

LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR

February 2025

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

This circular highlights key topics for your SEAC to consider. Where applicable, action items, questions to ask, and/or recommendations for effective practices will be included under each topic.

Feel free to share any of this information and any attachments with other SEAC members. As always, if you plan to introduce a motion for the consideration of SEAC, it is particularly important that you share all relevant background materials with your fellow SEAC reps.

Topics covered by this SEAC Circular:

1. Ministry of Education Updates:

- Mathematics
- Financial Literacy
- Literacy
- Mental Health

2. PPM 8

3. Transitions

4. Key Takeaways: February 2025 SEAC Circular

List of Supplementary Materials:

1. [2024-25 Math and Literacy Supports Memo](#)
2. [Financial Literacy](#)
3. [Policy and Program Memorandum 8](#)
4. [Right to Read - Year Two Update \(Ontario Human Rights Commission\)](#)
5. [Accessible Transitions for Students with Disabilities K-12](#)
6. [Tiered Approach - LD@School](#)
7. [PAAC Funding Resource Guide](#)

Note: You can access the [SEAC Circular](#), [LDAO SEAC Policies](#), [LDAO Policy Statement on Educational Inclusion](#), and [PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook](#).

You can access Ministry funding (B & SB) memos by date at: [Ministry Funding](#).

1. Ministry Priorities for 2024-2025

a. **Math**

As part of the 2024-25 Math and Literacy Supports, the Ministry of Education is meeting with each school board across the province to review student performance on EQAO math scores. Students who are not meeting to standard often include those with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), both with and without a formal diagnosis. Math is a critical skill for student success across the province as it supports problem-solving, logical reasoning, and critical thinking, which are essential for academic achievement, career opportunities, and everyday life.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC representatives can inquire about how school boards are supporting student achievement in mathematics.
- Ask if evidence-based strategies are being used to assess and enhance student growth in math learning.
- Inquire about the availability and focus of professional learning opportunities for educators to strengthen their ability to teach math effectively, particularly for students with IEPs.

b. **Financial Literacy**

In the 2025–2026 school year, students must complete a mandatory course on Financial Literacy to graduate from high school. Students need to achieve a score of 70% to meet the minimum standard. If they do not meet this benchmark, they will be required to retake this test.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC members may inquire about the types of support that will be provided for identified students to help them achieve this benchmark.

c. **Literacy**

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's (OHRC's) Two-Year Anniversary Update of the Right to Read report indicates that boards across the province have made some progress in the directives given but limited progress in key areas. Gains have been made in curriculum, professional development, and universal screening. However, there has been little to no progress in teacher education, additional qualifications courses, accommodations, and professional assessments. The OHRC report recommends equitable access to interventions, ensuring that every school has Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions available for students in each grade

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC members could inquire about the availability of Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions in schools across their board. This was a recommendation in the Right to Read Year Two report.
- Suggest tracking progress on implementing the Right to Read recommendations and sharing updates with SEAC.
- Recommend that boards develop, implement, and monitor plans to ensure equitable access to professional assessments and interventions for all students with LDs.
- Encourage boards to advocate for systemic change by sending a letter to the Ministry of Education requesting dedicated funding and resources for enhanced training in evidence-based literacy instruction for new teachers and additional qualifications courses.

d. Mental Health

The mental health of students, particularly those with disabilities, significantly impacts their ability to learn and succeed. Improving student mental health support can lead to enhanced academic performance, better social-emotional skills, and a positive school climate, benefitting all students and particularly those who may struggle with additional challenges. Students who feel like they matter and belong in a school environment, particularly students who with LDs develop resiliency. Resiliency is a key component to academic success.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC representatives may want to ask how funding for mental health resources is being allocated to support students with LDs specifically.
- Inquire about the availability of mental health professionals, such as child and youth workers, counselors, and psychologists, in schools and how their services are being tailored to support students with LDs.
- Recommend regular evaluations of mental health programs to ensure they effectively address the needs of students with LDs and other exceptionalities.
- Suggest providing professional development for educators on recognizing and supporting student mental health challenges.
- School Boards have a Mental Health lead at each school who is responsible for sharing information to parents to guide and support their students with positive mental health. Ask how these materials are being shared with parents in your Board.

2. PPM 8

The year two update from the OHRC report recommends revising PPM 8 to align with the DSM-5, incorporating current research on reading and spelling. The update should also include a comprehensive review of interventions implemented and an evaluation of the progress achieved. Additionally, the report highlights that current assessment practices often lack a full battery of cognitive tests, which are crucial for identifying and addressing the specific needs of students.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- Inquire whether school boards are advocating for updates to PPM 8 to reflect evidence-based practices and DSM-5 guidelines.
- Recommend that SEAC monitor and provide feedback on the implementation and effectiveness of interventions for students with reading and spelling challenges.
- Suggest that boards document and share outcomes from interventions to build a repository of effective practices.

3. Transitions

Audits of student Individual Education Plans (IEPs) continue to highlight that transition planning is an area requiring improvement, particularly for students with disabilities moving from K-12 to postsecondary. Poor coordination between secondary schools and postsecondary institutions remains a significant barrier.

One of the recommendations for our students with LDs includes providing assistive technology training for both staff and students, as well as improving access to instructional materials and adaptive technology before learning begins. The report also suggests creating a learning skills course tailored to address students' executive functioning needs. Developing resiliency in students was emphasized as a key area for boards to address through professional learning opportunities. Transition support should encompass both large transitions, such as moving from secondary to postsecondary education, and smaller transitions, such as changes between grade levels or classrooms.

Potential Action Items, Questions to Ask, and/or Recommendations:

- SEAC representatives may inquire about how boards ensure that IEPs are dynamic tools to support effective student growth.
- What strategies are in place to ensure timely access to instructional materials and adaptive technology before learning begins for students with LDs?

- Ask how school boards are ensuring effective transition planning for students with LDs, especially in coordination with postsecondary institutions.
- Suggest professional development opportunities for educators to support students in fostering belonging, mattering, and resiliency and managing transitions effectively.

4. Key Takeaways: February 2025 SEAC Circular

1. **Ministry of Education Priorities:** Boards are focusing on improving math, financial literacy, literacy, and mental health outcomes for students. SEAC representatives are encouraged to explore how these priorities are being addressed and advocate for evidence-based practices and equitable access to resources.
2. **Transitions:** Transition planning for students with disabilities continues to be an area of improvement. Recommendations include providing assistive technology training, improving access to instructional materials, and fostering resiliency through professional learning.
3. **Individual Education Plans (IEPs):** SEAC members should inquire about how IEPs are being utilized as dynamic tools to support effective student growth, particularly during transitions.
4. **PPM 8 Updates:** The Ontario Human Rights Commission recommends revising PPM 8 to reflect DSM-5 guidelines and current research on reading and spelling, with a focus on improving interventions and cognitive assessments.
5. **Right to Read Implementation:** Boards need to enhance access to Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions and develop, implement, and monitor plans for equitable assessments and interventions for all students with LDs.
6. **Mental Health Support:** The mental health of students with disabilities remains a critical focus area. Boards should ensure appropriate funding, professional mental health staff availability, and educator training to support students effectively.
7. **SEAC Action:** SEAC representatives play a vital role in advocating for inclusive practices, raising critical questions, and ensuring that board policies align with provincial priorities and student needs.