

Ministry of Education

Office of the ADM

Capital and Business Support Division
900 Bay Street
20th Floor, Mowat Block
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Ministère de l'Éducation

Bureau du sous-ministre adjoint

Division du soutien aux immobilisations et
aux affaires
900, rue Bay
20^e étage, Édifice Mowat
Toronto ON M7A 1L2



2017: B7

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Children's Service Leads, Consolidated Municipal Service
Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Service
Administration Boards (DSSABs)

FROM: Josh Paul
Assistant Deputy Minister
Capital and Business Support Division

DATE: **June 12, 2017**

SUBJECT: **Request for Capital Priorities Project Funding
Submissions**

On behalf of the ministry team, I am writing to announce the launch of the 2017 Capital Priorities program. The Capital Priorities program provides school boards with an opportunity to identify their most urgent and pressing pupil accommodation needs. The ministry has allocated just over \$3 billion in capital funding through the Capital Priorities program since it began in 2011. The Capital Priorities program serves as the primary means for funding capital projects that address school boards' pupil accommodation needs including enrolment pressures, supporting the consolidation of underutilized facilities, providing facilities for French-language rights holders in under-served areas, and replacing facilities in poor repair.

Highlights/Summary Points

- The submission deadline for all capital funding requests is **September 8, 2017**.
- The 2017 Capital Priorities projects are required to open no later than the 2020-2021 school year.
- School boards may apply for capital funding support for the creation of new or renovated licensed child care spaces and child and family program in schools as part of a larger school capital project.
- The ministry will include joint-use school participation among its criteria in reviewing all project submissions.

- The ministry has capital funding to support the replacement of existing space for community partners in situations where the space will be lost due to the board's pupil accommodation activities.

Project Submissions

Capital Priorities

As with previous rounds of the Capital Priorities program, funding for Capital Priorities projects will be allocated on a business case basis for new schools, retrofits, and additions that need to be completed by the 2020-2021 school year. School boards are required to identify their ten highest and most urgent Capital Priorities and submit the associated business cases through the School Facilities Inventory System (SFIS) in order to be considered for funding approval.

With this spring's announcements of School Consolidation Capital funding approvals, the ministry completes its commitment to invest \$750 million to support improved utilization of school space through the reduction of surplus capacity. The ministry will continue to support consolidation projects through its annual Capital Priorities program.

The ministry is increasing its submission limit to ten projects to compensate for the completion of the School Consolidation Capital program which will have no further intakes.

School boards are required to submit their completed Capital Priorities business cases by **September 8, 2017**. The ministry **will not** accept business cases after this date.

Child Care Centres in Schools

In Memo **2017:B06 Request for Early Years Capital Program Funding Submissions**, the ministry announced details of the 2017-18 Early Years Capital Program (EYCP) in support of the government's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework. The Framework aims to ensure that all children and families have access to a range of high-quality, inclusive, and affordable early years and child care programs and services that are responsive to the needs of families. This plan will create access to licensed child care for 100,000 more children aged 0 to 4 years old over the next five years. To support this commitment, the government is investing up to \$1.6 billion in capital funding for child care capital builds and retrofits to support the creation of licensed child care spaces in schools, the broader public sector, and community locations for children aged 0-4 years.

With support from their local Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSAABs), school boards have an opportunity to request capital funding support for the creation of new child care spaces or child and family program projects that are associated with a larger school capital project through this round of the Capital Priorities program.

For child care spaces and child and family programs associated with a Capital Priorities project request, school boards must submit a request for capital funding support for these projects by completing and attaching a *Joint Submission - Capital Funding for Child Care and Child and Family Programs* to their Capital Priorities business case. Please see memo **2017:B06 Request for Early Years Capital Program Funding Submissions** for additional details.

School boards are required to submit their completed Early Years Joint Submissions by **September 8, 2017**. The ministry **will not** accept Early Years Joint Submissions after this date.

Joint-Use Capital Projects

The ministry encourages all school boards to consider collaborative capital project arrangements between school boards. This includes maximizing the opportunities of co-location, particularly in rural, northern and small communities.

