March 2, 2010

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to inform you that the Provincial Interest Regulation (PIR) was filed on February 26 and is now in effect.

Our government’s approach to publicly funded education has been — and will always be — one of respect, collaboration and consultation with our education partners.

The PIR is stronger thanks to advice and input from all of you. It reflects a constructive and supportive approach that honours the complexity within and among school boards, and the partnership that exists between school boards and the government.

Authority for the regulation is in subsection 11.1 of the Education Act.

Consultations were held with trustee associations and with others from June to September 2009. Over the winter, further consultations were held with members of the Partnership Table.

The regulation establishes a collegial process with school boards if the Minister has concerns in one or more of the following areas:

1. academic achievement of students;
2. student health and safety;
3. good governance of the school board;
4. performance of the board and of the director of education in carrying out their responsibilities under the Education Act; and
5. parent involvement.

In the case where concerns were identified, the Minister would appoint one or more persons to undertake a review of the board with respect to the area(s) of concern. Upon completion of the review, the individual(s) appointed would write a report and submit it to the Minister. Prior to doing so, however, the board would have an opportunity to review and comment on the report, and these comments would also be provided to the Minister.
After considering the reviewers’ report and any comments the board might have, the Minister might make comments or recommendations to the board. The board must then give “full and fair consideration” to these comments and advise on how it is going to take these comments into account, particularly with respect to the board’s multi-year plan.

Under the PIR, the only circumstances which could lead to consideration of board supervision are if a board refused to or did not fully participate in a review process, or refused to give full and fair consideration to recommended changes arising out of the review.

This regulation supports our government’s priorities of higher student achievement and enhanced public confidence in our publicly funded education system. It does so in a way that reflects our commitment to work with you in a respectful and collaborative way.

I am delighted to be moving forward with this important regulation. Thank you for the time and effort you have put into its development.

Sincerely,

Leona Dombrowsky
Minister of Education