

Ministry of Education

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Ministère de l'Éducation

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MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Supervisory Officers and Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities
Director of Provincial Schools

FROM: Marg Connor
Director
Learning Environment Branch

DATE: June 21, 2013

RE: Healthy Schools and Student Well-Being Support and Monitoring Plan

I am writing to provide you with an update on the Ministry's Healthy Schools and Student Well-Being Support and Monitoring Plan and to invite you to volunteer for a school board visit in 2013-14.

Our collective work on healthy schools and student well-being is taking place within the context of current provincial initiatives, including:

- the recent announcement of the Ministry's consultation on building the next phase in Ontario's education strategy for the success and well-being of our students;
- the release of the Healthy Kids Panel report, "No Time to Wait: The Healthy Kids Strategy" (see attached), with recommendations and implications for education; and
- a review by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario of provincial, school board and school-level actions related to healthy schools (with particular focus on physical activity and healthy eating for students).

The Ministry's Support and Monitoring Plan for Healthy Schools and Student Well-Being is an opportunity for continued implementation and improved sustainability of student health and well-being policies and programs in boards. It was developed to:

- increase school board understanding and awareness of healthy schools policies/programs and the resources available to support implementation;
- identify current successes and challenges with implementation; and
- establish a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of the healthy schools and student well-being policies/programs at the school board and school level and identify opportunities for linkages between these policies/programs and student achievement.

There are two components to the Support and Monitoring Plan.

1. School Board Visits

In 2012-13 Ministry of Education staff conducted 12 school board visits, two per region. These visits provided important insight into the implementation of healthy schools and student well-being policies and programs. An aggregated report, summarizing the findings of these visits, will be sent to all school boards. Building on the learning this year, we will be continuing with school board visits in each region in 2013-14. As we did last year, we will be asking the Regional Offices to assist us in contacting school boards to seek participation in board visits during 2013-14. If your board has not taken part in a Healthy Schools monitoring visit, I would encourage you to consider volunteering for next year.

2. Capacity Building

a. Adobe Connect Webinars

The Ministry of Education hosted three Adobe Connect sessions on the topics of healthy eating, injury prevention and physical activity. A total of sixty-two school boards participated in the sessions, many of whom invited their public health units to take part as a collaborative learning opportunity. Based on participation rates and positive feedback from the sessions, we will be continuing with three modules for next year (October, January and April) on pertinent student well-being topics.

b. E-Bulletin

An e-bulletin, entitled “*Focus on Healthy Schools*”, was distributed to all school boards and schools across the province in early February and June. We will continue to provide updates again next year on key student health and well-being initiatives, research, as well as exemplary practices from the field.

If you have any questions about the Healthy Schools Support and Monitoring Plan, please contact me or your Regional Office staff.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to healthy schools and student well-being.

Marg Connor
Director
Learning Environment Branch
Ministry of Education

- c. Kathy Verduyn, Director, Field Service Branch
Regional Managers, Ministry of Education Regional Offices.
Barry Pervin, Assistant Deputy Minister, Instruction and Leadership Development Division