

LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR

February 2019

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. Education consultations
2. EPO funding changes
3. SEAC composition, orientation and training
4. PA days
5. PRO grants
6. AODA committees

List of Supplementary Materials:

1. PAAC on SEAC Response to Ministry of Education Consultation
2. People for Education summary of EPO funding changes
3. PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices PowerPoint
4. PPM 151: PA Days

Note: You can access the SEAC Circular and supplementary materials at www.ldao.ca/about/public-policy-advocacy/seac-circulars/.

You can access Ministry memos by date at:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/> (Note: general memos have not been posted since July 2018, although some more recent funding B memos are posted)

1. Education consultations

The Ministry of Education conducted at least two sets of consultations in the fall of 2018. Information about a widely publicized consultation to the general public was included in the November LDAO SEAC Circular, and the attached **PAAC on SEAC Response** was submitted on December 14, 2018. Ministry personnel are still reviewing all the responses, but PAAC members were reassured to learn that Special Education/Success for All policy staff are involved in the review.

There was also a Ministry of Education funding consultation that was less widely publicized. PAAC on SEAC did not learn about the consultation in time to put together a joint response, but you can read the [People for Education response](#).

2. EPO funding changes

On Friday, December 14th, 2018 the Ministry of Education sent memos to school boards across the province outlining a range of areas where funding is going to be reduced or discontinued. None of the announcements affected Grants for Student Needs (the core funding for education), but are included in a category call Education Programs – Other (EPO). The attached **summary from the People for Education** website gives some information, but the memo itself has not been posted or made public.

SEAC members are asked to forward a copy of the December 14 memo, to their provincial association, if they received it at SEAC. Although Special Education funding is not directly cut, there are programs which have funding discontinued or reduced that will affect students with special education needs. SEACs should ask for information on program cuts or reductions in their school boards.

3. SEAC composition, orientation and training

As SEACs begin a new term of office, orientation for new members (and refresh for continuing members) is very important. Many SEACs have found it useful to use the **PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook** as a foundation for SEAC orientation and training. The handbook can be downloaded in sections from the PAAC on SEAC website: www.paac-seac.ca/home/paac-on-seac-effective-practices-handbook-for-seac-members/. Alison Morse created a PowerPoint presentation on behalf of PAAC, which I have attached for your use.

PAAC would like to send an electronic copy of the PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook to SEAC chairs. To facilitate this we are asking SEAC members to send the name

and email contact of their new SEAC chair(s). It would also be helpful to have a list of the associations represented on your SEAC. Please send to: dianew@LDAO.ca.

4. PA days

PPM 151 on PA days (www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm151.pdf, and attached) has been updated as of January 7, 2019 to reflect Ministry of Education priorities, particularly math education. The third PA day can be used for a number of possible listed topics, including special education. SEACs should ask how special education will be addressed in board professional development.

5. PRO grants

Parent Reaching Out (PRO) grants have finally been awarded, although there is no public listing of the individual grants (e.g. on the Parent Engagement section of the Ministry website). In spite of the late announcements, the deadline for completing PRO grant projects has not been changed from June 2019, and there is no indication if the grants will be awarded in the future.

6. AODA committees

The K-12 and postsecondary **Education Standard Development Committees** were tasked to make recommendations for a new Education Standard under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) These committees had begun to meet in early 2018, but are currently on hold until the Government reviews the report of the third 5 year review of the AODA, by David Onley. That report is expected by the end of February.

The **Information & Communication Standard Development Committee** was also in hiatus until December, when it met to finalize recommendations to go out for public consultation. This committee reviewed the existing Information & Communication Standard, and made recommendations for changes and additions. Once the recommendations are posted for public consultation I will send out a notification to SEAC members.

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

Provincial funding announcements may affect programs for students at risk

December 19, 2018, People for Education

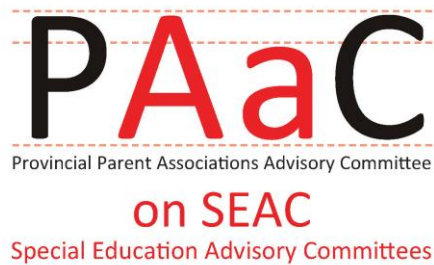
On Friday, December 14th, the Ministry of Education sent memos to school boards across the province outlining a range of areas where funding is going to be reduced or discontinued. Funding for the programs affected had been announced in a [memo to school boards in March, 2018](#). None of the announcements affected [Grants for Student Needs](#) (the core funding for education), but are included in a category call Education Programs – Other.

