

**MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MINISTER  
FOR THE YEAR 1999/2000**

**11 September 2000**

## **MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION**

September 11, 2000

Honourable Janet Ecker  
Minister  
Ministry of Education  
900 Bay Street  
22<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Mowat Block  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1L2

### **Re: Annual report of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education**

Dear Minister Ecker:

It is with great pleasure that I submit to you this report on the activities of your Advisory Council on Special Education during the fiscal year 1999/2000.

On behalf of the members of the Council, I would like to thank you for your active involvement with the Council and for the many opportunities I and other members of Council have had to contribute to the development of special education policy.

We have recently received the Order in Council extending the mandate of your Council for five years to March 2005. We are particularly pleased that the government has recognized the need for additional Council meeting time to give us the opportunity to develop more fully our advice to you on special education matters. We also appreciate the addition of a Native representative as a voting member of the Council and the addition of representatives from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Children's Secretariat as non-voting members.

As in previous years, the attached report includes a message to the Minister documenting some of Council's principal observations and recommendations, and also includes a detailed description of the activities of your Council during 1999/2000.

I look forward to meeting with you in the near future to discuss the issues raised by Council and summarized in this report. I also would like to extend an invitation to you to attend the Council's next meeting which is scheduled for October 17 and 18, 2000.

Yours sincerely,

Lynn Ziraldo  
Chair

**c/o Lynn Ziraldo, 9 ElstonCourt, Richmond Hill, ON L4C 8A6  
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## **PART 1: COUNCIL'S MESSAGE TO THE MINISTER**

Dear Minister Ecker:

As your Advisory Council<sup>1</sup>, 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 some of the significant observations and positions of the Council over the 1999/2000 year and the first part of the 2000/2001 year. To be of greatest possible benefit to our continuing dialogue, this message emphasises issues of concern to the Council at the time of writing (Summer 2000). A complete list of the Council's resolutions for the year 1999/2000 is included in Part 3 of this report.

### **Council's Priorities**

At each meeting of the Council, each Council member is encouraged to table a report on the recent consultation with the organizations in his or her constituency. These reports are shared among Council members in order that the perceptions of successful practices and of issues and concerns are known to all members. Each year at its June meeting, Council reviews the emerging issues of concern to members and establishes a short list of priorities for the coming year.

At its June 17, 1999 meeting the Council identified priority areas for work during the 1999/2000 year:

- special education funding;
- elementary / secondary policy and curriculum;
- student transitions (during their elementary / secondary school years and from school to work, further education and life in the community);
- interministry coordination (in the provision of support services for exceptional students); and
- governance and school board accountability in special education.

For each of these priority areas, Council has an active standing subcommittee. The subcommittees meet as needed, usually by teleconference, to examine issues and draft resolutions for the consideration of the full Council at its next regular meeting.

At its June 15, 2000 meeting, Council re-examined its priorities and set the following five priorities for 2000/2001:

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<sup>1</sup>A description of the mandate and structure of the Council is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

- special education funding (especially the ISA profiles and validation process)
- accountability and standards
- curriculum and assessment
- interministerial coordinated services (in light of the PPM 81 review and the Minister's January 27, 2000 announcement)
- support for student transitions: into, among and from schools

The roles of Council's standing committees are continuing to evolve to accommodate these changing priorities. In addition a number of ad hoc subcommittees were created to respond to specific issues such as the Special Education Information Handbook, the Role of Educational Assistants, Transportation of Exceptional Students, and Special Education Statistics.

The following sections are organized in accordance with Council's five priority concerns with an emphasis on the emerging concerns which will guide our deliberations in 2000/2001.

### **Special Education Funding**

Council continues to be supportive of the concepts of transparency and portability of special education funding which are embodied in the student focussed funding model. Council welcomes the increases in special education funding provided by the government over the past two years. The decision to protect school boards' ISA allocations for 2000/2001 at a minimum of the 1999/2000 level was also very helpful to school boards in planning for 2000/2001 special education programs and services.

We recognize that there are always additional needs of exceptional students which could be met through still more funding. However, our primary concerns are with the mechanisms for distribution of the funds provided.

The principal source of concern is with the process for identification and distribution of the Intensive Support Amount (ISA) portion of the special education grant. This concern is centred on the ISA student profiles, assessment requirements, and the validation process.

Last year we advised that there was considerable confusion among school board officials and parents about the intent of the ISA profiles. Parents advised us that the ISA criteria were restrictive and that they feared students who failed to match the profiles in some minor respect would be denied needed programs and services. Over the past year, evidence has accumulated that this is indeed occurring. Despite the announcement of the Minister on January 27, 2000 that ISA funding for 2000/2001 would not be tied to specific students, many school board officials are continuing to advise parents that needed special education programs and services cannot be provided to their child because the ministry (through its ISA process) has determined that their child does not warrant such programs or services. It appears that the ministry message is not getting through to a significant number of teachers, principals, school board officials and parents.

We also advised last year of concerns from parents that programs and services may be identified in student's Individual Education Plans for the sole purpose of obtaining funds and that some school boards may then use the funds for other purposes. This practice appears to have developed as we had feared. We have received a number of reports of Individual Education Plans being written, not to reflect the needs of students, but to gain access to ISA funds. While we anticipate that the ministry's recent steps to separate ISA funding from individual students will give school boards additional flexibility in the allocation of special education dollars, we believe that the use of student's IEP as documentation to support ISA claims may continue to distort the program planning process for individual students.

