

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MINISTER

FOR THE YEAR 2005 - 2006

Ministry of Education
Advisory Council on Special Education
c/o Suite 710
2 Carlton Street, 7th Floor
Toronto ON M5B 1J3

Ministère de l'Éducation
Conseil consultatif sur l'éducation
de l'enfance en difficulté
a/s du Bureau 710
2, rue Carlton, 7^e étage
Toronto ON M5B 1J3



June 8, 2006

Sandra Pupatello, MPP
Minister of Education
900 Bay Street
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1L2

Re: Annual Report of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education

Dear Minister Pupatello,

In my capacity as Chair of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE), please accept my sincerest congratulations on your recent appointment as Ontario's Minister of Education.

It is with considerable pleasure that I submit this report to you on the activities of your Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) for the fiscal year 2005-2006.

On behalf of all MACSE members, I wish to express appreciation for the many opportunities MACSE has been provided, during the past year, to contribute advice to the development and implementation of special education policy and programs in the province of Ontario.

The attached report documents MACSE's foremost activities, observations and recommendations

As you have recently acquired the Education portfolio, this report will be timely in identifying issues and solutions that Council believes are critical to ensuring success for students with special needs. MACSE members look forward to working with you as the government's agenda for special education is implemented.

On a personal note, it has been my pleasure to have served as Chair of the Advisory Council on Special Education for the past ten years. I have been fortunate to have an opportunity to work with several ministers: Gerard Kennedy, Elizabeth Witmer, Janet Ecker, Dave Johnson and John Snobelen. I would like to thank each of the ministers and their staff for their commitment to ensure continuing improvements to special education programs and services for students with special education needs.

I would also like to thank the staff of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Council members and their sectors for their hard work and ongoing support and commitment to me in my role as Council chair. It has been a very rewarding and fulfilling experience to work on behalf of students with special education needs.

I look forward to meeting with you to review Council's report in detail. I also look forward to working with you and ministry staff in new capacities to enhance the education system for all Ontario students.

Yours sincerely,

Lynn Ziraldo
Chair

Letter of Transmittal

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PART 1

Activities of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education in 2005/06

The mandate of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) is to advise you, as Minister, on any matter related to the establishment and provision of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils (students with special education needs), including the identification and provision of early intervention programs for students with special needs. A more detailed description of the structure of Council and its mandate is attached as Appendix 1.

In order to fulfill this important responsibility, Council responds to proposals or positions of the Ministry of Education or other ministries that impact on students with special education needs. Council's voice is often heard through its representation on various Ministry work groups or other stakeholder advisory bodies. Members also document successful practices and challenges that are evident in the special education community. Each member of Council is requested to consult with the organizations in his or her constituency and to table a report at each MACSE meeting reflecting any input received. MACSE's role is to advise you on recommended actions, following careful analysis of all of the information.

During the course of this year, MACSE had the opportunity to offer advice or participate in discussions related to a number of significant issues that affect students with special education needs. This included, for example, recommendations on:

- Education Funding
- Teacher Qualifications
- Post Secondary Transitions
- Safe Schools Initiative
- Literacy and Numeracy Initiatives
- Early School Initiatives
- Learning to 18 Initiatives
- Education for All
- Alternate Assessments
- Daily Physical Activity
- Health Support Services
- Parent Voice in Education
- Professional Development
- Special Education Programs and Services
- Provincial Elementary Report Card
- Report of the Expert Panel: Education for All
- Student Success and
- Mini Discussion paper 'Leading Education'

MACSE also continued to follow through with the development, refinement and application of its Policy Framework on Special Education, an Accountability Logic Model and position papers on Funding, Safe School and Transitions. MACSE is currently working on a Service Coordination Logic Model.

Council continues to collaborate with other ministries through their participation at Council meetings. Council's voice was also heard through the participation of its Chair in meetings with the former Minister of Education, the Honourable Gerard Kennedy; the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Education, Ms Kathleen Wynne; the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Children and Youth Services, Ms Liz Sandals; Dr. Ben Levin, the Deputy Minister of Education; George Zegarac, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Strategic Planning and Elementary/Secondary Schools Division of the Ministry of Education; Aryeh Gitterman, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Instruction & Leadership Development Division; the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ms Judith Wright; the Chief Assessment Officer of the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, Ms Avis Glaze; and the Chief Assessment Officer of the Education Quality and Accountability Office, Ms Victoria Hemming.

On behalf of Council, Council Chair attended several meetings with a number of organizations in order to represent the needs and concerns of students with special education needs. These meetings included:

- Special Education Working Table
- Safe Schools Action Team
- Post Secondary Advisory Committee on Disability Issues
- Literacy and Numeracy Working Table
- Parent Voice in Education Project
- Council of Directors of Education (CODE) Project
- Special Education Funding
- Students at Risk Literacy and Math
- Aboriginal Education
- Planning Entry to School for Children with Special Needs
- Curriculum Implementation Partnership
- Boards of Education
- Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACS)
- Human Rights Commission's Consultation on Education and Disability
- Special Needs Organizations
- Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)
- The Post Secondary Review Committee
- Ontario Grants for Student Needs and
- Various stakeholder organizations.

On behalf of Council, Council Chair attended a number of speaking engagements such as:

- Netherlands Delegation
- Irish Education Delegation
- Council for Exceptional Children International
- Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
- Ontario Principal's Council
- University of Toronto Qualification Course
- Humber College
- Ottawa Region Special Education Council
- Special Education Advisory Committee of the Huron Superior Catholic School Board

Message

This annual message highlights the significant observations, conclusions and recommendations developed by your Advisory Council during the course of the fiscal year 2005-2006. As in past years, Council's formal advice is expressed, in part, through a series of resolutions which are included as Part 3 of this report.

The Resolutions provide guidance with respect to:

- Accountability Framework
- Accessible and Alternative Format of Learning Materials
- Alternate Assessments
- Curriculum Review
- Daily Physical Activity
- Discussion Paper on "*Leading Education.*"
- Education Funding
- Education Quality and Accountability Office
- Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Parent Voice in Education Project
- Professional Development and Training
- Provincial Elementary Report Card
- Report of the Expert Panel: "*Education for All*"
- Role of Principals and Vice Principals
- Safe Schools
- Service Coordination and
- Student Success

In addition, this report reflects Council's ongoing advice based upon priorities that have evolved over several years. Council's priorities focus on areas intended to ensure that students with special education needs are provided with the programs and services they require to attend, participate and progress in school.

The key priority areas included the following, not in any particular order:

- Policy Framework on Special Education
- Special Education Funding
- Education for All
- Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) Projects
- MACSE's Accountability and Service Coordination Logic Models
- Safe Schools Initiative
- Accountability and Partnerships
- Early School Initiatives
- Learning to 18 Initiatives
- Literacy and Numeracy Initiatives
- Post Secondary Transitions
- Teacher Qualifications

Policy Framework on Special Education

In September 2004, MACSE presented the Minister with a new Policy Framework for Special Education in Ontario entitled "Achieving and Sustaining Excellence in Special Education". This Policy Framework contains Guiding Principles that MACSE believes should be reflected in the development of policies, programs and services for Special education; the professionals who deliver them; and the relationships among the key parties, these include:

- Society has an interest in, and responsibility for, educating all children;
- All children can be taught, can learn and can become contributing members of society;
- The learning potential of students is influenced by individual and environmental factors;
- Respect for the dignity and worth of all students is a hallmark of Ontario's public education system;
- Each school fosters a sense of belonging for all students;
- Parents and students have the opportunity to participate actively in the education system;

- Parents understand their rights and have timely access to mediation and appeals processes;
- Educators use instructional strategies that:
 - Meet the identified strengths and needs of each student, as reflected in the Individual Education Plan;
 - Generally reflect demonstration of learning based on the Ontario curriculum and facilitate achievement of associated performance standards; and
 - Promote student capacity for independent learning and self-advocacy;
- Educators and related professionals have the competencies and current knowledge required to understand and address the learning requirements of students with special education needs;
- A coordinated approach among service-providers enables student achievement; and
- Special education services:
 - Demonstrate fiscal accountability and value for money; and
 - Are measurable, responsive to change and enriched by proven innovations.

