

**LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR**

**October 2020**

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.

Welcome to a very different start to the school year. School boards and schools are still scrambling to cope with in-school and remote learning options in ever changing times. While it is not ‘business as usual”, SEACs still have an important role to play in monitoring how special education is available to students.

 **Topics covered by this SEAC Circular:**

1. Planning for the SEAC year

2. Special Education budget and Special Education Plan

3. Scheduling of IPRCs

4. Special education supports for students

5. Assistive technology survey for teachers

6. Learning Disabilities Awareness month

 **List of Supplementary Materials:**

1. PAAC on SEAC Calendar 2020-21

2. Sept. 3, 2020 Memo 2020–21 Grants for Student Needs (GSN) and Related Regulations

3. MACSE Community Collaboration – LDAO

4. MACSE Community Collaboration – PAAC on SEAC

5. Report from the Accessibility Education K-12 SDC Working Group on *COVID-19 Barriers for Students with Disabilities & Recommendations*

6. LDAO Public Awareness 2020

**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: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/>

**1. Planning for the SEAC year**

While there are changes to how the school year started and uncertainly about future required changes, it is still helpful to plan SEAC activities for the school year, and adapt as needed.

The attached **PAAC on SEAC Annual Calendar** can be used to help plan. It is also available on the PAAC on SEAC website at: [www.paac-seac.ca/annual-calendar/](http://www.paac-seac.ca/annual-calendar/).

The *PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook* (2016) outlines effective practices to help SEACs develop an annual plan (see: **Section 3 SEAC Roles & Responsibilities,** <http://www.paac-seac.ca/home/paac-on-seac-effective-practices-handbook-for-seac-members/section-3-seac-roles-and-responsibilities/3-1-annual-planning/>)

**2. Special Education budget and Special Education Plan**

In spite of interruptions and the need to set up remote formats for meetings, many if not most school boards seem to have been able to consult their SEACs on updating the Special Education Plan, and creating the Special Education budget. Where this hasn’t happened, SEACs need to be updated on progress.

In reviewing the budget, SEACs can refer to the Aug. 26, 2020 Memo *Additional Funding for School Reopening* (<https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos/B2020/B14_EN.pdf>), sent previously, and the attached Sept. 3, 2020 Memo 2020–21 *Grants for Student Needs (GSN) and Related Regulations* (<https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos/B2020/B15_EN.pdf>)

See also recommendations in the MACSE collaboration forms from LDAO and PAAC on SEAC.

**3. Scheduling of IPRCs**

Some school boards have delayed some of their initial and review IPRCs due to the pandemic. In addition, some students with learning disabilities faced delays in accessing assessments due to Covid19 and thus delayed IPRCs. SEACs should work with their school boards to find ways to expedite backlogs of assessments and IPRCs, and give input into prioritizing IPRCs.

See also recommendations in the MACSE collaboration forms from LDAO and PAAC on SEAC.

**4. Special education supports for students**While providing individualized special education supports and services to students is challenging under the present circumstances, schools and school boards need to find creative ways of doing this. For example, they need to find ways of:

* providing the extra supports required to close gaps in learning for students with learning disabilities and other special education needs
* Including strategies to target learning gaps and social-emotional needs in updated IEPs
* providing special education supports, including access to special education teachers and EAs to students participating in remote learning
* making sure all online learning materials are in accessible formats

See also recommendations in the MACSE collaboration forms from LDAO and PAAC on SEAC, and the Report from the Accessibility Education K-12 SDC Working Group on *COVID-19 Barriers for Students with Disabilities & Recommendations* (attached)

SEACs should ask for ongoing updates on how individualized supports and services are being provided to students with special education needs.

**5. Assistive technology survey for grade 6 – 10 teachers**

Shimin Mo, a researcher at the University of Toronto, under the supervision of Dr. Todd Cunningham, is currently supporting a survey study on teacher's perceptions of assistive technology. The survey should only take around 15 minutes, and after participating, participants will be invited to a webinar on the topic of supporting learners with assistive technology needs in the classroom and at home. Here's the survey: [https://tinyurl.com/atsurveyoise](https://ldawc.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d37862c55f4a7106d2865c639&id=bbed184d84&e=1233a0fdd4)

**6. Learning Disabilities Awareness month**

October is Learning Disabilities Awareness month. LDA SEAC members and alternates are asked to share and distribute the attached *LDAO Public Awareness 2020* information.

**Questions?** Email Diane Wagner at dianew@LDAO.ca