

Ministry of Education

Minister

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Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

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Dear Parents,

As the school year comes to a close, I would like to express my sincere congratulations to every student across Ontario on all they have accomplished.

We're going back to basics in Ontario schools, including a renewed focus on the foundational skills students need for success in life: reading, writing and math. These changes are designed to help ensure children in Ontario's schools are learning the skills they need to be ready for the jobs of the future.

That's why our government made historic investments to education ahead of the 2022-23 school year, including the first and largest publicly funded tutoring support program of its kind in Canada.

As we look forward to September, our government has increased investments in public education to ensure students have the tools they need to turn their dreams into reality.

New Math and Reading Supports for 2023-24

Ontario's plan to improve reading, writing and math is anchored by an additional \$200 million. In practical terms, that means nearly 2,000 new educators with a focus on improving reading, writing and math. To strengthen student achievement, we are expanding financial literacy learning in classrooms and doubling the number of school math coaches, and for the first time we are deploying math improvement teams to underperforming schools and boards.

On top of these new investments, we're unveiling a new language curriculum in English and French that goes back to basics. Students will now master how to read, while learning other important life skills, like critical thinking and reinstating cursive writing. In addition, our youngest students will for the first time benefit from a screening assessment to measure their reading skills to better support those who are behind.

To ensure students have access to teacher-led tutoring, our government expanded TVO and Centre franco to cover more grades and longer hours to support year-round learning.

New Mental Health Learning and Increased Funding

We all know how important it is to empower students with the tools and supports they need to live happy, healthy and successful lives.

Ontario is leading in Canada by introducing mandatory learning on mental health and well-being. Specifically, that means helping young people develop life skills they can depend on to manage stress and know where to turn when they need support.

Our government is investing five times more compared to 2018-19 or about \$113 million in this 2023-24 school year on student mental health. That includes additional funding over the next three years to continue to expand access and improve the care of Ontario's students. We will also be funding access to mental health supports over the summer to ensure consistent access year-round for those who need it.

Passage of *The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023*

Parents and students believe our school system needs to re-focus on what matters most: student achievement and a renewed emphasis on mastering the foundational skills of reading, writing, math and STEM. That is why our government introduced *The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act*, which mandates that student achievement and academic success must be the top priority of school boards.

This legislation strengthens parent voices in schools and enhances accountability on school boards. In addition, we will now be able to accelerate the building of schools across Ontario, speed up the certification of new educators, and take action to strengthen our zero-tolerance policy against those who would cause harm to children.

As the school year comes to an end, I want to take a moment to thank every student, parent, educator and staff member for their hard work. Our students continue to shine bright and we are proud of every one of them.

To the class of 2023, you have inspired your communities and country. We wish you every success on your journey.

Have a safe and positive summer,

Hon. Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education