Dear Premier Wynne,

RE: Ontario Grades 1-12 Health and Physical Education Curriculum “Human Development and Sexual Health” Content

On behalf of the Board of Health of the Perth District Health Unit, I am writing this letter to congratulate your government for releasing the new Ontario Grades 1-12 Health and Physical Education Curriculum, including the updated “Human Development and Sexual Health” content.

The proposed curriculum changes primarily relate to creating awareness and a culture of respect regarding diversity, including visible and invisible differences, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Since 1998, there have been numerous reports written that support the critical need for education and awareness-raising on diversity, and for the elimination of bullying related to visible and invisible differences. Ontario must support the development of positive self-concept in all our children and youth.

In relation to the sexual health content of the new curriculum, it focuses on developing skills amongst children and youth to navigate the pressures they will be exposed to in our society. The prevention of sexually transmitted infections and the promotion of healthy sexuality are priorities for public health, and this curriculum utilizes the most current understanding in these areas.

We support the “Human Development and Sexual Health” content as proposed and thank you sincerely for your perseverance in addressing challenges. Locally, we have collaborated with our partner school board to create a low literacy information sheet to allay the anxieties of our Anabaptist population (enclosed). We will also be participating in a community information meeting to respond to questions and concerns.

Respectfully yours,

Dr. Miriam Klassen    Ms. Teresa Baressi
Medical Officer of Health    Board Chair

MK/mr

c. Hon. Liz Sandals, Minister of Education
   Hon. Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
   ADM (Acting) Martha Greenberg, Health Promotion Division
   Parliamentary Assistant, Ministry of Children and Youth Services
   Mr. Randy Pettapiece, MPP Perth-Wellington
   Boards of Health of Ontario Public Health Units