

April 29, 2019

Honourable Lisa Thompson  
Minister of Education  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Mowat Block  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Y4

Dear Minister Thompson;

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Waterloo Region District School Board, I am writing to share our concerns regarding the recent changes to the Ontario Autism Program.

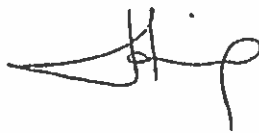
On February 6, 2019, your government announced drastic changes to the way parents will receive support for their children with Autism. In addition, these changes will also impact the way community service providers support children and families in their programs.

As a school district for over 60,000 students, we have concerns with how these changes will impact our students, classrooms, and families.

Providing support for students on the Autism spectrum requires qualified and trained staff. The proposed quick timelines for the changes do not provide enough time for trained staff to be in place in schools to support students. We are encouraged to hear that additional training for teachers in the area of Autism Spectrum Disorder is on the way, however, more intensive supports are needed.

The proposed changes will impact the well-being of every student in Ontario. I and my fellow trustees encourage you to provide more funding to school boards to continue to support the learning and achievement of students on the Autism spectrum.

Sincerely,



Jayne Herring  
Chairperson of the Board



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