

**Ministry of Education**

**Ministère de l'Éducation**



Capital and Business Support  
Division

Division du soutien aux  
immobilisations et aux affaires

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**2024: SB04**

**Date:** February 5, 2024

**Memorandum to:** Directors of Education  
Senior Business Officials  
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

**From:** Didem Proulx  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Capital and Business Support Division

**Subject** Ontario Builds Signage - Updated Requirements for Capital  
Priorities, School-based Child Care and Renewal Projects

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In 2021, the Ontario government introduced guidelines requiring Ontario Builds signage at new build infrastructure projects, including Capital Priorities and school-based child care projects.

The government recently updated the guidelines to include Ontario Builds signage for all infrastructure projects, including constructing, modernizing, expanding, renovating, replacing and rehabilitating infrastructure. The changes support increased transparency in public communications of the government's investments to build modern schools faster to support the needs of growing communities and ensure value for taxpayer dollars.

As a result, there are several changes impacting signage requirements for education sector capital projects:

- **Signage Criteria:** In addition to Capital Priorities and school-based child care projects approved since 2019-20, Ontario Builds signage will now be required for renewal projects. This would capture renewal projects supported by provincial investments exceeding \$250,000 or have a project duration of 90 days or more (may include one or more projects occurring within a school year);
- **Signage Design:** Revised design requirements that include a reference to provincial education infrastructure investments; as well, bilingual signage in French designated

areas, as per the Ontario Builds Visual Identity Guide

(<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-builds-templates>)

- Project specific signage will continue to be required for Capital Priorities and child care projects (e.g. new school construction, new school addition) and approved by the ministry prior to production.
- **New:** Generic signs will be used for Renewal project signage for all school sites across the province and will not require ministry approval prior to production.
- Additional information will be included in the **ministry's Communication Protocol**.
- **Installation and Removal Timelines:** Signage installation timelines will remain within 60 days of project approval (all project types), or otherwise noted in the ministry's Communication Protocol. Signage is to remain installed at project sites for a **minimum of 90 days** once the project is complete and open to the public for its intended use. After this period, they may be removed. This period was **previously 6 months** after project completion.
- **Accountability:** The ministry is required to provide monthly updates to the Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI) regarding the status of signage installation for eligible projects. In turn, school boards will need to adhere to signage processes detailed in the ministry's Communication Protocol to ensure accurate data is communicated to MOI on a timely basis. Your ministry's Capital Analyst may also follow up on signage status updates at monthly update meetings.
  - Note: all approved Capital Priorities and child care projects are posted on the Ontario Builds website. Renewal projects will eventually be added to this website based on the signage data submitted by school boards.  
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/building-ontario>.
- **Signage Costs:** All expenses related to Ontario Builds signage, such as design, production, and installation are the responsibility of the school board and may be considered a capital expense.

### **Next Steps: Signage for Renewal Based Projects**

To leverage existing processes and mitigate additional administrative tasks, the ministry will require school boards to report their eligible renewal projects through the VFA Facility system (VFA).

No later than **February 29, 2024**, school boards will be required to report in VFA all current active and planned renewal projects for the 2023-24 school year that meet the renewal project signage criteria. These are projects that are supported with a renewal investment of \$250,000 or more (**through School Condition Improvement and/or School Renewal Allocation**) or have a project duration of 90 days or more at a school site. School boards will need to maintain their project data over the regular financial reporting cycles to support the ministry's reporting requirements to MOI.

Please refer to Appendix A for additional details on reporting fields that will be required for school renewal projects in VFA, including the status and confirmation of signage installation.

Note: Renewal projects associated with technical improvements (e.g. upgrades to an information/security/video system, etc.) **do not require signage** and can be excluded when assessing overall renewal investment at a school site.

To answer any questions boards may have about the new renewal signage reporting process, VFA associates will host **training sessions in February 2024**. Further information on these sessions will be shared with school board facility administrators in the coming weeks.

### **Ministry's Communication Protocol**

The ministry is in the process of updating its Communication Protocol to reflect these updated signage requirements including incorporating samples of the design proofs for the **generic signage for renewal projects** and the various signage designs for Capital Priorities and child care projects. This document will be shared with school boards in the near future.

If you have any questions regarding signage requirements for capital priorities or school renewal projects, please direct your inquiries to either:

- Anne Scott, Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Issues Management Unit  
[Anne.Scott@ontario.ca](mailto:Anne.Scott@ontario.ca)
- Patrizia Del Riccio, Director (A), Business Operations Strategic Support Branch  
[Patrizia.DelRiccio@ontario.ca](mailto:Patrizia.DelRiccio@ontario.ca) .

Thank you, in advance, for your collaboration on this initiative.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

Didem Proulx  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Capital and Business Support Division

Appendices:

Appendix A: School Renewal Signage Reporting Requirements

- C: Facility Managers  
Early Years Leads, District School Boards  
Children's Services Leads, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards  
Andrew Locker, Director, Field Services Branch, Ministry of Education

## Appendix A: School Renewal Signage Reporting

School boards will be expected to report on the following additional fields in the VFA Facility system to identify school renewal projects requiring signage by **February 29, 2024**, and on an ongoing basis in alignment with ministry financial reporting cycles.

Field	Description / Note
EDU Project Number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DSB# - #####</li></ul>
Project Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 75 character title field</li></ul>
Project Start Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Forecasted / actual start date with activity on site</li></ul>
Project End Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Substantially Complete</li></ul>
Budgeted Amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total costs including professional (e.g., legal / architectural) and installation costs</li></ul>
Legally Committed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amount currently contractually committed (should be less than or equal to total cost)</li></ul>
Project Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pre-construction, Construction Underway, Completed</li></ul>
Signage Installation Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Date sign installed</li></ul>
Signage Removal Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Date sign removed</li></ul>
Signage Picture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upload signage picture</li></ul>