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September 3, 2019

Hon. Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
5th Floor, 438 University Avenue
Toronto, ON
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Re: Elmdale Public School Construction

Dear Minister Lecce,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your new appointment as Ontario's Minister of Education.

I write to raise an important and time-sensitive matter that many constituents have flagged with me over the last several weeks.

Elmdale Public School in Ottawa Centre has been slated for renovations starting this summer for the next year. In the hopes of having a renovated space for their children to learn, many parents have made the sacrifice of having their children go to schools further away for a year to accommodate this.

As parents have shared with me, this change has required many challenges like sending their children to school by bus rather than walking, longer days for their children, a farther location of their temporary school and much more.

The parents and children have faced these issues with the understanding they were temporary. They were told this will conclude in a year and soon after their children will have a renovated school.

However, due to unforeseen costs, the Ministry of Education has not given its approval of this project. The Ottawa Carleton District School Board has agreed to cover the additional costs associated with the construction, and we are all eager to get this project completed in its one year projected date. Parents of Elmdale School are simply waiting for your Ministry to give the go-ahead.

I urge you to prioritize this project as parents cannot have their children away from their neighbourhood school for any longer. Construction on this project must begin immediately.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Joel Harden
MPP, Ottawa Centre

cc: Marit Stiles, Official Opposition Critic for Education
Erica Braunovan, OCDSB Trustee, Zone 10