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**LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR**

**April 2022**

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) SEAC Circular is published 5 times a year, usually 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.

**Topics covered by this SEAC Circular:**

1. Right to Read report

2. Final Recommendations of the K -12 Standards Development Committee

3. Ministry of Education updates

4. Special Education Budget

5. Responses to PPM 81 Consultation

6. Two new resources to share

7. Clarification on use of the term learning disabilities

**List of Supplementary Materials:**

1. LDAO Right to Read Executive Summary

2. LDAO Right to Read Detailed Response

3. Special Education Update (February 2022)

4. Professional Activity Days memo

5. LDAO Response to Draft PPM 81

6. PAAC on SEAC PPM 81 Response

**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 funding (B & SB) memos by date at: <https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos.htm>

**1. Right to Read report**

The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) launched its Right to Read public inquiry in October 2019, concerned that Ontario’s public education system was failing to meet the needs of students with reading disabilities. LDAO worked with OHRC six months before the announcement and helped shaped the terms of the inquiry. LDAO is a founding member of The Literacy Alliance of Ontario, a joint effort to change the way reading is taught in line with science. This group includes ONBIDA, DDon, Dyslexia Canada , Ponda and OISE, among others.

On February 28, 2022, OHRC released a comprehensive *Right to Read* report which included detailed findings and recommendations for the Ministry of Education, school boards and faculties of education on curriculum and instruction, early screening, reading interventions, accommodation, professional assessments and systemic issues. Attached are an executive summary of LDAO’s response, and a more detailed response.

“LDAO and its Chapters strongly support the OHRC Right to Read report’s focus on early reading and its call to change how reading is taught in our schools. LDAO will continue as always to engage with the Ministry of Education to maximize the positive impacts these changes can have in the lives of students living with LDs.”

“LDAO supports the Right to Read’s focus on early reading and a majority of the recommendations. There are a few recommendations that require further consultation and discussion, to make sure the rights of students with learning disabilities are protected and the right to read and learn secured for future generations.” (See detailed response).

**2. Final Recommendations of the K -12 Standards Development Committee**

LDAO welcomes the release of the Final Recommendations of the K -12 Standards Development Committee and commends Lynn Ziraldo, chair, and all the committee members who worked so hard to consult and develop these recommendations. The full recommendations can be found here: [www.ontario.ca/document/development-proposed-kindergarten-grade-12-k-12-education-standards-2022-final-recommendations](http://www.ontario.ca/document/development-proposed-kindergarten-grade-12-k-12-education-standards-2022-final-recommendations)

**3. Ministry of Education updates**

Attached are the **Special Education Update** prepared for the February meeting of the Minister’s Advisory Committee on Special Education (MACSE). As well as outlining Ministry of Education initiatives there are also reports from the Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services (MCCSS), Ministry of Colleges & Universities (MCU), Ministry of Health (MOH), and Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA).

Also attached is a February 22, 2022 memo on **Professional Activity Days** for the 22-23 school year. Priorities include Learning Recovery (learning recovery and renewal, student mental health and well-being, early reading and mathematics, and supporting de-streamed classrooms) as well as Equity and Inclusive Education (special education and supporting students with disabilities, and anti-racism and anti-discrimination).

For more detailed information on Learning Recovery initiatives, read the Ministry’s [Learning Recovery Action Plan](https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos/B2022/B02_EN.pdf)

SEACs should ask about their school board’s plans for PA days, and ask how the funding outlined in the Learning Recovery Action Plan will be used by their school board.

**4. Special Education Budget**

Ministry of Education funding documents for the 2022-23 school year can be found at: [www.ontario.ca/page/education-funding-2022-23](http://www.ontario.ca/page/education-funding-2022-23).

Documents available include:

[2022-23 Grants for Student Needs funding (GSN)](https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos/B2022/B03_EN.pdf)

[2022-23 Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF)](https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos/B2022/B05_EN.pdf) and

[2022-23 Student Mental Well-Being allocation](https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos/SB2022/SB11_EN.pdf)

Of particular interest are:

[Special Education Grant changes for 2022-23](https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos/SB2022/SB08_EN.pdf)

[2022-23 Education funding: a guide to the Special Education Grant](https://files.ontario.ca/edu-2223-speced-guide-en-2022-03-21.pdf)

[Special education funding guidelines: Special Equipment Amount (SEA), 2022-23](https://files.ontario.ca/edu-2223-sea-guidelines-en-2022-03-18.pdf)

The changes to Special Education funding include:

Starting in the 2022-23 school year, the Priorities and Partnership Funding’s (PPF) $16.3 million **Special Education Supports** amount will become the **Local Priorities Amount** and be transferred into the Special Education Grant’s DSENA. This amount will be allocated to school boards to address local priorities such as: • additional educational staff and/or professional/paraprofessional staff to support students with special education needs (e.g., special education resource teachers, educational assistants, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and psychologists among others); and • other local priorities such as evidence-based programs and interventions, as well as transition supports.

Note that this is a change in location of funding rather than new funding.

Starting in 2022-23, the ministry will provide $7.4 million in additional funding for Assistive Technology via the **Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Per-Pupil Amount (PPA)** This additional investment will help boards in acquiring and maintaining assistive technologies and related hardware and software for students with special education needs. As a result, SEA PPA base funding is increasing to $20,000, and the per pupil amount is increasing to $39.4.

SEACs should ask how their school board will allocate the additional SEA funding.

For help in understanding education funding SEAC members can refer to [PAAC on SEAC Funding Resource Guide Updated 2021](http://www.paac-seac.ca/resources/paac-on-seac-funding-resource-guide-2021-3/)

For help in budget planning refer to the Effective Practices in the [PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook](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/)

**5. Responses to PPM 81 Consultation**

Attached for your information are responses from LDAO and from PAAC on SEAC to the recent consultation on revising PPM 8, *Provision of health support services in school settings*.

**6. Two new resources to share**

Justice for Children & Youth Parent Navigation Resource, <https://jfcy.org/en/specialeducation/> 

Holland Bloorview inclusion project <https://deareverybody.hollandbloorview.ca/project-inclusion/>

**7. Clarification on use of the term learning disabilities**

A recent letter to Minister Lecce, shared with SEAC chairs, from the Dufferin-Peel CDSB SEAC, cites research from the British Medical Journal indicating that “that children with ‘learning disabilities’ are more vulnerable to illness from COVID-19 (Willamson EJ et al., 2021)”

LDAO would like to point out that in the UK the term ‘learning disabilities’ is used for what in North America are called ‘intellectual disabilities’ so the research results are not referring to students with learning disabilities as defined in Ontario.

**Questions?** Email Diane Wagner at [dianew@LDAO.ca](mailto:dianew@LDAO.ca)