

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MINISTER

FOR THE YEAR 2001 - 2002

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

June 3, 2002

Elizabeth Witmer, MPP
Deputy Premier
Minister of Education
Ministry 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 Witmer,

It is with great pleasure that, as Chair, I am submitting to you this report for the fiscal year 2001-2002 on the activities of your Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE).

On behalf of the members of the Council, I would like to thank the former Minister of Education, Janet Ecker, for her ongoing support and active involvement with the Council, and wish to express Council's appreciation for the many opportunities it has had to contribute to the development of special education policy in the province of Ontario.

As in previous years, the attached report includes a message to the Minister that documents some of Council's principal observations and recommendations. The report also includes a detailed description of the activities of your Council during 2001-2002. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss this report in detail.

Once again, I wish to express Council's appreciation for the opportunity to continue this positive dialogue. This forum provides us with an opportunity to review with you Ministry policies that impact on the ability and responsibility of school boards to provide special education programs and services for exceptional students.

Yours sincerely,

Lynn Ziraldo
Chair
c/o Lynn Ziraldo, 9 Elston Court, Richmond Hill, ON L4C 8A6
(905) 884-7933 Fax: (905) 770-9377

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PART 1:

COUNCIL'S MESSAGE TO THE MINISTER

Dear Minister Witmer,

As your Advisory Council on Special Education, we believe it to be our role to document successful practices as well as the challenges facing the special education community, and to recommend to you appropriate actions in response to this information. This message highlights the significant observations and positions of the Council over the 2001-2002 year. A description of the mandate and structure of the Council is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

Council's advice, for the year 2001-2002, is expressed in a series of resolutions which are included as Part 3 of this report.

Council's Priorities

At Council meetings, each member is encouraged to table a report on recent consultations with the organizations in his or her constituency. These reports, which document successful practices as well as issues of concern, are shared among Council members.

The following sections of this message are organized in accordance with Council's priority areas with an emphasis on the emerging concerns that will guide our deliberations in the year 2002-2003:

- special education funding, including transportation;
- accountability, including improved teaching/ learning; curriculum and assessment; standardized and core subject testing; legislation; Ontario College of Teachers initiatives; Teaching Policy and Program Project initiatives; Individual Education Plans (IEPs); Program Standards; and Double Cohort;
- interministerial liaison, including Coordinated Services and the Universal Infant Hearing Screening Program.

Special Education Funding

Budget Consultation

The Chair, Lynn Ziraldo, was included in the government's pre-budget consultation and was able to provide input collected from Council members and their constituents. Adequate funding for students who require special education programs and services continues to be a high priority for your Council.

While Council is encouraged that education remains a priority of government, it remains concerned that, given the current financial situation in the province, special education funding could be eroded in the future.

Funding

Council members understood the government's rationale for the flexibility given to boards in the 2001-2002 grant regulation, which enabled them to respond to local priorities. It also supported keeping special education funding from previous years enveloped and protected. However, Council remains concerned about the adequacy of current special education funding levels for students with special education needs.

The Intensive Support Amount (ISA) refinement process appears to have been successful and members of Council reported that the experience of pilot boards was positive. Council was also pleased that ISA 1 claims now cover specialized equipment for students receiving their education in Children's Treatment Centres as well as for students leaving Provincial Demonstration Schools to return to the school boards.

Council is in support of the ISA Comprehensive Review process and the establishment of the related ISA Working Group, on which it has been represented. Cycles One and Two of the Comprehensive Review have been well received by boards due in part to the clarified eligibility criteria, the cyclical nature of the review and the collegial approach taken by the validators in assisting boards in the claims process. It is important that this process continue to be viewed as credible, and Council strongly recommends that boards that have demonstrated needs in Cycles One and Two beyond their existing funding levels be funded on their actual live claims for the 2002-2003 school year. It would be equally important for other boards to continue to receive stable funding pending the completion of Cycle Four of the Comprehensive ISA Review. In addition, Council has identified a need for all boards to receive an increase in the Special Education Per Pupil Amount (SEPPA) for the 2002-2003 school year. It also recommends a further increase in the per pupil amount of SEPPA for the secondary school panel in keeping with funding levels for the elementary panel.

Council continues to be concerned about the administrative burden that the ISA process places on boards. Council believes that board staff time is often shifted from providing direct service for all students, to the administrative management of the ISA process. This appears to have resulted in extended waiting periods for assessments for students (especially for French Language school boards) who are not part of the claims process. Council recommends that the Ministry provide school boards with additional funding for assessments to enable them to both meet the ISA funding criteria for eligible students, and also to undertake assessments for other students for diagnostic, placement and program purposes.

Transportation

The Minister's Council is aware of the ongoing work of the Student Transportation Project, which is in the process of developing a new funding model for school transportation. Council members have expressed concern that there appears to be no special educators involved directly in the project, and that Council has had only limited opportunity to provide input. Council believes that the funding to boards for transportation must be equitable, must address the circumstances of pupils with special education needs, must provide boards with the flexibility they need to address unique circumstances, and must not influence decisions related to length of school day or program delivery for exceptional students. Issues that need to be taken into consideration for students with special education needs include: the ability to take part in curriculum related excursions, the ability to attend summer school, the ability to participate in planned transitions from care and treatment programs to school programs, and safety. The Ad-hoc Transportation Committee of MACSE is available to serve as a resource to the Student Transportation Project to ensure that these issues are given appropriate consideration.