The grants where funding is being discontinued include:

- [SpeakUP](#) – grants for students in grades 7 to 12 to lead projects promoting student engagement
- [Equitable access to post-secondary education](#) – a fund boards could apply to for programs that supported students from grades 10 to 12 who:
 - have low secondary school credit accumulation and/or are achieving below the provincial average
 - are taking applied and/or locally developed courses
 - are disengaged and/or may not be considering post-secondary education after high school.
- [Focus on Youth](#) – funding to support after-school programs and job experience for young people in high needs neighbourhoods.
- [Tutors in the classroom](#) – a program that helped boards pay post-secondary students to work as tutors in JK to Grade 6 classrooms.
- [Regional equity networks](#) – funding from the province to bring school boards together to “build upon and embed cultures of equity and human rights in all aspects of board and school practices, policies, programs and operations.”
- [Re-engagement 12&12+](#) – a program where staff and teachers individually contacted thousands of students who had quit school, to assist them in getting back in, so that they could graduate.
- [Indigenous focused collaborative inquiry](#) – funding to support teams of teachers and board staff, working with members of First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities to develop projects to support Indigenous young people to succeed.
- [Innovation in Learning](#) – a fund for school boards to provide support for professional development and innovations in teaching and learning, so that students develop global competencies (sometimes called transferable skills or 21st century skills).

Grants where funding is being reduced include:

[Well-Being: Safe, Accepting and Healthy Schools and Mental Health](#) – funding to support “students’ whole experience at school” including things like student mental health, equity, student voice, and collaborative professionalism.



Consultation: Education in Ontario

PAAC on SEAC Response

The Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees (PAAC on SEAC) is the only group in Ontario that brings together provincial parent associations to communicate and co-operate on matters pertaining to Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs) and special education. We encourage valuable partnerships amongst trustees, educators, voluntary organizations and parents. Through the PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook for SEAC Members and other materials, PAAC provided tools and resources to help improve SEAC effectiveness and communication, and to assist Ontario's students with special education needs and their families.

PAAC on SEAC is pleased to make a submission to the education consultation and provide a voice for students with special education needs. Students with disabilities and/or special education needs make up almost 20% of students attending elementary and secondary schools. These students need accommodations, modifications to the curriculum and/or alternate programs to be successful. It is vital that these students receive the programs and services they need to become employed and participating citizens in the future.

The rights of students with disabilities are protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code and the rights of all students with special education needs to programs and services are mandated under the Education Act.

The following questions have been answered from the perspective of students with disabilities an/or special education needs.

To support the success of students with special education needs, it is critical that teachers receive pre-service and professional development on Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction and accommodating the individual special education needs of students. In addition, teachers must have the access to resources that support the learning of students with special education needs in the relevant program areas and course specialties.

How should we improve student performance in the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)?

- Provide pre-service and in-service professional development in STEM subjects for all elementary teacher candidates and teachers to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to support the success of students with special education needs.

- Ensure that students with special education needs are provided with the accommodations required to successfully complete STEM subjects in elementary school and STEM courses in secondary school. Find ways around perceived safety issues.
- Ensure the provision of manipulatives, assistive technology and accessible course materials for students with special education needs. In Technology courses ensure the availability of support from special education personnel with training in technology.
- Students with special education needs benefit from learning the practical applications of mathematics, science and technology and all students should understand the link between what they are learning and real world application.
- Ensure that students on a modified or alternative skills curriculum have access to STEM subjects, and that all students with special education needs are encouraged to take STEM courses.
- Ensure math programs from the early grades link to the practical skills that students will need as adults – budgeting, banking, building, graphing, project costing, cooking, fitness, career goals.
- While promoting STEM subjects, make sure that Arts programs and courses are available to students studying STEM subjects, as the humanities and the arts provide critical skills for effective participation and analysis.
- Ensure that students with special education needs who attend STEM clubs and after school programs have the accommodations and supports they need to participate successfully, including support personnel and transportation.
- Ensure that secondary school Learning Strategies teachers have the skills and knowledge to support students with special education needs in STEM subjects.
- Employers have identified that they are looking for employees who have strong number sense, data management and problem solving skills. It is vital that students develop these skills at school.

How should our schools prepare students with needed job skills, such as skilled trades and coding?

Unemployment rates for people with disabilities are extremely high and many people with disabilities are under-employed. Research on the employment of people with disabilities has found that people with disabilities can be high performing employees with low rates of absenteeism and few workplace safety issues. Preparing students with disabilities and/or special education needs for future employment success is vital to the economy of Ontario.

- Promote role models for students with disabilities by providing learning materials that show the diversity of Ontario's workforce, that includes people with disabilities.