In the current 2016-17 school year, the ministry has committed dedicated funding to assist school boards in pursuing joint-use school opportunities between boards. This funding is being allocated:

- to support boards with facilitation and joint planning towards the potential development of joint-use school proposals (the Joint-Use Schools Seed Funding Program), and
- on studies being commissioned by the ministry to highlight joint-use experiences and develop a joint-use toolkit that can be used to assist boards in developing joint-use schools. The ministry expects to receive these studies this Fall.

Since 2013, the ministry has prioritized joint-use projects as part of the Capital Priorities program, however, while there are approximately 4,900 schools in Ontario, only 37 are currently joint-use arrangements.

Therefore, going forward, the ministry will be reviewing all capital proposals submitted by boards for ministry funding for new schools, additions or consolidation projects to ensure joint-use opportunities between boards have been explored before funding is granted.

School boards seeking Capital Priorities funding approval must:

- Document efforts made to explore joint-use opportunities for each capital project funding request as part of the business case submissions;
- Demonstrate a willingness to participate with co-terminous school boards in joint-use school opportunities;
- For joint-use school proposals, both boards must include the project as part of their Capital Priorities submission; and
- For joint-use school proposals, explain the role of the joint-use school on expected improvements to student programming and operational efficiency.

Joint-Use Seed Funding Program

The Joint-Use Schools Seed Funding program is available to school boards to encourage the development of more joint-use schools between two or more school boards. Successful applicants will receive \$20,000 in operating funding, per school board, to support the development of a joint-use school project. The ministry will accept applications at any time throughout the year.

Community Hub Projects

In addition to partnerships with other school boards, the ministry also encourages school boards to consider collaborative capital project arrangements between school boards and community partners. New community partners must provide any required capital funding for the project, and the project must not result in any additional operating costs for the school board.

The Replacement Space Funding is available to fund the capital costs of relocating an existing community hub from one school (operating or non-operating) to another school in circumstances where the original school is:

- To be closed or sold, or
- Facing accommodation pressure.

In situations where the original school is facing accommodation pressure, Replacement Space Funding will be restricted to schools where the footprint of the original school cannot be expanded.

Funding will be allocated on a business case basis, jointly submitted by both the school board and the community partner. Boards are to submit supplemental documents with their Capital Priorities Business Case including a description of the community partner and their services, an explanation of the capital requirements and capital cost estimate, and a commitment from the community partner to provide operating funding for the space (include amount).

Community partners that align with the priorities and goals of the ministry (e.g. child and family programs, child mental health, French language services, post-secondary programs, etc.) will be prioritized. Any community partner that provides competing educational services is not eligible for Replacement Space Funding.

Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

As in previous rounds of Capital Priorities, school boards are to submit business cases through the School Facilities Inventory System (SFIS) system. School boards will be able to access the Capital Priorities submission templates in SFIS beginning June 22, 2017. School boards can save their work in progress; however, once school boards submit their business cases, their submissions will be locked from further editing. School boards will only be able to modify their business cases by requesting that their Capital Analyst (Appendix A) unlock the submission.

Eligible Project Categories

Projects eligible for funding consideration for this round of the Capital Priorities program must meet one or more of the following category descriptions:

- 1) Enrolment Pressure: Projects will accommodate pupils where enrolment is currently or is projected to persistently exceed capacity at a school or within a group of schools, and students are currently housed in non-permanent space (e.g., portables).
- 2) School Consolidations: Projects that support the reduction of excess capacity in order to decrease operating and renewal costs and address renewal need backlogs. These projects may also provide other benefits such as improved program offerings, accessibility or energy efficiency. Projects linked to an accommodation review must have a final trustee decisions on the outcome of the pupil accommodation review by **September 29, 2017**.
- 3) Facility Condition: Projects will replace schools that have higher renewal needs than the cost of constructing an appropriately sized new facility.
- 4) French-language Accommodation: Projects will provide access to French-language facilities where demographics warrant. Such projects will only be considered eligible if the school board can demonstrate that there is a sufficient French-language population not being served by an existing French-language school facility.

