

315 Front Street West
Toronto ON M7A 0B8

315, rue Front Ouest
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 0B8

2023: B03

Date: April 17, 2023

Memorandum to: Chairs of District School Boards
Directors of Education
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

From: Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister of Education

Subject: **Better Outcomes for Students**

As we look ahead to the 2023-24 school year, the Ministry of Education investments will continue to help ensure every student has the opportunity for success, by ensuring our students have the skills they need. Our actions will continue to be informed by data and evidence, including results from recent Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments, credit accumulation, and graduation rates.

During the 2022-23 school year, Ontario provided \$175 million in tutoring supports. More than 200,000 students benefitted from meaningful educational support. Online tutoring supports were also expanded through *Mathify* and *Eurêka!*. Between April and November 2022, approximately 100,000 questions were answered through *Mathify's* online tutoring, and approximately 3,000 students from French-language schools received online tutoring support through *Eurêka!*, provided by OCT certified teachers. Students also benefitted from the first year of all Grade 9 subjects being offered in one stream. In addition, historic supports were provided for special education and mental health, and enhanced cleaning standards were made available in our schools.

Going forward, investments will continue to build the education system for the future, continue to position Ontario as a leading jurisdiction in education, and support programs with the

greatest impact in the classroom and on students – including students who need our support the most.

In the 2023-24 school year, education funding is projected to be \$27.6 billion, representing a historic investment in public education. Further details are outlined in memorandum *2023:B05 - 2023-24 Priorities and Partnerships Funding* and memorandum *2023:B04 - Grants for Student Needs Funding*.

To support students across the province, the government is providing funding to support additional teachers, especially in key subjects like reading and math to build important life-long skills.

The plan to support learning in the 2023-24 school year includes the following key investments:

- Early Reading
- Math
- De-streaming
- Job-readiness
- Mental Health
- Human Rights and Inclusion
- Special Education
- Student Safety
- Student Transportation
- Capital
- Remote Learning Administration

Additional details on these investments are outlined below.

Early Reading - \$109.1 million

Ontario is introducing comprehensive early reading actions that include universal screening for students in Year 2 of Kindergarten to Grade 2, with intensive supports for students who need them. All Kindergarten to Grade 3 educators will be trained in new approaches to reading instruction. This will provide a strong foundation for our youngest learners that is critical to their success in every other subject. Key investments include:

- *Education staff to support reading interventions:* \$65.0 million to hire teachers that can work one-on-one or in small groups with students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 who would benefit from more support in reading;

- *Reading screening tools:* \$12.5 million to provide educators with early reading screening tools to help ensure students with reading difficulties are identified early and supported in the classroom;
- *Licenses for reading intervention supports:* \$12.5 million for reading intervention supports, such as evidence-based programs, licenses and training for educators;
- *Professional assessments:* \$11.5 million to provide professional assessments to support determination of learning accommodations for students;
- *Training:* \$6.0 million to fund third-party experts in early reading to develop focused training materials for Ontario educators to support the significant change of teaching practice towards systematic, evidence-based reading instruction;
- *Third-party community-based literacy programs:* \$1.0 million for United for Literacy to continue their work in collaboration with community organizations, schools, and Indigenous communities to help Kindergarten to Grade 12 students build their skills in reading, writing, and math; and
- *Curriculum implementation supports:* \$0.6 million to support educators implementing the new Language curriculum.

Math - \$71.8 million

Ontario will continue its focus in math in response to the latest EQAO results to support students in meeting provincial math standards. We are doubling the number of math facilitators to work directly with students and teachers in priority schools. A Math Action Team will work directly with leads in every school board that have responsibility for math improvement to develop a plan of action and ensure actions are taken that make a difference for students. Key investments include:

- *Math facilitators:* \$33.3 million for math facilitators in priority schools to support teachers and work directly with students;
- *Digital math tools:* \$15.0 million for expanding access to digital math tools for every student in Grades 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9;
- *Board math leads:* \$13.5 million for school board math leads to lead student math improvement efforts;
- *Online tutoring:* \$6.0 million for one-on-one virtual math tutoring services through TVO's *Mathify* and Le Centre franco's *Eurêka!*; and
- *Additional qualifications in math:* \$4.0 million to continue to subsidize educators completing Additional Qualifications (AQs) in math.

