success of the mental health strategy. School boards need to be equipped with the tools and resources needed to identify mental health issues.

SEPPB is in the process of developing *Supporting Oral Language Foundations (K-3)*. This user friendly booklet will become a resource where all related Ministry initiatives that support oral language development K-3 can be found.

Tribunals and agencies with common stakeholders and related issues are now clustered in order to improve public services. The Social Justice Tribunal cluster brings the Special Education Tribunals (English and French) under the governance of the Ministry of the Attorney General. The clustering initiative promotes the best use of resources through cross-agency cooperation and enhances consistency in tribunal practices, procedures and decision making.

ITEM	GUIDELINES: DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING, BLIND AND LOW VISION, LEARNING DISABILITIES	Anita Bennett Ruth Swan
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The presenters provided an overview of the *Deaf and Hard of Hearing Guidelines* and the *Blind and Low Vision Guidelines*. The Guidelines for these exceptionalities describe effective practices for district school boards when providing supports and services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, or those who are blind or have low vision. Electronic release of the Guidelines is targeted for 2011.

The Ministry of Education is considering developing guidelines in the area of Learning Disabilities, including a review of PPM 8. MACSE will be involved as this work moves forward.

Discussion by MACSE members:

- These Guidelines should be inclusive of all the pathways out of secondary school, which includes but is not limited to post secondary education.
- Family and community engagement should be a priority of the Guidelines. Limiting engagement to “parents” does not embrace the diversity of family structures in Ontario. Furthermore, the student voice should be heard and respected.

ITEM	COMMUNITY COLLABORATION REPORT Part One	All
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Members were invited by the Chair to highlight successful practices and challenges as well as possible solutions from their most recent consultation with their constituency:

Past Chair (Lynn Ziraldo)

- The York Region District School Board publication “Understanding Learning Disabilities – How

Processing Affects Learning” Chart was presented. This chart is designed to be used as a starting point to think, plan and support programming in response to a student’s assessed areas of strength and or need.

- Some of Ontario’s postsecondary colleges have cancelled their vocational programs. These programs are extremely valuable to students with special education needs.

Principals (Marlene Pike)

- The Student Support Leadership Initiative (SSLI) develops leadership within and across school boards and community agencies to establish or enhance local partnerships that will better meet the needs of students through collaborative planning, coordination and referrals. It is meant to support school boards and community agencies in meeting the non-academic needs of students in a timely and effective manner. In terms of successful practices, one SSLI coordinator promotes the following message: *recognize* the signs/symptoms, *listen* to the students who are trying to communicate what they are dealing with, then *talk* to those who are more equipped to deal with mental health issues and are connected to the services, then *act* on providing accommodations/modifications as needed, and finally, *use* the resources that are available.
- When parents of students with mental health needs are not engaging with the school boards and service providers it is challenging to meet the needs of these students.

Speech and Language Pathologists (Ruth Jones)

- Transition into school from speech and language services is working well and has been enhanced by full day kindergarten. There are challenges with respect to gaps in service and sometimes, children will “age out” of wait lists before they are able to be seen. When these children enter into a new classroom, the teacher must be acquainted with the assistive technology that the child uses prior to the first day of school.
- All stakeholders involved in the education of children with speech and language issues need to better understand the relationship between mental health and speech and language.

Blind and Low Vision (Dawn Clelland)

- Some children are erroneously diagnosed with a learning disability instead of low vision. Once these children were outfitted with bifocals, they started achieving in school at much higher rates, and all issues associated with learning rectified themselves.
- Children who read via brail and large print have a lack of resources and supports in summer months to assist them if they fall behind.

Multiple Exceptionalities (Tracy Grant)

- Thames Valley District School Board has published *Understand Me: A Strategic Plan for Improving Mental Health and Supporting Students with Mental Health Problems in the Thames Valley District School Board: 2010-2015*. The Executive Summary proposes a plan with next steps that involve the formation of task groups to work on seven critical areas of strategic focus.
- Children with multiple exceptionalities have a lack of programs and supports. Full day programming for these children is needed for healthy growth and development, and also to support parents who work.

