

Meeting Summary
Meeting of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education
October 8 & 9, 2014

The Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) held its most recent meeting on October 8th and 9th in Toronto. Below are highlights of the meeting:

October 8th, 2014

- 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:
- The renewed goals for education include:
 - Achieving excellence
 - Ensuring equity
 - Promoting well-being
 - Enhancing public confidence
- An overview of special education with a focus on the special education funding policy.
- Implementation of Policy and Program Memorandum 156 (PPM156) : Supporting Transitions for All Student With Special Education Needs takes effect September 2014. Funds were provided to district school boards to support the implementation
- Individual Education Plan samples have been revised and updated to reflect current policies and initiatives. They will soon be posted on the EDU Gains/EDU Source website, along with other resources to support IEPs and Transition Plans.
- \$150M has been allocated to district school boards to support the effective use of technology and to identify effective best practices for 21st century learning.
- The High Needs Allocation (HNA) funding approach is being implemented over the next four years.
- Through a coordinated approach, three working groups are reviewing current definitions of developmental disability, mild intellectual disability, behavior and giftedness.
- In order to ensure consistency, the guidelines for deaf and hard of hearing, blind and low vision and learning disabilities will be revisited once the definitions for intellectual and behaviour are complete.
- Phase 2 ("years 4-10") of the Mental Health Strategy is underway. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) is leading the implementation of Phase 2 with other ministries including the Ministry of Education (EDU). Fourteen lead agencies for the transformation of the delivery of mental health have been identified.
- EDU continues to implement its' initiatives from the first three years by supporting School Mental Health ASSIST as they work closely with the Mental Health Leaders as school boards develop their comprehensive mental health and addictions strategies.
- SEPPB is currently working on the development of a provincial alternative curriculum framework. During summer 2014, a writing team of educators worked on the front matter for the framework. The curriculum branch is hoping to have it ready by September 2016.
- The Minister of Education, Honourable Liz Sandals thanked the past Chair, John Wilhelm, for his work over the years. The Minister also congratulated the new Chair, Joe Trovato and new Vice Chair, Robert Savage and welcomed two new members, Brian Rivait representing principals and Joanne Jones representing medical.
- Honourable Sandals spoke about the input received on the Achieving Excellence document

and the renewed vision for education in Ontario. The four goals for education include:

- Achieving excellence;
- Ensuring equity;
- Promoting well-being; and
- Enhancing public confidence
- The Minister spoke briefly of other education initiatives including the High Needs Amount (HNA), Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) and EQAO results.
- Before leaving, Minister Sandals presented Dr. Arlette Lefebvre with a Certificate of Appreciation for her work over the past six years.
- Representatives from the ministries of Education, Children and Youth Services (MCYS) , Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC), and Community and Social Services (MCSS) provided an overview of the Special Needs Strategy.
- In October 2014, service providers will be attending Regional Information Sessions to learn more about the proposed development process for coordinated service planning and integrated delivery of rehabilitation services.
- 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
- Staff from the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) provided an overview of the enhanced program changes in teacher education.
- SEPPB staff provided an update on Autism. More than 17,500 students diagnosed with ASD are currently being supported by the publicly-funded school system. Since 2006 the ministry has invested \$69 million through targeted funding outside the Grants for Students Needs (GSN) to strengthen school board capability and improve the learning environment for students with ASD.
- Of this \$69 million investment in ASD, nearly \$45 million has been allocated to training. These training initiatives have strengthened applied behaviour analysis (ABA) capacity of school teams, principals, teachers and teachers' assistants.
- To date more than 17,000 educators have been trained in Applied Behaviour Analysis instructional practices to support students with ASD.

October 9, 2014

- Dr. Kathy Short and staff from SEPPB provided MACSE members with an update on the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy with a focus on the School Mental Health Assist Strategy.
- Staff from the TCU-EDU presented the Four Point Action Plan to Strengthen Transitions to Postsecondary Education for students with disabilities. The Transitions Model is centred on multi-disciplinary, student-specific, postsecondary Education Disability Services Offices-led transition teams to support transitions of students with ASD to postsecondary education. The demonstration projects are partnering with coordinating school boards. Funding of \$180,000 (\$60,000 per board) has been provided to the coordinating boards by the EDU.

- Algonquin College is partnering with the Ottawa Carleton District School Board and York University is partnering with the Toronto District School Board, and the York Catholic District School Board.
- SEPPB staff provided an update on the revised Policy/Program Memorandum 8 (PPM) Identification and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities. The PPM introduces a new definition of Learning Disability and describes an approach to program planning for students with learning disabilities.
- Representatives from the Early Years Division provided an overview of the recently released resource “Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years.”
- All the community collaboration reports were shared with ministry staff and council members.
- Once finalized, MACSE minutes will be posted on the MACSE repository and will be available to members. [Minutes](#) from previous meetings are available online.
- MACSE’s next meeting is scheduled for February 4 & 5, 2015.
- Members are reminded that all meeting materials from the October 2014 meeting are confidential unless otherwise stated.