

Executive Summary

PlayFair Teams:

Engaging Students in Challenging Conceptions of Disability, Education, and Social Justice

The overall project objective is engaging Canadian youth, with and without disabilities to increase awareness in schools and local communities of disability, education, and social justice. The project will be administered by the Marsha Forest Centre (MFC) and partners. The Marsha Forest Centre is an internationally known centre consulting with governments, corporation, advocacy groups, school systems, foundations, and individuals, developing projects, conducting research, and publishing in the area of inclusion of persons with disabilities in the larger community. The Toronto-based Centre is known for development of the Circles of Friends, MAPS, PATH, and other support strategies, for its internationally recognized publications on inclusion, and for the quality of research conducted under its aegis. Partners in the project are People First Canada, the Ontario Coalition for Inclusive Education, and Frontier College, Canada's national literacy leader.

The primary strategy is development and presentation of **PlayFair** Presentations focusing on disability, education, and social justice by elementary and secondary students. The project partners will reach out to leading educators in school systems across Canada to extend the partnership circle and to take joint action to improve the life of Canadians with disabilities, particularly as that life relates to education and social justice. Audiences will be student groups and local communities. Project planning will be undertaken and recruitment of three pilot Ontario schools completed during **Phase One** of the project. Volunteer **PlayFair** Teams from these schools will be led by a National Coordinator, a National Mentor on Disability, an in-school staff member, and a local community Mentor. **PlayFair** teams will be students with and without disabilities. The **PlayFair** Team will be an extra-curricular activity of each school in order to make **PlayFair Teams** a continuing part of the school program. A training video, training manual, poster, other publicity materials, and project web page will be developed based on PlayFair Workshops developed in the schools.

School numbers will increase in **Phase Two** and the training video and manual field-tested. As part of the project and to stimulate its spread to other

schools, **Phase One** pilot schools will agree to attract at least one school for Phase Two. The Phase One pilot schools, the National Coordinator, and the National Mentor for Disability will support the new schools. The project training video and the project training manual will be piloted during **Phase Two** with these new schools.

In **Phase Three** the project will become national with invitations for advocates in other parts of Canada to initiate **PlayFair** Teams. Those schools already part of the project may continue to support new schools. Support through materials developed, advice from MFC and partners, and contact with other Teams will continue beyond the project funding period.

The primary intended results for the Canadian community include:

- raising awareness of issues of disability in Canadian society through student activism
- development of support training materials, continuing support through MFC and partners, and contact with other Teams to support sustainability.

The primary benefits for pilot collaborating schools and school systems will be:

- development of leadership opportunities for educators and students in working with and for groups marginalized in society
- recognition of their schools, administrators, teachers, and students as activists in working toward social justice for those with disabilities
- partnership in an exciting national project which will make substantial contributions to the lives of Canadians with disabilities
- positioning their systems as national and international leaders in moving toward recognition of the United Nations call for Education for All and education of all within community schools
- recognition through a national media campaign as pioneers in what promises to be a project which has seminal effect on the national ethic
- development of a proactive stance focused on those elements of their mission statements which relate to excellent education for students and contribution to their conceptual and moral development

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