

**Supporting Our Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder  
And the Families and Staff that Support Them  
March 2019  
Durham District School Board Trustees**

---

The Durham District School Board Trustees are very concerned about the new Autism Funding Model. We care deeply about the success of our students identified with autism, and all students with special needs, and the impact on their families.

We are very appreciative of the hard work of our DDSB staff to try to support our students identified with autism, but are extremely concerned about staff's ability to support students with this lack of funding and new Ministry model.

### **DDSB Trustee Concerns**

#### **\$12,300 Funding Announcement to School Boards**

- This is the standard per pupil amount the Board receives for all students as part of regular funding.
- This amount does not allow the Board to provide the necessary supports and specialists students require.
- Programs to support students with complex needs including autism cost five to six times more than the funding provided.

#### **Funding to Parents**

- \$140,000 is the lifetime cap for each child's access to service funding under the recently announced model.
- Based on this cap, and the cost of services, most families will not be able to afford the therapy and early treatment programs that are critical and effective to their child's success.
- The Childhood Budget annual cap amounts of \$20,000 per year for children under six and \$5,000 for children over six are not sufficient for therapy and services needed on an intensive basis which can cost \$60,000 or more annually.
- We are concerned this will place financial hardship on our families.

#### **Impact on Teachers, EAs, ECEs, School Administrators and Support Staff**

- Providing one day of mandatory training to support students with autism is inadequate in order to have the skills required for staff.
- It is unfair to expect teachers and all staff to be able to teach a full class of students and provide the specialized complex programming that students with autism need.
- This puts staff in a very difficult position and they cannot meet the needs of all students.

#### **Reduction to Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Funding**

- This special funding for students who require two support staff to assist them daily at school has been reduced and does not come close to covering the costs needed to pay for staff.

## Hardship on Families

- The inadequate funding amount will force parents to choose between therapy and respite/care for their children. This places incredible stress on our families.

## Ministry Funding Model

- Only three million dollars was announced to provide support for the entire province.
- This is for one day training of staff and not directly given to student needs.
- For two decades special education funding has been inadequate.
- Funding is generated through a mathematical formula and does not come close to meeting student needs.

## What Can You Do?

- All families need to contact the Minister of Education and MPPs and share their concerns through telephone calls, letters, social media and demand the funding and model change. Families and school boards need to be provided with the true cost to support students with autism spectrum disorder and **all** students with special needs.

## Should I Be Concerned If I Don't Have a Child Identified With Autism Or Special Needs?

- Absolutely!
- Each dollar taken from our students with special needs impacts funding for **all** students and classrooms.

**We must support our students with special education needs and their families. Every dollar withdrawn from special education funding is a dollar withdrawn from all classrooms.**

**This impacts all students and families.**

Trustee Patrice Barnes  
Trustee Paul Crawford  
Trustee Niki Lundquist, Chair, Ed. Finance  
Trustee Scott Templeton

Trustee Michael Barrett, Chair  
Trustee Donna Edwards  
Trustee Carolyn Morton, Vice Chair  
Trustee Christine Thatcher

Trustee Chris Braney  
Trustee Darlene Forbes, Vice Chair Standing  
Trustee Ashley Noble

	Twitter Account	Facebook Page	Email
Premier Doug Ford	<a href="#">@fordnation</a>	<a href="#">@FordNationDougFord</a>	<a href="mailto:premier@ontario.ca">premier@ontario.ca</a>
Lisa Thompson (Minister of Education)	<a href="#">@LisaThompsonMPP</a>	<a href="#">@Lisathompsonpc</a>	<a href="mailto:minister.edu@ontario.ca">minister.edu@ontario.ca</a>
MPP Peter Bethlenfalvy (Pickering-Uxbridge)	<a href="#">@PBethlenfalvy</a>	<a href="#">@PeterBethlenfalvyMPP</a>	<a href="mailto:peter.bethlenfalvy@pc.ola.org">peter.bethlenfalvy@pc.ola.org</a>
MPP Lorne Coe (Whitby)	<a href="#">@lornecoe</a>	<a href="#">@lornecoempp</a>	<a href="mailto:lorne.coe@pc.ola.org">lorne.coe@pc.ola.org</a>
MPP Jennifer French (Oshawa)	<a href="#">@jennkfrench</a>	<a href="#">@jenniferfrenchNDP</a>	<a href="mailto:JFrench-QP@ndp.on.ca">JFrench-QP@ndp.on.ca</a>
MPP Lindsey Park (Durham)	<a href="#">@lparkpc</a>	<a href="#">@lparkpc</a>	<a href="mailto:lindsey.park@pc.ola.org">lindsey.park@pc.ola.org</a>
MPP Rod Phillips (Ajax)	<a href="#">@RodPhillips01</a>	<a href="#">@RodforMPP</a>	<a href="mailto:rod.phillips@pc.ola.org">rod.phillips@pc.ola.org</a>
MPP Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Kawartha-Brock)	<a href="#">@LaurieScottPC</a>	<a href="#">@laurie.scott.794</a>	<a href="mailto:Laurie.scottco@pc.ola.org">Laurie.scottco@pc.ola.org</a>