

LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR

November 2008

The following are some topics that your SEAC should be looking at this month. As usual action items will be underlined, and summarized at the end. Feel free to share any of this information or the attachments with other SEAC members. As always, when you are planning to introduce a motion for the consideration of SEAC, it is particularly important that you share all related background items with your fellow SEAC reps.

The topics covered by this SEAC Circular:

1. IEP Initiatives
2. OPA Student Assessment Project
3. Dedicated PA day
4. CODE Projects
5. Learning for All
6. Special Education Plans
7. Public Consultation on Information and Communication Standard
8. Educational Opportunities

List of Supplementary Materials:

1. Special Education Update
2. Memo to Directors on IEP samples
3. IC Public Review Summary
4. Special Education Advocacy Institute Agenda
5. Special Education Advocacy Institute Registration form

1. IEP Initiatives

The Ministry of Education has posted the first six **IEP Samples** on a website that is available for everyone: www.ontariodirectors.ca/IEP-PEI/index.html. Eventually there

will be 26 samples, in French and English, based on an elementary and secondary template for each exceptionality and 2 templates for non-identified students.

I have attached a copy of the memo that went to Directors of Education about the IEP samples, which contains the following “We ask you to share this information with your Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), school councils and your school communities. These samples are a ‘work in progress’ therefore we invite and welcome comments and suggestions for improving them over time.”

There is an opportunity right on the website to give feedback on the IEP samples, so please read them and send comments. Note that the samples are written using the provincial electronic IEP template, which does not have a space for parent or student comments on it, so please point this out in any suggestions you make. LDAO reps or alternates who send e-mail comments on the site are requested to c.c. dianew@ldao.ca.

In addition to the IEP samples, the Ministry is preparing other IEP resource documents for educators and principals. A ‘read-only’ version of the IEP template is being developed by the Ministry of Education, to be made available to parents by school boards. In the meantime, the IEP samples give an idea of the format of the template.

LDAO and the Reference Committee continue to work on the **IEP Resource Project for Parents and Students**. There are currently 10 Units of content prepared, including one specifically for students, and work continues on a Glossary of Terms and supplementary units containing more detailed information for those who wish it. The final product will be an online workshop accessible to everyone, in the spring of 2009.

2. OPA Student Assessment Project

On October 15th, the Ontario Psychological Association (OPA) held a conference showcasing Promising Practices from the 2006-2008 OPA Student Assessment Project. 72 school boards and 3 school authorities participated in the project. A Summary of Key Results Areas (May 23, 2008) and the individual presentations at the conference can be downloaded at: www.psych.on.ca/?id1=117

Participants at the conference received a copy of **Sharing Promising Practices, A Resource Guide: Kindergarten to Grade 4**. One important outcome of the project was that many boards developed a more integrated system for early response to students who are struggling, with interventions based on classroom assessment, then referral to an In-School Support Team for further input, before referral for professional assessments. It is very important that parents understand this whole process, and SEACs can help with this education. SEACs should ask for a presentation from their board’s participants in the conference, and discuss how SEAC can help promote promising practices to parents in their board.

3. Dedicated PA day

The Memo to Directors mentions the dedicated PA day as well: “The focus of the 2009 Special Education Professional Development day will be to support school teams in the

development of effective IEPs as well as the implementation of the new Education for All, *Learning for All K-12*, a practical resource for classroom instruction.”

We understand that some school boards have already used one of their fall PA days for special education, but the many are waiting until the new year, when there will be more information on *Learning for All K-12*.

4. CODE Projects

29 school boards will be presenting results of their CODE-funded projects at the **CODE Special Education Summit** on November 17 and 18. SEACs should ask for a presentation from their board’s representatives who attended the Summit and ask how their board intends to continue the work of their own CODE project.

5. Learning for All

There will be a presentation on **Learning for All** at the CODE Special Education Summit, but the document is not expected to be released until January 2009.

6. Special Education Plans

School boards and school authorities will be required to report amendments only for their 2009 Special Education Plans. The Ministry is continuing to work on a process to align the improvement planning and reporting processes for the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, Student Success/ Learning to 18, and Special Education Plans. SEACs should be discussing any changes that will be made to their board’s Special Education Plan.

7. Public Consultation on Information and Communication Standard

The **Information and Communication Standard Development Committee** has produced a draft standard for public review. The final version of the standard will become a regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and will govern how information and communications are made accessible. I have attached a Summary version for now. The full document and an annotated version (which talks about the thinking behind the provisions in the standard) will be up on the Accessibility Directorate website soon, along with instructions on how to provide feedback.

I will let you know when the public review process begins, but in the meantime I would recommend that you read the Summary, especially the section on Educational Organizations and Regulatory Bodies (p.7), as these provisions are very important for students with special education needs.

8. Educational Opportunities

A parent organization called **People for Education** is holding a one day education conference on **Saturday November 8th** at York University. You can read more and register at: www.peopleforeducation.com/getinvolved/annualconference

The Ontario Association of Education Advocates, in partnership with LDAO, were awarded a Ontario Trillium Foundation grant to bring together students identified with special needs, their parents, and educational professionals for an intensive 2 ½ day training program in advocacy, self-advocacy and collaboration.

The **Special Education Advocacy Institute** will be held from **November 20 - 22, 2008** at a school in Oakville. The cost of registration and meals are covered under the Trillium grant, but preregistration is required.

An agenda and registration form are attached.

ACTION ITEMS

- There is an opportunity on the website www.ontariodirectors.ca/IEP-PEI/index.html to give feedback on the IEP samples, so please read them and send comments. LDAO reps or alternates who send e-mail comments on the site are requested to c.c. dianew@ldao.ca.
- SEACs should ask for a presentation from their board's participants in the OPA Promising Practices conference, and discuss how SEAC can help promote promising practices to parents in their board.
- SEACs should ask for a presentation from their board's representatives who attended the CODE Special Education Summit, and ask how their board intends to continue the work of their own CODE project.
- SEACs should be discussing any changes that will be made to their board's Special Education Plan.
- Recommendation to read the Information and Communication Public Review Summary, especially the section on Educational Organizations and Regulatory Bodies on page 7.

Questions?

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