ITEM	MENTAL HEALTH	Maureen Cox Trudy Blugerman
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Research highlights were presented on the links between mental health and student achievement, including that youth with mental health or substance abuse difficulties have higher rates of school absenteeism and drop out rates. It was recognized that although educators do not provide direct mental health and addictions services and cannot diagnose children with mental health and addiction needs, they are in a unique position to recognize children and youth about whom they have concerns and can support students and families through referrals to community service agencies. SEPPB provided an update on the mental health work currently underway, including Working Together for Kid’s Mental

Health, Student Support Leadership Initiative and the Foundations for a Healthy School Framework.

An overview of the recent provincial government's announcement related to Mental Health and Addictions was provided. The strategy will start with children and youth to:

- Focus on strengthening services for children and youth;
- Create a more integrated and responsive system;
- Build awareness and capacity within the education system to support students and families

Discussion by MACSE members

- There is a lack of resources and capacity building with respect to the relationship between mental health and the other exceptionalities. Programs and services must be available in a holistic manner.
- The stigma associated with mental illness must be eradicated. In order to bring mental illness and addiction out from behind closed doors, parents must be engaged and educated so that they understand the myths and misconceptions attached to mental health.
- It is critical to examine current barriers and ways to work more collaboratively to serve these youth.
- There may be times when parents of youth with mental health issues may impact on the youth's ability or willingness to seek support.
- The strategy should embrace the use of information technology. Children and youth use IT applications in a plethora of ways. Accessing these children on their own terms will allow empower them with the supports and services that they need.

ITEM	TRANSITIONS PPM UPDATE	Anita Bennett Fausto Iannialice
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The PPM *Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs* provides direction to school boards regarding the development of student transition plans. The implementation of the requirements set out in the PPM will support the continuity of programs for students with all exceptionalities including students identified as gifted. The PPM will be implemented in September 2012, which will allow school boards one year to plan and prepare for implementation.

It was clarified that the Transitions PPM is a system level requirement that will apply to all exceptionalities. The Ministry of Education acknowledges that there is transitions work underway targeting youth with developmental disabilities specifically, including the Youth Transitions Project and the work being done jointly by the Ministries of Children and Youth Services and Community and Social Services.

Discussion by MACSE members

- The PPM explains that when there is no Individual Education Plan, at the discretion of the board, a student transition plan may be developed. MACSE members voiced concern over this as the absence of an IEP may not trigger a transition plan in some cases.
- The PPM clarifies that if a student does not require specific transitions supports, the transition plan should note that no additional transition supports are required at this time, and that the need for transition support will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. MACSE members were concerned that school boards would select this option to circumvent the lack of programs and resources that are provided to students with specific exceptionalities.

ITEM	MINISTRY UPDATES	Susan Capling, MCYS Carol Latimer, MCSS
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MACSE heard a joint presentation from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) on the development of a framework to support transition planning for young people with developmental disabilities. The framework is comprised of policy directions that include recognized transition planning and best practices. The framework also establishes

the expectation that each MCYS/MCSS regional office will lead the development of regional transition planning protocols that formalize the planning roles and responsibilities of local service providers and other community partners, including school boards. Regional transition protocols will be developed across all regions in accordance with the framework. A provincial framework with regional protocols will speak to the unique voice needs of each region yet ensure consistency across the province.

MCSS noted that as of July 1, 2011, nine new regional Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) organizations will become the primary contact for information about Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports, and the single point of access to apply for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports, under the new *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008*. One DSO organization will become the single access point in each of the Ministry's nine (9) geographic regions throughout Ontario, and each regional Developmental Services Ontario organization can be accessed by people throughout the entire region, regardless of where they live.

These new regional DSO organizations will be responsible for supporting individuals with developmental disabilities through a new application process for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports, under the new Act.

Each regional Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) organization will be responsible for:

- providing information about available services and supports;
- confirming eligibility for those applying for Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports for the first time;
- completing the new Application Package to assess each individual's service and support needs; and
- linking eligible and prioritized people to available services and supports.

The nine organizations that have been identified to become the regional Developmental Services Ontario organizations are listed on the Ministry of Education's website: www.ontario.ca/community.

Discussion by MACSE members

- MACSE members were concerned regarding the number of transition plans that will be required for students.
- MACSE members requested that they be able to review the draft framework.
- Financial literacy needs to be considered for students and families.

