



# Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

40 Matheson Boulevard West, Mississauga, Ontario L5R 1C5 • Tel: (905) 890-1221 • Fax: (905) 890-7610

April 7, 2006

The Honourable Sandra Pupatello  
Ministry of Education  
Office of the Minister  
Mowat Block  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1L2

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board with two purposes today.

The first is to congratulate you formally on your appointment as Minister of Education and to indicate our desire to work collaboratively with you in the best interests of the Catholic students of Dufferin-Peel. We were interested to note your comments upon your appointment regarding your own education in the Catholic and public school systems in Windsor and hope that your positive experiences will inform your decisions as Minister in this vital portfolio.

Our second, and more serious purpose, is in response to your predecessor's letter of April 4 with respect to the Investigation Report to the Minister of Education. The Minister had asked the Board to advise your office of its plan to address the report's contents by today.

The Board, having received the report only late in the day on Tuesday, April 4 - barely two business days ago - has not yet had an opportunity to meet and consider the impact of the report's recommendations. The report's contents are complex and the Board is committed to careful consideration of each of the recommendations.

The investigators' report complimented the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board for providing an excellent level of service to its community. This excellence is a direct result of our commitment to provide our students with the very highest level of education available anywhere in this province. Our consideration of the report's recommendations will be undertaken with this commitment as our foundation.

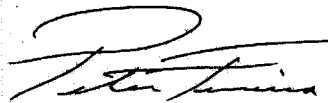
Many of the recommendations hold significant potential impact for our students and the quality of their education. As such, some aspects may require public consultation before the Board can finalize any response. We are, of course, very anxious to move forward as quickly as possible and have scheduled a meeting for Monday, April 10. We will communicate with you again following that meeting to advise you of the status of our review.

I have also been asked to advise you that we, as a Board, were extremely disappointed with the Ministry's handling of the release of the report. It is our understanding that the Ministry was in possession of the report for several days before its release, providing ample time for the report to be shared with the Board. Yet the Ministry chose to release the report to the media and post it on the Ministry website before sharing it with the Board. We consider this approach to be disrespectful of the parents of Dufferin-Peel Catholic students, and of the Board, as the elected stewards of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic system. We would ask the new Minister to direct Ministry staff to ensure that any future announcements follow a more appropriate protocol.

As you know, and as was acknowledged by the report, significant sources of our deficit are the result of province-wide underfunding of salaries, transportation and special education. It would help us in our consideration of the report's other recommendations if the Minister could advise us of her plans to address these underfunding issues.

As previously indicated, we will communicate with you, again, after our April 10 meeting. We also look forward to your response regarding the identified underfunding issues and any specifics you can provide regarding your plans and timing to address these shortfalls.

Yours truly,



Peter Ferreira  
Chair

PF:al

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