



Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association

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January 17, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairpersons and Directors of Education
- All Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Beverley Eckensweiler, President

SUBJECT: Municipal Governance Review

Overview:

On Tuesday, January 15, 2019, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced the creation of a panel of two advisors to review regional government across several regions of the province and make recommendations on governance and service delivery improvements. The review will examine Ontario's eight regional municipalities (Halton, York, Durham, Waterloo, Niagara, Peel, Muskoka District and Oxford County), the County of Simcoe, and their lower-tier municipalities.

Mandate:

The mandate of the advisory panel is:

- To provide expert advice to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and to make recommendations to the government on opportunities to improve regional governance and service delivery.
- The panel members are Michael Fenn and Ken Seiling.

Key questions on municipal governance and decision-making that will focus the recommendations include:

- a. Is the decision-making (mechanisms and priorities) of upper and lower-tier municipalities efficiently aligned?
- b. Does the existing model support the capacity of the municipalities to make decisions efficiently?
- c. Are two-tier structures appropriate for all of these municipalities?

- d. Does the distribution of councillors represent the residents well? Do the ways that regional councillors/heads of council get elected/appointed to serve on regional council, help to align lower and upper-tier priorities? Is there opportunity for more efficient allocation of various service responsibilities?
- e. Is there duplication of activities?
- f. Are there opportunities for cost savings?
- g. Are there barriers to making effective and responsive infrastructure and service delivery decisions?

Stakeholder Consultations:

The advisory body will seek input from elected and appointed council members, municipal and business stakeholders and members of the public from the nine upper-tier municipalities and 73 lower-tier member municipalities. The consultation process will include:

- a. Interviews with all upper and lower-tier heads of council in early 2019 to elicit their views on an individual basis and to prepare for group consultations in spring 2019.
- b. Consultations with all nine upper-tier councils as well as the Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO).
- c. Engaging key municipal associations such as the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO), etc.
- d. A provincially-hosted online consultation targeted to residents and businesses within the regions and Simcoe County.
- e. Other consultation methods deemed appropriate to solicit additional input from other stakeholders, communities and/or organizations.

Timeline:

The work of the advisory body will begin on December 20, 2018. Recommendations will be submitted to the Minister by early summer 2019.

Next Steps for OCSTA:

Within the context of this governance review and the Ministry of Education's objective of finding efficiencies/cost savings in the education sector, OCSTA will carefully monitor the advisory panel to determine what, if any, steps are being considered with respect to school boards and possible board amalgamations.

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Andrews at sandrews@ocsta.on.ca