

Ministry of Education

Ministère de l'Éducation

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January 21, 2005

Dear Friends:

I am writing to introduce you to the Parent Voice in Education Project and to encourage you and your school council's participation with it.

The McGuinty government is seeking parents' advice on how to strengthen the role of parents at all levels in Ontario's publicly funded education. We respect that parents have busy lives and therefore should be supported in their efforts to be engaged in their children's education.

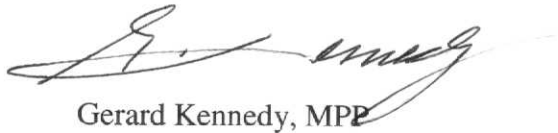
In November, I appointed a tremendous group of 20 diverse and experienced parent group leaders, reflective of all regions of the province, to develop recommendations. This project team, chaired by Gabrielle Blais of Ottawa, was asked to determine how best to establish an independent voice that could be representative of and accountable to parents, and how to support parents at the local school, at the board and regional level and provincially. Included was the question of how to accredit representatives of parents at the Education Partnership Table that we have established for all education sector groups to assist with provincial policy decisions. The Project mandate is attached and more information including a list of the members can be found at [www.ontarioparentcouncil.org](http://www.ontarioparentcouncil.org).

The Project team has now put together a discussion paper to facilitate your input and will be holding a series of formal and informal consultations to provide parents with an opportunity to share their ideas and hear about the different options for new ways of organizing parents. Formal public consultation meetings will be held in several communities across the province from February 15 – 23. Individual members will also be announcing informal consultations in their home areas. The working group will make their recommendations at the end of March and these will be available for further public comment at that time.

The Parent Voice project members are very interested in your input and I hope you will be able to work together with them over the next few months. In addition to the in-person consultations, you can contribute your ideas to the members of the project through e-mail at [info@parentvoiceineducation.org](mailto:info@parentvoiceineducation.org), or fax or mail. My Parliamentary Assistant, Kathleen Wynne, MPP, is supporting the work of the project team and can be reached if you have questions at [Kathleen.wynne@edu.gov.on.ca](mailto:Kathleen.wynne@edu.gov.on.ca).

In closing, I want to thank you very much as an active parent or member of a school council for the contribution you are already making to publicly funded education. I look forward to your comments on this and/or any other education initiatives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerard Kennedy", written in a cursive style.

Gerard Kennedy, MPP  
Minister of Education

P.S. If you haven't already, I invite you to subscribe to the Ontario Provincial Education e-Network (OPEN) to receive updates and provide input on education initiatives. To access, please log onto [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca) and click on 'OPEN'.