- Encourage mentorship and other programs that bring individuals with disabilities from a variety of employment fields into schools.

The Conference Board of Canada has identified the following employment skills as critical for economic success:

- Fundamental Skills – Communicate, Manage Information, Use Numbers, Think and Solve Problems
- Personal Management Skills – Demonstrate positive attitude and behaviours, Be Responsible, Be Adaptable, Learn Continuously, Work safely
- Teamwork Skills – Work with Others, Participate in Projects and Tasks
- Ensure that the Ontario curriculum and schools provide all students with the opportunities to develop and use these skills throughout their school career. Students with special education needs should be provided with the necessary accommodations and supports to develop and use these skills.
- Support students with disabilities to learn and work alongside and in cooperation with their peers who do not have disabilities, since sustainable friendships are essential to the development of necessary social networking skills and future non-working and working relationships.
- Create curriculum expectations and content that includes application of learning to careers and the work world.
- Promote the participation of students with special education needs in school and community experiential programs, and in cooperative education programs that will support the development of employment skills.
- Ensure that students with special education needs have the accommodations and supports, including transportation, which they require to participate in co-op placements and experiential learning in the community.
- Promote the participation of students with special education needs in youth apprenticeship programs and ensure they are provided the required accommodations.
- Introduce courses in Coding, as part of the curriculum, from early grades and ensure that students with special education needs have the accommodations and supports they need.
- Ensure that students with special education needs have the opportunity to develop workplace skills, including WHMIS, Food Safety and First Aid, in the classroom and practice the skills in experiential learning and co-operative education placements.

What measures can be taken to improve provincial standardized testing?

- Provincial standardized testing processes have long recognized that the test content and process is not suitable for all students and some students are exempted as deemed appropriate by the school Principal. Students with special education needs, including

mental health challenges, should be evaluated individually to determine if participation in standardized testing is in their best interests, based on their individual needs.

- Ensure that students with special education needs receive the accommodations that are in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) for participation in provincial standardized testing, including Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) tests.
- Ensure that all test materials and preparation/sample materials are available in accessible formats.
- Ensure that all of the accommodations that a student will require to participate in provincial standardized testing are documented in the student's IEP, and that students have the opportunity to use these accommodations on a regular basis in the classroom before using them in provincial assessments.
- Ensure that an independent complaints/dispute resolution mechanism is provided to address concerns about the provision and access to accommodations in standardized testing.
- Ensure that there is accountability and a follow up process for students with special education needs that are unsuccessful in provincial standardized testing, to identify individual and systemic issues with the testing processes and provision of accommodations.
- Ensure that there continues to be an option for students with special education needs who are unable to pass the Grade 10 literacy test, e.g. a literacy course.

What more can be done to ensure students graduate high school with important life skills, including financial literacy?

- Ensure that the Ontario curriculum and schools provide all students with the opportunities to develop financial literacy skills starting from the early grades.
- Ensure that students with special education needs are provided with the necessary accommodations and supports to develop and use financial literacy skills.
- Ensure that the Ontario curriculum includes learning expectations and course materials to enable all students to develop other important skills such as dietary requirements, food preparation and meal planning, child development and child rearing, social and intimate relationships, housekeeping, health care, and personal fitness.
- Ensure that students with special education needs are provided with the necessary accommodations and supports to develop and use these important skills.
- Team work skills are important to future employers and for success as an engaged citizen and should remain an important focus in schools. All students need multiple opportunities from the early grades to graduation to develop skills that foster team work, including:

- Communication, written and verbal
- Negotiation and conflict resolution
- Personal Management Skills –Positive attitudes and behaviours
- Personal and team member responsibility
- Adaptability and Resiliency

What steps could schools take to ban cell phone use in the classroom?

- Students with special education needs who require personal mobile devices for communication, or as assistive technology to access the curriculum and demonstrate learning, need to have access to their devices in school.
- Recognize that many schools do not have adequate computers for all students (or updated technology) and cell phones can be beneficial for student research and learning; for example, many high school courses encourage students to use their cell phones for research in class. However since this can be an economic equity issue, provisions would need to be made for students who could not afford cell phones.
- Ensure the Ontario curriculum for elementary and secondary schools includes information on the health and safety risks of personal mobile device use.

How can we build a new age-appropriate Health and Physical Education curriculum that includes subjects like mental health, sexual health education and the legalization of cannabis?

Students with disabilities and/or special education needs are especially vulnerable to abuse (emotional, physical, sexual, or financial). It is critical that these students have access to curriculum that will help them to identify and protect themselves from any type of abuse.