Special Education Funding

MACSE has had the opportunity to provide advice on specific funding matters in Special Education. More recently, MACSE was asked to give input on the development of a new Special Education Funding Model. To this end, MACSE developed the following basic principles that should be considered as high priorities in the establishment of a new Model:

1. **Funding Envelope** - The Ministry should continue to provide a separate and protected envelope for the provision of Special Education programs and services.
2. **Research and Evidence Based** - The Ministry should invest in special education research by establishing a specific research fund, equivalent to 1% of the overall special education grant.
3. **A team approach to address the learning needs of the whole student** - The funding formula should provide for the provision of professional support staff.

4. **Focus on Student Achievement** – A management framework with defined performance measures for both outputs and outcomes needs to be developed.
5. **Responsiveness to Need** - Grants need to be announced by the Ministry in a timely predictable fashion, which will give school boards adequate time to approve a budget that responds to the needs of exceptional children.
6. **Build Capacity and Knowledge Transfer** - The new Funding Model should include an amount dedicated to the professional development, mentoring and in-service support for special education educators, support personnel and SEACs.
7. **Fully compliant with all legislation** - The new funding model needs to be compliant with *all* legislation affecting students with special education needs.
8. **“Fairness does not equal sameness” and “equity” does not entail identical treatment”** - Requires equitable (not equal) distribution of funding across exceptionalities with recognition both of the intensity of service needs and the measurable educational outcomes that can be achieved.
9. **Coordination between Ministries** - Involve other Ministries and agencies as appropriate (e.g., Ministry of Children and Youth Services; Mental Health organizations, the Children’s Aid Society) to enhance student outcomes.

Education for All

MACSE played a significant role in the development of *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students With Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6*. This initiative was conceived and discussed at length by the members of your Advisory Council on Special Education, thus culminating in the creation of an “*Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs*”. Members of this panel included English and French-language teachers, principals, consultants, researchers, and professors from Catholic and public school boards and universities across Ontario. Each member demonstrated expertise and leadership in the teaching of reading, writing, and mathematics to students with special education needs.

MACSE believes that the effect of this document has had a positive impact on how special education is conceptualized and understood in the province of Ontario. The impact of *Education for All* on learning for all students, including students with special needs, has been profound. The principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiated instruction (DI), assistive technology, generating individual and class learning profiles for the purpose of in-school and in-class problem-solving and professional learning communities (PLC) have caused the much needed winds of

positive change to breeze through every classroom and school in this province. For the past 20 years, inclusion has been a goal of the Ministry of Education and of MACSE but unfortunately, in many instances, inclusion for children with special needs was geographical, as students with special learning needs were placed in a school/classroom setting but not actively participating in classroom instruction and programming. *Education for All* has moved the true spirit of inclusion forward by providing all students with the opportunity to have unlimited access and connectedness to their classroom teachers, to classroom resources and to in-class learning opportunities. A classroom based on UDL and DI is an orientation intended to shape teaching in order to provide all students with access to the Ontario curriculum. MACSE applauds these principles and will work to support the ongoing drive to continue this positive movement.

To support the implementation of *Education for All*, the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) has been provided with \$25 million dollars from the Ministry of Education for this school year (2005/06) to provide innovative projects that improve instruction and assessment practices for a diverse range of learners, particularly in the areas of numeracy and literacy. *Education for All* has become the focus for the majority of projects that have been implemented. MACSE awaits the compilation of the results of these projects and will then again work with the Ministry to ensure that this powerful impetus continues in this province. MACSE will continue to advise that the Ministry of Education address aspects and principles of *Education for All*. For example, the Ministry is preparing a symposium on assistive technology for the coming September 2006. *Education for All* has been the focus for the content of this project.

Although this document is targeting the primary and junior classroom teachers, it appears that attitudes towards teaching students who learn differently have been greatly altered at all levels of the elementary/secondary education system. Directors, administrators, consultants, general classroom teachers and special education teachers increasingly view special education as part of the regular classroom learning experience and not as separate education from the regular stream. Many educators and administrators have in-serviced intermediate and secondary personnel on the principles in *Education for All* and have expressed that the intent of this document is beneficial for all teachers and students.

Education for All is a stellar example of how MACSE works effectively with the Ministry for the benefit of students in our province. MACSE's advice to the Minister of Education on the *Education for All* document can be seen through various initiatives that are currently being reviewed and implemented. MACSE's advice to the Minister of Education on the *Education For All* report is as follows:

- That the Minister of Education continue to provide direction and research to address gifted learning, social skills development, positive behaviour support, interventions, students with severe communication needs, mental health issues, alternate assessment and learning for all grades for students with special needs;

- The Ministry of Education develop a plan to address: improved use of funded equipment and technology, identification of appropriate technologies for specific learners, availability of assistive technology software for learners with disabilities, effective implementation, effective training, effective support, maximizing the effectiveness of the current investments in assistive technologies to benefit all students;
- The Ministry include a focus for the Assistive Technology Symposium on informing the development of a provincial assistive technology strategy.
- That the Ministry of Education collaborate with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities on this initiative in order to ensure that e-text is available at post-secondary education institutions, as well as at the elementary and secondary levels.
- The Ministry of Education establish priorities for implementation based on the recommendations of the Expert Panel document “Education for All”.
- The Minister of Education encourage boards to consider Special Education and the recommendations of *Education for All* as part of their planning and delivery of all professional development days.

Education for All Council of Directors of Education (CODE) Project

MACSE was very pleased to support the development of the CODE *Education for All* project. MACSE was represented on the Advisory Committee and received regular updates about the progress of the project throughout the year. Many members of MACSE were directly or indirectly involved in one or more of the eighty-five Board and Board Partnership projects.

MACSE was very pleased to know that every District School Board in the province developed a plan in response to the CODE project initiative. Members were supportive of the focus on improving student achievement for students with special education needs within the context of the provincial focus on literacy and numeracy.

MACSE supported the process that encouraged boards to identify a focus based upon a review of current special education program and service needs within the context of the content of the *Education for All* document. MACSE also supported the extension of the projects for JK to Grade 12 since the content of the document *Education for All* is appropriate at all levels of schooling.

MACSE has long been an advocate of evidence-based practice and thus, supported the accountability measures that were built into the project process. Members were particularly pleased to see the significant research component that was built into the process and looks forward to reviewing the results of project.

Members felt that the dual focus on improved student achievement and increased capacity for teachers, educational assistants, professional support staff, principals, and superintendents will ensure that gains made through the projects will be sustained over time. The project focus on lateral capacity building across schools, systems and the province was also valued by members.

Finally, MACSE recognizes and supports the need to continue the implementation process of the *Education for All* report and looks forward to ongoing involvement in that process.

Logic Models

The mandate of the Accountability and Partnerships Standing Committee is to support a focus on accountability within the education system. Early in 2005, the committee began to explore the use of Logic Models to address accountability issues. The standing committee requested support from the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch of the Ministry of Education to undertake its work. In discussion with colleagues, it appeared that Logic Modeling might provide a method to facilitate an analysis of accountability within the special education system.