Projects matching the following descriptions should not be submitted as Capital Priorities:

- Projects related to only addressing an accommodation pressure of a specialized or alternative program such as French Immersion;
- Projects for additional child care or child and family program space that is not associated with a priority school project;
- Projects for new, non-replacement space to support a community partner;
- Projects that have been previously funded by either the ministry or the school board; and
- Projects that should be funded through renewal funding, including program enhancements and projects related to only addressing current and/or proposed changes to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.

If a school board has previously submitted a project for Capital Priorities or School Consolidation Capital funding and did not receive ministry funding, please refer to the ministry's comments when considering whether or not to re-submit the project. Please contact your Capital Analyst (Appendix A) for further clarification.

Project Evaluation

The ministry will assess all proposed projects using project-specific quantitative and qualitative measures depending upon the category of project.

For Accommodation Pressures and French-Language Accommodation projects:

- Assessments will be based on school-level capacity ratings, historical enrolment trends, enrolment forecasts, and geographic distribution of students; and
- Primary consideration will be given to projects in areas where accommodation needs are currently high with secondary consideration to projects in areas where accommodation needs are expected to be high in the next five to ten years.

For Facility Condition and School Consolidation projects:

- Assessments will be based on the projected operating and renewal savings and the removal of renewal backlog needs relative to the project cost; and
- Priorities will be given to projects with the highest expected Internal Rate of Return. This will be calculated using the expected cost of the project compared to the expected savings resulting from the project.

In addition to project specific assessments, the following school board performance measures will also be considered for all Capital Priorities project categories:

- School board's demonstrated willingness to participate with co-terminous school boards in joint-use school opportunities;
- School board's ability to build to ministry benchmark costs as evidenced by past projects;
- School board's ability to deliver projects within target timeframes as evidenced by past projects;
- School board's history of meeting the ministry's capital accountability measures (Appendix B);
- Enrolment and utilization trends for projects of the school board which have previously been funded; and
- Number of projects the school board currently has underway and the status of these projects in relation to approved funding and opening dates.

The ministry will expect that school boards will explore various options before submitting their business cases for a specific option. School boards must be able to identify the cost differentiation and considerations of various options.

Capital Analysis and Planning Template

The Capital Analysis and Planning Template (CAPT) is an essential tool for understanding school boards' capital financial position. An approved CAPT is necessary before the ministry is able to sufficiently assess the existing capital activity of a school board. As a result, school boards will not be considered for new capital project funding approval if the ministry does not have an approved CAPT consistent with the school board's 2015-16 Financial Statement.

Ministry Contact

Capital Priorities Program

If you have any Capital Priorities program questions, or require additional information, please contact the Capital Analyst assigned to your school board (Appendix A) or:

Paul Bloye, Manager, Capital Policy and Programs Branch at 416-325-8589 or at Paul.Bloye@Ontario.ca

or

Mathew Thomas, Manager, Capital Policy and Programs Branch at 416-326-9920 or at Mathew.P.Thomas@ontario.ca.

Child Care and Child and Family Program

If you have any child care and child and family program questions, or require additional information, please contact Jeff O'Grady, Acting Manager, Capital Policy and Programs Branch at 416-325-2027 or at Jeff.OGrady@ontario.ca.

Communications Protocol

School boards are reminded to follow the ministry's communications protocol requirements for all ministry funded major capital construction projects as outlined in Appendix C.

Should you have any questions related to the communication requirements, please contact:

Dylan Franks, Senior Information Officer, Communications Branch at 416-325-2947 or Dylan.Franks@ontario.ca.

We look forward to working with you to identify and develop your future capital projects.

