

Ministry of Education

Capital and Business Support
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Date: October 28, 2020

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

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

Subject: COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream: Education Related
(CVRIS-EDU) Projects

Recognising that COVID-19 has created new demands for infrastructure investments, a new, time limited COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream (CVRIS) is being introduced under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) to provide up to \$700 million in combined federal-provincial funding for education-related infrastructure projects.

The COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream – Education Related Projects (CVRIS-EDU) is now open to boards. School boards are invited to put forward proposals for consideration that will protect the health and wellbeing of students, staff and children in schools and co-located child care facilities.

This memorandum provides more details on the CVRIS-EDU and is structured as follows:

1. Project Eligibility
2. Application and Decision Processes
3. Next Steps and Key Contacts

1. PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

This section provides details on the types of facilities eligible under CVRIS-EDU, project activities associated with the eligible facilities, and key criteria that must be met for projects to be considered eligible.

Eligible Facilities

The CVRIS-EDU aims to support retrofits, repairs and upgrades to school board facilities to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by supporting health and safety. Eligible facilities include:

- Elementary and secondary schools
- Continuing Education Facilities
- Child care centres co-located with school board facilities

While the priority will be given to projects in instructional facilities, school boards can identify eligible projects and opportunities in their overall portfolio.

In determining the potential needs of a co-located child care centre, school boards should consult with local Consolidated Municipal Service Managers or District Social Services Administration Boards (CMSMs/DSSABs).

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects are those where the purpose of the project is to build, modify, repair and/or reconfigure the asset to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and provide a public benefit. These projects should focus on fixed tangible capital assets intended for public use and/or benefit that fall under one of the following themes:

- promoting occupant health and safety;
- improving facility condition (e.g., optimize air quality and water refilling stations that also improve access to safe drinking water);
- enhancing physical distancing; and
- facilitating distance learning (e.g., network and broadband infrastructure).

The CVRIS-EDU program will not support certain activities – such as purchase and installation of computers and tablets. Please refer to Appendix A for examples of eligible project activities.

Project Criteria

The following criteria must also be satisfied for project expenditures to be considered eligible:

- The project must not be receiving funding under another federal or provincial program.
- Individual projects cannot exceed \$10 million in total eligible costs.
- The project must not have been tendered before the project is approved by the federal government.
- Construction must have commenced by September 30, 2021. However, recognizing that school boards tend to undertake renewal activity in July and August during the summer break, school boards are encouraged to start projects earlier.

- Construction must be substantially complete¹ by December 31, 2021².
- Projects must be in schools that will remain open and operating until January 1, 2027.

To maximize the reach and impact of these investments, school boards are asked to consider and nominate projects across the range of eligible project categories identified in Appendix A.

Note that failure to meet program requirements, including timelines, could constitute project default and ineligibility for funding through this program. School boards would be expected to manage any ineligible costs (e.g., using existing renewal funding), as no additional funding will be made available to offset ineligible costs.

Please see Appendix B for general program requirements.

2. APPLICATION AND DECISION PROCESSES

The ministry will administer the CVRIS-EDU by assessing eligible project proposals from boards, securing approval from the provincial and federal governments, and confirming the final list of approved projects. Please refer to Appendix C for the CVRIS-EDU intake form.

Application deadline: November 18, 2020

Submit form to: Jacqueline.Chan@ontario.ca

School boards are asked to start identifying projects, in collaboration with CMSMs/DSSABs when concerning child care projects, and submit the intake form by or before November 18, 2020. Timelines have been set to reflect the need for federal approvals, as such late applications may not be considered for funding.

Project Assessment Process

The ministry will assess all eligible project proposals before making funding recommendations to the provincial and federal governments. The ministry will use an objective assessment framework including factors such as:

- likelihood of projects being completed within proposed budget and within timelines (projects that can be completed spring/summer 2021 are likely to receive higher preference);
- the broad impact of the project on health and safety of students and staff; and

¹ Substantially completed refers to the period where all significant work (except for deficiency / warrantee work) has been completed and the project/asset can be used for its intended purpose.

² For projects in remote communities, the deadline for substantial completion is December 31, 2022. A Remote Community is defined as a community with a population of less than 10,000 that is not accessible by means of an all-weather road, or a community that is accessible by means of an all-weather road and that is situated more than 161 kilometres by road from the nearest community with a population of more than 10,000 or more than 322 kilometres by road from the nearest community with a population of more than 50,000.

- facility age, condition and utilization.

