

Ministry of Education

Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministry of Health Promotion

Ministère de la Promotion de la santé



November 5, 2008

Dear Principal/School Board,

We are writing to tell you about the Healthy Schools Recognition Program and to encourage you, your staff and your students to help create a healthier learning environment at your school.

Engaging in healthy activities can help students' performance in the classroom. When students are healthy, they are better able to learn. And when they learn healthy habits, they are more likely to have a healthy and active lifestyle in the future. Now is the perfect time to build on previous successes, or decide how to get involved for the first time.

The Healthy Schools Recognition Program encourages school staff, students, school councils and community partners to engage in healthy activities. Over the last two years, more than 1,700 schools pledged to undertake more than 4,600 healthy activities. They received a pledge certificate and pennant to be displayed in the school as recognition of their commitment.

Participation in the Healthy School Recognition Program is easy. If you have already participated, it is even easier to do so again. You can expand on previous years' activities, or you can choose to develop a different one. The important thing is to do something healthy.

There is a range of healthy activities your school can do. See the attached list of helpful questions and answers for ideas. Or, visit www.ontario.ca/healthyschools to:

- find tips and ideas to help your school community be healthier
- use the search tool to learn what other schools have done
- discover more about programs like the "Eating Well Looks Good" on You pilot project
- read success stories from other schools — and share your own to inspire others.

To apply, visit the website and download the application form. Schools should apply by April 16, 2009.

Remember, there are many ways to promote a healthy learning environment. Activities highlighting the importance of physical activity, healthy eating, bullying prevention, personal safety, substance use and abuse, and mental health can all be counted towards your school's participation.

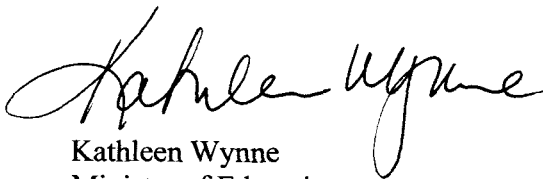
Planning a healthy project or activity for the school is a great way for students to get involved with their school and their community. We encourage you and your staff to work with students, parents and local organizations to develop activities and promote the Healthy Schools Recognition Program throughout the community.

We are writing to student councils and school councils to encourage their involvement. You can also use the attached newsletter article to promote the Healthy Schools Recognition Program within your school.

We hope your school will commit to becoming healthier by participating in the Healthy Schools Recognition Program for 2008/09.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to Ontario students.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education



Margarett R. Best
Minister of Health Promotion