



June 18, 2021

The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education

To the Honourable Doug Ford and the Honourable Stephen Lecce,

At the June 16, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Halton District School Board (HDSB), Trustees unanimously approved the following motion:

Be it resolved that the Chair write a letter to the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Education imploring the Provincial Government, and more specifically the Ministry of Education, to formally recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to be held annually on September 30th, and

Be it further resolved the letter also implore the Ministry of Education to be accountable to the TRC Calls to Action on Education that were passed in June 2015, by reviewing and revising the Indigenous history curriculum materials, which were developed in 2018 but never released by the current government, so they can be introduced in schools this Fall.

This letter is to be copied to Halton MPPs, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE).

The Truth and Reconciliation Report, which was released in 2015, includes 94 Calls to Action. Call to Action #80 is to create a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The HDSB Trustees ask the Provincial Government and the Ministry of Education to formally recognize September 30 as this National Day.

On May 27th of this year, through the use of ground-penetrating radar, the remains of 215 Indigenous children were found on the grounds of the Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia. This horrific discovery serves as a grim reminder of all the work that has not yet been done to heed the Calls to Action.

On June 5th, Bill C-5, an Act to amend the Bills of Exchange Act, the Interpretation Act and the Canada Labour Code (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation) was passed. MP Steven Guilbeault, in bringing

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forward the bill to create this National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, expressed the hope that it would be used 'as a day of reflection but also a day of learning'. He also stated that the commemorations should be Indigenous-led.

Minister Lecce, very little progress has been made by the Province of Ontario with respect to Education for Reconciliation (Calls to Action 62-65). In the absence of provincial direction on these Calls to Action, the HDSB, like many others throughout the province, has worked to embed First Nations, Inuit, and Métis histories, contributions and current realities into programming. This however leaves inconsistencies and gaps in student knowledge and understanding across the province. The Indigenous history curriculum needs to be released immediately across the province to prepare for the Fall.

It is long past time to ensure that we, as settlers and treaty partners, honour and respect the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and heed the Calls to Action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andréa Grebenc', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Andréa Grebenc
Chair of the Board of Trustees

cc: The Honourable Ted Arnott, MPP, Wellington-Halton Hills
Jane McKenna, MPP, Burlington
Parm Gill, MPP, Milton
Stephen Crawford, MPP, Oakville
Effie Triantafilopoulos, MPP, Oakville North-Burlington
Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Member Board Chairs
Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)