

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

**Wednesday, October 14, 2009 & Thursday, October 15, 2009**

**9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Ontario North Room  
MacDonald Block  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario**

**Members**

John Wilhelm, Chair  
Warren Kennedy, Vice Chair  
Lynn Ziraldo, Past Chair/Advisor  
Jean-Baptiste Arhanchiague  
Susan Blekkenhorst  
Bonny Cann  
Jennifer Cantello Daw  
Joanne Cripps  
Tracy Grant  
Ruth Jones  
Dr. Arlette LeFebvre  
David Mason  
Marlene Pike  
Raoul Romain  
Marianne Saade  
Robert Savage  
Joe Trovato  
Linda Ward

**Members Absent**

Sabeena Ali  
Lois Parkinson  
Alison Morse  
Tyler Meredith

**Non Voting Members**

Mary Iannuzziello, MOHLTC  
Tina Pedel, MTCU  
Susan Paetkau, MOHLTC

**Non Voting Member Absent**

Jane Cousens, MTCU

**Ministry of Education**

Alain Broux, Acting Council Secretary  
Maureen Cox  
Barry Finlay  
Mike Gildea  
Noorie Kabani  
Michel Laverdiere  
Joanne Lee  
David Moore  
Sandy Palinski  
Christine Riedel  
Bob Spall  
Ruth Swan  
Julie Williams  
Bill Wyman  
Zheng Xu  
Cosimo Cinanni  
Ruth Flynn  
Richard Franz  
Liz Harding  
Norman Stormes  
Glenda Stevenson  
Sharon Stuckless

**Autism Reference Group**

Marg Spoelstra

**ITEM****Chair's Remarks****John Wilhelm**

Council Chair, John Wilhelm, welcomed members, Ministry staff and invited guests to the meeting. He provided an overview of MACSE's meeting style and purpose.

Barry Finlay spoke about *Policy Program Memorandum 140* (PPM 140) and the introduction of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) in schools.

**ITEM****Autism Survey Results****Julie Williams, Joanne Lee &  
Marg Spoelstra (Autism Reference Group)**

Julie Williams (Manager, Program Policy & Coordinated Services Unit) and Joanne Lee (Senior Policy Advisor) from the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB), together with Marg Spoelstra from the Autism Reference Group, presented updates on the Autism Ontario Survey Results. Highlights included:

- A provincial summary of the English and French boards' 2008 and 2009 responses to the PPM 140 implementation survey. (Presentations available)
- Status report on government action taken to implement the recommendations from the report of the Ministers' ASD Reference Group. (Presentation available)
- Supports for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders - an update on ASD Collaborative Service Delivery Models (CSDM) Phase 2. This builds on the collaborative work from CSDM Phase 1 and focuses on the *Connection for Students* multidisciplinary transition team model.
- Marg Spoelstra, Executive Director of Autism Ontario, provided an overview of responses from approximately 600 parents who were surveyed in 2008 on the implementation of PPM 140. Autism Ontario plans to conduct this survey again this fall. The 2008 results will be included in the October issue of *Autism Matters*. The report with comments will be released to all the school boards early in early November. A parent guide on how to use report is being produced.

Discussion/Questions:

- Over 13,000 educators have been trained to support ABA instructional techniques in schools. Barry Finlay added that the training provides an introduction for staff to apply ABA.
- The survey is a self assessment tool for boards to assess their implementation of PPM 140. Boards report they are at various stages in using ABA with students with ASD as appropriate.
- This is evolving and an effective IEP process will help.
- Boards can use these results to consult with their SEACs and plan for training.
- Learning from this process would help our work to support other exceptionalities.
- The *Connections for Students* transition team model can inform transitions for all students with special education needs.

**ITEM****Ministry Updates  
Transition Initiatives****Mary Iannuzziello (MOHLTC),  
and Tina Pedel (MTCU)**

Mary Iannuzziello, Program Consultant with the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care (MOHLTC) and Tina Pedel, Senior Program Design and Development Analyst with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) provided updates on transition initiatives. Highlights included:

- Announcements on transitions and best practices were shared.
- Overview of MTCU websites with resources available for students with disabilities.
- The following documents can be found at the following websites:  
Transitions to Postsecondary Education: A Resource Guide for Students with Disabilities  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/students/transitions/> and  
Employment Guide for Students with Disabilities  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/students/disabilities/> in English  
Transitions aux études postsecondaires : Guide de ressources pour les étudiants handicapés  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/fre/tcu/students/transitions/> et  
Guide sur l'emploi pour les étudiants handicapés  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/fre/tcu/students/disabilities/> en Français

**Discussion/Questions:**

- There is a need in London for greater support for children with psychiatric problems.
- What services are available for the aboriginal community on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome? Mary Iannuzziello undertook to follow-up after the meeting.
- There is a need for more consistent policies and alignment of assessments/diagnoses between the secondary and post-secondary sectors.
- Is there a specific section on assessment protocols? Tina Pedel will consult with colleagues and follow-up at a later date.
- How are guidance counsellors and other teaching staff being made aware of the site? A suggestion was made that a memo be sent to the system and that it should be posted on both EDU & TCU websites.
- For the transition from elementary to secondary, it would be helpful if the boards could have access to Community Care Access Center (CCAC) services.
- The Chair noted that there are many initiatives going on for ASD, etc.
- Alain Broux, acting Secretary of MACSE assured Council that he would forward any questions to Christine Hughes at the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS).

**ITEM****Report Back from Working Groups****All****MOHLTC Presentation: Mental Health and Addictions Strategy****MACSE's Guiding Principles**

- A working group discussed the MOHLTC report, *Every Door is the Right Door*, on the mental health and addictions strategy. A copy will be posted on the MACSE repository.
- The group discussed five guiding principles. Council members were asked to respond by e-mail if they feel there are any omissions. A teleconference will be held with the mental health group to discuss further revisions, after which a revised draft will be sent to the Council. Once approved, it will be sent to the Minister.

## **SEACs/Parent Engagement**

- A second working group discussed SEACs and Parent Engagement and focused on questions including: what parent engagement looks like in schools; education versus training; and helping to define what parent engagement is all about and getting the message out.
- The Parent Engagement Office sent documents to Council members, including a copy of the resolution on building capacity and a memo from the Minister with roles of SEAC. These documents are available on the web.
- A proposed action plan will be submitted to the Minister about building capacity of SEACs, including immediate, short-term (2010-11) and long-term goals.

## **ITEM**

## **Community Collaborations**

**All**

### Chair

The Chair noted that Minister Wynne speaks very highly of MACSE. It is a group of people with diverse background and knowledge that reaches across the province and to associations to bring input forward from each sector. Council members were asked to verify MACSE's public directory and let the Council's secretary know if their data to be updated or if groups are missing.

### Aboriginal Community:

Information is collected from advisors and brought to the table. It was suggested that the successful practices sheet may be helpful if members run into barriers when consulting their sectors.

### Medical Practitioners:

Paediatricians have commented about the desirability of having SEAC websites available in many languages.

### Emotional/Behaviour Disorder:

This diverse community is having language/literacy issues when interpreting information. A suggestion was made on sharing successful practices, such as using a DVD instead of the internet.

### Teachers/French Language Community:

Calls are being received from new teachers asking for better training regarding stress, burnout, high demands, and behavioural management. Questions are being asked about how to respond to an increase in ASD teenagers entering the IBI program. Best practices were shared, arising from an after school program.

### Principals:

The Ministry was congratulated for issuing a draft of *Learning for All K-12* and inviting response. Comments included issues around adolescents with behaviour issues, the importance of assistive technology in closing the gap, and transitions from elementary to secondary.

**ITEM****Closing Remarks****John Wilhelm**

The Chair thanked members, Ministry staff and guests for a productive day. The following was noted:

- Discussion with Minister Wynne will include the report back from working groups and acknowledging the early release of the draft *Learning for All K to 12*.
- A handout will be distributed on the best ways to seek information from stakeholders.
- Council members were asked to consider common trends and approaches regarding collaborating with the community.

