***<insert date here>*, 2015**

Kathleen Wynne,
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Premier@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Wynne,

I support the need for mandating at least one compulsory food and nutrition course in Ontario secondary schools.

Public Health Ontario reports that ‘nearly one third of children and youth are overweight or obese − conditions that can result in chronic diseases like Type II diabetes, cancer and heart disease.’

In January 2012, the Ontario Government set an ambitious target to reduce childhood obesity by 20% over five years. OHEA believes that prevention strategies start with nutrition and food skills education and practice.

I am very thankful that our Ontario secondary school curriculum now includes seven food and nutrition related courses under the Family Studies umbrella. However, none of these courses ismandatory and many students miss out on the opportunity to learn essential food skills.

Food education for all students will help achieve the government’s obesity reduction goal. Every student should benefit from practical food skills and knowledge – not just those who currently opt-in for an elective food and nutrition course in Family Studies.

The Ontario Home Economics Association (OHEA) has been running an [online petition](http://www.thepetitionsite.com/133/783/509/urge-the-governement-of-ontario-to-make-at-least-one-food-nutrition-course-compulsory/) to urge the Government of Ontario to make at least one Food and Nutrition course mandatory for all students to receive an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

By way of the petition’s comments, OHEA has heard loud and clear from parents, educators, dietitians, food producers, family doctors and the public about unacceptable, unhealthy eating habits and a need to prioritize the health of Ontario kids.

OHEA is committed to prioritizing and implementing mandatory food and nutrition education engaging qualified Family Studies teachers in every Ontario secondary school. I am hopeful you will also prioritize this important initiative in an effort to secure a healthy future for youth across Ontario.

Sincerely,

*<Insert name here>*

cc:

Hon. Liz Sandals, Minister of Education ([lsandals.mpp@liberal.ola.org)](lsandals.mpp%40liberal.ola.org%29)

Ontario Home Economics Association (foodliteracy@ohea.on.ca)

*<insert any additional people you would like to copy here>*