

Ministry of Education

Special Education Policy
and Programs Branch
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Ministère de l'Éducation

Direction des politiques et des programmes
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900, rue Bay
Toronto ON M7A 1L2



MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education

FROM: Louise Sirisko
Director, Special Education Policy and Programs Branch

DATE: March 1, 2016

SUBJECT: Provincial and Demonstration Schools Consultation

I am writing to inform you that the Ministry of Education is consulting with students, families, staff, education partners and community partners. The purpose of the consultation is to explore ways to provide a range of quality programs and services that best meet the needs of students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, blind or have low vision, deafblind, or have learning disabilities and their families. We are also seeking to better understand the knowledge and skills that would best prepare our students for their various pathways in school and life.

Consultations will begin in March and will include:

- Centre Jules-Léger (Ottawa) Provincial and Demonstration schools,
- Robarts School for the Deaf (London); and
- English-language demonstration schools for students with severe learning disabilities (Amethyst Demonstration School in London, Trillium Demonstration School in Milton, and Sagonaska Demonstration School in Belleville).

Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf in Milton, Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf in Belleville, and W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind in Brantford, will not be included in this consultation.

Further information, including discussion papers, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and an online survey have been posted on the Ministry of Education website at http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/consult_pds.html.

The Centre Jules-Léger consultation will also explore governance accordance with the ministry's commitments under the Consultation Policy on Governance of French Language Education (2011) and in light of the 2015 French language Services Commissioner of Ontario report which made eight recommendations about the operation and governance of Centre Jules-Léger.

The Ministry believes that district school boards will have an important contribution to make to the consultation process. This will include information about program delivery models and supports for students who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or have learning disabilities. In the next few days, the consultants hired by the Ministry to facilitate the consultation will be sending you an invitation to participate in regional sessions for schools boards that will be held in March and early April (excluding the week of March 14). The facilitators are:

Consultation	Facilitator Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robarts School for the Deaf • English Language Demonstration Schools 	The Strategic Counsel Lisa Fulford 416-975-4465, x 221 Email: lfulford@thestrategiccounsel.com
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre Jules-Léger 	PGF Consultants Kéïla Fontaine 613-241-2251, x 229 Email: kfontaine@pgf.ca

Each Board will be invited to send up to two staff and two students who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or have learning disabilities, to participate (face-to-face or by teleconference). In addition, the online survey will be available until April 8, 2016, for all stakeholders to make individual submissions.

Once the consultations conclude this spring, the ministry will then carefully consider the input received from students and families, staff and education and community partners. As plans for moving forward are developed, we will work closely with all our partners to ensure that their perspectives are fully understood.

If you have any questions, please contact Anita Bennett (Anita.M.Bennett@ontario.ca), the manager in my branch leading the consultation in collaboration with the consultants. Thank you for your ongoing cooperation.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Louise Sirisko