

Program Guideline

Teacher Learning &

TLLP

Leadership Program

TLLP has been one of the best learning experiences that the school community and I have participated in.

This initiative is an excellent way to empower teachers to become lead learners in their schools and boards, and to take ownership of their professional learning.

This has been some of the best and most rewarding work in my career.

This project is motivating, inspiring and exciting – exactly what teachers have asked for and need.

The experience kick-started a revolutionary change in my teaching style, approach and effectiveness in and outside my program.

Our TLLP experience impacted the practice of each teacher participant.

It has easily been the best part of my teacher career. This is the best PD I have been involved in and would support it any way I can.

TLLP empowers teachers – I don't think I've ever felt so professionally empowered and valued.

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Section A: Introduction

1. *The Teacher Learning and Leadership Program*

The Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP) provides opportunities for experienced teachers to lead projects that enhance their professionalism and skills, extend their learning and share their expertise with others. The annual program is designed with the recognition that ongoing teacher learning is vital in supporting the goals of [A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario](#), which include excellence in student achievement levels, equity for all learners, the promotion of child and student well-being and enhancement of public confidence in the education system.

Teachers who are currently working in the classroom can apply, as individuals or as teams, to undertake self-directed projects with their own unique learning and sharing activities. The program has three goals:

- Support teacher professional learning;
- Foster teacher leadership; and
- Facilitate the sharing of exemplary practices with others for the broader benefit of Ontario's students.

Teacher Professional Learning:

The TLLP supports teacher learning and facilitates knowledge production by funding proposals from teachers for innovative, self-chosen professional learning activities in areas that are meaningful to them.

Teacher Leadership:

The TLLP fosters teacher leadership by providing all participants in the program with a Leadership Skills for Classroom Teachers professional development session that will help them develop the skills needed to manage their project and share their learning with colleagues effectively. The participants will then apply these leadership skills as they share their expertise of exemplary practices with colleagues.

Sharing of Exemplary Practices:

The TLLP facilitates sharing opportunities for experienced teachers that will in turn benefit Ontario students. Within the context of their project, participants will be required to share their learning and model their practices with others (intra/inter-board and provincially) via the [Mentoring Moments Ning](#) and/or [TeachOntario](#).

Information about completed projects will be posted in a [public online archive](#) on the Ministry of Education's TLLP website. For each completed project, there will be "at-a-glance" information that includes a description of the project, a summary of what was learned and contact information for the project leader. These tools are intended to serve as a resource for school boards, principals and teachers to support future professional learning initiatives.



Section B: General Guidelines

2. Who can apply for the TLLP?

- Experienced teachers from all Ontario publicly funded school boards, school authorities and provincial schools, who have chosen to remain in the classroom and want to deepen their learning in an area of their expertise
- Teachers who are beyond the induction career stage and whose primary assignment is teaching students (e.g., classroom teacher, teacher-librarian, guidance counsellor, co-op teacher, itinerant teacher, department head)
- Individual teachers or groups of teachers; groups must be teacher-led but may include other educational workers, such as education assistants, board consultants and principals
- Project leads who have already completed a TLLP project may reapply in a following cohort. As the TLLP is not intended to fund ongoing projects, proposals from previous project leads must be significantly different in topic and/or scope from their first project. Participants can lead up to two projects, but may continue to support other TLLP projects as team members.

Occasional teachers and teachers working in system level or administrative positions (e.g., principals, coordinators, consultants) are not eligible to lead a TLLP project; however, these educators can provide extremely valuable input as team members. The focus of the program is on experienced teachers who have chosen not to pursue system level or administrative roles and therefore do not have the opportunities to share their knowledge and experience, as consultants do, for example.

The TLLP is meant to deepen professional learning for teachers or teacher-led groups that bring relevant background or experience to the topic. The TLLP also fosters the sharing of the teacher's or teacher-led group's learning with colleagues. In this context, applicants will need to indicate what background and experience they bring to the project and:

- demonstrate what their learning goals are
- state how they will achieve those goals
- explain how they will share their learning with others.

