

Ministry of Education

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Ministère de l'Éducation

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Memorandum To: Directors of Education
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities
Provincial Schools Branch

From: Richard Franz, ADM
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Division

Date: August 10, 2017

Subject: New Innovation in Learning Fund (ILF)

The Ministry of Education is committed to ensuring that our graduates are equipped with the global competencies – higher order skills, knowledge and attitudes – that they need in order to thrive in a world that is marked by rapid change, technological acceleration and increasing complexity.

Over the last two years of the Technology and Learning Fund, districts were asked to begin the integration of global competencies at the system, school and classroom level. The response has been positive, with boards embracing global competencies as they develop system plans, connect competencies to curriculum, and consider new forms of assessment.

Now, we are pleased to announce a new ***Innovation in Learning Fund (ILF)***, a \$10M per-year ongoing investment towards fostering greater innovation in learning and teaching to support the development of global competencies in students.

Through the ILF, each District School Board, School Authority Board, and the Provincial Schools Branch will receive a yearly allocation to:

- Provide professional development opportunities that empower educators to facilitate learning experiences that foster deeper learning and global competencies in students.

- Implement innovations in learning and teaching (“innovation projects”) that will help to foster deeper learning and global competencies in students.

In June 2017, the Ministry consulted with a cross-section of directors of education to hear feedback on the proposed ILF. Based upon feedback from the consultation, the funding model for the ILF is comprised of one standard allocation of \$109,000 per year for each district school board and \$23,200 per year for school authorities and provincial schools.

The ILF aims to build upon the strong innovation work that has occurred across districts through the three-year Technology and Learning Fund by purposefully focusing on supporting the evolution of teacher practice. For that reason, a minimum of 50% of the ILF allocation is to be invested in locally-determined, educator professional development. Supporting the learning of our teachers is imperative for maintaining a high-functioning, relevant and responsive education system. Remaining funds can be used to support the development and scaling of innovation projects that foster global competencies, including for research, partnerships and resources. The attached ILF Q&A document provides more details about the ILF and innovation projects, and some ideas for professional learning activities that boards may consider in their planning.

Funding for Technology

Funding for the purchase of technology and digital tools will continue via Grants for Student Needs (GSN). In addition, in an effort to address the concerns raised at the June consultation regarding technology acquisition, the ministry and our Council of Directors of Education (CODE) partners will be providing an additional \$10M in TLF allocations to all school boards, provincial schools and school authorities for the purchase of digital tools in 2017-18. As was the case with the TLF, these funds will be comprised of a standard base allocation plus per-pupil amount, and will flow through CODE. CODE will be communicating to boards their TLF allocations. It should be noted that this TLF extension marks the culmination of any separate funding for technology; all future technology investments should be planned accordingly within the existing GSN.

Additional Supports for Digital Learning

In addition to the ILF and TLF, it should be noted that the ministry is continuing to support 21st century learners through a holistic investment of resources including:

- Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching contacts for each board (these contacts, previously funded through the TLF, are now part of the annual GSN allocation);
- Providing all school boards with a Virtual Learning Environment to support online learning for both students and educators;
- An extensive array of digital resources, including licensed software and resources such as eLearning courses produced by the ministry;
- Investing in broadband modernization to improve access in schools across the province; and

- Documenting and sharing current innovative school board transformations and practices across the province through videos, research summaries and board artifacts.

Letters of agreement for the Innovation in Learning Fund will be issued in Fall 2017, along with relevant resources. Any questions about the ILF can be directed to Ziyaad Vahed, Manager, 21st Century Learning Unit at ziyaad.vahed4@ontario.ca or (416) 327-6593.

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Cathy Montreuil, Assistant Deputy Minister (A), Student Achievement Division

Attachments:

1. ILF Q&A Document