

**Ministry of Education
Learning Environment Branch**
15th Floor, Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Telephone (416) 325-7645
Facsimile (416) 325-2664

**Ministère de l'Éducation
Direction du milieu d'apprentissage**
15^e étage, édifice Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Téléphone 416 325-7645
Télécopieur 416 325-2664



MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education

FROM: Elizabeth Harding
Director
Learning Environment Branch

DATE: December 1, 2009

SUBJECT: **Community Use of Schools, Online Permitting**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide you with information on an opportunity to further develop an online permitting system to help facilitate your board's Community Use of Schools (CUS) program.

As you know, the government provides funding to school boards through the Community Use of Schools Program in order to make school space more affordable and accessible for use by Not-for-Profit groups outside of regular school hours. Both indoor and outdoor school space is intended to be made available to Not-For-Profit community groups at reduced rates. As well, part of the Community Use of Schools funding can be used for software and technology.

One identified practice that promotes the effectiveness of the CUS program is for school boards to use an online permitting system. Such a system allows community groups the ability to reserve available space in schools online. It is the Ministry's expectation that, as of September 2010, boards will provide the following information on their websites as part of the details given for CUS:

1. Outreach Coordinator contact information;
2. A breakdown of each type of available space within each school and the hourly cost of renting said space;
3. The hours during the week when space is potentially available (e.g. space can be rented Mon-Thurs from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm, please inquire as to availability);
4. Insurance requirements.

In order to support boards to meet these minimum expectations and to undertake further enhancements of their online permitting processes, the Ministry of Education will provide interested school boards with some financial assistance. School boards must use the funding to purchase or upgrade software to provide the public with the ability to reserve school space online for the Community Use of Schools program (including Priority Schools, if applicable). School boards will be eligible for \$10,000 each if they choose to work alone or \$15,000 each if a school board works with its coterminous board to better align service delivery to the end user via the board's website.

As part of the transfer payment agreement, the Ministry will ask that your board indicate its current capacity to support online permitting, and the additional type of service(s) you wish to provide beginning in September 2010 as an enhancement. The Ministry requires that all funding be spent as of March 31st, 2010, and that new or upgraded software be in place and operational by September 1st, 2010.

The Ministry of Education will send each school board a transfer payment agreement for the development of an online permitting system. Should your board be interested in this program, the Ministry asks that you return the completed agreement by January 15, 2010.

Thank you for your support of this worthwhile program.

My staff and I are available should you have any questions.

Elizabeth Harding
Director