

# LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR

**February 2010**

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

This month we welcome Leona Dombrowsky as the new Minister of Education and extend our thanks to Kathleen Wynne for her support to special education over the years she held this office.

The following are some topics that your SEAC should be looking at in the next couple of months. As usual action items will be underlined, and summarized at the end. 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. SEAC Effectiveness Survey
2. IEP initiatives
3. Learning for All
4. New School Safety rules in effect
5. New Fall Progress report card and IEPs
6. Accessible Customer Service Standard
7. Online SEAC Training

## **List of Supplementary Materials:**

1. LDAO Response to Learning for All Consultation Questions
2. Keeping our Kids Safe at School
3. LDAO Online SEAC Course Registration form
4. LDAO Online SEAC Course Registration form for outside associations.

## 1. SEAC Effectiveness Survey

Thank you to all who completed the online SEAC Effectiveness Survey. PAAC members are now compiling and studying the results, and will create a report that will be made available when it is finished.

## 2. IEP initiatives

The translation into French of the online workshop [IEP 101 for Parents and Students](#) is complete, and the French version will be available soon on the LDAO website.

## 5. Learning for All

Some SEACs have been reviewing the draft Ministry of Education resource document [Learning for All, K-12](#). Based on the questions presented to one SEAC, I have created the attached LDAO response. LDAO SEAC reps should refer to this response when discussing Learning for All at their SEACs.

A January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Memo to Directors outlines the Ministry of Education's plans for [Learning for All, K-12](#). The memo included: clarification that *L4All K – 12* is a resource document and not Ministry policy; information that *L4All K – 12* will remain as a draft for the 2009-10 school year, and feedback and information gathered throughout the year will inform the finalization of the document; and clarification that regional lead school boards will develop resources/tool kits that can be customized to meet local needs and provide support for the use of the draft *L4All K – 12*.

SEACs should ask if their school board is one of the regional lead boards, and if so ask to have input into the development of resources/tool kits.

## 4. New School Safety rules in effect

On February 1, 2010 changes to the Education Act came in to effect that amended the Safe Schools provisions to require:

- all school staff to report serious student incidents to the principal
- principals to contact the parents of victims who have been harmed as a result of serious student incidents
- staff to respond to incidents that have a negative impact of the school climate, including incidents of sexual and gender-based bullying or homophobia.

The Ministry has created a booklet for parents [Keeping our Kids Safe at School](#) to explain the reporting requirements. It is on the Ministry website, but I have attached a copy as well.

SEACs who have not already had a presentation on their board's revised Safe Schools policies and guidelines should ask for one in February.

## 5. New Fall Progress report card and IEPs

On December 22, 2009 then Minister Kathleen Wynne announced that starting in 2010-2011 a [New Fall Progress Report Card](#) would replace the old fall report cards which contain student marks.

PAAC on SEAC received the following clarification from the Special Education Policy & Program Branch on the relationship of the fall progress report card to IEP schedules:

As you know, the IEP must be completed and signed by the principal and parent (or student 16 years of age and older) within 30 school days of the student's placement in a special education program (*Regulation 181/98*). This thirty-day requirement for completion of an IEP applies to the IEPs of all students, including those who have not been identified as exceptional through the IPRC process, but who receive a special education program and/or service (*The Individual Education Plan (IEP), A Resource Guide (2004), p.42*).

The learning expectations in the IEP must be reviewed and updated, as necessary, at the beginning of each reporting period, or at least once in each reporting period (*The Individual Education Plan (IEP), A Resource Guide (2004), p.48*).

Currently, there are three formal reporting periods in the elementary panel and this will not change. There will be a fall progress report card required to be completed for every student. The second reporting period will be in January/February and the third in the latter part of June. Therefore, there are still three elementary formal reporting periods.

For students beginning a special education placement/service in September, the thirty-day requirement will coincide very closely with this fall progress report card and thus would meet the requirement for reviewing the learning expectations in the first reporting period. For the other reporting periods, the requirements as stated in the IEP resource guide and noted above still apply. There is no change in the secondary panel.

## 6. Accessible Customer Service Standards

The **Accessibility Standards for Customer Service** applies to all people, businesses and organizations that provide goods or services either directly to the public or to other businesses or organizations. Designated public sector organizations, including school boards, must comply with the standard by **January 1, 2010**, and file their first accessibility report by **March 31, 2010**. School boards will be required to:

1. Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
2. Set a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access goods and use services and about any other measures the school board offers (assistive devices, services or methods) to enable them to access goods and use services.
3. Use reasonable efforts to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.
4. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.

5. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on the board's behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
6. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who are involved in developing policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
7. Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability.
8. Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties.
9. Where admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability.
10. Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use goods or services are temporarily disrupted.

Under the Customer Service Standard, parents are receiving goods and/or services from the school board, and parents of students with special education needs may have disabilities themselves. Therefore, SEACs should ask for a presentation on their board's plans to comply with the Customer Service Standard. Any training materials should take into account all types of disabilities. For example, a parent with learning disabilities attending a school meeting or IPRC may need to take notes on a laptop computer or have a note-taker with them, since they may have difficulty remembering everything that happened at the meeting.

## 7. Online SEAC Training

As mentioned in the November SEAC Circular, LDAO's online SEAC Training course is now being offered as a self-paced course. **All LDAO SEAC representatives and alternates who have not taken LDAO SEAC training should be registering for the course.** An application form is attached.

SEAC representatives and alternates from other parent associations are welcome to register as well, although the certificate of completion (which requires completion of assignments) can only be given to LDAO reps. Other association reps might want to check with their own association about funding for this course. Please e-mail me at [dianew@ldao.ca](mailto:dianew@ldao.ca) for more information.

The Ministry of Education continues to maintain a SEAC Learning Website:  
[www.seac-learning.ca/index.htm](http://www.seac-learning.ca/index.htm).

## ACTION ITEMS

- LDAO SEAC reps should refer to LDAO's response when discussing **Learning for All, K-12** at their SEACs.
- SEACs should ask if their school board is one of the regional lead boards for **Learning for All, K-12** and if so ask to have input into the development of resources/tool kits.
- SEACs who have not already had a presentation on their board's revised Safe Schools policies and guidelines should ask for one in February.

- SEACs should ask for a presentation on their board's plans to comply with the Customer Service standard, including any training materials.

**Questions?**

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