ITEM	YOUTH TRANSITION PROJECT	Bruce Drewett, Project Director David Moore, Project and Policy Coordinator
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The purpose of the youth transition project is to identify and benchmark best practices that demonstrate results in planning and preparing youth with developmental disabilities for transition to an inclusive and meaningful life in the adult community. The project will identify and benchmark best practices in transition planning and preparation related to three critical destination points: post-secondary education and training, self supported or competitive employment, and community living. The project will develop resources that support:

- More consistency in planning
- More person-centred planning and family involvement
- Greater clarity around transition planning expectations for school boards and social agencies and their accountability for results
- Broader set of destination opportunities for youth with developmental disabilities, with an emphasis on

economic independence and social inclusion

- Increased community ownership and capacity to deliver employment, postsecondary education and training, and community living opportunities

Key deliverables for this project will include development of 3-5 benchmarked best practices in:

- Planning (processes and methods for person-centred planning and family involvement; greater consistency in planning)
- Preparation (better preparatory opportunities such as experiential learning/work experience and more formalized recognition of skills attained)

For each benchmarked practice there will be a standard, quality indicators, cited literature, and a summary of demonstrated practices that provide examples of how the standard may be achieved. An action plan will be developed to support implementation of benchmarked practices that includes a knowledge transfer and mobilization strategy. A community of practice model will be used, which will eventually include a strategy for communities to self-evaluate the effectiveness of implementation. A reference group is being established to provide expert external input and advice to this project, including objective validation of products developed by the project team and suggestions of literature that should be reviewed.

Discussion by MACSE members

- In Quebec, the cost to accommodate people with disabilities is off set.
- The importance of working collaboratively across ministries to avoid duplication of resources was reiterated.

ITEM	WORKING GROUP SESSIONS	All
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Transitions: This working group created a resolution regarding the MCSS/MCYS framework to support transition planning for youth with developmental disabilities. The resolution was passed by MACSE members on day 2 of the MACSE meeting (see Appendix A).

Mental Health: This working group discussed the current resources that are available to educators to address this issue. The mental health strategy should not duplicate efforts that are already available.

June, 8 2011: Meeting started at 9:00 AM

ITEM	ASD REFERENCE GROUP – REPORT ON PPM 140	Julie Williams
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The purpose of the presentation was to give an overview of the Ministry of Education's progress in implementing the Ministers' ASD Reference Group recommendations and to provide status update on province-wide implementation of the Connections for Students model.

The Ministers' ASD Reference Group was created by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) to provide both ministers with advice on effective, evidence-based educational practices to meet the wide range of needs of students with ASD. The Ministers' ASD Reference Group delivered its final report in 2007. The Ministry of Education has taken action in response to the majority of the Reference Group's recommendations (31 out of 34) and continues with deeper implementation, including working with MCYS to support effective collaborative service delivery models (CSDM Phase 1 and Phase 2: Connections for Students).

The *Connections for Students* model is centered on multi-disciplinary, student-specific, school-based transition teams that are established approximately six months before a child prepares to transition from intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) services provided through the MCYS funded Autism Intervention Program (AIP) to ABA instructional methods in school. Transition teams include the Principal or designate (Team Lead), parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher, the School Support Program ASD Consultant and a school board person with ABA expertise as required. These teams may be supplemented by other multi-disciplinary expertise based on the child's needs.

In March 2010, *Connections for Students* transition teams became available in all 72 publicly funded school boards for children who are ready to leave IBI services provided by the AIP and are starting or continuing in the publicly funded school system. In 2009-2010, *Connections for Students* model was implemented by all AIP providers and 16 school boards. Tools and resources developed by the 16 school board/AIP partnerships were made publicly available at <http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/ASD/asd-english.html>. As of December 31, 2010, 878 children and youth had been supported through *Connections for Students* model province-wide since 2009/10 (MCYS data).

In 2007, the Ministry of Education released PPM 140. School boards have been directed through this PPM to use ABA methods with students with ASD, in accordance with students' individual education plans. An annual process to monitor school boards' implementation of PPM 140 has been established. As required by PPM 140, the Ministry of Education has developed and implemented an annual process to monitor implementation of PPM 140 by school boards.

