



**ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION**

Leading Education's Advocates

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Cathy Abraham
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Wednesday, November 14, 2018

To: Stephen Crawford, MPP (Oakville) and
Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Timothy Bryan, Clerk of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

Email: comm-financeaffairs@ola.org

Re: OPSBA's Submission re: Bill 47, Making Ontario Open for Business Act, 2018

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) appreciates the opportunity to respond to Bill 47, Making Ontario Open for Business Act, 2018. In particular, OPSBA strongly supports the amendments considered in Schedule 3 - Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeships Act, 2009, that changes the journeyman to apprentice ratio for all trades (that are not to exceed one apprentice for each journeyman.)

In conjunction with the proposed changes, OPSBA recommends that a targeted marketing and communications plan, specifically directed at parents, students, educators and employers, is needed to further elevate skilled trades to an even more respected pathway. There is evidence-based research and data that should be shared that clearly shows there are, and will continue to be, many opportunities for well-paid skilled trade jobs in the future. This is a career pathway that needs to be part of a comprehensive and intentional career exploration strategy from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The earlier students and parents are made aware of these types of career opportunities, the more likely there will be an actual increase in the supply pipeline for apprenticeships in the skilled trades. Waiting until students graduate is too late and negatively implies that these are careers that should be considered only if other pathways are not attainable.

OPSBA urges the government to strongly consider providing relevant opportunities for students, beyond the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), to begin to earn apprenticeship hours while in secondary school, which can then be continued upon graduation with an employer or at the community college level. This will provide an early incentive for students to develop positive attitudes toward the trades, pursue an interest, develop a passion and begin in a very practical way to learn about safety in the workplace. An apprenticeship focus can easily be expanded and integrated into existing vocational school programs and through secondary school experiential and cooperative education programs, as well as Specialist High Skilled Majors. This will involve balancing and/or shifting funding levels for commencing an apprenticeship to secondary schools rather than only in post-secondary and employment settings.

OPSBA welcomes the \$13.2 million pre-apprenticeship training funding announced in early November and believes the criteria for individuals to access these dollars should be expanded in order to provide an opportunity for school boards/schools to also apply. This will allow the development of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs in schools/school boards for secondary students that will ensure guided instruction and support for students as they explore the skilled trades.

We look forward to discussing this further with both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Abraham". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cathy Abraham
President
Ontario Public School Boards' Association

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association represents public district school boards and public school authorities across Ontario, which together serve more than 1.3 million public elementary and secondary students. The Association advocates on behalf of the best interests and needs of the public school system in Ontario. OPSBA is seen as the credible voice of public education in Ontario and is routinely called on by the provincial government for input and advice on legislation and the impact of government policy directions.

cc:

The Honourable Lisa Thompson, Minister of Education
The Honourable Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities
Nancy Naylor, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education