

Memorandum to: Chairs of District School Boards
Directors of Education
School Authorities

From: Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

Subject: Ministry of Education Updates

As we move ahead to the winter holiday break, we want to recognize the significant work that has been done across the education sector to ensure that schools remain safe and healthy environments for students and staff.

Our Chief Medical Officer of Health has confirmed that the transmission of COVID-19 in schools has remained low. This has been accomplished in part through our comprehensive safety plan that includes a mandatory masking policy for students in Grades 4-12, \$1.3 billion in COVID-19 resources for school boards to be used for enhanced cleaning and personal protective equipment, improved air quality for 95% of schools, and further hiring to promote physical distancing and cleanliness in schools. With this plan and supported by the efforts of our education partners, we have kept schools safe. However, the public health environment in Ontario continues to evolve rapidly. The government is continuing to monitor the COVID-19 situation, including recent trends in hospitalizations and intensive care unit patients.

Supporting Different Learning Options

To best support parents and school boards in minimizing any potential disruption in learning, we have taken action to support remote learning.

Before the start of the 2020-21 school year, school boards were asked to ensure their readiness to pivot to remote learning if required. We are encouraged by the planning that school boards across the province have engaged in to demonstrate this readiness.

We encourage boards to continue to ensure that students and families are provided the resources required to successfully participate in remote learning, including ensuring the availability of remote learning devices for all students.

Plans must also be in place to support students with special education needs to learn remotely.

The Ministry of Education recently announced the launch of two new portals, [TVO Learn](#) and [TFO IDÉLLO, apprendre à la maison](#), which provide supports for students learning

remotely by accessing additional educational resources developed by Ontario certified teachers.

Secondary students can continue to access TVO's [Independent Learning Centre \(ILC\) Open House](#) and [Portes ouvertes pour les cours TVO ILC in French-language](#), which provide access to 144 Grade 9 to 12 courses. These ILC resources are designed to provide flexible learning opportunities to help students keep up with their learning or deepen their understanding of a specific subject.

As a reminder, we are recommending that boards encourage students and staff to take home any materials that they may require for remote learning before they leave school for the holiday period so that we can continue to be ready for all scenarios.

Thank you for the ongoing partnership as we have worked to keep schools safe during this unprecedented time.

Sincerely,

Stephen Lecce
Minister

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister