

**LDAO SEAC CIRCULAR**

**February 2012**

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

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. Suggestions for Effective practices will appear in red.

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. Categories of Exceptionalities memo
2. Mental health initiatives
3. Learning Disabilities Working Group

4. Additional Qualification (AQ) courses

5. Revised draft of *Learning for All*

**List of Supplementary Materials:**

1. Memo on Categories of Exceptionalities

2. LDAO News Release

3. PowerPoint on Mental Health initiatives

4. Key Messages from Learning Disabilities Working Group

5. LDAO recommended revisions to LD AQ

6. Learning for All memo

**1. Categories of Exceptionalities memo**

In December 2011 a memo went to Directors of Education clarifying that students with some disorders that affect learning, including ADHD, may in certain cases be identified under Communication -- Learning Disability. LDAO hopes that the implementation of this memorandum within school boards around Ontario will result in increased access to special education services for students with ADHD and other neurobiological disorders which affect learning. SEACs should ask their boards how they plan to implement the Ministry’s directions as outlined in the memo.

LDAO’s position is outlined in the attached News Release.

**2. Mental health initiatives**

The December 2011 SEAC Circular talked about new mental health and addiction initiatives involving collaboration among four Ministries, Education (EDU), Children & Youth Services (MCYS), Health & Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) and Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU).   
15 school boards have been chosen this year to hire mental health leaders who will work with Dr. Kathy Short and Dr. Bruce Ferguson to develop a school board mental health plan. In year 2 of the 3 year initiative, there will be 30 boards included, with all 72 to be involved by year 3. The school board mental health plans will coordinate school and community mental health services, and will link to existing networks such as the *Student Support Leadership* clusters and the MCYS *Working Together for Kids Mental Health* initiative.

144 nurses will be hired through MOHLTC to work in school boards. Some will be in leadership positions and others may provide front line services to students.

Special Education Policy & Programs Branch staff have been working on a K-12 guide for educators on students with mental health and/or addictions issues. There will also be a website based on materials in the guide, with links to other resources.

SEACs should ask for monthly updates on how all these initiatives are being developed and coordinated in their school board.

**3. Learning Disabilities Working Group**

PPM 8 on Learning Disabilities was released in 1982. It contains sections that are obsolete and references, resources or programs that are outdated or no longer exist. One of the mandates of the Learning Disabilities Working Group’s (LDWG) is to review and assess the relevance and currency of PPM 8 and provide advice to the Ministry. The LDWG reviewed the current PPM 8 and offered feedback and suggestions at the September and November 2011 meetings. This feedback informed the development of a new draft PPM on Learning Disabilities that was presented at the January meeting. The LDWG reviewed this draft PPM and provided feedback which the Ministry will take under consideration in developing the next draft.

The next meeting of the LDWG will be in early March.

**4. Additional Qualification (AQ) courses**

Your SEAC may be looking at the draft revised AQ courses that the Ontario College of Teachers has out for consultation:

**Schedule C**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Qualification | Draft Guideline | Feedback Form | Due by |
| Orientation to Teaching in Ontario | [Guideline(PDF)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/pdf/orientation_to_teaching_in_ontario_e.pdf) | [Feedback Form(DOC)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/feedback_forms/draft_feedback_form_e.doc) | February 2, 2012 |
| Teaching Students with Behavioural Needs | [Guideline(PDF)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/pdf/teaching_students_with_behavioral_needs_e.pdf) | [Feedback Form(DOC)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/feedback_forms/draft_feedback_form_e.doc) | April 12, 2012 |
| Teaching Students with Communication Needs (Learning Disability) | [Guideline(PDF)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/pdf/teaching_students_with_communication_needs_(learning_disability)_e.pdf) | [Feedback Form(DOC)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/feedback_forms/draft_feedback_form_e.doc) | April 12, 2012 |
| Teaching Students with Intellectual Needs (Developmental Disability) | [Guideline(PDF)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/pdf/teaching_students_with_intellectual_needs_(developmental_disability)_e.pdf) | [Feedback Form(DOC)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/feedback_forms/draft_feedback_form_e.doc) | April 12, 2012 |
| Teaching Students with Intellectual Needs (Mild Intellectual Disability) | [Guideline(PDF)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/pdf/teaching_students_with_intellectual_needs_(mild_intellectual_disability)_e.pdf) | [Feedback Form(DOC)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/feedback_forms/draft_feedback_form_e.doc) | April 12, 2012 |
| Teaching Students with Multiple Needs | [Guideline(PDF)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/pdf/teaching_students_with_multiple_needs_e.pdf) | [Feedback Form(DOC)](http://www.oct.ca/additional_qualifications/drafts/feedback_forms/draft_feedback_form_e.doc) | April 12, 2012 |

The College has invited feedback to these draft guidelines. The feedback will inform the final versions of these guidelines to ensure they reflect the necessary professional knowledge, skills and practice required of educators related to these specific areas of focus.

LDAO has submitted proposed revisions to the *Teaching Students with Communication Needs (Learning Disability)* AQ, which is attached for your information.

LDAO reps should refer to the LDAO proposed revisions to the *Teaching Students with Communication Needs (Learning Disability)* AQ when providing their feedback.

**5. Revised draft of *Learning for All***

A revised *Learning for All, K-12 (Draft 2011)* is now electronically released and posted on the Ministry’s website. The document is available at: [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/learning.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/learning.html).

Funding has been provided to school boards to participate in Regional Learning for All K-12 Professional Learning Communities. SEACs should ask for regular updates on their board’s participation in these professional learning communities.

**ACTION ITEMS**

* SEACs should ask their boards how they plan to implement the Ministry’s directions as outlined in the memo on Categories of Exceptionalities.
* SEACs should ask for monthly updates on how the various mental health initiatives are being developed and coordinated in their school board.
* SEACs may choose to discuss and provide feedback to the draft AQ guidelines. LDAO reps should refer to the LDAO proposed revisions to the *Teaching Students with Communication Needs (Learning Disability)* AQ when providing their feedback.
* SEACs should ask for regular updates on their board’s participation in the Regional Learning for All K-12 Professional Learning Communities.

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