

October 1, 2021

Memorandum to: Directors of Education
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

From: Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

Subject: **Updates to the School Screening Tool for the 2021-22 School Year**

As the 2021-22 school year continues, I am writing to notify you of recent updates made to the [COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#).

Key changes are focused on providing clarity to users and individuals, and do not represent policy changes. Updates to the screening tools include:

- **Symptoms** - Clarifying that staff, students and children should stay home from school and child care if they are unwell, even if they do not have symptoms that are most commonly associated with COVID-19, and monitor before returning to school.
- **Testing** - Clarifying that rapid antigen tests are not for use on individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 or on high-risk close contacts.
- **Vaccination and Immunization Status** – Revisions were made to the structure of the vaccination status and COVID-19 case history question to clarify that the individual could be vaccinated or had previously tested positive within the last 90 days.
- **Personal Health Information and Immunization Status** - Clarifying that the purpose of asking if an individual is fully vaccinated or was previously positive with COVID-19 in the past 90 days is for providing correct isolation requirements. A reminder has been added to note that no public health information is being collected when individuals complete the screening tool.
- **International Travel** – the international travel question has been revised to provide better clarity about who can and cannot attend school after travelling. While unvaccinated children under the age of 12 are exempt from federal quarantine if they travelled in the company of someone who qualified for an exemption from quarantine based on vaccination status, they may not attend school or child care for 14 days upon their return. Individuals with all other quarantine exemptions (e.g., travelling for cross-border custody arrangements; travelling for medical treatment) may continue to attend school or child care.

Copies of the new screener are available for download [here](#). Similar to the 2020-21 school year, the downloadable screening tool will be made available in multiple languages. These additional languages will be added online shortly.

We will continue to update the screening tool as public health guidance evolves and are committed to keeping schools and school boards informed of any changes. We ask that you continue to work with your public health units to review your own screening materials to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements outlined in provincial guidance. Public health units continue to have the authority to implement additional measures based on local circumstances.

Thank you again for your continued support and collaboration as we work together to support students, staff and families across Ontario.

Sincerely,

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

- c: Board COVID-19 Leads
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, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
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