

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE
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IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Progress in Achievement for Students with Special Education Needs

WHAT'S NEW

- Students with special education needs (excluding gifted) have shown improvement in their academic achievement, as demonstrated by Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) test results for grades 3 & 6 (reading, writing and mathematics) for the period from 2002-2003 to 2013-14.
- Grade 3 EQAO results for students with special education needs (excluding gifted) from 2002-03 to 2013-14 have demonstrated an increase of 24% in reading, 43% in writing, and 6% in mathematics.
- Grade 6 EQAO results for students with special education needs (excluding gifted) from 2002-03 to 2013-14 have demonstrated an: increase of 31% in reading, 34% in writing, and 1% in mathematics.
- In both Grade 3 and Grade 6, the improvement in the performance of students with special education needs (excluding gifted) from 2002-03 to 2013-14 exceeded that of “All Students” population in reading and writing.
- Grade 9 EQAO results for students with special education needs (excluding gifted) from 2002-03 to 2013-14 have demonstrated an increase of 24% in academic mathematics and 24% in applied mathematics.
- Since 2002, the percentage of fully participating first-time eligible students with special education needs (excluding gifted) who completed the Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) successfully has increased by 14 percentage points. The success rate has remained the same at 51% in 2013 and 2014.

Supporting Programs in Alternative Areas – The Development of a Provincial Alternative Curriculum Framework

WHAT'S NEW

- SEPPB completed consultation sessions with school boards, SEACs, school authorities and provincial parent associations between fall 2013 and spring 2014.
- Following the consultations during summer 2014 a Development Writing Team of educators was selected to begin to draft a foundation document to outline key messages, guiding principles and overarching program areas to form the basis for a provincial framework for programs that are alternative to the provincial curriculum. It will establish the foundation for the development of learning expectations in key program areas.

KEY FACTS

- A small percentage of students have diverse learning needs and do not access the Ontario curriculum and require programs in alternative areas. In

2009 school boards reported this to be approximately 17,000 students (~1% of the student population).

- Ontario's provincial curriculum is not applicable to, nor suitable for all students.
- Currently boards deliver programs in alternative areas based on locally developed resources, as well as supporting resources that are purchased. The Provincial Auditor identified this as a concern and made recommendations to the Ministry of Education to provide direction to enhance resources and programming for these students.
- A provincial e-community site is available for school boards to share locally developed resources that support monitoring and reporting on the achievement of students with special education needs who do not access the provincial curriculum.

NEXT STEPS

- It is the intent of SEPPB to further refine the draft foundation document that was begun in summer 2014. There will be further consultation with district school boards and specific professional groups as the draft foundation document is refined.

Supports for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

KEY FACTS

- Since 2008, the ministry has been funding the Canadian Hearing Society (CHS) and VOICE for Hearing Impaired to enhance the capacity of the education sector in teaching students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- The Barrier Free Education Initiatives for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students, led by CHS, is intended to assist school boards in identifying access and accommodation needs of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing who use American Sign Language (ASL) or Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ), and students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing who use oral language as a means of communication and use assistive devices, hearing aids and FM systems.
- CHS has developed and will be posting Webinars/Webcasts on: Technology and Resources in the Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students; on Communication Accessibility and Anti-Audism and anti-Ableism; and on Language Foundations for Classroom Teachers. These resources will be posted on the CHS website.
- VOICE for Hearing Impaired led the VOICE Ontario School Board Training and Mentorship Program to increase the capacity of qualified professionals and broaden the understanding of decision-makers in Ontario's district school boards to meet the needs of students who are oral Deaf and Hard of Hearing who use oral language as a method of communication and use assistive devices such as cochlear implants, hearing aids, FM systems and other technology.

- VOICE continues to enhance classroom teachers' knowledge of effective strategies and interventions for students with cochlear implants through workshops, and print resources such as guides and tip sheets. These resources can be accessed on the VOICE for Hearing Impaired website.
- VOICE and CHS are collaborating in the development of a parents' guide on mental health and addictions needs of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

FUNDING

- The ministry will continue to fund CHS and VOICE for Hearing Impaired for additional deliverables to enhance educators' capacity in teaching students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Draft Guidelines for Special Education Programs and Services for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (K-12), Draft Guidelines for Programs and Services for Students Who Are Blind or have Low Vision (K-12)

KEY FACTS

- The Guidelines for Special Education Programs and Services for Students Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Guidelines for Special Education Programs and Services for Students who are Blind or have Low Vision are resources intended for district school boards to use when providing special education programs and services for students with these exceptionalities.

NEXT STEPS

- SEPPB intends to revisit the guidelines as part of a broader guideline development process and consult with relevant stakeholders prior to their release.
- Electronic release of the guidelines is to be determined.
- SEPPB will work with leadership networks and other stakeholders during the rollout of the guidelines.

Learning for All, A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (Learning for All, K-12) (2013) and Regional Projects

WHAT'S NEW

- In April 2014 the ministry posted ***Learning for All, K-12 (2013)*** electronically. This resource is available on the [ministry website](#) along with 2013-14 Learning for All K-12 regional project reports.
- In 2014-15 the ministry will continue to provide funds to all 72 district school boards to support the use of this resource guide and related professional learning. In 2014-15 Learning for All K-12 regional projects will integrate the following areas of focus:

- “knowing your student” and “students knowing themselves as learners” and the use of an integrated process of assessment and instruction through collaborative inquiry
 - fostering continuous improvement of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and transition plans as critical tools in driving student achievement and well-being for students with special education needs.
- 18 lead Learning for All K-12 school boards across the province shared their learning stories at the Ontario Education Fall Symposia “Creating Conditions for Coherence – Knowing Your Learning System” for senior system leader teams.
- The ministry has developed the [Learning for All K-12 EduGAINS](#) website to facilitate sharing of resources and to support the use of the document.
- *Principals Want to Know*, a resource for all principals will soon be available.

KEY FACTS

- SEPPB has led the development of the resource guide *Learning for All, K-12 (2013)*. The document is available on the [Ministry of Education website](#).
- *Learning for All, K-12 (2013)* builds on the guiding principles outlined in *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students With Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6 (2005)*.
- *Learning for All, K-12 (2013)* describes an integrated framework for assessment and instruction that supports the learning of all students.
- This resource guide is designed to share information with educators about evidence-based and research-informed educational approaches that have proven to be effective in supporting the learning of all students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. These approaches include Assessment for Learning, Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction and the Tiered Approach.
- The resource guide also presents sample planning tools including class and student profiles.
- Since 2009, district school boards, under the regional leadership of 18 school boards across the province, have sustained knowledge mobilization, built educator capacity, and shared their learning in providing personalized and precise teaching and learning. District school boards have used this resource as an integrating framework to identify, prioritize and address system needs centered on student needs.

FUNDING

- From 2009-2014 the ministry provided funding to all district school boards to encourage their participation in regional professional learning activities. Additional funds are provided to 18 lead school boards to coordinate regional Professional Learning Communities and develop sharable resources to support the use of the document in elementary and secondary schools. In 2014-15 approximately \$1.5M has been distributed to school boards. All school boards receive \$17,000 each with adjustments based on their

enrolment to continue participation and contribution to their regional Professional Learning. In addition, 18 lead school boards received \$5,000 to support their leadership roles and responsibilities in regional collaboration.

