

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MINISTER
FOR THE YEAR 2002 - 2003**

Ministry of Education
Advisory Council on Special Education
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June 19, 2003

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 considerable pleasure that, as Chair, I am submitting this report to you on the activities of your Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) for the fiscal year 2002-2003.

On behalf of all MACSE members, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and active involvement with Council. I also wish to express appreciation for the many opportunities MACSE has been provided, during the past year, to contribute advice about the development and implementation of special education policy in the province of Ontario.

As in previous years, the attached report is a formal message to the Minister which documents MACSE's foremost activities, observations and recommendations. I look forward to meeting with you to review Council's message in detail, and to respond to any questions that you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Lynn Ziraldo
Chair

Letter of Transmittal

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PART 1

COUNCIL'S MESSAGE TO THE MINISTER

Dear Minister Witmer,

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 special education services for exceptional pupils, 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, as submitted to the Council from time to time. In addition, Council's voice is often heard through its representation on various Ministry work groups or other stakeholder advisory bodies. Members also document successful practices, as well as challenges, that are evident in the special education community. Each member of Council is encouraged to consult with the organizations in his or her constituency and to table a report at each MACSE meeting reflecting the input received. MACSE's role is to advise you on appropriate actions, following careful analysis of all of this information.

This annual message highlights the significant observations, conclusions and recommendations developed by your Advisory Council during the course of the past fiscal year, 2002-2003. As in past years, Council's formal advice is expressed through a series of resolutions which are included as Part 3 of this report. These resolutions provide guidance on the following issues:

- accountability and standards
- funding
- curriculum and assessment
- programs and services for students with special education needs
- student safety
- performance appraisal

Council's Priorities

Council's priorities continue to be those intended to ensure that students with special education needs are provided with the programs and services they require to succeed in school. Accordingly, this message is organized in priority areas with an emphasis on the emerging challenges that will guide our deliberations in the year 2003-2004. These priority areas are:

- **special education funding** - including implementation of the recommendations of the Education Equality Task Force (EETF), one of which is for the Ministry to review and

consider the recommendations in the brief submitted to the EETF by MACSE; a second relates to the provision of transportation of exceptional pupils; and a third speaks to increasing the Special Education Per Pupil Amount (SEPPA) for secondary school students as well as reviewing the special education funding model;

- **accountability** - including student learning and evaluation, teacher training and development; curriculum and assessment; Ontario College of Teachers initiatives; Individual Education Plans (IEPs); Special Education Program Standards; special education finance and program equity for students in educational programs provided in care, treatment, custodial and correctional facilities;
- **program standards** - including the release of and consultation on special education program standards, and a commitment to implement the exceptionality specific program standards;
- **applied research** - including implementation of MACSE's recommendation to the Education Equality Task Force (EETF) that the government invest in applied research aimed at helping school boards build the capacity to develop efficient and cost-effective programming for students with special needs and appropriate ways to measure whether these programs are improving the achievement level of students with special needs;
- **service coordination** - including improved interministerial liaison to facilitate entry to school procedures for students from pre-school programs to the classroom; speech and language services, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy (OT/PT), Adaptive Equipment, and the system of services provided to children and youth with psychosocial and or behaviour needs;
- **professional development** - including teacher access to "just-in-time" resources when addressing the needs of special education students. Given the complexity of students' education needs and the low incidence rates of some disorders/disabilities, teachers need access to a web page that provides them with resources and suggestions for meeting the specific needs of every student; and
- **training in use of adaptive learning** - including a commitment to review the training/technical needs of school boards in the use of assistive technologies and to develop a strategy to address implementation of the appropriate adaptive learning technologies for students with special education needs.

SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING

Budget Consultation

Adequate funding for students who require special education programs and services continues to be a high priority for your Council. MACSE was appreciative of the involvement of its Chair, Lynn Ziraldo, in the government's announcement of Special Education in December 2002 with the Premier. MACSE's Chair was involved in the government's pre-budget consultation reflecting the views of Council members and their constituents that were relevant to the needs of students receiving special education programs and services.

The new funding announced for special education in December 2002 is clear evidence of that commitment. MACSE acknowledges that this represents a total annual investment for special education of \$1.65 Billion and signifies a large step on the part of the government as it responds to the recommendations of the Education Equality Task Force Report presented by Dr. Mordechai Rozanski.

It is apparent from the 2003 provincial budget that the education of students with special needs continues to be one of your government's priorities as well.

Funding Priorities

While Council is supportive of keeping special education funding enveloped and protected, it believes that with the ongoing debate regarding the special education funding levels (i.e. is there enough funding for special education), it is increasingly important to confirm that the special education allocation is being used as effectively and efficiently as possible to support successful educational outcomes for students with special education needs. Therefore, in order to ensure the effective use of special education investments, we believe that the government should now focus its efforts on certain key priorities.

We believe that the following priorities will act as important "levers for change" as the Ministry provides guidance to school boards in their use of their share of the special education investment. These priorities include:

- Investing in applied research. In MACSE's submission to the Education Equality Task Force, it recommended that the government invest in applied research aimed at helping school boards build the capacity to develop efficient and cost-effective programming for students with special education needs and appropriate ways to measure whether these programs are improving the achievement level of students with special education needs. MACSE believes that such research could drive innovation and excellence in special education. For that reason, Council recommended that funding provided for this research equal 1% of the total special education investment. This would equate to approximately \$16 Million annually.
- Increasing the Special Education Per Pupil Amount (SEPPA) for secondary school students to offset the estimated decline in enrolment that will result from reduced number

of years in the secondary school curriculum, and then increase the SEPPA by a further 10% to support a high level of special education programming at the secondary school level. These recommended increases are included in Dr. Rozanski's report and implementation is critical if secondary school students with special education needs are to have their educational needs met. Special education delivery at the secondary level is challenging. Secondary schools must be funded at the same level as elementary schools in order to provide adequate support for students with special education needs to access the curriculum, including participating in Cooperative Education placements, work experience programs, and transition planning.

- Providing training for teachers in the use of Adaptive Learning technology. Many children with special education needs can have their needs addressed through the use of adaptive learning technologies – basically, software & hardware that are to these students what a pencil is to others. These technologies can be expensive. To its credit, the Ministry of Education's student focused funding model provides assistance to school boards in the purchase of this technology. But MACSE often hears that technologies are not purchased because the technical capacity for implementing them or for integrating the technology into the classroom strategies of the teacher is lacking at the board level. MACSE also hears that for similar reasons there are far too many occasions when technology is purchased and then is not put to use. This critical issue can be easily addressed through strategic investments in training, including a focus on integrating technology with curriculum instruction.

