

LDAO May SEAC Update

May 2010

New features on EDU website

A memo went out to Directors of Education in April announcing new features for parents of students with special education needs on the Ministry of Education website, including a chart of where to find school board Parent Guides to special education and Special Education Plans: [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/School Board SEPs and Parent Guides English.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/School_Board_SEPs_and_Parent_Guides_English.pdf)

There is also a sample notice to parents for boards to use as a template (attached). SEACs could help with communication to parents about the website changes.

Special Equipment Amount changes

There has been a substantial change to the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) process for 2010-2011. School boards will be submitting claims in May for equipment purchased in the 1009-2010 school year, but for the 2010-2011 school year funding for computer hardware and software for students with special education needs will come out of an overall SEA Per Pupil amount that is not based on individual claims. There will still be a claims process for non-computer equipment (e.g. FM systems) that has the usual \$800 deductible. The rationale and advantages of the new funding approach are outlined in the attached document. There is information on SEA on the Ministry website in the technical papers for 2010-11 funding (www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/1011/technical10.pdf) but the specific SEA funding guideline document is not yet on the website.

Note that the school boards are expected to “develop an internal process that allocates the SEA Per Pupil Amount, the SEA Claims- Based Amount and a board internal contribution to support student needs in an equitable and timely fashion”. Now that computer-based equipment is no longer going to be allocated based on individual claims, it is very important that school boards have a *transparent application and decision-making process* for parents whose children have a documented need for such equipment and software. SEACs should ask their board to involve them in the development of such a process and to keep them updated.

Memo on Special Education Plans

A Memo to Directors in April (copied to SEAC chairs) pointed out that “each school board must ensure that updated and comprehensive information regarding special education programs and services is made available to the community by the start of each school year. School boards are strongly encouraged to post the special education reports in a user-friendly format on their public websites.” It also reminded boards that in preparing this plan, “school boards and school authorities must continue to consult with their respective Special Education Advisory Committees (SEAC) as per *Regulation 464/97*” and additionally, “as the achievement of students with special education needs is considered in the development, implementation and monitoring of the Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement, you are encouraged to consult with your SEAC regarding these processes.” SEACs should ask for an update on their Board Improvement Plan process and how it will take into account achievement of students with special education needs.

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