

Student and Parent Survey Recommendations

Question 1 – GSAs

- Schools should host student forums to determine areas of improvement towards creating safe and accepting school environments.
- School boards should define a clear policy for the creation of GSAs, anti-bullying or equity groups, especially for students discriminated against based on sexual orientation.
- School boards should run professional development sessions for all school administrations, teachers, and staff, specifically concerning bullying based on sexual orientation.

Question 2 – Civics/Careers

- Civics/Careers teachers should host a day where they invite speakers from around the community, for students in Civics/Careers classes.
- Schools should incorporate mock election programs and all-candidates meetings into the school year.
- The Ministry of Education should establish a working group, including students and policy makers, to update the Civics/Careers curriculum, with a goal of creating a revised curriculum ready for fall 2013.

Question 3 – Healthy Food Options

- Schools should inform parents of their cafeterias' menus by making them available to parents through various channels of communication.
- Cafeteria menus should be available in all school cafeterias with nutrition facts and allergy alerts for all products.
- Schools should support implementation of the food & beverage guidelines and should ensure that students are involved with this implementation.

Question 4 – Pressure

- Schools should provide guidance and support for students dealing with pressure to complete secondary school in four years.
- The Ministry of Education & school boards should formally recognize that taking more than four years for secondary school may be the appropriate step for students.
- The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities should work together to re-examine prerequisites for both high school and post-secondary courses in order to minimise the number.

Question 5 – Social Media

- The Ontario Student Trustees' Association should work with education stakeholders to create guidelines for teacher-student interactions through social media.
- School boards should be encouraged to use social media outlets for educational purposes, as they hold great potential for student and parent engagement and teaching.
- Technology workshops should be advertised and made an option for teachers with less technological expertise.

Question 6 – Teacher Recognition

- Schools should plan assemblies and/or presentations for recognizing teachers for their extracurricular contributions.
- The Ministry of Education should define a policy around financial and/or other incentives for teachers who coach/supervise extra-curricular activities, thereby encouraging all teachers to get involved before and after instructional time.

Question 7 – Cyber-bullying

- Students should support students through anti-bullying clubs and assemblies to bring attention to cyber-bullying and its effects on students, while ensuring the safety of all those involved.
- Schools should have a system to include guidance counsellors, social workers, and local police, when schools are alerted of a cyber-bullying issue.
- Ministry of Education & school boards should define a current, up-to-date series of guidelines around bullying, to include cyber-bullying and communicate those guidelines widely to students, parents and the school community.

Question 8 – Sexual Education

- Teachers should include an anonymous system of communication, such as a question box, between students and teachers in every sexual education classroom to address students' practical concerns.
- Parents should be engaged and educated about their children's sexual education through communication from the schools.
- The Ministry of Education should enact newly revised secondary school sexual education curriculum, so students are better prepared, as this education becomes increasingly relevant.

Question 9 – Mental Health

- Teachers should discuss mental health with their students and should encourage students to learn about the topic.
- School community should work to break down the stigma around Mental Health, by educating the entire school community and encouraging awareness events.
- School boards should be responsible for ensuring that the school community is made aware of the resources they can use if students, parents, and staff are encountering mental health concerns.

Question 10 – Student Fees

- School boards should develop operating procedures and communication plans to ensure that students and parents alike are aware of the potential financial aid that exists for them.
- The Ministry of Education should continue to push forward its new guidelines on Student Fees and Fundraising, and should compensate school boards for the loss in funding due to the implementation of the new fee guidelines.
- The Ministry of Education should provide funding for basic supplies, resources for school, and extracurricular activities.