September 4, 2013

Dear Chairs,

As fall approaches and our children head back to school, we have so much to be proud of. Student achievement continues to rise with roughly 75 per cent of our four and five-year-olds enrolled in full-day kindergarten and 83 per cent of our high school students graduating.

Ontario’s students continue to amaze me. Their hard work, along with the incredible support of their parents, teachers and school board staff, is making our schools stronger each and every day. The results over the past decade speak for themselves.

For example, the Education Quality and Accountability Office released their most recent provincial results last week. The number of elementary students reaching Ontario’s high standard has increased by 17 percentage points over the last 10 years. Today, 71 percent of grade 3 and 6 students are meeting or exceeding the provincial standard of a ‘B’ grade.

We know that we have to improve our results in mathematics, and we look forward to working with our education partners to ensure that Ontario’s students have the skills they need in today’s global economy. One of our most innovative initiatives is the implementation of full-day kindergarten. During the last school year, over 120,000 students were enrolled in this program.

By this time next year, full-day kindergarten will be completely rolled out, making it available to all of Ontario’s four and five-year-olds. Together, we have come a long way — initiatives like full-day kindergarten and our student success programs are part of why our education system is now recognized as being among the best in the English-speaking world.

I know that I can count on your support as partners who recognize that investing in our children’s education is an investment in our province’s future. I am excited to support our students, teachers and educators as we build an even stronger education system to provide the best environment for students to succeed now and throughout their lives.

I hope that you have enjoyed the summer break, and I thank you in advance for your hard work, on behalf of our students, as we look forward to another successful school year.

Sincerely,

Liz Sandals
Minister