Results of the 2011 survey were shared at the June 2011 MACSE meeting and with members of the former Ministers' Autism Spectrum Disorders Reference Group. The survey results can be used by school boards and the Ministry of Education to identify capacity building needs and to better target training and professional learning opportunities and initiatives.

Discussion:

MACSE Members and members of the ASD Reference Group asked the Ministry of Education to consider:

- Changing the survey format to include an option for a Board to indicate that they undertook the activity "none of the time".
- Families would like to be included in this type of survey.
- Whether the survey could be made available to parents and family members of children with ASD.

- Whether further training was needed to ensure that Boards have the tools and resources to effectively carry out the principles behind Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA).
- Whether teacher candidates receive the appropriate amount of training with regards to ASD.
- The use of functional behaviour analysis.
- Transitions into and out of secondary programs.
- More training on ABA and training at a higher level is critical, particularly for Educational Assistants.
- Issues related to students with ASD who also have mental health issues.
- Ways to engage students with ASD so that they have a voice.

MACSE members expressed congratulations to the inter-ministerial team who worked on the *Connections for Students* model on the success of the model and the impact that it has had for children and families.

ITEM	MACSE DIRECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS	Hong-Son Duong
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An overview of key accountability directives and requirements that apply to both ministries and agencies was provided. The key directive is the Agency Establishment and Accountability Directive (2010) which identifies the accountability framework for all agencies. MACSE is considered an advisory agency because its primary function is to provide advice to the Minister of Education. Highlights of this discussion are as follows:

- A Memorandum of Understanding between MACSE and the Minister of Education must be completed. This is a requirement of all agencies.
- Any potential conflict of interest must be reported to John Wilhelm, MACSE Chair and Ethics Executive. For example, MACSE members must not use their appointment to benefit themselves or members of their family, or disclose or use confidential information for personal gain.
- MACSE members were reminded of the Travel, Meals and Hospitality Directive which outlines the prudent use of tax dollars.

ITEM	MACSE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)	Alain Broux
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SEPPB presented key components of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between MACSE and the Ministry of Education. The MOU is one of the accountability requirements for all agencies and once approved, will replace the Terms of Reference between MACSE and the Ministry of Education.

Discussion:

- Applications for provincial agencies, boards and commissions no longer ask the applicant to identify the specific position for which they are applying. The applicant's skills and qualifications are matched to available positions.

ITEM	SPECIAL EDUCATION IN ONTARIO, K-12	Anita Bennett Ruth Swan
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The Special Education Policy and Programs Branch is developing a comprehensive and integrated guide entitled *Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (working title). The Guide for educators consolidates information found in:

- *Standards for School Boards Special Education Plans (2000)*
- *Individual Education Plans: Standards for Development, Program Planning and Implementation (2000)*
- *Transition Planning: A Resource Guide (2002)*
- *Special Education: A Guide for Educators (2001)*
- *Individual Education Plan (IEP): A Resource Guide (2004)*

It was clarified that the Guide will be a document that provides information on Special Education generally. The Ministry of Education will continue to develop specialized, specific guidelines and resource documents that focus on specific areas of need. Once a draft is available, the Ministry of Education will undertake focused consultation. The Guide is currently targeted for electronic release in Fall 2011.

Discussion:

- The Guide should be released in abbreviated versions depending on target audience. Parents need a single source document that is comprehensive yet easy to read.
- Having a document that provides the same information to everyone, including parents, will be very useful.
- There was strong support for print copies of the Guide to be made available to school boards.
- Consideration should be given to including parent engagement and student voice in the document.

ITEM	EARLY LEARNING UPDATE	Maureen Cox Jill Worthy Michelle Braakman Christine Riedel
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MACSE members were given a demonstration of the tools and resources available at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten/>. All children in Ontario will have full-day kindergarten (FDK) available to them by 2014; currently 15% of children are enrolled in full day programming during their early years.

Special Education Policy and Programs Branch was invited to attend the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch regional Spring training sessions on implementation of the draft Full-Day Early Learning Kindergarten Program and Draft Extended-Day Program. The focus of the three day sessions was capacity building.

