

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

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



MEMORANDUM TO: Trustees of School Boards
Secretary Treasurers of School Authorities

FROM: Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education

DATE: March 20, 2009

SUBJECT: **Release of *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools***

In order to meet the needs of Ontarians now and in the future, our government is committed to making environmental education a part of every child's learning. *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools* will guide this work as we move forward together to ensure that our students are active, engaged, and environmentally literate citizens.

I am encouraged by the progress that has been made in environmental education since June 2007 when I announced that our government would move forward on the recommendations in the report *Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future*. Boards and schools are to be congratulated for work already in progress and we look forward to hearing of continuing successes as the development of environmental education in our schools is guided by the policy framework.

As you know, the policy framework was launched at the Environmental Education Symposium on February 25-26, 2009 in Toronto. The Symposium was an opportunity for school board teams to meet and build leadership capacity in environmental education by sharing resources and effective practices to promote the implementation of environmental education in school boards and schools across the province.

You may be interested to know of the enthusiastic participation of students from 40 school boards at the recent Symposium. I was particularly pleased to witness the creative and inspirational presentation that they made to delegates at its conclusion. The commitment of Ontario's youth to this important initiative and their desire to take an active role with you on the work ahead was evident.

As was demonstrated at the symposium, I am keenly aware of the power of environmental education to foster student engagement. And, as we know, engagement in school and in learning has a positive effect on student achievement and motivation. Students who take action on the environment on a personal level, locally or globally, will become more engaged citizens in their communities and will improve our province's environmental future.

The policy framework provides the vision and a model for school boards in the revision or development a board's environmental education policy. In moving forward, you are encouraged to follow existing board policy development processes to complete this task. It is also recognized that the implementation of the policy framework for environmental education will occur over time and that it will be guided by local needs and conditions.

I look forward to continuing to work with you to support Ontario students as they develop the knowledge, skills and perspectives needed to be environmentally active citizens.

Kathleen Wynne

cc: Ben Levin DM
Grant Clarke ADM (A)
Alayne Bigwin ADM (A)
Sue Durst, Director, CAPB
Ginette Plourde, Director, FLEPPB
Kit Rankin, Director, FSB
Regional Managers