



**MEMORANDUM TO:** Directors of Education  
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

**FROM:** Pauline McNaughton  
Director (A)  
Student Success/Learning-to-18 Strategic Policy Branch

Denys Giguère  
Director  
French-Language Education Policy & Programs Branch

**DATE:** January 21, 2015

**SUBJECT:** **Request for Proposals for Pilot Projects on Experiential Learning  
Connected to the Community**

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This memo is an invitation to submit a proposal for innovative pilot projects within the regular scope of teachers' roles and practices, focussed on experiential learning opportunities, where students actively engage with community partners. Pilots will run in the remaining 2014-2015 school year to inform opportunities for subsequent school years.

The Ministry of Education's renewed vision, *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario*, recognizes that students "will benefit from a wide array of opportunities both inside and outside of school that are compelling and contribute to their success."

During the Fall 2014 Regional Symposia held across the province, system leaders participated in consultations on the expansion of experiential learning. During these consultations, many new and innovative practices and creative models were shared by boards. The purpose of these pilot projects is to further explore new and innovative programming. These projects will inform policy development for the expansion of experiential learning from Kindergarten to grade 12.

Experiential learning is an activity in which students participate in an experience, reflect on the experience in an effort to derive meaning from it, and then apply this learning to inform their decisions and actions.

### **Pilot Criteria**

To support the renewed vision and the increased emphasis on experiential learning opportunities connected to the community, boards are invited to submit proposals for pilot projects, within the regular scope of teachers' roles and practices, that are focussed on improving student engagement and achievement and:

- driven by student interests and inquiries/questions
- integrated with community partners: local and/or global
- connected to or an extension of the curriculum (may be one subject/course or multidisciplinary) and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as: critical thinking, leadership, creativity, innovation and social responsibility
- designed to promote student reflection and the application of learning in new contexts
- completed individually, in small groups, by a class or course, a grade (elementary/secondary), multiple grades, or cross-panel
- afford opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skills in the four areas of learning identified in the education and career/life planning program and record their learning in their K-6 "All About Me" Portfolio or 7-12 Individual Pathways Plan (IPP).

Boards and school authorities are invited to submit proposal(s) using the attached RFP template to apply for funding to enhance current or build new innovative experiential learning opportunities that are integrated with community partners.

Funding may be used for:

- fees related to participation in experiential learning opportunities provided by school boards or by third party organizations, such as not-for-profit or community organizations
- transportation costs
- resources/materials related to the project
- teacher release and planning time to enhance current or establish new initiatives.

Many boards/schools are already engaging in creative approaches or delivering innovative programs that are experiential in nature. Funding may be used to augment existing initiatives (e.g. collaborative inquiry, 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, outdoor education); however, the pilot project must clearly integrate the criteria mentioned above.

Funding may not be used for:

- staffing
- the purchase of capital equipment
- travel outside the province
- expenses unrelated to the experiential learning pilot projects.

Proposals are due by February 11, 2015. Communication to successful boards will take place by February 27, 2015, followed by contract agreements and transfer payments.

Successful boards will be required to report on assessment practices, implementation steps and outcomes for students. Details of reporting requirements are outlined in the attached RFP.

Two teleconferences, Wednesday, January 28, 2015 from 12:00 – 12:30 p.m. and Thursday, January 29, 2015 from 12:30 – 1:00 p.m., will be scheduled with the Student Success Leaders and regional office staff to provide further information and evaluation criteria for the RFPs.

Thank you for your continued commitment to Student Success. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Melissa Nantais at [melissa.nantais@ontario.ca](mailto:melissa.nantais@ontario.ca) or 416-327-9619.

Original signed by:

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French-Language Education Policy  
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**Attachment:**

Request for Proposals template