



556 Christina St N.
Sarnia, ON N7T 5W6
Tel (519) 336-2400
Fax (519) 336-2085
info@sarnialambtonchamber.com
www.sarnialambtonchamber.com

April 15, 2009

Hon Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education
Mowat Block, 22nd Floor
900 Bay St
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors of Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce. Our Chamber has a membership of close to 1000 business who employ over 19,000 persons in our community. We remain most concerned with the decision of many Ontario school Boards to begin the school year in advance of Labour Day weekend this year. There are three significant, negative impacts this policy change will have on businesses Province-wide.

First, tourism and many other businesses employ a large number of summer students. These business operations rely on these students to remain in their employ until after the Labour Day long weekend. With school beginning as much as a week earlier, businesses will have to scramble to find substitute staff for a one-week period to cover abandoned positions until after Labour Day.

Second, the economic impact that will occur because families who traditionally vacation in the last week of the summer and/or over Labour Day weekend may not reschedule to a non-school week. The loss of this traditionally good business week will negatively impact their business in a year that, as you know, is shaping up to be an extremely challenging one for all Ontarians. Adding another negative factor is certainly not helpful.

Finally, the change this year by several school Boards sets a pattern that could again occur in the future.

Minister, we hope that you agree with us that a creative solution is required from the Ministry to restore uniformity to the school year across the province. Please consider the serious impact the earlier school year start will have on our businesses and province before you approve School Board calendar requests.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Les McDermott".

Les McDermott, Chair
Board of Directors

C.c. Minister of Tourism, Monique Smith
Bob Bailey, MPP Sarnia Lambton
Maria Van Bommel, MPP Lambton Kent Middlesex