



**Avon Maitland District School Board**  
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September 26, 2018

The Honorable Lisa M. Thompson  
Minister of Education  
Mowat Block, 22nd Floor  
900 Bay St.  
Toronto, ON L7A 1L2

Dear Minister Thompson,

This letter is being written with respect to the cancellation of the summer curriculum writing sessions, including those focusing on Truth and Reconciliation and Indigenous Languages in Kindergarten. In addition, we are also writing to inquire about the “*soft launch*” of the five secondary First Nations, Metis and Inuit studies courses detailed in your April 6, 2018 Memo to Directors.

Last school year we were pleased to accept and implement the revisions brought forth from the Ministry of Education for Social Studies (Grades 4-6), History and Geography (Grades 7-8) and the Canadian World Studies (Grade 10). We acknowledged that this demonstrated the commitment to Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action (Calls 62 & 63). AMDSB Teachers have been charged with fully implementing this curricula this school year and were provided support and resources from system staff in order to do so. This is only a start to the work that is needed; educators are eager to share Indigenous learning with all students K- 12.

In Avon Maitland District School Board we are concerned about the negative message to the education system, the Indigenous community as well as the greater public in our district in moving forward with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. In both our community and in our schools, people are coming together to deepen their understanding around the history of Perth and Huron Counties in regards to the First Nations past and present on these lands.

Our school board has taken many steps over the recent years to grow the understanding of Indigenous Peoples locally, provincially and nationally. For instance, we have welcomed Dr. Niigan Sinclair, Professor of Native Studies at University of Manitoba and son of the Senator, Murray Sinclair, to speak with all educators in our school board during a professional activity day dedicated to Equity. He shared many important messages with us, awakening our responsibility towards reconciliation and mobilizing us to advance the Calls to Action. As a result, many educators took home the responsibility of extending their own learning and sharing their knowledge in the classroom. It was our belief that the curriculum revisions will guide us in this work for years to come.

We would like to impress on you that the continuation of the curriculum revisions, as well as communication regarding the implementation of the five draft secondary documents, are both essential steps in helping us to achieve our strategic direction of ‘*creating positive inclusive learning environments*’ for all and our contributions to implement number 62 and 63 Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

Respectfully submitted by the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, Avon Maitland District School Board.