

Ministry of Education

Deputy Minister

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Ministère de l'Éducation

Sous-ministre

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2020:B14

Date: August 26, 2020

Memorandum to: Chairs of District School Boards
Directors of Education
Secretary Treasurers of School Authorities

From: Stephen Lecce
Minister

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister of Education

Subject **Additional Funding for School Reopening**

Earlier today, the Federal Government announced the Safe Return to Class Fund providing the Province of Ontario with first phase funding supports equal to \$381 million.

This investment complements the already landmark resources of more than \$900 million provided by the province to support provincial back-to-school plans.

The purpose of this memo is to provide information on this first phase of federal funding.

Additional Teaching Staff

Funding of \$70 million will be allocated to school boards reflecting a base funding amount of \$125,000 per panel as well as projected total 2020-21 Average Daily Enrolment (ADE). This one-time funding is for non-permanent teachers and supply teachers. The funding should be used for time-limited positions. See Appendix A for board-by-board allocations.

School Reopening Emerging Issues

In recognition of the meetings we have had with each school board to discuss the safe reopening of schools, funding of \$100 million will be allocated to school boards to augment the health and safety of school reopening plans. This funding is designed to be responsive to varying local issues and may be used to support a broad range of activities such as additional hiring of staff (such as custodians and other school-based staff), leasing of community-based

spaces, improving air quality and additional technology and broadband supports. This funding will be allocated to school boards reflecting a base funding amount of \$125,000 per panel as well as projected total 2020-21 ADE. See Appendix A for board-by-board allocations.

Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

As the safety of students and staff continues to be a key priority in the reopening of Ontario schools, the ministry is investing a further \$30 million in funding for masks and PPE. This funding will continue to be supported through the centralized supply chain to secure these critical supplies.

Transportation

The ministry recognizes that school boards are facing unique student transportation challenges for the upcoming school year as a result of COVID-19. To support school boards in ensuring enhanced health and safety measures, \$25.5 million will be provided to assist in reducing the number of students on school buses to support physical distancing, as well as addressing other pressures school boards may face in transporting students as a result of COVID-19.

This \$25.5 million in funding will be allocated to school boards proportional to school boards' 2020-21 Transportation Grant allocation. See Appendix A for board-by-board allocations.

The ministry recognizes that the student transportation sector may be facing a greater driver shortage this year. As such, \$44.5 million will be set aside to support ongoing efforts in school bus driver recruitment and retention for the 2020-21 school year. Further details on the driver recruitment and retention funding will be shared shortly.

A total amount of \$70 million will be provided for student transportation to enhance health and safety measures for school buses and to ensure service stability for students and families as schools reopen.

Remote Learning

As parent surveys are indicating more families may be choosing remote learning for part of or all of the upcoming school year, the ministry will be supplementing the \$18 million investment announced on August 13, 2020 by a further \$36 million. This additional funding will ensure that where school boards choose to provide remote learning, dedicated funding supports will be provided to hire more principals and school administration supports.

In addition, where it is projected that a school board will have more than 1,500 pupils attending virtual schools in 2020-21, by panel, they will now also generate vice-principal funding to ensure appropriate school leadership is available. Furthermore, the five per cent virtual school attendance funding assumption used to calculate the original \$18 million investment has been updated to ten per cent to reflect higher than expected enrolment in the remote program.

Where school boards have a need greater than what is provided through the total remote learning funding amount of \$54 million, they may access funding provided under School Reopening Emerging Issues. See Appendix A for board-by-board allocations.

Additional Special Education and Mental Health Supports

To further support students with special education needs and support the mental health needs of students, the ministry is providing school boards with an additional \$12.5 million in funding investments. This is flexible funding to address local needs including the purposes as outlined in memorandum 2020: B11. Each district school board's projected allocation for this funding is set out in Appendix A. The allocation reflects base funding of \$100,000 per board and a top up based on ADE. This formula provides both smaller and larger boards with the ability to implement meaningful special education and mental health supports.

Additional Public Health Nurses

As announced on July 30, the ministry continues to work with colleagues in the Ministry of Health to ensure public health capacity is expanded to support school reopening, including 500 new public health nurses through an initial investment of \$50 million. Additional funding of \$12.5 million is also being provided to support up to 125 additional nursing full-time equivalents (FTEs) in public health units across the province, including a combination of Registered Practical Nurses (RPN), Registered Nurses (RN), and Nurse Practitioners (NP).

The additional FTEs in public health units focus on supporting the school and child care restart plans, with a focus on meeting the demand of schools, school boards, child care centres, and parents/teachers for information, guidance, case and contact management, infection prevention and control, and outbreak management and response.

Future Pandemic Response Fund

Given the continued uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 virus and wanting to ensure there is prudence in our plan, the ministry will be holding back \$50 million to address future pandemic education needs. Details on this will be provided at a later date.

In the coming weeks, school boards will receive a Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) for the new Priorities and Partnerships Fund (PPF) investments reflecting the allocations noted within.

Pending federal approvals in December, the Ministry of Education will announce the second phase of the federal funding in the coming months for the remainder of the school year.

We appreciate all that school boards are doing to reopen schools, and we will continue to work together to support the health and safety of students and staff.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership.

Sincerely,

Stephen Lecce
Minister

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

Attachment

cc: President, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'ontario (ACÉPO)
Executive Director, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'ontario (ACÉPO)
President, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
Executive Director, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
President, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
Executive Director, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
President, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
Executive Director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
President, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
President, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
General Secretary, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
President, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
President, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
Chair, Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW)
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President of OSBCU, Canadian Union of Public Employees – Ontario (CUPE-ON)
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