

Ministry of Education

Deputy Minister

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Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2**Ministère de l'Éducation**

Sous-ministre

Édifice Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Memorandum To: Directors of Education

From: George Zegarac
Deputy Minister

Date: March 27, 2015

Subject: 2015-16 Calendar of Education Events

I am writing to update you on my commitment regarding improving our responsiveness to system needs and working together to improve coherence between ministry and school board planning. I am pleased to inform you that we continue to make progress in two key areas of this commitment – the further streamlining of ministry sessions and earlier release of the ministry's Calendar of Education Events.

Our renewed vision, *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario*, encourages us to work together to integrate and consolidate our efforts around key priorities. This includes looking at how we learn together and support improved outcomes for the children and students in our early years and education system. A significant component of this work relates to professional learning that takes place with the ministry, school boards, and other partners.

Over the past two years the ministry has been examining how we engage in professional learning with the field, including building coherence across priorities, increasing integration of key messages across sessions and exploring alternative methods of delivery to reduce demands on senior leaders to be away from their boards. This has involved intensive work on the part of my staff to review professional learning plans in the context of innovation, alignment and possible integration, and to consult with partners in the field about how to make progress, with the outcome of a more responsive Calendar of Education Events.

Information on ministry-led events for 2015-16 is now available online via the Calendar of Education Events, found online [here](#). We hope this earlier release will facilitate your own planning processes, and would encourage you to share this link broadly within your organization. We recognize that sessions may need to be added to support the release of new documents and/or priorities. We will endeavour to keep such additions to a minimum and will place them on the calendar with consideration of the demands on your time. We continue to seek your specific feedback on potential areas for improvement, and appreciate your partnership and input.

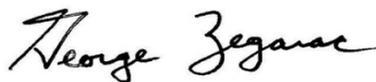
We are working on rolling out some improvements to make the calendar more user-friendly; these improvements will be rolled out by this summer.

New to the calendar this year will be the option to view provincial events and those in your region simultaneously, a new coding system to facilitate at-a-glance understanding of the different types of sessions (for example a “V” denotes virtual sessions), and the ability to export events to other calendar formats such as Outlook and iCal. In addition, every event will contain a new field that includes the intended learning outcomes for that session to assist your staff with identifying relevant sessions for their work.

You will find a list of the adjustments made to date in the attached appendix. Additional details about specific sessions for 2015-16, including funding, will follow at later dates and come from the relevant ministry program area.

Progress on the calendar for 2015-16 has been supported through the input of various leadership associations, including CODE and the Institute for Educational Leadership, throughout the development process. In the coming months, we will be renewing our dialogue with you to consider more transformative approaches for professional learning in collaboration with our partners. If you have any questions or feedback to provide about the calendar, please contact Russ Riddell, Director of Strategic Planning and Transformation, at (416) 325-4835, or Russell.riddell@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,



George Zegarac
Deputy Minister

Attachment: Appendix: Responsive Professional Learning

- c. Ministry of Education Assistant Deputy Ministers
 - Russ Riddell, Director, Strategic Planning and Transformation Branch
 - Council of Ontario Directors of Education
 - Conseil ontarien des directrices et directeurs de l'éducation de langue française
 - Association des gestionnaires de l'éducation franco-ontarienne
 - Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association
 - Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association
 - Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes
 - Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario
 - Ontario Principals' Council
 - Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens
 - Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
 - Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association
 - Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
 - Ontario Teachers' Federation