Day 1 focused on building leadership capacity among system and school staff. Both Year 1 and Year 2 leaders were invited. For Day 2/3 boards were invited to send a team consisting of Kindergarten Teachers, Early Childhood Educators and Grade 1 Teachers. Leaders from Day 1 were invited to stay to facilitate the rest of the sessions.

The Full-Day Early Learning Kindergarten Program and Draft Extended-Day Program documents will remain in draft form for the 2011-2012 year. Consultations will take place and the goal is to finalize both documents by Spring 2012. Resources are being developed including videos to support the key messages in the document and training sessions.

Discussion:

- The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities needs to ensure that there will be a sufficient supply of early childhood educators to meet the demands of FDK.
- All supports for children with exceptionalities that were available to children prior to FDK will still be available to children as FDK is implemented.

ITEM	COMMUNITY COLLABORATION REPORT Part Two	All
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Medical Practitioners (Dr. Arlette Lefebvre)

- In order to receive educational programming at Sick Kids Hospital, children must formally exit their prior school. This is unnecessary and does not provide for a seamless educational experience for the child.
- Paediatricians are concerned regarding the use of cell phones in classrooms.

Gifted (David Mason)

- Some school boards have limited or no resources for children who are gifted. An electronic portal would be a cost-effective way to connect all gifted children including those that are French speaking and/or Aboriginal to the necessary tools and resources they need to succeed.

Teachers & the French Language Community (Raoul Romain)

- Children who live in the North and children who are French speaking experience long wait times with regards to the completion of a psychological assessment.
- There needs to be some consideration given to how to approach teaching students with learning disabilities.

Social Workers (Marianne Saade)

- A collaborative approach to serving the mental health needs of children and youth is needed. Many children do not access the local community agencies that provide supports for mental health. Educators are in a position to coordinate and influence this.

Students/Youth (Christian McLary)

- The Ministry of Education needs to better harness the power of information technology. If a program, policy or resource is on You Tube, Facebook, and other social media devices, children and youth will respond and take notice. Technology is a good way to connect with students.

Emotional/Behavior Disorder (Robert Savage)

- Transitions and Mental Health were the two themes that educators presented to me as cause for concern. Educators are also concerned about the wait time associated with documentation to meet student needs.
- It is also important to consider pre-service programs for new teachers, to make sure that they have adequate training.

MACSE Vice-Chair & Supervisory Officers (Warren Kennedy)

- A ten year mental health strategy will be able to address many of the gaps in services that currently exist. The strategy will also give educators the tools and resources they need to effectively address this issue.
- The Board Improvement Planning for Student Achievement (BIPSA) process now has a special education component to it, this is a vital step for the achievement of students with special education needs.

ITEM	ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TEACHERS REVIEW OF AQ GUIDELINES	Déirdre Smith James Moloney Ontario College of Teachers
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The Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) outlined their approach to draft revisions to Schedule D: Special Education Part I, II and Specialist Additional Qualification (AQ) course guidelines. The Guideline Review will be done in three stages:

- Phase 1 – Consultation and Data Collection
- Phase 2 – Provincial Writing Team and AQ Guideline Development
- Phase 3 – Final Draft Guideline Development

The OCT is in phase 1 of the process. School boards, practitioners and other affected parties had opportunities to provide input to the document at an early stage. In order to obtain as much feedback as possible, the College has used a variety of approaches, including focused conversations with a range of groups and the recent launch of a survey to identify the essential knowledge, skills and practices the Special Education AQ courses need to address. This survey is open to the general public.

MACSE members were encouraged to submit their comments to the OCT in writing.

Discussion:

- The AQ courses associated with Blind and Low Vision need to be re-formatted so that each course builds upon the next, with more focus on low vision.
- The revised Schedule D Special Education additional qualification (AQ) course guideline does not have a course dedicated to developmental disabilities.
- The Ministry of Education has committed to creating a mental health strategy, thus, Schedule C should equip educators with an AQ that speaks directly to mental health.
- AQ courses are currently revised every seven years, as special education is constantly evolving, the AQ courses quickly become outdated. As a result, these courses should be reviewed on an annual basis.

