

Ministry of Education

Ministère de l'Éducation

Capital and Business Support
Division

Division du soutien aux
immobilisations et aux affaires

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157-2022-10228

March 23, 2023

Lori-Ann Pizzolato
Chair
Thames Valley District School Board
1250 Dundas Street
London, ON N5W 5P2

Dear Lori-Ann Pizzolato,

Thank you for your letter dated November 15, 2022, regarding feedback on the Capital Priorities Grant Program. I appreciate the time you have taken to identify these barriers and provide this feedback to the Ministry of Education (ministry).

Schools are critical infrastructure and are an essential part of supporting student achievement. The ministry is committed to supporting the development and construction of capital projects to provide healthy, safe, and accessible learning environments for students and work environments for staff. As part of this commitment, the ministry values your feedback and will take this into consideration to ensure capital projects and processes meet the needs of students, staff, and school communities.

You may be interested to know that the ministry undertook a Lean Review in 2021 of the Capital Approval Process for both school and child care projects. As a result of the review, the ministry has made a number of internal improvements, such as reducing approval timelines by up to 50% for 80% of the capital requests made to the ministry.

We are also aware of the current market conditions as a result of material and labour shortages, supply chain issues and rising construction costs. As a result, the ministry is working with school boards to better understand the sources and impacts of project delays and cost increases and identify solutions.

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Lori-Ann Pizzolato

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As you may already know, Ontario's More Homes Built Faster Plan, announced on October 25, 2022, outlines next steps in the province's plan to get 1.5 million homes built over the next 10 years. We know schools are an essential part of a community and that is why we are working closely with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and other partners. As part of this plan, the ministry launched an Urban Schools/Growth Framework Working Group which included Thames Valley District School Board (DSB), to discuss shaping future schools in urban, rapidly intensifying areas and other areas of growth across the province. The working group consultations have concluded, and the ministry is assessing the input and advice received.

I look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with Thames Valley DSB. Please note that ministry staff may follow up to further discuss your feedback.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Didem Proulx
Assistant Deputy Minister
Capital and Business Support Division