**Adjournment of Day 1 of the Meeting****Thursday, October 15, 2009****ITEM****Chair's Remarks****John Wilhelm**

The Chair welcomed participants and noted the following:

- Members to confirm the accuracy of the public directory list and notify him of any updates.
- Correspondence is shared with council members from SEACs, School Boards and Associations (often involving funding).
- Members were asked to consider the kit on ASD which covers attitude, plan for language level, culture, and relation to children.
- Follow up on the Special Education Plan Resource Guide and Individual Education Plans (IEPs); however, growing incidence rates is a challenge.
- Council Chair thanked the Minister for great connections and mentioned MACSE's progress with the chronic fatigue syndrome conversation.
- The Minister is to be commended for releasing the draft of *Learning for All K-12* and noted that there has been very good response on the process.
- MACSE appreciates the Minister's ongoing support for students with special education needs.

**ITEM****Council Remarks to the Minister****Warren Kennedy,  
Ruth Jones, Joe Trovato, Lynn Ziraldo**

Vice-chair Warren Kennedy and council members Ruth Jones (Speech and Language Pathologists), Joe Trovato (Psychologists) and Lynn Ziraldo (Past Chair/Advisor) presented information to the Minister regarding outreach to SEACs, student mental health, transitions and parent engagement. Highlights included:

- MACSE members have used working groups to focus on two priority areas.
- A working group on building capacity of SEACs met with staff from the Parent Engagement Office. Discussion centred on Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, commitment to parent engagement, and MACSE's role in engaging SEACs. The working group has developed an action plan which was subsequently approved by Council and will be submitted to the Minister.
- A working group on student mental health met with staff in SEPPB and MOHLTC. Discussion focussed on the Mental Health and Addiction Strategy. The working group has reviewed a draft

of suggested guidelines for a collaborative approach to support student mental health. Council members will have further opportunity to review and revise before approving a submission which will be made to the Minister in December 2009.

- Working with staff in SEPPB and other ministries, MACSE has discussed strategies to support more streamlined and seamless transitions for all students. An emphasis is being placed on marketing and promoting current and future tools and information to all stakeholders.
- A suggestion was made that a joint memo from the Ministers of EDU and MTCU informing stakeholders about websites would be helpful. Concern was also expressed that assessment protocols have not been implemented.
- The Minister was thanked for bringing parent engagement to MACSE.

**ITEM**

**Minister's Remarks**

**Hon. Kathleen Wynne**

The Minister of Education, the Honourable Kathleen Wynne, made brief remarks on Ministry activities and responded to questions. Highlights included:

- Welcome to new members and an expression of appreciation for MACSE's work addressing difficult education issues.
- Affirmed her personal commitment to protecting the education system as a government priority, but noted the government's capacity for new investment is constrained by the realities of the economy and the budget deficit.
- Noted that mental health is an area where MACSE's advice will be helpful. This is a difficult area given the complexities of mental health status and a diagnosis. There is room for discussion about what the education system's role should be and MACSE's advice is important as it has "its finger on the pulse" of the system.
- Input from SEACs is important regarding connections and capacity building. Bill 177 (formalization of the role of Parent Involvement Committees (PICs)) focusing on that level of formal recognition (regional bodies) is a good step forward. Regional bodies are working with SEACs.
- Acknowledged Council members' concern that the Ministry work to strengthen connections with MTCU to support more effective transitions.
- Noted the suggestion about issuing a joint EDU/TCU memo about transitions.
- Noted her concern about students living on reserves. There is a responsibility to support students with special education needs and their teachers. There must be a focus on the federal government's support of building this capacity.
- Strengthening collaboration by MOHLTC & MCYS with Children's Aid Societies & school boards.

The Chair thanked the Minister for her ongoing commitment to students with special education needs and also acknowledged the support of staff in the Minister's Office.

