



THE EDUCATION CENTRE - AURORA

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January 20, 2022

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
5th Floor, 438 University Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2A5
minister.edu@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Lecce:

Through the past two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, York Region District School Board's curricular and assessment practises have been instrumental in supporting the well-being and achievement of our students. From Kindergarten to Grade 12, our teachers have consistently ensured that students have received equitable learning and assessment opportunities that ensure fair, valid and accurate evaluation of students attending both in-person and remote learning.

We know that learning this past semester has presented obstacles, particularly the recent move to online learning and the subsequent shift to in-person learning shortly before the end of the semester. Our staff continue to provide educators exemplary guidance on assessment practises that align with the Ministry's Growing Success policy document and current Ministry guidance. This guidance has provided increased support for student well-being and mental health, and increased opportunities for student success while ensuring teachers are afforded the flexibility to exercise their professional judgement.

Since Boards across Ontario communicated their plans to support the January 17, 2022 in-person reopening, YRDSB staff and trustees have received numerous communications from students and families concerned about inconsistent assessment practises across school boards in Ontario. In particular, some Boards have noted language to the effect that *marks will reflect learning up to December 17, 2021 and may not drop lower*. This messaging is similar to messaging provided by the Ministry to support school closures during the 2019-2020 school year and was not provided for the 2020-2021 or 2021-2022 school years.

There is significant concern that inconsistent assessment practises across the province will unfairly disadvantage students in York Region District School Board, in particular Grade 12 students applying for post-secondary institutions. In light of some boards' departure from the Ministry's communicated expectations, as a Board, **we urgently request that the Ministry provide clear and consistent assessment and evaluation guidance to all school boards**. As you can appreciate, response to this matter is pressing as secondary students begin culminating activities on January 26, 2022 with final marks being uploaded between January 28 and February 3, 2022. Moreover,

potential graduates will have their final course marks transmitted to the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) and the Ontario College Application Service (OCAS) by February 10, 2022 and February 11, 2022 respectively.

We are committed to our common goal of building confidence in public education, reducing inequities in outcomes for our students, and providing equitable access to opportunities for all students in the province.

Your prompt attention to this matter would be greatly appreciated so that we may support our staff in responding to the needs of our students.

Allan Tam

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allan Tam." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chair of the York Region District School Board

cc. YRDSB Trustees and Student Trustees
Ontario Public School Boards' Association,
All York Region Members of Provincial Parliament
Ontario Public School Board Chairs