

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



March 12, 2009

Dear Board Chairs, Directors of Education, Secretary-Treasurers and Supervisory Officers of School Authorities and Director of Provincial Schools,

In recent days, there has been a great deal of discussion about the upcoming school year calendar. With Labour Day on September 7 this year, school boards are taking a variety of approaches to schedule the required 194 school days. I know that this is an issue to which you have already given thought and on which you may have reached decisions.

I am writing to you because significant concern has been expressed about the prospect of having students return to class before Labour Day, especially in view of the challenging economic circumstances that Ontario is facing and the possible impact on tourism and summer employment for students. I trust that you will take these considerations into account when reaching decisions about your calendars for the upcoming school year. In particular, if you have not already done so, I request that you engage with your community and coterminous boards to determine the best option for your community.

As you are aware, it is possible to meet the provincial regulation requirements, while permitting students to return to class after Labour Day, by scheduling at least two professional activity days before September 7. Boards may also wish to submit more than one calendar to meet the particular needs of local communities within your boards.

There are, and have long been, local circumstances that see students return to class before Labour Day. These include year-round schools, communities close to other jurisdictions with earlier start days and the inclusion of week-long breaks in the fall to accommodate local priorities such as harvests and hunting seasons.

I trust that you will give serious consideration to the advisability of beginning classes before Labour Day. I am confident that you will make decisions that are in the best interest of your community.

Thank you for the good work that you continue to do on behalf of the students of Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Wynne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education