PURPOSE OF LOGIC MODELS

Logic Models are narrative or graphic depictions of processes in real life that communicate the underlying assumptions upon which an activity is expected to lead to a specific result. A Logic Model is a fundamental tool of policy and program design, evaluation and performance measurement and risk assessment and management.

In order to simplify the development of a Logic Model, the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education has developed a draft of a "tiered" Logic Model for consideration.

TIER I: The Tier I Logic Model identifies a number of "domains," including: Ministry of Education, District School Boards, Family [parents and students], Student Learning/Teaching Process, Student Assessment Process.

At Tier I, only Activities and Long-Term Outcomes are shown. In addition, certain elements of the Logic Model are highlighted as requiring further analysis.

TIER II: The Tier II Logic Models address each of the five "domains" in turn. For each Domain, the following are shown: Inputs, Activities/Outputs, Outcomes.

TIER III: Tier III Logic Models provide an additional level of detail for the elements identified at Tier I. Examples of Tier III Logic Models include Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and School Board Special Education Plans.

These draft Logic Models have been approved in principle by full MACSE Council. Efforts are currently underway to use Logic Models to examine issues that cross ministries. The Logic Model for Service Coordination is currently under development in consultation with this subcommittee of MACSE.

Safe Schools Initiative

Since 1998, MACSE has monitored issues of safety and has passed 26 resolutions supporting change in various related areas. More recently, through the Council's strength of voice, the government established a Safe Schools Action Team to address issues concerning the Safe Schools Act. With the appointment of MACSE's Chair to the Safe Schools Action Team in November, 2005 and the rise of a number of new issues, the Council developed a position paper on key issues affecting school safety. These include the *Safe Schools Act*, the Anti-Bullying Initiative, Care and Treatment Facilities and the use of restraints in schools.

MACSE supports the government's directive of the *Safe Schools Act*, and further believes that a student should not be denied a chance to learn by being excluded from school due to disability-related behaviours that are not within their control. Regulations on mitigating circumstance reflect MACSE's advice, but the Council remains concerned the current regulations on mitigating circumstances do not address situations where parents are asked to pick up their children from school early and to keep them at home for the remainder of the school day. This action is sometimes referred to as an "informal suspension". Due diligence related to equity and fairness must be applied to decisions that are made in these circumstances.

The Council is also aware of ongoing public interest in anti-bullying initiatives. Although a bully can victimize any student, those who are unable or unlikely to advocate for themselves are at higher risk of being bullied. As a result, MACSE believes that anti-bullying initiatives should promote effective school strategies to ensure that all students, including those with special education needs, are supported and equipped to respond to threats and other actions of bullies.

The Council also believes that significant changes have occurred in care and treatment facilities that compel a re-examination of how children in these facilities are educated. MACSE believes that the context has changed so significantly over time, that mental health services for children and youth are left fragmented between different ministries. The Council believes that a new service model needs to be developed in order to effectively treat the "whole child" needs.

The Council is also concerned that currently, there is no Ministry of Education policy regarding the use of safe physical intervention or restraints in extreme situations and no directive to school boards to develop a policy on the safe use of restraints. Given that other ministries (e.g., Ministry of Community and Social Services) have well developed policies, this is an area which should be addressed readily based on an examination of need.

Council's recommendations on the Student Safety

A. Safe Schools Act:

- That the Ministry of Education amend the *Education Act*. Regulations should be amended to:
 - ensure that school boards fulfill the “duty to accommodate” in accordance with requirements under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*;
 - provide for consideration of mitigating circumstances for discretionary suspensions and expulsions;
 - clarify that Reg. 474/00 s.3 (1) (access to school premises) does not apply to students who are registered with the particular school board; and
 - mandate the use of mediation before an expulsion hearing.
- That the ministry develop support documents to ensure the implementation of policy as intended including:
 - protocols that ensure expulsions, suspensions and informal absences are consistently recorded; and
 - guidelines to assist schools to better plan, respond to and prevent violence.
- That the Ministry of Education ensure the establishment and full funding of a sufficient number of alternative programs for *all* expelled students.

B. Anti-Bullying Initiative

- That the Ministry of Education require all school staff be trained in methods to prevent bullying, as well as to engage students in restorative approaches to conflict resolution;

- That the Ministry of Education develop and provide "train the trainer" professional development to designated staff in all school boards with the intent that the individuals provide in-service to other board staff;
- That the Ministry of Education provides a menu of universal, school-wide methods that can be applied flexibly according to locally articulated needs; and
- That the Ministry of Education develops annual anti-bullying plans with outcome measures and a process for implementation for both existing and future measures.

C. Care and Treatment Facilities

- That the Ministry of Education take the lead to initiate a comprehensive inter-ministerial review of the legislative grant that funds the educational component of care and treatment facilities. This review should also address:
 - long wait-lists for “day-treatment classes” caused by the shortage of day treatment programs for students living in the community;
 - the shortage of other mental health programs designed to keep children and youth in school;
 - the lack of effective transition planning into and exiting from these programs and
 - the shortage of psycho-educational assessment services.

D. Use of Restraints

- That the Ministry of Education develop and implement a policy on the use of restraints in the school setting, which will include:
 - definition of “physical restraint”;
 - clear statement of what constitutes physical restraint;
 - guidelines on alternatives to the use of restraints; and how, when and by whom a physical restraint may have to be used;
 - requirement that school boards and schools must have written policies governing behaviour management techniques;
 - provide current, regulated and approved training for staff; and

- have mandated protocols for reviewing the policy and reporting on results, including an obligation to report to parents.

Teacher Qualifications

The Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) has continually supported the ongoing professional development of education personnel (including teachers, teacher assistants, administrators, social workers, support therapist, etc.)

A summary of MACSE resolutions from the last seven years illustrates the Council's concerns regarding professional development, instruction on accommodations and modifications, teacher training on secondary programs for students with special education needs, additional qualifications courses and training in the use of adaptive technology. MACSE believes that all educators must remain current in best practices for planning and delivering programs and services for students with special education needs. In addition to the positive impacts our advice has had, the ministry recently made it clear that the Council's views pertaining to the training of specialized teachers for blindness/low vision and deafness/hard of hearing are being considered.

MACSE has recommended that teacher performance appraisal system take into account the development work on policies, programs and resources in special education and reflect consultations done with various stakeholder groups.

Council's recommendations on Teacher Qualifications:

A. Professional Learning:

- More equitable access to professional learning for Ontario educators, including the availability of additional qualifications courses related to low incidence exceptionalities (i.e., Deaf, Blind, and Deaf/blind);
- The current granting of initial qualification for hearing and deaf candidates; The recognition of an acceptable initial teacher education program for teaching the deaf from outside Ontario;
- Mandatory course hours on special education in the Bachelor of Education Program;
- All Additional Qualification courses should address the belief statements and instructional strategies outlined in the Expert Panel Report, *Education for All*;
- Candidates who are deaf should be able to complete the Bachelor of Education regardless of their deafness;

- Faculties of Education should help the candidate who is deaf to complete her or his degree in Education. It should give the candidate all the tools she or he needs to complete her or his degree, e.g., a Sign Language Interpreter;
- All candidates who are deaf or hard-of-hearing should complete a Bachelor of Education;
- Fluency in ASL/LSQ should not be a requirement to complete the program, rather an ASL/LSQ stream and an oral stream should be offered;
- ASL/LSQ proficiency should be a prerequisite for admission to the Additional Qualifications Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing program;
- A practicum should be a component of each part of the program;
- Additional Qualifications programs should include training specific to the role of the itinerant teacher to address the fact that many deaf and hard of hearing children are in regular classroom settings;
- Additional Qualifications program should include current policies and practices related to ASL and bilingual education; and
- Representatives from the Deaf community and Deaf professionals should be consulted in the development and delivery of the Additional Qualifications Program.

