

Ministry of Education

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2019: B14

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Senior Business Officials
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

FROM: Andrew Davis
Assistant Deputy Minister
Education Labour and Finance Division

DATE: **April 26, 2019**

SUBJECT: ***Grants for Student Needs (GSN) Funding for 2019–20***

As a follow-up to the Ministry of Education's memorandum, *2019:B08 Education that Works for You*, I am writing to provide you 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.

The government is committed to investments that have the greatest impact on the classroom, while ensuring tax dollars are used more effectively. Ten of the thirteen special purpose grants are either maintained or increasing from 2018–19 funding levels. These include, for example, Indigenous Education, Special Education, Languages, Geographic Circumstances, Safe and Accepting Schools, and Student Transportation.

The 2019–20 GSN also reflects funding for increased enrolment, ongoing investments to meet labour agreements, and regular updates to the GSN.

A. CLASS SIZE AND ATTRITION PROTECTION: (\$214 Million)

Class Size

As indicated in 2019:B08, the ministry shared proposed changes to class sizes effective for the 2019–20 school year and also launched the next [consultation phase](#) on class size inviting partners to continue this important dialogue ending on May 31, 2019.

To support board planning, the table below re-summarizes the proposed changes, subject to ongoing consultations, labour negotiations and potential legislative changes.

Description	Funded	Regulated
Kindergarten	UNCHANGED - Funded average class size remains at 25.57. Funded Early Childhood Educators (ECE) classroom staffing ratio change from 1.14 FTE to 1.0 FTE; Ministry will provide a new per-pupil amount of \$87.32 per average daily enrolment (ADE) in the Pupil Foundation Grant to support ECE supply costs.	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 (Grades 1 to 3)	UNCHANGED - Funded average class size remains at 19.8.	UNCHANGED - Board-wide cap remains at 20.0 (flexibility for 10% of classes to be up to 23).
Intermediate (Grades 4 to 8)	Funded average class size adjusted from 23.84 to 24.5.	Maximum board-wide average adjusted to 24.5 for all school boards.
Secondary (Grades 9 to 12)	Funded average class size adjusted from 22.0 to 28.0.	Maximum board-wide average adjusted to 28.0.

Other Impacts Resulting from Class Size Changes

- The secondary programming amount of 1.02 staff per 1,000 ADE will no longer be provided, effective September 2019. It is projected that the impact of removing the secondary programming amount from the Pupil Foundation Grant will be approximately \$52 million; this amount is included in the estimated class size impact for the 2019–20 school year, along with other related impacts.
- 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. Additional details will be provided in a subsequent memorandum.

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. Information on how this is calculated will be available in EFIS.

With this support in place, it is expected that school boards will not lay-off teachers associated with the proposed changes to class sizes and e-learning.

Other key elements of the attrition protection funding include:

- **School board forecast protection** to address situations where actual attrition is higher than the school board's forecasts; and,
- **An additional 5 per cent attrition protection** to further support the staffing complement for the continuity of STEM and specialized programming. This means boards are being provided with 105 per cent attrition protection funding.

For more information, please refer to 2019: SB02 *Key Planning Details for Attrition Protection*.

B. SPECIAL EDUCATION

Behaviour Expertise Amount: \$15.2 million

The ministry is investing \$15.2 million in the Behaviour Expertise Amount allocation, an increase of approximately one hundred per cent 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.

This investment will increase the:

- ABA Expertise Professionals Amount to a total of \$24.4 million; and the
- ABA Training Amount to a total of \$6.0 million.

C. OTHER GRANTS FOR STUDENT NEEDS FUNDING CHANGES

There will also be changes made to the GSN in the following areas:

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.

The investments related to adult day school teachers will be transferred to the Continuing Education and Other Programs Grant.

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.

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.

D. CAPITAL

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

For the 2019–20 school year, the ministry continues to invest \$1.4 billion in funding to support the repair and renewal of school facilities. This includes:

- School Condition Improvement (SCI): \$1 billion in funding towards SCI, which will allow boards to revitalize and renew aged building components that have exceeded or will exceed their useful life.
- School Renewal Allocation (SRA): An additional \$40 million in capital funding towards SRA, which will allow boards to address the renewal needs of their schools and undertake capital improvements to older buildings.

Investments in school renewal will allow school boards to continue to address facility condition, provide healthy and safe learning environments, and address energy efficiency and accessibility requirements of their school facilities.

Update on School Construction Programs

Further details regarding the launch of the next round of Capital Priorities including child care, will be included in a separate memorandum to follow.

E. 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.

F. KEEPING UP WITH COSTS: \$52 Million

The GSN has been updated to assist school boards in managing increases to transportation, electricity, and other non-staff school operations costs. In 2019–20, the projected investment is \$52 million:

- 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).

G. ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION AND OTHER CHANGES

In 2019–20, the ministry will continue to implement GSN reforms that began in prior years. A list of these reforms as well as other in-year changes can be found below.

School Foundation Grant (SFG) Definition Change Funding Impacts

This is the third year of a four-year phase-in of the funding impacts of the new SFG definition of a school, based on campus. A campus is defined as property or properties which are owned, leased or rented by a school board, that are linked by a contiguous property line. This change includes funding impacts on other grants in the GSN that are based on the SFG definition of a school.

Retirement Gratuities

This is the eighth year of a 12 year phase-out of the retirement gratuities resulting in a reduction in the benefits funding benchmarks. This 0.167 per cent reduction will be applied to the benefits benchmarks in the Foundation Grants with equivalent adjustments to the benchmarks in the Special Purpose Grants to reflect the reduction in benefits funding.

For school boards that provided one-time payouts of retirement gratuities in 2015–16, funding will continue to be recovered from school boards in 2019–20. This recovery, which began in 2016–17, will be over the number of years' equivalent to the estimated average remaining service life of school board employees eligible for retirement gratuities as at August 31, 2012. The funding recovered from school boards will be to the extent that school boards received funding from the ministry and to the extent that boards reported a one-time gain in the early payout of retirement gratuities in 2015–16.

Salary Increases

The ministry will provide a 1 per cent salary benchmark increase for staff¹ in 2019–20, to reflect the 2017–19 central labour agreements.

Reciprocal Education Approach (REA)

As you know, 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 we move forward with the proposed regulatory amendments to implement the REA, we continue to strongly encourage school boards 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

¹ Does not include directors of education or senior administration staff. Funding for principal and vice-principal salary increases are provided separately. More details will be available in the Technical Paper.

name, School Facilities Inventory System (SFIS) number, Campus ID, Board School Identification number (BSID) and panel (elementary/secondary). **Please include “RNEF” in the subject line of your email.**

For more information on any of these items, please refer to the Technical Paper, available soon on the ministry’s website.

H. 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.

I. MODERNIZATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS AND SCHOOL AUTHORITIES

The government is committed to ensuring that every dollar spent in the classroom is having the greatest impact on student achievement. 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 thorough 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. The government looks forward to engaging with experts and education partners in this important conversation.

J. SCHOOL AUTHORITIES

As in previous years, 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.

K. OTHER GRANTS

For greater clarity, the ministry wishes to confirm that there will be no changes to the remaining grants and allocations in the Grants for Student Needs not identified in this memo. The stability in this funding should allow school boards to finalize their staffing plans for the 2019–20 school year with minimal changes.

L. NOTICE

Some of the elements and proposals set out in this memo can only take effect if certain regulations are made by the Minister of Education or Lieutenant Governor in Council under the *Education Act*. Such regulations have not yet been made. Therefore, the content of this memo should be considered to be subject to such regulations, if and when made.

M. REPORTING

Dates for Submission of Financial Reports

The ministry has established the following dates for submission of financial reports:

Date	Description
June 28, 2019	Board Estimates for 2019–20 <i>Please advise your ministry finance officer, as soon as possible, if you would like to take advantage of a 4-week extension (until July 24, 2019) to submit.</i>
November 15, 2019	Board Financial Statements for 2018–19
November 22, 2019	Board Enrolment Projections for 2020–21 to 2023–24
December 13, 2019	Board Revised Estimates for 2019–20
May 15, 2020	Board Financial Report for September 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020

The ministry expects that Estimates forms will be available in EFIS by May 9, 2019.

N. INFORMATION RESOURCES

If you require further information, please contact:

Subject	Contact	Telephone and email
Benefits Transformation and Retirement Gratuities	Romina Di Pasquale	(416) 903-9479 romina.diPasquale@ontario.ca
Capital Policies	Colleen Hogan	(416) 325-1705 colleen.hogan@ontario.ca
Capital Priorities and Project Accountability	Paul Bloye	(416) 325-8589 paul.bloye@ontario.ca
Financial Accountability and Reporting Requirements	Med Ahmadoun	(416) 326-0201 med.ahmadoun@ontario.ca
Indigenous Education	Taunya Paquette	(647) 290-7142 taunya.paquette@ontario.ca
Operating Funding	Doreen Lamarche	(416) 326-0999 doreen.lamarche@ontario.ca
Special Education	Claudine Munroe	(416) 325-2889 claudine.munroe@ontario.ca
Student Transportation	Cheri Hayward	(416) 327-7503 cheri.hayward@ontario.ca

General questions regarding the 2019–20 GSN release can be emailed to:
EDULABFINANCE@ontario.ca.

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.

Original signed by

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