Education Equality Task Force

MACSE would like to commend the Ministry and the government for responding to stakeholder concerns about the student-focused funding model by establishing the Education Equality Task Force. The participation the Chair of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education on the task force's Stakeholder Advisory Committee did much to ensure that a special education voice was heard throughout the process. Council also appreciated the opportunity to make a submission to the task force and was pleased that Dr. Rozanski made many key recommendations that were consistent with MACSE's advice. Council was particularly pleased that Dr. Rozanski recommended that the government review separately, the many important recommendations to the Task Force that MACSE had presented in its brief.

Council looks forward to the Ministry developing a work plan to implement all of the recommendations of the task force, noting Recommendation No. 22 of the Task Force's Report which states: "that the Ministry of Education review and consider the recommendations in the brief submitted to the task force by the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education". These recommendations will need to be further analyzed to determine how they can be implemented and Council will advise the government about its priorities, including the identification of the type of research that is required to support effective special education program and service delivery.

Student Transportation

MACSE continues to be interested in the ongoing work of the Student Transportation Project, which is in the process of developing a new funding model for school transportation. Council

would like to thank the Ministry for inviting the Chair of its Ad-hoc Transportation Committee to participate on the Transportation Review Advisory Committee of the Business Services Branch. Council believes that funding to boards for transportation must be equitable, must address the circumstances of students 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.

Council is concerned that as the work of this project proceeds, that the issues relating to students with special education needs be fully addressed. These include: the ability to take part in curriculum related excursions, including cooperative education activities; the ability to attend summer school; the ability to participate in planned transitions from care and treatment programs to school programs; and student safety. Unless all of these issues are addressed, coincidental with the establishment of a new transportation funding model, there will continue to be inequities and gaps in service for students with special education needs.

ISA Comprehensive Review

MACSE has been active in providing input and advice to the Ministry about the need for adequate funding for students with special education needs. Council was pleased to have the opportunity for some of its members to be involved with other stakeholder groups, including representatives from school boards, trustee associations and education administrators, on the Intensive Support Amount (ISA) Working Group.

Council supported, in principle, the recommendations of the Working Group since they were intended to address a number of problems inherent in the existing funding model. At the same time, MACSE had a number of specific recommendations for further improvement. In particular, Council reinforced its long held view that for the period that ISA funding continues, the Ministry should adopt the recommendations of the First ISA Expert Panel that the student eligibility profiles should be used as guidelines and not as checklists when considering ISA claims made by boards.

MACSE also recommended that a guarantee be provided for stable funding for all boards until they went live with their ISA Claims and that any future consultation about further refinements to the funding model involve MACSE, as well as provincial educator and parent associations involved in special education. Council also expressed the need to make boards more accountable for their special education budgets and expenditures, while stressing the need for boards to involve their Special Education Advisory Committees in this accountability process.

MACSE commends the Ministry for its December 2002 announcement of \$250 million in new annual funding to boards for teachers, education assistants and other specialists for students with special education needs. This initiative was a welcome immediate response to the Education Equality Task Force's recommendation that ISA funding be provided to boards to consider the results of the ISA Comprehensive Review. Indeed, the announcement exceeded the recommendation of the Education Equality Task Force Report which suggested that the results of the ISA review be funded only to the end of Cycle 3 for the current academic year, and that, in 2003-2004, the Ministry go "live" and recognize the results of Cycle 4. Instead, the government announced that it would recognize the results of Cycle 4 in the current budget year.

It is important to note that MACSE's position on the future of student-focused funding, as reflected in its recommendations to the Education Equality Task Force, is that consideration should be given to allocating new funds (beginning in the school year 2004-05) based upon a single special education component (with the exception of the Special Incidence Portion or SIP amount), which should be more census based and is supported by current educational research. MACSE looks forward to providing advice related to the development of long term options that reflect this approach and which will require less administrative effort and continue to move away from an individual student focus.

Council is supportive of continuing the current ISA process for one more year only to enable school boards to submit claims for a fifth cycle, thus establishing a credible base-line that demonstrates the different incidence rate of high needs students among boards. However, Council's view is that the work of the ISA Work Group is now complete and should be disbanded, and that in the future, special education funding should move towards a more census based approach, as noted above.

MACSE is supportive of the development of a new advisory group to look at the entire special education funding envelope, including appropriate benchmarks. There is also a need to ensure that funding is in place to address new initiatives, such as Program Standards.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Program Standards

Council has been supportive of the work being done on program standards and is of the strong opinion that the implementation of standards will go a long way towards ensuring effective use of the considerable investment made by the government in special education. Members have participated on volunteer resource groups which have been providing advice on this project and Council views this initiative as both an exciting and challenging opportunity. In Dr. Rozanski's Education Equality Task Force, 2002, he recommended that the Ministry consult on the draft standards and then commit to the full implementation of specific exceptionality standards. MACSE supports that recommendation and awaits the government's announcement of its plans for the full implementation of these standards.

Council is aware that the full implementation of program standards requires careful planning and preparation and is eager to participate in the consultation phase of the generic program standards. Further insights will result as the Ministry pilots a standards-based approach for special education programs and services in 6 to 10 school boards and school authorities throughout Ontario. Council understands that the exceptionality-specific standards developed for autism will be the vehicle for evaluating the impact of change as school boards move towards a program standards-based approach and that these pilots will run through the 2003/04 school year. At the same time, MACSE would like assurances that this work will actually lead to the standards becoming Ministry policy and is looking forward to learning about the next steps in the process, following the outcome of the pilots.

Students At Risk

The activities of the Ministry's At-Risk Working Group received MACSE support through the representation of the Chair. Council is supportive of the direction taken by the committee to explore a variety of successful pathways for all students to achieve their post-secondary goals and employment. MACSE supports the principle that while students with special education needs will be included in this initiative, any funding to support this students at-risk initiative will be separate and apart from the special education funding envelope.

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Training

Council has recommended the provision of SEAC training that includes parent association members of SEACs, trustees and school board staff. The Ministry of Education last provided training in French and English specifically for SEACs in 1995.

A number of constituent groups represented on MACSE have identified training for SEAC members as a priority. The need for additional training is accentuated by the many new SEAC members appointed since 1995 and the significant number of ministry initiatives impacting on special education that have been implemented since that time. MACSE understands that work by the Ministry on this initiative is underway, and Council members would be pleased to participate with the Ministry in the implementation of appropriate training and to offer its advice on how best to provide it.

Professional Development for Teachers and Support Staff

MACSE has long advocated for enhancement to the professional development and renewal of teachers in the education of students with special needs. It is supportive of the government's Professional Learning Program (PLP) for teachers, including the requirement that of the 7 required courses that teachers must take for re-certification, one of these is to be in the area of special education. However, Council is concerned that not enough is being done by the Faculties of Education and the College of Teachers to ensure adequate opportunities for teachers to access specialty training through pre-service and additional qualification courses.

