



March 31, 2009

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne, MPP
Minister of Education
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister:

The Burlington Chamber of Commerce has a concern that moving the start date of 2009-2010 school year forward by one week will adversely affect the business community. We believe that there is an alternate resolution.

We understand that this situation has arisen from the Ministry's decision to ensure that there must be 194 school days in an educational year. This is the first year that a late Labour Day combined with an extended Christmas season and the early June dismissal has caused the school year to be three teaching days short. We support the Ministry's decision on the length of the school year, however, we have concerns over the pre-Labour Day option.

Primarily our concerns are for the businesses that rely on the summer freedom of many Ontarians to do business during the summer. Summer camps, resorts, local fairs, school suppliers and the Toronto International Exhibition are all examples of business that rely on that last week of summer for income. Second, many Ontarians have made deposits for summer activities that are non-refundable. Finally, we understand that many Ontario students require the entire summer to earn sufficient funds for their education.

The Chamber believes that three additional school days can be dealt with in one of two ways. The Ministry can alter the number of Professional Development Days in the year or the length of the Christmas break can be reduced.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K Hoey'.

Keith Hoey
President

cc: Chair, Halton District School Board
Chair, Halton Catholic District School Board
Joyce Savoline, MPP Burlington