

Ministry of Education

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Ministère de l'Éducation

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2024:B09**Date:** April 26, 2024**Memorandum to:** Directors of Education
School Authorities**From:** Yael Ginsler
Assistant Deputy Minister
Student Achievement DivisionDidier Pomerleau
Assistant Deputy Minister
French-Language Education DivisionClayton La Touche
Assistant Deputy Minister
Student Support and Field Services Division**Subject:** 2024-25 Math and Literacy Supports

During the 2023-24 school year, school boards across the province demonstrated an unwavering commitment and ongoing efforts toward the shared goal of improving student achievement in math and literacy.

Building on the work this past year, this memo provides an outline of the continuation of funding to school boards for the 2024-25 school year to provide focused supports in the classroom and at home to help students in building the math and literacy skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

Ontario continues to implement historic investments and student supports alongside a modernized curriculum to ensure students are prepared for their future. For the 2024-25 school year, the government is investing more than \$28.6 billion in Core Education Funding to ensure two million students receive a quality back to basics education. This is an increase of nearly \$745 million compared to last year.

In addition to Core Education Funding, Ontario is also investing \$402.9 million for Responsive Education Programs (REP) and Funding for External Partners (FEP), which together now comprise what was formerly known as Priorities and Partnership Funding (PPF). This includes over \$70 million in math and over \$95 million in literacy supports. These investments are reflected in Memorandum [B06: 2024–25 Responsive Education Programs \(formerly Priorities and Partnerships Funding\)](#) and include support for

teachers with specialized expertise in literacy instruction, Math Facilitators in priority school classrooms, a Board Math Lead in every school board, and the deployment of a ministry Math Action Team to support school boards, working directly with Board Math Leads to drive change and improve math achievement.

School boards are encouraged to share this memorandum with math and literacy leadership teams in your board to provide guidance on requirements and expectations for the upcoming school year.

Math Achievement Action Plan (Over \$70M)

Board Math Lead

For the 2024-25 school year, school boards are being provided with funding for a dedicated Board Math Lead who will inform, monitor, and report progress towards math achievement and improvement targets as well as lead board-wide actions to meet these targets. This means that individuals holding this position should be dedicated to math improvement efforts full-time.

Board Math Leads must have:

- Completed a Supervisory Officer Qualification Program (SOQP) unless an exemption request is submitted by the school board and approved by the ministry. Exemption requests must be submitted through the [2024-25 Math Board Lead Supervisory Officer Exemption Request Form](#) by **August 12, 2024**, to be considered.
 - **New for 2024-25:** All exemptions requested must include a plan that clearly articulates how the board will support and build capacity for math to better prepare senior executive leaders as part of ongoing succession planning for future years.
 - Note: All prior exemptions granted for the 2023-24 school year are considered to have expired as of August 31, 2024. All boards must submit a new exemption request for the 2024-25 school year.
- An Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) certificate.
- Demonstrated system leadership and success in promoting student academic achievement and specialized expertise in math where possible (e.g., hold specialist qualifications in math, experience in facilitating and/or writing additional qualification courses in math).
- Experience in instructional coaching, building educator and administrator capacity in mathematics teaching, and designing and monitoring school and board learning.
- Demonstrated experience in leading and implementing system change.
- Demonstrated knowledge and/or understanding of collaborative approaches to promote inclusion and effectively support the diverse needs of students, including implementing universal design for learning and special education supports in the classroom.

Board Math Leads will be expected to:

Plan

- Develop a board Math Achievement Action Plan, based on requirements provided by the ministry, endorsed by the Director of Education and trustees of the board and submitted to the ministry.
- Work with superintendents and principals responsible for the Student Achievement Plan on developing and monitoring school improvement goals and actions aligned with the Math Achievement Action Plan.
- Develop meaningful and measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including KPIs for students receiving special education programs and/or services, and strategies at the board, school, and classroom level, inspired by the Taking Action in Mathematics Framework, to ensure accountability for math academic achievement and role of math facilitators.

Implement

- Lead board-wide efforts to meet targets, including intentional actions leading to improvement in student academic achievement in math.
- Lead math curriculum implementation and the use of instructional and assessment practices with a proven track record of enhancing student academic achievement.
- Develop a communication plan for the board and school to share the Math Achievement Action Plan and results in math with parents and local community.
- Develop and facilitate professional learning opportunities for teachers, principals and school math facilitators as well as other educators that support student academic achievement (e.g., special education and Literacy Leads).
- Attend ministry sessions to share practices and progress towards improvement efforts (including data and other evidence) and plans to further improve academic achievement.