Original signed by:

Joshua Paul
Assistant Deputy Minister
Capital and Business Support Division

Appendices:

Appendix A: List of Ministry Capital Analysts
Appendix B: Capital Approval Process Chart
Appendix C: Communications Protocol Requirements

c.c. Senior Business Officials
Superintendents and Managers of Facilities
Managers of Planning
Early Years Leads
CAOs of Consolidated Municipal Service Managers
CAOs of District Social Service Administration Boards
Steven Reid, Director, Field Services Branch, Ministry of Education

Appendix A: List of Ministry Capital Analysts

DSB	District School Board	Capital Analyst	Email	Phone
1	DSB Ontario North East	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
2	Algoma DSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
3	Rainbow DSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
4	Near North DSB	Sarosh Yousuf	Sarosh.Yousuf@ontario.ca	416-325-8059
5.1	Keewatin-Patricia DSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
5.2	Rainy River DSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
6.1	Lakehead DSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
6.2	Superior Greenstone DSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
7	Bluewater DSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
8	Avon Maitland DSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
9	Greater Essex County DSB	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
10	Lambton Kent DSB	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
11	Thames Valley DSB	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
12	Toronto DSB	Lisa Bland	Lisa.Bland@ontario.ca	416-326-9921
13	Durham DSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
14	Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
15	Trillium Lakelands DSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
16	York Region DSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
17	Simcoe County DSB	Sarosh Yousuf	Sarosh.Yousuf@ontario.ca	416-325-8059
18	Upper Grand DSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
19	Peel DSB	Sarosh Yousuf	Sarosh.Yousuf@ontario.ca	416-325-8059
20	Halton DSB	Sarosh Yousuf	Sarosh.Yousuf@ontario.ca	416-325-8059
21	Hamilton-Wentworth DSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
22	DSB Niagara	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
23	Grand Erie DSB	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
24	Waterloo Region DSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
25	Ottawa-Carleton DSB	Daniel Cayouette	Daniel.Cayouette@ontario.ca	416-325-2018
26	Upper Canada DSB	Daniel Cayouette	Daniel.Cayouette@ontario.ca	416-325-2018
27	Limestone DSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
28	Renfrew County DSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
29	Hastings & Prince Edward DSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
30.1	Northeastern CDSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
30.2	Nipissing-Parry Sound CDSB	Sarosh Yousuf	Sarosh.Yousuf@ontario.ca	416-325-8059
31	Huron Superior CDSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
32	Sudbury CDSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
33.1	Northwest CDSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
33.2	Kenora CDSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
34.1	Thunder Bay CDSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297

DSB	District School Board	Capital Analyst	Email	Phone
34.2	Superior North CDSB	Jaimie Burke	Jaimie.Burke@ontario.ca	416-325-4297
35	Bruce-Grey CDSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
36	Huron Perth CDSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
37	Windsor-Essex CDSB	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
38	London DCSB	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
39	St. Clair CDSB	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
40	Toronto CDSB	Lisa Bland	Lisa.Bland@ontario.ca	416-326-9921
41	Peterborough VNCCDSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
42	York CDSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
43	Dufferin Peel CDSB	Sarosh Yousuf	Sarosh.Yousuf@ontario.ca	416-325-8059
44	Simcoe Muskoka CDSB	Sarosh Yousuf	Sarosh.Yousuf@ontario.ca	416-325-8059
45	Durham CDSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
46	Halton CDSB	Sarosh Yousuf	Sarosh.Yousuf@ontario.ca	416-325-8059
47	Hamilton-Wentworth CDSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
48	Wellington CDSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
49	Waterloo CDSB	Matthew Anderson	Matthew.Anderson@ontario.ca	416-325-9796
50	Niagara CDSB	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
51	Brant Haldimand Norfolk CDSB	Kristin Grunenکو	Kristin.Grunenko@ontario.ca	416-326-9959
52	CDSB of Eastern Ontario	Daniel Cayouette	Daniel.Cayouette@ontario.ca	416-325-2018
53	Ottawa CSB	Daniel Cayouette	Daniel.Cayouette@ontario.ca	416-325-2018
54	Renfrew County CDSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
55	Algonquin & Lakeshore CDSB	Shakufe Virani	Shakufe.Virani@onatario.ca	416-325-2805
56	CSP du Nord-Est	Laval Wong	Laval.Wong@ontario.ca	416-325-2015
57	CSP du Grand Nord de l'Ontario	Laval Wong	Laval.Wong@ontario.ca	416-325-2015
58	CS Viamonde	Laval Wong	Laval.Wong@ontario.ca	416-325-2015
59	CÉP de l'Est de l'Ontario	Daniel Cayouette	Daniel.Cayouette@ontario.ca	416-325-2018
60.1	CSCD des Grandes Rivières	Laval Wong	Laval.Wong@ontario.ca	416-325-2015
60.2	CSC Franco-Nord	Laval Wong	Laval.Wong@ontario.ca	416-325-2015
61	CSC du Nouvel-Ontario	Laval Wong	Laval.Wong@ontario.ca	416-325-2015
62	CSDC des Aurores boréales	Laval Wong	Laval.Wong@ontario.ca	416-325-2015
63	CSC Providence	Laval Wong	Laval.Wong@ontario.ca	416-325-2015
64	CSDC Centre Sud	Laval Wong	Laval.Wong@ontario.ca	416-325-2015
65	CSDC de l'Est ontarien	Daniel Cayouette	Daniel.Cayouette@ontario.ca	416-325-2018
66	CÉC du Centre-Est	Daniel Cayouette	Daniel.Cayouette@ontario.ca	416-325-2018

