

Ministry of Education

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MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Toronto and Area Region

FROM: Gerry Townsend
Regional Manager
Toronto and Area Region

DATE: November 20, 2008

SUBJECT: Consultation on Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy

As you may know, the Minister of Education has made a commitment to release an Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy for Ontario's publicly-funded schools. Release of this strategy is planned in the near future.

The Strategy includes an Action Plan which sets out the expectations for the Ministry, school boards and schools. The Ministry's Inclusive Education Branch is seeking input from school boards on the Action Plan which will inform the policy paper and subsequent policy directives. To facilitate this consultation process, I am inviting you or your delegate to attend a meeting at **the Peel District School Board, HJA Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street, Mississauga, Ontario** on **Tuesday, December 2, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. in the Brampton Room**. We hope that you will attend in person. If you cannot attend in person, we would be pleased to arrange a teleconference connection.

Representatives from the Inclusive Education Branch will attend the meetings in Barrie, Ottawa, Toronto, and London to help facilitate the discussions, and will be connected by teleconference to the meetings in Thunder Bay and Sudbury. A separate teleconference for French-language school boards is also being arranged.

A proposed list of actions will be circulated at the meeting or faxed to you if you are connected by teleconference. Please treat this document as highly confidential, and destroy it after the meeting. Our discussions will be focused on the attached list of questions.

I apologize for the short notice, and look forward receiving your valuable input in regard to this important initiative.

Please feel free to contact Tom Adams, Education Officer, at 416-325-6857 if you have questions or would like more information.

Gerry Townsend
Regional Manager

Regional Consultations: Questions for Discussion

1. (a) What is your reaction to the Action Plan from the viewpoint of your board and schools?
(b) How does the Action Plan align with current board goals in areas such as reducing the achievement gap, board/school improvement plans, and developing or revising the board's Equity Policy?
2. Does the Action Plan sufficiently capture the concepts of equity and inclusive education?
3. (a) What issues or challenges would there be to implementing this Action Plan by September 1, 2010?
(b) What supports would you need to meet this implementation date?
4. (a) What responses and expectations do you anticipate from trustees, unions, community and school councils?
(b) What strategies would you employ to manage these responses and expectations?
5. How should the concept of religious accommodation be addressed within the Action Plan and how would you implement the concept with your board/schools?
6. (a) How can the Action Plan support or challenge the work of the sector with respect to workplace and employment issues?
(b) If there are challenges, what strategies would your board employ to address them?
7. (a) What reporting mechanism, e.g. Director's Report, do you think would be most effective at reporting progress in a transparent and accountable manner?
(b) What indicators would you use to establish baseline data and demonstrate continuous improvement?
8. (a) What specific actions or requirements would you like to see in the proposed PPM and Resource Guide?
(b) What input would you like to have into the development of these documents?
9. What equity-related best practices in your board would you like to share?
10. Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to share with us?