In particular, Council is concerned about the shortage of teachers of the blind and would request that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities make an exception to its requirement to have a minimum class size of 20 students in classes to train teachers of the Blind. Council is also concerned that there are no teacher qualifications requirements for communicating in American Sign Language/Langage signé du Québec (ASL/LSQ) and would urge that this be addressed. It has the same concern about standards for teaching assistants and ASL/LSQ interpreters.

MACSE commends the Ministry for the release of its *Transition Planning: A Resource Guide* (2002) as well as the *Special Education Companion to the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner* (2003). Council was pleased to be able to provide input and advice to the Ministry as these valuable resource documents for teachers were developed. They are of a high quality and will certainly assist teachers in responding to the needs of students receiving special education

programs. Council has encouraged the Ministry to provide ongoing training in the area of transition.

Expenditure Reporting

MACSE supports the establishment by the Education Finance Branch of a Special Education Expenditure Reporting Committee to address current variances in how school boards are reporting, and is pleased to be represented on the committee. Council agrees that it is in everyone's interests to have a more explicit and clear set of rules for reporting that accurately captures expenditures for the additional costs of special education, Learning Opportunities Grant (LOG) programming, and other extra supports for students. However, Council is not supportive of having any accountability mechanism that mixes Special Education expenditure reporting with the reporting of Learning Opportunities Grant expenditures. Special education funds must remain protected and enveloped so that they are directed solely to supporting special education programs and services and not for alternative programs or remedial support. Council has also urged the Ministry to provide appropriate training to boards once the expenditure reporting process has been approved and implemented.

Education Quality & Accountability Office (EQAO)

Council supports the commitment of the Ministry of Education to the improvement of student achievement, and understands the important role that provincial assessment plays in that regard. Council also believes that in order for school boards to benefit fully from this process, EQAO must:

- release results with both provincial and board data, with appropriate comparisons by exceptionality;
- provide a template for boards to report this information to SEACs or provide a separate report directly to SEACs;
- inform boards that the provision of school based information by school boards to the media is inappropriate when it is out of context;
- emphasize with boards that it is crucial that special education students continue to participate;
- provide information for parents and teachers that is contextualized and reveals how students did, not only against provincial expectations, but also against other students within their board, including their classmates; and
- report results to teachers in a way that specifically identifies areas for needed improvement in the class so that this can be incorporated in the teaching strategies.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Council continues to support the implementation of the Ministry's IEP Standards and the review of boards' IEPs to assess compliance. The provision by the Ministry of a sample provincial IEP template to assist boards in meeting the standards is a positive development. The Council encourages the Ministry to develop exceptionality-specific sample IEPs that would provide suggestions on how to fill out IEPs with appropriate content. Council would also urge the Ministry to continue to provide boards with feed-back about the implementation of the standards

and would welcome the opportunity to provide continuing advice about how school boards can develop ongoing review processes to ensure that IEPs are developed consistent with the standards.

Special Education Plans

Council continues to monitor the implementation of the Ministry's standards for school boards' special education plans and is aware that the next submission of boards' special education plans will be in July 2003. Council is supportive of standards for special education plans and looks forward to providing input and advice to the Ministry as the policy document, *Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans (2000)* is reviewed and refined.

Response to the Ontario Human Rights Commission Consultation Paper

MACSE responded to the to the *Ontario Human Rights Commission Consultation Paper on Education and Disability: Human Rights in Ontario's Education System (September 2002)* in two ways. It provided a written submission reflecting a summary of the majority or consensus view of Council members while attaching any individual input provided by constituent groups represented on Council. The following is a brief summary of some of the issues raised in MACSE's consolidated submission.

In response to the question "What other barriers to education for persons with disabilities are you aware of?", MACSE's response included reference to unequal access to programs and services. For example, some disability groups have access to early intervention programs, while others do not. In addition, early intervention programs do not continue once children enter school while northern and rural Boards typically provide a reduced range of service. There is also a lack of coordination of services across ministries.

Remedies suggested by Council included the provision of greater access to assessment and diagnosis, with the government covering the costs of at least the primary diagnosis in all cases, and enabling students and parents to have more timely access to the Human Rights complaints process without first having to exhaust other remedies under the Education Act. Council also stressed the importance of educational systems complying with all of their legislated mandates related to the enabling, empowerment and support of all learners with disabilities.

In response to the question "What best practices are you aware of for reducing negative attitudes, stereotypes and harassment directed towards students with disabilities in the education system?", Council cited antiracist education, professional development of educators, and better pre-service training for teachers.

Council also responded to the question "What examples exist of policies and procedures that avoid labels for students with disabilities?" Examples cited included:

- the Ministry of Education's IEP Standards which support the identification of individual student needs and strengths and the development of appropriate modifications and strategies, without relying on labels;

- information contained in the Ministry of Education's Program Standards Project which is now in progress, should provide clarification on the appropriate use of labels for students with special education needs; and
- the use of 'people first' language;

Council also cited the Ministry's *Special Education: A Guide for Educators* (2002), and its *Individual Education Plans: Standards for Development, Program Planning, and Implementation* (2000), as examples of successful practices for accommodation policies and procedures in an educational setting.

Provincial Auditor's Report on Special Education

During the audit process, several members of the Council met 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 looks forward to providing input and advice to the Ministry about the Ministry's plan to respond to the ongoing Provincial Auditor's recommendations.

SERVICE COORDINATION

Interministerial Issues

MACSE is supportive of the Ministry of Education's Coordinated Services initiative and has been actively represented on the Coordinated Services Advisory Committee (CSAC) that is providing guidance and advice. The focus of this initiative is to develop policies, in collaboration with Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) and the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services (MCFCS), to improve service coordination between schools and other agencies, and to clarify responsibilities for service provision to children receiving special education programs and services in school. We look forward to the development of policies that will lead to improved coordination in planning entry to school, and of speech and language services, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy (OT/PT), and Adaptive Equipment for these students. We also support the plan for the Ministry to conduct a comprehensive review of the system of services provided to children and youth with psychosocial and or behaviour needs. The review is intended to identify gaps and issues with services, while identifying practices that effectively coordinate children's mental health services with school boards.

The Universal Infant Hearing Screening, Assessment and Communication Development Program, launched by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC), is of continuing interest to the Council. Council members believe that early screening, assessment and early intervention programming for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students will better prepare students for school entry. However 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). As well, Council's concern regarding the de-listing of Hearing Aid Assessments from the OHIP schedule continues.

Similarly, there is a need for greater emphasis on pre-school programming for children with other exceptionalities. MACSE's keen interest in these and other early intervention initiatives has been reflected in the establishment of an Ad-hoc Early Intervention Committee, reporting to Council through its Interministerial Policy Coordination Standing Committee. This step is intended to better assist Council in fulfilling its mandate to provide advice about the identification and provision of early intervention programs for students with special education needs.

