



**ONTARIO PUBLIC  
SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION**

**Leading Education's Advocates**

**Ontario Public School Boards' Association**  
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Laurie French  
President

W.R. (Rusty) Hick  
Executive Director

April 5, 2018

The Honourable Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Minister of Education  
Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care

Dear Minister:

via email: [Indira.naidoo-harris@ontario.ca](mailto:Indira.naidoo-harris@ontario.ca)

Thank you for your letter of March 26 which provided next steps with regard to last fall's Governance consultation topics. We have noted that many of the decisions and directions taken reflect our advocacy work and want to thank your Ministry for listening to stakeholders. On behalf of our members, I would like to follow up on a few items as well as seek additional information and clarification.

With regard to Trustee Codes of Conduct, we want to remind your Ministry of our 2012 template and the six principles that were part of a Ministry consultation several years ago. We have recently begun to update this template based on experience and suggest that our template could help inform the direction and starting point for the working group which is tasked with developing minimum standards. The memo indicated that this working group would be established in late 2018, but in the meantime a regulation is being proposed requiring, "school boards to have a publicly available code of conduct for trustees and to review their code on a regular basis." We question the creation of a regulation before an actual province-wide policy is in place. We suggest it makes better sense to create a policy with minimum standards and then require boards to have it posted on their website and review it regularly.

As for the use of an Integrity Commissioner (IC), we thank you for allowing local flexibility and the ability for boards to access an IC if they choose to. We would request that there be funding for this use of an outside professional resource. Also, we suggest the Ministry consider connecting with the OESC about creating an IC pool for boards to access.

We were pleased to see the ministry acknowledging the work of trustees and see the modest increase in their honoraria as an important first step. We look forward to being a member of the working group to review this regulation for a more fair formula and compensation.

OPSBA supports the proposed changes to the regulation governing student trustees. We believe this will also give students more of a voice at board tables and stability during terms. We also support the decision to allow more flexibility, with limits, for the allowance of electronic participation in meetings by board chairs. This has been an issue for our northern members in particular. For this change, we would look again for a policy template that can be used by all boards to ensure consistency across the province and ensure everyone is meeting expectations.

Finally, with regard to Director of Education requirements, we thank the ministry for respecting these important leaders and for the ongoing willingness of your Ministry to work together with CODE and other education partners.

We look forward to learning about the next steps for the working groups mentioned above.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie French".

Laurie French  
President

Cc: Sam Andrey, Chief of Staff  
Bruce Drewett, Director, Leadership, Collaboration and Governance