B. Technological Studies for Teachers:

- The recommendations from the Council of the Ontario College of Teachers should be acted upon; and
- Teachers should be able to upgrade their technological skills to teach the broad range of skills covered in the new Technological Education Curriculum. In order to do so, review Regulation 184/97 and add more courses.

C. Native Teacher Education Programs:

- Flexibility of either following the regular stream: an undergraduate degree and a Bachelor of Education degree or a full time/part time degree program that is specifically designed for native teacher education.

STUDENT TRANSITIONS

Transition Planning at the Secondary Level:

All students, regardless of exceptionality, or level of support needed, require that educators and families see their strengths and aim high for their future, not limiting the transition planning process to currently existing and traditional opportunities for postsecondary activities. Individualized education and career planning is not an end unto itself, but is a process that helps build relationships and connections in the community. The goal for all students must be life in the community. The transition plan should reflect this, and it should be clearly linked to each student's secondary school Individual Education Plan (IEP) so that they have the support for curricular and co-curricular activities necessary to achieve future educational and vocational goals.

The EDU document, *Transition Planning: A Resource Guide (2002)*, was released to school boards, parent organizations, postsecondary institutions and health and service agencies in October 2002.

Special Education: A Guide for Educators (2001) includes a section on Transitions: Ideas for Successful Practice. The section identifies the key transition periods in a student's schooling:

- preschool-to-school;
- school-to-school;
- transition from Care and Treatment Facilities and Correctional Facilities;
- transition to school following prolonged medical absences;
- elementary to secondary;
- secondary to postsecondary education; and
- from secondary school to the world of work,

and emphasizes that a coordinated plan that forms part of the student's IEP and is implemented well before any anticipated move can ensure that the student has supports in place to lessen apprehension about the transition.

MACSE has passed several resolutions identifying secondary transition issues that are in need of re-examination as follows:

- Ways that students with special education needs can gain meaningful employment;
- Seeking out role models and success stories of students with special education needs who have made a successful transition from school to work;

- Assisting students with special education needs to better understand their accommodation needs, particularly in the area of assistive technology;
- Assisting students with special education needs to develop better self-advocacy skills;
- Verifying if protocols exist in separate/public school boards to facilitate a smooth transition for exceptional students from elementary to secondary education including protocols for First Nations students in federally funded schools; and
- Specific goals for the student's transition to postsecondary activities that must reflect the strengths, needs and interests of the student.

Transition Planning to Post Secondary Education

Transition to post secondary education for students with special education needs is a collaborative process that includes the student (wherever possible), the parent(s), the student's teachers, other school and board staff, employers, post-secondary institutions and community agencies. Planning must be based on ongoing communication and respectful partnerships.

MACSE believes that the learning potential of students is influenced by individuals and environmental factors and that all children can be taught, learn and become contributing members of society and that society has an interest in and responsibility for educating all children. Parents and students with special education needs have to understand their rights and responsibilities related to transition planning and have the opportunity to participate actively in this planning process.

Since 1997, MACSE has developed 17 resolutions addressing transition issues related to secondary school transition. Global transition issues, including student and family goals that should be discussed in the upcoming years, include: the necessary pre-school and post-school services and opportunities; the sharing of information between students, parents, outside agencies and the school system; resources needed to prepare and support students for community supports during and after the school years.

MACSE Recommendations to Address Post Secondary Issues:

- Increased access to student financial support to promote continuing education for students with special education needs including bursaries and additional funding for part-time students and students with higher needs;

- Access to psychological assessments needed to establish eligibility for, and levels of service for students with learning disabilities at the post secondary level. This financial support should be independent of eligibility for the OSAP Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD) and should not require establishment of ineligibility for the BSWD;
- Seamless transition to continuing education through improved protocols and interagency collaboration;
- Apprenticeships, co-op and work experience for students with special education needs which includes funding for job coaches, personal support workers and special transportation;
- Research tied to the Ontario Disabilities Support Program (ODSP) to promote independence in adulthood for students with special education needs; and
- A coordinated effort and formal links between high schools and postsecondary destinations for all students, including those with special needs.

MACSE Recommendations to Address the Ministry of Education’s Regulations, Policy and Resource Documents:

- That the Ministry of Education inquire if school boards assign staff responsibility for transition planning coordination and if they arrange to receive advice from the community on transition planning by creating a transition planning advisory committee or by arranging for an existing body to perform this function;
- That the Ministry of Education gather information from all school boards regarding models of transition support for students in all exceptionalities in their school boards and communities; and
- That effective and exemplary models of transition support be published as a resource for school staff, special education staff, guidance counsellors, principals, communities and families and also for publication on the Ministry web site.

Appreciation

Council would like to congratulate the Ministry for undertaking a number of initiatives related to improving education for students with special education needs in Ontario. These include: increasing student achievement levels, reducing achievement gaps, student physical, mental and behavioural health issues, student safety and quality of

learning environments, increased public confidence and support for public education. Council applauds the Ministry of Education's vision to have Ontario students receive the best public education in the world, measured by high levels of achievement and engagement for all students to achieve successful learning outcomes that will give all students the skills, knowledge and opportunities to attain their potential, to pursue lifelong learning, and to contribute to a prosperous, cohesive society.

CONCLUSION

This report reflects the most significant observations, challenges and recommendations arising from the work of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education for the year 2005-2006. Council is excited about the government's overall education agenda and looks forward to the opportunity to provide input to you as the agenda is implemented.

Yours sincerely,

Lynn Ziraldo
Chair, on behalf of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education

PART 2

COUNCIL MEETINGS / CONSULTATIONS 2005 / 2006

Membership

The Chair wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the following members whose terms expired on March 31, 2006:

Ms Susan Menary, Member representing Speech and Language Pathologist, the Roman Catholic Community and Chair of the Accountability and Partnerships Standing Committee.

Ms Virginia (Ginny) Dunlop, Member representing the Gifted Community and Chair of the System Capacity Standing Committee.

Meetings

The Council held meetings on **June 8, 9, 2005, October 26, 27, 2005, and on February 22, 23, 2006.**

The June 2005 agenda included the following topics:

- Update from the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch;
- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS);
- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities;
- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care;
- Ministry Updates: Ministries of Community and Social Services
- Review of MACSE's Logic Model;
- Bob Rae Post Secondary Report Initiative;
- Student Success Initiatives/ Learning to 18 Initiatives;
- Resources for Library/School Textbooks/Learning Resources;
- Literacy & Numeracy Secretariat Initiatives;
- Literacy & Numeracy Expert Panel Report;
- Update: Ad Hoc Committee Service Coordination;
- Update: Ad Hoc Committee for Student Instruction & Assessment;
- Direction/Accountability for Service Coordination;
- Review of the Accountability Framework;
- Update on the Special Education Tribunals;
- Update on the Parent Voice in Education Project;
- Update on the Ontario Human Rights Commission Guidelines on Accessible Education;
- Ontarians with Disabilities Act;
- Working Table: Teacher Development;
- Update from Education Finance Branch;
- Review of the Guiding Principles for Special Education

- Update from Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
- Update from the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat
- Update from the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO);
- Review of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy
- Resolutions and
- Sector Successes/Challenges

The October 2005 agenda included the following topics:

- Update from the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch;
- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS);
- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU);
- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLC);
- Ministry Updates: Ministries of Community and Social Services (MCSS);
- Review of New Terminology in Special Education;
- Review of Working Tables/Groups/Committees;
- Update from the Education Finance Branch;
- Review of the New Funding Model Position Paper;
- Resolution on Special Education Funding;
- Update on the Transportation Funding Model;
- Update from Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA);
- Update on the Ontario School Information System (OnSIS);
- Update on the Assistive Technology Initiatives;
- Review of College of Teachers' Qualification - Phase Three;
- MACSE's role on the Working Group on Teacher Development;
- Review of the Critical Path of the System Capacity Standing Committee;
- Update on Student Achievement, Daily Physical Activity Initiative;
- Update from the Secondary School Policy Branch;
- Update from the Service Coordination Committee;
- Update from the Student Instruction and Assessment Committee;
- Update and review of MACSE's Logic Model - Next steps;
- Performance/Outcomes Committee, review of terms of reference, critical path;
- Update from the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO);
- Update from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE);
- Update from the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat;
- Update on the Learning to 18 Initiative;
- Update from the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch;
- Update on Teacher Development;
- Resolutions; and
- Sector Successes/Challenges

The February 2006 agenda included the following topics:

- Update from the Special Education Policy and Programs Branch;
- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS);
- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU);
- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MHLTC);

- Ministry Updates: Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS);
- Update from Working Table on Special Education;
- Update from the Education Finance Branch;
- Update on the AT (Assistive Technology) Symposium;
- Overview of the Research Framework;
- Update from Council of Directors of Education (CODE);
- Curriculum Review/Update Presentation;
- Student Instruction and Assessment Committee Update;
- Secondary School Policy Committee Update;
- Update from the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO);
- Update from the Parent Engagement Office;
- Review of the Leading Education Discussion Paper;
- Discussion on MACSE's Accountability Logic Model;
- Update from the Performance/Outcomes Measurement Ad Hoc Committee;
- Update from the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat;
- Update on Teacher Development;
- Update on Learning to 18 Initiative;
- Update from Parent Engagement Office;
- Update from the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch;
- Resolutions: and
- Sector Successes/Challenges.

The Honourable Gerard Kennedy, Minister of Education, attended the June 2005, October 2005 and February 2006 Council meetings. Members of the Council were pleased to hear the Minister's personal commitment to students with special education needs and his continuing recognition of the role of his Advisory Council on Special Education.

Members of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees of Council participated in a number of teleconferences during the year to discuss the initiatives such as:

- The Ontario Human Rights Commission;
- Attorney General response to the tribunal decision;
- Committees Critical Paths;
- Achievement Charts;
- The Expert Panel;
- Early Entry to School Guidelines;
- New position paper on Education Funding;
- Parent Voice in Education;
- Accountability issues;
- The Parent Engagement Office;
- Special education plans;
- Transferability of IPRC identification from one board to another board;
- Partnership Issues;
- Ontario Skills Passport;
- Learning to 18 Initiative;
- Proposed Alternate Diploma and Provincial Skills Certificate;
- IEP Logic Model;

- Curriculum review;
- Aboriginal Research/Issues;
- Daily Physical Activity;
- Safe Schools Initiatives;
- Review of the “Safe Schools” Position Paper;
- Special Education Monograph No. 5: Guidelines for the Implementation of the Ministry of Education and Training’s Violence-Free Schools Policy with respect to Exceptional Pupils and Others with Special Needs – Status; and
- Postsecondary Advisory Committee on Disabilities Issues.

A list of the Standing and Ad Hoc Committees is attached as Appendix 3.

Consultations

During the course of the year, Council Chair, Lynn Ziraldo had opportunities to meet with the Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister of Education as well as with the Assistant Deputy Ministers of: Strategic Planning and Elementary/Secondary Programs; French Language Education and Educational Operations Division; Instruction & Leadership Development Division, and the Elementary/Secondary Business and Finance Division. These meetings provided the Chair with an opportunity to inform the Minister, Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Ministers about the work of Council while providing them with an opportunity to respond to Council's priorities, issues and recommendations.

Other activities included the Chair's attendance at meetings of provincial associations, including the Annual General Meeting of the Learning Disabilities Association and the Council for Exceptional Children, pre-budget consultation and the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy. The Chair also addressed the Netherlands and the Irish Education Delegation on MACSE activities. The Chair participated in the Ministry of Education’s Safe School Task Force, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities’ Postsecondary Advisory Committee on Disabilities Issues and attended numerous consultations throughout the province.

The Chair and other members of Council met on several occasions with officials of the Ministry, representing various branches, in order to ensure that the perspective, concerns and recommendations of the Council were understood by those who have the responsibility for developing and implementing policies and programs that impact on exceptional students.

The Chair and other members of Council addressed audiences throughout Ontario, including school board SEAC meetings, parent organizations, professional groups and various special education additional qualification courses. This gave the opportunity to share information about Council's activities and provided an excellent forum for inviting input on pertinent issues. Members continued to liaise with the sectors they represent and obtain information about successful practices and challenges, which are shared with Council as a whole. This input is used to inform Council's understanding of issues and assists in setting its agenda for the following year. A sample of the form used by Council members to report on these consultations is attached as Appendix 4.

Self-evaluation

Council maintained its practice of continual assessment of its own effectiveness. A summary of evaluative feedback from Council members is provided to all members and to Ministry staff following each meeting. A sample of the feedback form used by Council members is attached as Appendix 5.

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

PART 3

Annual Report to the Minister:

RESOLUTIONS

for the year

JUNE 2005 - FEBRUARY 2006

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**MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION
RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD
JUNE 2005 TO FEBRUARY 2006**

Alternate Assessments

05/06.03.01 **Whereas:** Psychological assessments are needed to establish eligibility for, and levels of service for students with learning disabilities and ADHD at the post-secondary level; and

Whereas: Students who are eligible for OSAP are eligible for the Bursary for Students with Disabilities to pay for these assessments, but students of limited financial means who are not eligible for OSAP are not eligible for financial support for psychological assessments.

Be it resolved: that financial support that is independent of eligibility for the OSAP Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD) and does not require establishment of ineligibility for the BSWD be provided for all psychological assessments for post-secondary students with disabilities at the college/university level.

05/06.03.04 **Whereas:** Regulation 181 states that placement in a regular class, with appropriate special education services, when it would meet the pupil's needs; and is consistent with parental preferences is the first consideration when making a placement decision; and

Whereas: the Ministry of Education has goals: high levels of student achievement; reduced gaps in student achievement and high levels of public confidence.

Be it resolved: that the Minister develop provincial policy related to the development and use of alternate assessment.

Daily Activity

05/06.02.01 **WHEREAS** the Minister of Education has announced that research has shown a link between regular physical activity and improved student achievement; and

WHEREAS this Minister has endorsed 20 minutes of daily activity for all elementary school students,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry explore creative initiatives and incentives to encourage daily physical activity for students in the secondary panel based on evidence-based research.

Funding

05/06.01.05 Whereas: on May 17, 2005, the Minister of Education, in supporting the Ontario government's goal of continued success for all students, announced that:

- \$29.5 million annually would be provided to elementary schools for textbooks and learning resources;
- \$14.5 million annually would be provided to secondary schools for textbooks and learning resources;
- \$11.0 million for new resources for elementary school libraries; and
- \$6.0 million for new resources for secondary school libraries.

Whereas: the Government of Ontario has endorsed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and thereby acknowledges that education must be accessible for all.

Be it resolved: that MACSE urge the Minister of Education to ensure that school boards provide a report to him on the types of materials and on the amount of funding spent from this grant on accessible and alternate formats of learning materials.

Health Support Services

05/06.01.03 Whereas: the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has released the report "Realizing the Potential of Home Care", and;

Whereas: the report (recommendation 50) recommends that MCYS, Ministry of Education, MCSS and agencies conduct a review of the school health support services to develop a long term strategy for coordination and funding of these services to children in schools.