Grant Clarke, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Learning & Curriculum Division and Barry Finlay, Director of the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch, provided an update.

Highlights of the presentation by Grant Clarke, ADM, included:

- The recent reorganization of the Ministry to better support closing the achievement gap. Everyone in the Ministry and across the sector is in the “student achievement business.” Special education is a key component of the student achievement agenda.
- Significant progress has been made, student success initiatives are expanding and transitions are being strengthened. The Ministry is taking a K-12 focus.
- Continuing work to build capacity in relation to IEPs and reviews of approaches to funding.
- Continue to look to MACSE for advice and as an important mechanism for collaboration.

Council comments/questions:

- It is important to align accommodations at the secondary and post-secondary levels. The Minister commented on working with TCU to address gaps.
- The Early Learning initiative is moving forward and the Ministry will be working with school boards to support a phase-in of the new program.
- The Ministry needs to carefully consider the role of technology in instruction and its role in supporting student achievement.

Highlights of Barry Finlay’s remarks included:

- Extensive reviews of SIP & SEA are in progress. When this is complete, the Ministry will have recommendations to share with MACSE.
- Noted the appointment of Kevin Costante as Deputy Minister of Education. He brings an extensive public service background to the role, including leadership roles at MCSS.
- *Learning for All K-12* is driven by knowing our students.
- EQAO results are a measure that can help inform where progress is being made and where more focus may be needed. More detailed results will be distributed as they become available.

Council comments/questions:

- EQAO results in both English and French was requested, as well as presenting the data in tables in addition to graphs.
- School boards have access to all the data for their students.
- Concern was expressed that gifted students are not part of transition planning.
- Barry Finlay agreed to look into the availability of a breakdown of Aboriginal results.
- Concern about Measures of Variability (MOV) and consistency in reporting. It was noted that more is to be done in this area and added that the information is reported by boards.
- Concern was expressed about non-identified students with learning disabilities. Barry Finlay noted the recommendations from the Provincial Auditor General and the Ministry’s continuing work with school boards to build capacity to strengthen IEPs.



**ITEM****Assessing Achievement in  
Alternative Areas (A4) (Update)****Sandy Palinski  
with Maureen Cox**

Sandy Palinski (Manager, Strategic Planning Unit) and Maureen Cox (Education Officer) with the SEPPB updated Council on Assessing Achievement in Alternative Areas (A4). (Presentation available.)  
Highlights included:

- Information about A4 project will be shared with school boards in the next few weeks.
- The survey provides information about future data that we may be gathering on these students.
- SEPPB will provide information about the draft guidelines in a webinar.

Comments:

- We can benefit from enhancing alternative assessment measures and best practices. No two kids are the same; therefore it is a complicated process.
- In response to a question about the webinar, it was noted that a MACSE representative will be invited and that the webinar may be recorded.
- Additional questions may be sent to the Council secretary.

**ITEM****PPM 144 and PPM 145  
Safe Schools Update and Discussion****Norman Stormes  
Liz Harding**

Liz Harding (Director) and Norman Stormes (Education Officer) with the Learning Environment Branch provided an update on PPM 144 and PPM 145. (Presentation available.)

- To support the implementation of these new policies, the Ministry will be providing training on October 20 and 21 for school board teams on the new safe schools legislative requirements (*Keeping Our Kids Safe At School Act, 2009*); and relating to the revised PPM 144 and PPM 145.
- Board teams will be responsible for organizing and delivering the Safe Schools and Equity and Inclusive Education training through a one day face-to-face training session for school teams.
- MACSE will receive copies of the PPMs.

Comments/questions:

- Effective prevention and awareness must include students.
- Importance of incorporating media education as part of the curriculum (online bullying).
- Bullying was added to Bill 212.