Monitor and Report

- Submit Math Achievement Action Plan within timelines prescribed by the ministry.
- Meet with the Math Achievement Action Team to ensure the initial Math Achievement Action Plan is in place and endorsed.
- Monitor the board Math Achievement Action Plan and provide regular updates on progress to the Math Action Team, Director of Education and to the Board of Trustees (e.g., monthly).
- Provide ongoing information to the ministry on progress towards math achievement based on identified KPIs.

Please send the name and contact information for your Board Math Lead to math@ontario.ca as soon as possible, and no later than Friday, **August 30, 2024**.

School Math Facilitator

School boards are also being provided with funding for dedicated School Math Facilitators to work in Grades 3, 6, and 9 classrooms in identified priority schools (see section below on Priority Schools).

School Math Facilitators must have:

- An Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) certificate.
- Expertise and qualifications in math.
- Experience teaching math in multiple grades.
- Experience working with teachers on monitoring progress towards improvement targets.
- Experience using instructional and assessment practices with a proven track record of enhancing student academic achievements.
- Deep knowledge of the Ontario math curriculum (2020 and 2021).
- Special education qualifications and/or experience supporting students receiving special education programs and/or services, including knowledge of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Differentiated Instruction (DI) and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP), is not mandatory, but would be an asset.

To support positive student achievement in priority schools, School Math Facilitators will be expected to:

- Support student learning in priority schools in Grades 3, 6 and 9 classrooms.
- Support math academic achievement efforts in alignment with the school and board improvement goals and actions.
- Provide in-class facilitation to strengthen math knowledge and pedagogy.
- Share resources and effective practices.
- Collaborate with classroom educators to identify students' strengths, needs and determine appropriate strategies, accommodations and/or interventions which may also include Resources and/or Special Education teachers.
- Work directly with students who require additional support by using high-impact and early intervention strategies.
- Attend ministry sessions to share practices and progress towards achievement efforts and results (including data and evidence).

Please send the name and contact information for your School Math Facilitators to math@ontario.ca by Friday, **August 30, 2024**.

Ministry Math Action Team

To further support math improvement, the ministry Math Action Team will continue to support boards and work directly with Board Math Leads on their Math Achievement Action Plans. This will include working with Board Math Leads during prescheduled meetings focused on reviewing their Math Achievement Action Plans and providing guidance to respond to trends identified through regular updates.

Achieving measurable outcomes on key performance indicators leading to improved math learning and achievement will continue to be a focus, along with the explicit implementation of high-impact teaching practices.

Priority Schools

In response to feedback regarding the need for stability and ongoing improvement, the priority schools list in each board for the 2024-25 school year will remain the same as 2023-24. This is inclusive of priority school exchange requests received from boards this school year.

School boards interested in exchanging schools within their current list of priority schools should submit their request through the [2024-25 Math Achievement Action Plan Priority School Exchange Form](#). All exchange requests must identify the rationale for the requested change(s) in priority school(s), including details on how a school math facilitator would benefit the school(s) proposed to be added. As part of the request, the school board must also provide a detailed plan on how the board will facilitate continued positive student achievement in math for the school(s) proposed to be removed from the list of priority schools.

The ministry has prepared a suggested list of schools using 2022-23 EQAO data for your board to consider when submitting school exchange requests. The list of your current priority schools, as well as suggested schools to consider based on 2022-23 EQAO results will be shared with your school board in a separate communication. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, using information provided by the board as well as available data. Exchange requests should be received **by September 30, 2024**, to be considered.

Additional Continuing Investments

Additional details are outlined in the [B06: 2024–25 Responsive Education Programs \(formerly Priorities and Partnerships Funding\) memo](#) and the [B05: 2024–25 Core Education Funding \(formerly Grants for Student Needs\) memo](#).

The ministry is also continuing to support math improvement through the following investments:

- Additional Qualification in Math (\$4 million): Teachers will continue to have access to subsidies to complete additional qualifications in math. Each subsidy is provided at \$650 for educators who will have completed eligible courses between September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2025. School boards are invited to submit an application through the 2024-25 [Math AQ Application Form](#) by June 28, 2024.
- Digital Math Tools (\$15 million): Funding will be made available to school boards to offer digital math tools aligned with the Ontario curriculum to support students, parents and educators. School boards are encouraged to procure digital math tools listed on the [OECM digital math tool vendor of record](#).

- Continued access to one-to-one, live and teacher-led virtual tutoring services for students in English and French through [TVO's Mathify](#) and [Le Centre franco's Eurêka!](#).

In the 2023-24 year, the ministry also dedicated \$8.32 million to support school boards in implementing early interventions in math for students with special education needs (via GSN funding). This funding is intended to support achievement in math for students receiving special education programs and/or services with the implementation of the de-streamed math curriculum. This funding will continue in the CEF in 2024-25.

