

Ministry of Education

Ministère de l'Éducation



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MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities
Program Superintendents
Principals of Secondary Schools
Principals of Elementary Schools
Principals of Provincial and Demonstration Schools
Principal of the Independent Learning Centre

FROM: Philip Steenkamp
Deputy Minister (Acting)

DATE: August 30, 2007

SUBJECT: ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS – ESL AND ELD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ONTARIO ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12, 2007

One of the ministry's key goals in its strategic direction is to reach every student, including English language learners, by engaging them in learning that enables them to develop their talents, meet their personal goals, and develop the knowledge and skills they will need to participate in, and contribute fully to, their personal success and Ontario's future.

I am pleased to provide you with a *Policy for English language learners – ESL and ELD Programs and Services*. The policy will clarify the ministry's expectations of school boards to provide programs and services that support English language learners from Kindergarten to Grade 12. It is now available on the Ministry website at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/esleldprograms/>. You will receive hard copies of the policy in September.

The initial consultations on this policy began in May 2005. Regional consultations were held in October/November 2006. School board administrators, teachers, and community members participated in these consultations and provided positive, encouraging and useful input to the final policy development.

As you know, the Auditor General of Ontario released an annual report in 2005 which addressed the need of English language learners. The report indicated that "the ministry's overall goals for ESL/ELD programs are to assist students in developing the English literacy skills they require to achieve success at school, in postsecondary education, and in the workplace on an equal basis with their peers whose first language is English. The recommendations made by the Auditor General are reflected in the *Policy for English language learners – ESL and ELD Programs and Services*.

The policy includes requirements that school boards must meet in supporting their English language learners as well as information that will support the implementation of the policy requirements.

In May 2005 the ministry released *Many Roots, Many Voices: Supporting English language learners in every classroom. A practical guide for Ontario educators*. Two additional resources have been developed to provide further support for working with English language learners: *Supporting English language learners in Kindergarten* and *Supporting English language learners with limited prior schooling* will be available shortly. A symposium to support the implementation of this new policy and resources, and to provide opportunities for professional learning, is being planned for December 5 -6, 2007; you will receive further information about the symposium shortly.

We look forward to working with you to reach the government's goal of creating a better future for all students in Ontario.

For more information about the Policy and its implementation, please do not hesitate to contact Sue Durst, Director of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch at Sue.Durst@ontario.ca or 416-325-2532.


Philip Steenkamp

Attachment

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