

Ministry of Education

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MEMORANDUM TO: Supervisory Officers of School Authorities
Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities

FROM: Kit Rankin
Director
Field Services Branch

Marie-France LeFort
Manager
Parent Engagement Office

DATE: October 19, 2006

SUBJECT: *Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants for Schools: Application Process for School Councils to Reach out to Parents who may Experience Challenges in Getting Involved in their Child's Education*

In their literature review about the influence of families on student achievement, Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp (2002) found that when "schools, families and communities work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more".

As first announced in the Ontario Parent Involvement Policy released in December 2005, \$1M is being allocated through a new grant program to support school council-led initiatives to enhance the participation of parents who face challenges in getting involved in their child's education. These challenges may include recent settlement to Canada, level of language proficiency in English/French, socio-economic difficulties, physical challenges, or difficulty in getting transportation to the school.

This memorandum provides important information on this new Parent Involvement Grant Program:

A. Read, Share, and Inform:

The Ministry is sending Grant Proposal Kits to each school and school board. We ask that Supervisory Officers/Secretary-Treasurers share this memo and the attached Grant Proposal Kit with the individuals who have the responsibility for the school council.

The *Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant* for schools provides a unique opportunity for school councils to facilitate greater contact between the school, parents and the community. School Councils are encouraged to submit a proposal, either alone or in

partnership with other school councils, parents or community groups. Principals, parent involvement committees and board staff have been encouraged to provide assistance for project proposals.

Extra care was taken, with advice from parents, to develop a simple form, in recognition of the time available to school council volunteers and to limit the administrative burden of school principals. **The full application form, reporting template and instructions for completion are attached to this memo and are also available as a web based document at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/>**

B. Important Dates:

- 1) November 21, 2006: final date for the school council to submit a project proposal to the Parent Engagement Office and to the school board.**

School councils will have until **November 21, 2006** to submit a project proposal. In addition to sending a proposal to the Parent Engagement Office (PEO), a signed copy of the proposal is to be sent to the school authority, in care of the Supervisory Officer/Secretary-Treasurer. This allows the school authority to review all school council proposals, if they wish to do so, to ensure the projects are consistent with school authority policies and strategies related to parent involvement.

- 2) December 5, 2006, and December 12, 2006.**

After a formal application review process at the Parent Engagement Office is complete, the office will contact the school authorities by **December 5, 2006**. School authorities will be asked to confirm that projects considered eligible by the Parent Engagement Office are consistent with school authority policies and strategies for parent involvement.

Important: Please note that specific school projects not supported by the school authority will not be funded. Where the Parent Engagement Office has not heard back from the school authority by **December 12, 2006**, it will presume that all eligible projects are to be funded and will proceed with drafting contracts to the school authority for this purpose.

- 3) Week of December 18-22**

After receiving notification from school authorities, the Parent Engagement Office will prepare the contracts for the transfer of funds. School authorities will return the signed contracts to the Parent Engagement Office and the money for approved projects will be transferred. School authorities are asked to facilitate the distribution of grant money to school councils and to make the funds easily accessible; this mechanism may mirror the process for distributing the \$500.00 parent involvement allocation to school councils.

C. For More Information:

If you have questions or need assistance during the grant application period, you may contact Jerry Sundercock, School Council Grant Coordinator:

by phone: 1-800-265-4221, Extension 224 or

by email: jerry.sundercock@ontario.ca

After December 12, 2006, questions may be addressed to the Parent Engagement Office:

By phone: 1-800-387-5514

By email: parent.participation@ontario.ca

We look forward to your proposals to involve more parents in their children's education.

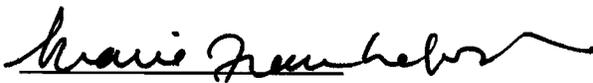
Sincerely,



Kit Rankin

Director,

Field Services Branch



Marie-France LeFort

Manager,

Parent Engagement Office

c. Regional Managers, Ministry of Education