In order to achieve a measure of objectivity in ISA funding decisions the ministry has required a psychological or medical assessment with documentation of a particular diagnosis in a number of exceptionality areas. Experience is showing that medical or psychological assessments done for purposes of identification and placement do not necessarily require (and consequently, do not always contain) the diagnosis required for purposes of documenting ISA claims. We have been informed by school boards that this can lead to the diversion of psychological, social work, and other support services to the goal of reassessing students or writing reports for funding purposes. We have also heard of parents being informed by school boards that special education programs and services can only be provided to their children if the parent obtains an assessment privately which matches the ISA funding criteria. We are aware that the ministry has clarified the need for assessments stating that for lifelong conditions such as autism and developmental disability, an initial diagnosis will be sufficient documentation along with current educational assessments. We urge the ministry to continue to monitor this issue to ensure that ISA documentation requirements are appropriately understood by school boards and that children are not being reassessed purely for funding purposes.

A fourth significant concern has emerged during the validation process for the 2000/2001 funding which took place in the Spring of 2000. The ISA profiles were written to provide clear and objective guidelines to school boards in selecting and documenting high need students for ISA funding purposes. In last year's report we noted Council's concern that the Ministry had not followed the advice of its Expert Panel (on which Council members had participated) and had restricted the eligibility criteria in a number of the profiles. We urged the Ministry to reconsider. This January the Minister announced the decision to retain the profiles unchanged in order to provide needed stability for school boards. While this decision did indeed provide stability, it preserved perceived inequities in a number of exceptionality areas including emotional/behavioural, learning disability, and developmental disability. We repeat our request for the profiles to be reviewed especially in these three areas.

This year, in preparation for the validation of ISA funding claims, we understand that ministry staff and the ministry validators intensively reviewed the profiles and developed additional guidelines for the validators in order to ensure consistency in application of the profiles. While the stated intent was to ensure consistency of validation decisions across school boards, there have also been some additional consequences. The validators' guidelines were perceived by many school board officials to function as additional unpublished criteria which further restricted the number of students accepted for ISA funding. If these additional criteria had been known earlier, considerable unproductive effort by school boards and parents could have been avoided. The impact of these decisions appears to have been greatest in the area of developmental disability where a percentile IQ score appears to have been adopted unannounced by the ministry. We urge the ministry to publish all of its criteria in the future.

Council recognizes the significant challenges of refining the special education funding process to achieve its intended purposes. We look forward to working with ministry staff through our Special Education Funding Subcommittee to clarify any gaps between the

current funding formula and the application of funds to meet the needs of the students for whom the funds are intended. Where such gaps exist we need to determine whether school boards are able to address the needs in the current environment, and to initiate any changes necessary to achieve a funding process which both supports student's needs and ensures accountability.

## **Accountability and Standards**

Council is particularly appreciative of the personal accountability of Minister Ecker and of past Ministers Johnson and Snobelen in attending each of Council's meetings and dialoguing candidly with members about the government's initiatives. We also very much appreciate the accountability of ministry staff in providing written responses to each of Council's resolutions. Access of the chair and Council members to ministry staff is also excellent as is the support of ministry staff to the Council at meetings. These actions of the minister and ministry staff set a positive example for the Council and the school boards as the ministry pursues its objective of increasing accountability throughout the education system.

Council welcomed the announcement of the Minister on January 27, 2000 that the ministry will be developing standards for Individual Education Plans, school board special education plans and program standards for each exceptionality area. We look forward to working closely with ministry staff in the development of these standards. These standards will have the potential to bring much needed consistency to special education programs and services across school boards. As with the government's existing legislation and regulations in special education, without monitoring and enforcement by the ministry school boards may be slow to implement the standards especially if sufficient financial resources are not available. In the event that funding or other barriers to implementation exist, monitoring by the ministry will bring these to light enabling necessary corrective action to be planned.

Council also welcomed the ministry's thorough review of school boards' 1999 special education plans. We are awaiting the publication by the ministry of its summary report of this review. We encourage the ministry to continue with this level of scrutiny of the boards' special education plans for 2000 and for subsequent years. Council particularly endorses the ministry's practice, begun with the 1999 plans, of reviewing the comments on the plans provided by the school boards' Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs).

In 1997, regulation 464/97 increased the role of school board Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs), requiring school boards to share and consult with their SEACs on their budgets, financial statements and special education plans. Members of SEACs have advised us of their need for training and guidelines to assist them to contribute optimally to the budgeting and special education planning processes of the school boards. We acknowledge the commitment of the ministry to provide training to SEAC members in conjunction with the training for school board personnel around the new IEP and Special Education Plan standards. We are pleased with the ministry

commitment that this training will include the accountability role of SEACs in regulation 464/97 and we look forward to working with ministry staff in the development and delivery of this training.

The apparent reduction in the range of placement options for exceptional students (which we identified in last year's report) continues to be a concern. Too often exceptional students are being required to attend those programs which boards choose to provide and not the programs which they most need. We urge the ministry, through its standards for Individual Education Plans and school board special education plans to monitor and require all school boards to provide or purchase the programs and services needed by their students. There is also concern among some of our members that the program standards which the ministry is developing must not be written to encourage one form of program placement over another. The program standards must not presuppose or require either a segregated placement or a fully integrated placement. They must support programming throughout the complete range of placements.

