

May 11, 2023

Memorandum to: Chairs of District School Boards
Directors of Education
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

From: Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education

Subject: **Student Learning about Community Services**

Recently, we have become aware of certain school boards and schools not allowing parents in their police service uniform to attend certain school events such as parent days and career fairs.

It is important to note many of our students have parents who serve as first responders. These students, like the community their parents serve, are understandably proud of that selfless service.

With rising crime taking hold around the country, we need to better work with law enforcement to counter human trafficking, illegal drugs, cyber bullying, and violence impacting too many communities in Ontario.

I am writing to set out in the clearest terms my expectation that these parents, and others who proudly wear uniforms as part of their occupation, are to be welcomed to attend career fairs, Bring Your Parent to School Day, and other similar engagements that take place in schools.

Moreover, any parent of a student within a publicly funded school has the right to participate in their child's education and school experience. This is a right that is non negotiable for any parent, including those who serve in uniform from law enforcement to the Canadian Forces.

Those school boards who are not allowing parents in their service uniforms are enabling division instead of bringing all segments of civil society together as we work to counter very real threats to communities across the province.

It is a recognition of the personal sacrifice made daily by the brave women and men of our police services. The uniform they wear is a representation of their duty, and their commitment to putting their lives on the line in service to their community. Each and every day, these mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, daughters and sons do what it takes to keep us safe – from our schools to our homes.

School boards who have implemented this type of policy must reverse this decision and ensure our schools remain welcoming to frontline police and all first responders who work around the clock to keep families and schools safe.

Sincerely,

Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education