Literacy (Over \$95M)

Early Reading Enhancements: Early Reading Screening Tools

The ministry is investing \$12.5M million in 2024-25, to continue to fund evidence-based early reading screening for all students in Year 2 of Kindergarten to Grade 2 in response to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Right to Read report and to ensure students have the necessary foundational reading skills critical to future success.

In alignment with [Policy/Program Memorandum 168](#) on reading instruction and early reading screening, boards must use ministry-approved tools for mandatory early reading screening. School boards have access to a list of ministry-approved early reading screening tools through OECM's Vendor of Record (VOR) arrangement for the [Early Reading Screening Tools Agreement](#). The following are ministry-approved early reading screening tools on the OECM VOR from which boards may use this funding:

English Language:

- Acadience Learning Inc. (Acadience Reading tool)
- NCS Pearson Inc. (AimsWebPlus tool)
- Nelson Education Ltd. (easyCBM tool)

French Language:

- Acadience Learning Inc. (Acadience Reading Français)

School boards are responsible for the implementation of early reading screening in accordance with 2022-26 central agreements.

Licenses and Supports for Reading Programs and Interventions

The ministry is continuing to provide \$12.5M in funding in the 2024-25 school year to enable school boards to purchase licenses, resources and professional learning to support the provision of systematic, evidence-based reading programs and interventions for struggling readers, including but not limited to students with reading disabilities. Effective implementation of evidence-based reading instruction, includes:

- Determining the learner profile through early reading screening and/or other reading assessment
- Incorporating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into instruction, with differentiated instruction as needed
- Delivering tiered interventions to support all students to meet grade-level curricular expectations.
- Using systematic and explicit reading instruction strategies
- Teaching the foundational reading skills, and
- Progress monitoring through ongoing evidence-based reading assessment

As part of the Ministry of Education's commitment to ensure Ontario students build stronger literacy skills, the ministry is working to develop a Vendor of Record (VOR) for scientific evidence-based reading programs and interventions to support direct, explicit and systematic reading instruction across all Tiers and grades. The VOR is anticipated for release in Summer, 2024 at the earliest.

Education Staff to Support Reading Interventions

Ontario is investing \$68.68M in 2024-25 to continue funding for teachers with specialized expertise in evidence-based systematic and explicit instruction focused on foundational reading skills to support students in Kindergarten to Grade 3.

School boards will receive funding for teachers who can work one-on-one or in small groups with students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 who would benefit from more support in reading. These supports may include providing direct Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading interventions and other supports required by the school or board on reading and literacy-related initiatives.

New in 2024-25, and in accordance with centrally negotiated terms (2022-2026), these reading specialist teachers will also provide literacy and language curriculum instruction to students in Grade 1, Grade 2 and eligible Kindergarten classrooms while the classroom teacher administers early reading screening to individual students in the early part of the school year, per [Policy/Program Memorandum 168](#). Each year, all students who do not meet the benchmark in the Fall screening will be screened a second time. This second screening may be administered by the specialist teacher, in accordance with collective agreements.

Individuals hired in these positions should have:

- Specialized expertise in scientific, evidence-based literacy instruction that emphasizes foundational knowledge and skills, as well as training in providing direct Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading interventions;
- An awareness and experience with assessments that inform instruction based on intensity, duration and frequency of skill required; and
- Expertise in a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction.

Expert-Developed Resources and Training Materials

The ministry will continue to fund the development of educator resources and training materials to support implementation of the revised elementary Language/Français and Grade 9 English/Français curriculum, early reading screening, and to support implementation of the upcoming updates to the kindergarten curriculum. This includes funding for Dyslexia Canada to continue to develop, in partnership with International Dyslexia Association – Ontario, resources and training materials. In 2023-24, Dyslexia Canada developed a website (onlit.org) that provides teachers with resources and professional training modules. Educators have been accessing resources that are added to the website resource library continually and attending virtual events. Through this website, many educators have also received individualized support for their differentiated learning needs in reading pedagogy.

The ministry is also continuing to fund the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years, at \$750,000 per year, to develop resources and training opportunities to strengthen capacity of educators supporting students with learning disabilities and struggling readers.

Additional Continuing Investments

In addition, \$11.5 million continues to be available for professional assessments, including literacy-related professional assessments such as speech and language professional assessments. This funding has now been transferred to the Core Education Funding.

Additional details and board funding allocations are found in [B06: 2024–25 Responsive Education Programs \(formerly Priorities and Partnerships Funding\) memo](#).

Thank you for your commitment to mathematics and literacy achievement and improving outcomes for your students.

Sincerely,

Yael Ginsler
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Assistant Deputy Minister
French-Language Education Division

Clayton La Touche
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