Whereas: the review of PPM 81 conducted by the Ministry of Education involve consultation with stakeholders and has a body of outcome data that would be useful to this proposed new review.

Be it resolved: that the review of School Health Support Services be jointly led by MCYS and MOHLTC and the Ministry of Education.

Be it resolved: that MACSE and other organizations be involved in this review and development of any recommendations.

Logic Model

05/06.03.05 Whereas: MACSE has developed a logic model to clarify accountability in special education.

Be it resolved: that MACSE's Accountability Logic Model be endorsed by Council and forwarded to the Minister.

05/06.03.13 Whereas: MACSE's Service Coordination Committee is creating a Logic Model about Service Coordination; and

Whereas: the Ministry of Children and Youth Services is working to align policy, programming and funding responsibilities for children and youth with special needs with Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care; and

Whereas: the Ministry of Education has a Coordinated Services Advisory Committee.

Be it Resolved: that MACSE be involved in any interministerial discussion/consultation regarding service coordination, including policy alignment, program and funding responsibilities.

Parent Voice in Education Project

05/06.01.02 Whereas: the Parent Voice in Education Project Report was released in April 2005;

Whereas: this report has identified strategies and recommendations to strengthen parental voice;

Be it resolved: that the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education liaise with the proposed Office of Parental Involvement.

Professional Development

05/06.03.03 Whereas: there are a number of days designated as professional activity days by all district school boards as part of school year calendars; and

Whereas: improved student achievement for students with special education needs is directly tied to improved classroom instruction; and

Whereas: all classroom teachers, support staff and administrators require ongoing opportunities to enhance their practice related to students with special education needs; and

Whereas: the most effective staff development is team-based, inquiry-oriented and evidence-based; and

Whereas: the Working Table in the Leading Education Discussion Paper has recommended an expansion to the number of Professional Development Days.

Be it resolved: that the Minister encourage boards to consider Special Education and the recommendations of *Education for All* as part of their planning and delivery of all professional development days.

Provincial Elementary Report Card

05/06.01.04 **Whereas:** the provincial elementary report card was introduced in 1998 and is now 7 years old; and,

Whereas: the goals and measurable outcomes as envisioned by the Education Partnership Table may not reflect the principles of the current elementary report card; and,

Whereas: the November 19, 2004 memoranda from Judith Wright references clarifications to the Guide for the Provincial Elementary Report Card and Individual Education Plans.

Be it resolved: that MACSE support and be involved in a full consultative review of the Elementary Provincial Report Card.

Report of the Expert Panel: *Education for All*

05/06.01.11 **Whereas:** MACSE has received an advance copy of the *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Grades Kindergarten to Grade 6*.

Be it resolved: that MACSE supports *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Grades Kindergarten to Grade 6* in principle as an initial step.

05/06.01.13 Whereas: MACSE has passed a resolution in support of the document *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Grades Kindergarten to Grade 6*.

Be it resolved: that the Minister view this document *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Grades Kindergarten to Grade 6* as an important first step in meeting the educational needs of students with special needs;

That the Minister continue to provide direction and research to address gifted learning, social skills development, alternate strategies, behaviour modification, interventions, students with severe communication needs, mental health issues, alternate assessment and learning for all grades for students with special needs.

05/06.02.04 Whereas this Ministry supports success for all students; and

Whereas the Expert Panel Document *Education for All* has endorsed the principles of Universal Design for Learning; and

Whereas MACSE has requested that a portion of the Better Learning Materials Grant go to materials and texts in adapted formats; and

Whereas e-text is not limited to print but includes visual ASL and other visual e-text; and

Whereas It is inefficient for school boards to spend time/resources creating accessible resources for individual students; and

Whereas in the interim, schools should be encouraged to select course text(s) which are already available in an accessible electronic format,

Be it Resolved: that the Ministry of Education establish a working group to address the availability of accessible e-text that is accessible to all students; and

Be it Resolved: that the Ministry of Education develop a policy to address:

- Improved use of funded equipment and technology
- Identification of appropriate technologies for specific learners
- Availability of assistive technology software for learners with disabilities
- Effective implementation
- Effective training
- Effective support

- Maximizing the effectiveness of the current investments in assistive technologies to benefit all students; and

Be it Resolved: that the Ministry of Education collaborate with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities on this initiative in order to ensure that e-text is available at post-secondary education institutions, as well as at the elementary and secondary levels.

05/06.02.05 Whereas: MACSE supports in principle the final version of “*Education for All*” as an initial step in addressing the needs of students with special needs; and

Whereas: MACSE realizes that there is more work to be done to follow up on this initial document,

Be it Resolved: that the Ministry establish priorities for implementation based on the recommendations of the Expert Panel document *Education for All*.

05/06.03.09 Whereas: the document *Education for All* identifies the integral part that assistive technology plays in student learning.

Whereas: the Ministry of Education has responded to the need to share successful practice related to the management and use of assistive technology to support improved student achievement.

Whereas: there is a wealth of evidence-based information about effective use of assistive technology within the province, the country and internationally; and

Whereas, there is a need to develop a provincial strategic plan to support board planning for current technology and a process whereby new technologies can be explored for potential addition to board planning, e.g., sound field systems in all classrooms.

Be it resolved, that the Ministry include a focus for the Assistive Technology Symposium on informing the development of a provincial assistive technology strategy.

Safe Schools

05/06.01.10 Whereas: students with special education needs are at increased risk of being victimized by or engaging in bullying behaviours; and

Whereas: there is a strong link between work on bullying and that of the *Safe Schools Act*.

Be it resolved: that MACSE request an opportunity to review a draft document from the anti-bullying reference group.

05/06.02.02 Whereas: this Ministry supports Safe School Initiatives; and

Whereas: MACSE has reviewed and updated their Safe Schools Position Statement on Issues Affecting Student Safety,

Be it Resolved: that MACSE approve in principle the updated version of its Safe Schools Position Statement on Issues Affecting Student Safety.

05/06.02.03 Whereas: Students with special education needs should not be denied the opportunity to learn by being excluded due to disability-related behaviours that are not within their control; and

School principals require guidelines on:

- how to implement EDU's Safe Schools Act policy in a manner that does not adversely affect students with special education needs;
- when and how to apply mitigating circumstances; and
- preventative measures that proactively modify the learning environment in a supportive way that would preclude the need to suspend, expel or exclude students with special education needs, and that;

"Making our schools safer is an ongoing EDU commitment. In-service and training is a key component of any safe school strategy. Currently, the Safe Schools Act is under review, it would therefore be timely for a resource document to be produced that would support any revisions to the Safe Schools Act",

Be it Resolved: that EDU work collaboratively with MACSE to develop a practical resource guide for educators addressing the impact on and implementation of the Safe Schools Act for students with special education needs.

05/06.03.15 Whereas: the use of physical restraint (see previous MACSE Resolution 03.01.05) continues to be a grave issue that has and can result in injury and or death; and

Whereas: there is no existing policy in the Ministry of Education with respect to accountability, standards and rules about use of, training about, reporting of use of restraints, resulting in widely inconsistent or non-existent policies across the province; and

Whereas: the Ministry of Community and Social Services has affirmed that restraint should be a last resort limited to extreme situations and that up-to-date and approved training is required; and

Whereas: understating non-verbal communication and de-escalation techniques could prevent use of restraints in the vast majority of situations, and

Whereas; the Ministry of Education is currently receiving possible changes to the “Safe Schools Act” through the Safe Schools Action Team.