- The approach to all curriculum, including health and physical education, should recognize the diversity of people, families and communities in Ontario. It is especially critical that Ontario curriculum recognize the diversity of learners, including those with special education needs.
- Develop curriculum and learning materials for Health and Physical Education programs and courses in consultation with experts who have knowledge of mental health, sexual health education, recreational use of cannabis, child psychology, child developmental stages and disability issues.
- Ensure that Health and Physical Education curriculum is presented in a non-judgmental and balanced approach by teachers and other school staff.

- Ensure that teachers have professional development to obtain the skills and knowledge required to support students with special education needs in accessing health and physical education curriculum.
- Ensure that students with special education needs have the accommodations they require to access the health and physical education curriculum and demonstrate learning.
- Sexuality education is important for students with special education needs – start early, with age appropriate information, use correct anatomical terms, include role playing, safety strategies, relationship skills, school and community resources. Develop appropriate curriculum in consultation with experts who understand the complexities/differences for some students with disabilities.
- Include mental health education in all aspects of the curriculum from the early grade to provide all students with the information and skills they need to protect their own mental health and well-being. This should include: stress management, physical and mental fitness, self-awareness and understanding, relationship skills, school and community resources, online resources.
- Ensure that stress management starts in kindergarten with whole class strategies such as yoga, breathing exercises, and relaxation techniques.
- Ensure that curriculum content on the recreational use of cannabis includes information on the risks associated with usage and especially the potential impact on brain development.
- Since students with special education needs are at high risk for mental health challenges, teachers/schools should be aware of and trained and supported to deal with these specialized health concerns.

What elements should be included in a Ministry of Education Parents' Bill of Rights?

- Parents have rights and responsibilities under the Education Act, including those identified in Regulation 181/98 for the Identification, Placement and Review Committee. These rights need to be acknowledged in a Parents' Bill of Rights.
- Ensure that parents of students with special education needs have the opportunity for meaningful consultation and input into a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Ensure that parents have the right to be invited to all meetings where the needs, programming and services for a student with special education needs are discussed, and that there is reasonable flexibility to accommodate the parents' schedule.

- Ensure that parents are aware of and have access to a dispute resolution process where conflicts arise, starting at the school level and, where not resolved at the school level, moving on to school board levels, e.g. school board ombudsman's office.
- Consider the development of a Students' Bill of Rights.

PAAC on SEAC

Members: • Association for Bright Children • Community Living Ontario • Down Syndrome Association of Ontario • Easter Seals Ontario • Epilepsy Ontario • Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Ontario Network of Expertise • Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community • Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario • Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders • Ontario Brain Injury Association • Parents for Children's Mental Health • VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children

Affiliate members: • Association Francophone de Parents d'Enfants Dyslexiques ou ayant tout autre trouble d'apprentissage • Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy • Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario • Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada • VIEWS for the Visually Impaired

PAAC on SEAC

Supporting SEACs across the Province:
SEAC Member Orientation



PAAC on SEAC

SEAC Orientation

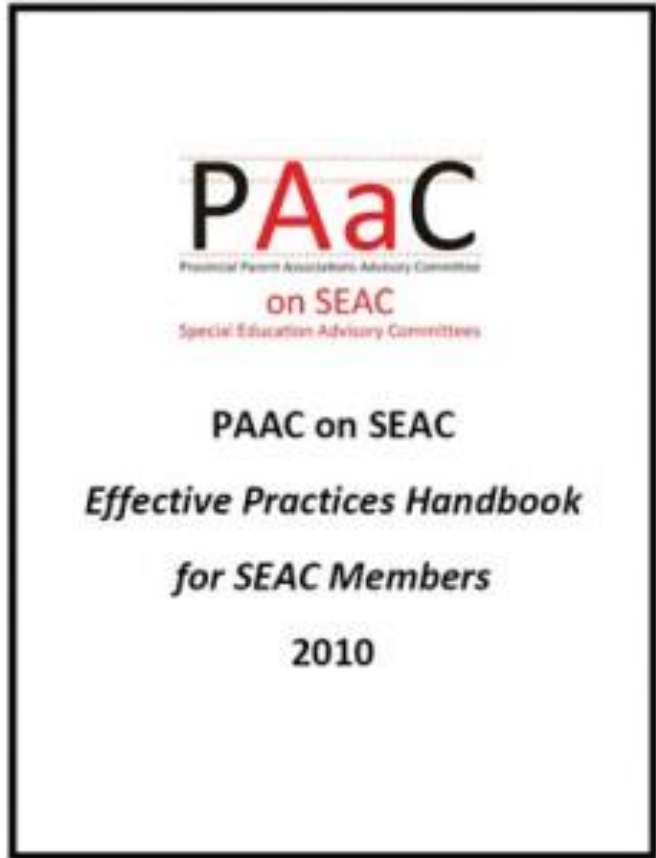
Presentation Goals:

