

Meeting Summary
Meeting of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education
October 30, 2013

The Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) held its most recent meeting on October 30th in Toronto. Below are highlights of the meeting:

October 30, 2013

- John Wilhelm, Chair of Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) welcomed all new members to Council and provided a detailed overview of the *Conflict of Interest* rules to the Council. Council members were reminded of the requirement to declare any potential conflict at each meeting.
- Barry Finlay, Director of the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB) provided an overview of special education in Ontario with a focus on the Special Education Grant (SEG). The purpose of reviewing the SEG was to provide background information before the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) consultations that are taking place. MACSE members will receive a separate consultation.
- The Autism Reference Group presented an update following the recommendations from the report "*Making a Difference*" produced by the joint working group. The working group consisted of staff from the Ministry of Education (EDU) and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS). A total of 34 recommendations were made in this report and the joint working group accomplished work in all of the recommendations and implemented some fully. PPM 140 was informed as a result of this report.
- Each member of MACSE shared the successes and challenges experienced by their exceptionality, group or the community they represent. The information gathered helps to inform MACSE's priorities and various initiatives of EDU.
- Barry Finlay presented the School Board Efficiencies and Modernization Strategy in relation to special education. A more detailed explanation was provided of the Special Education Grant (SEG) with a focus on the High Needs Amount (HNA), a component of the grant. Barry also spoke of Dr. Doug Willms work with the ministry and the creation of a new funding formula that if approved will provide a more equitable distribution of funds.
- SEPPB provided an update on the Provincial Trends Report, Individual Education Plans (IEP) and Transition Plans. Updated IEPs will now be available on the Council of Directors of Education (CODE) website.
- The Minister of Education, Honourable Liz Sandals welcomed new members of MACSE and expressed her thanks for those who have been on MACSE for many years. The Minister provided members with an update on current priorities. Minister Sandals also spoke briefly about the following initiatives including:
 - PPM on learning disabilities
 - Mental Health Strategy
 - Mental Health Leaders
 - PPM 156 on transition planning

The Minister also spoke of the legislative agenda including the amendment to the Ontario College of Teachers Act (investigative and disciplinary processes), the new framework for

negotiations in the school sector and the replacement of the Day Nurseries Act that will become the new Childcare and Day Nurseries Act.

The Minister spoke about updating the vision for Ontario's education system. Consultations on education have been occurring throughout the province with a variety of people attending including small businesses, non-profit agencies and various parent groups. Conversations have included resilience in students, the importance of connecting with students and better use of technology. The main issue at all venues was Mental Health and Addictions. There is a growing public awareness in mental health issues.

Minister Sandals approved the establishment of working groups to review the following exceptionalities:

- Developmental / Mild Intellectual;
 - Gifted; and
 - Behaviour
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- Once finalized, MACSE minutes 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 meetings are as follows: February 5 and 6, 2014 and June 24 and 25, 2014.
 - Members are reminded that all meeting materials from the October 2013 meeting are confidential unless otherwise stated.