

March 12, 2010

Dear Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC),

As the new Minister of Education, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you and express my excitement in working with you to improve outcomes for students across our province. As a former member of SEAC, I am aware of the commitment and the vital role that SEACs play in supporting and meeting the needs of students with special education needs within your district school board. I am writing to personally thank you for your contribution and commitment as a SEAC member to improving services and programs for students with special education needs.

The Ministry of Education is committed to ensuring that SEACs are provided with the appropriate information and resources to continue providing assistance to school boards in support of children with special education needs. In an effort to support SEACs in this role, the ministry has identified opportunities to improve its communication and information sharing with SEACs. To ensure that SEAC members can access up to date information on ministry initiatives, SEAC orientation and training materials, resources and effective practices, I am asking for your assistance within the following areas. I am confident these efforts will result in an enhanced collective capacity to further the interests and well-being of students with special education needs.

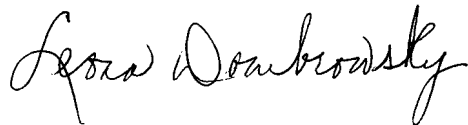
The ministry is currently in the process of reviewing the SEAC e-learning website. At this time, we are asking that SEAC chairs facilitate a discussion with their members about the website during a SEAC meeting and provide feedback and suggestions on how it can be utilized to be a more effective source of information for SEAC members. The SEAC e-learning website can be found at <http://seac-learning.ca/> along with information on how to provide the ministry with your feedback.

To provide SEAC members with current ministry and special education updates, meeting minutes from the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE), and Ministry of Education memos in regard to special education issues, the ministry will make available a direct link on the SEAC website to access this information. In order to receive updates directly we are asking that all SEAC chairs register themselves by sending an email to christine.riedel@ontario.ca. Christine, an Education Officer with the ministry's Special Education Policy and Programs Branch, will send registered SEAC chairs ministry updates on issues pertaining to special education.

As a method to provide further opportunity for development of effective practices in SEAC recruitment, orientation, training agenda management, and parent/stakeholder engagement, the SEAC website will host resources and materials on effective practices occurring in the province. Christine will be in contact with SEAC chairs shortly to discuss next steps in this process.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your continued efforts to support students with special education needs in partnership with local district school boards. I look forward to the implementation of the above mentioned initiatives as we strive to assist you to undertake your roles and responsibilities as a SEAC member.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leona Dombrowsky". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'L'.

Leona Dombrowsky
Minister of Education

c: Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)