NEXT STEPS

- The ministry will continue to support all district school boards in their use of the resource document and facilitate sharing of resources developed by school boards provincially.
- The ministry will continue to collaborate with other branches and divisions to build alignment and scale the use of *Learning for All, K-12* in depth and spread (e.g., working with Early Learning Division, Curriculum Assessment Policy Branch, Literacy Numeracy Secretariat to develop K – 3 Pedagogical Leadership training sessions across the province).

Supporting Students with Learning Disabilities

WHAT'S NEW

- In August 2014, the ministry issued a revised [Policy/Program Memorandum 8 \(PPM\) Identification and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities](#). Implementation of the new policy requirements started in January 2015. The PPM introduces a new definition of LDs and describes an approach to program planning for students with LDs that promotes the principles and approaches described in *Learning for All, K – 12*. It reflects the most current research in LDs and effective practices in school boards. Revised PPM 8 is intended to promote consistency across the province in the identification and program planning for students with LDs.
- The ministry supported the implementation of PPM 8 by delivering English and French information sessions through Adobe Connect intended for Supervisory Officers and Coordinators of Special Education from district school boards, school authorities, Demonstration Schools as well as representatives from Provincial Schools Branch and Field Services Branch; conducting presentations on revised PPM 8 at Regional Special Education Councils, CEC, Learning for All networks, etc.

KEY FACTS

- In 2012-13, district school boards reported that 42.2% of exceptional students identified by an IPRC had a learning disability. This is the largest exceptionality group of the twelve sub-categories of exceptionalities.
- The ministry's PPM 8 on Learning Disabilities (LDs) was issued in 1982 and had not been substantially revised.
- The Learning Disabilities Working Group (LDWG) was established in September 2011 to provide advice on the review of PPM 8 and the development of guidelines. The working group included stakeholders, educators, parents and academics with expertise in LDs.
- The LDWG has also drafted Guidelines for Special Education Programs and Services for Students with LDs. The ministry is currently reviewing the guidelines to align them with the guidelines for other exceptionalities.

FUNDING

- The ministry continues to providing funding to the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) to develop a range of online resources and conduct Summer Educators' Institutes to further enhance the understanding of evidence-based and research informed assessment and instructional strategies in the field of LDs (2014 and 2015).

NEXT STEPS

- The ministry-developed resources to support the implementation of PPM 8 will be posted on EduGains (English) and ÉduSource (French).
- LDAO 2nd Annual Educators' Institute is scheduled for August 25 & 26, 2015. The purpose of the Educators' Institute is to provide attendees with relevant and practical information on effective assessment and instructional strategies, new perspectives, and knowledge in the field of LDs (based on current evidence-based, evidence-informed, and practice-informed strategies).

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Transition Plans

WHAT'S NEW

- IEP samples including transition plans, and other resources are now available on EduGAINS website (English) and ÉduSource website (French) under the [Special Education](#) tab.
- The ministry will continue to post resources on EduGAINS/ÉduSource and intends on sharing board developed materials designed to support educators with IEPs including transition planning.

KEY FACTS

- IEPs are an important tool in driving student achievement and well-being for students with special education needs.
- The ministry released the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Provincial Trends Report 2012: Student Achievement and Narrowing Gaps based on the results submitted by district school boards, school authorities and Provincial and Demonstration Schools. The report confirms the commitment of district school boards to the continuous improvement of IEPs. In particular the report highlights that district school boards reported that they are meeting all of the standards for IEPs at the satisfactory and/or proficient level.
- Since 2012, the ministry provided district school boards with funds to support the continuous improvement of IEPs including transition plans.

NEXT STEPS

- The ministry will continue to provide funds to mobilize knowledge and sustain professional learning pertaining to the resource guide *Learning for All, K-12* (2013). This funding will continue to support Learning for All K-12 regional projects and professional learning.

Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12

KEY FACTS

- SEPPB is publishing a comprehensive and integrated special education guide that updates and consolidates information currently found in: *Standards for School Board's Special Education Plans (2000)*; *IEP Standards for Development, Program Planning and Implementation (2000)*; *Transition Planning: A Resource Guide (2002)*; *Special Education: A Guide for Educators (2001)*; and *Individual Education Plan (IEP): A Resource Guide (2004)*.
- Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12 will set out the policies and requirements of the Ministry of Education that govern special education programs and services in publicly funded elementary and secondary schools in Ontario. The sector has expressed the need for clarification of special education policies and requirements through the consolidation of information found in documents developed over time by the ministry.
- The document is intended for school and school board administrators but will be of interest to the broader educational community.
- The guide is targeted for electronic release in 2015.

Board Improvement Planning for Student Achievement (BIPSA)

WHAT'S NEW

- Board Improvement Planning for Student Achievement (BIPSA) continues to grow and evolve; Special Education Regional Office Leads continue to be on the Ministry Regional BIPSA Teams.
- Over 2014-15 the Ministry Regional BIPSA Teams will visit every school board twice:
 - 1) Visit One was completed between November and January with a focus on implementation
 - 2) Visit Two to be held between March and May with a focus on monitoring.

KEY FACTS

- Board improvement planning processes establish a greater focus on and accountability for student achievement as school boards are required to identify targeted goals and strategies based on needs assessment that focus on improving the achievement of all students, including those with special education needs.
- SEPPB continues to better understand the achievement of students with special education needs by examining how boards consider, monitor and work to improve their achievement.
- SEPPB continues to work closely with the Student Achievement Division (BIPSA ministry lead) to ensure that BIPSA processes include students with special education needs.

NEXT STEPS

- SEPPB will continue to have an active role on the ministry's BIPSA Steering Committee to help inform strategic directions in support of students with special education needs.

Mental Health and Addictions Strategy

WHAT'S NEW

- Beginning in 2014-15, the ministry will be providing \$8.76M through the GSN to support the salary and benefit costs of a Mental Health Leader position in each district school board, including \$120K for the cost of one Mental Health Leader to be shared by the four isolate and remote school authorities.
- The ministry has translated into French the *ABCs of Mental Health* from the Hincks-Dellcrest Centre and it will be posted online in early 2015.
- The Draft K-12 Mental Health and Addictions Educator Resource Guide, *Supporting Minds, An Educator's Guide to Promoting Students' Mental Health and Well-being*, was released in August of 2013. The guide promotes student mental health and well-being, and provides supports for educators to recognize problems early and support students in the classroom. Feedback is currently being gathered for the next version of the document.
- The ministry is continuing to support School Mental Health ASSIST.
- Development of further enhancements to the Ontario curriculum to promote healthy development and mental health is underway, including:
 - The development of English- and French-language video resources and viewer guides for K-12 educators to support student learning about mental health and well-being through the current curriculum and build supportive learning environments. These resources are expected to be available in the winter of 2015 and will be posted on EduGAINS and ÉduSource.
 - A new preface has been added to the beginning of recently revised curriculum documents which sets the context for the educators' role in promoting and supporting healthy development for all students. The preface will continue to be included in curriculum documents as they are revised and released as part of the curriculum review cycle.
 - In June 2014, the Ontario Human Rights Commission released a Policy Paper on preventing discrimination based on mental health disabilities and addictions (Policy). The Policy provides practical guidance on the legal rights and responsibilities set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code as they relate to mental health and addiction issues. Ontarians with mental health disabilities and addictions are protected under the ground of "disability", including when they receive services in schools.