Accountability

Improved Teaching/Learning

The Council supports the commitment of the Ministry of Education to the improvement of student achievement, and building capacity within the system to support student learning.

Parents who communicate with Council members tell them that there is a high level of frustration over issues related to school attendance for students in special education programs, which are adversely affected during a strike situation. The Council encourages the Minister to work toward putting in place measures to solve this issue in order to provide more stability in the system.

At the elementary and secondary school levels, parents and constituents report concerns to members about the increase in the amount and the level of difficulty of homework resulting from the raised level of expectations of the new curriculum. At the secondary school level, there is also concern regarding the increased challenge that the new curriculum presents to students who would formerly have had access to basic level courses and who may not graduate as a result.

Members of your Council support the Ministry in its work to improve student learning through improved teaching. This includes legislation that was passed to change the workload standards for teachers, to enable them to have more time for remediation that will assist students in meeting the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum. The inclusion of special education as one of the seven mandatory professional learning areas for teachers is applauded by Council members. The successful completion of the learning requirements for the Professional Learning Program will help assure parents and students that teachers have up-to-date special education knowledge and skills. The Council also supports the on-going review by the Ontario College of Teachers of Additional Qualifications course guidelines. Council members were very pleased to learn that the teacher entry-to-profession exam, administered in Spring 2002, will now be treated as a province-wide field trial.

Education Quality Assurance Office (EQAO)

The Council Chair met with the new chief executive officer of EQAO, and discussed its accommodation policy as it pertains to the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test and the Grade 3, 6 and 9 provincial assessments. Council appreciated the opportunity to provide input into both the EQAO *Guide for Accommodations, Special Provisions, Deferrals, and Exemptions*, as well as the Ministry's revisions to *Policy/Program Memorandum 127: Accommodations, Deferrals, and Exemptions* for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. The Council has expressed a keen interest in data collection and has provided EQAO with a number of suggestions for compiling information related to the implementation of accommodations and the impact of provincial assessments on students with special education needs.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Council commends the Ministry's commitment to the training that took place in Spring 2001 and the decision to have trustees and members of Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs) participate with boards' academic and finance staff. Council recommends that the Ministry consider this joint process as a model for future special education training. Council supports the implementation of the Ministry's IEP standards and believes that the IEP must be based on an individual student's strengths and needs, must describe accommodations required to access the provincial curriculum,

and must identify any modified or alternative learning expectations. Council strongly supports the ongoing review of a random sample of boards' IEPs and recommends additional training. Council also supports the release of a provincial IEP template to assist boards in achieving the required standards.

Program Standards

The government's January 2000 announcement regarding the establishment of Program Standards was well received by the Minister's Advisory Council as such standards would set out clear expectations for programs and services to be offered to exceptional students, and other students with special education needs who have an IEP. School boards would have clear direction about the quality of programs and services the Ministry expects them to offer with the funding received. Parents, similarly, would have clearer information about what they could expect their children to receive. Program standards, therefore, are an important component for accountability for the delivery of special education programs and services.

The Ministry has established volunteer Resource Groups (vRGs) for each exceptionality as a mechanism for consulting with stakeholders on the development of appropriate standards. Members of Council have been pleased to participate on each volunteer Resource Group (vRG). This work continues with the active vRGs now providing advice for standards for programs for students with Learning Disabilities and Multiple Exceptionalities. Council supports the composite advice of the vRGs compiled to date, and urges the Ministry to release program standards for implementation. Because there may be implications to implementing the standards - related to human resource training and professional development and finances - Council supports broader consultation on the proposed standards, in order that the full potential of these implications can be determined, and appropriate planning for implementation can occur.

Double Cohort

It is the Council's wish that the Minister continue to take into account the need for sufficient placements for students who are part of the double cohort. Members support initiatives planned, such as the multi-year funding commitment announced in the 2001 Ontario Budget, which will provide additional operating funding for colleges and universities.

Provincial Auditor's Report on Special Education

Council was pleased that some members, including the Chair, had the opportunity to meet with staff from the Office of the Provincial Auditor to discuss compliance for special education issues. Council is supportive of the recommendations in the Auditor's final report and continues to provide advice to the Ministry regarding compliance and support strategies that can be introduced to enhance quality and accountability in the special education. All members of Council look forward to further opportunities to provide input and advice to the Ministry about the development of a Ministry plan to respond to these recommendations in a comprehensive and timely manner.

Special Education: A Guide for Educators

Council was pleased to receive an official copy of the *Special Education: A Guide for Educators* at the October 2001 Council meeting. Council recommends that the Ministry undertake a periodic review and update of this resource document to ensure that it continues to be a valuable resource to parents and educators alike.

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC):

Council acknowledges the important role SEACs play in advising school boards about special education programs and services as per Regulation 464/97. In that regard, Council feels it is critical that the Ministry provide appropriate in-service and support to SEAC members to enable them to fulfill their role.

Interministerial Liaison

Coordinated Services

At a meeting in September 2001, the Chair informed the former Minister of Education, Janet Ecker, that Council looks forward to the changes expected from the work being undertaken by the Coordinated Services Unit of the Ministry of Education.

Council supports the Ministry of Education's initiative to collaborate with the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services (MCFCS) and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) to develop policies aimed at improving the coordination of social, health, educational, speech-language, and psychological services between schools and other agencies for children with special needs.

