

Office of the Premier of Ontario

Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1



**Cabinet de la
Première ministre de l'Ontario**

Édifice de l'Assemblée législative, Queen's Park
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1A1

February 19, 2016

Ms. Krista Wylie
Co-Founder
Fix Our Schools Campaign
info@fixourschools.ca

Dear Ms. Wylie:

Thank you for your email about infrastructure funding for schools in the upcoming Ontario budget. We welcome the opportunity to respond collectively.

Our government agrees that capital funding for schools is one of the most important infrastructure investments we can make. Ontario has nearly 5,000 schools worth about \$55 billion that house almost two million students.

Our government's investments have led to significant improvements in Ontario's education infrastructure, and we are committed to building on that track record in the years ahead. Our government made a 10-year commitment in 2014, to provide \$11 billion to help build new schools in areas of high growth, improve the condition of existing schools and reduce surplus space through school consolidations.

Since 2003, we have invested \$13.9 billion in school infrastructure and renewal, including nearly 755 new schools and more than 720 additions and renovations. We have significantly increased annual funding provided to address the costs of repairing and renovating schools, and to help keep schools in a good state of repair.

Our investments include \$1.25 billion over three years for the School Improvement Condition program to keep schools in a good condition. School boards also receive an annual school renewal allocation, which supports the costs of repairing and renovating schools. For the 2015-16 school year, an estimated \$325 million will be provided to boards across the province through the School Renewal Grant.

Last year, the Ministry of Education revised its policy on school boards' use of the proceeds of disposition (POD) generated from the disposition of surplus school properties. Under the new POD policy, boards are now required to use POD revenues to address school renewal needs. Boards with the ability to generate the highest amounts of POD in Ontario are also among the boards with the highest deferred maintenance backlogs; hence, this change will provide another source of funding for boards to reduce the backlog.

School boards also play a key role in resolving the repair backlog by addressing surplus space in schools. As part of their regular capital planning exercise, boards should review their underutilized schools and consolidate schools that are no longer required by the board. By right-sizing their capital footprint, boards can target renewal funding to schools that meet the long-term accommodation needs of the board. Our government supports boards in making decisions that promote the efficient use of school space and allocation of funds to address high-priority renewal needs.

Thank you again for writing and for your efforts on behalf of your community. We trust this information will be helpful.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Wynne
Premier



Charles Sousa
Minister of Finance



Brad Duguid
Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure



Liz Sandals
Minister of Education