



Ontario Home Economics Association

1760 Waddell Avenue, Peterborough, ON K9K 2G5

January 10, 2022

Daryl Kramp, MPP,  
Hastings Lennox-Addington  
[daryl.kramp@pc.ola.org](mailto:daryl.kramp@pc.ola.org)

**Re: *Food Literacy for Students Act, 2020 - Bill 216***  
***(Understanding this Bill could get renumbered in the next session)***

Dear MPP Daryl Kramp:

Happy New Year to you and your team. We look to 2022 with optimism.

Thank you for your Christmas message, your encouraging update on Bill 216 and draft elementary curriculum to-date. Kudos on your persistence to move Bill 216 forward in 2022 - despite unavoidable setbacks.

**If an additional round table is required, the Ontario Home Economics Association (OHEA) respectfully requests an invitation to attend. We fully endorse this vital legislation and offer expertise in curriculum development.**

**Who We Are:**

*OHEA is a self-regulated body of registered Professional Home Economists that promotes high professional standards among its members so they may assist families and individuals to achieve and maintain a desirable quality of life. (Bill Pr35 – Statutes of Ontario, 1989)*

**OHEA Has the Expertise to Support Bill 216:**

OHEA members by their registration have relevant training, knowledge, skills, interest, and experience to develop Food Literacy curriculum. Many members are food educators in a variety of capacities and have identified a general lack of

food and nutrition knowledge, and cooking skills among students and consumers. Bill 216 can greatly help to address this deficiency in Ontario curricula.

*“Food Literacy is a spectrum of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enhance health and wellbeing,”* states Dr. Joyce Slater, RD, MSc, PhD, Professor, Human Nutritional Sciences, University of Manitoba, January -2022. OHEA concurs that bringing food education to the forefront is critical. There remains, however, the necessity for hands-on learning to build confidence and competencies. This **practical food literacy** via experiential learning in food selection, safety and especially, cooking skills, is vital for responsible life management.

**OHEA agrees that experiential Food Literacy education will better equip Ontario graduates with the essential life skills and knowledge to:**

- select/prepare nutrient-rich food to promote growth and development;
- support positive health outcomes, and help reduce healthcare costs;
- appreciate local food, food production challenges, food safety and security;
- reduce the use of ultra-processed and convenience foods;
- promote mindful eating and family mealtime;
- manage family food budgets and reduce food waste;
- increase self-reliance and reduce dependency on food banks especially in times of emergency or pandemic;
- prepare to leave home and make wise consumer choices for self, family and community.

**OHEA initiated an online petition: *Urging the Government of Ontario to make at least one Food & Nutrition course compulsory for Secondary School graduation.***

Public response to the petition was amazing. Nurses, teachers, doctors, dietitians, students, parents and grandparents are among several thousand Ontario voters who signed the petition:

<https://www.thepetitionsite.com/133/783/509/urge-the-gouvernement-of-ontario-to-make-at-least-one-food-nutrition-course-compulsory/>

*Many people know that, “the elimination of home economics programs from Ontario schools resulted in a generation of children and young parents lacking food literacy and food skills.”* Food Literacy in Ontario, Nutrition Connections, Ontario Public Health Association 2019. However, many people do not know that

the secondary school multidiscipline subject area, **Family Studies (FS)**, already exists. It is currently a popular ‘optional choice’ for students and includes foods courses for grades 9-12. Therein, lies a problem and a solution.

**The Problem:** By not mandating one (FS) Food & Nutrition course as a ‘required’, course, Ontario has created a Food Literacy deficiency.

**The Solution:** Tweaking existing (FS) Food & Nutrition Curriculum and making one a ‘required’ course at the secondary level, would be fiscally smart, and timely, and a wise solution for Bill 216.

***Food literacy is already deeply embedded in all seven of the current (FS) Food and Nutrition related courses. Elements of food literacy are also present in other Family Studies courses.*** Family Studies nurtures development through food skills, nutrition, financial literacy, and consumer education.

The (FS) subject area is an integral part of existing Social Sciences and Humanities Curriculum. You can explore the seven Food & Nutrition options currently available here:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/ssciences9to122013.pdf>

**OHEA strongly recommends that Food Literacy be taught by Ontario Certified Teachers fully qualified as Family Studies Educators to provide credible, consistent, and accurate nutrition messaging and cooking skills. The same professionals should be involved in Food Literacy curriculum development.**

Thank you for sending the *Food Literacy Draft Revised – Gr. 1-8 Science and Technology Curriculum*. OHEA has concern at the elementary level since Home Economics was largely eliminated by the Ministry several years ago and where hands-on cooking skills, nutrition curriculum, and food literacy, in general, is lacking.

*Being food literate is important to help families navigate a complex food environment and enable them to make healthy food choices that satisfy their preferences, cultural traditions, and nutritional needs. Food literacy is particularly important in the early years, when children are developing the eating patterns and skills that they will carry into adulthood and pass on to future generations.”* Food

Literacy in Ontario, Nutrition Connections and Ontario Public Health Association, 2019.

**Once again, we ask that you invite OHEA representation to your next Round Table discussion. [info@ohea.on.ca](mailto:info@ohea.on.ca). OHEA can bring depth of knowledge and experience in Food Literacy education.**

Attached, is our previous Letter of Support for Bill 216 dated Nov, 2021 for easy reference.

Sincerely,



Jason Eaton, P.H.Ec.,  
**President, Ontario Home Economics Association (OHEA)**



Camille Naranjit, P.H.Ec. OCT.,  
**President-Elect, Ontario Home Economics Association (OHEA)**  
**President, Ontario Family Studies and Home Economics Educators' Association**

**OHEA Partner:** *Six-by-Sixteen* Project with OFA

**OHEA - Partner:** *Ontario Food & Nutrition Strategy*

**OHEA - Presenter:** *Unpacking Food Literacy*. OPHA -

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