December 11, 2008

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to share with you a copy of the report by the Safe Schools Action Team.

Last February, the action team was re-engaged to examine issues of gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment and inappropriate sexual behaviour in schools. The team, chaired by Parliamentary Assistant Liz Sandals, also looked at barriers to students reporting these incidents and reviewed local police/school board protocols.

The team’s report — *Shaping a Culture of Respect in Our Schools: Fostering Safe and Healthy Relationships* — summarizes their findings and consultations, and provides recommended areas for action. The report is also available on the Ministry of Education website.

These are very serious issues. A safe and positive learning and working environment is essential if we want our students to succeed. We will carefully review the report’s recommendations and work to effectively implement changes to help make our schools safer.

Thank you for the work that you are already doing to help create safer school environments and to support Ontario’s students.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education