

February 10, 2014

«DSB»
«Address_1»
«Address_2»
«City», «Province»
«Pcode»

Dear «Name»:

We are pleased to inform you that the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) will be partnering with the Ministry of Education to fund Round 3 (2013-14) of the 21st Century Innovation Research Initiative (formerly: 21st Century Pilots for System Learning and 21st Century Strategic Pilots). This funding is intended to further advance innovation projects that began in 2011-12 and 2012-13 that are using innovative, technology-enabled teaching and learning practices to impact student engagement, learning, achievement, well-being and acquisition of higher-order '21st Century' competencies.

Please find attached a Letter of Agreement from CODE that outlines your board's allocation and criteria for funding for 2013-14. The funding model for Round 3 of the 21st Century Innovation Research has been modified to reflect the progress made in boards over the last year. In addition, new implementation supports are now available as you continue to systematize and scale-up promising 21st Century, next generation teaching and learning practices. Please find additional information below.

Round 3 Innovation Research

CODE and the Ministry of Education continue to be interested in gaining insights into the impact of technology in changing teaching practice and strengthening student engagement, learning, well-being and achievement, with emphasis on important higher-order "21st century skills" such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration and entrepreneurship. The overall goals of the Research Initiative in Round 3 (2013-14) build upon promising practices and lessons learned in Round 1 (2011-12) and Round 2 (2012-13) and will continue to be focussed on:

- promoting local innovation and leadership for 21st century (next generation) teaching and learning;
- supporting evidence- and research-informed decision-making that is focussed on the instructional core. As we move to systematizing promising practices, it becomes increasingly important to ensure that your district is collecting robust evidence of impact on student learning;
- situating Ontario's local innovation efforts within the wider context of current international research on the features of strong districts, whole system reform that integrates effective technology-enabled pedagogy, and emerging evidence on '21st century effectiveness' in innovative learning environments; and
- promoting sector-wide engagement, fostering common understanding, and supporting capacity building and knowledge mobilization in moving to scale-up pedagogy-driven, technology-enabled practices for optimizing learning.

Funding for Round 3

The funding model in Round 3 has been modified to recognize the progress that all districts are making to strengthen and expand their work beyond “pockets of innovation”. We encourage you to explore how lessons learned in 2012-13 can be expanded into more classrooms, schools, or across the district. As such, the funding allocation approach in Round 3 shifts from a prior “project-based” allocation method, to one in which each district will receive a base allocation (\$80,000 consistent with funding for “system scale” projects in 2012-13) and a per-pupil allocation.

Funding is available to support capacity building activities, resource development, coordination, research, and the acquisition of digital technologies (up to 50% of the allocation) that supports professional and/or student learning.

Please sign and return the attached Letter of Agreement to CODE to signal your participation. Also, please complete the Appendix A: Round 3 Board Contact and Innovation Research Information by **February 21, 2014**.

ROUND 3 IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORTS

Release of Research Findings and Synopsis from Round 2

The Ministry of Education and CODE recognize that you have made significant commitments and investments to engage in collaborative research to explore, in a systematic way, the impact of technology-enabled pedagogy. During the 2012-13 school year, all 72 school boards and provincial schools partnered with CODE, the Ministry of Education, and the external research team of Curriculum Services Canada (CSC) on the *21st Century Pilots for System Learning & 21st Century Strategic Pilots* collaborative research investigation. The study began in 2011-12 (Round 1) with 47 project teams and grew to 90 projects involving the whole sector in 2012-13.

In Round 2, there were 1600 schools, over 4500 teachers, and over 100,000 students involved in the local innovation projects. Some of the early findings were shared with you in our memo from June 26th 2013, which also invited you to identify a board team for the October 29th 2013 Round Table event where the overall provincial results were presented. The final report and synopsis are now available at the Ministry's new “21st century learning” domain at: www.edugains.ca.

Opportunities to Mobilize Effective Practice

(New Publications and Videos Capture Local Practice and International Links)

The Ministry of Education and CODE appreciate the challenges facing educators at all levels in managing competing priorities and the many draws on staff time out of district, including the October 29th 21st Century Round Table event in Toronto. We want to recognize that all 72 districts and our provincial schools made it a priority to come together on October 29th as a professional learning community actively engaged in the ongoing innovation work that is essential to ensuring student success and Ontario's ongoing role as a world leader in education. The Ministry and CODE are committed to mobilizing the knowledge and effective practice that is growing across the province. Lessons learned from Round 2 (2012-13) are consistent with international trends in 21st Century next generation learning and with emerging themes from the public consultations on building the next phase of Ontario's education strategy. Four new vehicles are being launched by the Ministry of Education to support this knowledge mobilization effort:

- 1) The *21st Century Teaching and Learning Winter 2014 Quick Facts* provides an overview of activities underway and impacts to-date. It also highlights emerging activities (attached).
- 2) *What We Heard*...captures key messages from the October 29th round table discussions and considerations for district school boards as they take their next steps (attached).
- 3) *What Research Tells Us*...provides a brief synopsis of selective current research intended to support educators as they make decisions about 21st Century teaching and learning strategies and investments for Round 3: 2013-14 (attached).
- 4) *EduGAINS' new 21st Century Learning domain* provides access to a variety of resources and impact evidence intended to help educators integrate pedagogy-driven, technology-enabled innovations for strengthening student engagement, learning, well-being and achievement (www.edugains.ca).

If you have any questions about the innovation projects or the process for completing the attachments, please contact your Ministry of Education Regional Office 21st Century Teaching and Learning contact.

Regional Office	Lead Contact
Toronto Area Regional Office	Rob DeRubeis (English-language boards) Rob.DeRubeis@ontario.ca
	Nancy Gilbert (French-language boards) Nancy.Gilbert@ontario.ca
Ottawa Regional Office	Michel Chartrand (English-language boards) Michel.Chartrand@ontario.ca
	Maurice Glaude (French-language boards) Maurice.Glaude@ontario.ca
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Sudbury-North Bay Regional Office	Stephen Simard Stephen.Simard@ontario.ca
Thunder Bay Regional Office	Carol-Lynne Oldale Carol-Lynne.Oldale@ontario.ca

As we learn our way forward together in this dynamic field, your contributions are helping to define the province's priorities for action and a 21st Century teaching and learning plan for Ontario.

On behalf of the Ministry of Education and CODE, thank you again for your ongoing leadership and commitment to innovation and equipping our students with the knowledge and skills they need for success today and in the future.

Original Signed By:

Frank Kelly

cc:

Grant Clarke, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education
 Janine Griffore, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education
 Karen Gill, Director, Ministry of Education
 Kathy Verduyn, Director, Ministry of Education
 Denys Giguère, Director, Ministry of Education
 DSB Business Supervisory Officer
 2012-13 Innovation Pilot Contact

Attachments