



M E D I A R E L E A S E

June 7, 2017

FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT NOT FAIR TO ALL

A recent announcement by the Ministry of Education for increased support for students with special education needs does not sit well with the Board of Trustees for District School Board Ontario North East.

On May 19th in Sudbury, Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter, along with Sudbury MPP Glenn Thibeault announced funding for approximately 20,000 students with special education needs across Northern Ontario. A press release touted an additional \$22-million dollars annually in special education supports through the Northern Supports Initiative, and increases in the Special Education Grant beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, targeted at supporting the unique needs of students in Northern, rural and French-language school boards.

The release explained that over \$13-million of this amount has been allocated to Northern boards and \$9-million to other boards in the province. \$15-million dollars of that money is through GSN (Grants for Student Needs) funding and \$7-million through EPO (Education Program Grants). Of the entire \$22-million announced in the province, \$11-million is earmarked for French-language boards.

"While the special education announcement appeared to be providing real relief to schools, we have been dismayed to learn that only \$4.5-million dollars of the \$7-million dollar EPO grant will be shared amongst 19 English boards in Northern Ontario. The remaining \$2.5-million of the EPO grant (Northern Support Initiative) will be shared among 6 French boards," says DSB ONE Board Chair Doug Shearer.

"This is in addition to the General Student Needs document this Spring which classified all French schools as "remote" schools eligible for additional funding. English public boards enjoy that privilege only in schools that are actually remote."

"We will be reaching out to our coterminous boards again to see what we can do to come together and use this funding wisely," added Shearer. "However, at the annual general meeting of the Ontario Public School Board's Association this weekend, our board will certainly be asking some very difficult questions as to why so few of those funds are flowing through to English public boards."

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District School Board Ontario North East

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"When we continually see French boards advantaged through funding and our boards can't get the resources we need, is it any wonder why we're struggling to achieve good results in graduation rates, credit accumulation, and in having our students properly assessed to meet their critical needs? We can't compete – and it's just plain wrong."

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