De-streaming - \$103.7 million

Ontario is providing supports for students to be successful in a de-streamed environment and to support the important transition to high school. Key investments include:

- *Staffing to support de-streaming and transition to secondary school:* \$100.0 million for additional teachers in Grades 7 through 10 to work directly with students to provide early and ongoing supports for students to be successful in de-streamed classes; and
- *De-streaming implementation supports:* \$3.7 million to school boards to support Grade 8 students in their transition to a de-streamed Grade 9 program, and support Grade 9 students to be successful in the de-streamed Grade 9 classroom and in preparation for Grade 10 and their senior program.

These funds are in addition to \$602.0 million available through the Learning Opportunities Grant in the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) that provide supports for students who may face barriers to academic achievement.

Job-readiness - \$132.4 million

Ontario is strengthening co-operative education opportunities and expanding job skill programs to ensure students have opportunities for hands-on learning in a variety of careers, including in the skilled trades. Key investments include:

- *Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM):* \$55.6 million to school boards for SHSM programs, through the GSN, including \$13.2 million transfer from PPF to GSN, to support the expansion in the 13 sectors with the strongest focus on technological education and the skilled trades;
- *School College Work Initiative:* \$46.7 million for the School College Work Initiative, including expansion of Dual Credits in key labour market sectors in healthcare, early childhood education, technological education, as well as for level 1 Apprenticeship training;
- *Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP):* \$20.0 million from the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to school boards to support delivery of OYAP, which allows secondary school students to explore and consider careers in the skilled trades as attractive, viable career options;
- *Experiential professional learning in the skilled trades for guidance teacher-counsellors:* \$3.0 million to school boards for the second of three years of funding for school boards to provide experiential professional learning opportunities for all guidance teacher-counsellors to develop an enhanced understanding and benefits of the skilled trades and apprenticeship pathways;

- *Strengthening co-op for students with special education needs:* \$2.1 million to select school boards for the first of three years of funding to provide targeted supports for students with disabilities in cooperative education placements to help them acquire the skills required for success after graduation;
- *Entrepreneurship education pilot projects:* \$1.8 million to school boards for the second of three years of funding to promote entrepreneurship education for students;
- *Recognition of Experiential Learning for Credit (RELC):* \$1.0 million to select school boards for the second of three years of the RELC pilot to allow students to earn a credit towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma for valuable learning that takes place outside of the school day with community partners or organizations;
- *Skilled trades bursary program:* \$1.0 million to school boards for the third of three years of funding for school boards to provide \$1,000 bursaries to Grade 11 or 12 students, including adult learners, who have financial and other barriers to completing their OSSD, are enrolled in a cooperative education program, and have plans to pursue a post-secondary skilled trades pathway;
- *Adult education:* \$0.5 million to support school boards in the implementation of adult education programs, including Personal Support Worker programs and the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students policy;
- *Learn and work bursary:* \$0.4 million to select school boards to provide \$1,000 bursaries to students, including adult learners, who may be facing barriers to success, who are enrolled in a cooperative education program and have financial and other barriers to completing their OSSD; and
- *School board - employer regional networks:* \$0.3 million to create better connections among schools and local employers to prepare students for in-demand jobs.

Mental Health - \$106.2 million

Ontario continues to be a leader in supporting student mental health. Mental Health Leaders in every school board are currently working with system leaders, educators, and community partners to ensure supports are available to students. Supports include up to 180 Mental Health Workers in secondary schools who provide direct early interventions to students struggling with mild to moderate mental health issues. Mental Health workers also partner with educators, principals, and families to support students' continued learning. In addition, they provide referrals to community child/youth mental health and hospitals/health care providers for students experiencing a crisis or with greater mental health needs. Key investments include:

- *Supporting student mental health allocation:* \$36.7 million to foster the learning and well-being of students;