In last year's report we highlighted the need to give parents some clear direction on procedures to follow in the event of disagreement with their school or school board on matters other than the identification and placement of their children. Too many parents are frustrated and confused about what "proper channels" to follow in the event of disagreements in matters such as IEPs, report cards, teacher attitudes, or provincial testing. We anticipate that such direction will appear in the Special Education Information Handbook. As the Handbook is a large document intended primarily for use by school boards, it may not be readily accessible to all parents. Consequently, this information is also needed on the ministry web site. We also encourage the ministry to consider requiring it to be placed in the school board's parent guides.

## **Curriculum and Assessment**

Council wishes to congratulate the ministry on the successful completion of the new elementary and secondary curriculum documents. We believe that the greater degree of precision in these documents will be of benefit to educators, parents and students throughout the province. However, this added rigour in the specification of learning expectations, together with provincial testing and the provincial report card increases the challenge to the school system to identify exceptional students early and to provide the special education programs and services which they need in order to succeed in school.

We have documented elsewhere our concern that sufficient information needed by classroom teachers about accommodations for exceptional students was not published in the ministry's curriculum documents, but was published in a separate companion document titled *Program Planning and Assessment: Grades 9 to 12*. Council acknowledges the commitment of the ministry to print sufficient copies of *Program Planning and Assessment* to ensure that every teacher in the province has a copy. However, we believe that this is a second best solution. We believe that the separation of special education material from the curriculum documents is symbolic of an

inappropriate and outdated way of thinking about special education as separate from and not concerned with the regular activities of the school. In contrast, Council applauds the approach taken by the ministry in the Ontario Secondary Schools and Choices into Action documents where accommodations for exceptional students were interwoven throughout the documents. We also applaud the approach in the Elementary Curriculum Planner in which the excellent and useful material of the Special Education Companion is accessible by teachers from any place in the planner. It is our hope that the *Program Planning and Assessment* document will be the last ministry document to segregate special education from the mainstream.

Council continues to be concerned about options that are available for students who, in the past, would have enrolled in basic level courses. We are aware that school boards may develop local courses in English, math and science for these students and that other strategies such as substitution of credit courses may be employed. We are also encouraged by the planned development of pathways to employment and a skills passport which we understand will provide another route for students who do not graduate with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma or Ontario Secondary School Certificate. We continue to urge the ministry to monitor this issue closely and to take what action is necessary to ensure that these students receive the programs and services which they need.

Last year Council expressed its concern that the implementation of the Grade 10 Test of Reading and Writing should not penalize exceptional students unfairly. Council has reviewed the draft accommodation policy circulated by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) and has identified, and communicated to EQAO, a number of significant concerns which could make this test a systemic barrier to graduation for some students with disabilities. Proposed policies such as (only) doubling the amount of time for exceptional students, and prohibiting teachers from explaining the instructions suggest a fundamental lack of clarity about the nature of the test itself and about the concept of literacy which it is designed to assess. Council welcomes the decision that the 2000/2001 year will be a trial year for the test, and we encourage the ministry and EQAO to proceed with the utmost caution in this very sensitive area. We look forward to the results of this trial and to discussing any indicated policy implications with EQAO and the ministry.

## **Coordinated Services**

Council appreciates the excellent work of the ministry in leading the interministerial review of school health and psychosocial support services currently governed by the 1984 Policy / Program Memorandum 81 and the 1987 Interministerial Guidelines for the Provision of Speech and Language Services. We are particularly appreciative of the high degree of involvement of Council members and other members of the education, health and social service communities on the steering committee and the three task groups. We are eagerly looking forward to reviewing the report of the steering committee. Finally Council welcomed the announcement of the Minister on January 27, 2000 committing the Ministry of Education to taking the lead in coordinating services

from the health and social service sectors for students in schools. We look forward to working with the ministries in implementing the recommendations from the PPM 81 review and improving service coordination among the ministries and sectors.

Council also appreciates the involvement at Council meetings and on Council subcommittees (particularly the Interministerial Coordination subcommittee) of representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and the Office of Integrated Services for Children. We also note with appreciation the revision of Council's membership to include the Children's Secretariat and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities who will now join representatives of the Ministries of Health and Long Term Care and Community and Social Services as non-voting members of the Council.

## **Student Transitions**

Council continues to await the publication of the Ministry of Education Transition Planning Resource Guide and the Special Education Information Handbook. We hear from parents and school board officials that some school boards are awaiting the publication of the Transition Planning Resource Guide before taking any significant steps to implement transition planning. We believe that the delay in the publication of this document signals to the school boards that the ministry is not serious about its regulatory requirement for transition planning. We urge the ministry to proceed with publication of this document (and the Special Education Information Handbook) immediately.

## **Other Matters**

### **Safe Schools Act**

Council acknowledges the provisions of the Safe Schools Act and regulations directed to exceptional students. Members have expressed concerns that, notwithstanding these provisions, implementation of the government's Safe Schools Act may lead to inappropriate action (suspension or expulsion) against students who really require accommodations and appropriate strategies to address their emotional and behavioural disorders. We acknowledge the commitment of the ministry to provide appropriate guidance for school boards in implementing the Safe Schools Act with respect to exceptional students and we look forward to working with ministry staff on this important task.