**ITEM****Student Success/Learning to 18****Richard Franz**

Richard Franz (Acting Director), Learning Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategic Policy Branch, made a presentation:

- The branch is now a component of the new Student Achievement Division.
- Noted the amendment of legislation to require learning to age 18 and spoke to the programming initiatives to increase student engagement. As an example, the dual credit initiative gives students an opportunity to take a college-level course which also counts for secondary credit.
- Graduation rates are increasing, but there is a continuing need to address gaps and consider “who do we need to reach better?”
- Noted that the development of *Learning for All K-12* has been informed by the advice received from groups such as MACSE and expert panels.

Comments/questions:

- A question was asked about credit accumulation as students progress with their individual education plan. MACSE was advised that each student in Grade 9 is tracked for 5 years and then measured. It was noted that special education students may be in the secondary panel for 7 years.
- The dual credit initiative would be welcomed by the gifted community.
- The Chair commented that not all positive initiatives are captured by the graph.

**ITEM**

***Learning for All K-12***

**Julie Williams  
with Ruth Swan and Zheng Xu**

Julie Williams (Manager); Ruth Swan and Zheng Xu (Education Officers) from SEPPB presented *Learning for All K-12*.

- Members were provided with 3 documents (to be posted on the repository).
- The draft *Learning for All K-12* resource document has been posted on the CODE web site. The support and positive response of Directors of Education was noted.
- Work will continue with the intra-ministerial advisory group.
- There is a meeting on November 7 with provincial affiliates.

Comments/questions:

- The draft will be placed on the MACSE repository.
- What will be the common thread of measurement across the province?
- MACSE was advised that web based student profile tools are an example of the great work that may be shared.
- A package went out to the leads boards to support planning. There is one tool for regional level and one for board level.
- The Ministry will bring the next draft back to MACSE.

**ITEM**

**Special Education Plans/School  
Effectiveness Framework (Consultation)**

**Maureen Cox  
and Bob Spall**

Maureen Cox and Bob Spall (Education Officers with SEPPB), presented Special Education Plans/School Effectiveness Framework. Highlights of their presentation included:

- Consultation with Council members as a follow-up to work presented in June.
- Standards for Special Education Plans and information from the Board Improvement Planning (BIP) processes.

Comments/questions:

- It was suggested information for parents should be included (SEAC), adding that it may be helpful to look at patterns at the provincial level.
- Is there a minimum expectation? The template is to be used to identify needs gaps and establish goals.
- A suggestion was made that under pillars, SEAC & parents should be added.
- The Chair commended the work to date and added that MACSE looks forward to working with the Ministry as work continues.

**ITEM****Special Education Consultation  
Individual Education Plan (IEP) &  
Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC)****Christine Riedel  
Noorie Kabani,  
and Bill Wyman**

Christine Riedel (Education Officer), Noorie Kabani and Bill Wyman (Senior Policy Advisors) with SEPPB, took members through a questionnaire to engage MACSE in a consultation process.

Highlights included:

- Purpose, context, background, IEP current directions & next steps.
- IPRC/IEP documentation current directions & next steps.
- Engaging parents in the IPRC/IEP process.
- Special Education Consultation on IEP initiatives.
- IEP Guide and Special Education Guide are being reviewed, with the intent of having an updated publication released in late 2010.

**ITEM****Committee of the Whole/Resolutions****All Members***Upcoming Council Meeting Dates*

- Teleconference with new members Wednesday, January 6, 2010
- February 17, 2010
- June 9 and 10, 2010
- October 13 and 14, 2010

**ITEM****Closing Remarks****John Wilhelm**

The Chair thanked all Council members, Ministry staff and guests for their contribution to two productive days of discussion. He noted a few final items:

- Council's recommendations on SEAC capacity building were approved on a motion moved by Warren Kennedy, seconded by Joe Trovato, and carried unanimously. The recommendations will be sent to the Minister through SEPPB.
- Members were asked to continue consulting their sectors. The list of associations is under review and will come back to Council.
- Members were reminded that the draft guidelines for assessing achievement are confidential and not to be shared outside Council.
- A teleconference will be held with the mental health working group. A draft document is to be reviewed and updates/revisions sent electronically. Once approved (via email), the paper will be sent to the Minister, probably after the winter break.

**The meeting adjourned.**