

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Secretaries of School Authorities
Principals of Provincial Schools

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

Kit Rankin
Acting Assistant Deputy Minister
French-Language Education and Educational Operations
Division

DATE: August 8, 2008

SUBJECT: Update: Four-Year Funding for Elementary School Library
Resources

In September 2007, the Premier committed additional funding for boards/schools to purchase elementary school library resources. This investment is in recognition of the role that school libraries play in improving student achievement and augments the recently announced four-year school library staff funding investment.

This funding in library resources is in addition to the funds provided annually to boards through the *Pupil Foundation Grant*.

The purpose of this memo is to provide boards and schools with an update on the status of the elementary school library investment which is intended to enhance their library collections over the next four years.

Consultations/Research

In order to ensure that a range of suppliers will offer their best discounts to schools, provide value for money and further improve Ontario's elementary school library collections, the ministry consulted with education and industry stakeholders in both French- and English-language communities. Supplementary research was also conducted in order to confirm consultation findings and further inform this investment.

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The consultations were based on the following underlying principles

- o Open, fair and transparent selection process
- o Provides value for money
- o Demonstrates accountability
- o Improves elementary library resource collections
- o Builds local resources and relationships

2008-09, \$15 Million Funding

By November 1, 2008, the Ministry will be releasing \$15 million to school boards for the first year of this investment. The Ministry will take a leadership role by contracting with qualified vendors, through a *Request for Qualification* (RFQ) process. School boards and schools will continue to make decisions about the types of books and book alternatives they wish to purchase and which qualified vendors they wish to conduct business with.

The RFQ will be available on the MERX online tendering system on or around August 11, 2008. The attached *Notice of Opportunity* has been sent to book industry associations and will be advertised in select Canadian newspapers. This *Notice of Opportunity* contains information for vendors who may be interested in participating in the RFQ process.

Library Investment Project Webpage

The Ministry of Education is committed to ongoing communication with school boards, school authorities and provincial schools and is in the process of creating a webpage for the *Library Investment Project*. This webpage will be available only to school boards, school authorities and provincial schools and will be password protected. It will contain all the information that boards and schools require to conduct business with qualified vendors. Shortly, boards and schools will be contacted to identify a board/school *Library Investment Project* contact person who will be provided with the ministry's webpage URL, the password to access webpage and other information as required.

We trust that you find the above information useful. We appreciate your support in the implementation of this initiative.

George Zegarac

Kit Rankin

Attachment

Ontario Ministry of Education

NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY

Request for Qualifications
For
Elementary School Library Books Investment

Background

The Premier of Ontario has committed \$80 million in additional funding for school libraries over the next four years.

This is to advise interested Vendors that the Ministry of Education will be issuing a Request for Qualification (RFQ) to select Vendors to provide books and related services for elementary school libraries in Ontario. The Ministry of Education invites Vendors to respond to this RFQ. The competition is open to all Vendors who have a legal right to distribute books under the *Copyright Act*.

To Participate

RFQ No.CFSB-001-08 will be available to interested Vendors on the MERX, the electronic bidding system on or around August 11, 2008.

Vendor Information Session

There will be an online/conference call vendor information session on August 7, 2008 at 2 p.m. Those interested in participating must register by 5 p.m. on August 6, 2008, at <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/218410956>.

Contact Information

Questions pertaining to the vendor information session and obtaining the RFQ should be directed to MERX.

www.merx.com

MERX Call Centre: 1-800-964-6379

Facsimile: 1-888-235-5800

Email: merx@merx.com