As we noted in last year's report, ministry staff have prepared a draft guideline which would provide considerable assistance to educators in implementing the Safe Schools Act with respect to exceptional students. This document is known as Special Education Monograph 5. Council would like to see this document revised in light of the Safe Schools Act and released to school boards as soon as possible in order to minimize possible inappropriate application of the provisions of the Act to exceptional students. Ideally, the principles embodied in Monograph 5 should be interwoven as appropriate into the safe schools policies of local schools and school boards.

### **- Challenges of French Language School Boards**

French language school boards report a number of challenges in serving their exceptional students who, they believe, are not adequately funded by the current funding model.

1. As French language staff are scarce across the province, most French-language school boards must purchase these services. As these professionals usually come from the Ottawa region or from Quebec, the school board must pay for

- travel and accommodation on top of the fee for service.
2. The geographic distances covered by French language boards add to the cost of preparation of ISA files and the delivery of direct services to schools. Professionals spend a lot of time on the road, which takes away from time spent in the schools and with students.
  3. Some French-language school boards must offer costly programs for individual students because appropriate programs offered by other school boards are too far away, and because there are no other students who have the same exceptionality. These individualized programs often require specialized professional services and may require funding for professional training in the specific needs of the student.
  4. There is a lack of French language care and treatment programs, (i.e. Section 19 programs). Consequently, students who would be referred by other boards to care and treatment facilities must often be retained by French language boards and appropriate costly programs provided. The cost of serving these students in regular classes often exceeds the funding received through ISA.

We thank you, Minister, for the opportunity to submit this report. We continue to appreciate the support which you and the staff of the Ministry of Education provide to this Council and we look forward to working closely with you and with ministry staff over the coming year to bring further improvements to special education in Ontario.

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

## **PART 2: ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL IN 1998/99**

### **Membership**

During 1999/2000 there were three membership changes on Council:

- Mr. Jim Roots retired and was replaced by Mr. Jonathan Samson as the representative for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities;
- Ms. Beverly Ginou retired and was replaced by Ms. Diane McLeod as the representative for the Blind and Low Vision communities;
- Mr. John Wilhelm retired and was replaced by Ms. Jane Loughborough as the representative for Social Workers.

The membership of Council at the end of 1999/2000 is shown in Appendix 2.

### **Meetings<sup>1</sup>**

The Council held meetings on June 17 and October 21, 1999 and on February 17, 2000.

The June 17, 1999 agenda included topics on:

- PPM 81
- Special Needs Opportunity Window (SNOW) Project
- Funding Model and ISA Review
- Elementary School Policy
- Course Profiles/Curriculum
- Secondary Report Card
- Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting
- Reporting Support for Higher Achievement
- Ontario Student Transcript Policy
- Teacher Advisor
- Annual Education Plan
- Community Involvement (PPM124A)
- Successful Practices
- Special Education Information Handbook
- Special Education Plan
- Advisory Council Sunset Review

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<sup>1</sup>Copies of the minutes of these meetings are available in English or French by writing to Ms. Savitri Ramhit, Administrative Coordinator, Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Waterpark Place, 20 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5J 2N8; phone (416) 325-2784; e-mail savitri.ramhit@edu.gov.on.ca

The October 21, 1999 agenda included topics on:

- Curriculum Implementation Partnership
- Transportation
- Elementary Curriculum Unit Planner
- Secondary Curriculum Policy Documents Grades 11 & 12
- Course Profiles
- Assessment, Evaluation & Reporting
- Financial Accountability Statistics
- Over 21
- Special Education Information Handbook
- Safe Schools
- Special Education Plans
- Transition Guide
- PPM 81 Review
- Reg 298 Review/Class Size

The February 17, 2000 agenda included topics on:

- Grade 10 Reading and Writing Test
- Update to Secondary Curriculum Program, Planning & Assessment Guide
- Grade 11 and 12 Curriculum
- Implementation Plan of the Partnership Council
- Pathways for Secondary Students who are At-Risk of not Graduating
- Announcement re. Improved Quality and Accountability for Special Education
- Report on Special Education Funding Model for French Language School Boards
- Teacher Testing

Copies of the minutes of these meetings are available in English and French from Ms. Savitri Ramhit who can be reached at (416) 325-2784 or by e-mail at [savitri.ramhit@edu.gov.on.ca](mailto:savitri.ramhit@edu.gov.on.ca)

The Honourable Janet Ecker, Minister of Education joined the Council at its October 21, 1999 and February 17, 2000 meetings for an exchange of views on special education issues and on the government's accomplishments in education reform and current initiatives in special education. Members of the Council were reassured and pleased to hear from the Minister of her personal commitment to exceptional students and her appreciation for the role of her Advisory Council on Special Education.

### **Sub-Committees**

Five standing sub-committees have been active:

- Special Education Funding
- Curriculum
- Interministry Co-ordination
- Transitions

- Accountability and Governance.

In addition six Ad-Hoc Committees have been created to assist with specific issues

- Safe Schools / Code of Conduct
- Educational Assistants
- Special Education Handbook
- Transportation
- Grade 10 Test of Reading and Writing
- Statistics

Details of committee and subcommittee membership are in Appendix 3.

