



## THE ONTARIO FEDERATION OF HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS, INC.

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June 6, 2016

The Honourable Liz Sandals  
Minister of Education  
22<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Mowat Block  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister:

The Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations (OFHSA) is a province-wide network of volunteer members committed to informed and pro-active involvement in our homes, our schools and our communities to obtain 'The Best for Each Student'.

At the Annual Meeting of the Ontario Federation of Home & School Associations (OFHSA) on April 17, 2016, members adopted the policy *that there be a life and livelihood skills curriculum course offered for all elementary school students in Ontario.*

The Life Skills Approach consists of interpersonal and psycho-social skills such as assertion, negotiation, decision making, empathy building, values clarification, and coping with the focus on a combination of knowledge, attitudes and values, and skills.

The social and emotional challenges students face today are quite different than those experienced by previous generations. Given the changing nature of complex societal expectations of personal, financial, career and family structures, a different set of skills and attitudes is required to become a successful contributing adult. Life and livelihood skills education affords the opportunity for a reduction in the harmful negative effects of the problems facing society while supporting well rounded healthy lifestyles.

A number of factors, including changes in family dynamics, create the potential for significant differences in student readiness as children enter kindergarten. While there are various volunteer organizations currently offering opportunities for children to gain a number of these life skills, the education system would provide all children with these necessary skills.

*Ontario's Well-Being Strategy for Education complements the Life Skills Approach... "developing healthy schools is key to establishing the learning conditions that are vital to help students reach their full potential by putting the conditions in place for students to adopt healthy active living practices and maintain them throughout their lives".*

Every student must receive the basic life skills education necessary to promote interpersonal and psycho-social skills for healthy living and social well-being, and the livelihood education skills including crafts, money management, and entrepreneurial skills.

Life skills education curriculum includes complementary topics such as: healthy nutrition, food choices and preparation; health and self-body image; simple household tools and maintenance; communication and technology skills; and financial management skills. The curriculum must provide for consistent and measurable outcomes for each student.

We now call on the Minister and Ministry of Education, along with education partners and parents, to review the current elementary curriculum and broaden programming to support life and livelihood skills knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that prepare elementary students for transition into adulthood as productive members of society.

Sincerely,

Sandra Binns  
President

Cc Hon Kathleen O. Wynne, Premier of Ontario  
Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, Binbrook Branch  
The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

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**The Best for Each Student**

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