September 2, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

Today is an important day in the history of Ontario’s publicly funded education system. As of now, full-day kindergarten is a reality for every single four- and five-year old in our province.

As you read this, approximately 265,000 of our youngest learners are getting ready to make new friends, meet new challenges, and take new risks — through the play-based learning format that is the hallmark of our made-in-Ontario full-day kindergarten program.

The realization of full-day kindergarten means that together, we have made history, and in doing so, we have positively influenced the future of our children and our province. It was no small task. It took vision and fortitude, creativity and collaboration, but more than anything, it took a lot of hard work by all of us working together.

Our government put forward a plan for full-day kindergarten, and together with the dedication and hard work of our educators and administrators in our schools and school boards, along with students and parents, we have accomplished a historical transformation in our education system.

Full-day kindergarten owes its success to people like you, who turn ideas into action and investments into results. Thank you for your contribution to this milestone in our province’s history.

While this marks the end of a chapter on implementing full-day kindergarten, it also marks the unofficial beginning of a new chapter in our collective story — one premised on our renewed vision.

Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario, makes it clear that the best is yet to come for our publicly funded education system. Even as we celebrate our accomplishments, we must relentlessly strive toward achieving excellence, ensuring equity, promoting well-being and enhancing public confidence. Students, families and communities expect nothing less of us. And as educators, we must expect nothing less of ourselves.

It wasn’t so long ago that full-day kindergarten was just an idea backed by some words on a page. Today, it is helping every four- and five-year old in Ontario get the best possible start in school and in life. So as I write this, with a copy of Achieving Excellence on my desk, I can only imagine what we will have achieved together years from now on behalf of Ontario’s students. And it all starts today.

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I wish you all the best in the 2014-15 school year, and I look forward to working with you every step of the way.

Sincerely,

Liz Sandals
Minister

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