September 21, 2015

Dear Chair

I am pleased to inform you that today, we have released the School Consolidation Experience Studies on the Ministry of Education’s website. The release of these studies fulfils an important commitment we made to the sector as part of the School Board Efficiencies and Modernization initiative.

The three comprehensive studies cover the full-range of issues experienced by participating schools, school boards, and those whom they serve, and they do so in a clear and objective manner. In addition, the studies provide important forward guidance for future consolidations that will benefit students, parents, communities and the sector.

The highlights of the reports include lessons learned from multiple stakeholder perspectives which are articulated around the themes of Communication, Transition Planning and Implementation of Decisions, as well as Program Offerings and School Culture. While the lessons learned are specific to each of the three case studies, collectively they provide valuable insight and advice to school board administrators who have undertaken, or are planning to undertake, school consolidations and/or reorganizations.

With these studies in hand, I would like to thank Senior Education Consultant, Joan Green, for her thorough and thoughtful work. Ms. Green, a recipient of the Order of Ontario, founding CEO of the Ontario Education Quality and Accountability Office, and former Director of Education for the City of Toronto, left no issue off the table; the result being an unflinching and highly informative look at the consolidation experience. Furthermore, the participating school boards and school communities also deserve recognition for their ready participation and forthright contributions to these invaluable studies.

As Chair, school consolidations are one of your most sensitive challenges. While there is no avoiding that fact, I trust that you will find these studies, and their many insights, helpful as your work with colleagues and communities to modernize your school board’s capital footprint.

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