



ONTARIO PUBLIC  
SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION

**Leading Education's Advocates**

**Ontario Public School Boards' Association**  
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Cathy Abraham  
President

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Executive Director

June 4, 2021

The Honourable Stephen Lecce  
Minister of Education

Dear Minister:

Since the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) and Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF) were announced in early May, OPSBA and its member boards have spent the past month reviewing the intricate details of the many memos and their funding information. We do note and appreciate the support given towards many funding lines, including mental health and back-to-school plans, which will help boards to continue offering programs and services to students.

However, as boards are now making final budget recommendations and decisions for the 2021-22 school year, there is one issue that is consistently being discussed around board tables across the province. This is the half-year funding provision that was noted in Memo B07 Planning for the 2021-22 School Year, which stated, "*At this time, school boards are expected to budget for approximately half of the above resources to support the first half of the school year, including access to one per cent from their reserves.*"


It is becoming extremely clear that this is a problem. School boards are being asked to plan for a full year but will initially receive only 50 percent of the funding, with a review to be conducted to determine the allocation of the remaining funds. This is highly problematic when funds are being used for staffing purposes given that half-year positions are often difficult to fill, and extremely difficult to fill in Northern and rural areas.

Programming and support for our students requires and demands an annual funding model.

As noted in our [GSN submission](#), "*school boards require strong, predictable and equitable education funding in order to set the conditions that promote and sustain improved student achievement and well-being.*" A significant disruption to student learning is a potential outcome if the second half of the funding is not received by school boards.

We strongly ask you to reconsider this request and inform school boards of your decision as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Abraham". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

cc.

Nancy Naylor, Deputy Minister

Andrew Davis, Assistant Deputy Minister, Education Labour and Finance Division

Jeff Brennan, Director of Stakeholder Relations, Minister's Office

*The Ontario Public School Boards' Association represents English public district school boards and public school authorities across Ontario, which together serve more than 1.3 million public elementary and secondary students. The Association advocates on behalf of the best interests and needs of the public school system in Ontario. OPSBA is seen as the credible voice of public education in Ontario and is routinely called on by the provincial government for input and advice on legislation and the impact of government policy directions.*