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Equality for disabled

In reference to the excellent article by Chris Dafoe, Segregation Goes By The Boards (April 25), the Coalition for Integration NOW! applauds the Ontario Minister of Education for supporting equality in education for children with disabilities through her intervention in the Alixe Hysert case.

Our coalition, made up of major advocacy groups representing approximately 150 local associations across Ontario, was formed to advocate for legislative amendments to the Education Act which would give our children a guaranteed right to integration.

We support Education Minister Marion Boyd in her efforts to accelerate integration and to pull together relevant groups in policy discussions to ensure that integration will be successfully implemented.

However, the Ministry of Education's true commitment to equality for our children can best be demonstrated by providing legislated guarantees now. This means the legislated right to attend neighbourhood schools, in age-appropriate classes with whatever program modifications and support are necessary for both student and teacher.

Even though many families across Ontario have been fighting for years for changes to the act, we are willing to trust the minister and wait one more year for implementation in September, 1992. We trust that she will not let us down.

Our children have been waiting decades for equality in Ontario. School integration is the major stepping stone to equality of opportunity and independence in adult life.

Our children have much to gain through learning and growing alongside their typical peers. They have even more to give.

Equality rights for students with disabilities will be a victory for all children in Ontario.

**Louise Bailey, Chairperson
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