

Ontario lifts moratorium on building new schools

Province to pump \$1 billion into new facilities

Ontario's government has lifted a three-year moratorium on school closings in order to shut down older buildings and make way for 100 new facilities.

The government has announced a \$1-billion cash infusion for the schools, to be constructed across the province over the next few years, Education Minister Kathleen Wynne announced yesterday.

The province will consult school boards to identify older buildings too expensive to salvage.

"It's not worth it to keep repairing and throwing money into those schools because there is just too much to be done — the roof's gone, the boiler's out of date, the floor's coming up," she said.

"We need to be looking everywhere around the province and asking boards to

identify those schools."

The ministry is releasing a set of guidelines for closing schools, requiring boards to consult a community for seven months before a school shuts its doors.

Meanwhile, Ottawa's school boards are hoping to get their share of new buildings.

The Eastern Ontario French public school board, which plans to build schools in Kingston and Kanata West as part of its strategic plan, said it hopes to garner funding.

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board has opened six schools in the last two years and plans on building several new schools, including the recently approved Longfields-Davidson Heights Secondary School in Barrhaven.

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