## **Resolutions**

In the course of its three meetings of 1999/2000, Council made 37 formal recommendations to the minister in the form of resolutions. Council's resolutions are listed in Part 3 of this report.

## **Consultations**

Council Chair, Lynn Ziraldo, and other members of Council met on several occasions with senior officials of the ministry in order to ensure that the perspective, concerns and recommendations of the Council are understood by those who have responsibility for developing and implementing policies and programs.

Council provided representatives to ministry consultation meetings on a variety of issues including: education finance reform; curriculum; provincial report cards; provincial testing.

Members of Council addressed audiences throughout Ontario providing information about the Council and inviting input. Members also continued to collect information on successful practices and concerns / challenges from the special education community to inform their understanding of issues and to assist Council in setting its agenda for future years. A sample of the form used by Council members to report on these consultations may be found on page 12 of this report.

## **Self-evaluation**

Council also continued 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 form used by Council members to provide their evaluative feedback may be found on page 13 of this report.

**MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**COMMUNICATION: COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY**

SUBMITTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BEST PRACTICES/ WHAT'S WORKING WELL IN SPECIAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>CHALLENGES/ISSUES</b>

Please send to Lynn Ziraldo, 9 Elston Court, Richmond Hill, Ontario L4C 8A6  
(905) 884-7933 Fax: (905) 770-9377

**MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**SWOT ANALYSIS**

MEETING \_\_\_\_\_

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>

c/o Lynn Ziraldo, 9 Elston Court, Richmond Hill, ON L4C 8A6  
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## PART 3: RESOLUTIONS JUNE 1999 - FEBRUARY 2000

During the period June 1999 to February 2000, 37 resolutions were made by the Council. The resolutions are categorized as follows.

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Page</u>
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Curriculum and Assessment	15
Early Intervention and Integrated Services for Children	17
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Individual Education Plan	20
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Professional Development	20
Resource Documents	21
Special Education Advisory Committee	21
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Successful Practices	23
Transition Planning	23
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	24

## **Behavioural Issues**

00.1.1 **Whereas:** Data is unavailable for Ontario that accurately describes students who are experiencing serious behavioural difficulties. Statistics about suspensions, expulsions and violent incidents do not indicate how many of these students have Behaviour as one of their exceptionalities. There is no data that indicates the level of need nor trends in urban, rural or geographical areas.

Service delivery models are currently based on guesses and perceptions about this population.

**Be it resolved** that a Task Force be established with representation from the Ontario Council for Children with Behavioural Disorders and the Ministries of Education, Health, Community and Social Services, and Corrections to:

- Refine a province-wide Behaviour survey for distribution to all District School Boards and School Authorities in Ontario to be submitted in time for a second annual Behaviour Forum in June 2001;

Establish categories of behaviour that would meet the needs of all four Ministries for data collection to isolate trends and patterns across the province;

Include in the annual Ministry of Education October report specific data about this population of students using the categories of behaviour established above.

And that this data be the basis on which a full continuum of service for students experiencing behavioural difficulties is constructed.

## **Curriculum and Assessment**

99.2.5 **Whereas:** It is clear that good social adjustment later in life is built upon the acquisition of strong communication and social skills early in life and that the most effective and cost-effective setting to build these skills is the school.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education and Training consider including social skills and communication training as an integral part of the curriculum beginning with the youngest children possible.

***Resolutions of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education:  
June 1999 to February 2000***

99.3.3 **Whereas:** Summer Institutes for 1999 were well received by teachers and training is key to the implementation of a new curriculum.

**Be it resolved** that the model of Summer Institutes for the implementation of the elementary/secondary curriculum be repeated for the Summer 2000 and focus on Special Education.

99.3.5 **Whereas:**

- identified exceptional students in Ontario have a right to appropriate special education programs and services
- school boards are required to provide, or purchase from another school board, the special education programs and services to meet the needs of their exceptional students.
- schools must establish and provide the program differentiation and modification, and the accommodations, to meet the learning needs of their exceptional students and every teacher must have easy access to all policies related to curriculum
- the Grades 9 and Program Planning and Assessment policy is a separate document from each of the Grade 9 and 10 subject curriculum policy documents and members of MACSE are hearing from teachers that they have never seen this Ministry document.

**Be it resolved that the MACSE recommends that the Program Planning and Assessment policy be included within and as an integral part of each of the Grades 11 and 12 subject curriculum policy documents to ensure that this information is available to all teachers.**

99.3.6 **Whereas:** Curriculum for American Sign Language (ASL) is now being elaborated by Provincial Schools Branch for the Anglophone deaf students.

**Be it resolved** that the curriculum for Langage Signé Québécois (LSQ) be also elaborated for the deaf francophone students.

99.3.7 **Whereas:** To accommodate Special Education Needs and to ensure that the

*Resolutions of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education:  
June 1999 to February 2000*

needs of exceptional learners are met.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education (EDU) develop course profiles for Grades 11 and 12.

*Resolutions of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education:  
June 1999 to February 2000*

99.3.8 **Whereas:** Elementary and Grade 9 Exemplars are a key initiative in curriculum resources.

**Be it resolved** that Exemplars be developed for Grades 11 and 12 courses.

00.1.5 **Whereas:** school boards are required to provide special education programs and services to meet the needs of their exceptional students.