Council understands that the key components of this initiative include:

- an emphasis on students in the primary grades (JK-Gr. 3), in order to build on the positive outcomes achieved through the government's Early Years Program;
- the development of a series of guidelines, which will require school boards to develop transition plans for children moving from early intervention programs to school, including from the government's pre-school speech and language program and its intensive early intervention program for children with autism;
- the development of new policies that will clarify interministerial roles and responsibilities in the provision of speech language services, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and the provision of adaptive equipment; and
- a comprehensive review of the interface between school boards and children's mental health services in order to identify successful practices as well as gaps and areas for improvement.

Council anticipates that the work of the Coordinated Services Unit will benefit parents and their children by providing a more fluid and collaborative transition from birth to school registration. Members have appreciated the opportunity to provide input and advice to this initiative in the early stages of its development. We are also pleased that members of Council, including the Chair, have been invited to participate on the Ministry's Coordinated Services Advisory Committee.

Universal Infant Hearing Screening Program

The universal Infant Hearing Screening, Assessment and Communication Development Program, launched by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC), is of interest to the Council. Council members believe that early screening, assessment and early intervention programming for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students requiring programs and services will better prepare students to transition to school-based programs. Council is concerned about the limited availability of pre-school programs for deaf/hard of hearing children across the province, and also about the critical shortage of specialist teachers.

Council believes that services and support for Deaf and hard-of-hearing pre-school children should be reviewed. It also recommends that steps be taken to ensure effective transition from the infant hearing program (from birth to age 2 ½). There is also a need for the government to better communicate both programs to the public. As well, Council's concern regarding the delisting of Hearing Aid Assessments from the OHIP schedule continues.

Safe Schools Act and Code of Conduct

The Council respects and understands the intent of this legislation, and appreciates the way in which the Ministry has worked with members to include mitigating circumstances in the governing Regulation. Council will continue to be interested in the implementation components of this initiative, including: training for principals, and the ways in which boards track and report on exceptional students who are suspended or expelled and placed in strict discipline programs. Members of Council have indicated that they would like updates to ensure that exceptional students are not being adversely impacted by this legislation. In particular, Council has requested progress-reports on related initiatives, such as strict discipline programs, to gauge their impact on the Native, Francophone and rural populations of exceptional students, for whom programs may not be available.

Early Reading Project

Council commends the Ministry for its establishment of the Early Reading Project and the focus on early years initiatives. The presentation and sharing of materials at the February meeting generated interest in the merits of early intervention strategies and the process of effective target setting. As part of its continuing interest in this topic, Council has requested further information on the coordination of various Early Years initiatives, including those from other ministries. Members are also interested in receiving data relating to the number of students who participated in the Early Reading Project and were later identified as exceptional.

Conclusion

This summary reflects the most significant observations, **challenges** and recommendations arising from the work of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education for the year 2001-2002.

I would like to express Council's appreciation for the support given by the former Minister of Education, Janet Ecker and Ministry staff during the 2001-2002 Council year. Minister Ecker's attendance at all three meetings and her consideration of Council's resolutions, was also appreciated. As Chair of your Council, I look forward to working with you over the coming year to ensure further improvements to special education programs and services for exceptional students.

Yours sincerely,

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

PART 2

ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL IN 2001 and 2002

Membership

The following information summarizes the appointments and reappointments that the Minister made during the 2001-2002 year.

- **Janice Strickland** is a new member and was appointed for a term of three years expiring March 31, 2004 as representative for the Developmental Disability exceptionality.
- **Catherine Davis** is a new member and was appointed for a term of three years ending March 31, 2004 as the representative for Native communities. The Native representative position is a new position which began April 1, 2001.
- **Edward Masse** is a new member and was appointed for a term of one year ending March 31, 2002 as representative of the Students and Youth community.
- **Jean-Luc Bernard** was reappointed for three years as the representative for Supervisory Officers and the French language community. Mr. Bernard was also appointed Vice-Chair for a three year term ending March 31, 2004.
- **Martha Walsh** was reappointed for a term of three years as the representative for Multiple Exceptionalities and her term will expire March 31, 2004.
- **Raymond LeBlanc** was reappointed for a term of three years as representative for the Pervasive Development Disorder/Autism community and the French community and his term will expire March 31, 2004.
- **Greg Gillis** was reappointed for a three year term as representative for the Medical community and his term will expire March 31, 2004.
- **Derryn Gill** was reappointed for a one year term as representative for Physical Disabilities and her term expired March 31, 2002.
- **Janice Currie** was reappointed for a one year term as representative for Psychologists and her term expired March 31, 2002.
- **John Hendry** was reappointed for a one year term as representative for Trustees and his term expired March 31, 2002.

- **Jeanne Robinson** was reappointed for a one year term as the representative for Educational Assistants but resigned from this appointment in June of 2001.
- **Ruth Ann Schedlich** was appointed as representative for Teacher Assistants to complete Jeanne Robinson's term, which expired March 31, 2002.
- **Cheryl Zinszer** was appointed for a three year term March 31,2000 as representative for Principals but resigned in August, 2001 when she accepted a position with the London District Office of the Ministry of Education.

The membership of Council at the end of 2001-2002 is shown in Appendix 2.

Meetings

The Council held meetings on June 13 and 14, 2001, October 17 and 18, 2001, and on February 20 and 21, 2002.

The June 13 and 14, 2001 agenda included the following topics:

Additional Qualification Courses
 Teaching Policy and Program
 Curriculum Implementation Partnerships
 Children's Treatment Centres
 Early Intensive Programs for Children with Autism
 Secondary School Project
 Double Cohort
 Care and Treatment Programs (Section 19)
 Program Standards
 Individual Education Plan (IEP) Review
Special Education: A Guide for Educators
 Transitions Plan

The October 17 and 18, 2001 agenda included the following topics:

Provincial Auditor's Report on Special Education
Special Education: A Guide for Educators
 Ontario Skills Passport
 Summer Institutes
 Program Standards
 Communication Protocol
 Early Reading Project
 Accountability Forum

Community Care Access Centres
Infant Hearing Program
French-Language Assessment Project
Teaching Policy and Program
Core Subject Testing
Special Education Funding
Accountability and Data Collection
Co-ordinated Services
Early Intervention, Early Assessment Project
IEP Review and Special Education Board Plans Review

The February 20 and 21, 2002 agenda included topics on the following:

Early Intervention Programs for Children with Autism
IEP reviews
Co-ordinated Services
Program Standards
Provincial Auditor's Report on Special Education
Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning (OKNL) - Gifted Pilot Project
Care and Treatment Programs (Section 19)
Transportation
Education Finance
Early Reading Project

The Honourable Janet Ecker, former Minister of Education, joined the Council at all three of these meetings for an exchange of views on special education issues and on the government's accomplishments in education reform as well as current initiatives in special education. Members of the Council were reassured and pleased to hear the former Minister's personal commitment to exceptional students and her continuing recognition for the role of her Advisory Council on Special Education.

Consultations

Council Chair, Lynn Ziraldo, met with the former Minister of Education, Janet Ecker, on September 13, 2001. At this time, Lynn Ziraldo reviewed the Council's Annual Report to the Minister for the year 2000-2001. This gave the Chair of Council an opportunity to raise issues that were of concern to the Council and gave the former Minister an opportunity to hear and to respond to the Council's priorities, issues and recommendations.

Over the past year, the Chair also continued to meet, as necessary, with the Deputy Minister of Education, Suzanne Herbert and the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Strategic Planning and Elementary/Secondary Programs Division, Judith Wright.

The Chair also met with Denis Vaillancourt, Assistant Deputy Minister of the French-Language Education and Educational Operations, to discuss a variety of issues, including: special education within the French Language community, the role and importance of school boards' Special Education Advisory Committees, and the resource support that Provincial and Demonstration Schools provide to school boards.

On November 28, 2001, the Office of the Provincial Auditor released its report on its value-for-money audit of special education. Prior to the release, Council Chair and various Council members met with the Provincial Auditor to provide input on the process of monitoring and implementing the recommendations on special education. The Provincial Auditor's recommendations confirm Ministry initiatives intended to improve quality and accountability including standards for Individual Education Plans and School Board Special Education Plans as well as Program Standards, and suggest areas for further work needed to ensure program effectiveness. The Council plans to provide ongoing advice to the Ministry on how to implement the recommendations in the report.

The Chair and other members of Council met on several occasions with officials of the Ministry 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.

The development of Program Standards for special education programs and services continues to be a priority. Members of the Council participated on volunteer Resource Groups in 2001 to develop recommendations for how the government should set program standards in each exceptionality area. The Members also met as a group to review the common elements of the advice received by the Ministry staff through the meetings of the volunteer Resource Groups.

Council provided representatives to Ministry consultation meetings on a variety of issues including Education Finance Reform, and in particular the ISA Working Group overseeing the current Comprehensive ISA Review. Council members provided feedback to the Ontario College of Teachers regarding Additional Qualifications courses for teachers, and to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch of the Ministry regarding the Special Education Companion to the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner.

A number of Council members attended training sessions on Individual Education Plan and Special Education Board Plan Standards in March and April 2001. The Ministry, in partnership with the Ontario Council for Exceptional Children and l'Association professionnelle pour l'enfance en difficulté, conducted nine training sessions across the province, seven in English and two in French. The Council Chair, Lynn Ziraldo, presented at several of the sessions, which were attended by school board staff, Council and SEAC members.

Standing and Ad Hoc Committees of Council members participated in a number of teleconferences during the year to discuss initiatives such as the Ontario Education Number (OEN), Health Support Services in School Settings, and the Student

Transportation Project. As well, a number of issues were discussed with the Education, Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), such as accommodations for exceptional students and deferrals and exemptions for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. A copy of the Standing and Ad Hoc Committees is attached as Appendix 3.

Members of Council addressed audiences throughout Ontario, providing information about the Council and inviting input on pertinent issues. Members continued to collect information related to their area of representation, as well as on successful practices and concerns/challenges from the special education community. This input was used to inform Council's understanding of issues and to assist in setting its agenda for next year. A sample of the form used by Council members to report on these consultations is attached as Appendix 4.

The Chair reported on her meetings with Kit Rankin, Director of the Ministry's Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch. The Chair informed Council that the following topics were discussed at the meeting: the need for additional funding for text books and related technological support for students in special education programs; policies on exemptions at elementary and secondary level (i.e. French); the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test; policies for student assessment; secondary school diploma requirements; the relative merits of semestered and non-semestered secondary schools; the double cohort; ongoing curriculum implementation; support for students at risk; alternatives to (former) basic level courses; support for students still governed by Ontario Schools: Intermediate and Senior Divisions (OS:IS); and the Ministry's Skills Passport initiative.

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

of the

Annual Report to the Minister:

RESOLUTIONS

for the year

JUNE 2001 - FEBRUARY 2002

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MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD JUNE 2001 TO FEBRUARY 2002

During the period June 2001 to February 2002, forty-five resolutions were made by the Council. The resolutions are categorized as follows:

Communication Strategies

01.03.10 **Whereas:** the Ministry of Education has a number of initiatives that impact on exceptional students (e.g. IEPs, Standards, School Board Plans, Safe Schools, Strict Discipline Programs) and are of interest to parents, SEAC and other stakeholders:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education develop and implement a communication strategy about initiatives that impact on exceptional students with MACSE input.

Compliance Support Strategies

01.02.10. **Whereas:** the accountability, the monitoring and legal obligations are essential elements for School Boards:

Be it resolved that MACSE submit the Compliance Support Strategies position paper to the Ministry of Education for consideration. This is a preliminary version only.

Curriculum

02.01.07. **Whereas:** the Special Education Companion to the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner is an excellent resource for educators and parents, and is currently under revision for release in electronic and print versions and was previously not available to parents:

Be it resolved that when the revised Special Education Companion is released a version be made available to parents.

01.03.13 **Whereas:** the Ministry of Education has initiated a new testing program for all students in grades 4,5,7,8,9,10 and 11. The needs of special education students will need to be addressed in the new testing program:

Be it resolved that (a) MACSE be consulted regarding how the needs of special education students will be addressed in the new testing program (b) an accommodations/exemptions and deferrals guide be developed for the new testing program in consultation with MACSE.

02.01.14 **Whereas:** MACSE has heard reports of some students getting advice to take courses not suitable for their ability (i.e., being encouraged to take U/C instead of U level courses or applied courses instead of academic courses):

Be it resolved that a Ministry guideline be sent to all school boards advising them to be familiar with Admission Requirements for Universities prior to providing guidance to students.

01.02.11 **Whereas:** the information technology and on-line curriculum should be accessible as much as possible:

Whereas: the information technology in the schools will reduce the cost of providing accessible education to students with disabilities:

Be it resolved that MACSE recommends that all new hardware, on-line curriculum and software acquisition meet the Ministry of Education requirements of accessibility.

01.02.12 **Whereas:** some School Boards do not have the training or the expertise to deliver professional development in the area of special and/or adaptive technologies:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education implements a delivery mechanism to ensure that every teacher in Ontario has the opportunity to develop the skills and the support mechanism necessary to integrate special and/or adaptive technologies into their teaching and it is the responsibility of the teacher to enhance their skills.

Funding

Funding - Protected

01.02.08 **Be it resolved that** a mechanism must be put into place to monitor how current levels of protected Special Education funding as well as 2001-2002 flexible funding enhancements are being spent on special education programs and services as defined by the Ministry's code of account.

01.02.09 **Be it resolved that** flexible funding enhancements in 2001-2002 allocation to boards not be the beginning of a trend toward the erosion of protected funding envelope for special education.

Funding - ISA

02.01.01 **Whereas:** the administrative burden of the comprehensive ISA review process has created a backlog of student assessments:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education consider additional funding to assist school boards to address the backlog of student assessments, and further, that the Ministry require boards to submit a plan in order to be granted additional funding.

02. 01.02 **Whereas:** it is important to maintain the integrity of the ISA comprehensive review recommendations:

Be it resolved that school boards whose cycle one results are higher than current stable funding levels move to live funding in 2002-2003, while other boards continue to receive stable funding.

02.01.05 **Whereas:** the current Intensive Support Amount (ISA) funding amounts have remained constant since the student focused funding model was introduced, while costs to school boards have increased:

Be it resolved that Ministry of Education's review the current per claim amount for ISA 2 and ISA 3 claims with the view to adjusting these amounts to more realistically reflect the actual costs to boards (e.g. to more adequately respond to increased staffing and programming costs).

Funding - SEPPA

02.01.03 **Whereas:** the majority of students in special education are covered under Special Education Per Pupil Amount (SEPPA) funding:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education should increase the level of SEPPA funding for all school boards for 2002-2003.

02.01.04 **Whereas:** with the implementation of *Ontario Secondary Schools Grades 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements 1999* the student population upon which the SEPPA grant is based will probably go down, as many students graduate in four years; while at the same time the student population will have proportionately more special education students because many will take more than four years to graduate in order to

successfully complete the new more rigorous curriculum:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education increase the level of SEPPA funding for the secondary panel to match or exceed the level of elementary panel SEPPA funding.

Funding - Section 19

02.01.15 **Whereas:** PPM 85 was issued on January 20, 1986 and defines funding for textbooks and the resources in Section 19 facilities as \$2500, and such resourcing is frequently inadequate:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education review the level of funding for textbooks and technological resources in Section 19 facilities.

01.02.14 **Whereas:** the 1995 Section 19 Program guideline from the Ministry of Education is outdated:

Be it resolved that MACSE recommends a review of the 1995 policy guideline for the Section 19 Program.

01.03.06 **Whereas:** it is not clear to parents how Section 19 programs are organized:

Be it resolved that MACSE recommend that a parent friendly document be developed that explains Section 19 programs and procedures including admission criteria, funding, costs to parents and necessary permissions for assessment, treatment and teaching.

Funding - Accountability

01.02.06 **Be it resolved that** the Ministry of Education establish specific codes of accounts for school boards to report on their expenditures based on defined special education programs and services.

