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Trustees' Association

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March 29, 2016

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Chairpersons and Directors of Education  
**FROM:** Wally Easton, Policy Advisor - Finance  
**SUBJECT:** 2016-17 Grants for Student Needs Announcements

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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:

### **Funding to reflect the central labour agreements:**

- increase in salary benchmarks for teaching and non-teaching staff of 1.25 percent for the entire 2016-17 school year
- reduction for projected 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). A reconciliation will occur at the end of the year and savings not realized will be reimbursed to boards.
- 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 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
- Reduction for projected 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). A reconciliation will occur at the end of the year and savings not realized will be reimbursed to boards.

**Other funding:**

- an investment of \$1.2M in the per-pupil allocation of the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Supplement 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.
- updates to the per pupil allocation in the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Supplement and two components of the Language Grant based on the 2011 census data will be phased in over three-years.
- the Student Transportation Grant will be increased by 2 percent.
- 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)
- increase of 3.5 percent for electricity costs.

- accountability measures previously announced:
  - i. as announced in 2015, 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)
  - ii. in 2015 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 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 and 2016–17 is the third year of the four-year phase-in.

**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

In 2014-15 the Ministry introduced the School Consolidation Capital (SCC) program as part of the School Board Efficiencies & Modernization program 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.

**2016-17 School Year Education Programs – Other (EPO) Funding**

To facilitate school boards' budget planning for the 2016-17 school year, the Ministry confirms that \$104.1 million (\$214.1 million in 2015-16) of EPO funding will be allocated to school boards and school authorities to support ministry priorities. Within this amount:

- \$79.4 million will be announced shortly.
- \$24.7 million to be confirmed later in the year.

In the coming weeks, the ministry will outline the details of the Renewed Mathematics Strategy – a roadmap that leverages all of the knowledge and evidence that contributes to our collective understanding of the improvement process. An EPO B-Memo specifically on mathematics will be released in the coming weeks and will outline the Strategy's funding model, its assumptions and the specific allocations for each district school board.

The 2016-17 GSN Technical Paper, board by board estimates, and other information regarding funding for 2016-17 is available on the Ministry of Education website.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 416-932-9460 or email: [weaston@ocsta.on.ca](mailto:weaston@ocsta.on.ca).