

Ministry of Education

Minister

Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

Édifrice Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2



November 29, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

This is an exciting time in education as we work together on the important next steps in supporting student achievement, equity and well-being. I am pleased to share details with you about the ministry's new Transformation Steering Committee (TSC).

As you know, at the start of the school year I made several announcements about how the Ontario government intends to strengthen our publicly funded education system by taking action to promote equity and well-being, and refreshing our curriculum, assessment and reporting practices. This work builds on the vision set out in *Achieving Excellence* – a vision based on broad input and a review of education trends globally. Given the rapid change of technology and society, this work is also timely. It has been two decades since the last full-scale renewal of the curriculum.

The role of the TSC will be to secure expert sector and community input as well as provide oversight to inform the transformative changes in education over the next three to five years.

These transformative changes announced in September include:

- refreshing the curriculum;
- renewing our approach to Grade 9;
- reviewing assessment policy; and
- renewing our approach to student report cards and other reporting practices.

The TSC will assist with these goals by providing guiding principles and ongoing feedback that will ensure that all of Ontario's students will have every opportunity to thrive and fulfill their potential, regardless of their personal circumstances.

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This work is also intended to address longstanding concerns about an overloaded curriculum and a curriculum review cycle that at times added content without taking less relevant content out. With a bold vision for the future, now is the time to rethink the review process with our partners.

Through our recent engagement with our partners, we heard the need to embed equity and well-being into everything that we do, especially with respect to curriculum and assessment, so that we embrace a broader definition of student success beyond purely academic pursuits. With these goals at the heart of our work, we will provide all students with access to inclusive, engaging and motivating learning experiences and the opportunity to become resilient, compassionate global citizens.

This review will also include exploring and responding to labour market demands, and preparing students for the highly skilled workforce of today and tomorrow. We are shifting our focus on a curriculum that nurtures transferable skills or global competencies in student learning and we are moving away from a content-centred system.

A key principle of the committee is its commitment to work collaboratively with all partners to define the changes that are needed and how to make them a reality. The committee's approach will be guided by the government's renewed vision for education and the principles of collaborative professionalism.

Your input is also critically important to this process. To that end, another key focus of the TSC will be to examine ways to broaden the discussion and outreach to ensure your voices are included in this process. It is anticipated that opportunity for broader consultation and outreach will take place beginning in February, but any thoughts at this preliminary stage of discussion are welcome at TSC@ontario.ca.

The TSC will be co-facilitated by Ken Thurston and Marilies Rettig, who both have extensive experience in the education sector. Ken has served as a teacher, principal, superintendent and director of education, while Marilies has served as a teacher and held top leadership roles in teacher federations at both the staff and political levels. Both have served as trusted advisors to me, and I am confident they will lead a thorough and inclusive consultation process.

Complementing this work will be the [Independent Review of Assessment and Reporting](#) conducted by the six education advisors to myself and Premier Wynne and led by Dr. Carol Campbell. This review is now underway to make sure educational assessments are culturally relevant, able to measure a wider range of learning, and better reflect equity and student well-being.

Our government is firmly committed to maintaining a publicly funded education system and to empowering students of all ages to meet their full potential and to be active, engaged and productive citizens.

Thank you for your dedication to the success and well-being of Ontario's students. I look forward to working with you all as we move ahead with this transformative process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MH' with a stylized flourish.

Mitzie Hunter, MBA
Minister

Enclosures: Terms of Reference (Draft)

- c. Bruce Rodrigues, Deputy Minister
Marilyn Rettig, Co-Facilitator, Transformation Steering Committee
Ken Thurston, Co-Facilitator, Transformation Steering Committee
Directors of Education