Council also believes there is a need for an interministerial review of the policies and regulatory requirements related to education programs in government approved care, treatment, custody and correctional facilities. Further, it applauds the recommendation in the Education Equality Task Force Report that "the government establish a Cabinet-level advisory council on integrated services for children and families, composed of representatives from the Ministries of Community, Family, and Children's Services, Education, Health and Long-Term Care, Public Safety and Security, and Tourism and Recreation, to meet on a regular basis to align the work and the funding mechanisms of the ministries that serve families, children, and youth". MACSE would welcome the opportunity to assist this new council and would urge the government to proceed immediately with its establishment.

Student Safety

Over the past three years, the Safe Schools Project has led to the development of legislation, regulations, and policies for ensuring that schools are safer learning and teaching environments. 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 Regulations. Council will continue to be interested in the implementation components of this initiative, including: the application of the term "mitigating circumstances", the sharing of successful practices among school boards, 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. Council has also explored other student safety issues, such as the use of physical and mechanical restraints.

CONCLUSION

This summary reflects the most significant observations, challenges and recommendations arising from the work of your Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education for the year 2002-2003.

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 2002 and 2003

Membership

The following information summarizes the appointments and reappointments that the Minister made during the 2002 - 2003 year.

These members are:

- ◆ **Ellen Goodman** was appointed as the representative for the Blind and Low Vision exceptionality for a term of three years to expire March 31, 2005.
- ◆ **Susann Palmiere** was appointed as the representative for the Physical Disability exceptionality for a term of three years to expire March 31, 2005.
- ◆ **Nancy Kirby** was appointed as the representative for Trustees for a term of three years to expire March 31, 2005.
- ◆ **Annette Webber** was appointed as the representative for Principals for a term of three years to expire March 31, 2005.
- ◆ **Dr. Lynne Beal** was appointed as the representative for Psychologists for a term of three years to expire March 31, 2005.
- ◆ **Kenneth Goldberg** was appointed as the representative for Social Workers for a term of three years to expire March 31, 2005.
- ◆ **Norah-Lynn McIntyre** was reappointed as the representative for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing exceptionality for a three year term to expire March 31, 2005.
- ◆ **Ruth Ann Schedlich** was reappointed as the representative for Educational Assistants for a three year term to expire March 31, 2005.

The following four members resigned for personal reasons during this term: Erin Barton, representing Students/Youth, Dr. Greg Gillis representing Medical Practitioners, Martha Walsh representing Multiple Disabilities and Catherine Davis representing the Native Communities.

The Chair wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the following members whose term expired March 31, 2003. The members are: James Arthur representing Emotional/Behaviour Disorder/Catholic Community and Don Jones, representing Teachers.

Meetings

The Council held meetings on June 2002, October 2002, and on February 2003.

The June 2002 agenda included the following topics:

- Special Education for Native Students
- Coordinated Services
- September School Reports
- Data Collection Initiative
- Provincial Auditor's Report
- Additional Qualification Courses for Special Education Teachers
- Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test
- Program Standards
- Special Education Companion to the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner
- Individual Education Plan (IEP) Template
- Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning (OKLN)
- Gifted e-Learning Demonstration

The October 2002 agenda included the following topics:

- Education Equality Task Force Activities
- Results of the Comprehensive Review of the Special Education Funding Intensive Support Amount (ISA)
- ISA Costing Project
- ISA Allocations Including ISA 1 and Special Incidence Portion (SIP)
- Student Transportation
- Children's Mental Health
- Vision - Provision of Services for Children
- The Early Years Centres
- Role and Governance of Special Education Tribunals
- School Board Special Education Plan
- Provincial Auditor's Report - Next Steps
- Human Rights Consultations
- Curriculum and Assessment

The February 2003 agenda included the following topics:

- Education Equality Task Force Report
- Principles for Future Funding Model
- Special Education Expenditure Reporting Project
- Status of ISA Working Group
- Update on Ministry Response to Rozanski Report
- Data Collection Project
- Transportation Review Committee update
- Performance Indicators Work Group
- Audiological Services

- Provincial Auditor's Report
- Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO)
- Performance Appraisal for School Board Administrators
- Pilots on Teacher Performance Appraisal
- Special Education Companion to the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner

The Honourable Elizabeth Witmer, Minister of Education joined the Council for two of the three meetings, while the Parliamentary Assistant represented the Minister at one meeting 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 Minister's personal commitment to exceptional students and her continuing recognition for the role of her Advisory Council on Special Education.

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

- program standards;
- Grade 10 Reading and Writing Test;
- curriculum implementation, including the teaching of literacy and numeracy;
- transition planning for exceptional pupils;
- student safety;
- students at risk including the activities of the At-Risk Working Group (Curriculum Implementation Partnership);
- remediation;
- learning resources including reduced vocabulary textbooks for secondary school subjects, high interest/low vocabulary materials, closed-captioning and the use of electronic materials to support learning;
- student course selections;
- special education funding;
- student transportation;
- provincial assessment;
- interministerial coordination; and
- pre-school programs and services.

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

Consultations

Council Chair, Lynn Ziraldo, met with the Minister of Education, Elizabeth Witmer, and the Deputy Minister, Suzanne Herbert. This gives the Chair an opportunity to inform the Minister of the work of Council while providing the Minister with an opportunity to hear and respond to the Council's priorities, issues and recommendations. Discussions included the following topics: funding, special education program standards, coordinated services, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) training, and provincial assessments. The Chair was also invited by the Finance Minister, Janet Ecker to attend the government's pre-budget discussions, at which time two major areas of discussion impacting on education were benchmark adjustments and collective agreements.

Over the past year, the Chair attended numerous meetings representing Council including meeting with Dr. Rozanski on six different occasions to discuss MACSE's input to the Education Equality Task Force. Chair also communicated with the Deputy Minister of Education, Suzanne Herbert, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Strategic Planning and Elementary/Secondary Programs Division, Judith Wright, Denis Vaillancourt, Assistant Deputy Minister, French-Language and Educational Operations Division, Trudy Griffiths of the Ontario Parent Council and Ardeth Staz from the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO).

Other activities included the Chair's attendance at Associations, Committees and the Annual General meeting of the Learning Disabilities Association, Council for Exceptional Children and her interview with the editor of the Ontario College of Teachers for its publication, *Professionally Speaking* on the topic of special education.

The Chair and other members of Council met on several occasions with officials of the Ministry in 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. In addition, Council provided representatives for Ministry consultation meetings on a variety of issues.

Members of Council as well 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.

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 2002 - FEBRUARY 2003

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MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD JUNE 2002 TO FEBRUARY 2003

During the period June 2002 to February 2003, fifty-three resolutions were made by the Council. The resolutions are categorized as follows:

Accountability

02.02.06 **Be it resolved that** the Ministry ensure that MACSE is consulted on the recommendations from the Learning Opportunities Task Force.

02.02.16 **Whereas:** recognizing the importance of data within an accountability framework, and that information is crucial in establishing policies and that MACSE provides major input on Special Education.

Be it resolved that the Ministry share and consult regularly with MACSE regarding the data collection framework.

02.02.17 **Whereas:** there is an importance of data associated with an accountability framework.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education share and consult with MACSE regarding the ongoing follow-up to the Provincial Auditor's Report on Special Education.

Blind and Low Vision

02.02.04 **Whereas:** Reg.298 sec. 30 of the Education Act and ISA funding provides eligibility for preschool programs for students who are Deaf; and

Whereas: early identification and provision of appropriate services for preschoolers with special needs is a stated priority of EDU; and

Whereas: the extension of early childhood services for visually impaired preschool children throughout the province was recommended in the MACSE 2000-2001 Annual Report to the Minister; and

Whereas: many regions in the province lack this essential specialized intervention.

Be it resolved that EDU mandate, fund and coordinate with the Ministry of Community, Family and Children Services (MCFCS) and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC), specialized, locally-based, frequent,

family-focused, early intervention services for preschoolers with visual impairments and blindness from diagnosis to school entry.

02.02.05 **Whereas:** a number of school boards are not serving or are ceasing to serve students with low vision, stating these students are not covered by ISA funding.

Be it resolved that EDU ensure students with low vision, are funded and served in all school boards.

02.03.11 **Whereas:** additional qualification courses for teachers of students with blindness and low vision have not been taught in Ontario for more than two years; and

Whereas: there is presently an extreme shortage of trained teachers of blind and low vision students in Ontario, a shortage which promises to become more severe as more teachers retire; and

Whereas: at present there is no university in Ontario willing to offer these courses unless there is an enrollment of 20 or more students; and

Whereas: visual impairment in children is an extremely low incidence disability, and potential teachers of students with visual impairment are spread out all over the province; and

Whereas: an on-line, Part 1 Teacher of the Blind course has already been created for use in Ontario, with the potential for parts 2 and 3 to be created on line as well.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education work with the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities to require that at least one university or college in Ontario, annually offer on-line Additional Qualification courses in each of Teacher of the Blind Parts 1, 2 and 3, regardless of the number of potential students enrolled, and that the College of Teachers promptly authorize the verification of these courses.

Curriculum

02.02.22 **Whereas:** the EDU response to 02.01.07 (re: parent access to the Special Education Companion) states that it may be available on a cost recovery basis.

Be it resolved that EDU make the Special Education Companion available to parents free of charge upon request.

02.03.12 **Whereas:** many students require textbooks in an alternative format (braille, large print, audio, digital audio or electronic text) in order to access the Ontario curriculum and whereas the Ontario Disabilities Act requires the planned removal and prevention of barriers affecting persons with disabilities.

Be it resolved that prior to the granting of EDU approval, that publishers ensure that the availability of textbooks in alternative formats be concurrent with the release of the print version.

03.01.01 **Whereas:** the major focus of Secondary curriculum English/Français as course profiles is the delivery of literature units with learning expectations relating to the meaning of texts, the forms of texts, and the elements of style; and

Whereas: improvements in student literacy require direct instruction to improve reading vocabulary, comprehension, speed, and a more positive attitude towards reading.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education revise secondary English/Français as courses to include a focus on improving student literacy through direct instruction including strategies to improve vocabulary, comprehension, speed, and positive attitude.

Curriculum - Resource Material

03.01.02 **Whereas:** when students with special education needs are required to learn from textbooks at their frustration reading level, they struggle with the textbook content and do not increase their vocabulary and comprehension reading skills.

Be it resolved that textbooks and required reading materials, for both elementary and secondary schools, be available at a variety of reading levels, so that students will be able to access curriculum with written resources rated as being within two years of the student's instructional reading level. Further, accommodated/ modified reading materials for exceptional students should not be limited to traditional "high interest/low vocabulary" novels.

03.01.11 **Whereas:** teachers often require "just-in-time" resources to assist them to meet the educational needs of students with low incidence special needs by using resource material developed by relevant organizations.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education work with relevant organizations to develop web-based "just-in-time" resources to ensure that materials to meet curriculum expectations and developed by organizations

with expertise in these low-incidence conditions are available to teachers when needed.

Early Intervention

02.02.18 **Whereas:** children in the Early Intervention Program for Children with Autism are now entering the school system with an interruption of ABA services that are essential to the progress of these children.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Community, Family and Children Services (MCFCS), review how school aged children will be served.

03.01.07 **Whereas:** 02.02.04, 02.02.15 and 02.01.10 have recommended specific actions regarding early intervention, Whereas Regulation 298 Section 30 reads “A hearing-handicapped child who has attained the age of two years may be admitted to a special education program for the hearing-handicapped”, Whereas the importance of early intervention for children with special needs has long been recognised and Whereas successful intervention with children with special needs frequently requires interministerial involvement.

Be it resolved that in concert with MOHLTC and MCFCS, EDU review the policies regarding all children with special needs from birth to age 6 years to facilitate their entry and ultimate success in school.

Field Services Branch

02.03.07 **Whereas:** the changes in education have prompted many questions among educators and parents about the impact on special education and whereas many of those questions are directed to the Ministry District Offices (Field Services Branch).

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education have a complement of at least one English and one French permanent Education Officer with special education specialist qualifications in each of the Ministry District Offices (Field Services Branch).

02.03.08 **Whereas:** the role of the Ministry District Offices (Field Services Branch) is to support school boards as they comply with the Education Act, associated regulations, and Ministry policy directives.

Be it resolved that the role of Ministry District Offices (Field Services Branch) be enhanced to provide Ministry staff with increased authority to

enforce compliance with the Education Act, associated Regulations, and Ministry policy directives.

Funding

Student-Focused Funding

02.02.01 **Be it resolved that** the Minister of Education ensure that MACSE be consulted on a regular basis during the review of Student-Focused Funding.

02.02.02 **Whereas:** the May 2002 Speech From the Throne announced an Education Equality Task Force to review Student-Focused Funding to improve fairness, certainty and stability for school boards; and

Whereas: one of the mandates of MACSE is to identify the concerns in the delivery of special education services to students.

Be it resolved that MACSE be represented on the Education Equality Task Force to ensure that the needs of exceptional students are considered in any recommendations.

Funding - General

02.02.03 **Whereas:** the current funding formula fails to capture all of the needs of special education students; and

Whereas: boards are redirecting funding from their budgets to the Special Education budget to provide adequate programs and services; and

Whereas: boards develop budgets that adequately represent and reflect the needs of exceptional pupils.

