

2010-11 Ministry of Education Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Building Capacity Survey Results Highlights

OVERVIEW

During the 2010-11 school year the Ministry of Education distributed a survey to the Chairs of all SEACs in Ontario, 52 SEACs responded to the survey. Respondents provided feedback and comments in the following categories:

SEAC PRACTICES

- Nearly all SEACs indicated consultation in the review of special education programs and services in their board. A majority additionally indicated that their SEAC provided recommendations during the review.
- An overwhelming majority of SEACs indicated consultation in the development and review of the Special Education Report.
- Half of the SEACs reported involvement in their board's Board Improvement Planning for Student Achievement (BIPSA) process.
- Effective practices to maintain a collaborative, representative, and informed SEAC membership include participation on other committees of the board, regular professional development, and annually establishing values, goals, protocols, and/or priority setting.
- Challenges reported related to membership renewal, recruitment, and orientation practices.
- Several rural and large geographical area SEACs reported that the ability of members to consistently travel to monthly meetings was an additional challenge.

SEAC LEARNING WEBSITE

- Most SEAC members are aware of the SEAC Learning website, and some visit and utilize the site regularly.
- SEACs utilize the website as a resource for information and for member orientation.
- The *Roles and Responsibilities* component was the most useful for visitors to the site, while the *Historical Overview* was the least helpful.
- Suggestions for improvement to the SEAC Learning website included improving user-friendliness and providing resources and links to promote sharing of effective practices.

ORIENTATION

- SEACs prepare manuals and provide orientation presentations for new members.
- Few SEACs report using a mentor program for new members.
- Few respondents provide training jointly with other SEACs or school boards.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Most SEAC information is provided to their community through board websites.
- A small number of SEACs identified the use of social networking to engage the community.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

SEACs also had the opportunity to provide additional comments at the end of the survey. Three common themes emerged:

- An interest in networking with other SEACs in the province, including sharing best practices.
- Increased opportunities for professional development.
- Seeking innovative approaches to working collaboratively with school boards on the review and development of special education programs and services.