

**LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR**

**April 2016**

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. Provincial and Demonstration Schools Consultation

2. 2016-17 Education Funding

3. Review of Suspension/Expulsion Programs

**List of Supplementary Materials:**

1. Provincial Schools Consultation memo (PDF)

2. Special Education funding information for SEAC members

3. Special Education Grant memo (PDF)

4. Special Needs Grant Discussion Paper

5. Suspension –Expulsion Evaluation memo (PDF)

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

1. **Provincial and Demonstration Schools Consultation**

In the February SEAC Circular there was information on the Ministry of Education consultation with students, families, staff, education partners and community partners on the English language Demonstration schools (for students with severe learning disabilities), Centre Jules-Leger French language Provincial & Demonstration school, and the Robarts School for the Deaf in London.

The attached **Memo to Directors** indicates that school boards were consulted as well. Each board was invited to send up to two staff and two students who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or have learning disabilities to participate in the consultations.

The Strategic Council which is conducting the consultation for the Ministry held a teleconference consultation with LDAO chapter representatives on March 17th. The questions were more open-ended than those on the EDU website and led to a lot of discussion of the role of Demonstration schools in educating teachers, and on the educational needs of students with learning disabilities.

Anita Bennett, manager at the Special Education Policy & Programs Branch, participated in the teleconference and asked for examples of exemplary school board programs for students with learning disabilities. LDAO SEAC members who have programs that they feel are exemplary, either at the school or school board level, are asked to send information on them to dianew@LDAO.ca by Friday, April 8th, so that I can forward them to the consultant.

The Strategic Council will tabulate and summarize all the information gathered from the various consultations, but it is not in their mandate to make recommendations to the Ministry. As stated in the Memo, “Once the consultations conclude this spring, the ministry will then carefully consider the input received from students and families, staff and education and community partners. As plans for moving forward are developed, we will work closely with all our partners to ensure that their perspectives are fully understood.”

LDAO has been following the consultation carefully and there is a great deal of information as well as many comments on our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/LDAOntario/). *LDAO has been waiting to see the proposals that come out of the consultation, and will be closely monitoring the process with a view to advocating for the best possible outcomes for students with LDs in Ontario.*

**2. 2016-17 Education Funding**

The funding documents for 2016-17 have been released by the Ministry of Education, and can be found at: [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/funding.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/funding.html).

There are two plain language guides available, [2016-17 Education Funding: A Guide to the Grants for Student Needs](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/1617/2016_gsn_guide_en.pdf) and [A Guide to the Special Education Grant](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/1617/2016_spec_ed_guide_en.pdf). These are a good place to start for SEAC members who are relatively new to their role.

Special education funding is complicated, but for those who would like a more detailed description, I have put together a document with sections from the [Technical Paper 2016-17](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/1617/2016_technical_paper_en.pdf) and the [Memorandum from the Director, Special Education Policy and Programs Branch, March 24, 2016](file:///%5C%5Csbsldao%5Cusers%24%5Cdwagner%5CSEAC%5C2016%5CApril%202016%5CMemorandum%20from%20the%20Director%2C%20Special%20Education%20Policy%20and%20Programs%20Branch%2C%20March%2024%2C%202016). The Memorandum, also attached, has even more detail in the form of charts and formulas.

SEACs should be asking for a presentation on the school board planning process for their special education budget.

For SEAC members who are interested in learning more about the outcomes of the Ministry consultation on Special Education funding, you can read Special Needs Grant excerpts from the 2016-17 Education Funding: [Discussion Summary](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/1617/2016_ds_en.pdf), in an attached document.

**3. Review of Suspension/Expulsion Programs**

The Ministry of Education has commissioned an evaluation of the programs for suspended/expelled students by a research team headed by Dr. Katina Pollock, at the University of Western Ontario. SEACs whose boards run such programs should ask to kept informed about the evaluation process, especially as it relates to implementation of IEPs for students who are in such placements.

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