

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

Memorandum to: Directors of Education
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities
Director of Centre Jules-Léger Consortium

From: Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

Subject: Readiness to Move to Remote Learning

Thank you for the work you and your teams have undertaken to implement daily reporting and for your collaboration with local public health and responsiveness to COVID-19 cases in schools. We are continuing to work closely with the Ministry of Health to monitor cases across the province.

Recent experience with school closures due to outbreaks has demonstrated the critical importance of schools being ready to pivot to remote learning quickly, and we have seen clear cases where this transition has been seamless and effective.

Staff, students, and families should be aware of the school board's remote learning plan and the steps that will be taken should the need arise to move to remote learning in the event of classroom, school, or board closure.

Remote Learning Policies

In August 2020, the ministry released Policy/Program Memorandum No. 164 (PPM 164) to outline remote learning requirements, including synchronous learning, during times of extended interruption to in-person learning. PPM 164 is intended to support boards with minimum requirements and effective practices for remote learning, and ensures a consistent expectation that students and parents can rely on.

To be prepared for a potential closure, school boards should have plans in place so they can move to remote learning quickly. While these plans are overwhelmingly in place, it is the ministry's expectation that all boards are prepared to immediately transition cohorts or schools (based on the nature of the isolation) from in-person instruction to remote learning, with teacher-led instruction resuming within 24 hours of the cohort or school-wide isolation. The continuity of learning is paramount to provide stability and consistency in the lives of our students. The ministry has developed a checklist to support boards in their planning and help inform the ministry of areas where additional guidance and support may be needed.

We ask that school boards complete [this checklist](#) by October 23, 2020. The checklist is available on a web-based form that can be easily shared with the ministry.

If you have any questions about this checklist, please contact Yael Ginsler, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Student Achievement Division at Yael.Ginsler@Ontario.ca.

Supports for Educators

Last spring, 30,000 educators took advantage of the opportunity for training on remote learning. In addition, at the start of this school year, all educators were trained as part of mandatory professional activity days. To further support teachers to prepare for remote learning, the ministry has developed a self-assessment readiness tool for teachers that includes suggested strategies and links to resources.

This tool for teachers and other professional learning resources are available through the ministry's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). School board staff have access to this space by logging into the VLE and clicking the Supports for Virtual Learning link on their school board's home page. If you do not know the web address for your school board's instance of the VLE please visit <https://www.d2l.com/ontario>.

The ministry is also hosting a series of webinars focused on remote learning in the coming weeks and months. Educators can register for these webinars by visiting: <https://ontario.educatorwebinars.ca>. I encourage you to share this registration website with educators in your board. New webinars will continue to be added regularly over the course of the school year.

Thank you for the diligence with which you are preparing to pivot to remote learning should the need arise. The ministry looks forward to continuing to support you and your teams.

Sincerely,

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

- c: Executive Director, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'ontario (ACÉPO)
- Executive Director, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
- Executive Director, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
- Executive Director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
- Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
- Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
- General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
- General Secretary, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
- General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
- Chair, Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW)
- Chair, Education Workers' Alliance of Ontario (EWAO)
- Co-ordinator, Canadian Union of Public Employees – Ontario (CUPE-ON)