Be it resolved that the EDU strongly reconsider allocating more dollars to the special education protected envelope for the 2002-03 school year.

Funding - ISA

02.03.04 **Whereas:** it is important for Boards to receive appropriate funding for the ISA files submitted, in a more timely manner.

Be it resolved that at the end of the Comprehensive Review Process, Boards receive funding calculated from the results of all cycles of ISA Review.

03.01.08 **Whereas:** the Education Equality Task Force recommended that the Ministry of Education fund school boards, in the 2003-2004 school year, for all ISA claims approved during the review.

Whereas: the Education Equality Task Force recommended that the Ministry of Education allocate \$130 million to school boards in the current year (2002-03) to fund all ISA claims approved to the end of cycle 3 of the comprehensive review.

Whereas: the Education Equality Task Force in their Recommendation 22, recommended that the Ministry of Education review and consider the recommendations in MACSE's brief.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education immediately disband the ISA Working Group and create a new Working Group to develop a Bridging Strategy on funding model.

Funding - Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

02.02.14 **Whereas:** Policy/Program Memorandum No. 76C (PPM 76C) was first introduced in 1985 and subsequently revised in 1991. It was developed in recognition of a need for flexibility in providing funding for a range of alternative placements for deaf, blind and deaf-blind pupils who are enrolled in school board programs and who are eligible to attend a Provincial School; and

Whereas: in-lieu funding provided under PPM 76C was replaced by the revised funding formula and that ISA Guidelines 2001-2002 include criteria for ISA claims submitted for Profiles 2.2/2.3 - Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing preschool children and school aged children; and

Whereas: ISA funding permits a range of supports and services realistic with the needs of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing student of 2002; and

Whereas: the existing funding model recognizes the shift that many students will be integrated in accordance with Regulation 181/98; and

Whereas: the existing funding model recognizes the shift that many students will be integrated in accordance with Regulation 181/98; and

Whereas: many students with lower levels of hearing loss require and benefit from supports and services. The ISA criteria, therefore, supports students with a moderate to severe bilateral hearing loss of at least 31 dB for ISA level 2 funding and a severe to profound bilateral hearing loss of at least 71 dB for ISA level 3 funding; and

Whereas: draft standards for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students have been developed that support the ISA criteria and provide direction into present needs of students; and

Whereas: boards continue to adhere to the outdated PPM 76C and are not identifying students with less than 70 dB hearing loss, nor does PPM 76C recognize the impact of enabling technology; and

Whereas: many Deaf and/or Hard-of-Hearing students who are not being identified by boards of education are being denied suitable supports and services; and

Whereas: boards are not providing interpreters and/or note takers despite the availability through ISA of this specialized support.

Be it resolved that Policy/Program Memorandum No. 76C be modified to reflect current needs of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students prior to commencement of the 2002/03 school year and that boards of education be directed to i) adhere to the Education Act by identifying all Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students, ii) adhere to the Ontarians with Disabilities Act by accommodating all Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students, and iii) adhere to the ISA criteria in applying for funding to support their Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing student population.

02.02.15 **Whereas:** ISA funding provides for preschool aged Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students and school boards determine whether or not they offer programs but are permitted to do so under Reg 298 s. 30; and

Whereas: the MOHLTC Infant Hearing Program provides supports up to 2.5 years of age.

Be it resolved that preschool programs for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students be mandated so that equitable supports are provided across the province.

Funding - Auditor's Report re Accountability

02.03.02 **Whereas:** the Auditor's report has pointed out the need for accountability and outcome measures in Special Education; and

Whereas: there is a need for research on outcomes in Special Education in Ontario.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education invest in special education research by establishing a specific research fund in order to support applied research in special education.

Funding - Professional Development

02.03.03 **Whereas:** the Ministry of Education is developing a number of new initiatives in special education, including program standards; and

Whereas: it is critical that special education teachers need professional development to implement these changes.

Be it resolved that the funding formula include a dedicated amount to the provision of professional development support for special education educators, including professional support staff.

Funding - Rozanski's Task Force

03.01.09 **Whereas:** the Rozanski Task Force report recognized the need for more funding for special education programs and services.

Whereas: MACSE participated on the stakeholders advisory group to Dr. Rozanski as well as the Premier's press conference on announcements resulting from the recommendations in the report.

Whereas: we applaud the government for moving forward and implementing three priority recommendations regarding special education funding in the current school year.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education implement all of the recommendations in the Rozanski Report.

03.01.10 **Whereas:** the Education Equality Task force, Recommendation 22, stated that the Ministry of Education review and consider the recommendations of MACSE's brief.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education provide an action plan to review and consider MACSE's submission to the Education Equality Task Force.

MACSE Annual Report

02.02.27 **Whereas:** the Annual Report to the Minister for the year 2001-2002 from MACSE has been reviewed by Council members.

Be it resolved that MACSE approve the Annual Report 2001-2002 and that it be delivered to the Minister.

Program Standards

02.02.23 **Whereas:** the government has made a commitment to develop Program Standards and that the implementation process is important for the success of this initiative.

Be it resolved that the Ministry move forward immediately with the release and implementation of the Program Standards and organize a forum for consultation with all members of MACSE and voluntary Resource Groups (vRGs).

Provincial Supervisors

02.03.01 **Whereas:** Sub-Section 8(3) of the Education Act requires the Ministry to ensure that all exceptional students in Ontario have available to them, in accordance with this Act and the regulations, appropriate special education programs and special education services; and

Whereas: Paragraph 170 (1) 7 of the Education Act requires boards to provide or enter into an agreement with another board to provide in accordance with the regulations special education programs and special education services for its exceptional pupils.

Be it resolved that the Minister direct the provincial supervisors, who have been delegated authority and responsibility by the Minister to make decisions to provide balanced budgets for three district school boards, not to cut special education programs and services for students who have been legally identified through a regulated process.

02.03.05 **Whereas:** The Minister appointed provincial supervisors to carry out the responsibilities of trustees in three district school boards, and whereas in fulfilling these responsibilities supervisors may make policy decisions that impact upon special education programs and services for exceptional pupils.

Be it resolved that the Minister direct each provincial supervisor to consult with the appropriate board's Special Education Advisory Committee and take its advice into consideration prior to determining or implementing any decisions that may impact on the overall delivery of special education programs and services, a process that would be consistent with what school boards are required to follow under Regulation 464/97, made under the Education Act.

02.03.06 **Whereas:** These decisions made by appointed provincial supervisors may alter the provision of special education programs and services, as outlined in a school board's special education plan.

Be it resolved that the Minister direct each provincial supervisor to ensure that any decisions that impact on the overall provision of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of a school board be incorporated as an amendment in the school board's Special Education Plan, a process that would be consistent with what school boards are required to do in accordance with Regulation 306 made under the Education Act.