KEY FACTS

- The Government's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy responds to the reports from the all-party Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, and the Minister's Advisory Group to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on the 10-Year Mental Health and Addictions Strategy.

- The Strategy was first announced in the May 2011 Ontario budget, and was provided in *Open Minds, Healthy Minds* released in June 2011. There are four guiding goals for the Strategy:
 1. Improve mental health and well-being for all Ontarians,
 2. Create healthy, resilient, inclusive communities,
 3. Identify mental health and addictions problems early and intervene; and
 4. Provide timely, high quality, integrated, person-directed health and other human services.
- For the first three years, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and their partner ministries, the Ministries of Education, Health and Long-Term Care, Training, Colleges and Universities as well as the Attorney General and Aboriginal Affairs worked together with their sectors and communities to support children and youth who have mental health and addictions challenges to reach their potential and thrive.
- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is leading Phase 2 of the strategy, which will build on the accomplishments of the first three years, in partnership with other ministries including the Ministry of Education.
- The expanded Strategy will help to ensure Ontarians and their families have better access to quality services and supports for their mental well-being. The Strategy will:
 - Promote mental health and well-being for all Ontarians;
 - Ensure early identification and intervention;
 - Expand housing and employment support;
 - Expand an integrated health and social service coordination model for people coping with mental illness and addictions; and
 - Provide funding based on need and quality.
- A high-level evaluation of the Strategy is being established by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care with partner ministries through the Institute of Clinical Evaluation Sciences to provide a framework for evaluation and a mental health and addictions scorecard of quantitative and qualitative indicators.
 - A qualitative case study of all the new workers hired through the Strategy including the Mental Health Leaders has been completed by the consulting firm Cathexis.
 - An evaluation of School Mental Health ASSIST activities is also occurring.
- In November 2012, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services launched *Moving on Mental Health – A system that makes sense for children and youth*, a three-year action plan to transform the child and youth mental health system. These changes, when fully implemented, will support clear and streamlined pathways to care, and will result in defined core services to be available in communities across Ontario.
 - The first 14 lead agencies were announced in August 2014. The lead agency for the Toronto area is expected to be announced in winter 2015.

FUNDING

- The government's investments totalled \$257 million over the first three-year period of the strategy.
- For 2014-15, \$1.4M in funding will be given to district school boards to further develop and implement their board level mental health and addictions strategies. This may include providing opportunities for educators to participate in activities to increase mental health awareness to further support students with mental health and/or addiction needs.
- \$1M will be provided to fund the School Mental health ASSIST team for 2014-15, contracted through the Hamilton Wentworth school board.

NEXT STEPS

In year four of the Strategy, the following initiatives are underway:

- The Mental Health Leaders are working with School Mental Health ASSIST to provide leadership support in their board for the development of a board level comprehensive student mental health and addictions strategy.
- School Mental Health ASSIST has developed several resources as part of increasing mental health awareness that are available to all school boards. These resources include the following:

Mental Health Awareness Level

- Webinar for all district school boards providing a broad overview of the Strategy, and information about specific supports for school boards (all education sector audiences).
- Decision Support Tool on selection of capacity building resources, developed with the School-Based Mental Health and Substance Abuse Consortium (SBMHSA).
- Interactive web platform providing information about School Mental Health ASSIST and mental health awareness resources for all district school boards, including a closed on-line community for Mental Health Leaders.
- Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention slide presentations and resource guide (resource for senior administrators and clinicians in district school boards).

Mental Health Literacy Level

- Administrator's Guide and slide presentation (companion to *Supporting Minds, An Educator's Guide to Promoting Students' Mental Health and Well-being*).
 - Mental Health Literacy Modules for school staff and administrators (in development).
- The Ministry of Education continues to work with other ministries to support the alignment of initiatives to support students.

Response to the Reference Group on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

WHAT'S NEW

- The Ontario Auditor General Office (OAGO) completed its audit of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services' autism services and supports for children. The report is available on the [Office of the Auditor General of Ontario website](#). (School-based ASD supports and services references begin on Page 69 of the report).
- In response to recommendations from the Report of the Auditor General, the ministry developed a list of requirements that may be included in training opportunities provided by district school boards to educators who work or may work with students with ASD. All district school board ABA Expertise Professionals were provided the opportunity to offer input into the developed training requirements through each regional ABA professional learning community. The ministry communicated the list of [training requirements at ABA Day](#) in 2014.
- The formal or informal training opportunities and/or mentoring on ABA should be practical and oriented at developing classroom educators' skills to apply and individualize ABA and cover the following content:
 - Behaviour
 - Functions of Behaviour
 - Assessments and data collection to inform ABA instructional methods
 - Development, implementation and monitoring of effective Individual Education Plans and Transition Plans that incorporate ABA methods in a variety of educational settings
 - Principles of ABA, with a focus on ABA instructional methods to support students with ASD and other students who may benefit.
- District school boards will be expected to monitor the availability and participation of educators in ABA training opportunities provided by the board.
 - The ministry will begin monitoring provincial implementation of training requirements through the 2014-15 annual Policy Program Memorandum (PPM) 140 Survey.
- The ministry is currently working on revising the existing methodology for monitoring school boards' compliance with the requirements of PPM 140, with a focus on deeper implementation.
- The ministry will host its fourth ABA Professional Learning Day on June 3rd, 2015. All 72 district school boards will be invited to participate and engage in this knowledge mobilization event and share current evidence-based resources and effective practices. Information and resource sharing will continue the development of regional professional learning communities to further develop ABA capacity in Ontario's publicly funded schools.
- The ministry has launched EduGAINS and ÉduSource ASD pages, as part of the Special Education domain.
- The ministry funded Geneva Centre for Autism to develop 12 bilingual e-learning modules on autism. They became available free of charge to all

educators employed by publicly funded district school boards in Ontario in July 2013. EDU will monitor the uptake of these modules.

- In September 2014, Geneva launched an ABA Certificate Course for Educators through online e-Learning modules that focus on comprehensive training on ABA, including evidence-based behavioural strategies that can be incorporated into the classroom setting to promote student achievement and well-being. The ministry provided all boards with an allocation of spaces to participate in the ABA Certificate Course for Educators online e-Learning modules.
- The ministry is partnering with TCU on a Transitions Model that is centred on multi-disciplinary, student-specific, postsecondary Education Disability Services Offices-led transition teams to support transitions of students with ASD to post-secondary education (PSE). 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 ministry.
- 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 District Catholic School Board.
- The three identified school boards are required to:
 - implement the preliminary Transitions Model in collaboration with PSE institutions and other partners;
 - engage multiple district school boards from their regions to review current practices, identify gaps and set targets to strengthen boards' capacities to implement the Transitions Model; and gather and share effective transition practices region and province-wide;
 - participate in professional learning communities to develop resources, support documentation, evaluate the preliminary Transitions Model and provide recommendations for its enhancements.

KEY FACTS

- The total number of students formally identified as having an ASD by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) in publicly funded district school boards, including school authorities, as of the 2012-13 school year is over 17,500.
- The government has taken action in response to the majority of the Reference Group's recommendations.
- All district school boards and Ministry of Children and Youth (MCYS) funded Autism Intervention Program (AIP) providers are implementing *Connections for Students* model across the province. The *Connections for Students* model is centred 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 AIP to ABA instructional methods in school, and continue for six months after entry or continuing in school
 - 1,252 children and youth had been served province-wide by the *Connections for Students* model as at the end of 2012-13.

