

Ministry of Education

Minister

Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

Édifce Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2



Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to share with you details of our government's next steps to support community hubs in schools that will benefit both students and the local community.

Our government recognizes the important role many educational institutions play in communities. On May 6, 2016, Ontario announced \$50 million to retrofit existing space and improve accessibility in schools to support greater use by communities.

This investment will enable more schools to serve as community hubs that provide one point of access for a range of services. These services may include children's mental health programs, health clinics, social or education services, public libraries, community or neighbourhood centres, or any other kind of cultural and recreational uses that would improve access to services for children or the local community.

School boards are encouraged to work with their community partners to use this funding to share space in schools in ways that support students and the broader community. An example of how this funding could be used may include renovating two excess classrooms into a redesigned space for use by a community partner. Another example could be adding security doors or addressing accessibility barriers through the installation of ramps or automatic doors. Both projects would contribute to expanded public use of a new or existing community hub.

Boards will have local flexibility to decide what available excess spaces and schools provide the best opportunities to meet the needs of the board, the school and community hub partners. It is important to note, however, that while the ministry is providing this capital funding to boards to promote more community hubs in schools, community partners are expected to fully cover the operating and administrative costs of the school board for the spaces they occupy.

Each board's detailed funding information is being shared with them through separate correspondence from Gabriel F. Sékaly, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Financial Policy and Business Division.

As part of a government that is focused on helping people in their everyday lives, we recognize the value and importance schools play as hubs that support the vibrancy and vitality of their community. This initiative was developed in response to recommendations from our education partners, and represents a significant step in helping improve community access to schools to support the communities they serve.

I look forward to continuing our work together on this and other initiatives, and thank you for your dedicated and passionate leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MH', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Mitzie Hunter, MBA
Minister

- c. Council of Ontario Directors of Education
- Ontario Public School Boards' Association
- Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association
- Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques
- Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario