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Charitable Registration
Number 11924 8771 RR0001

May 10th, 2010

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON. M7A 1A1

Dear Premier McGuinty:

The Ontario Public Health Association applauds the Ministry of Education and your government on the newly released Ontario Health and Physical Education (H&PE) Curriculum for Grades 1 – 8. Our association would like to commend you on the excellent consultative approach the Ministry of Education followed to revise the curriculum. The extensive two year process built upon the latest information on nutrition and healthy eating; personal safety and injury prevention; substance use, addictions and related behaviours; and human development and sexual health. Our association was very pleased to have been involved in the process from the beginning. We and others had ample opportunity to help shape the final product through numerous consultations, focus groups and on line surveys.

We are very disappointed at the depiction of the curriculum in the media which capitalized on the voice of one special interest group and highlighted only one component of the comprehensive curriculum. Although at first we were concerned that the entire curriculum would be pulled, we are encouraged that you will only be recalling the Human Development and Sexual Health portion of the document for further examination.

The public health expert advice can be seen throughout the new curriculum. The introduction of topics for presentation and discussion are appropriate to the age of the student. Our association is committed to inclusion and acceptance of diverse populations and supports the inclusion of information and discussion about gender identify, families led by same sex partners and sexual relations among same sex partners as part of the curriculum at appropriate age.

Effective health education and health literacy are required by our society in this technological age where students have ready access to all types of information. Through the Health and Physical Education Curriculum we can provide current high quality health information to assist students in navigating the information age and equip them with the knowledge, skill and self efficacy required to make healthy choices in a very complex world. We anticipate that the Human Development and Sexual Health Curriculum will be quickly reviewed and implemented.

Sincerely,



Liz Haugh
President