School boards are encouraged to provide opportunities for participation in the TLLP to as many different teachers as possible. Previous recipients of TLLP funding are able to apply to the Provincial Knowledge Exchange (PKE). The PKE provides a funded opportunity to tap into previous TLLP learning by connecting past TLLP participants with interested school or board learning teams. More information about the PKE is available on the [PKE page](#) on the TLLP Ning.

3. What types of projects may be funded?

The focus of the TLLP is to provide an opportunity for knowledge construction and personalization of learning that is developed by the learner and connected to their own "real world" of classroom practice. As such, experienced classroom teachers are encouraged to collaborate with their colleagues to pursue their own authentic learning goals.

Examples of projects are:



- lesson study and creation of an electronic resource that can be shared province wide
- implementation of innovative classroom strategies and publication of the outcomes in a professional magazine
- deepening and sharing teaching expertise (e.g. math skills, improving boys' literacy)
- learning about adapting new methodologies / technologies for students with special needs and opening the classroom to other teachers in your school or board.

Other teachers, subject associations and local affiliates could be a rich source of ideas.

There is no set maximum amount of funding available per project since it will depend on the scope of the activities of the proposed project. However, funding should be tied to the project's learning and sharing goals, as articulated in the project's Proposal Application Form.

4. What are the project selection criteria?

- The extent to which the proposal is guided by the following five characteristics of effective professional learning ([see Appendix A](#)):
 - Coherent
 - Attentive to Adult Learning Styles
 - Goal-oriented
 - Sustainable
 - Evidence-informed
- The quality of the proposal (i.e., to what extent the proposal is well thought out and realistic)
- The extent to which the topic would have an impact on student learning and development and reflect ministry/board/school goals
- The potential impact for the learning of participating educators
- The potential impact for the learning of other educators
- The potential of the plan for sharing with others in the school, board, and/or other boards (i.e. the potential for replication and interest on a larger scale)
- The extent to which the learning and sharing outcomes can be measured

5. What are eligible and ineligible project costs?

Eligible costs

- Ontario travelling costs* (e.g., travel, accommodation, meals in accordance with the board's reimbursement rate policies)
- Resources specific to the project (e.g. books). The anticipated purchase of resources must be made clear in the application.
- Release time (at the board's per diem rate)

Ineligible costs

- Anything for which the Ministry of Education currently provides funding (e.g., student textbooks, salaries of existing teacher positions)
- Resources unrelated to the project
- Capital expenses
- Additional qualification courses or academic credit courses

*Applicants must always use the most economical mode of travel and accommodation



Technology can be included in a proposed budget on the following conditions:

- it is essential for the achievement of the project's learning and sharing goals
- the project proposal clearly demonstrates how technology will be used as a teaching and learning tool
- the use of technology will benefit the learning of other teachers or other educational staff
- the project proposal reflects a balance between technology hardware and professional learning and sharing activities*
- its purchase complies with board procurement policies, as the equipment will belong to the board once the project is completed.

***As per the above criteria, proposed purchases related to technology (e.g., hardware, software, apps, peripherals) may not exceed half of the total project budget**

Consider using the [SAMR model](#) as part of the rationale for connecting technology to the overall learning goals of the project.

Applicants are encouraged to consult with others when preparing their project budget. Principals and staff in the finance department of school boards can provide advice on items, such as release time and board purchasing procedures. Other contacts, such as curriculum consultants, board IT consultants or other teachers, may be able to help with determining the cost of resources in particular program areas, the type of technology supported by the board and the best means for planning sharing activities.

6. How will the contract and transfer payments work?

Contract:

Boards will be responsible for supporting teachers in the TLLP activities and managing the budget allocated to the project. The Ministry of Education will provide a transfer payment contract to allocate the funding. The funding amount will be based on the project budget, plus an additional 10% to be used by the board to pay for the administration of the project funding. The remainder must be dedicated solely to the approved project as described in the proposal.

The teacher participants must comply with the board's accounting and procurement practices and collaborate with the board staff managing the budget.

The contract will also stipulate that the teacher participants complete the TLLP Teacher Participant Final Report Form (located on the [TLLP Ning](#)) and submit it to the board's director of education/supervisory officer of school authority. The board's senior business official will be required to complete the TLLP Board Final Report Form and submit it to the Ministry of Education. Report form templates are accessible via the [TLLP Ning](#). Specific timelines for submitting all reports are outlined in TLLP Timelines posted on the Ministry's [TLLP website](#) and the [TLLP Ning](#).



