February 23, 2015

Dear Chairs,

Ontario’s curriculum is recognized as world class and sets high standards of achievement for all students. It also supports our government’s renewed goals laid out in Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario – achieving excellence, ensuring equity, promoting well-being and enhancing public confidence. Thank you for the work you do every day to support our students.

Well-being is a core component of our renewed vision for education and we are committed to the success, safety and well-being of every student and child. Our students deserve a curriculum that is current, relevant and age-appropriate to give them the best information possible to make informed decisions about their health and well-being.

That is why I am pleased to inform you that the revised curriculum policy documents for Health and Physical Education, Grades 1 to 8, 2015 and Health and Physical Education, Grades 9 to 12, 2015, have been posted on the Ministry of Education website www.edu.gov.on.ca. Print documents will be distributed to schools and school boards in the near future.

The revision of these curriculum policy documents is the result of work done through the curriculum review process, which began in 2007. The review process was guided by research on current instructional approaches specific to this discipline, expert advice from academics, benchmarking and comparisons of the curriculum with that of other national and international jurisdictions. The review also involved extensive consultations with educators, students, parents and a wide range of stakeholders. These processes provided valuable insights to support strengthening and updating the curriculum to meet current and future student needs.

In addition to supporting Achieving Excellence, the curriculum aligns with other government policies and documents including: Healthy Schools policies and programs, Ontario’s Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, Comprehensive Action Plan on Accepting Schools, the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, Character Education, Environmental Education, Financial Literacy Education, Growing Success, Learning for All, plus First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework and others.
As you know, mandatory implementation of the curriculum begins this September. To support this, we will be providing regional training sessions for board teams throughout April and May, which will include both web-based and face-to-face components. More information on these sessions will be communicated shortly. In the meantime, you may wish to see the Calendar of Education Events at: http://skills.edu.gov.on.ca/PLCalendar/MonthCalendar/search.aspx.

We know that parents and educators play critical and complementary roles to support student safety and well-being. Recognizing this, we have begun developing a series of resources for parents, which provide information on the Health and Physical Education curriculum and ideas for supporting learning at home.

The parent resources will include:

- A Parent’s Guide to the Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Grades 1-12;
- A Parent’s Guide: Human Development and Sexual Health in the Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Grades 7-12;
- Quick Facts for Parents: Learning about Healthy Relationships and Consent; and
- Quick Facts for Parents: Learning about Online Safety, including Risks of Sexting.

These resources are available on the ministry’s webpage at: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html

Planning for the development of educator resources and supports is also underway. Resources will be available at www.eduGAINS.ca and through education partners.

The release of the revised Health and Physical Education curriculum would not be possible without our partners in education. I would like to personally thank you again for all your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Liz Sandals
Minister

c: Ontario Public School Boards’ Association
   Ontario Catholic School Trustees’ Association
   Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques
   Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l’Ontario