

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Secretaries of School Authorities
Principals of Secondary Schools
Principals of Elementary Schools

FROM: George Zegarac
Assistant Deputy Minister
Strategic Planning and Elementary/Secondary Programs Division

Avis Glaze
Chief Executive Officer
The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat

DATE: August 28, 2007

SUBJECT: *Steps to English Proficiency:*
Invitation to Participate in a Pilot Project

As you are aware, a key goal of the Ministry of Education is to ensure that all students, including students who are in the process of learning English as a second or additional language, can achieve a high level of literacy and numeracy. Recent EQAO results indicate that we are moving in the right direction. The release of *Many Roots, Many Voices: Supporting English Language Learners* in every classroom, and the release of a new K-12 comprehensive policy to support programs and services for English language learners are two steps in our strategy to ensure that teachers and students have what they need and deserve in order to improve student achievement.

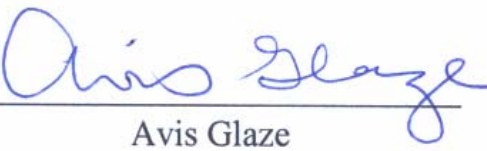
To provide further support for English language learners, the ministry has developed *Steps to English Proficiency (STEP)* which consists of materials for initial assessment and developmental continua for ongoing assessment of English language proficiency for students who are learning English as a second or additional language. We are inviting English-language school boards to participate in a pilot project from Fall 2007 to Spring 2009 which will provide feedback which the Ministry will use in revising *STEP* for release to all school boards in the 2009-2010 school year as well as build capacity and leadership in participating boards and schools.

Each English-language board is invited to nominate a team to participate in the pilot; from these nominations the ministry will select up to 20 boards to participate in the pilot. A board team will include up to 25 people who may come from up to 10 different schools. Teams must include school-based ESL/ELD teachers or the person who will take responsibility for English language learners at the school level, and classroom teachers (Grades 1 -8) or Student Success teachers (Grades 9 – 12) who will work with English language learners and with the ESL/ELD teacher where possible. Participating teams should also include ESL/ELD coordinators and/or consultants or the person who will take responsibility for English language learners at the board level. For boards with Reception and Assessment Centres, teachers working in those Centres should also participate as part of the team.

Some of the teachers involved in the pilot project will also be invited to participate in a validation study to establish benchmarks and targets for English language learners. This study will be conducted by a team of researchers from OISE/UT led by Dr. Jim Cummins and Dr. Eunice Jang.

Details of the plan for the pilot and roles and responsibilities, as well as a response form, are provided in the attached document “*STEP* Pilot 2007-2009: Project Outline”. The response form should be signed by a senior administrator in the board.

If you wish to be considered for involvement in the *STEP* pilot, please return the completed Response Form by September 21, 2007. For additional information or clarification, feel free to contact Eleanor Minuk, Education Officer at (416) 325-4721 or eleanor.minuk@ontario.ca.


Avis Glaze


George Zegarac

Attachments

STEP Pilot 2007-2009: Project Outline

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

Dates	Activities
Fall 2007	Selection and Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ September 21, 2007: deadline for board submission of Response Form ▪ Selection of sites for participation in pilot project and validation study ▪ two-day training sessions for teachers and consultants/coordinators ▪ An additional day of training provided by OISE/UT for teachers involved in the validation study
Fall 2007- Spring 2009	Implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing support for teachers through online resources and web-based conferencing ▪ OISE research team conducts validation study with selected teachers
Spring 2009	Feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional discussions with selected teachers and consultants ▪ Report and recommendations from pilot project and validation study submitted to the ministry
Summer 2009	Revision and publication of the STEP materials
Fall 2009- Spring 2010	Province-wide distribution and training

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Ministry will provide to boards selected to participate in the pilot:

- trainers for a two-day training session in the board (Fall 2007);
- copies of the *STEP* material for each participating teacher;
- ongoing support from ministry staff during the pilot through online resources and web-based conferencing;
- \$2,000 for up to ten schools (per board) selected to participate in the pilot, intended to cover the cost of :
 - printing the necessary tracking forms, tracking folders, and assessment materials for student use,
 - the purchase of recommended materials for use with the elementary assessment kit (at a cost of approximately \$500 per kit, one kit per school); and
 - release time for groups of teachers to participate in professional activities (other than the initial training) related to *STEP*.
- costs for selected teachers to participate in regional focus groups in Spring 2009, to provide feedback to the ministry on the implementation on *STEP*.

Participating boards will provide:

- a venue for the two-day training session in Fall 2007 (boards are encouraged to organize joint sessions);
- release time and travels costs for the teachers participating in the initial training; and
- a report on the use of the funds provided to support the pilot project.

Participating school-based teachers are expected to:

- attend the two-day training session in Fall 2007;
- conduct an initial assessment using the *STEP* materials with five English language learners in the school in Fall 2007 (unless the initial assessment is conducted in a board Reception & Assessment Centre);
- work collaboratively to use the *STEP* materials for on-going classroom based assessment with five English language learners in the school;
- maintain portfolios of students' work and track student progress using the *STEP* tracking forms and folder;
- engage in professional activities (board or school based) related to *STEP*;
- provide feedback to the ministry on issues related to implementation; and
- provide feedback to the OISE/UT research team (if selected to participate in the validation study).

Participating teachers from Reception and Assessment Centres are expected to:

- attend the two-day training session in Fall 2007;
- conduct initial assessments using the *STEP* materials with all newcomer students;
- engage in professional activities (board or school based) related to *STEP*; and
- provide feedback to the ministry on issues related to implementation.

Participating ESL/ELD coordinators and consultants or board personnel with responsibility for English language learners are expected to:

- attend the two-day training session with teachers from their board;
- provide on-going leadership and organize professional learning activities for teachers involved in the pilot;
- ensure that teachers have access to the necessary materials; and
- provide feedback to the ministry on issues related to professional development and province-wide implementation.

STEP PILOT 2007-2009: RESPONSE FORM

Board:			
Name of contact person		Role	Contact information: phone and e-mail
Names of team members		Role	School or centre
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			

This Board agrees to the terms outlined in this document and wishes to be considered for inclusion in the *STEP Pilot Project 2007-2009*.

Name of senior administrator: _____

Signature of senior administrator: _____ Date: _____

Role: _____ Phone: _____ email: _____

Please submit this Response Form, by September 21, 2007, to:
 by e-mail: Eleanor.minuk@ontario.ca
 by fax: (416) 325-2575