

March 17, 2026

The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Premier's Office
Room 281, Main Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A5

The Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Education
5th Floor
438 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

via email: premier@ontario.ca
minister.edu@ontario.ca

**RE: Request for Provincial Consultation and Transparency Regarding Potential Changes
to English Public School Board Governance**

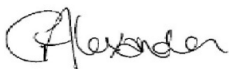
Dear Premier Ford and Minister Calandra,

At their regular scheduled meeting of March 16, 2026, Council of the Municipality of Bluewater received correspondence from Michael Bannerman, Board of Trustees Chair for the Avon Maitland District School Board regarding the potential changes to the English Public School Board Governance and passed the following resolution:

MOVED: Councillor Harris **SECONDED:** Councillor Walden
THAT Council of the Municipality of Bluewater supports the Avon Maitland District School Board in their request to the Government of Ontario to undertake a comprehensive, province-wide consultation process before moving forward with any changes to the governance structure of English public school boards; and

THAT this resolution be circulated to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Education, MPP Lisa Thompson all Ontario municipalities. **CARRIED.**

Sincerely,



Chandra Alexander
Acting CAO/Manager of Corporate Services/Clerk

Encl: Letter from Avon Maitland District School Board Trustee Chair

cc: Michael Bannerman, Chair, Board of Trustees
MPP Lisa Thompson
All Ontario Municipalities

March 2, 2026

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier's Office
Room 281, Main Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A5

And

The Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Education, Ministry of Education
315 Front Street West, 14th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 0B8

Re: Request for Provincial Consultation and Transparency Regarding Potential Changes to English Public School Board Governance

Dear Premier Doug Ford and Minister Paul Calandra,

On behalf of the Trustees of the Avon Maitland District School Board, I am writing to respectfully request that the Government of Ontario undertake a comprehensive, province-wide consultation process before moving forward with any changes to the governance structure of English public school boards.

Recent public statements indicating that the Ministry is considering eliminating the role of democratically elected English public school trustees have generated significant concern among school boards, families, and communities across the province. Trustees serve as an essential democratic link between local communities and the public education system. Any proposal to fundamentally alter or remove this role would represent a major shift in the governance of education in Ontario and warrants careful study, thoughtful analysis, and open dialogue.

Given the magnitude of this potential change, we respectfully ask the government to clearly demonstrate how it has arrived at its current thinking. Specifically, we request that the Ministry make public the research, evidence, data analysis, policy reviews, stakeholder input, and performance evaluations that have informed its consideration of altering or eliminating the role of elected trustees. Transparency regarding the rationale, objectives, and anticipated outcomes of this proposal is essential to maintaining public trust and ensuring informed dialogue.

The Trustees of the Avon Maitland District School Board believe that decisions of this significance must be supported by transparent research and meaningful engagement with stakeholders. We respectfully request that the government initiate a formal consultation process that includes school boards, parents, educators, students, First Nations representatives, and the broader public. Such a process would help ensure that any future governance model is grounded in evidence and reflects the needs and priorities of Ontario's diverse communities.

As a board serving a large and predominantly rural geographic area, we also wish to emphasize the critical importance of the democratically elected trustee role in ensuring that rural perspectives are represented in education decision-making. Trustees provide an essential local voice for communities whose priorities and challenges may differ significantly from those experienced in larger urban centres. Issues such as student transportation, long travel distances, rural school viability, access to programming, and community connectivity are often best understood by locally elected representatives who live and work in those communities. Preserving avenues for rural representation helps ensure that provincial education policies reflect the realities of students and families across all regions of Ontario.

We are also concerned that removing English public school trustees could have unintended consequences for representation and accountability within the system. In many boards, legislated First Nations representation and student trustees play an important role in ensuring diverse voices are heard in decision-making. The loss of elected trustees could impact these mechanisms that currently provide important perspectives at the governance table.

We are aware that the Waterloo District School Board has written to the Ombudsman's Office to request an investigation into the fairness, transparency, and accountability of the process used to implement changes to the school board governance model, and we are in full support of this request.

The Trustees of the Avon Maitland District School Board remain committed to working collaboratively with the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Government of Ontario to support a strong, transparent, and responsive public education system. We believe that transparency, evidence-based decision-making, and meaningful consultation will best serve students, families, and communities across the province.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We would welcome the opportunity to participate in any consultation process or discussion regarding the future governance of Ontario's public education system.

Sincerely,



Michael Bannerman
Chair, Board of Trustees
Avon Maitland District School Board

cc: AMDSB Trustees
MPP Lisa Thompson
MPP Matthew Rae
Local Municipalities
Local Media Outlets
Ontario Public School Boards' Association and Member Boards
AMDSB Parent Involvement Committee
AMDSB Special Education Advisory Committee
AMDSB Parent Councils Chairs