3. NEXT STEPS & KEY CONTACTS

The ministry will continue to work with education partners to assess additional costs associated with addressing the COVID-19 public health emergency. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact:

Mehul Mehta, Director
Capital and Business Support Division
(647) 448-3862
Mehul.Mehta@ontario.ca

Hitesh Chopra, Manager
Capital Policy Unit
416-258-3368
Hitesh.Chopra@ontario.ca

Sincerely,

Didem Proulx
Assistant Deputy Minister
Capital and Business Support Division

Attachments:

- Appendix A: Examples of Education-Related Eligible Project Activities
- Appendix B: General Program Requirements
- Appendix C: CVRIS Intake Form for Education Sector

Copy to:

- Facility Managers
- Children's Services Leads, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards

Appendix A: Examples of eligible project activities under the CVRIS-EDU

Promoting Occupant Health and Safety

- Installing fixed hand washing / sanitizing stations to meet needs that cannot be met by current washrooms.
- Installing fixed bottled water refilling stations to compensate for water fountains that have been disabled, or replacing water stations that can support safe, physically distant access to water.
- Safety retrofits and barriers (e.g. room/gym partitions) to reduce social interaction especially for open-concept areas.
- Reducing the number of touch points (e.g. automatic door openers and water faucets).

Improving Facility Condition

- Improving ventilation in buildings and portables, which could include:
 - Renewal and repair of existing heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) units;
 - Installing mechanical ventilation in buildings where none currently exist;
 - Installing cooling / air conditioning units; and
 - Window repair or replacement for fresh air intake.
- Retrofitting or replacing (where it is more cost effective to do so) older portables with inadequate ventilation systems.
- Installation of new fixed bottled water filling stations and/or replacement of existing water filling stations.

Enhancing Physical Distancing

- Retrofit projects to support physical distancing and address over-crowding. For example:
 - Retrofitting used/unused classroom space to support physical distancing.
 - Creating cooling centers in schools where air conditioning does not currently exist to allow boards to maximize the use of classroom / non-classroom space (e.g., libraries and cafeterias) to facilitate physical distancing.
 - Installing / replacing moveable room partitions for open areas.
- Creation of separate entrances / exits with appropriate security enhancements, where not already in place, to support physical distancing.
- Creating new playground space to separate groups and promote additional outdoor programming (e.g., childcare or other).

Addressing Child Care Needs in School Facilities

- Retrofitting used/unused classroom space to support expansion of child care spaces.
- Extension of projects like those listed above – such as:

- improvements to ventilation.
- installing new or additional hand-washing stations, and/or washrooms.
- measures that support physical distancing or cohorting for children in child care centres based in school board facilities.
- creating sperate entrances / exits with appropriate security enhancements.
- creating new playground space to separate groups and promote outdoor programming.

Facilitating Distance Learning

- Fixed IT assets to support distance learning, such as network infrastructure, retrofits and upgrades, WIFI access points and broadband.

Appendix B: Program Requirements

Eligible Expenditures

Eligible Expenditures will include the following:

1. All costs direct and necessary for the successful implementation (excluding ineligible costs noted below) of an eligible project and which may include capital costs, design and planning, and costs related to meeting specific program requirements; and
2. Costs will only be eligible as of Project approval.

Ineligible Expenditures

Costs Incurred before a project is approved and any and all expenditures related to contracts signed prior to approval of a project. Ineligible expenditures will include the following:

1. Costs incurred for cancelled projects;
2. Leasing buildings and other facilities; leasing equipment other than equipment directly related to the construction of the project; real estate fees and related costs;
3. Any overhead costs, including salaries and other employment benefits of any employees of the recipient, any direct or indirect operating or administrative costs of recipients, and more specifically any costs related to planning, engineering, architecture, supervision, management and other activities normally carried out by the recipient's staff;
4. Financing charges, legal fees, and loan interest payments, including those related to easements (e.g. surveys);
5. Any goods and services costs which are received through donations or in kind;
6. Provincial sales tax, goods and services tax, or harmonized sales tax for which the recipient is eligible for a rebate, and any other costs eligible for rebates;
7. Costs associated with operating expenses and regularly scheduled maintenance work, except for essential capital equipment purchased at the onset of the construction/acquisition of the main asset and approved; and
8. Cost related to furnishing and non-fixed assets which are not essential for the operation of the asset / project.

Note: Additional details around program stipulations (e.g., audit requirements and communications) will be provided upon project approval.