Safe Schools Policy

02.02.19 **Whereas:** the students who are perceived as 'different' by their peers are frequently the victims of bullying.

Be it resolved that EDU develop bullying prevention policy standards for mandatory empathy training and tolerance of differences as part of a comprehensive bullying prevention program.

02.02.20 **Whereas:** the EDU response to Resolution 02.01.06 describes the Safe Schools Policy of the Ministry, but it does not respond to the issue of assessing the risk presented by individual students.

Be it resolved that EDU examine the practice of risk assessment with a view to developing consistent, valid and reliable assessment of risk presented by individual students.

02.02.21 **Whereas:** in spite of EDU responses to resolutions 00.02.06, 00.02.08, 00.02.09, 01.01.17, there is an increase in frequent formal and informal suspensions as a result of the Safe Schools/Code of Conduct Initiative, especially reported for students with behavioural challenges, autism and intellectual disabilities; and that data collection to support these concerns is yet to be undertaken.

Be it resolved that EDU direct school boards to provide appropriate training programs for staff on prevention and intervention regarding disruptive behaviour.

03.01.05 **Whereas:** physical restraint is a grave issue that can and has resulted in injury and death; the vast majority of physical restraints in Ontario schools involve children with special needs; the recent and ongoing Ontario Coroner inquests of the deaths of two children with special needs linked to prone/floor and mechanical (e.g. belts, tape, table etc.) restraints have recommended, among other things, that restraints must be limited to the most extreme situations; the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services has affirmed that restraint should be a last resort and that up-to-date and approved training is required; and there are currently no specific

EDU standards and rules regarding restraint from the Ministry of Education, resulting in widely inconsistent or non-existent policies across the province.

Be it resolved that prone/floor and mechanical restraints be immediately banned from use in Ontario Schools, and that policy be developed that limits restraints to the most extreme situations as a last resort and mandates up-to-date and approved training.

Secondary School

02.03.09 **Whereas:** there are a number of exceptional students who are believed or known to be facing challenges in meeting the graduation requirements of the new secondary school diploma, and

Whereas: there are different points of view among special education stakeholders about the policy and program options, including an alternative secondary school diploma, that could be considered to assist exceptional students in meeting these challenges.

Be it resolved that the Minister of Education consult with MACSE on the various policy and program options that may be considered for meeting the needs of exceptional students who may not be able to meet the graduation requirements of a secondary school diploma.

02.03.10 **Whereas:** a number of students at risk are facing challenges in meeting the graduation requirements of the new secondary diploma and curriculum expectations.

Be it resolved that the Minister of Education consider establishing a provincial Task Force including all stakeholders in order to explore issues relating to students at risk who are failing to meet curriculum expectations, including a review of policy documents and graduation requirements.

03.01.03 **Whereas:** some students are making inappropriate course selections in secondary school, which may limit their post-secondary choices.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education produce information booklets for students and their parents/guardians, to enable students to make informed course selections, including pathways to students' post-secondary goals.

Section 19 Classrooms

03.01.04 **Whereas:** Current Section 19 agreements differ greatly from the original intentions, and whereas there are issues such as inadequate funding,

transition of students to and from these programs, transportation of students to and from these programs, unavailability of materials, lack of accountability to parents, and inconsistent availability of Section 19 classrooms across the province.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education together with the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and the Ministry of Correctional Services conduct a joint general policy review of this regulatory arrangement and share the results of the review.

Special Education Plans

02.02.25 **Whereas:** school boards are accountable for the development and implementation of Special Education Plans.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education remind school boards that amendments to the Special Education Plans must be submitted to the Ministry of Education by July 31, 2002.

02.02.26 **Whereas:** school boards are required to submit their Special Education Plans to the ministry according to ministry standards.

Be it resolved that as soon as possible the Ministry provide feedback to school boards regarding their special education plans.

Special Education Portfolio

02.02.24 **Whereas:** the Special Education portfolio has increased considerably in its capacity over the years and that Special Education has a high profile with all education initiatives.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education establish a permanent Branch for Special Education with a Director.

Special Education Programs & Services for Native Students

02.02.07 **Whereas:** schools often fail to deliver adequate Special Education Programs and Services to Native students.

Be it resolved that EDU should set up accountability mechanisms to ensure that adequate Special Education Programs and Services are delivered to Native students and a clear tracking mechanism is put in place to validate programs and services that are accessed.

02.02.08 **Whereas:** there seem to be disparities in Special Education Programs and Services for Native students relative to those of non-Native students; and

Whereas: data on racial matters cannot be collected easily.

Be it resolved that EDU through its Legal Services Branch investigate how information about the extent of the disparity in Special Education Programs and Services for Native students relative to those for non-Native students can be collected and how further studies can be conducted.

02.02.09 **Whereas:** the funding of Special Education Programs and Services for Native students is the responsibility of the Provincial government and the Federal government.

Be it resolved that EDU investigate how funding of Special Education Programs and Services for Native students can be coordinated and equity established between the Federal and Provincial systems.

02.02.10 **Whereas:** Special Education Programs and Services for Native students do not appear to address their needs adequately.

Be it resolved that EDU investigate the establishment of a pilot project involving the assessment of academic achievement and the need for special education intervention, transition planning and follow-up for Native students.

02.02.11 **Whereas:** representatives (e.g., parents, guardians, band leaders) of Native students in Special Education do not have a provincial parent organization; and

Whereas: they are often not informed about Special Education Programs and Services.

Be it resolved that EDU develop, implement and disseminate culturally and linguistically sensitive resource materials so that Native representatives and parents will become more aware of the full range of Special Education Programs and Services.

02.02.28 **Whereas:** Native students seem to have difficulty accessing Special Education Programs and Services.

Be it resolved that an Ad Hoc committee of MACSE on Special Education for Native students be formed to identify the many complex Special Education issues involving Native students, and recommend solutions for action.

Speech & Language Services

02.03.14 **Whereas:** the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has indicated great variability in waiting time for speech therapy services through the Community Care Access Centres, with some children waiting up to two years for services; and

Whereas: the Ministry of Education is currently reviewing coordinated services to school age children, including speech and language services.

Be it resolved that the Ministry of Education consider models for the delivery of speech and language services to school age children that reduce waiting times for students and reduce fragmentation in the delivery of services.

Standardized Provincial Testing

02.02.13 **Whereas:** Native students in Band schools are not required to participate in standardized provincial testing and do not have their level of academic achievement assessed.

Be it resolved that EDU investigate the provision of standardized testing for Native students in Band schools.

Transition Planning

02.02.12 **Whereas:** transition planning for Native students from Band schools to provincially funded schools is often inconsistent or absent.

Be it resolved that EDU address the need for formal methods for transition planning between Band to provincially funded schools for students in Special Education.

