



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

OPSBA Review of 2019-20 Grants for Student Needs (GSN) Funding

On April 26, 2019, the ministry issued [memo B14](#) providing details regarding the 2019-20 GSN. This memo is follow-up to the Ministry of Education's memorandum, *2019:BO8 Education that Works for You*, and provides school boards with further information about the Ministry of Education's GSN funding for 2019-20. GSN funding for 2019-20 is projected to be \$24.66 billion. The average provincial per-pupil funding is projected to be \$12,246 in 2019–20. Highlights are as follows:

- **Class Sizes** - To support board planning, the list below summarizes the proposed changes, subject to ongoing consultations, labour negotiations and potential legislative changes:
 - **Kindergarten** - UNCHANGED - Maximum board-wide average remains at 26.0 with a hard cap of 29 (flexibility for 10% of classes to be up to 32 if purpose-built accommodation is not available (this exception will sunset after 2021–2022); if a program will be negatively affected (e.g., French immersion; or where compliance will increase kindergarten/Grade 1 combined classes)
 - **Primary** - UNCHANGED - Board-wide cap remains at 20.0 (flexibility for 10% of classes to be up to 23)
 - **Intermediate** - Maximum board-wide average adjusted to 24.5 for all school boards
 - **Secondary** - Maximum board-wide average adjusted to 28.0
 - The **secondary programming amount** of 1.02 staff per 1,000 ADE will no longer be provided, effective September 2019
 - The **Supported Schools Allocation benchmarks** are being updated to reflect the changes to class size,
 - To align with the proposed changes to secondary class size and to reflect other data updates, the **Supplementary Area Factor** for school facility operations, within the School Facility Operations and Renewal Grant, will be updated. These changes would be phased in over five years.
- **Attrition Protection** - The ministry is introducing a new Attrition Protection Allocation (within the Cost Adjustment and Qualifications and Experience Grant) for up to four years to protect front-line staff impacted by the proposed changes to class sizes and e-learning; allowing school boards to phase in the proposed class sizes. Through this four-year attrition protection, funding will be provided to top-up school boards where the change in funded classroom teachers exceeds the actual attrition and other voluntary leaves.

- **Behaviour Expertise Amount (\$15.2 million)** - The ministry is investing \$15.2 million in the Behaviour Expertise Amount allocation, an increase of approximately 100% over 2018–19. This investment will allow school boards to hire more professional staff at the board level who have expertise in Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and to double the training opportunities that will build school board capacity in ABA.
- **Local Priorities Fund (LPF)** - The LPF, first established in 2017-18 during the last round of collective bargaining, expires on August 31, 2019. Whether the funding for staffing is extended is an issue subject to the upcoming central collective bargaining process.
- **Cost Adjustment Allocation – Base Amount (\$36 Million)** - The base amount of the Cost Adjustment Allocation, providing supplemental funding for education worker benchmarks, has been discontinued for the 2019–20 school year. The investments related to adult day school teachers will be transferred to the Continuing Education and Other Programs Grant.
- **Human Resource Transition Supplement (\$10 Million)** - The Human Resource Transition Supplement, provided to assist school boards in managing the negotiated 2017–19 central collective agreements, expires on August 31, 2019.
- Details of all **capital funding programs**, including board-by-board allocations, will be provided in the coming weeks in a separate memorandum.
- **School Renewal Funding** - The ministry continues to invest \$1.4 billion in funding to support the repair and renewal of school facilities.
- Further details regarding the launch of the next round of **Capital Priorities** including child care, will be included in a separate memorandum to follow.
- **Student Transportation** - Stabilization funding will be provided to school boards that run efficient transportation operations but for which the costs of student transportation exceed the funding provided for that purpose. This funding will be provided in 2019-20 based on boards' 2018-19 transportation deficits while the Ministry of Education undertakes a review of the student transportation funding formula in order to achieve a more efficient and accountable student transportation system in Ontario. The Student Transportation Grant will be increased by 4 per cent to help boards manage increased costs. As in previous years, this update will be netted against a school board's transportation surplus. In addition, funding adjustments due to fuel price changes will continue to be triggered by the fuel escalation and de-escalation mechanism throughout the school year.
- The ministry will also provide a 2 per cent cost benchmark update to the non-staff portion of the **School Operations Allocation** benchmark to assist boards in managing the increases in commodity prices (electricity, natural gas, facility insurance, and other costs).
- In 2019–20, the ministry will continue to implement **GSN reforms that began in prior years**. A list of these reforms is as follows:
 - School Foundation Grant (SFG) Definition Change Funding Impacts
 - Retirement Gratuities
- **Salary Increases** - The ministry will provide a 1 per cent salary benchmark increase for staff in 2019–20, to reflect the 2017–19 central labour agreements.
- **Reciprocal Education Approach (REA)** - The ministry continues to engage with the Education Service Agreement and Reverse Education Service Agreement (ESA/RESA) Working Group regarding the REA. This approach is intended to improve access and reduce barriers for First Nation students who wish to attend First Nation schools or provincially funded schools, and for students transitioning between school systems. The focus of this work over the coming months is the development of a regulatory framework

