

**July 7, 2023**

**Memorandum to:** Chairs of District School Boards  
Directors of Education  
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

**From:** Clayton La Touche  
Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Support and Field Services  
Division

Yael Ginsler  
Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Achievement Division

**Subject:** Mental Health Literacy Modules and Mandatory Professional Activity Days for the 2023-24 School Year

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Promoting the healthy development of all students, as well as enabling them to reach their full potential, remains a top priority for the ministry. The government is committed to ensuring that students have access to mental health services and improved mental health literacy. As was announced on May 1, 2023, the government is introducing mandatory mental health literacy modules.

The mental health literacy modules are currently being developed by School Mental Health Ontario with input from the Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) and will align with the Grades 7 and 8 Health and Physical Education curriculum. Students in Grades 7 and 8 will learn how to manage stress, understand the relationship between mental health and mental illness, recognize possible signs of mental health problems, counteract mental health stigma and know when and how to get support.

The modules will be teacher-led and students will engage in learning activities that prepare them for the transitions that come with adolescence, as they continue to build their “toolkit” of strategies for supporting mental health, including self-care strategies.

The mental health literacy modules will be ready for the 2023-24 school year and will be mandatory beginning in January 2024. The modules will be available on the ministry’s virtual learning environment and more details will be shared with school boards in August 2023.

The ministry recognizes the important role that professional learning has in helping educators gain greater knowledge and skills, including on key areas of focus for student learning and supports.

On April 6, 2023, the ministry issued a memo regarding the Professional Activity (PA) Days for the 2023-24 school year, which outlined direction on topics for the three mandatory PA days. To support the government’s commitment to improving mental health literacy in schools, please note that under the broader topic of **Student Well-being, School Safety and Violence Prevention**, time must be dedicated specifically for student mental health and well-being to enhance educator capacity to support student mental health, in addition to one or more of the following:

- Cybersecurity and online privacy awareness
- Anti-Sex Trafficking
- Student safety and violent incident prevention

During the dedicated time for student mental health and well-being, Grades 7 and 8 teachers' professional activities are to focus on the implementation of the mental health literacy modules. All other teachers may focus on those modules or other relevant material to enhance educator capacity to support student mental health. Additional details on this provincial priority and PA Day topics will be provided prior to the new school year in the Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 151: Professional Activity Days Devoted to Provincial Education Priorities.

Sincerely,

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Assistant Deputy Minister  
Student Support and Field Services Division

Yael Ginsler  
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Student Achievement Division

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