Section C: Roles and Responsibilities

7. Teacher Applicant(s)/Participant(s)

- Completes the application form
- Prepares project budget, consulting with principal, school board staff or other staff as needed
- Obtains the principal's signature on the application form to acknowledge that their support of the application
- Submits the application form to the director of education or the supervisory officer of the school authority; in the case of a group application, the application is sent to the director of education/supervisory officer of the group leader's board

The selected participants will be required to commit to the following expectations of the program:

- Attend the Leadership Skills for Classroom Teachers professional development session to strengthen facilitation skills and explore effective strategies in communicating with adult learners and budget management
- Carry out the activities as described in their proposal application
- Comply with the board's accounting and procurement practices and collaborate with the board staff managing the budget
- Agree to be contacted/surveyed, for evaluation purposes, by ministry representatives throughout the duration of the project
- Participate in building a community of practice through a province-wide [TLLP teacher networking site](#)
- Post at least two artefacts on the TLLP networking site and/or [TeachOntario](#)
- If requested, provide support to future TLLP participants within your school board
- Participate in knowledge exchange opportunities in order to share their learning and promising practices with colleagues and other education stakeholders
- Document and conduct an analysis of their project and their learning
- Complete the TLLP Teacher Participant Final Report Form and submit it, along with any additional project artefacts, to the board's director of education/supervisory officer of school authority
- Present and share results of their learning at the TLLP Sharing the Learning Summit and within the context of a growing TLLP community of practice
- Share information and progress with the principal to facilitate school and board-wide sharing of their learning

8. School Principal

- Ensures that all experienced teachers in their school are aware of the TLLP
- Meets with the TLLP participant(s) to build a shared understanding of the project's intended purpose, timelines, activities and to better understand what the participant(s) wants to accomplish
- Assists the TLLP participant(s) in finding/contacting supports



- Supports the TLLP participants in meeting project requirements (e.g., taking release time, obtaining resources, contacting other schools, etc.)
- Encourages and assists the TLLP participants(s)' with their growth goals, strategies and timelines for meeting them (these could become part of the teacher(s) Annual Learning Plan for the project year)
- Supports the TLLP participant(s)' project on an as-needed basis and facilitates opportunities for the participants(s) to share their expertise with colleagues

9. Director of Education/Supervisory Officer of School Authority

- Ensures that all experienced teachers in their board are aware of the TLLP
- Establishes a board level committee comprised of board staff and representatives from the teachers' federations to review and prioritize the proposals, and to recommend two* to be forwarded to the Ministry of Education
- Supports the selected teacher participant(s) in TLLP activities and manages the budget allocated to the project
- Has the senior business official complete the TLLP Board Final Report Form (located on the [TLLP Ning](#))
- Forwards the TLLP Board Report Final Form to the Ministry of Education (TLLP-PALPE@ontario.ca)

*To acknowledge the differing sizes and unique sharing needs of school boards, the school boards listed below employing over 3,000 permanent teachers may submit **up to three** recommended proposals:

- Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
- Durham District School Board
- Halton District School Board
- Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
- Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
- Peel District School Board
- Simcoe County District School Board
- Thames Valley District School Board
- Toronto District School Board
- Toronto Catholic District School Board
- Waterloo Region District School Board
- York Catholic District School Board
- York Region District School Board

10. Board Level Review Committee

The director of education/supervisory officer of school authority may use an existing committee (e.g., NTIP Steering Committee) or set up a new committee. The committee must have board and affiliate representation. For example:

- Experienced classroom teacher(s) whose primary assignment is teaching students



- Principal(s)
- Superintendent(s)
- Federation(s)
- Other staff that the board deems appropriate (e.g. consultants)

The Review Committee:

