



Accessing Parent Engagement Funds

We encourage you to reach out to your parent community and engage as many parents as possible in supporting their child's learning and making your school a place where parents feel welcomed and valued partners.

Projects most likely to receive funding are those that meet the following criteria:

PROJECT FOCUS

- increases volunteer recruitment and involvement in the school
- broadens the events held at the school to bring in more parents
- provides support for parents helping with homework
- builds parent and family literacy skills
- builds community links through activities
- develops communication tools to meet the needs of diverse parents

The specific programs you choose should focus on increasing parent involvement, especially hard to reach parents, those who are disengaged, struggle with English, face serious economic challenges, or are new to Canada and the education system.

The following page is a list of suggested projects to help your association think about ways it might use these PRO funds.

PROJECT IDEA FILE



- Resource/information kits for parents new to the school or new high school parents. Kits might include school, school board, and Home and School documents, contact information and a “who does what” brochure for the school and the school board, or tips for homework support.
- Funds to have materials translated for parents whose first language isn’t English.
- Engaging the services of a translator for parent information meetings, parent-teacher interviews, meetings with the principal or trustee.
- A series of Parent Education Nights on topics such as the language and math curriculum, supporting your own child’s learning, taming the homework monster, the role of a trustee, superintendent, director, principal, teacher. Explore translation services for these evenings as well, and provide trained, paid child care, and food.
- Host “Family Dinner” evenings to teach parents and kids about good nutrition, food preparation, and the importance of finding time to work together as a family. Open these sessions to your entire parent community.
- Volunteer recruitment projects: reach out to parents not already engaged, survey what they need to be more involved and then provide training, supports, and encouragement. Develop resources/programs to reach stay-at-home and working parents, moms and dads, new Canadians, and ESL adults.
- Hire community resource staff to help develop plans that can engage parents of hard-to-serve young people. Offer them access to professional support through the school.
- Build a speaker/support network program to help parents deal with issues such as drug and alcohol use, smoking, behaviour problems, bullying programs and obesity.
- Provide free book bags full of children’s books for parents. Offer tips to help children become better readers.
- Provide English language books for ESL children and families.
- Set up a Buddy System for new and ESL families to help them become familiar with the school’s culture and operation.
- Encourage new parents to socialize with the parent community – dinners prepared by new comers and existing community parents, family gym nights, fashion shows/multicultural nights to explore different traditions and cultures.
- Breakfast/Snack Programs focusing on good nutrition. Provide nutrition counseling and food preparation practice for children. Invite parents in the evening and have the children prepare food for them.

- Adopt another school with a more challenging population/ need. Provide child care, food, clothing, and information nights. Investigate the “Family & Schools Together” program as a model for helping schools where parents need help to get organized. Bring the Home and School model to them.
- Enlist the help of community agencies to identify parent needs and provide resources in your community.
- Try new communications tools for parents in your community – web site design and maintenance. Offer computer access in your school to parents without a computer at home.



We hope that this list may spark an idea for a unique proposal that will meet the needs of your community. Home and School Councils may also take a role in helping their Associations plan and undertake projects. Regional PRO grants are also available to Home and School Councils

Home and School Associations are strongly encouraged to apply for these parent-directed funds. A side benefit of any of these projects may be increased parent volunteers for other programs at the school. The BEST benefit may be increased student success. OFHSA will be tracking successful proposals and sharing best practices. Please remember to forward a copy of your completed application form to the OFHSA office and let us know how the project succeeds. ***Good luck!***