



**Education and Early Childhood Development
Office of the Minister**

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January 29, 2018

On October 11, 2017, the Government initiated a review of its education administrative model, conducted by Dr. Avis Glaze. On Tuesday, January 23, 2018, you were briefed by Dr. Glaze on her report concerning a new education administrative model. The intent of the report is clear – we must streamline the system and unite efforts to provide the best possible education for our students.

I sincerely believe that the challenges we are facing are caused by a fractured and fragmented system and not the people within it. I recognize your public service and appreciate your leadership, and the commitment of your board to our children and young people. We have carefully considered Dr. Glaze's report and it is clear that province-wide, systemic changes are needed now.

Thank you for meeting with me so that I could inform you that we have accepted Dr. Glaze's recommendation to shift from a system of nine disconnected silos to one coherent, aligned model, focused on student learning and achievement. This will be accomplished, in part, through the elimination of the seven governing (elected) regional school boards once the required structural and legislative changes can be accomplished. This transition will be a significant undertaking that will require collaboration and cooperation from all education partners.

School boards remain accountable to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development for the control and management of schools in their jurisdiction, governed by the *Education Act* and *Regulations* and Ministerial directives as well as by their bylaws (including the Code of Ethics) and the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*. These responsibilities of the board and its members remain during the transition.

The enforcement of, and compliance with, bylaws by the board in respect of the conduct and operation of public schools and the exercise of board responsibilities must continue in the interim period. The bylaws, including the Code of Ethics, create ongoing performance standards to guide members and the boards in maintaining good governance practices and accountabilities. Such practices, in turn, support public confidence in the board's ability to meet its ongoing statutory obligations and the needs of its staff, students and community.

It is my responsibility as Minister to ensure that purposes of the *Act* are upheld, that the interests of students and staff in a quality education system are protected, that public confidence in the education system is preserved, and that resources of the board are being used in a responsible manner during this period of necessary transition. As such, I am issuing the following directives to all regional school boards. These directives must be adopted immediately. I confirm that compliance with these directives, as well as ongoing compliance with the board by-laws and Code of Ethics, form part of the board's service and performance standards pursuant to Section 64(6) of the *Education Act*.

- (1) I direct you not to approve any new school board policies without my express approval;
- (2) I direct you to refrain from entering into agreements or otherwise making substantive changes in relation to the following issues, without the express approval of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development:
 - School Board Governance or Board Services
 - Transportation
 - Finance
 - Property and Property Services
 - Operations
 - Human Resources
 - Programming
- (3) I direct you to refrain from initiating any new school reviews under the School Review Policy;
- (4) In relation to the Pre-primary Program, I direct you to continue to work with the Department to implement the universal pre-primary program in accordance with the *Pre-primary Education Act* and the policy framework and directives of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in relation to that program and related services;

If these directives are not met, please be advised that I will be in a position to exercise my authority in accordance with Section 68(2) of the *Education Act*, which states, “The Minister may appoint a person to carry out such responsibilities and exercise such authority of the School Board as the Minister determines and in such manner as the Minister determines and, to the extent the Minister determines, the school board ceases to have such responsibilities or authority.”

In her report, Dr. Glaze noted her appreciation of the open and collaborative approach of those with whom she consulted during her review. In particular, she noted that there is enormous goodwill within our education system. It is incumbent on all of us to work together to create an invigorated, coherent, responsive education administrative system for the benefit of Nova Scotian students.

Sincerely,



Zach Churchill
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

c Board Members
Superintendent of Schools
Acting Deputy Minister