- *Mental health workers in secondary schools*: \$26.5 million for supports including Mental Health Workers in secondary schools who provide direct early interventions to students struggling with mental health issues;
- *Mental health leaders*: \$10.8 million for leads in every school board to work with system leaders, educators, and community partners to support student mental health;
- *Student mental well-being allocation*: \$10.5 million to foster the resilience and mental well-being of all students through student engagement, staff development, stakeholder consultation, programs, services, and planning with community child and youth mental health providers;
- *Mental Health Summer Funding*: \$12 million to ensure students continue to have access to school based mental health professionals and services during the summer of 2023. In addition, the ministry intends to provide \$14M for summer of 2024;
- *School Mental Health Ontario*: \$6.5 million for the ministry's implementation partner for school-based mental health that provides coaching support to all 72 school boards to promote consistent evidence-based, made in Ontario programs/ resources/ tools to standardize school-based mental health across the province; and
- *Well-being and positive school climates allocation*: \$3.2 million to support school boards to meet local needs/priorities to promote wellness.

Human Rights and Inclusion - \$16.7 million

Ontario is committed to upholding and promoting human rights and working with education partners and communities to eliminate barriers faced by marginalized students and families. The ministry will continue to work with its partners in establishing and maintaining a world-class education system that sets high expectations for every student, and that will help to ensure equality of opportunity, meaningful experiences, and successful outcomes. Key investments include:

- *Transportation and stability supports for children and youth in care*: \$6.6 million for school boards to enable students to remain in their home school when they experience a residence change, and to provide stability supports that ensure a positive connection to learning and education;
- *Indigenous graduation coach program*: \$4.8M for select school boards to support Indigenous students in obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (increase of \$0.884M to ensure students have access to programming throughout the academic year as well as the Summer months);
- *Graduation Coach Program for Black Students*: \$4.7 million to school boards to support Black Students in obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma;

- *Addressing Antisemitism*: \$0.3 million to work with third-party partners focused on challenging antisemitism. This is in addition to Ontario including new mandatory learning in elementary school, beginning with the 2023-24 school year, on Holocaust education in the Grade 6 curriculum to help younger students gain a deeper understanding of the significance of the Holocaust and combat rising cases of antisemitism in Ontario schools; and
- *Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship Program*: \$0.3 million to select school boards to support entrepreneurial skill development for Indigenous students.

Special Education - \$3.4 billion

Ontario will continue to support students with special education needs and disabilities, so they have access to the supports they need to succeed in school and beyond. Over the past several years, the ministry has invested in direct student supports, educator professional learning, and new resources for families and educators. To support the action plan and to address the unique barriers that students with special education needs face, the government is making major investments in special education. Key investments include:

- *Special Education Grant*: \$3.4 billion for the additional costs of the programs, services, or equipment required by students with special education needs.
 - Starting in 2023-24, this includes *Early Math Intervention for Students with Special Education Needs*: \$8.3 million to help increase student engagement, close learning gaps, and ensure students are prepared for foundational Grade 9 math and early preparation for secondary school;
- *Summer learning*: \$10.0 million for school boards to deliver transition programs and additional staffing during the summer of 2023 for students with special education needs to support the transition into the 2023-24 school year;
- *Removing Barriers for Students with Disabilities*: \$6.0 million of application-based funding for school boards to implement projects that prevent and remove accessibility barriers experienced by students with special education needs / disabilities;
- *Online Autism Training Programing*: \$4.5 million provided to the Geneva Centre for Autism for online training opportunities to build educator and education worker capacity to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other special education needs;
- *Additional Qualifications in Special Education*: \$1.4 million to continue to subsidize educators and principals to complete Additional Qualifications (AQs) in special education;

- *Developmental Disabilities Pilot: Student Transitions*: \$0.5 million to support select school boards to explore and implement successful practices in transitioning students with developmental disabilities to work through an intensive job placement program;
- *Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO)*: \$0.8 million to strengthen educators' capacity to support students with learning disabilities and address relevant OHRC Right to Read report recommendations; and
- *Post-Secondary Opportunities & Transition Supports for Students who are D/deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)*: \$0.2M to support a Deaf Youth Hub where youth can access resources to support a transition from high school education to post-secondary pathways including employment.

