

## **LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR**

**April 2018**

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) SEAC Circular is published 5 times a year, in September, November, February, April and June.

The following are some topics that your SEAC should be looking at. Action items and/or recommendations for effective practices will be underlined.

Feel free to share any of this information or the attachments with other SEAC members. As always, when you are planning to introduce a motion for the consideration of SEAC, it is particularly important that you share all related background items with your fellow SEAC reps.

### **The topics covered by this SEAC Circular:**

1. More changes at the Ministry of Education
2. Funding announcements and the Special Education Budget process
3. Mental Health initiatives
4. Governance Engagement Consultation update

### **List of Supplementary Materials:**

1. Staffing Announcement Mem
2. Special Education Funding 2018-19 Summary
3. Mental Health & Addictions memo
4. Governance Engagement Memo

**Note: You can access the SEAC Circular and supplementary materials at [www.ldao.ca/ldao-services/public-policy-advocacy/seac-circulars/](http://www.ldao.ca/ldao-services/public-policy-advocacy/seac-circulars/).**

**You can access Ministry memos by date at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/>**

## I. More changes at the Ministry of Education

The February LDAO SEAC Circular announced that Shirley Kendrick had been appointed as Director of the Special Education/Success for All Branch. Since that time, Shirley has assumed the role of interim Assistant Deputy Minister in the Student Support & Field Services Division, and Julie Williams, a manager in the Special Education/Success for All Branch, is now interim Director of the branch.

## 2. Funding announcements and the Special Education Budget process

On March 26, 2018, the Ministry released information on the **2018-19 Grants for Student Needs (GSN) Funding** (subject to regulations made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under the Education Act) in Memorandum 2018 B06: [Grants for Student Needs Funding for 2018-19](#). The **Special Education Grant** comes under the GSN.

In addition, Memorandum 2018 B07: [2018-19 School Year Education Programs – Other \(EPO Funding\)](#) announced projected EPO (Education Programs – Other) funding envelopes.

The memos announced new funding to address waitlists for assessments (under EPO Funding) and to Increase special education services (under the Special Education Grant).

Over the next three school years, the ministry is to provide approximately \$125 million in **EPO funding** to address current waitlists for assessments, beginning with a projected \$20 million in 2018-19. School boards will have to apply for the funding, based on their needs, in order to build capacity and/or develop local approaches to provide timely, responsive assessments.

Over \$170 million in funding, over the next three years, is to be allocated through the **Special Education Grant**, to support increased special education programs and services, including:

- Funding for a multi-disciplinary team or equivalent for all boards (four additional FTEs per school board) to build board capacity and help teachers, education assistants, and other staff better understand and adapt to the unique needs of their students;
- Funding for other staffing resources to support students with special education needs;
- Funding to build capacity and provide direct support to students with special education needs in recognition of the increase in demand for services

There is some information on board by board allocations in Appendices in [Grants for Student Needs Funding for 2018-19](#) and in Appendix A – [2018-19 School Year EPO Funding Allocations](#). More details will be available when the funding **Technical Paper** is released.

Under the **GSN**, the *Local Priorities Funding*, initiated in 2017-18, will continue to be available to address a range of local priorities and needs, including more special education staffing to support children in need, “at-risk” students and adult education.

SEACs should ask for a presentation on their school board’s special education budget, including both GSN and EPO funding initiatives. The presentation should include plans for addressing the issue of waitlists for assessments.

Effective practices can be found at: [www.paac-seac.ca/home/paac-on-seac-effective-practices-handbook-for-seac-members/section-3-seac-roles-and-responsibilities/3-6-special-education-budget-and-financial-statements/](http://www.paac-seac.ca/home/paac-on-seac-effective-practices-handbook-for-seac-members/section-3-seac-roles-and-responsibilities/3-6-special-education-budget-and-financial-statements/)

### 3. Mental Health initiatives

Under **EPO funding** in 2018-19, the ministry will be providing funding for about 180 new mental health workers in secondary schools. By the end of 2019-20 all school boards with secondary schools will receive funding for at least one mental health worker (regulated health professional) plus additional funding to support province-wide research and evaluation of the new mental health supports. A *Memo to Directors* on March 22, 2018 (attached) also announced new annual funding for the Mental Health ASSIST initiative, and the embedding of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) throughout the refreshed curriculum, to promote mental health and well-being for all students.

Announcements of mental health initiatives in other Ministries can be found at: [Ontario Making Historic Investment in Mental Health and Addictions Care for Every Stage of Life](#)

### 4. Governance Engagement Consultation update

The November 2017 LDAO SEAC Circular had information on how to respond to a consultation on School Board Governance issues. A March 28, 2018 Memo announced next steps planned as a result of feedback received to the consultation.

Proposed changes to the regulation regarding **student trustees** would, if approved, provide student trustees with more time and greater support by:

- 1) requiring all school boards to have at least two student trustees (to encourage collaboration and shared ownership of responsibilities);
- 2) providing school boards with the option of a two-year, staggered term of office or a one-year term of office; and
- 3) for boards that maintain a one-year term of office, moving the student trustee election date to the end of February (to enable greater time and opportunity for orientation and mentoring of incoming student trustees). The changes would be for the 2019-20 school year.

The Ministry will be examining possible legislative changes that would allow student trustees to move board motions. PAAC on SEAC has been looking at the role of student trustees on SEAC. Currently there is no legislated role except as one of the designated trustees on SEAC. It would be useful to get input from student trustees on special education issues, even if they are not voting members. LDAO SEAC members are invited to share their experiences with participation of student trustees, to [dianew@LDAO.ca](mailto:dianew@LDAO.ca)

Also relevant to SEAC, amendments to the **electronic meetings** regulation are being proposed that would, if approved, permit boards to include in policy the ability for board and committee chairs to preside over meetings electronically, in certain circumstances that would be outlined in the regulation. These changes would apply to SEAC Chairs.

**Questions?** Email Diane Wagner at [dianew@LDAO.ca](mailto:dianew@LDAO.ca) or call (416) 929-4311 Ex. 22 (Mon.)