**Be it resolved** that MACSE be involved with the development of the guide titled Ontario Assessment Policy.

### **Early Intervention and Integrated Services for Children**

99.3.4 **Whereas:** The Council has forwarded to the Office of Integrated Services for Children a proposal for Early Intervention initiatives for children with pervasive developmental disorders.

**Be it resolved** that the Office of Integrated Services for Children continue to keep Council up-to-date of the initiatives in Early Interventions.

### **Funding**

99.2.2 **Whereas:** The new ISA profiles exclude children with behavioural and/or speech and language exceptionalities; **and whereas** these students are not being serviced because of Boards (of Education) limited resources.

**Be it resolved** that profiles be amended to reflect the recommendations of the expert panel in order to include more children with behavioural and speech and language exceptionalities.

99.2.3 **Whereas:** The preparation of files and applications for ISA funding is labour intensive and requires a great deal of time to prepare and document; **and whereas:** this activity is performed by Special Education teachers keeping them out of the classroom.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education and Training (MET) allow funding to cover the extraordinary cost of ISA funding documentation that

*Resolutions of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education:  
June 1999 to February 2000*

is currently not provided for.

***Resolutions of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education:  
June 1999 to February 2000***

99.2.4 **Whereas:** Many boards in the province are in growth periods and therefore the number of exceptional students increases accordingly; these students are not being serviced because the funding for 1999 - 2000 is stable.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education and Training devise a plan which will allow adjustments in ISA funding for September of 1999 to assist boards experiencing growth.

99.2.6 **Whereas:** Council recognizes the benefits and importance of providing support to students.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education and Training provide funding on an on-going basis for summer school for grades 7 and 8.

99.2.8 **Whereas:** Summer school is crucial for grade 8 students. The funding is calculated on the number of hours of regular course (110 hours). In order to offer summer school, boards need more or less 20 students.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education and Training develop a new formula for summer school to allow more Boards to offer summer school.

99.2.11 **Whereas:** The Ministry of Education and Training will be reviewing the spending of special education dollars by the district school boards; **and whereas** the information so gathered would be of great assistance to Special Education Advisory Committees in their mandated assignment to review the budget and financial statements of the district school boards.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education and Training release the information on the review of the spending of special education funds by school boards to the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education and a Board's Special Education Advisory Committee.

00.1.2 **Whereas:** there is a clear lack of understanding of the scope of behavioural difficulties being experienced in Ontario's students. The ISA student profiles provide extra funding for only one subset of extremely serious behavioural disorders; those that present a constant physical risk to themselves or others. The service delivery model for this subset of disorders is often limited to provision of supervision.

**Be it resolved** that the full range of behavioural difficulties be addressed

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in the ISA student profiles in order to fund interventions that will benefit a greater proportion of students with behaviour difficulties and can focus on behavioural change rather than supervision.

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00.1.4 **Whereas:** An Early Intervention Autism Project is underway.

**Be it resolved** that

- a. given the significant communication component for students with PDD/Autism that funding be provided to support assessments that include speech/language information;
- b. given the significant impact that IBI may have on the students educational program that funding be provided to assist schools with the transition process; [i.e. transition from pre-school programs into school - *editor's note*]
- c. given that a specific training program is to be provided on IBI, that a communication component be included in the training and funding be provided for this training;
- d. an analysis be conducted on the impact of other communication services to be accessed through Pre-school Speech and Language Services, i.e. if students with autism/PDD are to receive intensive services what impact will this have on students with other types of communication needs?

00.1.8 **Whereas:** the Ministry will be issuing a Manual on the ISA process

**Be it resolved** that MACSE be involved in reviewing the draft of the ISA Manual, and that, MACSE be part of the training process.

00.1.9 **Whereas:** There appears to be a great amount of confusion with respect to ISA Funding and allocation of special education funding.

**Be it resolved** that an in-service session be held on the funding model be offered to SEACs, Parent Associations and Board Officials and staff members.

00.1.10 **Whereas:** under section 23 of the Canadian Charter of rights and Freedoms, confirmed by orders of the Supreme Court of Canada, funding for the French-Language minority must be at least equal to, or if necessary, superior to the funding of the English-Language majority; and

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**Whereas:** funding portion from the ISA for French-Language Special Education was lower in proportion to the funding for English-Language School Boards in 1998-99 and 1999-2000; and

**Whereas** equity of Special Education program and service delivery in French-Language School Boards presents important issues with regards to large jurisdictions, low population density and lack of French-Language professional services within the communities.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education (EDU) release transition funds to allow equity of special education program and service delivery and to cover extraordinary costs incurred by French-Language Schools Boards over the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 periods.

**Be it resolved** that the EDU create a working committee including French-Language Schools Board and EDU representatives to examine specific issues related to French-Language School Board funding, without a delay.

### **Individual Education Plan**

00.1.7 **Whereas:** the Ministry of Education will be developing standards for Individual Education Plans (IEPs); School Boards' Special Education Plans; special education programs for each exceptionality; assessment protocols and a process for auditing IEPs; and better coordination of services for students with special needs for French and English Boards.

**Be it resolved** that MACSE be actively involved in developing standards for Individual Education Plans (IEPs); School Boards' Special Education Plans; special education programs for each exceptionality; assessment protocols and a process for auditing IEPs; and better coordination of services for students with special needs for French and English Boards.

