

August 27, 2025

sent via email

Hon. Paul Calandra
Minister of Education
438 University Ave, 5th Flr,
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2A5
minister.edu@ontario.ca

RE: Professional Activity Day on election day and school board governance review

Dear Minister Calandra:

I write today on behalf of [AMCTO](#). As you know we had requested a delegation with you at the 2025 Annual AMO Conference in Ottawa. We understand that with an historic number of meetings scheduled, it can be difficult to accept all delegation requests, though we were disappointed that we could not meet with you.

As you may be aware, we had requested the meeting as an opportunity to touch base with you in your new role given the importance of legislation under your purview to the municipal and school board election process, about which we had the opportunity to meet with you in November 2024 in your previous role at MMAH.

Minister Flack has indicated his interest in pursuing a review and update of the *MEA* as we look to the 2030 election cycle. We are of course very excited about this commitment and wanted to ensure that you were up to speed on the implications our recommendations would have on your new ministry.

Applying an Existing Professional Activity Day to Election Day

We had also hoped to speak to you about the benefits of amending *R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 304* under the *Education Act, 1990* to apply one of the existing provincially mandated Professional Activity Days to municipal and school board election day on a permanent basis, starting in October 2026, to guarantee access to the largest, centrally located and accessible community spaces as polling locations. We had [written to your predecessor](#) about this previously

We are requesting that you apply the ministry's discretion over school year calendar development to amend the regulation to require school boards to schedule a PA Day on municipal and school board election days going forward and separately ensure that schools provide access to assets, resources, and staff in support of this important democratic process to remove this red tape.

Review of school board governance

We also wanted to speak with you about the governance review your ministry is currently undertaking with respect to school boards. We understand that during the AMO Conference you had an opportunity to speak with the media and indicated that if it is possible to deliver better outcomes for students, then eliminating the role of trustees may be something you consider.

We will leave any commentary about the benefits and challenges this may present for those within the education sector. However, AMCTO's interest is in the impacts such a decision could have on the upcoming municipal and school board elections scheduled for October 2026. As you know, many of our members are responsible for conducting these elections.

We understand that the Order-In-Council issued by Cabinet authorized your ministry to provide administrative oversight of five boards without a sunset date. This along with your comments during the AMO conference leads us to inquire whether trustee elections will occur next year. As we mentioned to you last fall, election planning is well underway, and procurement is on the horizon. As our members are also responsible for conducting school board trustee elections, we would note that any changes to the electoral process could have significant impacts on the municipal professionals who are running the elections and to their municipalities which provide the funds to administer the elections.

Should removing trustees from the school board governance model be under serious consideration, we would urge you to consider a decision timeline that will avoid impacting the local election process.

Perhaps consider aligning any future changes to school board governance with the anticipated review of the local election process which we hope will commence soon after the conclusion of post-election legislated processes in early 2027. This approach could help ensure a smoother transition to any new model that may not include trustees while avoiding impacting the election planning process that is well underway.

As always, we are happy to meet to discuss these requests. You can reach out to David Arbuckle, Executive Director (darbuckle@amcto.com) to set up a meeting.

We look forward to your reply regarding our request for mandatory PA Days on municipal and school board election day, and hope to also hear from you with respect to timelines for decision-making on school board governance as it relates to the 2026 election.

Sincerely,

[Originally signed by]

Danielle Manton, AOMC
President, AMCTO

CC: Hon. Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Denise Allyson Cole, Deputy Minister, EDU
Martha Greenberg, Deputy Minister, MMAH
Darby Wheeler, Director of Policy, Minister's Office, EDU
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