- To provide information on PAAC on SEAC
- To share PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook for SEAC Members (2016)
- To highlight Effective Practices for SEAC members and SEAC meetings

Provincial Parent Association Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees

- Ad hoc Committee of Provincial Parent Associations that have SEAC Members
- Meet monthly September to June
- Ministry of Education Liaison attends 3 times a year
- Members share information from the provincial government pertinent to SEAC
- Members share information from school board SEAC members
- Respond to consultations

PAAC on SEAC Handbook



- First PAAC on SEAC handbook created in 1985
- Several revisions, most recent in 2016 electronic format
- Posted on PAAC on SEAC website www.paac-seac.ca
- SEAC training videos also on Website

PAAC on SEAC

Effective Practices Handbook

- Handbook and Videos based on Education Act, Regulation 464/97, Special Education Advisory Committees
- Regulation 464/97 determines:
 - SEAC Membership
 - Membership Eligibility
 - Quorum
 - Chair and Vice Chair Roles
 - SEAC Member Roles and Responsibilities

PAAC on SEAC Training Videos

Available on PAAC on SEAC website at:

<http://www.paac-seac.ca/>

Three Modules:

- Purpose of a SEAC
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Meeting Process



Handbook Contents

1. Introduction and Background
2. Membership
3. SEAC Roles and Responsibilities
4. Information and Knowledge Transfer
5. SEAC Meeting Processes
6. Provincial and Local Parent Associations

Appendices include Regulation 464/97

Section 1: Background

- Brief History of PAAC on SEAC
- List of members
- PAAC on SEAC Surveys of SEAC members
 - 2009
 - 2014
- Introduction to Regulation 464/98
- Recommendations and Effective Practices

PAAC on SEAC Recommends.....

- PAAC on SEAC has made recommendations on many of the topics
- These are activities that PAAC on SEAC members feel are very important
- Some recommendations are for the SEAC, and others are to the school board regarding SEAC
- All of the recommendations are based on effective practices

PAAC on SEAC Recommends.....

- Each PAAC on SEAC recommendation is in bold
- For example:

“PAAC on SEAC recommends that school boards provide SEAC orientation and training on a regular basis and that professional development for SEAC members should be on-going.”

Effective Practices

- Effective Practices have been identified by provincial parent associations from the experience of SEAC members in school boards across the province
- Effective Practices are shown in boxed frames
- The list of Effective Practices are all examples of activities or practices that have been found to be effective
- SEACs and their members are encouraged to look at each item and consider whether the practice is one that might be useful for their SEAC
- They are all optional activities

For example:
Effective Practices to support financial literacy of SEAC members include:

- a) Sharing of Ministry of Education resource materials regarding special education funding, including PowerPoints and Webinars, with SEAC members.
- b) Providing SEAC members with written materials about special education funding, including definitions of key terms, in SEAC Orientation Manuals.
- c) Regular presentations on the school board budget and financial statements at SEAC meetings.
- d) Presenting financial information to SEAC members in easy to understand language with visuals and graphics.

Section 2: Membership

Section includes information and effective practices related to :

- Local association Representatives
- Trustees
- First Nations Representatives
- Additional Members
- Membership Nomination Process
- Replacing SEAC Members and Filling Vacancies

Effective Practices for SEAC Membership

- To identify eligible local associations
- To select local associations if more than 12 organizations nominated
- To involve Trustees in SEAC
- To select Additional Members/Members at Large
- To involve Alternate Members in SEAC Activities

Effective Practices to involve alternates in SEAC activities include:

- a) Providing meeting resources to the alternate members.
- b) Making it clear the SEAC member is responsible to provide information to the alternate.
- c) Encouraging all alternate members to attend every SEAC meeting.
- d) Having an alternate member who is able to extend the reach of the SEAC member by selecting someone for different area in the district or bringing specific knowledge or skills.
- e) Choosing an alternative members who may become the SEAC member in the future.
- f) Having the SEAC member and alternate work together to share information to and from the local and provincial association

Section 3:

SEAC Roles and Responsibilities

- Annual Planning and Annual SEAC Goals
- Special Education Programs and Services Development and Review
- Special Education Plans
- Board Improvement Planning for Student Achievement
- Special Education Budget and Financial Statements
- Public Access and Consultation
- Evaluation of SEAC

Effective Practices – Roles and Responsibilities

- To be heard by Trustees
- To support annual planning by SEAC
- To support SEAC participation in planning of special education programs and services
- To review Special Education Plan
- To review Special Education Budget
- To support Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement

Effective Practices for SEAC to be heard by the Trustees

- a) Providing copies of SEAC monthly meeting Minutes to Trustees.
- b) Providing Trustees with short written report highlighting the key events.
- c) Allowing the chair of SEAC to provide a short verbal report on each SEAC meeting during Trustee meetings.
- d) Requesting the opportunity for a delegation from SEAC to make a presentation to the Trustees on important topics, such as:
 - Special Education budget
 - Special Education Report
 - Special Education Program reviews
 - Policies that may affect special education
- e) Inviting the Trustees to attend SEAC meetings when key topics discussion.
- f) Creating a SEAC Annual Report that highlights activities and recommendations.

Effective Practices to Review Special Education Plan

Reviewing key documents - 486/97, Regulation 306, Special Education in Ontario K to Grade 12 Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans and Special Education Plan Checklist.

b) Developing an annual process for review of the Special Education Plan.
This may include:

- ☐ Establishing a sub-committee to make recommendations for changes
- ☐ Including a review of each section as part of the regular SEAC meetings
- ☐ Having presentations on specific programs that will need to be changed

c) Ensuring that the review process includes updating of statistical information, staffing, program locations and other change annually.

d) Providing SEAC an opportunity to review all the special Education Plan in conjunction with the special education budget.

e) Making a recommendation or motion regarding the Special Education Plan to create a record in the SEAC Minutes.

Effective Practices to Review Special Education Budget

- a) Providing SEAC members with orientation and training regarding financial statements, the Special Education Grant, revenues and expenditures.
- b) Providing timely information on the Special Education Grant each year when Ministry of Education releases the grant regulations.
- c) Inviting SEAC members to participate in Budget Committee or working groups.
- d) Providing regular updates on Financial Statements and the budget process at SEAC meetings.
- e) Analyzing special education budget information, program staffing and statistical information about students with special education needs.
- f) Planning a SEAC presentation to Trustees as part of public consultation on the annual school board budget.

Section 4:

Information and Knowledge Transfer

- Orientation and Training
 - SEAC Orientation Manual
- SEAC Member Skills
 - Preparation List for SEAC members
- Meeting Evaluation
- Member Recognition

Effective Practices – SEAC Meetings

- a) To provide SEAC members with relevant special education information
- b) To support SEAC member orientation and training
- c) To support SEAC Member participation
- d) To evaluate SEAC effectiveness
- e) To recognize the contribution of SEAC members

Effective Practices to Support Member Participation

- a) Developing or sharing a Code of Conduct that outline expectations.
- b) Providing meeting documents 5 business days before the meeting.
- c) Indicating when an agenda item is presented for decision making.
- d) Providing presenters with clear direction on purpose and content as well as time limits.
- e) Requesting presenters provide handouts with summary information with key ideas or facts in bold print or bulleted lists.
- f) Encouraging presenters to organize information into blocks with frequent stops to check that members have heard and understood materials.
- g) Ensuring presenters are clear about what they want from SEAC by providing discussion questions or options, including time for discussion or small group activities.
- h) Including time limits for presentations, or a time keeper, to make sure presentations are not too long or detailed.

Section 5:

SEAC Meeting Processes

- Administrative Support
- SEAC Agendas
- Parliamentary Procedures
- Quorum
- SEAC Motions
- Minority Reports
- Chair and Vice Chair
- Meeting Evaluation



Effective Practices – SEAC Meeting Processes

- To support SEAC members in remote locations
- For the development of SEAC Agenda's
- To track motions and the school board or Trustee response
- Related to Minority Reports
- Regarding the roles and responsibilities of the SEAC Chair and Vice-chair

Effective Practices for Setting SEAC Agenda

- a) Inviting all members of SEAC to identify future agenda topics or to forward agenda items to the Chair at the end of each meeting, or following each SEAC meeting.
- b) The Chair and Vice-chair to work with board administration staff to develop the Agenda.
- c) Establishing a sub-committee or an executive committee, to be responsible for developing the Agenda and planning meetings.
- d) Following the PAAC on SEAC Annual Calendar, or one developed by the SEAC, to be proactive about agenda items and information requirements expected in the course of each school year.

Effective Practices for Minority Reports

- a) Providing information about Minority Reports in SEAC training and school board SEAC orientation manual
- b) Providing a template for Minority Reports in the school board SEAC Orientation Manual.
- c) Developing a school board protocol for submitting Minority Reports and sharing them with Trustees.
- d) Developing school board process to share with SEAC the outcome of presenting the SEAC Motion and related Minority Reports to the Trustees.
- e) Developing a process to document past Minority Reports for consideration at future meetings and as part of annual planning.
- f) Development by provincial and local parent association of guidelines regarding the form and development of Minority Reports.

