

**Ministry of Education**

Minister

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**Ministère de l'Éducation**

Ministre

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**Memorandum To:**

Michel Barrett  
Chair, Durham District School Board

Doreen Dewar  
Chair, Rainbow District School Board

Janet McDougald  
Chair, Peel District School Board

**From:**

Liz Sandals  
Minister

**Date:**

May 27, 2015

**Subject:**

Supporting Students in the 2014-2015 Year

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In preparation for the school year resuming, I am writing to you today to encourage your school boards to maximize the remaining instructional and learning time for students that have been impacted by the local strike action.

This memo is to provide you with assistance in planning for the remainder of the 2014 – 2015 school year in the policy and program areas set out below. For your three boards and for the 2014-2015 school year only, this assistance includes the modifications to *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2010* (GS) and *Ontario Schools: Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements 2011* (OS) identified in this memo.

***Adjustments to School Year Calendar: Professional Activity Days and Examination Days***

Regulation 304 (School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days) under the *Education Act* establishes certain requirements relating to Professional Activity (PA) and examination days, and provides some flexibility to modify published calendars. The Deputy has written to the Directors of your boards identifying the specifics of calendar changes that you are encouraged to consider in order to maximize the amount of instructional and learning time remaining for your students, including eliminating formal examination days that may already have been scheduled, and moving or reducing the number of remaining PA days.

Requests for my approval of such changes to the school year calendars should be submitted electronically through the appropriate Regional Office of the Field Services Branch. The Regional Office will provide confirmation to the board that the notification has been received and the status of approval of the request as quickly as possible.

### ***Assessment and Evaluation Policy***

As you are aware, *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2010* (GS) specifies how final marks will be determined for students in courses in Grades 9 to 12.

For the 2014-2015 school year only and for your boards only, I will direct that boards inform teachers that they should determine 100% of final marks in full-year and second semester courses by considering all evidence collected and assessed through observations, student performances, projects, tests and assignments throughout the period of learning to the end of the school year.

### ***Secondary School Credits***

The compressed instructional time remaining in the 2014 – 2015 school year does not allow for the completion of the standard 110 hours of scheduled instructional time for each secondary credit. Accordingly, I am also directing that the 110 hours of instructional time as outlined in the *Ontario Schools: Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements 2011*, will not apply in this school year for your three boards.

### ***Specialized Programs***

- **Co-op Education** – Teachers will determine final marks by considering all evidence collected and assessed throughout the period of learning in Co-operative Education to the end of the school year.
- **Specialist High Skills Major** – The ministry will work with your boards to make one-time exceptions to allow reduced non-credit requirements for Grade 12 students graduating in June so that they receive the SHSM designation on their diploma.

### ***The Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)***

We recognize that graduating students are particularly concerned that their graduation requirements be completed and that their diplomas be issued in order to move forward with post-secondary study and employment. As noted above with respect to secondary school credits, students should be evaluated in each course based on all evidence collected throughout the period of learning to the end of the school year. I am further directing that for the 2014 – 2015 school year and for your boards only, that the OSSD be issued based on the teachers' evaluation as noted above.

### ***The Ontario Literacy Requirement***

Boards are asked to verify the status of all graduating students in terms of completion of the literacy requirement for the OSSD, and if a student is not able to complete the course requirements by the end of the school year, to ensure that they have been provided the opportunity to participate in the Adjudication Process, as set out in the annual memo to Directors of Education from the Director of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch on May 19, 2015.

### ***EQAO Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics***

The EQAO will *not* proceed with the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics in your boards this spring 2015. The focus of Grade 9 mathematics courses will be on addressing the curriculum expectations in the remaining instructional days in 2014 - 2015.

### ***Supports for Student Learning***

I share your concern about maximizing the preparation of students to be successful in the next steps in their academic careers in secondary school and in post-secondary study. I encourage you to communicate the following supports to your students, parents and community:

- **Summer School** – Boards are encouraged to work collaboratively with other district school boards to provide increased summer school availability in face to face and eLearning formats, as appropriate, and to inform students and parents of this availability.
- **Credit Rescue** – Boards are encouraged to engage students in credit rescue activities for the remainder of the school year.
- **Independent Learning Centre (ILC)** – Boards are reminded of opportunities that may be available through the ILC for students to earn credits. Information about the ILC, course availability and registration procedures continue to be available on the ILC website at [www.ilc.org](http://www.ilc.org).
- **Non-credit Supports** – Individual colleges and universities, and the websites for the Ontario College Admission Service (OCAS) [www.ocas.ca/home.html](http://www.ocas.ca/home.html) and the Ontario University Application Centre (OUAC) [www.ouac.on.ca](http://www.ouac.on.ca) identify non-credit supports for all students entering post-secondary study. In addition, the ILC is providing non-credit course packages in Grade 12 English, math and science courses, to supplement learning in courses in which graduating students were enrolled to support successful transition to the post-secondary sector. These courses will be available free of charge to students graduating from your boards. Further information about these Grade 12 courses will be posted on the ILC website at [www.ilc.org](http://www.ilc.org).

Thank you for your ongoing support of our students as we all work to support their success in this school year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Liz Sandals". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L" and "S".

Liz Sandals  
Minister