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June 7, 2024

**To: The Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery (MPBSD)**

**Re: OPSBA Response to Ontario's Regulatory Registry posting for Bill 194, Strengthening Cyber Security and Building Trust in the Public Sector Act, 2024**

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) is thankful for this initial opportunity to provide comments regarding the government's recently introduced legislation to address cyber security and privacy concerns across the Broader Public Sector in our province. As an entity that is directly and clearly included in the scope of this proposed legislation, we look forward to working with the Ministry of Education on the systems, services and supports for the stakeholders in the education sector.

We are extremely supportive of increasing the protective measures for children and youth and the personal privacy of our students, their families, and our staff. We appreciate the seriousness around cybersecurity risks and have had member boards deal with this issue this past school year. We have asked for funding to support this critical need and the increasing costs of cyber security and risk in our boards. This was noted in our most recent [education funding proposal](#). We would also suggest that any new requirements for school boards, that are a result of this legislation, need to be fully funded and supported by the province.

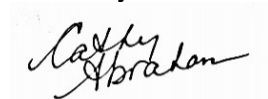
The legislation also looks to, "*set a definition of artificial intelligence (AI) to create consistency across the public sector.*" This is an issue of great interest and concern to school boards, and we would like to ensure that there is consideration of the specific impacts for our sector. Experts who understand the benefits and challenges in education (i.e. how AI is being used by students and staff) should be included in any consultation.

We have been contacted by the Ministry of Education and understand that there will be specific education-related consultations that are expected to begin this summer. We look forward to participating in those discussions as we are a directly impacted stakeholder and want to help ensure a successful implementation for our member school boards and that there is a supportive communications plan.

As the province's leading advocate for public education, OPSBA continues to support initiatives that improve student achievement and well-being, and that also lead to increasing public confidence in our world-class public education system.

We would like to acknowledge our appreciation of the government for addressing this serious and important issue, and for their commitment to engage in future consultations.

Sincerely,



Cathy Abraham,  
President, OPSBA

cc.

The Honourable Todd Smith, Minister of Education

Kate Manson-Smith, Deputy Minister (Education)

Phil Graham, Assistant Deputy Minister - Strategic Policy & Planning Division (Education)

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