- All district school boards have now hired ABA expertise professionals that are responsible for supporting principals, teachers, and multi-disciplinary transition teams by providing and coordinating ASD training and resources, and facilitating collaboration between service providers and schools.
- MCYS has expanded community-based ABA services and supports to build on and improve the continuum of supports for children and youth with ASD. \$25M has been invested to provide a broader range of services to children and youth with ASD to develop skills in key areas and to address behaviours that interfere with their functioning. MCYS has selected providers to deliver these new services and supports in each region of the province. Approximately 8,000 children and youth with ASD will benefit each year from these new services and supports.
- 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 where appropriate and in accordance with students' IEP. As required by PPM 140, the ministry has developed and implemented an annual process to monitor implementation of PPM 140 by district school boards.

FUNDING

- Since 2006 the ministry has invested \$69M through targeted funding outside the Grants for Student Needs to strengthen district school board capability and improve the learning environment for students with ASD.
- Since summer 2006, almost \$45M has been allocated for training, and to date more than 17,000 educators have been trained and prepared to support ABA in publicly funded schools.
- Beginning in 2008-09 all district school boards received new funding to hire additional board level ABA expertise professionals to support principals, teachers, and multi-disciplinary transition teams by providing and coordinating ASD training and resources, and facilitating collaboration between service providers and schools. Funding allowing school boards to hire additional board level ABA expertise professionals has been transferred into the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) through the Behaviour Expertise Amount (BEA) beginning in 2010-11. The total 2014-15 BEA amount is approximately \$11.6M.
- In 2014-15, \$3M in Education Programs – Other (EPO) funding has been allocated to school boards to further ABA training.
- \$1,000,000 in EPO funding was allocated to Geneva Centre for Autism Summer Institute 2014.
- \$180,000 in EPO funding will be allocated to three coordinating school boards to support the Post-Secondary Transitions Model for Students with ASD.

Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs) Capacity Building Projects

WHAT'S NEW

- [EDU SEAC web page.](#)

KEY FACTS

- In Fall 2009, the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) made recommendations to the ministry to build SEAC capacity. MACSE proposed that the ministry 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
 - Developing a mechanism for the sharing of effective practices.

NEXT STEPS

- SEPPB staff will continue to scan district school board websites for additional resources that relate to SEAC recruitment, orientation, roles and responsibilities, committee procedures, community/parent outreach and link them to the EDU SEAC web page.
- SEACs are asked to review the resource section of the website to ensure that any district school board SEAC developed resources that they have made public can be linked to the EDU SEAC website.

Special Needs Strategy

KEY FACTS

- The Ministries of Education, Children and Youth Services, Health and Long-Term Care, and Community and Social Services are working with parents, youth, service providers and communities to improve outcomes for children with special needs through the Special Needs Strategy. Three goals of the strategy are:
 1. Identifying children earlier and getting them the right help sooner. Trained providers will have a new developmental screen for children in the preschool years. They will screen for potential risks to the child's development as early as possible.
 2. Coordinating service planning. New service planning coordinators for children and youth with multiple or complex special needs will connect families to the right services and supports.
 3. Making supports and service delivery seamless. Integrating the delivery of rehabilitation services, such as speech-language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy. Services will be easier to access and seamless from birth through the school years.

WHAT'S NEW

- In response to feedback from Special Needs Strategy Proposal Development Chairs that more time is required to engage families and youth meaningfully and effectively collaborate to prepare implementation-ready proposals, the Ministries are extending the deadlines for the proposals. This is noted under next steps.

NEXT STEPS

- Coordinated Service Planning for Children and Youth. Proposals are due June 15 2015.
- Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services for Children and Youth. Proposals are due October 30, 2015.

Supporting Students with Intellectual (Developmental Disability, Mild Intellectual Disability, Giftedness) or Behavioural Needs through a Review of Definitions and Development of Guidelines

KEY FACTS

- The ministry is proceeding with a strategy to improve the achievement and well-being of students with Intellectual (Developmental Disability, Mild Intellectual Disability, Giftedness) or Behavioural needs through a coordinated approach that includes reviewing current definitions (phase 1) and developing guidelines (phase 2) to support more consistent and effective practices across Ontario.

NEXT STEPS

- A working group made up of external members has been established. The working group provides advice and expertise as this work proceeds. Enhanced definitions and new guidelines will support:
 - More consistency among boards in supporting students with intellectual and behaviour needs;
 - More coordinated and seamless transitions into, through and between school boards; and
 - Enhanced focus on the intellectual or behaviour strengths and needs of students.

Transformation of Care, Treatment, Custody and Correction Programs (CTCC)

WHAT'S NEW

In 2011, the Ministry of Education began a process of reviewing and transforming CTCC education programs. This transformation is taking place within the evolution of the broader education system where the capacity of schools to accommodate the diverse needs of learners within the classroom is increasing. Additionally, the care and treatment and Youth Justice and correctional systems are also evolving. We will need to continue to work to align CTCC education programs within this new context.

The vision for CTCC education programs continues to be refined alongside the release of the Ministry of Education's [Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario](#). The renewed goals of Achieving Excellence, Ensuring Equity, Promoting Well-being and Enhancing Public Confidence are relevant for education programs in CTCC facilities. In particular, the goal of Ensuring Equity,

with its focus on providing the best possible learning opportunities and supports for students who may be at risk of not succeeding, is essential for students in CTCC programs.

The transformation seeks to achieve the following vision for CTCC programs:

As an integrated part of Ontario's education system, CTCC programs provide critical support to meet the needs of students unable to attend regular schools and facilitate specific pathways to ensure future educational success.

In order to achieve this vision, three priority areas have been identified:

- Modernize governance, funding, accountability, and increase accountability for CTCC students
- Improve Student Learning, Achievement and Well-Being
- Improve collaboration across all systems to provide seamless programs and services for students

Following are the highlights of the proposed transformation of CTCC programs:

CTCC Program Guidelines

- School boards have been provided with revised Guidelines for Students in Government Approved Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional (CTCC) Facilities 2015-16 (Guidelines 2015-16). The Guidelines 2015-16 set out expectations in areas such as pupil teacher ratio, criteria for funding of educational assistants and administrative liaison positions, and outlines specific elements that inform the delivery of CTCC education programs. The Guidelines 2015-16 now include a renewed vision for CTCC programs, clarification of transition planning requirements, proposed funding changes and provisions related to program changes if the program is approved.

New Programs for the 2015-16 school year

- The ministry is inviting school boards to submit applications to renew existing CTCC programs, including those that were established as new and transformative CTCC programs in the 2013-14 year. In addition to these programs, the ministry is accepting new applications to address service pressures that have emerged in relation to identified system and local needs, particularly Francophone students, students who are First Nations, Métis and Inuit, students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and students in rural, remote and under-served communities. The types of new programs being sought are outlined below.

Enhanced Education and Treatment Programs

- School boards are invited to submit applications for the new Enhanced Education and Treatment (EET) Programs for children and youth in care

and treatment facilities. This will provide opportunities for the development of programs that increase the capacity of the system to meet the needs of students in care and treatment programs that could benefit from a program integrating health support services within an education program. The health support services that are expected to be integrated within the EET Programs include services provided by regulated health professionals (e.g. Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Psychologists, etc.), regulated social service professionals (e.g. Social Workers, etc.) and paraprofessionals (e.g. Communication Disorders Assistants, Child and Youth Workers, etc.).

