



Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario

September 3, 2009

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, MPP
Minister of Education
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON
M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Wynne,

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) would like to share with you two recent reports that outline the current knowledge about learning disabilities, from Canadian and international perspectives. Their findings are very similar across international boundaries, and demonstrate many unmet needs of persons with learning disabilities. The White Paper from the World Summit on Learning Disabilities was tabled in the Alberta Legislature on April 23, 2009 and in the Senate of Canada on March 8, 2009. We understand that a copy was sent to all provincial Ministers of Education.

In addition we have enclosed a copy of the LDAO response to the Special Education section of the 2008 Annual Report from the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, and our response to the Provincial Interest Regulation Consultation Paper.

As we mentioned in our response to the Auditor General's report, "in the intervening years since the 2001 Provincial Auditor's Report there have been many positive changes in special education in Ontario," and we credit your leadership with initiating many of these changes. We also know that you share some of our concerns about the ongoing work that needs to be done so that all students with special education needs can reach their potential.

We would like to bring to your attention the fact that the Ministries of Education of most of the provinces and territories have adopted the new definition of learning disabilities by the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada. With the exception of a few minor differences in wording, the LDAC definition is the same as the LDAO definition developed through funding by the Ministry of Education under the Promoting Early Intervention Project in 2001. At the time of that project the development of a new definition was commissioned because the Ministry of Education (EDU) definition was out of date and not in line with research. Clearly the EDU definition is even more out of date now, and out of step with the definition used by the rest of Canada.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your staff at your earliest convenience to discuss the definition and to address a number of concerns raised in this letter and in our attached responses.

www.ldao.ca

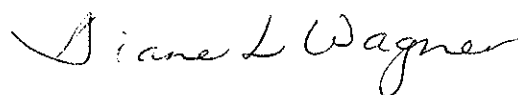
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We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maggie Wygant". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Maggie Wygant
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diane L Wagner". The signature is cursive and elegant, with a prominent loop at the end.

Diane Wagner
Coordinator, Public Policy & Client
Services

c.c. Barry Finlay
Director, Special Education
Policy & Programs Branch