

# 2024-25 Education Funding Consultation Guide

September 2023

## **INTRODUCTION**

For 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 Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments, credit accumulation, and graduation rates.

The government has also implemented the first set of regulations following the passage of *The Better Schools and Outcomes Act*. These new measures will focus on getting back to the basics of education: strengthening reading, writing and math, and other STEM disciplines. These reforms include the new authority for our government to set binding priorities on school boards that focus on boosting student achievement focused on reading, writing and math. To improve school board transparency, school board plans will be benchmarked against system-wide performance indicators.

For the 2023-24 school year, total public education funding is projected to be \$27.6 billion. This is the largest investment in Ontario's history. This includes a \$693 million increase in base Grants for Student Needs (GSN) funding compared to the year prior, or a 2.7 per cent increase.

For more information about the current education funding model, please see [Education funding, 2023-24](#) on the Ministry of Education's website.

## **ABOUT THIS CONSULTATION**

As in previous years, the government remains committed to discussing education funding reform in Ontario with education stakeholders through a consultation process that allows stakeholders to provide the benefit of their expertise, experience, and ideas. This year's guide focuses on two areas:

1. Strengthening accountability, enhancing transparency and reducing complexity
2. Modernization of the Special Education Grant

However, you may also submit feedback on education funding topics not outlined in this guide.

To ensure your feedback is considered, please forward your electronic submission by **October 27, 2023** to: [EDULABFINANCE@ontario.ca](mailto:EDULABFINANCE@ontario.ca). If you have questions about this consultation, please send them to the email address noted above.

## **STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENHANCING TRANSPARENCY**

Ontario is among the top performing education systems nationally and internationally. However, there is variability in how the education system performs across the province, including in student outcomes, governance practices, and approaches to engaging and sharing information with families.

On April 17, 2023, the government introduced *The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act* which will build on the progress Ontario has made as a world class education jurisdiction and on the continued efforts to modernize our education system by ensuring a renewed focus and commitment to student achievement.

The government is focused on ensuring school boards deliver on provincial priorities on student achievement and increasing accountability and transparency on board performance and funding.

### **Considerations:**

1. What reforms can be made to the GSN funding formula to:
  - i) reduce its complexity?
  - ii) enhance the transparency on how school board funding is used?
2. What opportunities are there to strengthen accountability while balancing administrative requirements?
3. What opportunities exist to better communicate to taxpayers:
  - i) how GSN funding is allocated to school boards?
  - ii) how school boards use GSN funding in alignment with government priorities?

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION – SPECIAL INCIDENCE PORTION (SIP) AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AMOUNT (SEA)**

On April 17, 2023, the Ministry of Education announced that a modernization review of key components of the Special Education Grant (SEG) was being undertaken. During the 2023-24 school year the ministry will conduct a review of the Special Incidence Portion (SIP) and Special Equipment Amount (SEA) allocations. This review seeks to improve the SIP and SEA allocations by streamlining processes, reducing administrative burden and continuing to meet student needs.

The review presents an important opportunity to transform the way funding is allocated and used and to ensure that supports on the ground are more closely aligned with student needs and our goals for student achievement through a modern process that is accountable and transparent. In addition, it will provide an opportunity to evaluate the existing allocation models, to assess student needs and outcomes, and to develop solutions that will address issues and inefficiencies that are identified.

For further information on the SIP and SEA allocations, please see the [2022-23 SIP Guidelines](#) and the [2023-24 SEA Guidelines](#).

### **Considerations:**

What reforms can be made to SIP and SEA to:

- i. Reduce administrative burden and streamline processes?
- ii. Recognize the complexity of student needs across the different special education delivery models (example: self-contained classroom setting versus fully integrated setting)?
- iii. Ensure the allocations are meeting their intended purpose?
- iv. Support flexibility to meet local priorities?

## **CONCLUSION**

As always, we thank you for your continued collaboration and partnership to support Ontario students. We remain committed to working closely with you to facilitate the next school year, with the best interest of Ontario's students in mind.

Thank you for taking the time to read this guide, and we look forward to receiving your submission.