

Grants for Student Needs (GSN)

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

Ontario continues to recover from the pandemic (even as COVID-19 persists in our communities) and many of our students and families are struggling. There are many issues colliding at present – mental health concerns, the rising costs of affordable housing and food, serious global conflicts, and increasing polarization in society. These all lead to challenges for students that are felt throughout our schools and classrooms. We all want our schools to be safe and welcoming environments in which our students can learn and thrive while pursuing passions that will help them succeed later in life, and our employees can engage in meaningful work.

Education is the second-largest funding line in the Provincial Budget. It is largely determined by a series of grants known as the Grants for Student Needs (GSN). The GSN supports funding for the classroom, school leadership and operations, specific student-related priorities and local management by school boards. Much of the funding is tied to specific grant categories and must be used for that purpose only.

While overall funding to the education sector (including childcare) has increased in the provincial budget, funding for K-12 education on a per pupil basis has not kept pace with inflation, let alone the increasing costs arising from a variety of factors. As an example, this is particularly evident with the rising costs of student transportation.

School boards continue to stress the need for local flexibility in order to comply with provincial balanced budget legislation, yet still meet unique local cost pressures and needs.

OPSBA AREAS OF ADVOCACY FOCUS

- **Equity, Diversity & Inclusion**
- **School Capital & Facilities**
- **Indigenous Education**
- **Local School Board Governance**
- **Mental Health Supports**
- **Special Education**
- **Student Transportation**
- **Skilled Trades & Apprenticeships**



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How can we ensure school boards receive stable and predictable funding to support long term student achievement and well-being strategies?