



“NEW HORIZONS”

A REPORT ON AUTISM AND EDUCATION QUICK FACTS

WHO WROTE THIS?

A team of writers who belong to the Ontario Autism Coalition, led by OAC Vice-President Laura Kirby-McIntosh. Laura is a mother of two teens on the spectrum, a high school teacher with over 20 years of classroom experience, and a passionate autism advocate.

WHAT ARE THE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS?

There are 64 recommendations in total. The first 36 are original ideas from the OAC and the rest are endorsements of recommendations made by other groups. The top five recommendations in the report are:

1. Increase and improve training in special education for teacher candidates.
2. Revise PPM 140 and enforce its application.
3. Reform education funding to ensure that the money allocated to provide supports and services to exceptional students *actually makes its way* directly to those students. Find a mechanism that will hold the Ministry of Education and/or school boards accountable when it doesn't.
4. Allocate funding to hire more EA's and to implement more extensive autism and ABA-related training for all Education Assistants (EAs), teachers, administrators and support staff assigned to work with students with ASD. Ensure that those who deliver ABA programming in schools collect regular data and receive appropriate supervision.
5. Establish a Demonstration School and/or a Provincial School for students with autism.

WHERE AND WHEN WILL THIS BE RELEASED / DISCUSSED?

The report will be released on Tuesday, April 4th at 10 a.m. at a press conference in the Queen's Park Media Studio in Toronto. The OAC will meet with Education Minister Mitzie Hunter on Wednesday, April 5th at 5 p.m.

WHY IS THE OAC RELEASING THIS REPORT?

Students with autism are struggling in Ontario's schools. While there is no shortage of caring and compassionate staff, the training and resources needed to properly meet the needs of autistic students simply aren't there. Until now, the OAC has focussed on advocating for autistic children. However, children grow up. If we are to be serious about helping autistic people and their families, then we need advocate for a better autism program, better supports in schools and improved services for autistic adults. The OAC is committed to advocating for better services for autistic people across the lifespan, and this report represents a major milestone in our next campaign, [#autismdoesntendatschool](#).

HOW WAS THIS REPORT WRITTEN?

This report represents months of research, writing and consultation by the Ontario Autism Coalition. The original writing team was assembled in October of 2016 and consisted mostly of parents of youth on the Autism Spectrum. Once the first draft was done, input was sought from the OAC Youth Advisory Committee, which consists of over 70 autistic teens and young adults. A public protest organized by the OAC was held outside of the offices of the Ministry of Education on November 29th, to draw attention to the need for better supports for autistic students in schools. That event led to a meeting in early December where the second draft of this report was shared with senior officials in the office of Education Minister Hunter. Consultations with MPP's, teachers unions, other disability organizations, and fellow education stakeholder groups were held from November through to the end March of 2017, and will continue for months to come. Our hope is that this report will not only provoke a dialogue about autism and schools, but that it will also lead to concrete **action** from the current government.

#AutismDoesntEndAtSchool

The Ontario Autism Coalition is a non-profit Ontario corporation dedicated to advocacy and political action on behalf of people with autism.

www.ontarioautismcoalition.com