



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

OPSBA Review of 2016-17 Grants for Student Needs (GSN) and Related Announcements

On March 24, 2016, the Ministry of Education issued Ministry Memorandum 2016:B6. This memorandum provides highlights of the 2016-17 Grants for Student Needs (GSN). The GSN for 2016-17 is estimated at \$22.9 billion which is an increase of \$300 million from the previous year. Highlights are as follows:

- The GSN includes funding to reflect the **central labour agreements**:
 - Increase in the **salary benchmarks** for teaching and non-teaching staff of 1.25 percent for the entire **2016-17** school year
 - Projected the savings from the **Earned Leave plans**, which apply to teachers represented by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) or l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
 - Changes to how **employee benefits** are funded through the GSN in 2016-17 will be made once the 2014-15 benefit costs are determined through the data collection and validation process that is currently underway
 - One-time contributions to cover **provincial benefits plans** start-up costs and to establish a Claims Fluctuation Reserve for each trust are being funded by the province and provided through Education Programs - Other (EPO) grants starting in the current school year and continuing in **2016-17**
 - One-time funding will be provided through the **2015-16** GSN for the **early payout of retirement gratuities**.
- Also related to the central labour agreements the **2015-16** (current year) GSN is being amended as follows:
 - Funding for the **one percent lump sum payment** will be provided through a table amount in the GSN
 - The Teacher Qualifications and Experience Allocation and the Early Childhood Educator Qualifications and Experience Allocation will recognize the **restoration of grid movement** retroactive to September 1, 2015

- Projected the savings from the **Earned Leave plans**, which apply to teachers represented by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) or l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO).
- An investment of \$1.2M in the Per-Pupil Amount (PPA) Allocation of the **First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Supplement** in 2016-17 to ensure that all boards receive a base amount of funding. This will give all boards resources to establish a position at a supervisory officer level that is dedicated to supporting implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework.
- Funding of \$6M to support **Board Action Plans on First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education** will be transferred to the GSN from Education Programs - Other (EPO).
- As a point of clarification, it should be noted that Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten pupils are eligible to generate funding from the **Native Languages Allocation** for elementary pupils, provided that the programs in which the pupils are enrolled meet the requirements for average daily length of program.
- The Ministry has analyzed the **2011 National Household Survey and Census data** and determined that the data quality is sufficient to warrant updates to the Per Pupil Allocation in the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Supplement and two components of the Language Grant so in 2016-17, the Ministry will begin a three-year phase-in of these updates.
- With respect to **capital funding**:
 - The Ministry intends to make amendments to the **regulation 444/98, Disposition of Surplus Real Property** as follows:
 - double the current surplus property circulation period from 90 days to 180 days
 - expand the list of public entities to receive notification of surplus property disposition
 - have all board-to-board sales be at fair market value
 - introduce a maximum rate a school board can charge for leasing a school to another board
 - clarify that private education providers are not eligible to lease surplus property unless the property has first been circulated to listed public entities
 - The **Capital Priorities program** serves as the primary means for funding school capital projects required to address accommodation pressures, replace facilities in poor repair, support the consolidation of underutilized facilities, and provide facilities for French language rights holders in under-served areas of the province and the Ministry expects to begin the next round of Capital Priorities in May 2016
 - The Ministry introduced the **School Consolidation Capital (SCC) program**, as one of the pillars of the School Board Efficiencies & Modernization program in 2014-15 to further assist school boards in managing their excess capacity and right-sizing their capital

footprint and the Ministry is currently reviewing board submissions for the second round of SCC funding and expects to announce funding approvals in spring 2016

- In 2016-17, \$500M will be allocated to school boards through the **School Condition Improvement (SCI) program** to address the significant backlog in school renewal needs.
- In 2016-17, the Student **Transportation Grant** will be increased by 2 percent.
- In 2016-17, the Ministry will again provide a 2 percent cost benchmark update to the non-staff portion of the School Operations Allocation benchmark to assist boards in managing the increases in **commodity prices (natural gas, facility insurance, and other costs)**
- Funding will increase by 3.5 percent for **electricity costs**.
- The Ministry is also introducing several new accountability measures:
 - As announced in the memorandum 2015: B07 - Grants for Student Needs Funding for 2015-16, the Ministry will begin to take action to ensure **compliance with the Full-day Kindergarten (FDK) and Primary (grades 1 to 3)** provisions of the Class Size regulation (O. Reg. 132/12)
 - In the memorandum 2015: B07 - Grants for Student Needs Funding for 2015-16, the Ministry informed boards of its intent to review board compliance with the enveloping provisions of the **School Board Administration and Governance Grant**. The Ministry recognizes that, as a result of collective bargaining, boards may face extraordinary costs in 2015-16. The review of compliance is therefore deferred to 2016-17.
- Several existing Ministry programs will be transferred into the GSN in 2016-17 as follows:
 - Funding for **library staff**, projected to be \$10M in 2016-17, supports the hiring of teacher-librarians and/or library technicians to support the learning of elementary school students
 - Funding for the **Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA)** Local Capacity initiative, projected to be \$3.2M in 2016-17, supports school boards to build capacity to better manage information to inform board decisions, school administration, and classroom practice
 - Funding for **Outdoor Education**, \$17M in 2016-17, provides elementary and secondary students with learning experiences in the outdoors
 - Funding for **Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching Contacts**, \$7.6M in 2016-17, provides boards with one Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching contact per school board.
- As a reminder, the following **funding model reforms** began in prior years will continue to be implemented:
 - 2016-17 is the second year of a three-year phase-in of **School Board Efficiencies and Modernization (SBEM)** measures, introduced in 2015-16

- In 2014-15, after extensive consultations with stakeholder representatives, including the Special Education Funding Working Group, the Ministry began the four-year implementation of a new funding model for what will now be called the Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount (DSENA) Allocation (formerly **High Needs Amount**)
- In 2014-15, the Ministry began phasing in a new allocation method for the **School Board Administration and Governance Grant**, as recommended by the School Board Administration and Governance Advisory Group (BAAG). 2016-17 is the third year of the four-year phase-in.