ITEM	LEARNING FOR ALL, K-12	Julie Williams Zheng Xu
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SEPPB is leading the development of the draft resource guide *Learning for All, K-12 (L4A K-12)* which builds on the guiding principals outlined in *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instructions for Students With Special Educations Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6*. *L4A K-12* is an integrated framework for assessment and instruction that supports the learning of all students. A revised draft *L4A K-12* is scheduled to be posted electronically on the Ministry of Education website in fall 2011. A video was shown from the London region as an example of how school boards have embraced the concepts of L4A.

Discussion:

- This will be an invaluable resource for parents, in particular newcomer parents.

ITEM	SEAC UPDATE AND SURVEY RESULTS	Julie Williams Fausto Iannialice Christine Riedel
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In Fall 2009, MACSE made recommendations to the Ministry of Education on Building Capacity of Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs). MACSE proposed that the Ministry of Education could enhance the capacity of school boards to support SEAC members by:

- Improving communication processes so that all SEACs have access to up to date information;
- Developing resources that all SEACs can access for training; and
- Developing a mechanism for the sharing of effective practices.

In March 2010 and April 2011 a memo from the Minister of Education indicated a commitment to ensuring that SEACs are provided with the appropriate information and resources to continue to provide assistance to school boards in support of children with special education needs.

In September 2010, a letter and survey were sent to SEAC chairs. SEACs were asked to complete a survey asking for their assistance in the following areas:

- Effective SEAC Practices
- Orientation
- Resources/Material
- Public Engagement
- SEAC Learning Websites

In total, 52 school boards responded to the survey (41 English, 11 French), the results of which were shared with MACSE.

Discussion:

- The questions that speak to the orientation of SEAC members is mandated through a regulation. This regulation should be provided to the boards prior to talking the survey as a gentle reminder to their responsibility under the Regulations.
- The creation of baseline data is hugely beneficial in measuring the success of this initiative.

ITEM	BOARD IMPROVEMENT PLANS FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (BIPSA)	Julie Williams Moira Sinclair
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For 2010-11, programs and services for students with special education needs are being integrated into the BIPSA process, which allowed the Ministry of Education to identify areas where more targeted support may be required. It also allowed the Ministry of Education to monitor the board improvement planning processes to ensure that data and evidence are collected and used for the planning of improved achievement for students with special education needs.

A steering committee within the Ministry of Education has been established to provide direction and support to regional ministry teams. Membership of the committee includes representatives from the Student Achievement Division and the Special Education Programs and Policy Branch.

It is evident that boards are in various stages both at board and school levels. Many boards have fully integrated special education data and evidence in their needs assessment and have identified goals and strategies to address special education programs and services, while other boards are in the early of stages of collection and use of data with regards to students with special education needs.

There has been significant improvement over this year between the first, second and third board visits, both in terms of board processes and BIPSA content to ensure students with special education needs are included. This year a special education representative participated on Ministry BIPSA teams to about one-third of boards. In 2011-12 all BIPSA teams will include a special education representative on all board visits.

MACSE members broke off into smaller groups to review some BIPSA examples.

ITEM	SUMMARY OF MEETING HIGHLIGHTS	John Wilhelm
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The Chair thanked all Council members, Ministry of Education staff and guests for their contribution to a productive meeting. He noted a few final items:

- Members are reminded that all meeting material from the June 2011 meeting is confidential unless otherwise stated.
- MACSE members who would like to provide input to the letter to Ontario College of Teachers regarding the review of AQ course guidelines should submit their feedback to John and Venetta.
- MACSE members were asked to think about more effective approaches for collaborating with the community in preparation for the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM

NEXT MEETINGS:

- October 12 & 13, 2011
- February 8, & 9, 2012 (1 ½ day meeting)
- June 6 & 7, 2012

Appendix A: MACSE Resolution – June 8, 2011

WHEREAS: a coordinated approach among service providers enables successful student transition

WHEREAS: the education sector has had a requirement for school boards to develop a transition plan for students with special education needs since 1998.

WHEREAS: the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services has developed a transition planning framework for youth with developmental disabilities moving to the adult services system

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Ministries of Education, Community and Social Services and Children and Youth Services work together to ensure each person with a developmental disability have a single integrated transition plan.

Moved By:	Ruth Jones
Seconded By:	Joe Trovato
Approved by All	