Community Based Youth Justice Programs

- Over the last few years, the Youth Justice (YJ) Services system has been repositioning from a predominantly custody focused system to one that offers a broad range of community and custodial programs and services to address the needs of youth, their families and communities. Youth who are serving a community sentence may attend a Community Based Youth Justice (CBYJ) Program, such as an Attendance Centre, that provides structured programming which can include education, addiction counselling, anger management, life skills, recreation and cultural programs. In order to respond to this trend, the ministry is focusing this year on a realignment of education programs in the YJ system to better serve students who are serving community sentences. New program applications for Education Programs in CBYJ Facilities are being accepted for commencement in the 2015-16 school year.

Provincial E-Learning Strategy

- In 2013-14, 18 English-language district school boards were e-Learning pilot sites. Within those boards, 14 sites were in Care and Treatment programs and 8 sites were in Custody and Correctional Facilities.
- One e-Learning pilot project was implemented at three sites in a French language board.
- The three phases involved the following e-Learning tool(s):
 - Phase 1 – Ontario Educational Resource Bank and e-Community Ontario
 - Phase 2 – Blended Learning
 - Phase 3 – Online Courses; Seat Reservation System, Course Writing Software
- In 2014-15, 18 district school boards will continue with blended learning and a select few have agreed to begin on-line courses in Phase 3.

KEY FACTS

- Students in CTCC programs may be among the most vulnerable and may be at risk of leaving school early without the skills and self-confidence necessary to have meaningful options in work, culture, civic affairs and relationships

- Children and youth in these programs may:
 - Have mental health and/or addictions issues
 - Have one or more exceptionalities
 - Have severe emotional and behavioural needs
 - Include young parents or young parents-to-be with treatment needs
 - Be in the care of a children's aid society
 - Be in conflict with the law
- Close to 80% of students in CTCC education programs are in care and treatment settings, many of which are mental health settings. The remaining students are either in youth justice settings or in adult correctional institutions. Students range in age from 4 to 21 years. Length of stay ranges from days to years.

FUNDING

- The total EDU funding envelope for 2014-15 is: 96M
- Beginning in 2015-16 the ministry is proposing to make \$2.5 million available for the new EET programs. School board applications would be eligible for up to \$500,000 per program.
- There is \$2 million available to fund both new and existing CBYJ programs. There are resources to fund between 7-10 new programs, depending on the staffing model proposed in these new programs.
- CTCC Program Areas and Funding (2014-15):
 - Care and Treatment: \$70,664,696 – 434 programs
 - Youth Justice: \$19,247,847– 120 programs
 - Corrections: \$332,064 – 4 programs

NEXT STEPS

The ongoing transformation of CTCC programs provides an opportunity to test new programs, remove existing or potential barriers to effective service delivery, provide more tailored and personalized learning environments to better meet student needs and improve educational outcomes.

SEPPB will work closely with boards and ministry partners to meet the needs of students in CTCC programs and to facilitate pathways to future success.

FUNDING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education Funding Overview

WHAT'S NEW

- The 2014-15 Special Education Grant (SEG) funding was announced in March 2014. The Grants for Student Needs (GSN) Regulation, which provides for these allocations, has been approved.

- Despite a period of fiscal restraint the Special Education Grant (SEG) is projected to increase to approximately \$2.72 billion in 2014–15. This is an increase of over \$1.09 billion or 67 percent since 2002–03.
- The ministry is making changes to be more responsive to the needs of students receiving special education programs and services, to increase the focus on supporting student outcomes, while responding to requests for a more fair and equitable High Needs Amount (HNA) allocation.
- After continued consultations with stakeholders, including the Special Education Funding Working Group, in 2014-15 the ministry will begin to phase out the historical HNA per pupil amounts. The transitional HNA Stabilization support will be removed for 2014-15.
- This transition to a more fair and equitable HNA model is fiscally neutral, but will have redistributive impacts among boards, thus will be phased in over four years.
- 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.

KEY FACTS

- The 2014-15 SEG will:
 - include revisions to the Special Education Per Pupil Amount (SEPPA) and the Behaviour Expertise Amount (BEA) benchmarks consistent with those implemented in other grants of the Grants for Student Needs (GSN),
 - introduce a 4 year transition to a new High Needs Amount (HNA) allocation that will provide greater fairness and equity by making the following changes:
 - eliminate the historical HNA per-pupil amounts over a four-year period, and the transitional HNA Stabilization in 2014–15, while repurposing the funding;
 - use the repurposing/redistribution of funds to gradually increase the proportion of funding that is distributed through both the Special Education Statistical Prediction Model (SESPM) and the HNA Measures of Variability Amount (MOV);
 - introduce a High Needs Base Amount for Collaboration and Integration beginning in 2014–15, which will provide all school boards with a minimum level of base high needs funding (\$450,000);
 - phase in the new HNA model over four years to mitigate redistribution impacts, which will result in an HNA allocation that better reflects the variation among boards with respect to students with special education needs and boards' ability to meet these needs.
 - conclude the transition to a single Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Per-Pupil Amount (PPA) of \$36.10, which as in previous years will support a

- funding increase of approximately 2 percent to the SEA PPA provincial total, continue to support the Special Incidence Portion (SIP) claim-based applications, and
- continue to support education programs for school-aged children and youth in Government-approved care and/or treatment, custody, and correctional facilities.
 - In addition, the ministry has invested approximately \$69M since 2006, through targeted funding outside the GSN, to build capacity and improve the learning environment for students with ASD.

Evolution of Special Education Funding

WHAT'S NEW

- After continued consultations with stakeholders, including the Special Education Funding Working Group, in 2014-15 the ministry will begin to phase out the historical HNA per pupil amounts. The transitional HNA Stabilization support will be removed for 2014-15.
- This transition to a more fair and equitable HNA model is fiscally neutral, but will have redistributive impacts among boards, thus will be phased in over four years.

NEXT STEPS

- During the 2014-15 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.
- The ministry will also continue to review and refine other components of the SEG, and to consult with stakeholders to ensure that the evolution of the funding approach supports students with special education needs and improves student outcomes and well-being.
- The ministry is working on its 2015-16 funding projections, which are normally released in early spring.

Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disability

WHAT'S NEW

- Protocols have been revised and implementation of integrated transition planning began September 2014.
- The next phase is to collect data on the number of young people and adults who have received an integrated transition plan and determine the level of satisfaction young people adults and their families have had with the process. The monitoring of integrated transition plans will provide data that will be used to improve processes going forward so that the experience of young people

and their families may be enhanced. MCYS/MCSS Regional Offices are in the process of collecting this data.

KEY FACTS

- The Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disability Protocols are intended to be living agreements that are regularly reviewed and updated by regional offices in consultation with district school boards and community service providers to ensure they remain current with any legislation, regulations, policy, resource or community changes.

NEXT STEPS

- In September 2015, a parent and young person survey will be launched to determine their satisfaction with the transition planning process.

ADVICE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)

NEXT STEPS

- MACSE's next meeting: June 10 & 11, 2015.

