

March 11, 2019

The Honorable Doug Ford  
Legislative Assembly of Ontario  
111 Wellesley St. W.  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1A2

Dear Premier Ford:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Waterloo Region District School Board, I am writing to share our concerns regarding the recent decision to repeal the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act.

On November 15, 2018, your government announced that the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act would be repealed and the Office of the Ombudsman would assume the duties of this office. This decision will leave Ontario as one of the only provinces without an independent child advocate.

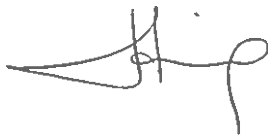
This Provincial Advocate is an independent officer of the Ontario legislature and provides an independent voice, including First Nations, children and youth. They educate children, youth, and their caregivers on the rights of children and youth. They make connections between families and organizations that provide them with services while encouraging dialogue and communication.

In addition, they conduct investigations and make recommendations to children's aid societies and services provided by residential licensees where a children's aid society is the placing agency.

The Advocate's review and investigations have helped to identify gaps and failures in the system that has put children and youth at risk.

I and my fellow trustees encourage you to keep the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth an independent officer and not repeal the Act. The children and youth of Ontario deserve to have their voices heard and know they are protected.

Sincerely,



Jayne Herring  
Chairperson, Waterloo Region District School Board



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