Appendix B: Capital Approval Process Chart

Capital Construction Approval Process Updated May 11, 2017		New Schools*		Additions*		Major Retrofits*		Early Years** (Child Care, Child & Family, FDK)
		Repeat Design	New Design	>50% or >\$3.0M	<50% and <\$3.0M	>50% or >\$3.0M	<50% and <\$3.0M	Individual Projects <\$250K
Pre-Design	Facility Space Template	Complete template with most recent adaptation (<5 years)	Board to submit template before hiring architect	Board to submit template before hiring architect	Not Required	Board to submit template before hiring architect	Not Required	Not Required
	Project Manager	Board to appoint a Project Manager (either internal staff or external resource). Board to notify Ministry of name and contact info.						
	Ministry Approval	Ministry must approve scope of project based upon submitted Space Template	Ministry must approve scope of project based upon submitted Space Template	Ministry must approve scope of project based upon submitted Space Template	Not Required	Ministry must approve scope of project based upon submitted Space Template	Not Required	Not Required
	GOAL	Board to retain an architect.						
Pre-Tender	Independent Cost Consultant Report	Board to submit final cost of recent adaptation (<5 years)	Board to submit an Independent Cost Consultant Report before issuing tender	Board to submit an Independent Cost Consultant Report before issuing tender	Not Required	Board to submit an Independent Cost Consultant Report before issuing tender	Not Required	Not Required
	Approval to Proceed (ATP) Request	Board's senior business official to submit the ATP Request Form confirming total estimated project costs does not exceed board's identified funding, including a floor plan approval letter for the child care component.						Not Required
	Capital Analysis & Planning Tool (CAPT)	Board to confirm that data entered in the CAPT for the requested project is in line with the data provided through the ATP Request Form.						Not Required
	Ministry Approval	Ministry's approval required before proceeding to tender. Approval based on identification of sufficient funding.						Not Required
	GOAL	Board to proceed to tender.						
Post-Tender	Tender exceed approved funding amount	Board to either identify additional funding available or make design changes to reduce the project cost. In either case, the board must demonstrate to the Ministry that sufficient funding is available to complete the project.						
	Tender meet approved funding amount	Board to accept tender bid. Important to ensure all project costs are identified and considered.						
Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry approvals are not required for retrofits that are 100% funded through School Condition Improvement and Early Years Funding less than \$250K. Consultant to review the design, provide costing analysis and advice, and report on options to ensure cost containment. To be based on drawings that are at least 80% complete. 50% determined by the following: (Estimated project cost / Latest construction benchmark value of the existing OTG (pre-construction) of the facility). * If a child care component is included as part of the project, a floor plan approval letter issued by the Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch of the Ministry of Education must be submitted as part of the ATP request. ** If a child care component is included as part of the project, a floor plan approval letter issued by the Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch of the Ministry of Education is still required. 							
Definitions:	Addition: Expansion of the gross floor area of a facility, including child care and child and family program rooms. Major Retrofit: Major structural renovation or reconstruction of the existing building envelop, including child care and child and family program rooms. It does not include expansion of the existing gross floor area. Any project that does expand the gross floor area, but is funded with Ministry funds or >\$1M in Accumulated Surplus is treated as a Major Retrofit.							