Student Safety - \$29.9 million

Student safety and well-being is a priority for this province. In 2023-24, Ontario is investing in supports for students to help them address personal and academic challenges hindering learning achievement, as well as resources for youth to create meaningful connections and a sense of belonging within their schools and communities. Key investments include:

- *Focus on Youth (FOY)*: \$ 10.0 million to immediately support student safety by providing a top-up investment to the FOY program to address incidents of school violence and promote inclusion and engagement in schools. The 24 participating FOY school boards will receive an increase of \$2.4 million for FOY in 2023-24, (in 2022-23, participating boards received \$7.6 million with a top up of \$2.9 million); and
- *Safe Schools*: \$19.9 million is being provided through the GSN for additional services that support school safety, student well-being and maintain clean schools.

Student Transportation - \$111.0 million

Following extensive consultations with the sector during the last two years, including Student Transportation Advisory Group, the government is introducing a new, modern needs and benchmark-based funding formula for student transportation in the 2023-24 school year.

The new funding formula establishes funding criteria to improve equitable access to student transportation services across Ontario.

For more information about the new funding formula and transition support, please refer to 2023:B06 - Student Transportation Grant – Grants for Student Needs 2023-24.

Capital

There are several capital initiatives underway with the support of various partners including school boards, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Infrastructure Ontario. We are

focusing on how we can all work together to build modern schools faster, better utilize school capacity and enhance accountability & transparency. Further information regarding these initiatives, including the next round of the Capital Priorities Program, will be shared in the near future.

The ministry is committed to supporting healthy and safe learning environments and will continue to invest \$1.4 billion for school renewal for the 2023-24 school year.

Remote Learning Administration - \$10.1 million

Effective with the 2023-24 school year, school boards will have the option to deliver remote learning instruction for elementary and secondary students as it has proven beneficial for some students. School boards may offer remote learning instruction directly, partner with another school board to provide remote learning instruction on their behalf, or work with other school boards to deliver remote learning collaboratively.

- *Funding for Remote Learning Administration:* \$10.1 million is being provided to school boards with remote learning enrolment to support the cost of salary and benefits of administrative staff (i.e., principal, vice-principal, school office support, information technology (IT)).

These are just a few of the key investments we are making in the 2023-24 school year to support student success. Additional information regarding investments can be found in the following B-Memos:

- Memorandum 2023:B04 - 2023-24 Grants for Student Needs Funding
- Memorandum 2023:B05 - 2023-24 Priorities and Partnerships Funding
- Memorandum 2023:B06 - Student Transportation Grant – Grants for Student Needs 2023-24
- Memorandum 2023:B07 – Capital funding for the 2023-24 School Year

These steps will build on investments to date and support the education system by focusing investments to have the greatest impact in the classroom and on students. Thank you for your collaboration and support as we work together to support students across Ontario.

Sincerely,

Stephen Lecce

Minister of Education

Nancy Naylor

Deputy Minister

- c: President, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO)
Executive Director, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO)
President, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
Executive Director, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
President, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
Executive Director, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
President, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
Executive Director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
President, Association des gestionnaires de l'éducation franco-ontarienne (AGÉFO)
Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des gestionnaires de l'éducation franco-ontarienne (AGÉFO)
Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
Executive Director, Conseil ontarien des directions de l'éducation de langue française (CODELF)
President, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
President, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
General Secretary, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
President, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
President, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
Chair, Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW)
Chair, Education Workers' Alliance of Ontario (EWAO)
President of OSBCU, Canadian Union of Public Employees – Ontario (CUPE-ON)
Co-ordinator, Canadian Union of Public Employees – Ontario (CUPE-ON)
President, Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes (ADFO)
Executive Director, Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes (ADFO)
President, Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO)
Executive Director, Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO)
President, Ontario Principals' Council (OPC)
Executive Director, Ontario Principals' Council (OPC)