

Ministry of Education

Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Ministère de l'Éducation

Édifice Mowat
Queens Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2



MEMORANDUM TO: School Council Chairs

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 school council chairs share this memo and the attached Grant Proposal Kit with members of 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 groups in the community. Principals, parent involvement committees and board staff have been encouraged to facilitate project proposals.

Extra care was taken, with advice from parents, to develop a simple form in recognition of the time available to school council volunteer. **The full application form, reporting template and detailed 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 board, in care of the Director of Education. This allows the board to review all school council proposals, if they wish to do so, to ensure the projects are consistent with school board policies and strategies related to parent involvement. Boards who wish to take this opportunity to review project submissions with the board's parent involvement committee are also encouraged to do so.

- 2) December 5, 2006**

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

- 3) Week of December 18-22**

After receiving notification from school boards, the Parent Engagement Office will prepare the contracts for the transfer of funds. Boards will return the signed contracts to the Parent Engagement Office and the money for approved projects will be transferred. School boards are asked to facilitate the distribution of grant money to school councils and to make the funds easily accessible.

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 receiving 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