Section 6:

Provincial and Local Parent Associations

- Local and Provincial Association Support
 - How Local Associations can support SEAC members
 - How Provincial Parent Associations can support SEAC members
- Representing the Local and Provincial Associations
 - How to share information from local and provincial parent associations

Effective Practices for Provincial Association Representatives

- a) For the local association to provide support to SEAC members
- b) For provincial associations to provide support to SEAC members
- c) For the SEAC member to represent the provincial/local parent association

Appendices

1. Regulation 464/97
2. Special Education Report Check List
3. Additional Resources



Questions?



Date of Issue: January 7, 2019

Effective: Until revoked or modified

Subject: **Professional Activity Days Devoted to Provincial Education Priorities**

Application: Directors of Education
Secretaries and Supervisory Officers of School Authorities
Director, Provincial Schools Branch

Reference: Regulation 304, “School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days”. This memorandum replaces Policy/Program Memorandum No. 151, December 5, 2017.

Introduction

The Education Act states that the Minister of Education may “establish policies and guidelines respecting criteria and topics for the professional activity days that are required by regulation and require boards to comply with the policies and guidelines”.¹

Regulation 304, “School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days”, made under the Education Act, sets out the conditions governing the establishment of school year calendars. The regulation states that school boards² must designate three professional activity (PA) days and may designate up to four additional PA days per school year.³ Half a school day may be designated as an instructional day and the remainder of the day for professional activities, but such a day constitutes a half-day in determining the number of instructional days in the school year.⁴

The requirements for the professional activities for the three mandatory PA days are set out in this memorandum. The ministry reviews these requirements regularly to ensure that they reflect the provincial education priorities established by the Minister. If the requirements should change as a result of such review, this memorandum will be updated.

1. Education Act, subsection 8(1), paragraph 28.

2. In this memorandum, *school board(s)* and *board(s)* refer to district school boards and school authorities.

3. Regulation 304, subsection 2(3.1), paragraphs 1 and 2.

4. Regulation 304, subsection 1(2).

Context

All school and school board staff have an important role to play in ensuring the success, equity of outcomes, and well-being of all students in Ontario's publicly funded education system. Building capacity at all levels of the education system and supporting a culture of professional learning for all is critical for student success.

The Ministry of Education recognizes that ongoing teacher professional learning plays a significant role in supporting well-being and in helping students succeed in the classroom and after graduation. Teaching is a dynamic learning profession that is constantly changing as teachers strive to engage and motivate students, and meet their diverse learning needs. Setting high expectations, believing that all students can learn, having empathy for all learners, continually reflecting on student learning outcomes, and exercising responsible, informed professional judgement to improve or change practice are fundamental to effective teaching. To ensure that Ontario's teaching profession continues to evolve, thrive, and be recognized for its excellence, the ministry is committed to supporting the ongoing professional learning of all teachers.

Requirements for School Boards

School boards must prepare their school year calendars in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 304. Boards are also required to submit their proposed school year calendars to the Minister of Education according to the dates specified in the regulation.

Professional activities on the three mandatory PA days must meet the requirements set out in the section that follows. If boards designate additional PA days (up to four may be designated per school year), the professional activities on all such PA days must be consistent with the definition of "professional activity" in the regulation.⁵

When submitting school year calendars, boards are required to include a general outline of the content for each of the PA days identified in the calendar.

For each mandatory PA day, the regulation also requires that boards prepare an agenda that specifies the date, location and timing of the activities, school(s) participating, and the program and scheduled professional activities. At least ten school days in advance

5. As stated in section 1(1) of Regulation 304, "professional activity" includes evaluation of the progress of pupils, consultation with parents, the counselling of pupils, curriculum and program evaluation and development, professional development of teachers and attendance at educational conferences, but does not include preparation by teachers for classes or instruction."

of a scheduled PA day, the board must make the agenda available by posting it on the board website and the website of each participating school; by posting it in the main office of the board and of each participating school; by distributing it to the school council chair of each participating school; and by using any other means the board considers appropriate to make the agenda accessible to all participants.

Each school year, boards are required to complete an evaluation of the activities conducted on all PA days held during that year. They are also required to retain these evaluations.

Requirements for the Three Mandatory Professional Activity Days

Professional activities for the three mandatory PA days must be focused on teachers' professional learning aligned with provincial education priorities.

These priorities are the criteria that determine the focus and scope of the professional activities for the three mandatory PA days.