Be it Resolved: that the ministry of Education develop provincial policy that outlines accountability, training, reporting and use of physical restraints as a last resort in schools.

Special Education Funding

05/06.01.06 **Whereas:** this government supports success for all students; and,

Whereas: the Government of Ontario has endorsed *the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and thereby acknowledges that education must be accessible for all.

Be it resolved: that the Minister of Education requires school boards to allocate a portion of the Better Learning Materials Grant to materials and texts in adapted formats (i.e., Braille, large print, audio, electronic formats, close captioning).

05/06.01.07 **Whereas:** funding for special education students follows the student when they move from one board to another; and,

Whereas: when special education students who were identified in one board move to another board, they are denied service until they are re-identified by the new board; a process which can be lengthy.

Be it resolved: that the Ministry legislate that identification through IPRC in one board is transferable to a new board immediately upon transfer.

05/06.01.08 Whereas: this government supports education for all and continues to make extraordinary investments in strategic areas to deliver stability and progress for Ontario's students; and,

Whereas: there appears to be an inequity between grants for elementary and secondary students.

Be it resolved: that the SEPPA (Special Education per Pupil Amount) for secondary school pupils should be increased to reflect their needs.

05/06.01.09 Whereas: EDU recognizes the need to provide funding for students with high needs who are new to boards; and,

Whereas: some students with high needs experience changes in their support needs over time.

Be it resolved: that MACSE recommends that additional funding should be available for students whose support needs have increased significantly, regardless of whether or not the students are new to the board.

05/06.02.06 Whereas: the Minister of Education has stated his intent to replace the funding model for the ISA 2 and ISA 3 (now referred to as the High Needs Amount) components of the Special Education Grant for school boards;

Be it Resolved: that the Ministry of Education develop a new model for Special Education funding that:

- is predictable and sustainable to ensure an appropriate level of funding;
- supports academic improvements and better overall outcomes for students with special education needs by enabling supports to be provided in a manner that is timely and responsive to the needs of each school population, e.g. that address the issues of declining enrolment, that address highly specialized program and service requirements, and acknowledges inter-ministerial funding responsibilities;
- supports effective programming and service decisions that respond to the areas of needs of students (e.g., realistic IEPs) and which result in reasonable expectations for students and staff;
- includes improvements in financial and program reporting, so that all partners in special education understand how effectively resources are being used to improve results for students;

- supports research and facilitates the transfer of knowledge related to effective and innovation practices;
- focuses the boards on program design to improve student outcomes; and
- encourages integrated program and service delivery at the school, board, regional and provincial levels while maintaining dedicated enveloping and reporting requirements.

05/06.03.07 Whereas: the Working Table on Special Education Reform identified the need to develop a funding model that is sustainable, predictable and in place for a number of years;

Whereas: Boards are now staffing for the upcoming school year;

Whereas: any significant change in the funding model will have unintended outcomes that can only be determined over time during the implementation process; and

Whereas: there has been a lack of predictability and stability in the funding of special education programs and services that has impacted negatively on Board delivery of these programs and services for students with special education needs.

Be it Resolved: that the Minister consider piloting in (06/07) the implementation of a new funding model for special education with the results used to inform the finalized model for implementation in 2007/08.

05/06.03.08 Whereas: School board supervisory officers are anxious to provide support in the development of a sustainable special education funding model.

Be it Resolved: that the minister consider developing a funding implementation committee that includes Superintendents with responsibility of Special Education.

Special Education Programs and Services

05/06.01.01 Whereas: increasingly, students with special needs are attending school board programs;

Whereas: it is acknowledged that there is a shortage of available low-incidence specialized teachers such as, teachers of students with blindness/low vision and deafness/hard of hearing;

Whereas: many school boards are unable to hire these specialized teachers.

Be it resolved: that the Ministry of Education develop a process for school boards to encourage opportunities for teachers to train as specialized teachers for students with blindness/low vision and deafness/hard of hearing.

05/06.01.14 Whereas: School Boards have the legal requirement to accept all students with special needs into their system and programs; and,

Whereas: Parents are sometimes unaware of their rights or are unwilling to pursue this refusal through appeals or other means of challenge.

Be it resolved: that MACSE request the Minister to develop a set of guidelines to support the situations where students with special needs would be excluded from entering a school system based on their special needs requirements.

05/06.03.10 Whereas: the Ministry of Education has completed an external review of the current programs and services provided by school boards in Ontario for students with Pervasive Developmental Disorder/Autism Spectrum Disorder (PDD/ASD); and

Whereas: this review has created recommendations for further development of programs and service delivery and provide a basis for gap analysis.

Be it resolved: that the Ministry of Education conduct external reviews of the current programs and services provided by school boards in Ontario for students identified under each of the Categories of Exceptionality as defined in the Education Act.

Accountability Framework

05/06.01.12 Whereas: The Accountability and Partnerships Standing Committee has been developing an Accountability Framework using a logic modelling process.

Be it resolved: that MACSE supports, in principle, the Accountability Framework for Special Education, developed by the Accountability and Partnerships Standing Committee.

05/06.02.07 Be it resolved: that the Position Paper on the Guiding Principles and Process Considerations For a New Special Education Funding Model be approved in principle.

Student Success

05/06.03.02 Whereas: the Ministry has recognized the necessity to build teacher capacity and improve student achievement through its support of student success, LNS projects and new curriculum documents; and

Whereas: there are 85 projects currently underway across the province funded through the CODE project; and

Whereas: the 85 projects are evidence-based and will provide outcome data measuring increases in school and system capacity and improvements in student achievement; and

Whereas: the implementation project design has fostered improved collaboration among curriculum and special education staff; and

Whereas: the initial feedback from monitoring teams and project participants has indicated that momentum for enhancing programs and services for the improvement of outcomes for students with special education needs is strong.

Be it resolved: that the Minister capitalize on the work currently underway across the province by ensuring professional development opportunities are made available during 06/07 school year, that are evidence based and will provide outcome data.

05/06.03.12 Whereas: While undergoing Educational Reform, the Ontario Government has identified “Student Success” as a priority to be measured by improved EQAO assessment performance; and

Whereas: Pedagogically students should be assessed in a manner appropriate to that student; and

Whereas: there is evidence that significant numbers of students with identified exceptionalities are excluded from EQAO assessments because they are not appropriate for some students; and

Whereas: IEPs are intended to address how students with identified exceptionalities will participate and progress in the Ontario Curriculum, and how that will be measured / assessed; and

Whereas: the purpose of alternate assessment is to improve instruction and results.

Be it Resolved: that the Ministry of Education investigate and develop policy about the use of alternate assessments that would measure/assess the learning and progress of students for whom EQAO testing is not appropriate.

05/06.03.14 **Whereas:** The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat has been created to work with school boards to enhance student achievement; and

Whereas: Students designated as having special education needs have seen improvement in their achievement scores, it has been at a lower rate than other students; and

Whereas: the gap for students with special education needs has actually increased slightly in most subject areas this year.

Be it Resolved: that the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS) develop specific strategies, initiatives and interventions targeted at closing the achievement gap for students with special education needs;

Be it Resolved: that MACSE and other special education stakeholder groups be consulted by the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS) on these activities.

Discussion paper ‘Leading Education’

05/06.03.06 **Whereas:** the Minister of Education, through the Partnership Table has developed a mini discussion paper “Leading Education” on the role of the Principal and Vice Principal; and

Whereas: MACSE believes that the Principal and Vice-Principal play a critical role in the education of students, especially those with special education needs.

Be it resolved: that MACSE be involved in any working table/task force regarding the role of the Principal and Vice-Principal.

