

Ministry of Education

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March 16, 2015

Ms. Kristina Laperle
Parent Co-Chair
French as a Second Language Advisory Committee
Toronto District School Board
fslactoronto@gmail.com

Dear Ms. Laperle,

Thank you for your email on behalf of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) French as a Second Language Advisory Committee. I share your interest in ensuring that the board has the ability to fulfil its governance role, including meaningful partnerships with the parent community, and appreciate the opportunity to respond.

I am grateful to Margaret Wilson for completing her review of the performance of the TDSB in such a short period of time. Ms. Wilson's observations are troubling and confirmed the need for the ministry to take action to ensure governance issues at the TDSB do not become an impediment to student achievement and well-being.

I have given directions to the TDSB that address the issues raised in Ms. Wilson's report, and am currently working with the board to ensure their compliance with my directions. These directions are unprecedented but are necessary given the concerns identified in Ms. Wilson's report. While they have made progress on a number of the directions, it is clear that more work is needed. I am therefore monitoring the TDSB's progress on an ongoing basis to ensure that there is follow through on a number of these directions and meaningful improvement on others.

In addition, I have accepted Ms. Wilson's further recommendation for a committee of advisors to consult with the TDSB community and make recommendations on governance and electoral representation options for the board. The consultation will examine the possibility of structural and procedural changes to address the culture of fear and restore the board's focus on the achievement and well-being of all students of the board, while also responding to local needs.

Parents, students and the larger board community are best served by transparent governance focused on the board's key priorities, in balance with responsiveness to local needs. Parents are key partners in our education system and the consultation process will include consideration of how the TDSB can best ensure meaningful engagement opportunities for all parents with the staff and trustees of the board. Your voice is important and I encourage you to participate in the consultation once details are announced.

Thank you for your continued contribution and commitment as a member of the TDSB French as a Second Language Advisory Committee. Our publicly funded education system is among the best in the world and this is due in a large part to a shared and vibrant partnership in which parents, trustees, staff, students, the government and many other community partners work in a respectful and collaborative partnership to support the success of all our students.

Thank you again for writing and sharing your concerns and for your ongoing contribution to Ontario's public education system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liz Sandals". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Liz Sandals
Minister