UPDATES FROM OTHER MINISTRIES

Ministry: Children and Youth Services

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

- The Minister of Children and Youth Services' 2014 Mandate Letter includes supporting children and youth with complex and special needs as a priority, with a focus on developing and implementing strategies that will improve the experiences and outcomes for children and youth with complex and special needs, including FASD.
- The Ministry of Children and Youth Services recently communicated through its internet site that over the next year, the government will be engaging with service providers, individuals and families affected by FASD, researchers and clinicians, and First Nations, Metis, Inuit and urban Aboriginal partners on the development of a provincial FASD Strategy. This website also indicated that the engagement will include a series of provincial roundtables and advised website visitors to check back in January to see how they can get involved.

Mental Health

Update on the Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy

Status Update/Timing

- Ontario's new Tele-Mental Health Service is now providing more than 2,500 psychiatric consults to benefit children and youth in 35 rural, remote and underserved communities. This will help children, youth and their families receive the specialized service they need within their communities, as close to their home as possible.
 - All publicly funded mental health professionals working with children and youth can refer to the Service, including those working in school boards.
- Ontario is building on the first year of the youth suicide prevention plan and continues to support communities across the province to strengthen their youth suicide prevention efforts.
- The initiatives include:
 - Funding to Support Local Initiatives: In 2014-15, some child and youth mental health agencies funded by MCYS are receiving up to \$28,500 from a \$1 million provincial fund to support local suicide prevention efforts and engage with their community partners and Ontarians to raise awareness about mental health. As part of this plan, the ministry is also providing up to \$750,000 for dedicated First Nation, Metis, Inuit and urban Aboriginal communities in recognition of their needs for culturally appropriate and community driven solutions. This funding is in addition to the \$200,000 investment for Aboriginal partners in 2013-14.
 - Annual Provincial Mobilization Forums: Forums will be held across the province in February and March 2015 to provide education and training on

- youth suicide prevention. They will help communities strengthen their youth suicide prevention efforts. The forums are being planned and implemented by the Ontario Centre for Excellence in Child and Youth Mental Health (the Centre). One of these forums will be Aboriginal-focused and the Centre will plan and implement it in partnership with a steering committee composed of representatives from a number of Aboriginal communities.
- [Together to Live](#) – a Web-Based Toolkit for Communities: *Together to Live* is an online toolkit designed to help communities address youth suicide. Developed by the Centre, the tool aims to help service providers working with children and youth in their efforts to bring their communities together to prevent youth suicide.
 - Coaches: Additional support for local community mobilization groups is provided through five coaches by the Centre. The coaches come from diverse backgrounds: one is Francophone; one is Aboriginal; and one has experience working with the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres. They will help communities plan, implement and evaluate youth suicide prevention efforts.

Linkages to Special Education

- The Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy (Strategy) is aligned with *A Shared Responsibility, Ontario's Policy Framework for Child and Youth Mental Health* (2006). New investments in the first three years of the Strategy continue to benefit students, schools, school boards, children and youth, providing the services, supports and tools that kids need to succeed in and beyond the classroom. Investments are building capacity at the local level through the provision of new workers.
- Now in Phase Two, the Strategy is expanding to support the transition between youth and adult services, and to improve the quality of services for Ontarians of all ages. We are partnering with the province's public health units to increase awareness, fight stigma and promote mental health in schools and in the workplace. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is leading this second phase of work.

Update on the *Moving on Mental Health (MOMH)* action plan

Status Update/Timing

- The first 14 lead agencies have begun their work in strategic leadership and planning with their community-based and broader sector partners towards the development of the initial elements of the Core Services Delivery Plan and the Community Mental Health Plan.
- Toronto has been designated as a single service area. The Toronto lead agency identification process submission period closed on October 31, 2014.
- All remaining lead agencies will be identified in 2015.
- Lead agencies will assume greater responsibilities over a two to three year period. During the first year, all ministry-funded agencies that are delivering child and youth

mental health services will continue to play an important role in delivering quality services for children, youth and their families.

- Further information regarding *Moving on Mental Health* can be found on the Ministry of Children and Youth Services website. You can also sign up for e-alerts on the [Moving on Mental Health web page](#).

Linkages to Special Education

- The first 14 lead agencies are required to complete Community Mental Health Plans (CMHP). The CMHP's will enable the lead agency to identify shared priorities and roles community partners have in meeting the needs of children and youth across the child and youth mental health continuum. The identified lead agencies have begun with strategic leadership and planning activities with their system partners at the local level and will build on this as they assume greater responsibility.

Youth Justice

Update on the *Youth Justice Education and Skills Training Success Strategy* ("*Success Strategy*")

Status Update / Timing

- The "Success Strategy" launched in February 2013, brings focus to youth justice services policy development, program design and service delivery efforts to support improved academic achievement, attainment and increased school engagement of youth in or at risk of conflict with the law.
- One goal under the Strategy is to enhance youth's access to educational and skills training programming and supports through improved capacity of youth justice staff.
- Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) is establishing the *Internet for Education and Skills Development Working Group (IESD Working Group)* in 2015 to create standards for an effective, consistent, transparent and equitable approach to youth's internet access for education and skills development programming across the youth justice services continuum.

Linkages to Special Education

- YJSD continues to collaborate with the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch, EDU to identify opportunities to improve educational outcomes for youth in Section 23 CTCC education programs in youth justice settings.
- Internet access standards for youth in the justice system support EDU's Section 23 E-learning Strategy for youth to have the access and support needed to effectively participate in e-learning.

Ministry: Health and Long-Term Care

Ontario Takes Action to Reduce Smoking and Obesity Rates

Ontario has introduced legislation to protect people from the dangers of tobacco and the potential harms of electronic cigarettes, known as e-cigarettes. Also included in the legislation are measures to help families make healthier food choices by giving them caloric information when eating out or purchasing take-away meals.

Introduction of the *Making Healthier Choices Act, 2014* supports the government's commitment to achieve the lowest smoking rate in Canada. If passed, the proposed legislation would:

- Ban the sale and supply of e-cigarettes to anyone under the age of 19.
- Prohibit the use of e-cigarettes in certain places where the smoking of tobacco is prohibited.
- Ban the sale of e-cigarettes in certain places where the sale of tobacco is prohibited.
- Prohibit the display and promotion of e-cigarettes in places where e-cigarettes or tobacco products are sold, or offered for sale.
- Ban the sale of flavoured tobacco products, with a delayed implementation date for menthol-flavoured tobacco products.
- Increase maximum fines for those who sell tobacco to youth, making Ontario's maximum fines the highest in Canada.
- Strengthen enforcement to allow for testing of substances used in water pipes (e.g. hookahs, shisha) in indoor public places.
- Require calories for standard food and beverage items, including alcohol, to be posted on menus and menu boards in restaurants, convenience stores, grocery stores and other food service premises with 20 or more locations in Ontario;
- Require food service operators to post contextual information that would help to educate patrons about their daily caloric requirements;
- Authorize public health inspectors to enforce menu labelling requirements.

Status Update / Timing

- *Making Healthier Choices Act, 2014* was introduced on November 24, 2014.
- The proposed *Making Healthier Choices Act* includes provisions from a bill with the same name introduced on February 24, 2014 and provisions from the *Youth Smoking Prevention Act, 2013* introduced on November 18, 2013.

Linkages to Special Education

- This legislation, if passed, will promote healthy habits and behaviours and it is an investment in a healthier future for children and youth.
- This legislation will help empower children, youth and families in making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Smoking to be Prohibited on Patios, Sport Fields and Playgrounds

Changing the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*, Ontario is taking action to protect children and youth from the harmful effects of smoking.