05/06.03.11 **Whereas:** the Ministry of Education has a process to undergo regular curriculum review/update for all subject area; and

Whereas: The basic principles, beliefs and concepts presented in the *Education For All* should be applied to curriculum development; and

Whereas: Regulation 181 states that placement in a regular class, with appropriate special education services, when it would meet the pupil's needs; and is consistent with parental preferences is the first consideration when making a placement decision.

Be it Resolved: that the Ministry of Education form a focus group with expertise in each of the exceptionalities from a teaching perspective to provide advice/guidance to the teams working on each of the curriculum reviews/updates.

APPENDIX 1

MANDATE AND STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL

The Advisory Committee on Special Education was established in 1974, and has been renewed continually from that date. Its name was later changed to the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE). The following describes the mandate and structure of the Council, as it existed during the 2005-2006 year.

The Council advises the Minister of Education on any matter related to the establishment and provision of special education programs and services for exceptional students, including the identification and provision of early intervention programs for students with special needs.

In particular, the Council:

- responds to proposals or positions of the Ministry of Education or other ministries, as submitted to the Council, from time to time;
- identifies concerns in the delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils and provides information, advice and recommendations for Ministry consideration;
- submits an annual report and recommendations to the Minister; and
- meets up to three times a year for a maximum of 4 ½ days per year.

The membership structure of the Advisory Council was changed in 1996. Instead of seats for specific organizations, the Council now has:

- one seat for each of ten exceptionalities;
- one seat for each of nine educator and professional categories;
- one seat for a student member;
- one seat for Native Communities;
- one non-voting seat for the Ministry of Community and Social Services;
- one non-voting seat for the Ministry of Children and Youth Services;
- one non-voting seat for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care;
- one non-voting seat for the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities; and
- two representatives each for the Francophone and Roman Catholic communities, appointed from among the members above.

APPENDIX 2

**MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION
APRIL 1, 2005 - MARCH 31, 2006**

Exceptionality Community of Interest Represented	Members
<p><u>Exceptionalities</u> All Exceptionalities Learning Disabilities Pervasive Developmental Disorders/Autism Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing Gifted Community Developmental Disability Blind & Low Vision Physical Disability Multiple Exceptionalities Emotional/Behavioural Disorder (Vice Chair effective March 15/05)</p> <p><u>Educator Groups</u> Supervisory Officers Trustees/French Language Community Principals Teachers/French Language Community Teachers' Assistants</p> <p><u>Professional Support</u> Medical Psychologists Social Workers Speech and Language Pathologists/Catholic Community</p> <p><u>Student / Youth</u></p> <p><u>Native Community</u></p>	<p>Lynn Ziraldo, Chair Peter Chaban Jennifer Cantello Daw Joanne Cripps Ginny J. Dunlop Janice Strickland Ellen Goodman Alison Morse Marlene Sartor John Wilhelm</p> <p>Michelle Lee Forge Robert Poirier Robert Stones Jean-Baptiste Arhanchiague Kimberley Taylor Horeck</p> <p>Dr. Jay Rosenfield Dr. Lynne A. Beal Laura Shepherd Susan Menary</p> <p>Tyler Meredith</p> <p>Eleanor Skead</p>

APPENDIX 3
MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP LIST - 2005 - 2006

Committee	Committee	Committee
<p><u>Standing Committee</u> <u>Accountability and Partnerships</u> Susan Menary, Chair, Ginny Dunlop Marlene Sartor Dr. Jay Rosenfield Robert Stones Robert Poirier Kim Taylor Horeck Michelle Forge Eleanor Skead Tyler Meredith Peter Chaban Jennifer Cantello Daw Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>	<p><u>Standing Committee</u> <u>Student Learning</u> Marlene Sartor, Chair Ginny Dunlop Susan Menary Ellen Goodman Janice Strickland Kim Taylor Horeck Tyler Meredith Robert Stones Jean-Baptiste Arhanchiague Alison Morse Laura Shepherd Michelle Forge Joanne Cripps Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>	<p><u>Standing Committee</u> <u>System Capacity</u> Ginny Dunlop, Chair Susan Menary Marlene Sartor Lynne Beal Robert Poirier Tyler Meredith Jean-Baptiste Arhanchiague Michelle Forge Ellen Goodman Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>
<p><u>Ad Hoc Committee</u> <u>Performance/Outcomes Measurement</u> Peter Chaban, Chair Ginny Dunlop Janice Strickland Dr. Jay Rosenfield Michelle Forge Alison Morse Robert Stones Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>	<p><u>Ad Hoc Committee</u> <u>Secondary School Policy</u> Ellen Goodman, Chair Janice Strickland Marlene Sartor Eleanor Skead Tyler Meredith Peter Chaban Michelle Forge Laura Shepherd Kim Taylor Horeck Robert Stones Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>	<p><u>Ad Hoc Committee</u> <u>Education Funding</u> Robert Poirier, Chair Ellen Goodman Ginny Dunlop Michelle Forge Alison Morse Tyler Meredith Kim Taylor Horeck Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>
	<p><u>Ad Hoc Committee</u> <u>Service Coordination</u> Laura Shepherd, Chair Dr. Lynne Beal Susan Menary Tyler Meredith Alison Morse Michelle Forge Kim Taylor Horeck Janice Strickland Jennifer Cantello Daw Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>	<p><u>Ad Hoc Committee</u> <u>Knowledge Management/Technology and Research</u> Lynne Beal, Chair Dr. Jay Rosenfield Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio Ginny Dunlop, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>
	<p><u>Ad Hoc Committee</u> <u>Student Instruction and Assessment</u> Robert Stones, Chair Ginny Dunlop Eleanor Skead Jean-Baptiste Arhanchiague Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>	<p><u>Ad Hoc Committee</u> <u>Talent Management</u> Michelle Forge, Chair Ellen Goodman Janice Strickland Peter Chaban Kim Taylor Horeck Jennifer Cantello Daw Jean-Baptiste Arhanchiague Lynn Ziraldo, Ex-officio Ginny Dunlop, Ex-officio John Wilhelm, Ex-officio</p>

APPENDIX 4

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Name of Council Member

COMMUNICATION: COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Date & Source	Successful Practices	Challenges/Issues	Possible Solutions

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF THE COMMUNICATION: COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY FORM

- This form is intended to be used by individuals who wish to provide information to the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education on successful practices; issues or challenges as well as to identify possible solutions in the area(s) of Exceptionalities and/or interest(s). The completed form should be mailed to the appropriate representative on Council.
- Information about successful practices, issues or challenges as well as possible solutions should be entered in the appropriate column of the chart. The name of the organization or an individual which is the source of the information and the consultation date must be entered in the first column of the chart. If the source is an individual, his/her identity should be protected by using a generic term like "parent" or "teacher", etc.
- Members who collect detailed information from constituents are requested to complete a summary form containing the most salient issues identified by their constituents and to provide that summary to the Council Chair indicating that more detailed information is available to any member who wishes it. Some members distribute this form to the organizations in their constituency and ask them to complete the form. This approach provides detailed information which may be very useful to the member but it also often provides more detail than can be easily assimilated by other Council members.
- The summary of most salient issues should be submitted by the Council Member to Council Chair prior to each regular Council meeting. The completed forms will be copied and distributed to all members at or shortly following each regular Council meeting.

APPENDIX 5

Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education Evaluation Analysis

<p>STRENGTHS (Internal) <i>Use this space to comment on internal items related to the meeting.</i></p>	<p>WEAKNESSES (Internal) <i>Use this space to comment on internal items related to the meeting.</i></p>
<p>OPPORTUNITIES (External) <i>Use this space to comment on external items.</i></p>	<p>CHALLENGES (External) <i>Use this space to comment on external items.</i></p>