

2019-20 Education Funding Guide

In June 2018, Ontario elected a government committed to restoring accountability and trust in Ontario's public institutions and finances.

Since coming to office, we have taken a number of positive steps to improve our province's education system. Currently, we are engaging in broad public consultations that will ensure that everyone interested has an opportunity to provide feedback and help shape the future of education in Ontario.

I believe educating our children is the most important job in the world. Here at the Ministry of Education we are committed to working together to achieve student success, while spending taxpayer dollars efficiently and with greater accountability. We are also looking to our education partners to provide input on how we can achieve these efficiencies throughout the sector.

Together, we will prepare Ontario students for success, improve their academic achievement and equip them with the tools they need to face the realities of today and the possibilities of the future.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Lisa Thompson,
Minister of Education

Each year, using the expertise and insight of our partners, the ministry works to address funding challenges and opportunities for Ontario's students and families. Using this engagement guide, we are again requesting feedback that will help us to deliver vital education programs and services efficiently.

Ontario's education system is strong in large part because of the leadership and advocacy of our school boards and education stakeholders. As Deputy Minister, I look forward to further strengthening our partnership and working collaboratively on behalf of students.

Thank you in advance for sharing your valuable insights and ideas as part of this year's education funding engagement.

Sincerely,

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister of Education

Introduction

The government recently released a line-by-line review of government spending, [*Managing Transformation - A Modernization Action Plan for Ontario*](#), undertaken by Ernst & Young LLP. The review reveals rapid expenditure growth across key sectors and public programs under the previous government. The review was based on analysis of government financial and program data, and builds on the work of Ontario's Auditor General and the Financial Accountability Officer.

The government is committed to improving accountability and making efficient and effective use of taxpayer dollars. The EY review outlined an objective of efficiency gains in the order of four cents on the dollar to be found in the governments' expenditures. As such, the government will be looking to our partners in the education sector to find efficiencies and improve accountability.

As Ontario's deficit has ballooned to \$15-billion, the line-by-line review recommends a number of large-scale opportunities to transform programs and services to ensure sustainability and value for money. This discussion guide will ask questions about how to start thinking about education funding reform in Ontario, including more efficient price setting and outcomes-based funding.

For more information about the current education funding model, please see the [2018-19 Education Funding](#) page of the Ministry of Education's website.

About this Engagement

Education partners are being provided with an opportunity to submit feedback about education funding, through written electronic submissions, on the following four topics:

- Efficient Price Setting;
- Outcomes-Based Funding;
- Accountability and Value-for-Money; and
- Other Education Funding Efficiencies.

You may also submit feedback on education funding topics not outlined in this guide. In order to ensure your feedback is considered, please forward your electronic submission by **Friday, December 14, 2018** to: EDULABFINANCE@ontario.ca arranged by topic.

Should you have any questions about this engagement guide, please send them to: EDULABFINANCE@ontario.ca.

Other Education Engagements

The government has recently embarked on the largest education consultation in Ontario's history and is inviting everyone – parents, students, educators and interested individuals or organizations – to provide feedback on the education system in Ontario. The consultation includes open submissions, an online survey and telephone town halls.

For more information, please visit the consultation [website](#).

Efficient Price Setting

The modern role of the ministry is as a system funder and steward. One of the best ways to ensure strong delivery of service and return on investment is to set efficient prices. Parts of the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) are already consistent with the concept of efficient price, for example, class size funding based on averages and funding based on the efficient use of space.

Considerations

1. Are there areas of the GSN which currently use efficient price setting which could be re-evaluated for further efficiencies?
2. Are there allocations of the GSN which currently do not use efficient price setting, but should be considered for reform?

Outcomes-Based Funding

Outcomes-based funding is intended to aid students by encouraging schools to focus more on providing supports and clearing the obstacles that prevent some students from achieving their full potential and graduating.

Although the GSN was not designed as an outcomes-based model, portions of it could be targeted to reducing gaps in student outcomes, which could result in better and more equitable results for students and their families.

Considerations

1. Are there areas of the GSN which could be reformed to an outcomes-based model (e.g. Learning Opportunities Grant)? How would the outcome be measured?
2. How can the funding model do a better job of indicating whether the investments made have maximized returns in achievement?

Accountability and Value-For-Money

The ministry is focused on ensuring that taxpayers get the best possible service for their money. It is also focused on ensuring that funding is being used for its intended purpose. With limited resources, it means keeping the focus on key priorities and making strategic choices about how best to use resources to improve student achievement.

Considerations

1. Are there parts of the funding formula that are not core to the delivery of education in Ontario? If so, what are they?
2. Should the government explore ways for alternative access to non-core programming?
3. Should the ministry undertake a review of targeted areas of the funding formula to increase accountability and value-for-money? If so, what are they?

Other Education Funding Efficiencies

The ministry continues to evaluate opportunities to streamline, review and strategically bundle education funding – both in the GSN and through other transfer payments – that support the delivery of education in Ontario.

Considerations

1. Are there areas of overlap or duplication within the GSN? If so, what are they?
2. Are there areas of overlap or duplication with other funding streams (e.g. Education Programs – Other, other ministries, other levels of government)? If so, what are they?

Conclusion

As all effective organizations do, we must continue to look for best practices in managing resources and continue to work collaboratively to develop future strategies for achieving greater efficiencies. Going forward, program funding in the education sector will need to be managed carefully with the goal of preparing Ontario students for success, improving their academic achievement and equipping them with the tools needed to enter the working world.

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