

Meeting Summary
Meeting of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education
February 5 & 6, 2014

The Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) held its most recent meeting on February 5th and 6th in Toronto. Below are highlights of the meeting:

February 5, 2014

- John Wilhelm, Chair of Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) welcomed members to Council and reminded them of the *Conflict of Interest* rules and the requirement to declare any potential conflict at each meeting.
- The Chair reminded members that since February marks the end of MACSE's fiscal year priorities for the upcoming year will be discussed and finalized before the June meeting.
- Barry Finlay, Director of the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch (SEPPB) provided an update on the following items:
 - As per the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), all communication products will be made accessible. Accessible communications products means producing documents that meet the needs of all users including users with low vision and other accessibility issues.
 - The ministry continues to work with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) on integrated transition planning for youth with developmental disabilities and how to transition these youth into adult services and long term support. One of the biggest challenges is the coordination of ministries and ensuring a seamless approach.
 - All 72 school boards received funding for a Mental Health Leader in 2013-14.
 - Three new working groups have been established for the following exceptionalities: Giftedness, Developmental Disability/ Mild Intellectual Disability and Behaviour.
 - PPM 8 on Learning Disabilities is currently in edit with an anticipated release date of Spring 2014. Implementation of the revised PPM is targeted for September 2014.
 - The Minister has been briefed on the special education funding working group and will consider its advice as we move into the release of the Grants for Student Needs.
 - PPM 156 on Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs - Implementation of PPM 156 will begin in September 2014.
 - On April 29th 2014, we plan to bring together all boards for a one-day Learning for All K-12 (L4All K-12) Professional Learning Day. This one day session will include updates from the Ministry of Education, findings from district school boards and breakout sessions featuring presentations by district school boards highlighting projects pertaining to several areas of focus including PPM 156 Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs, IEP and IPP/Creating Pathways to Success.
- Dr. Kathy Short and staff from SEPPB provided an update on the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. The three goals of this strategy include:
 - Providing fast access to high quality services;
 - Identifying and intervening in child and youth mental health and addictions needs early; and
 - Closing critical service gaps for vulnerable children and youth.

Over the past three years, more than \$250M has been spent on a number of initiatives related to child and youth mental health including:

- Funding provided for Mental Health Leaders in all school boards

- Implementation of school mental health ASSIST designed to help all 72 school boards as they work to promote student mental health and well being
- The release of a draft K-12 document Supporting Minds and intention to revise it including implications for Full Day Kindergarten (FDK).
- Dr Short provided Council with an outline of the core elements her team is working on with the mental health leaders which includes:
 - Implementation and Coaching Model
 - Organizational Conditions
 - Capacity Building
 - Evidence Based practice
 - System Coordination and Networking
- As part of the Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, the three ministries (MCYS, MOHLTC and EDU) committed to evaluating the Strategy and the various initiatives after the first three years.
- The Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES) was hired by MOHLTC to develop an evaluation framework, develop a baseline mental health and addictions scorecard, and evaluate various components of the Strategy including a qualitative study of the impact of all the workers hired through the Strategy (including the 72 Mental Health Leaders) and an evaluation of the Mental Health and Addictions Nurses in Schools Program.
- MACSE members viewed the introduction of the mental health and addictions video resource prepared by the ministry to support educators implementation of the Strategy in the classroom. MACSE members provided input to the ministry on mental health and addictions challenges for various special education needs / exceptionality groups.
- MACSE members heard presentations on a variety of initiatives underway within MCYS, Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (TCU) and the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS). A written update from each ministry is now part of the Special Education Update. One item of importance was the work being done across Ministries in Mental Health and Addictions.

February 6th, 2014

- Julie Williams and staff from SEPPB provided background information for new members and an update on Learning for All K-12. As mentioned the ministry plans to bring together all boards for a one-day Learning for All K-12 (L4All K-12) Professional Learning Day. This one day session will include updates from EDU, findings from district school boards and breakout sessions featuring presentations by district school boards highlighting projects pertaining to several areas of focus (PPM 156, IEP and Transitions, IPP/Creating Pathways to Success, Student Self-Efficacy and Collaborative Inquiry)
- The ministry continues to provide school boards with funds to support Learning for All K-12 Regional Projects that focus on:
 - educators “knowing your student” and “students knowing themselves as learners” as student self-efficacy is key to their achievement and well-being
 - fostering continuous improvement of IEPs as a critical tool in driving student achievement and well-being for students with special education needs
 - developing a plan and identifying effective practices to implement the requirements set out in Policy and Program Memorandum (PPM) 156.
- In Fall 2013 SEPPB conducted a survey with the 18 lead L4All K-12 school boards to review Learning for All K-12 Regional Projects 2009-13.
- Julie provided an update on the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) website. A total of 42 resources have now been posted from various school boards.

- Staff from the Inclusive Education Branch, Safe Schools and Student Well-Being Branch and SEPPB provided an overview of the *Supporting Bias-Free Progressive Discipline in Schools Resource Guide*. This guide was developed by the Ministry of Education and the Ontario Human Rights Commission and reflects feedback provided through consultations that took place with educators, non-teaching staff and parent groups.
- MACSE members reviewed their focus areas for 2012-13 and discussed upcoming priorities. Two working groups were established and are as follows:
 - Full Day Kindergarten and early identification
 - Special Education exceptionalities / guidelines / intervention
- Once finalized, MACSE minutes will be posted on the MACSE repository and will be available to members. [Minutes](#) from previous meetings are available online.
- MACSE's next meeting is scheduled for June 24 and 25, 2014.
- Members are reminded that all meeting materials from the February 2014 meeting are confidential unless otherwise stated.