Starting January 1, 2015, it will be illegal to:

- Smoke on bar and restaurant patios
- Smoke on playgrounds and public sports fields and surfaces
- Sell tobacco on university and college campuses.

Each year, tobacco claims 13,000 lives in Ontario — equivalent to 36 lives every day.

Tobacco-related disease costs Ontario's health care system an estimated \$2.2 billion in direct health care costs and an additional \$5.3 billion in indirect costs such as lost productivity.

Status Update / Timing

- Announced November 7, 2014.

Linkages to Special Education

- Preventing youth from starting to use tobacco and protecting them from the harmful effects of smoke supports Ontario's goal to have the lowest smoking rate in the country.
- The ban focuses not just on children but on parents and the broader community.
- The ban further protects children and youth from toxic second-hand tobacco smoke and will reduce its use in social occasions. It will facilitate making healthy choices and avoiding harmful behaviours.

Ontario Expanding Strategy to Address Mental Health Issues

Ontario is helping more people access co-ordinated mental health services when and where they need them by moving forward on the next phase of its mental health strategy, establishing a Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council and increasing support to community mental health service partners. The next phase of the strategy includes:

- A \$2.75 million investment to improve access to mental health care and reduce wait times at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health in Penetanguishene, the Royal in Ottawa and Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Services in Whitby
- Investing \$16 million to create 1,000 more supportive housing spaces over the next three years, as part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy

- Improving supports for youth with eating disorders through a pilot program with Ontario Shores, which will open a new 12-bed paediatric residential treatment unit treating 32 patients per year
- Partnering with the province's public health units to increase awareness, fight stigma and promote mental health in schools and in the workplace
- Developing a funding model -- based on advice from the new advisory council -- to improve outcomes, deliver higher quality care, and ensure that programs are better tailored to the needs of local communities.

Ontario is also providing \$138 million over three years through the 2014 Budget to community service agencies to help increase access to services such as peer support groups, treatment programs, and crisis and early intervention initiatives.

Status Update / Timing

- The [Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy](#), launched in 2011 with a focus on children and youth, provided more than 50,000 additional children and youth with access to mental health and addiction services. The strategy is now expanding to support the transition between youth and adult services, and to improve the quality of services for Ontarians of all ages
- The next phase of the strategy was announced November 25, 2014.

Linkages to Special Education

- Investing in community mental health and addiction services supports [Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care](#) and [Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy](#). It is also part of the Ontario government's four part economic plan to build Ontario up by investing in people's talent and skills, building new public infrastructure like roads and transit, creating a dynamic, supportive environment where business thrives and building a secure savings plan so everyone can afford to retire.
- Ensuring that children and youth have access to the right services and supports at the right time is essential to help them fulfill their vision of a better life and reach their full potential.

Ministry: Training, Colleges and Universities

Accessibility Fund for Students with Disabilities (AFSD)

Status Update / Timing

- In 2013-14, over \$48 million in funding was provided to assist students with disabilities succeed in postsecondary studies.
- In 2013-14, over 54,000 students were registered with Disabilities Offices at publicly funded postsecondary institutions.
- For 2014-15 onward, the ministry has integrated Summer Transitions Program funding with AFSD funding.
- An additional \$4.5 million is included in the new integrated model.
- Final allocations for the integrated fund were announced in December 2014.
- The ministry also announced that it would be reviewing the existing AFSD guidelines for the integrated fund.
 - The ministry will work with the sector to update the guidelines for the integrated fund, taking into account current mandates for the funds.

Linkages to Special Education

- The AFSD assists colleges and universities with costs related to the operation of offices for students with disabilities that provide a wide range of services to students with disabilities, including: arranging note-taking support for students with visual impairments, and interpreter services for students who are deaf, deafened and hard of hearing; arranging for learning assessments to determine the nature of a student's learning disability; and providing access to computers and appropriate technological learning aids.

Strengthening Transitions to Postsecondary Education for Students with Disabilities

Status Update / Timing

- The ministry is halfway through its three-year commitment of \$1.5 million to the Four Point Action Plan to strengthen transitions to postsecondary education for students with disabilities. The plan, implemented in 2013-14, will support students transitioning from high school to postsecondary.
 - [The Web Resource Guide](#): Since the launch in December 2013, there have been more than 43,000 page views. The website continues to undergo development, through outreach activities to promote the website and with input from the Advisory Board to support its activities.
 - **The Demonstration Projects** York University and Algonquin College have partnered with local school boards to pilot the proposed transitions model. There are 63 students enrolled in the programs. Each institution continues to develop resources to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder as they transition to postsecondary education.

- **Multi-Sector Working Group on Transitions to Postsecondary Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder** The ministry held the first meeting for the Working Group on October 3rd, 2014. The group will advise on the Proposed Transitions Model for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The first meeting provided members an opportunity to raise concerns and challenges with the current transition process from a variety of perspectives. The next meeting has been planned for January 22, 2015.
- The ministry expects to initiate consultative reviews of transitions-related documentation and existing transitions programs for students with learning disabilities to identify best practices, in collaboration with colleges and universities in the winter of 2015.

Linkages to special education

- The early focus on students with ASD reflects the significant increase in the number of students with ASD transitioning from secondary to postsecondary education. At the same time, it is expected that the plan will result in strengthening transition supports for all students with disabilities.
- The Transition Resource Website provides students, families, and educators with information about transitioning to postsecondary education. Students with disabilities can learn about the services and supports they need to succeed at college and university.
- The two demonstration projects, led by the Disabilities Services Offices at Algonquin College and at York University, are working with district school boards and community agencies, to develop effective practices, tools and templates to support the transition of students with ASD to postsecondary education.
- The first meeting of the Multi-Sector Working Group on Transitions to Postsecondary Education was held in Fall 2014. The second meeting is planned for early Winter 2015. Members include representatives from the Ministry of Education and district school boards.
- Upon completion of these three-year projects in 2015-16, the projects will share their learning, tools and resources with the relevant sectors.

Regional Assessment Centres

- In 2013-14, \$965,000 was allocated to the Northern Ontario Resource and Assessment Centre, and \$1.03 million to Queen's University Regional Assessment and Resource Centre. The centres used the funds to assist students with disabilities in Grade 8 and 9 with their transition to high school and encourage and support them to pursue postsecondary education.
- Collège Boréal recently entered into an agreement with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to establish a Francophone Centre for psycho-educational assessments in Sudbury relating to learning disabilities for French speaking postsecondary education students in Northern Ontario in 2014-2015. The total allocation in 2014-2015 for the Francophone Centre is \$289,500.
- \$75,000 was allocated to the Enhanced Mentoring Program at Trent University for 2013-14, the final year of funding for the pilot.

Student Success

- In 2012-13, MTCU continued to work with EDU on two key student success initiatives - Dual Credit programs and the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM).
- In 2014-15, \$35.6 million has been allocated for the School College Work Initiative (SCWI) which includes dual credits.
- In 2014-15, \$25.3 million has been allocated for the Specialist High Skills Major Program.

