January 5, 2017

Dear 2015-16 Minister’s Student Advisory Council Members,

As the new Minister of Education, it has been my pleasure to see all of the great work of the Minister’s Student Advisory Council. Your participation is important and your perspectives reflect the cultural, social, economic and geographical diversity of Ontario’s students. Thank you for sharing your voice to help strengthen student engagement across our province.

I would like to thank you for submitting the attached report that highlights your recommendations on topics that were most important to your council.

Thank you for your thoughtful advice. The recommendations from ‘Student Topic #2: Leading Change in the Area of Mental Health & Fitness in the Ontario Education System’ in particular are being considered as part of the review of the Daily Physical Activity Policy (PPM 138). Future MSAC members may be consulted on this topic.

In your report you also noted the importance of technology in the classroom. You may be aware that earlier this month, Ontario celebrated Computer Science Education Week by encouraging school boards across Ontario to participate in the “Hour of Code”. We also announced that our government will be providing a new resource that will help teachers integrate coding and computational thinking skills into teaching. You can read our news release to learn more about this exciting initiative.

I also note the importance you put on student well-being. You may be aware that we have moved this forward by conducting engagement sessions about well-being. We began with provincial meetings in early November 2016, followed by regional sessions with educators, parents, students and community members. We have been pleased to have a large number of students from this year’s council participate in these sessions, and I look forward to their participation continuing as this work moves forward.

I will continue to consider your recommendations to determine how your voice can inform the work of the ministry. Other recommendations will be shared within the ministry for consideration in our ongoing program and policy work.
Many of the recommendations outlined in your report are specific to the role of schools and school boards. Therefore, we have also shared your report directly with Directors of Education so that they can consider your great suggestions.

Thank you again for your participation and important work as part of the 2015-16 Minister’s Student Advisory Council.

Best wishes for a successful year.

Sincerely,

Mitzie Hunter, MBA
Minister of Education

C: Bruce Rodrigues, Deputy Minister
   Cathy Montreuil, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Achievement Division (SAD)
   Denys Giguère, Assistant Deputy Minister, French-Language, Aboriginal Learning and Research Division (FLALRD)
   Directors of Education

Attachment (1)