



STUDENT TRANSPORTATION
CHILD CARE
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS PRIORITY SCHOOL INITIATIVE

The Priority Schools Initiative (PSI) is a unique component of the Ministry of Education's Community Use of Schools program. The PSI funding allocation is provided in addition to the annual Community Use of Schools Grant which supports community use within all LKDSB schools.

The Ministry provides PSI funding to select school boards so that non-profit groups have free access to PSI school facilities outside school hours in communities that need it most.

Free use of school space enables non-profit organizations the ability to offer affordable or no-cost programming to community residents.

This is not a universal program and not every board receives PSI funding. The Ministry of Education determines which schools are designated as Priority Schools; the primary criteria for selecting Priority Schools are socio-economic, based on Canada Census data.

HOW MUCH IS THE "PSI" ALLOCATION?

The Ministry of Education allocates \$34,000 PSI funding per school year for each PSI designated school. If the full amount is not utilized the unused portion must be returned to the Ministry of Education on an annual basis.

HOW CAN SCHOOL BOARDS USE "PSI" FUNDING?

PSI funds are used by school boards to help offset costs incurred with keeping PSI schools open in the evening and weekends for community use, such as; custodial overtime costs, maintenance, equipment and energy costs and the additional wear/tear on the school.

WHAT ARE THE PSI FUNDING CONDITIONS?

- Eliminate usage fees for non-profit groups in identified Priority Schools;
- Provide priority access to school facilities for non-profit groups during non-school hours, but not displacing school-based extra-curricular activities; and
- Give priority to non-profit groups funded through Government of Ontario programs.

PRIORITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

1) HOW MANY PSI LOCATIONS ARE THERE?

Provincially there are currently two hundred and twenty (220) PSI locations. Since the 2011-12 school year the LKDSB has annually received \$34,000 for one (1) designated PSI site.

2) CAN THE PSI LOCATION BE MOVED?

Yes. The Ministry of Education has an established process for school boards to make relocation requests. *See attached May 2015 Ministry memo.*

3) HAS THE LKDSB PREVIOUSLY REQUESTED TO MOVE THE PSI LOCATION?

Yes. The LKDSB has previously successfully petitioned the Ministry to move the PSI location. The PSI location for the LKDSB was at two previous locations prior to SCITS:

- 2011-12 school year – Kinnwood Elementary/North Lambton Secondary, Forrest ON
- 2012-13 school year - North Lambton Secondary, Forrest ON
- 2013-14 through to 2015-16 school year – SCITS, Sarnia ON

4) WHAT IS THE CRITERIA TO MOVE THE PSI LOCATION?

The Ministry recognizes the importance of selecting the most appropriate schools as a PSI and invites boards to suggest substitutions with their rationale. Criteria include:

- Requests must be accompanied by a sound rationale and supporting documentation indicating why and how the board will continue to serve user groups at the current Priority School.
- Requests must be submitted by the deadline (are announced annually, typically in May with deadline of June).

5) WHY DO WE THINK WE WILL BE ABLE TO MOVE THE SCITS PSI DESIGNATION TO ST. CLAIR?

- If the SCITS site closes we know that the user groups will not have alternate secondary school locations in South Sarnia aside from St. Clair.
- The St. Clair site will be able to serve the same community as SCITS.
- We have successfully petitioned the Ministry of Education to move the PSI location on two previous occasions, without the compelling rationale of a school consolidation.

Ministry of Education

Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister

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Memorandum To: Directors of Education

From: John Malloy
Assistant Deputy Minister
Leadership and Learning Environment Division

Date: May 14, 2015

Subject: Request for Substitution of Priority Schools

This memo is a follow up to the 2015:B8 memorandum, *2015-16 School Year Education Programs – Other (EPO) Funding*, regarding the Priority Schools Initiative, a component of the Community Use of Schools program. Through this initiative, funding is provided to make space in selected schools, located in high needs communities, available to eligible not-for-profit groups at no cost outside of school hours.

We recognize the importance of selecting the most appropriate schools and communities for these initiatives. Consequently, the Ministry invites boards to suggest substitutions on an annual basis to reflect local need and circumstances. It is not mandatory to request substitutions of priority schools; it is optional for those boards that would like to make a substitution for operational reasons.

If you feel a more appropriate school, which continues to serve the same community, should replace an existing Priority School, please email Django Keita (django.keita@ontario.ca) or Michelle Goveas (michelle.goveas@ontario.ca) at the Ministry of Education with a rationale for a suggested substitution.

Please send your suggested substitution and rationale by June 12, 2015.

Please be advised that:

- Any request for substitution of Priority Schools must be accompanied by a sound rationale and if necessary supporting documents indicating why and how your board will continue to serve user groups of the current Priority School.
- All requests must be submitted by the deadline. If a board does not submit a request for substitution by the deadline, the request may be considered for the following school year.

- If you are aware that your board may wish to shift schools for 2015-16, but the proposed new location has not yet been determined, please inform us. We can then discuss alternate contingency options.
- Approvals of substitutions are conditional upon the board providing the Ministry with a satisfactory rationale that the proposed changes meet the intent of the program.

It is the Ministry's expectation that school boards use funds provided for priority schools to:

- Eliminate usage fees for not-for-profit groups;
- Give priority to not-for-profit groups funded through Ontario Government programs; and
- Provide priority access to school facilities for not-for-profit groups during non-school hours while not displacing school-based extra-curricular activities.

Recipient boards may use their Priority Schools funding to eliminate rental fees for not-for-profit groups such as, those serving children and youth, low income, board non-credit general interest continuing education courses, seniors, community adult groups (e.g. service clubs, philanthropic organizations, and charitable groups).

Furthermore, boards can use their Priority Schools funding to offset additional costs incurred when keeping schools open in the evening or on weekends for community use, including, but not limited to, administrative fees, custodial overtime costs, and hydro costs.

For your information, a list of all 220 current Priority Schools in the province is attached.

The Priority Schools Initiative supports the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport's Child and Youth Health and Wellness (After School) Strategy. The After School Strategy was implemented in 2009 to address government commitments to improve child and youth health issues in support of student achievement and well-being. Through this program, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport funds quality after-school programs in schools in priority areas across the province.

Both the Priority Schools Initiative and the After School program support the Poverty Reduction Strategy and help students and families in high priority neighbourhoods benefit from expanded access to programs and services. Thank you for your continued support of these initiatives.


I am also taking this opportunity to thank you for your support and outreach to your school board's education community regarding the Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grants program for school councils and regional/provincial projects. For the 2014-15 school year, over 2200 projects were funded. This included over 135 applications for Priority School neighbourhoods, all of which were approved for full or partial funding. We are pleased at this response from Priority Schools and look forward to seeing it grow in subsequent years.

The PRO grants for school councils are intended to support school-based initiatives to reach parents who face barriers that prevent them from becoming involved in their children's learning at home and at school. School councils may develop proposals individually, with other school councils in the same board, or with other groups in the school or in the community.

PRO grants support Ontario's goals and key priorities in reaching out to engage parents in supporting the success and well-being of our students. Applications are being received electronically. For more information, please visit the ministry website at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/reaching.html>

If you have any questions regarding this request for substitution or about the list of Priority Schools, please contact Django Keita at 416-325-2091, or Michelle Goveas at 416-212-0512.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Malloy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Dr. John Malloy
Assistant Deputy Minister
Leadership and Learning Environment Division

c: Regional Office Managers
Regional Office Leads
Outreach Coordinators

Attachments

List of Ontario Priority Schools 2014-15