PA Day 1

One PA day must be devoted to developing and implementing strategies to improve student achievement in mathematics, with a focus on fundamental math concepts and skills.

The ministry released the following key resources to support this professional learning focus:

- [Focusing on the Fundamentals of Math, A Teacher's Guide](#)
This resource highlights fundamental concepts and skills in Number Sense and Numeration in the Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Mathematics, 2005.
- [A Parent's Guide to the Fundamentals of Math, Grades 1 to 8](#)
This resource provides an overview for parents and guardians on some of these key math concepts and skills that elementary students are expected to know in grades one through eight.

PA Day 2

The topic (or topics) for the second mandatory PA day will vary, as indicated below. The topics for each teacher federation were determined during the 2014 and 2017 labour negotiations between the provincial government and representatives from the federations and school board associations, and continue to be in effect.

- **Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)**

All teachers:

- The full day must be devoted to a topic (or topics) aligned with ministry priorities, such as improving student achievement in mathematics and/or developing and implementing strategies to ensure equity for all students, or to a topic that is also a current school board priority.

- **Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)**

All teachers:

- A half a day must be devoted to occupational health and safety training, including training in violent incident reporting;
- The other half of the day must be devoted to a topic aligned with ministry priorities, specifically developing and implementing strategies to improve student achievement in mathematics.

Education workers:

- A half a day must be devoted to role-specific training or professional development (applies to permanent employees only);
- The other half of the day must be devoted to occupational health and safety training, including training in violent incident reporting.

- **Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)**

Grade 1 to 8 teachers:

- The full day must be devoted to a topic aligned with ministry priorities/school board initiatives, explicitly developing and implementing strategies to improve student achievement in mathematics.

Grade 9 to 12 teachers:

- The full day must be devoted to a topic determined by board/federation professional development committees (where possible) and aligned with ministry priorities, such as improving student achievement in mathematics or science and technology, or developing and implementing strategies to ensure equity for all students.

- **Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)**

All teachers:

- A half day must be devoted to occupational health and safety training.

Full-day Kindergarten (FDK) teacher and early childhood educator (ECE) teams:

- The other half of the day must be devoted to developing and implementing inquiry-based learning and pedagogical documentation assessment strategies.

Grade 1 to 12 teachers:

- The other half of the day must be devoted to a topic determined by board/federation professional development committees and aligned with ministry priorities, such as improving student achievement in mathematics, providing students with more inquiry-based or experiential learning opportunities, developing pedagogical documentation assessment strategies, or developing and implementing strategies to ensure equity for all students.

PA Day 3

The third PA day must be devoted to teachers' professional learning related to any one or more of the following provincial education priorities:

- Indigenous education;
- foundational math;
- science, technology, engineering and mathematics fundamentals (STEM);
- financial literacy;
- special education;
- equity, inclusion and human rights;
- job preparedness;
- mental health and well-being; and
- health and safety.

In addition, all professional activities for the mandatory PA days must meet one or more of the following requirements:

- Align with board and school goals and plans created within the context of the current provincial education priorities;
- Address systemic barriers and discriminatory practices that negatively impact student engagement, learning and outcomes by placing an emphasis on equity, inclusion, and human rights;
 - [PPM 119: Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools](#)

- Be informed by school and school board data, and targeted to reflect the contexts of the board and its schools, including the priority learning needs of the students and teachers;
- Be based on identified teacher learning needs with respect to culturally responsive and relevant instruction and the use of strategies that address the diverse learning needs of students;
- Contribute to pedagogical development by providing teachers with opportunities to become familiar with a wide variety of evidence-based instructional strategies and their appropriate use;
- Support learning in which teachers can engage in inquiry and knowledge construction with colleagues;
- Increase knowledge of the impact of the Indian Act, the residential school system, treaties and systemic racism, as well as increasing understanding of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives, cultures, histories, contributions and contemporary realities; and
- Support an intentional focus on addressing learning opportunities for students, including students receiving special education programs and services, through an equitable and asset-based teaching and learning approach.

Additional Considerations

While the three mandatory PA days are focused on professional learning for teachers, boards may decide to include other educators in professional activities on these three PA days. This may include Education Assistants and Early Childhood Educators in kindergarten classrooms, who may also benefit from participating in these or other professional learning opportunities, depending on local context.

Because of the importance of ongoing professional learning, school boards may also wish to consider incorporating professional activities scheduled for the three mandatory PA days into established board or school professional learning structures.

Knowledge of various ministry policy documents, including Policy/Program Memoranda, and ministry-developed resources is essential to meeting provincial education priorities and legislative requirements. Boards are encouraged to consider where a review of ministry policy documents and resources can be integrated into professional learning activities.