

2010: EL3

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education

FROM: Jim Grieve
Assistant Deputy Minister

DATE: March 4, 2010

SUBJECT: Early Learning Program –
Planning for 2011-12 (Year 2)

Thank you for making it possible for us to move forward in implementing the government's vision of the Early Learning Program (ELP). As you know, the ELP is being offered in 579 schools throughout the province starting in September 2010.

The purpose of this EL-memorandum is to provide school boards with information about the planning steps for Year 2 ELP implementation. Please find attached Appendix 1 from Memorandum 2009: B12 dated October 27, 2009 that lists the initial board-by-board planning allocations of ELP pupil places for Year 2.

This EL3 Memo includes the following:

- A: Planning Timelines
- B: Planning Parameters
- C: School Site Selection
- D. Identification of Capital Needs
- E: Support and Information Resources

A. PLANNING TIMELINES

To assist boards in preparing preliminary plans for the ELP in 2011-12, a planning template, *Early Learning Program - Year 2 School Selection* has been developed. This form is similar to the Year 1 planning template and is pre-loaded for each board to assist in collecting the required data. A separate email is being sent to Directors of Education containing the template. A sample is attached (see Appendix 2).

Each school board must submit the completed template, approved by the board's Chair and Director of Education, to ELP_AJE@Ontario.ca based on the allocations in Appendix 1. Boards are encouraged to submit their completed templates as soon as possible, but no later than **April 16, 2010**.

Ministry staff will work collaboratively with the boards to review the recommended sites.

Ministry staff will review boards' submissions in consultation with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and will work to ensure their recommended sites meet the planning parameters and guidelines. Final approval of the proposed sites for Year 2 will be done by the Ministry.

The Ministry will announce final approval of Year 2 sites by **May 21, 2010**.

B. PLANNING PARAMETERS

Your leadership and collaborative work is a key element to the success of the ELP. Boards will plan in consultation with their coterminous boards, local Best Start Networks, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards during the site selection process. Please take into consideration the impact on existing child care and early years programs, including those operating on school premises.

Please note the following parameters:

- Boards should provide sites covering at least double their Year 2 pupil-space allocation. This will provide flexibility in the Ministry approval process.
- Boards that currently offer full-day JK/K in all their schools are being provided ELP funding and will continue to transition these classes towards the Early Learning Program model.
- Boards should consider limiting plans for program expansion to the number of additional students allocated for 2011-12 (see Appendix 1). Prudence is required in board planning assumptions so that any new unfunded commitments can be sustained on a multi-year basis. We would therefore ask that you contact Andrew Davis (Andrew.davis@ontario.ca) to discuss the multi-year financial implications of any commitment beyond the Year 2 allocation.

Extended Day and Extended Year Programming

Subject to the passage of legislation, boards would have the duty to offer extended day programs to four-and five-year olds in the ELP during the school year. There may be some circumstances where boards, executing this duty, permit older children to participate in the extended day, to support viability. However, priority access to the extended day component must be given to four-and five-year-olds enrolled in the core component in the school.

Subject to the passage of legislation, school boards would also have the power to provide extended services, for a reasonable fee, at other times of the year for four-and five-year-olds under the guidance of the school year early childhood educators. This could include professional development (PD) days, holidays, and the summer. Where you have capacity and parent demand, the government is calling upon boards to use this power.

Also, boards that have the capacity and the parent demand are called upon to provide extended services at other times of the year for children six to twelve years old. This could include PD days, holidays and the summer.

C. SCHOOL SITE SELECTION

The following requirements need to be met for Year 2 ELP schools:

1. Selected schools must have all JK/K classes comply with the new ELP model as this is a whole school approach to program design and delivery.
2. Recommended schools should be schools that the board anticipates will remain open over the next five years.

In prioritizing schools for the ELP in 2011-12, boards are expected to meet the following requirements:

1. *Geographic Distribution*

As a primary consideration, boards should consider the various needs of all the communities that they serve and select Year 2 ELP schools in areas that may not have been allocated an ELP school in Year 1.

2. *Availability of Space*

In meeting the Geographic Distribution objective, school boards are required to prioritize schools for Year 2 ELP that:

- i. **Have available and appropriate classroom** space to accommodate the program.
- ii. If a board does not have sufficient space to accommodate part or all of its Year 2 ELP planning allocation, they are asked to prioritize schools that require **retrofits** over schools requiring additions.
- iii. Schools that require **additions** should be considered as a last option for Year 2 sites.

D. IDENTIFICATION OF CAPITAL NEEDS

To determine the ELP-related capital needs of boards to meet their Year 2 planning allocations, the Ministry is initiating a process to review and confirm the capital needs of school boards. Boards are required to identify within the planning template, described in section A, their proposed Year 2 ELP schools with capital needs. For each of these schools, boards will need to identify the number of classrooms that need to be retrofitted or built at the school to meet the school's planned ELP classroom allocation. As well, boards will need to briefly describe the rationale and scope of each capital project they need to undertake.

A follow-up communication providing more details on ELP capital will be released to boards shortly.

E. SUPPORT AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

Education Officers from the Early Learning Implementation Branch will be available in each Regional Office to assist you. They should be your first contact for further information about

the ELP, including Year 2 implementation.

For assistance in completing the *Early Learning Program – Year 2 School Selection* template, please contact the Finance Officer assigned to your board. For information about ELP capital needs, please contact the Capital Analyst assigned to your board.

If you require further information about the ELP, please contact:

ELP Implementation	Pam Musson Director, Early Learning Implementation Branch	(416) 314-8192 pam.musson@ontario.ca
ELP Policy and Program	Jill Vienneau Director, Early Learning Policy and Program Branch	(416) 314-2190 jill.vienneau@ontario.ca
Funding	Didem Proulx Director, Education Finance Branch	(416) 327-9060 didem.proulx@ontario.ca
Financial Analysis and Accountability	Andrew Davis Director, Financial Analysis and Accountability Branch	(416) 327-9356 andrew.davis@ontario.ca
Capital Policy	Grant Osborn (A) Director, Capital Policy	(416) 325-1705 grant.osborn@ontario.ca

With the introduction of the Early Learning Program, Ontario's education system has an opportunity to renew and extend its commitment to the education and development of our youngest students. While the successful implementation of this initiative will present challenges, publicly funded education has already demonstrated its capacity to achieve positive change that benefits students, parents, and communities. The Ministry looks forward to a co-operative effort with district school boards, schools and municipalities to make our province's vision for early learning a reality.



Jim Grieve
Assistant Deputy Minister

cc: Superintendents of Business and Finance
Early Learning Leaders in District School Boards
District Social Services Administration Boards
Consolidated Municipal Service Managers
Darryl Sturtevant, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy and Planning, Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Nancy Matthews, Assistant Deputy Minister, Service Delivery, Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Kit Rankin, Director, Field Services Branch, Ministry of Education
Ministry of Education, Executive Team

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