Linkages to Special Education

- In 2013-14 (year 8), 42,000 students are participating in approximately 1,600 programs in over 640 schools
- 2012-13 OnSIS data indicates that 26% of SHSM students had an IEP
- Local data submitted by SCWI Regional Planning Teams indicate that 14% of dual credit students in 2012-13 had been reviewed by an IPRC and 23% had an IEP.
- For 2013-14, a pilot dual credit program involved 10 students at Durham College, Durham DSB and Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB to provide participants with an opportunity to experience college life and enhance their academic and vocational skills by participating in courses that are part of Durham College's Community Integration through Cooperative Education (CICE) program. Results were impressive and the pilot is continuing in 2014-15.

Student Success

- On September 26, 2013, EDU released *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools, Policy and Program Requirements, Kindergarten to Grade 12*, a policy document describing a new education and career/life planning program designed to support students in developing the knowledge and skills they need to make informed education and career/life choices.
- Boards implemented Individual Pathways Plans for students in Grades 7 to 12 2013-14. Full policy implementation for every elementary and secondary school across Ontario began in September 2014.

Linkages to Special Education

- As part of the new education and career/life planning programs, students document their learning in an "All About Me" portfolio in Kindergarten to Grade 6, and in a web-based Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) from Grade 7 to Grade 12. Students have opportunities to share the portfolio or IPP with a teacher and/or guidance counsellor. They may also choose to share their learning with a parent or guardian.
- "All About Me" portfolios and Individual Pathways Plans may be used as a source of information, among various others, when developing the Individual Education Plan and Transition Plan, which are required for all students who receive special education programs and services.

Apprenticeship

- In 2013-14, \$2.7 million was provided to colleges for the Support for Apprentices with Disabilities (SAWD) initiative.

- SAWD assists colleges with costs related to providing accommodation, assessments and equipment modification for people with disabilities participating in apprenticeship programs, pre-apprenticeship programs and Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Programs.

Mental Health

- As part of the Government's \$257 million Mental Health and Addiction Strategy announced in 2011 Budget, the ministry launched the Mental Health Innovation Fund in September 2012 for projects that would lead to an improvement in mental health services and outcomes for Ontario's postsecondary students.
- The initial call in September 2012 resulted in 47 proposals being submitted with the Minister announcing, in March 2013, 10 projects for funding of \$6.34M over a three year period. One of the successful projects was the Colleges Ontario proposal for the Centre for Innovation on Campus Mental Health.
- A second call for proposals was issued in April and resulted in 41 proposals being submitted. On October 4, 2013 the Minister announced funding for a further 10 projects totalling \$3.5M over a two year period. The successful projects include Canadore's development of Ojibwe and Cree Language Mental Health First Aid services, Conestoga's examination of new approaches of supporting students with ASD, and Georgian's exploration of a case management approach to providing services in partnership with Centennial College.
- In Fall 2014, the ministry launched the third call for proposals under the Mental Health Innovation Fund. There were 49 eligible proposals submitted. The \$6M annual call covers the period 2014-15 through 2016-17 and targets three specific groups of challenged students: Aboriginal students' mental health, postsecondary students battling addictions issues, and, students with mental health issues in transition from secondary to postsecondary studies.
 - The Minister has recommended 12 projects be funded under the third round of the Mental Health Innovation Fund for the period 2014-15 to 2016-17. A further two projects at Sault College and EGALE Canada will also receive funding (note: announcement is anticipated on January 16th, 2015).
- On October 4, 2013, the Minister also helped to officially launch Good2Talk//All J'Écoute, a 24 hour-a-day, 365 day-a-year province-wide, bilingual, postsecondary mental health helpline being operated by Kid's Help Phone, the national community-based organization that has been providing telephone counselling services for young people since 1989. This service is being provided in partnership with CONNEX, 211 Ontario and the Centre for Excellence in Child and Youth Mental Health. The postsecondary mental health helpline is accessible at 1-866-925-5454 and is online at [Good 2 Talk](#) and [Allo j'écoute](#) websites. The Good2Talk service was fully launched in October 2013 with great success and helps more than 1,000 postsecondary students a month.
- The ministry is continuing to work with partner ministries, Health and Long-term Care, Education, and Children and Youth Services, as the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy moves forward into Years 4+ of the Strategy.
- The Ministry of Education is a full partner in Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy released in June, 2011.

Ministry of Community and Social Services

Developmental services investment strategy

- In the 2014 Ontario Budget, the government announced an investment of \$810M over the next three years with a focus on expanding direct funding; better supporting people in key life transitions; responding to people who have urgent support needs, and; broader options for residential support.
- The investment will support the further transformation of developmental services and expand supports to more individuals in the coming years:
 - Direct funding for 21,000 people, eliminating the current waitlist for Special Services at Home in two years and the waitlist for Passport within four years.
 - Provide residential supports and promote community living for 1,400 people.
 - Provide planning, transition and navigation support to help 4,200 people map out their futures.
 - Support agencies by providing additional funding for staff in the community and developmental services sector, recognizing the importance of the thousands of frontline workers.
 - And promote innovation and service modernization across the developmental services sector
- Dr. Helena Jaczek is the new Minister of Community and Social Services.

Select Committee on Developmental Services

- The Committee was struck in the fall of 2013 and included members from all three parties. Meetings commenced in October 2013 and the Committee finished public hearings the week of January 20, 2014. In addition to meetings in Toronto, they travelled to London, Thunder Bay, Moosonee and Ottawa.
- The Committee heard from ministries, agencies, family members and individuals with a developmental disability.
- The committee was dissolved following the dissolution of parliament for the June 2014 Ontario election, and was re-convened to release its final report in July 2014. The ministry is currently studying its 46 recommendations. The ministry's official response is anticipated for fall 2014.
- Many presenters have raised issues that students with a developmental disability encounter and difficulties transitioning from school to adult life in the community.

Developmental Services Employment and Modernization Fund

- MCSS established the Developmental Services Employment and Modernization Fund as part of the Ontario government's \$810 million investment strategy for community and developmental services approved in the 2014 Budget. This new multi-year fund will support the ongoing transformation of the developmental services system by promoting inclusive employment support models and outcomes, and by encouraging greater collaboration, innovation and efficiency in service delivery.
- The overall purpose of the fund is to support the ongoing transformation of the developmental services system into one that promotes greater inclusion and

independence for individuals, and delivers person-centred supports through a collaborative and efficient service delivery network.

- Information about how to apply is available on the ministry's website; deadline for applications is October 24, 2014.
- The fund consists of the following two streams:
 - Employment - the purpose of this stream is to foster a culture change in the delivery of employment programs, in order to make integrated employment in the community the preferred outcome for individuals with developmental disabilities.
 - Service Delivery Modernization – the purpose of this stream is to build on innovation and collaboration by developmental services agencies to modernize service delivery models and support the transition towards more individualized and responsive services and supports for individuals and families.

Person-directed Planning and Facilitation Regional Initiative

- The ministry is investing \$900,000 for person-directed planning in 2013/14 and into 2014/15.
- Once selected, individuals work with an independent facilitator or an agency planner to create a customized person-directed plan to help the individual:
 - Identify their life vision and goals;
 - Find supports to meet their goals with the help of others.
- The planning/facilitation process would involve:
 - Direct contact with a facilitator to engage in a series of connections/meetings;
 - Development of a written person-directed plan;
 - Planning implementation support; and
- Evaluation for all participants (both facilitators and individuals/families). Individuals are being selected now.
- Person-directed planning has been identified as a useful way to plan for transitions, such as leaving school.