### **Non-Diploma Students**

00.1.6 **Whereas:** School Boards need to provide programs/services to exceptional students.

**Be it resolved** that MACSE be involved in the development of the Skills

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Passport Portfolio.

### **Professional Development**

99.2.7 **Whereas** : There is a need to ensure that the needs of exceptional learners are met during the implementation phase of the new secondary curriculum.

**Be it resolved** that the ministry develop an education training strategy to provide further specific special education training and support to teachers as they implement the new secondary policy curriculum.

99.2.9 **Whereas**: There is a need to ensure that the needs of exceptional learners are met.

**Be it resolved** that specific implementation strategies as they relate to exceptional learners be incorporated in the teacher advisor guide.

### **Resource Documents**

99.2.10 **Whereas**: There is a need to provide support and clarity around exceptionalities

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education and Training undertake a review of the special education support documents (i.e. gifted, learning disabilities, behaviour, etc. disciplines).

### **Special Education Advisory Committee**

99.2.1 **Whereas**: It is critical that Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) understand clearly the budget process as it relates to Special Education.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry of Education and Training (MET) develop a clear worksheet that would facilitate the presentation by school boards to Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of critical budget issues as they relate to Special Education.

00.1.3 **Whereas**: only eight of the School Districts who responded to the Ontario

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Behaviour Survey had SEAC representatives for Behavioural Disorders. This eliminates the opportunity for advocacy on behalf of a whole group of exceptional students who have very unique needs that often impact on many others in the system.

**Be it resolved** that the Ministry request school boards to recruit SEAC members to serve as advocates for exceptional students with behaviour exceptionalities. [The intent of this resolution is that the Ministry request boards to recruit behaviour advocates to serve as SEAC members. - *editor's note*]



**Be it resolved** that MET's annual review of school board special education plans and amendments pay particular attention:

- to the placements available for students with developmental disabilities to determine whether integration into a regular classroom is available as a placement option for these students;
- data received from School Boards' September Reports regarding the placement of exceptional pupils is in keeping with the School Boards' special education plan.
- to any statements concerning pre-placement practices prior to IPRC decisions.
- MET highlight in the Special Education Information Handbook the intent of section 9 of Regulation 181/98 reinforcing the requirements that pre-placements be consistent with section 17 which requires that an IPRC consider whether placement in a regular class, with appropriate special education services: a) would meet the pupil's needs; and b) is consistent with the parents preferences, before considering the option of placement in a special class, integration be the first placement option considered.

### **Successful Practices**

99.2.15 **Whereas:** MET has advised the Council that it proposes to initiate a program to recognize successful practices in special education.

There are many excellent examples of integration of exceptional pupils, including those with developmental disabilities, in Ontario schools.

Many administrators, teachers, resource and support staff require additional support to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes in support of the ministry policy on integration as it relates to exceptional pupils, including those with developmental disabilities.

Information about successful practice is one of the most positive and effective means of providing support to teachers and administrators to learn new skills, knowledge and attitudes.

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**Be it resolved** that among the successful practices selected by MET for award recognition, some examples of the integration of exceptional pupils in the regular classroom with appropriate supports be included.

### **Transition Planning**

99.2.19 **Whereas:** There are insufficient further education opportunities in Ontario for adults who have disabilities which severely affect their ability to learn.

Responsibility within the Ontario government for providing further education programs for these adults is not clearly defined.

These adults are typically offered placements in life skills programs and workshops which do not fill the needs of those who have the ability and desire to continue learning.

**Be it resolved** that Council request the Government of Ontario to clarify responsibility for providing programs and services (including educational programs and services) for adults who have disabilities which severely affect their ability to learn.

Council request the Ministry of Education and Training, in consultation with other ministries and with other disability related organizations, to develop an action plan for further full and part time post-school-leaving educational opportunities for students who have disabilities which severely affect their ability to learn, and that this action plan be co-ordinated with the ministry's transition planning initiatives and with the exceptions based funding pilot project for students with developmental disabilities.

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

99.2.16 **Whereas:** There is concern that the support services (including counselling) provided by secondary schools, colleges and universities to deaf students, students with physical disabilities and others are not fully effective. Council wishes to assess the situation in colleges and universities concerning the provision of these services before it recommends specific corrective action to the minister.

The Ministry of Education and Training has recently conducted a survey of

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colleges and universities to determine the services which are available to students and potential students who are deaf, deafened and hard of hearing.

**Be it resolved** that Council requests the Minister to share with the Council the results of the recent study of support services for deaf students in colleges and universities.

- 99.2.17 **Whereas:** There is concern that the number and distribution of ASL and LSQ (i.e., French language) interpreters, particularly highly skilled interpreters, is currently in very short supply and is negatively affecting the ability of members of the deaf community to participate fully in school, work and the community.

Ontario interpreters are trained primarily at Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology.

**Be it resolved** that Council request the Ministry of Education and Training to work co-operatively with the Canadian Hearing Society and the Ontario Association for the Deaf in order to investigate the supply and demand of oral ASL and LSQ interpreters and real time captioners, particularly highly skilled interpreters and captioners, and that MET takes steps to ensure appropriate corrective action to ensure that the number and distribution of interpreters and captioners trained at Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology is consistent with anticipated needs.

- 99.2.18 **Whereas:** There is concern that there has been a reduction in career counselling services available to students with disabilities.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) no longer provides this support.

College and university student support offices and secondary schools are not providing the same level and nature of services formerly offered by VRS.

**Be it resolved** that Council request the Minister to provide funding to the secondary schools, colleges and universities to enable guidance, student support and/or special needs services to provide career counselling for students with disabilities at a quality level which at least matches that formerly provided through Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS).

99.3.1 **Whereas:** The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has provided Council with the results of an informal questionnaire to determine services for students who are deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing.

**Be it resolved that** the MTCU also survey information on the services for deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing francophone students in Ontario

99.3.2 **Whereas:** The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has provided Council with the results of an informal questionnaire to determine services for students who are deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing.

**Be it resolved that** the MTCU consider following up the informal survey with appropriate corrective action.

## MANDATE AND STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL

The Advisory Committee on Special Education was established in 1974 and has been renewed continually from that date, with a name change to the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education in 1986. Following a thorough review in 1995, the structure and function of the Council were changed in 1996 and remained unchanged until some further changes were made during the Summer of 2000. The following describes the mandate and structure the Council as it existed during the 1999/2000 year.

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

In particular, the Council:

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

The basis of membership on the 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 professional categories;
  - one seat for a student member;
  - two non-voting seats for the Ministries of Health and Community and Social Services;
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and

-two representatives each for the Francophone and Roman Catholic communities,  
appointed from among the members above.

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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 published by the ministry on its World Wide Web site at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca> (see Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education under Agencies, Boards and Commissions).

In the Summer of 2000 some 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 and Social 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.

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**APPENDIX 2**

**MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON  
SPECIAL EDUCATION: MEMBERS  
April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000**

<b>Exceptionality/ Community of Interest Represented</b>	<b>Members</b>
<p><b>Exceptionalities</b></p> <p>Emotional/Behaviour Disorder Pervasive Developmental Disorder, French Language Community Deaf &amp; Hard of Hearing Learning Disabilities, All Exceptionalities, Chair Gifted Developmental Disability Blind &amp; Low Vision Physical Disability Multiple Disabilities</p> <p>Student/Youth</p> <p><b>Educator Groups</b></p> <p>Trustees, Vice Chair Supervisory Officers, French Language Community Principals Teachers, Catholic Community Educational Assistants</p> <p><b>Professional Support</b></p> <p>Medical Psychologists Social Workers Speech and Language Pathologists</p> <p><b>Non-Voting</b></p> <p>Ministry of Community and Social Services Ministry of Health and Long Term Care</p>	<p>James Arthur Raymand LeBlanc</p> <p>Jonathan Samson Lynn Ziraldo Joanne Lee Patrick Worth Diane McLeod Derryn Gill Carol Clark</p> <p>Laurie Alphonse</p> <p>John Hendry Jean-Luc Bernard Terry Geddes Suzan Garlock Jeanne Robinson</p> <p>Greg Gillis Janice Prock Jane Loughborough Susan Bassili</p> <p>Suzanne Hamilton Anna Burwash</p>

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## APPENDIX 3

# MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEES

April 1, 1999 - March 2000

### SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING

John Hendry (chair)  
Terry Geddes  
Joanne Lee  
James Arthur  
Jean-Luc Bernard  
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)  
Diane McLeod

### CURRICULUM

Susan Garlock (chair)  
Terry Geddes  
Joanne Lee  
Derryn Gill  
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)  
Carol Clark  
Jane Loughborough

### INTERMINISTRY CO-ORDINATION

James Arthur (chair)  
Janice Prock  
Susan Bassili  
Jeanne Robinson  
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)  
Laurie Alphonse  
Raymond LeBlanc  
Jane Loughborough  
Greg Gillis  
Diane McLeod

### TRANSITIONS

Raymond LeBlanc (chair)  
Derryn Gill  
Jeanne Robinson  
Pat Worth (with advisor Janice Strickland)  
John Hendry  
Laurie Alphonse  
Greg Gillis  
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)  
Jonathan Samson

### ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

Terry Geddes (chair)  
Susan Bassili  
Jeanne Robinson  
Joanne Lee  
Jean-Luc Bernard  
Pat Worth (with advisor Janice Strickland)  
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)  
Jonathan Samson

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## **AD HOC COMMITTEES**

### **SAFE SCHOOLS / CODE OF CONDUCT**

Jeanne Robinson  
Janice Prock  
James Arthur  
Greg Gillis  
Terry Geddes  
Jean Luc Bernard  
Lynn Ziraldo (ex officio)

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION HANDBOOK**

Joanne Lee (chair)  
Carol Clark  
Janice Prock  
Derryn Gill  
Lynn Ziraldo  
Susan Bassili  
Susan Garlock

### **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS**

Jeanne Robinson (chair)  
Susan Garlock  
Terry Geddes  
Jean Luc Bernard  
Lynn Ziraldo (ex-officio)

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Derryn Gill  
Diane McLeod  
Carol Clark

### **GRADE TEN TEST OF READING AND WRITING**

Janice Prock. (chair)  
Raymond LeBlanc  
Terry Geddes  
Joanne Lee  
Carol Clark

### **STATISTICS**

Raymond LeBlanc (Chair)  
Jane Loughborough  
Susan Bassili  
Janice Prock