Funding - Other

02.01.13 **Whereas:** textbooks and learning resources for exceptional students are generally not readily available at the secondary level, thus these students cannot grow in reading skill, rather they simply acquire a greater distaste for reading:

Be it resolved that money be allocated to purchase textbooks and other learning resources, both in English and French, for exceptional students who require assistance in reading.

02.01.16 **Whereas:** some students encounter difficulties in learning in their early years that could be avoided and reduce long term costs associated with special education if appropriate early interventions were in place:

Be it resolved that funding for the Early Reading Strategy be expanded to include funding of intervention programs for students in JK – Grade 3 who are at risk for reading difficulties.

01.02.07 **Be it resolved that** the Ministry of Education investigate and find solutions for creating accessible and equitable opportunities for special education students to attend for-credit summer school courses.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

01.03.11 **Whereas:** the Ministry of Education IEP Standards clearly articulate IEPs must be based on individual program planning for individual students, ie: what an individual student needs in the way of supports to enable them to access the Ontario Curriculum (including the accommodations and modifications and support necessary to make this happen); and that input from MACSE sectors gives numerous examples of identical IEPs for students being generated:

Be it resolved that therefore the Ministry of Education revisions to IEP Standards consider strong advice to school boards to discourage the use of IEP engines that result in production of IEPs based on exceptionality rather than individual student needs.

01.03.12. **Whereas:** the Ministry of Education IEP Standards Review has demonstrated a wide variance in how individual Boards write IEPs; and how the current IEP Standards are interpreted:

Be it resolved that MACSE have input into additional IEP training to be provided to stakeholders (including principals, teachers, and SEACs).

Monograph 5

01.03.03 **Whereas:** the Education response to a resolution regarding Monograph 5 passed in March 1998 indicated final revisions were underway, and

recognizes that Monograph 5 is still considered a valuable resource for special needs students:

Be it resolved that that a final Monograph 5 be made available to school boards for implementation in schools.

Ontario College of Teachers

02.01.09 **Whereas:** The Ontario College of Teachers has developed draft Additional Qualifications (AQ) Course Guidelines in Pre-school Deaf Education; and

Whereas: it is MACSE's understanding that these guidelines were intended to augment skills of trained teachers of the Deaf and that the course as outlined is deemed by MACSE not to be suitable for classroom teachers who have had no prior training in deaf education; and

Whereas: considerable new information and understanding of the needs of today's deaf and hard of hearing students has been compiled in conjunction with the Universal Infant Hearing Programs of MOHLTC that warrants consideration in the development of the AQ Course Guidelines in preschool Deaf Education; and

Whereas: it is recognized that a growing number of deaf students are integrated into regular school board classes and consequently there is a need for an AQ course in Deaf education for classroom teachers:

Be it resolved that MACSE request that the OCT extend time lines for feedback to the AQ course for Pre-school Deaf Education, and that OCT also consult with community organizations, including members of the Infant Hearing Program, before finalizing the guidelines.

02.01.11. **Whereas:** the proposed Student Protection Act 2001 (Bill 101) focuses on the reporting requirements between employers of certified teachers and the professional regulatory body for teachers (OCT) concerning issues of sexual abuse; and

Whereas: other professionals (e.g. doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists) are governed by their colleges concerning issues of sexual abuse; and

Whereas: there are other employees of school boards that are not governed by a regulatory college (e.g. educational assistants):

Be it resolved that MACSE be assured that employers have a reporting

requirement related to all staff in schools concerning issues of sexual abuse in the education sector.

02.01.12 **Whereas:** a longer period of time is required to develop a better understanding of the rules and process of the qualifying test for teachers, and to have a chance to review the accommodation needs:

Be it resolved that MACSE recommend to the Ministry that the qualifying test for new teachers does not count for this year.

01.02.01 **Whereas:** in order to improve the training programs for Educational Assistants, it is important to provide a variety of apprenticeship programs:

Be it resolved that MACSE give advice in the development of the “on the job” standards for the Apprenticeship Training Program for Educational Assistants.

Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning (OKNL)

01.02.13 **Whereas:** the concern of learners with special needs have not been captured in the documentation of the Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning:

Be it resolved that MACSE be actively involved in developing a communication mechanism and/or protocol with the working group of Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning (OKNL) in order to address the issues of accessibility and equity.

Ontario Skills Passport

01.03.01 **Whereas:** MACSE recognizes the value of the Ontario Skills Passport for all students and endorses this new initiative:

Be it resolved that the Ministry encourage Boards to include a range of students with different exceptionalities in the piloting of the Passport. Also that any documentation arising from piloting include an analysis of the impact on exceptional students.

Over 21 Pilot Project

01.03.07 **Whereas:** the Ministry of Education has indicated that there will be a phase-out of Post 21 Pilot Project funding, and has indicated that this phase-out is expected to coincide with the possible expansion of the

MCSS Foundation Initiative, and that currently there are limited Foundation projects that are funded throughout the province:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education provide MACSE with information about Transition process for students currently involved in the Post 21 Pilot Project.

01.03.08. **Whereas:** the Ministry of Education has indicated that Post 21 Pilot Project funding will be phased-out; the phase out is expected to coincide with the possible expansion of the MCSS Foundations initiative; currently there are a limited number of Foundations project funded throughout the province; large numbers of students requiring ongoing MCSS support are graduating each year:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Community and Social Services provide MACSE with information about expansion of Foundations initiative, as well as other opportunities for students requiring ongoing support following high school.

