

Ministry of Education

Minister

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Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

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Toronto ON M7A 1L2



January 28, 2016

Mr. Les Cross
Ontario School Bus Association (OSBA)
3401 Wolfedale Road
Mississauga, ON L5C 1V8

Dear Mr. Cross,

In a letter sent to the Ontario School Bus Association (OSBA) and the Independent School Bus Operators Association (ISBOA) dated June 2, 2014, the Premier committed to an independent review of competitive procurement processes for student transportation. I am pleased to announce that I received the *Student Transportation Competitive Procurement Review Report*. Having taken the necessary time to consider its implications, I am pleased to provide you with my response.

I would like to thank the review team — the Honourable Colin Campbell, Mr. Leo Gotlieb and Mr. Paul Emanuelli — for their hard work in fulfilling their mandate. The review team has done an excellent job of conveying all stakeholders' perspectives, as a result of the extensive and complex stakeholder consultations that were conducted. I would also like to thank all stakeholders, including school boards, student transportation consortia and operators, for their support and participation in the review.

The *Student Transportation Competitive Procurement Review Report*, attached here and soon to be available on the ministry website, acknowledges that the use of Requests for Proposal (RFPs) is a viable option for acquiring student transportation services, and that exempting student transportation services from the *Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive* (BPSPD) would hinder the promotion of competition or transparency. In addition, the report does not identify an alternative BPSPD-compliant procurement option for school boards' consideration.

The report has also identified several opportunities for improvements in student transportation competitive procurement for school boards' consideration. I am happy to confirm that prior to the submission of the final report to me, the Treasury Board Secretariat reviewed all opportunities related to the BPSPD and confirmed their compliance with the BPSPD.

I believe this report will serve as a valuable resource as it provides a number of opportunities for improvements that can be realized through cross-sector collaboration. I recognize that some of the opportunities identified will require more time to address due to their complexity. I encourage school boards to collaboratively review the opportunities detailed in the report and assess the merits, suitability and potential implementation implications. I also expect that operators will play an important role in assisting and advising school boards as they move forward with addressing many of these opportunities.

Recognizing that the sector may already have operationalized a number of the opportunities identified in this report, I would encourage school boards and consortia to continue with these best business practices.

The review team will be providing information sessions on their findings to the sector. This will be an opportunity for operators to ask questions and to seek clarification. Details on the information sessions will be provided shortly.

In addition, ministry staff will be connecting with the four trustee associations, your association, the Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO) and ISBOA to discuss their participation and involvement in addressing the opportunities identified.

I would like to thank you again for your willingness to participate in the Student Transportation Competitive Procurement Review. I value your continued efforts in the safe transport of students across Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Sandals". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Liz" being more prominent than the last name "Sandals".

Liz Sandals
Minister

c: The Honourable Colin Campbell Q.C.,
Independent Review Chair

Leo Gotlieb,
Independent Review Expert Panel

Paul Emanuelli,
Independent Review Expert Panel