



ASSOCIATION FOR BRIGHT CHILDREN OF ONTARIO
SOCIÉTÉ POUR LES ENFANTS DOUÉS
ET SURDOUÉS DE L'ONTARIO
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ANNUAL REPORT 2007

EXECUTIVE 2006-2008

President Christine Thammavongsa (London)
Vice-President Dennis Ensing (London)
Past President Elizabeth Buckingham (Ottawa)
Recording Secretary vacant
Treasurer Sagarika Banerjee (Peel)5.06-6.07
 Arsenio Bonifacio (Halton)9.07-5.08

EXECUTIVE NOMINEES 2008-2010

Valerie Gravelle (Hamilton)
 Dennis Ensing (London)
 Christine Thammavongsa (London)
Secretary -Treasurer:
 Arsenio Bonifacio (Halton)

Standing Committees

Legislation Liaison Rebecca Hurwitz (Toronto)
Education Liaison vacant
SEAC Coordinator vacant
Resource Sylvia Kwan (Toronto)10.07-5.08
Chapter Liaison Rosanna DelGrosso (Toronto)10.07-5.08

Publications vacant
Publicity Colleen Haskett (London)
Conference vacant

Development vacant

Finance vacant

Advocacy:

Rebecca Hurwitz (Toronto)
 David Mason (Bruce)

Patricia Pugh (Wellington)

Outreach:

Sylvia Kwan (Toronto)

Public Relations:

Rosanna DelGrosso (Toronto)

Volunteer Development: vacant

Business Development:

Business Development:
 Liliana Diaz (Toronto)

Other

Email Inquiries Carol Ann Sloat (Brantford)
Webmaster Marc Comeau (Ottawa)
Bulletin Board Annie Dupuis (Toronto)
2008 Conference R. DelGrosso / S. Kwan (Toronto)
Corporate Secretary Becker Associates (Toronto)

TBD
 Marc Comeau (Ottawa)
 Annie Dupuis (Toronto)
 TBD

Executive Director: to be hired

STRUCTURE OF ABC The Association for Bright Children of Ontario would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our SEAC representatives, chapter presidents, chapter executives, provincial executive, provincial committee chairs and ABC members who sit on various provincial and local committees. ABC is primarily a volunteer organization based on a self-help and mutual support model and without the efforts of all these members, ABC could not serve the needs of our gifted and bright students.

PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE Provincial Executive meetings were held on April 14th, 2007 in Toronto and on March 29th, 2008 in Mississauga. To facilitate operation of an Executive that is spread across the province, routine business is conducted throughout the year by telephone and email.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL The Provincial Council includes the provincial executive officers, committee chairs and all chapter presidents. SEAC representatives were also invited to attend these meetings. The Provincial Council met twice this year on November 17, 2007 (hosted by the Toronto Chapter) and March 29, 2008 in Mississauga. At the Nov. '07 meeting, plans for restructuring ABC's revenue base away from memberships were introduced and strategic priorities were discussed including enhancing our web-based services. At the March '08 meeting, changes to the By-laws, primarily to update the executive positions, and to the Guidelines for Membership, Chapter Accreditation, Donations and Fundraising primarily to improve accountability and to implement a one year trial of an alternative revenue model, were discussed, amended and approved unanimously to be presented for ratification at the 2008 AGM. 2008 conference plans were discussed at both meetings.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ABC Ontario is represented on several different provincial committees:

The *Consortium for Ontario Gifted* (COG) is an umbrella group of ABC, Educators of the Gifted in Ontario (EDGO), the Inter Board Network (IBN), the Western Ontario Regional Committee (WORC), and the Eastern Ontario Enrichment Committee. Members of the ABC executive participated in two meetings on May 25 and October 19, 2007 at the Spec Ed Branch of the Ministry of Education. A meeting scheduled for February 2, 2008 was cancelled due to inclement weather; however the Chair of COG still met one on one with the recently appointed Director of the Spec Ed Branch. The next meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2008. Each organization provides an update and representatives from the Ministry of Education outline what is new in Special Education. COG's main focus for 2007-08 has been addressing issues concerning identification of gifted learners and differentiated instruction. Dennis Ensing has chaired COG since the fall of 2006.

The **Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education** (MACSE) 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. ABC member Becky Hurwitz was appointed by the Minister of Education to serve as the representative for the gifted exceptionality for 2006-2009. Becky has been involved with IEP and curriculum issues this past year during which there were three council meetings, each lasting one to one and a half days. These were held in June, October and February. The next meeting is scheduled for June 2008. Through MACSE contacts, ABC gave input into the development of the Ministry of Education document *Shared Solutions* which was released in fall 2007.

Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees (PAAC on SEAC) is a coalition of provincial parent organizations that meets 10 times per year. Ministry of Education staff attended all PAAC meetings. Sylvia Kwan, Director of Resource was appointed to represent ABC on PAAC at our Nov '07 PC meeting. The key issue of concern during this past year was the need for boards to be accountable for their educational outcomes and use of the provincial funds that are directed to special education. Through PAAC, Sylvia also participated in the Reference Committee on the *IEP Resource Project for Parents and Students* led by the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario.

PRESENTATIONS AND ADVOCACY Members of the provincial executive have been guest speakers at ABC chapter meetings, at universities and faculties of education, at additional qualifications courses for teachers, at conferences including school board sponsored workshops for teachers, and at schools and school councils. Common topics presented by and raised to ABC representatives at these events include ABC's resource guide, *Developing IEP's for Gifted Students*, availability of acceleration options, access to e-learning and dual enrolment, differentiating curriculum for gifted learners, identification issues, underachievement, social-emotional needs, gifted ELL/ESL issues, dual exceptionality and availability of placement options for gifted students. ABC continues to get inquiries concerning gifted learners of all ages from pre-school through secondary and beyond. ABC has also provided input to the Ministry and the College of Teachers on many related issues over the past year including new standards for additional qualifications course for teachers in gifted education.

NEWSMAGAZINE Four issues of the ABC Newsmagazine have been published since the last AGM. The Summer 2007 issue provided a summary of Karen Roger's presentations at our 2007 Conference; the Fall 2007 issue provided a preview of our updated FAQ's; the Winter 2007-08 and Spring 2008 issues featured Part 1 and Part 2 respectively of our Advocacy Primer. The Newsmagazine was distributed quarterly to ABC members and to others through SEAC representatives and the Legislative Liaison.

MEMBERSHIP As of May 2008, over 500 families in 18 chapters and contact areas hold membership.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEES (SEAC) There are presently 34 volunteer representatives and alternates who have been nominated by ABC and appointed by school boards to sit on various boards' Special Education Advisory Committees. The Education Act requires school boards to establish SEAC's. ABC is the association recognized to speak on behalf of bright and gifted children in Ontario. A number of our SEAC representatives also sit on additional school board sub-committees and chair SEAC meetings providing leadership in that capacity. Having a strong SEAC is the most effective way to improve the quality of gifted education in a school board. Without exception, all Boards in Ontario with excellent gifted programs have a history of strong ABC representation on their SEAC. ABC wishes to thank all SEAC representatives for their perseverance and energy in continuing to represent all special needs children.

RESOURCE COMMITTEE ABC continues to receive and catalogue journals on gifted education.

DONATIONS As a charitable association, ABC Ontario issues receipts for income tax purposes. We are grateful for financial and goods and services contributions made by our members and by the business community. Membership fees and donations are ABC's primary source of revenue.

GRANTS In 2006, ABC Ontario applied to the Parent Engagement Office of the Ministry of Education for Parenting Reaching Out (PRO) grants for four projects. One project was approved and received \$12,500 in funding which enabled ABC to produce and distribute an up dated, professionally designed brochure and an "eflyer" in both official languages as well as a matching display board and some additional website resources. ABC also partnered with some other small provincial parent associations to host a SEAC conference held in Toronto in June 07 and a teleconference held in September 2007 funded by a PRO grant. Our 2007-08 PRO grant project to develop additional translations plus website infrastructure and resources received \$15,000, is currently underway and due to be completed by fall '08.

ABC WEBSITE Over the past year, ABC Ontario's website received over 2800 unique visitors per month. Introduced in 2006, online membership and conference registration as well as our online bulletin boards continue to be well utilized. ABC membership is not required for bulletin board access and there are currently nearly 600 registered users and over 3200 posts! During 2007-08, the website was redesigned based on a new platform which enabled us to consolidate hosting of all our chapter sites. Content updates such as Chapter Events and other online resources can now be made by authorized users representing each chapter and the provincial executive. Website construction and updating is ongoing at this time. Some chapters still maintain their own independent websites which are linked to the Chapter section of the provincial website.

OFFICE Effective January 2006 Becker Associates of Toronto was hired to process mail, maintain membership and financial records and perform other day to day administrative functions.

AGM AND FAMILY WORKSHOP The 2008 AGM and Family Conference was held on May 9-10, 2008 at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. Volunteers from our Toronto chapter organized the event including custom ROM workshops for children. Susan Winebrenner was the speaker on both days. Friday's topics for educators were *Differentiating Content for Gifted Learners and Translating Educational Research into Classroom Practise*; Saturday's session for parents addressed *Helping Gifted Children Enjoy Success at Home and School*. Parents also enjoyed small discussion groups and a Toronto Chapter meeting in the afternoon.

TREASURER'S REPORT

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION – as at August 31, 2007

	2007 (\$)	2006 (\$)
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	59111	29803
Deposits, prepaid expenses and amount receivable	5990	
	65101	29803
EQUIPMENT	-	
	-	
Total Assets	65101	29803
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	7372	2763
DEFERRED REVENUE	12500	-
FUNDS HELD FOR TRIBUNALS	1000	1,500
FUNDS HELD FOR CLOSED CHAPTERS	6831	-
	-	
Total Liabilities	27703	4263
NET ASSETS		
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	37398	25540
	65101	29803

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS for the year ended August 31st, 2007

	2007 (\$)	2006 (\$)
REVENUES		
Membership Fees	13097	13,316
Conference and other	19404	13,210
Donations	15, 671	10580
	48172	37106
EXPENSES		
Newsletter	2776	3285
Liability insurance	3173	3427
Telephone, web and office supplies	3116	3291
Travel	411	561
Professional fees	1800	1668
Printing and postage	1134	1181
Secretariat and Accounting	10800	8608
Conference and meetings	10831	7,919
Visa, Interest and Bank Charges	182	337
Amortization	-	-
GST expense	2091	-
	36314	30277
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES for the year	11858	6829