

K-12 Education Standards Development Committee Key Messages

April 17-18, 2018

- “The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.” (Phil Jackson)
- As part of the April meeting, the K-12 Committee affirmed their shared consensus on the following group norms:
 1. Find choices that are win/win
 2. Mutual Respect for all members
 3. Openness and Flexibility
 4. Evidence-Based Approach to Committee work
 5. Shared Ownership of Process and Results
- The Committee appreciated hearing from the Minister of Education, the Honourable Indira Naidoo-Harris, who emphasized the importance of creating an inclusive and equitable education system for all students to have a chance to learn and reach their full potential.
- The Committee also appreciated the opportunity to incorporate the voices of youth and the We Have Something to Say Report shared by the Office of the Ontario Child Advocate, and to better understand the role of a disability justice approach and framing barriers to accessibility in terms of rights.
- The Committee continues to identify barriers facing students with disabilities, and agreed that there are a range of barriers still to be explored and discussed.
- The Committee collaborated on developing a shared vision for an accessible-student centred education system which would include a seamless model for transition planning.
- Key themes for the meeting were a focus on equity and inclusion, centering student voices, and considering the intersectionality of disability. Every student matters.
- The Committee recognized that students don’t learn in isolation, but in relation to a broad community. Lived experience of educators, staff, and a broad range of student support services must be considered throughout.

- The Committee acknowledged that barriers to accessibility can be exacerbated by capacity and resource challenges, particularly for northern and rural boards as well as Francophone boards who face challenges providing French-language services.
- The Committee appreciates the Ministry of Education sharing information and insights about K-12 education in Ontario. The Committee acknowledges the role of current accessibility standards and current Education framework, as well as challenges and implementation issues.
- Looking ahead, the Committee is committed to:
 - Working towards accessibility in a way that includes all students with disabilities
 - Focusing on evidence and research-based approaches
 - Referring back to Committee guiding principles throughout their work
- “Unity is strength. When there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved.” (Mattie Stepanek)