1. PURPOSE OF THE INITIATIVE

The Ministry of Education (EDU) is committed to supporting the improved educational achievement of children and youth in care of Children’s Aid Societies (CASs). The purpose of the initiative is to explore conditions for children and youth in care of or receiving services from CASs that result in improved educational achievement and well-being.

EDU is allocating funding for pilot programs that will generate innovative education delivery models to improve educational outcomes and well-being and close the achievement gap for this vulnerable group of students. The ministry would like to explore the effectiveness and scalability of a variety of approaches to support increased achievement of students in care. Boards may customize their proposal to meet local needs and are encouraged to partner with neighbouring and coterminous school boards.

Boards are invited to submit proposal(s) to run pilots for up to $50,000 per semester or summer

- secondary students - February to June 2015 (semester 2);
- secondary and/or elementary students - summer 2015.

2. CRITERIA FOR PROPOSALS

School boards and school authorities are asked to develop pilots based on the criteria outlined below to meet local needs.

The pilots including summer programming, for a minimum of 10 secondary students in care of or receiving services from a CAS, should offer expanded learning opportunities including experiential, cross-curricular and/or contextualized learning, in a student-centered, caring environment.

The summer programming for a minimum of 10 elementary students in care of or receiving services from a CAS, should offer expanded learning opportunities to support improved literacy and numeracy outcomes and well-being through creative and relevant programming.

The template on page 5 must be used for each proposal.

Boards may apply for funding for more than one pilot. In such cases, each project proposal must be submitted separately. Boards with existing pilots may apply for an additional pilot that differs from their current model, e.g., offered in a different community or a different model.
Selection of Students for the Pilot

The method of selection of students who will participate in the pilot is at the discretion of the school within the following parameters:

- Students in care of a CAS and/or are receiving services from a CAS;
- Enrolled in elementary or secondary school; and
- May be disengaged, have high levels of absenteeism, low levels of educational outcomes and/or are not on track to graduate.

Pilot Design

Examples of program features could include:

- Literacy and numeracy learning for elementary students;
- Bundles of credits to be delivered to a cohort that may stay together as one class. The bundle may reflect a school, class and/or student focus. The following are examples of themed studies achieved by bundling credits:
  - The Arts: Media Studies, Drama, Family Studies, English;
  - The Environment: Environmental Science, English, Geography, Green Industries;
  - Sports: Biology, Healthy Active Living, English, Technological Education.
- Instructional approaches that include hands-on-learning, cross-curricular linkages, and experiential learning;
- Content addressing career exploration, Essential Skills, and certifications;
- Delivery in a student-centered, caring environment;
- Tracking mechanisms to support success for participating students.

Best Practice

The pilot includes:

- An advisory group to guide implementation; the advisory group could include the school administration, Student Success Team, attendance and guidance counsellors, CAS staff, teachers delivering the courses, and students in care;
- Elements of support for students beyond the classroom that establish and utilize collaborative partnerships within the community;
- Systemic processes for sharing relevant information that may impact the educational outcomes of students in care between school boards and CASs. This would include the process used to identify students in care for targeted supports and interventions.
Deliverables

Recipients of funding will be required to:

- Submit a report on the provided template at the end of the semester or summer that includes:
  - Quantitative data related to students in the program: age, gender distribution, and for secondary students credits attempted/credits achieved, skill development (e.g. certifications); and for elementary students improved literacy and numeracy outcomes; and
  - Qualitative information, e.g., student testimonials, lessons learned.
- Participate in a provincial professional learning community (PLC) of the pilots to share best practices and resources that were developed.

Intended Outcomes

The pilots should support improved educational outcomes and well-being for children and youth in care through:

- Increased engagement through targeted learning opportunities and creative, relevant programming;
- Improved educational outcomes related to accumulation of credits if for secondary students, reduced disciplinary actions, and enhanced pathways planning;
- Access to supports and interventions; and
- Opportunities for school boards, CASs, and community partners to work together to identify student participants and share relevant information.

Funding Criteria

Funding can only be used for expenses directly related to the development and implementation of the pilot including:

- Program delivery expenditures including staffing, consumables, and costs related to programming (e.g., field trips). Note that expenditures for technology should not exceed 10% and remain for use in the program throughout the pilot;
- Administrative support required to implement the pilot (not to exceed 5% of total funding); and
- Evaluation of outcomes and data collection including costs for monitoring progress (not to exceed 10% of total funding).

All funding must be utilized within the term of the pilot.
4. **TIMELINES**

An Adobe Connect/teleconference will be available in early December. Details will be sent to Student Success Leaders along with a scoring rubric for pilot proposals.

Proposals must be submitted using the template on page 5 by **December 17, 2014** to SSL18.StrategicPolicy@ontario.ca If a board is submitting a request for more than one pilot, each proposal must be submitted separately. Delete pages 1-4 of this document before submitting and save the file as “CYIC pilot title and your board’s name”.

Communication to successful boards will occur by January 5, 2015 followed by transfer payment agreements.

5. **QUESTIONS**

For questions regarding the pilots and the related Call for Proposals, please contact Audrey Cartile at audrey.cartile@ontario.ca 416.326.0552.