to support the legislative amendments made to the Education Act in April 2018. These amendments and related regulatory changes will come into effect September 1, 2019. More details will be communicated in the coming months. As the Ministry moves forward with the proposed regulatory amendments to implement the REA, school boards have been strongly encouraged to begin discussions with First Nation communities and education authorities interested in developing ESAs and/or RESAs. For planning purposes, school boards should also be mindful that if there is sufficient demand expressed (i.e., a minimum number of pupils enroll in the course) the ministry expects that school boards will offer Indigenous languages and studies courses (which are funded through the Pupil Foundation and the Indigenous Education Grants within the GSN).

- **Rural and Northern Education Funding (RNEF) Schools List** - As a reminder, school boards continue to be required to spend RNEF funding using the List of Schools Eligible for Rural and Northern Education Fund Allocation: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/funding.html>. School boards may modify this list by passing a board motion. School boards must submit to the ministry, by June 14, 2019, the list of all the additional schools approved by board motion. Please submit these board motions along with the list of these additional schools to EDULABFINANCE@ontario.ca, including the school name, School Facilities Inventory System (SFIS) number, Campus ID, Board School Identification number (BSID) and panel (elementary/secondary). For more information on any of these items, please refer to the Technical Paper, available soon on the ministry's website.
- **International Student Recovery Amount (ISRA)** - Beginning in 2019-20, a school board's total GSN operating grants shall be reduced by an amount equal to a flat fee of \$1,300 multiplied by the international student enrolment, pro-rated where the students are not full-time. School boards continue to be responsible for setting tuition fee amounts for international students per the tuition fees regulation which sets the minimum amount that must be charged to non-resident students.
- **Modernization Of School Boards And School Authorities** - This involves looking at all aspects of the education system, including school board operations, while respecting the four publicly funded education systems in Ontario. The Ministry of Education will be undertaking a review of how boards can conduct their operations in the most efficient manner to best serve students and parents while ensuring their long-term sustainability. This process will be kicked off by the creation of a minister's task force.
- **School Authorities** - Funding for school authorities will be adjusted in 2019-20, as appropriate, to reflect changes in funding to district school boards. The ministry will provide further information concerning funding in 2019-20 for school authorities in the near future.
- **Other Grants** – The Ministry has confirmed that there will be no changes to the remaining grants and allocations in the Grants for Student Needs not already identified. The stability in this funding should allow school boards to finalize their staffing plans for the 2019-20 school year with minimal changes.
- **Other GSN Materials** - GSN projections for the 2019-20 school year are available on the ministry's website. All other GSN materials will be available in the coming weeks, including the 2019-20 Education Funding Technical Paper. Further communication will be sent to inform school boards of the documents' availability.

2019-20 Priorities and Partnerships Fund

On April 26, 2019, the ministry issued memo B15 providing details regarding the new Priorities and Partnership Fund (PPF). The funding will replace the previous Education Programs – Other

funding and will be evidence-based and outcome-focused while providing streamlined, accountable, and time-limited funding that will be reviewed and assessed by the Ministry each year. For 2019-20 the PPF will provide up to \$330 million in funding to education partners to support students. To facilitate school boards' budget planning for 2019-20, the Ministry is confirming approximately \$185 million of PPF funding to school boards and school authorities to support Ministry priorities. The program allocations as outlined in the memorandum as follows:

- Curriculum Implementation - To support school boards with the implementation of recently released curriculum: \$2.25M
- Engaging Parents and Communities - To involve parents and communities in their children's education. Parents are a child's first teacher. When parents are involved everyone benefits – schools become better places to learn and student performance improves: \$1.25M
- French-Language Education - To provide opportunities and tailored supports to students in Ontario's French-Language Education (FLE) system guided by the Aménagement linguistique policy: \$2.13M
- Indigenous Education - To improve student performance and well-being and close the performance gap between Indigenous students and all students: \$3.73M
- Math - To support Ontario's students in meeting provincial math standards: \$40.5M
- Mental Health and Well-Being - To support the critical linkage between mental health and well-being and student success: \$34.54M
- Special Education - To improve support for families of children and youth with special education needs: \$17.14M
- Student Pathways - To support students as they transition to postsecondary destinations including, apprenticeship, college, university, and the workplace: \$35.7M
- Supporting Student Potential - To support vulnerable students, including youth at risk, to stay in school, graduate and succeed: \$17.89M
- System Support and Efficiencies - To provide support to help ensure that the education system is running efficiently and effectively: \$30M

Further information on additional school board PPF initiatives will be provided as it becomes available.

Additional information on the 2019-20 GSN can be found at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding.