

May 6, 2020

Subject: Update on School Construction Activity During COVID-19

Memorandum to: Directors of Education
School Business Officials
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

From: Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister of Education

We thank you and your staff for all of your efforts in complying with the COVID-19 emergency orders, including those that have resulted in the halting of current capital projects, to keep Ontarians safe.

As a follow-up to the Province's announcement on May 1, 2020, certain businesses and workplaces may have reopened as of May 4, 2020, as long as they comply with strict public health measures and operate safely during the COVID-19 outbreak. We can confirm that school construction projects have been identified as one of these workplaces. Specifically, construction projects and services that support the operations of, and provide new capacity in, schools and child care centres within the meaning of the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

Schools are critical infrastructure, and they are an essential part of supporting student achievement, as well as providing safe and healthy learning environments for our students and work environments for school staff.

As school boards are best situated to understand their own particular circumstances, the ministry is asking that school boards consider whether their construction projects are able to reopen in light of these changes. This may mean that boards will need to consult with their own legal counsel, as appropriate.

Although certain businesses are being permitted to reopen, it is critical that people continue to stay home, practice physical distancing and only go out for essential reasons.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact: Didem Proulx, ADM, Capital and Business Supports Division (416) 885-2946, Paul Bloye, Director Capital Program Branch (416) 325-8589 or Andrea Dutton, Director Capital Policy Branch (416) 325-1705.

Thank you for your ongoing cooperation.

Sincerely,

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

c: Chief Administrative Officers, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs)
Managers, Directors and/or General Managers, CMSMs and DSSABs
Tony Pontes, Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)