Policy and Program Memorandum (PPM 81)

01.02.05 **Whereas:** the task group prepared reports and recommendations regarding revisions of PPM 81 (Speech and Language, Psychosocial services and Personal Health Support Services):

Be it resolved that Education release the literature review and successful practices from the PPM 81 Review task groups.

01.03.05 **Whereas:** there have been significant reductions to speech therapy services from CCACs to school-age children as outlined under Memo 81. Parents and schools are very concerned about this lack of service:

Be it resolved that Ministry of Education Co-ordinated Services Unit communicate MACSE's concern to the Ministry of Health, investigate reasons for cuts in service and explore options to improve access to speech therapy services.

Program Standards Project

01.02.16 **Whereas:** MACSE supports the efforts of the Program Standards Project and recognizes the importance of this initiative for special education students:

Be it resolved that a comprehensive communication, implementation and training plan for the rollout of this Program Standards be developed in consultation with MACSE.

01.03.09 **Whereas:** the government has made a commitment to quality and accountability through the development of program standards:

Be it resolved that MACSE recommends that the Ministry communicate to school boards, parents and to the broader education sector what the next steps are going to be related to program standards .

Safe Schools Policy

01.02.15 **Whereas:** suspension, expulsion regulations including mitigating circumstances come into effect for the 2001-2002 school year:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education develop a tracking mechanism and data collection process for the implementation of these safe school policy initiatives.

02.01.06 **Whereas:** Section 265(m) of The Education Act enables a principal to refuse to admit to the school a person whose presence in the school would, in the principal's judgement, be detrimental to the physical or mental well-being of the pupils; and whereas some boards are reported to be conducting independent risk assessments to determine which persons will be refused entry:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education examine the practice of risk assessment with a view to developing consistency across the province (sec 265 (m)).

Transition Guide

01.03.02 **Whereas:** the transition guide will be published soon:

Be it resolved that the Ministry develop a transition training strategy for the implementation of the transition guide.

Universal Infant Hearing Screening Program

01.02.02 **Whereas:** MACSE has ongoing concerns that the universality of the infant screening hearing process will not be assured:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care give consideration to launching a province-wide public awareness campaign to inform the public of the availability of infant hearing screening.

01.02.03. **Whereas:** the intention of the protocols for the Infant Hearing Screening Initiative was intended to include unbiased and equitable community input MACSE has concerns that the regional responsibility may not be assuring equitable participation from community partners:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care advise what accountability mechanisms are in place to oversee the implementation of the program to assure widespread community input.

01.02.04 **Whereas:** the Infant Hearing Screening Program is designed to provide screening to infants. MACSE is concerned that children who move to Ontario will not be routinely screened for hearing loss:

Be it resolved that initiatives be considered to assure screening for older children who move to Ontario.

01.03.04. **Whereas:** the Ministry of Health is no longer funding audiological services, including hearing aid evaluations. This is of great concern to parents, teachers and school boards, as hearing has a direct impact on classroom learning:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education Special Education Project staff communicate these concerns to the Ministry of Health and discuss ways to improve access to audiological services by school-age children.

02.01.08 **Whereas:** hearing aid assessments and re-assessments have been de-listed from the OHIP schedule of benefits effective August 2001; and whereas research supports audiological management of deaf and hard-of-hearing children in order to maximize their residual hearing and optimize their listening ability as well as achieving optimal ability for inclusion in schools:

Be it resolved that ongoing audiological assessments and re-assessments be available to students through MOHLTC.

02.01.10 **Whereas:** MOHLTC will launch the Universal Hearing Program in 2002; the program is intended to identify hearing loss and its impact on the development of communication; the identified babies will have access to communication audiological support in accordance with the protocols established by this program; those babies identified will also have continued support in their pre-school years under the Pre-school Speech and Language program of MOHLTC; and

Whereas: school based ISA funding is in place for pre-school aged deaf and hard of hearing children: however few preschool programs exist in Ontario; and

Whereas: it is expected that early intervention, access to suitable technology and communication supports will facilitate increased numbers of deaf and hard-of-hearing children to successfully integrate into the regular classroom setting:

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education initiate an inter-ministerial review of services and support for deaf and hard-of-hearing children with the intent of developing seamless transition plans and assuring continuity of program supports and services.

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 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 2001-2002 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.

Members are appointed by the Minister from nominations received from over 80 organizations with an interest in special education. Each member is responsible for liaising with and representing the interests of all organizations in his or her constituency. Details of the nomination and appointment process have been posted by the Ministry on its Web Site at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca> (see Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education under Agencies, Boards and Commissions).

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 nine exceptionalities;
- one seat for each of nine educator and professional categories;
- one seat for a student member;
- one seat for Native Communities;

- four non-voting seats for the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services & Integrated Services for Children, the Children's Secretariat, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities.
- two representatives each for the Francophone and Roman Catholic communities, appointed from among the members above.

In the Summer of 2000, further revisions were made to the mandate and structure of the Council.

- Council's meeting time was increased to 4 ½ days per year, allowing for three meetings of 1 ½ days each.
- The minister was mandated to appoint a member representing the Native community.
- The minister was mandated to invite the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Children's Secretariat to join the Ministry of Community Family and Children's Services and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, as non-voting members on the Council.
- The Council, with this revised structure, was mandated for a five year period ending March 31, 2005. At that time recommendations for the ongoing mandate and structure will be proposed, on the basis of a sunset review.

APPENDIX 2

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION APRIL 1, 2001 TO MARCH 31, 2002

Exceptionality / Community of Interest Represented	Members
<p><u>Exceptionalities:</u> Learning Disabilities, All Exceptionalities, Chair Emotional/Behaviour Disorder, Catholic Community Deaf & Hard of Hearing Gifted Developmental Disability Blind & Low Vision Physical Disability Multiple Exceptionalities Pervasive Developmental Disorder, French Language Community</p> <p><u>Educator Groups</u> Trustees Supervisory Officers, French Language Community, Vice-Chair Principals Teachers Educational Assistants</p> <p><u>Student /Youth</u></p> <p><u>Professional Support</u> Medical Psychologists Social Workers Speech and Language Pathologists & Roman Catholic Community</p> <p><u>Non-voting</u> Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Ministry of Community and Social Services, Office of Integrated Services for Children, and Children's Secretariat Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities</p> <p>Ministry of Education (Secretary)</p> <p>* Norah-Lynn McIntyre was Norah-Lynn Lankshear Cheryl Zinszer resigned August 2001 Jeanne Robinson resigned June 2001 and was replaced by Ruth Ann Schedlich</p>	<p>Lynn Ziraldo James Arthur Norah-Lynn McIntyre* Virginia Dunlop Janice Strickland Diane McLeod Derryn Gill Martha Walsh Raymond LeBlanc</p> <p>John Hendry Jean-Luc Bernard Cheryl Zinszer* Don Jones Jeanne Robinson*/ Ruth Ann Schedlich</p> <p>Edward Masse</p> <p>Greg Gillis Janice Currie Jane Loughborough Susan Menary</p> <p>Lois Michaels Sandy Palinski Sandy Palinski Jackie Creber/ Eydie Troper</p> <p>June Simonson</p>

APPENDIX 3
MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

COMMITTEE LIST: APRIL 2001 - MARCH 2002

Updated February 25, 2002

STANDING COMMITTEE

FINANCE

Derryn Gill (Chair)
John Hendry
Janice Currie
James Arthur
Jean-Luc Bernard
Martha Walsh
Janice Strickland
Susan Menary
Ginny Dunlop
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: John Amon

AD HOC COMMITTEE

TRANSPORTATION

Derryn Gill (Chair)
Diane McLeod
John Hendry
Jane Loughborough
Ginny Dunlop
Janice Strickland
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: June Simonson

STANDING COMMITTEE

INTERMINISTRY CO-ORDINATION

James Arthur (Chair)
Susan Menary
Don Jones
Raymond LeBlanc
Jane Loughborough
Greg Gillis
Diane McLeod
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
Catherine Davis
Edward Masse
Ruth Ann Schedlich
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Crawford Dedman

AD HOC COMMITTEES

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS

Ruth Ann Schedlich (Chair)
Jean Luc Bernard
Martha Walsh
Lynn Ziraldo (ex-officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Bill Wyman

TRANSITIONS

Raymond LeBlanc (Chair)
Don Jones
John Hendry
Greg Gillis
Diane McLeod
Edward Masse
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Bill Wyman

SAFE SCHOOLS/CODE OF CONDUCT

Jane Loughborough (Chair)
Janice Currie
James Arthur
Greg Gillis
Don Jones
Jean Luc Bernard
Catherine Davis
Janice Strickland
Edward Masse
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Paul Carr

STANDING COMMITTEE

ACCOUNTABILITY AND STANDARDS

Susan Menary (Chair)
Jean-Luc Bernard
Janice Currie
Ginny Dunlop
Derryn Gill
Janice Strickland
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
Jane Loughborough
Catherine Davis
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: John Amon

AD HOC COMMITTEE

ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

Don Jones (Chair)
Ginny Dunlop
Derryn Gill
Janice Strickland
Jane Loughborough
Susan Menary
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Kathy Schaffer

GRADE 10 TEST OF READING AND WRITING

Ginny Dunlop (Chair)
Janice Currie
Jean-Luc Bernard
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
Catherine Davis
Don Jones
Lynn Ziraldo (ex-officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Paul Carr

TEACHING

Vacant (Chair)
Jean-Luc Bernard
Don Jones
Martha Walsh
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Kathy Schaffer

APPENDIX 4

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

COMMUNICATION: COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Name of Council Member

DATE AND SOURCE	WHAT'S WORKING WELL IN SPECIAL EDUCATION	CHALLENGES/ISSUES

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

This form is intended for use by members of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education to provide information to the Council on successful practices and issues or challenges in the area which they represent on the Council.

Information about successful practices, issues or challenges should be entered in the appropriate column of the chart opposite the name of the organization which is the source of the information and the date of the consultation with that organization. If the source is an individual rather than a representative of an organization, you should protect the identity of the individual by showing in the source column a generic term like "parent" or "teacher" etc.

Some members are in the habit of distributing this form to the organizations in their constituency and asking the organizations 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. Members who collect such 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 indicating that more detailed information is available to any member who wishes it.

The completed form should be submitted by the member to the Chair of the Council prior to each regular meeting of the Council. 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

SWOT ANALYSIS

MEETING _____

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

c/o Lynn Ziraldo, 9 Elston Court, Richmond Hill, ON L4C 8A6
(905) 884-7933 Fax: (905) 770-9377