Appendix C: Communications Protocol Requirements: Public Communications and Events

All public announcements regarding capital investments in child care, child and family program and/or the publicly funded education system are joint communications opportunities for the provincial government, the school board, the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager/District Social Services Administration Board (CMSM/DSSAB), and community partners.

Public Communications

School boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and community partners should not issue a news release or any other media-focussed public communication regarding major capital construction projects without publicly recognizing the Ministry of Education's role in funding the project. In addition, school boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and community partners should contact the Ministry of Education to receive additional content for the media-focussed public communications, such as quotes from the minister(s).

The Ministry of Education may also choose to issue its own news release about various project milestones in addition to those prepared by school boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and community partners. If the ministry chooses to do so, school boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and community partners will be contacted to get quotes, as appropriate.

The intent of this protocol is to secure as much attention and media coverage for these events as possible. By doing so, we hope to help promote the role of all involved, including the Ministry of Education, school boards, CMSM/DSSABs, and community partners in bringing exciting new capital projects to benefit local communities.

Major Announcements and Events

Important: For all new school openings, or openings of major additions which includes child care and/or child and family programs and/or community hubs, the Minister of Education and the Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care must be invited as early as possible to the event. Invitations should be sent to information.met@ontario.ca. Where appropriate, the ministry's Regional Manager, Field Services Branch, in your area should be copied.

School boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and community partners are not to proceed with their public events until they have received a response from the office of the Minister of Education or the office of the Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care regarding the invitation. School boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and community partners will be notified within 15 business days of their opening event as to the ministers' attendance. Please note that if the date of your event changes at any time after the ministers have received the invitation, please advise us of the change at the same email address above.

If the Minister of Education or the Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care is unavailable, the invitation may be shared with a government representative who will contact your school board, CMSM/DSSAB, and/or community partner to coordinate the details (e.g., a joint announcement).

Note: School boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and community partners are not expected to delay their announcements to accommodate the ministers or a Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP). The primary goal is to make sure that the ministers are aware of the announcement opportunity.

Other Events

For all other media-focussed public communications opportunities that are not major events, such as sod turnings for example, an invitation to your local event must be sent to the Minister of Education and the Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care by email (see above) with at least three weeks' notice. Again, please send a copy to the ministry's Regional Manager, Field Services Branch, in your area, where appropriate. Please note that if the date of your event changes at any time after the ministers have received the invitation, please confirm the change at the same email address above.

School boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and community partners are not expected to delay these "other" events to accommodate the ministers. Only an invitation needs to be sent; a response is not mandatory to proceed.

This communications protocol does not replace school boards' existing partnership with the Ministry of Education's regional offices. Regional offices should still be regarded as school boards' primary point of contact for events and should be given updates in accordance with existing processes.

Acknowledgement of Support

You must acknowledge the support of the Government of Ontario in media-focussed communications of any kind, written or oral, relating to the agreement or the project. This could include but is not limited to, any report, announcement, speech, advertisement, publicity, promotional material, brochure, audio-visual material, web communications or any other public communications. For minor interactions on social media, or within social media such as Twitter, etc. where there is a tight restriction on content, government acknowledgement is not required. The same applies to reactive communications (e.g., media calls); however, if possible, such an acknowledgement is appreciated.

Signage

For all capital construction projects that exceed \$100,000, school boards will be required to display signage at the site of construction that identifies the support of the Government of Ontario. Signage will be provided to school boards by the Ministry of Education. School boards are then responsible for posting the signage in a prominent location. This should be done in a timely manner following the receipt of the signage. All signage production costs will be covered by the Ministry of Education, including the cost of distributing the signage to school boards.