

## **Province Strengthening Education in Rural and Northern Ontario**

*Plan to Improve Quality and Delivery of Rural Education for Students*

June 28, 2017 11:45 A.M.

Ontario is taking steps to strengthen the quality and delivery of education in rural and Northern communities, to provide students with the best possible start in life and build a foundation for their future success.

Mitzie Hunter, Minister of Education, joined by parliamentary assistants Grant Crack, Granville Anderson and Lou Rinaldi were at Chemong Public School in Bridgenorth today to make the announcement.

Based on feedback heard during in-person rural education engagements and from on-line survey respondents this spring, [Ontario's new plan](#) will support rural and Northern students and communities through a series of steps, including:

- Overhauling the process that school boards use to review schools for potential closure. While the process is under review, school boards will not begin any new reviews, with the exception of those reviews which would support joint-use projects between school boards or for student safety.
- Providing a new Rural and Northern Education Fund for this September to further enhance students' learning experience in rural schools, with better programming such as French immersion, arts education and guidance counselling.
- Providing increased funding for co-operation between school boards including planning and building joint-use schools.
- Continuing investments in broadband speed, special education supports and experiential learning opportunities for rural and Northern students.

Strengthening education for students in rural and Northern communities is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

### **QUOTES**

" Our government is committed to strengthening rural and Northern education. We are increasing our investment in rural and Northern students to help ensure that they have high-quality education services and programs that meet their needs."

- Mitzie Hunter

Minister of Education

" The feedback provided through rural education engagements and online survey respondents gave us valuable insight on how to improve the pupil accommodation review process and better support Ontario students living in rural and Northern communities."

- Granville Anderson

Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Education and MPP for Durham

## QUICK FACTS

- An additional \$20 million is being invested to support school boards in addressing local needs in rural and Northern communities, starting in September 2017.
- The province's commitment to fully reviewing and updating the pupil accommodation process will allow for further community consultation regarding school closure decisions.
- Further supports for schools boards to share space with each other and with community partners will also be made available to help ensure a sustainable presence within a community.
- The ministry hosted rural education engagements in 10 rural and Northern communities across the province to seek input from parents, students, communities, municipalities and school boards on how to strengthen education in rural and Northern Ontario.
- More than 1100 participants attended the stakeholder and public sessions and completed the online survey.

## LEARN MORE

- [Plan to Strengthen Rural and Northern Education](#)
- [Read the discussion paper](#)
- [Our vision for education in Ontario](#)
- [Capital Investments - Improving Ontario's Schools](#)

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