03.01.06 **Whereas:** the majority of students with exceptionalities receive few, if any, opportunities to participate in cooperative education and work placements (some barriers being funding for transportation, job coaches, and personal support); and that following the recent release of Transition Planning: A Resource Guide, knowledge of effective models of Transition would be an excellent resource for secondary school resource teachers, guidance counsellors, principals, communities and families.

Be it resolved that EDU develop and provide an ongoing process to gather examples of effective and exemplary models of Transition Planning for all exceptional students, for publication on the Ministry Web site.

Tribunals

02.03.13 **Whereas:** not withstanding Sub-Section 57(5) of the Education Act which states that the decisions of the Ontario Special Education (English and French) Tribunals are final and binding on the parties, a number of recent Tribunal decisions have resulted in further actions by parents and/or school boards in the courts, and

Whereas: parent and school board representatives have expressed uncertainty about the Tribunal's procedures and have expressed concern that the process is either too formal or too informal, and

Whereas: parents and school boards have expressed concern with the amount of time which passes between a parent's request to a Tribunal for a hearing and the delivery of the decision of the Tribunal.

Be it resolved that the Ontario Special Education (English and French) Tribunals clarify procedures and timelines and that, in so doing, the Ministry and the Tribunals consider developing:

- a regulation governing practices and procedures of the Tribunals; and/or
- rules of procedure as permitted by the Statutory Powers Procedure Act; and/or
- a detailed information guide for parties appearing before the Tribunals.

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 2002-2003 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, 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, 2002 - MARCH 31, 2002

Exceptionality/Community of Interest Represented	Members
<p><u>Exceptionalities:</u> Learning Disabilities, All Exceptionalities Pervasive Developmental Disorders/Autism Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing Gifted Developmental Disability Blind & Low Vision Physical Disability Multiple Disabilities Emotional/Behavioural Disorder</p> <p><u>Educator Groups</u> Supervisory Officers, French Language Community Trustees Principals Teachers Educational Assistants</p> <p><u>Professional Support</u> Medical Psychologists Social Workers Speech and Language Pathologists and Catholic Community</p> <p><u>Student / Youth</u></p> <p><u>Native</u></p> <p><u>Non- Voting</u> Ministry of Health and Long Term Care</p> <p>Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services</p> <p>Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities</p> <p><u>Ministry of Education</u> Council Secretary</p>	<p>Lynn Ziraldo, Chair Raymond LeBlanc Norah-Lynn McIntyre Ginny J. Dunlop Janice Strickland Ellen Goodman Susann Palmiere (Vacant) M. Walsh resigned October 2002 James Arthur</p> <p>Jean-Luc Bernard, Vice-Chair Nancy Kirby Annette Webber Don Jones Ruth Ann Schedlich</p> <p>(Vacant) Dr. Gilles resigned May 2002 Dr. Lynne A. Beal Kenneth Goldberg Susan Menary</p> <p>(Vacant) - E. Barton resigned February 2003</p> <p>(Vacant) - C. Davis resigned October 2002</p> <p>Lois Michaels replaced by Mary Iannuzziolo, February 2003</p> <p>Sandy Palinski</p> <p>Jackie Creber replaced by Paddy Buckley, February 2002</p> <p>June Simonson - Retired June 2002, replaced by Noorie Kabani</p>

APPENDIX 3

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

COMMITTEE LIST: APRIL 2002 - MARCH 2003

STANDING COMMITTEE

FINANCE

Nancy Kirby (Chair)
James Arthur
Jean-Luc Bernard
Janice Strickland
Susan Menary
Ginny Dunlop
Ruth Ann Schedlich
Martha Walsh
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: John Amon

AD HOC COMMITTEE

TRANSPORTATION

Ginny Dunlop (Chair)
Janice Strickland
Ruth Ann Schedlich
Nancy Kirby
Susann Palmiere
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: John Amon

STANDING COMMITTEE

INTERMINISTRY CO-ORDINATION

James Arthur (Chair)
Susan Menary
Don Jones
Raymond LeBlanc
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
Ruth Ann Schedlich
Kenneth Goldberg
Annette Webber
Erin Barton
Susann Palmiere
Ellen Goodman
Lynne Beal
Greg Gillis
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Crawford Dedman

AD HOC COMMITTEES

TRANSITIONS

Raymond LeBlanc (Chair)
Don Jones
Annette Webber
Janice Strickland
Erin Barton
Susann Palmiere
Ellen Goodman
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
Lynne Beal
Greg Gillis
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Bill Wyman

SAFE SCHOOLS/CODE OF CONDUCT

Janice Strickland (Chair)
James Arthur
Don Jones
Jean Luc Bernard
Ruth Ann Schedlich
Erin Barton
Kenneth Goldberg
Lynne Beal
Catherine Davis
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Paul Carr

TEACHERS' ASSISTANTS

Ruth Ann Schedlich (Chair)
Jean Luc Bernard
Kenneth Goldberg
Ellen Goodman
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
Susann Palmiere
Martha Walsh
Lynn Ziraldo (ex-officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Bill Wyman

NATIVE COMMUNITIES

Catherine Davis (Chair)
Don Jones
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
James Arthur
Susann Palmiere
Raymond LeBlanc
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Paul Carr

STANDING COMMITTEE

ACCOUNTABILITY AND STANDARDS

Susan Menary (Chair)
Jean-Luc Bernard
Ginny Dunlop
Janice Strickland
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
Annette Webber
Erin Barton
Ellen Goodman
Susann Palmiere
Kenneth Goldberg
Nancy Kirby
Lynne Beal
Catherine Davis
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: John Amon

AD HOC COMMITTEES

ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

Don Jones (Chair)
Ginny Dunlop
Janice Strickland
Susan Menary
Erin Barton
Raymond LeBlanc
Nancy Kirby
Lynne Beal
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Kathy Schaffer

PROVINCIAL TESTING (formally known as Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test)

Ginny Dunlop (Chair)
Jean-Luc Bernard
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
Don Jones
Erin Barton
Susann Palmiere
Lynne Beal
Catherine Davis
Lynn Ziraldo (ex-officio)

Ministry Resource Person: John Amon

TEACHING POLICY AND PROGRAM

Annette Webber (Chair)
Jean-Luc Bernard
Don Jones
Raymond LeBlanc
Norah-Lynn McIntyre
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

Ministry Resource Person: Kathy Schaffer

COMMUNICATION: COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Name of Council Member

DATE AND SOURCE	WHAT IS 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 a “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.

MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

SWOT ANALYSIS

MEETING _____

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<i>Use this space to comment on internal items related to the meeting.</i>	<i>Use this space to comment on internal items related to the meeting.</i>
<i>Use this space to comment on external items.</i>	<i>Use this space to comment on external items.</i>

c/o Lynn Ziraldo, 9 Elston Court, Richmond Hill, ON L4C 8A6
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