



**ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION**

Leading Education's Advocates

Ontario Public School Boards' Association
439 University Avenue, 18th Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 1Y8
Tel: (416) 340-2540
Fax: (416) 340-7571
webmaster@opsba.org
www.opsba.org

Cathy Abraham
President

W.R. (Rusty) Hick
Executive Director

November 25, 2022

To: Ernie Hardeman, MPP (Oxford) and Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

Michael Bushara, Clerk

Re: Bill 36, Progress on the Plan to Build Act (Budget Measures), 2022 and the Fall Economic Statement

Dear Chair Hardeman and Members of the Standing Committee on General Government:

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) would like to take this opportunity to address education related items that are not directly included in Bill 36, Progress on the Plan to Build Act (Budget Measures), but were part of the government's Fall Economic Statement and corresponding news release.

The Progress Update on Ontario's Plan to Build incorporated these education items, namely:

- Investing more funding in the Skills Development Fund, including initiatives targeted at students in Grades 7 and 8;
- Expanding the Dual Credit program, which is meant to help more secondary school students enter a career in the skilled trades or early childhood education; and
- Increasing the monthly core allowances for the Ontario Disability Support Program and the maximum monthly amount for the Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities program

As OPSBA advocates for the whole child and student well-being, we are in full support of additional funds to promote the skilled trades and apprenticeships, as well as other experiential learning opportunities for our students. We applaud the focus at the provincial and local levels to not only help students and parents to understand the value of skilled trades, but to create additional opportunities to do so while in secondary school.

Both as leaders of educational institutions and as future employers of these students, we respect the important contributions additional Early Childhood Educators will make to our Child Care and Kindergarten programs within our schools, as well as students in the many skilled trade areas that will help to keep our school systems and communities functional.

Considering the significant value of developing skilled trade areas in the schools, we also encourage further broadening of the Dual Credit offerings beyond the primary target group of disengaged students who have the potential to succeed in college or apprenticeship to include more Specialist High Skills Major Dual Credit programs, Indigenous Dual Credit Programs and Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program offerings to meet the varying educational needs of students. As well, we recommend providing dedicated funding for renovations in secondary school facilities to provide shop programs to support careers in the trades (Grades 7 to 12) to better prepare students for opportunities in the skilled trades.

And finally, we are always supportive of any additional funding to help our most vulnerable students, including those with severe disabilities and any progress in reducing waitlists. OPSBA is committed to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, anti-racism and anti-oppression in all aspects of the Association's leadership, services, and advocacy work. We envision a democratic, publicly funded, high quality, education system that ensures barrier and bias identification and removal, freedom from all forms of hate and discrimination, equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,



Cathy Abraham
President



W.R. (Rusty) Hick
Executive Director

cc.

Nancy Naylor, Deputy Minister

Dasha Androusenkov, Deputy Director of Stakeholder Relations (Minister of Education's Office)

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association represents English public district school boards and public school authorities across Ontario, which together serve more than 1.3 million public elementary and secondary students. The Association advocates on behalf of the best interests and needs of the English public school system in Ontario.