- Uses the selection criteria, described in [item 4](#) of this guideline, to identify up to two priority projects
- Forwards an acknowledgement letter, signed by the board's director of education/ supervisory officer of school authority (sample provided by the ministry) to all teacher applicants to thank them for their proposal and to the recommended applicants to confirm that their proposal will be sent to the Ministry of Education for consideration by the provincial Teacher Learning and Leadership Committee (TLLC)
- Forwards a list with the applicant name(s) and project title for each proposal it has received and the full application documents for the recommended applications to the TLLC via the Teaching Policy and Standards Branch (TPSB) of the Ministry of Education (TLLP-PALPE@ontario.ca)
- Keeps the other applications on file for one year in case the TLLC asks to see them (note that even though the board is recommending up to two or three proposals, the TLLC may wish to also consider the others)

11. Provincial Teacher Learning and Leadership Committee (TLLC)

The Ministry of Education chairs the TLLC. This committee is comprised of:

- Ministry of Education staff
- Teacher federation representatives

The TLLC:

- Reviews the project applications recommended by the board level selection committee
- Contacts the board/school authority/provincial school if it wishes to see an application not recommended by the board level review committee
- Selects projects, based on the selection criteria described in [item 4](#) of this guideline, the funding available and equity of distribution
- Informs teachers of the selection decision in February. Specific timelines are outlined in TLLP Timelines posted on the Ministry's [TLLP website](#) and the [TLLP Ning](#)

Section D: Questions?

Visit the Ministry's [TLLP website](#) for answers to frequently asked questions. The website also contains a number of resources to assist teachers who wish to develop a project proposal.

For further information and/or questions, e-mail the Ministry of Education at: TLLP-PALPE@ontario.ca.



APPENDIX A: Characteristics of Effective Professional Learning

In May 2007, the Minister’s Education Partnership Table approved the Working Table on Teacher Development’s recommendation for the adoption of the following five characteristics that should be considered by anyone charged with, or seeking to provide professional learning experiences for Ontario’s teachers:

i. Coherent

Teacher professional learning is ultimately about best practices for student learning and development and occurs in the context of the ministry/board/school and parent/community/classroom continuum. Coherence is also built on the “three R’s”^{*} of respect, responsibility and results, recognizing teacher professionalism and the complexity of teacher learning. Whether as part of required training, personal selection, or as the subject of an independent research initiative by an individual teacher or a professional learning community, and whether it is directly or indirectly job-embedded, the learning must have a positive impact on the students and school success.

^{*}The “three R’s” were articulated in the [discussion paper](#) Ontario Education Excellence for All: Developing Partners in Education.

ii. Attentive to Adult Learning Styles

Teachers come to each professional learning experience with a wide variety of skills, knowledge, education, teaching, and training background. As a result, when planning professional learning, adult learning principles should be addressed by:

- Considering the role of choice. Research supports the importance of choice and self-direction in personalizing the learning.
- Providing programming that is viewed as meaningful, relevant and substantive.
- Providing differentiation in the content and delivery models.
- Considering “best fit” within a culture of collaborative learning. The “one size fits all” approach may prove problematic in many circumstances. Effective learning must recognize and include the participants’ understanding and perspective in order to bring about a culture of reflection and transformation.
- Providing appropriate recognition for the successful completion of professional learning.

iii. Goal-oriented

Professional learning is enhanced when it is goal oriented and is clearly:

- Connected to improved student learning and achievement.
- Connected to daily practice (job embedded), both directly and indirectly.
- Situated within and respectful of varied contexts (i.e. relevant to ministry, board, school/community, classroom).



iv. Sustainable

Professional learning that will have an impact in the classroom must:

- Be planned and progress over time (i.e. it is a process).
- Be supported by appropriate resources focussed on its success.
- Involve the learners and allow time for practice (job embedded).
- Include time for self-assessment through reflection (construct/de-construct/re-construct thinking about practice) within its processes.
- Include, wherever possible, congruency in professional learning for other staff who support student learning (e.g. educational assistants, social workers, etc.).

v. Evidence-informed

Professional learning should consider and be built upon current research as well as both formal and informal data (e.g. quantitative, qualitative information). This approach would ensure up-to-date theories and practices are aligned with the needs of teachers and students. Evidence based professional learning activities also provide a baseline upon which outcomes can be measured.

The full report of the Working Table on Teacher Development is available on the Ministry of Education's [website](#).

