December 17, 2013

Mr. Sam Hammond
President
Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
136 Isabella Street,
Toronto ON M4Y 1P6

Dear Mr. Hammond,

Thank you for your letters about the upcoming mandatory unpaid day for members of the ETFO teacher bargaining unit on Friday, December 20. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

I understand your concern about potentially negative public perception, if teachers are not engaging in professional activities on a day that the approved school-year calendar has designated as a professional activity day. I can confirm that it is appropriate to identify December 20, 2013 as an unpaid day for elementary and secondary teachers in Ontario. This summarizes one of the components of the agreements we were able to reach with ETFO and other education partners earlier this year.

As you are aware, section 4.1 (1) of Ontario Regulation 304 – School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days, requires school boards to inform the public about the purpose of professional activity days. Since the mandatory unpaid day occurs on a professional activity day, a board may, after discussing the issue with the local bargaining unit, communicate publicly through its website or by other means that December 20 is an unpaid day for its teaching staff. The Ministry has no objection to Boards communicating this through their website or other public communications.

Thank you again for having taken the time to share your concerns.

Sincerely,

Liz Sandals
Minister

c: Directors of Education – English Public Boards
   Board Chairs – English Public Board
   CODE
   OPSBA