

Ministry of Education

Minister

Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Telephone (416) 325-2600
Facsimile (416) 325-2608

Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

Édifice Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Téléphone (416) 325-2600
Télécopieur (416) 325-2608



January 24, 2007

Dear colleagues,

A few weeks ago I wrote to you about the importance of strong leadership in our boards. Since then I had a very productive meeting with board chairs, and we have completed a series of trustee orientation sessions with excellent participation from both new and experienced trustees. I'm heartened to see the level of energy and commitment that trustees continue to demonstrate and look forward to working with you in support of a strong and effective publicly funded education system in Ontario.

We all recognize the importance of the key professional leadership roles played by your directors and supervisory officers. Their work is vital to our schools. That is why I am strongly in favour of hiring directors and supervisory officers through open competitions. Indeed, it would be my view that boards should always and only hire directors through a search and competition that is publicly advertised and open to all applicants with the relevant skills and experience.

I also believe that school boards should be able to hire the best qualified persons for director and supervisory officer positions, whether those candidates have qualified for such positions in Ontario or in another province or territory of Canada. I understand that Ontario is currently the only province that limits its senior educational positions to persons with qualifications available only in Ontario, even though many Ontario educators have taken on leadership positions in other parts of Canada. Ontario is a party to the federal-provincial Agreement on Internal Trade, in which provinces and territories committed themselves to the free movement of qualified persons in the professions and trades within Canada. Under this agreement many other occupational groups have made substantial progress in removing barriers to mobility across provinces for people doing similar work, such as architects or engineers.

To support the goal of being able to hire the best leaders for our schools, I will be reviewing what regulatory changes under the *Education Act* may be necessary to remove barriers to mobility of experienced school leaders. I will also ask the Ontario College of Teachers to review its regulations on this matter. In the interim, where a school board has held an open, publicly advertised competition and recommends a candidate who has successful experience in a school, district, or provincial education leadership position in Canada but does not meet the current Ontario qualifications for a supervisory officer or a director, I will be prepared to use my power under the *Education Act* to consider the qualifications and experience of the candidate and, where I consider them equivalent, accept them as such. I am confident that Ontario educators will do very well in these open competitions, as they currently do in other parts of Canada. I emphasize that all such candidates must have appropriate educational qualifications and experience; I do not support the hiring of non-educators into senior educational positions in our boards.

I hope that this approach will assist school boards in ensuring the broadest possible field of high quality candidates for your senior leadership positions. Public confidence in education is best maintained through broad, open and competitive hiring processes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kathleen Wynne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education

c: Partnership Table Members