

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members

From: Craig Smith, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)

Date: April 3, 2020

Regarding: School Shutdown Week 2 Update (3)

Accompanying this *Communiqué* is the outline of the Thames Valley District School Board's (TVDSB) *Teaching Staff Memo – Continuity of Learning, the TVDSB COVID-19 Protocol Safe Accessing School-Sites* and *ETFO Provincial Advice to Members Video Conferencing*.

The purpose of this *Communiqué* is to provide context and clarity regarding the roles, responsibilities and rights of ETFO Members during this period of distance teaching and learning under the declared provincial state of emergency and against the backdrop of an evolving global pandemic.

Given that the Board is proceeding with the soft implementation plan for *Continuous Learning* the following must be understood:

- The provisions of the ETFO TVTL/TVDSB *Collective Agreement* remain in effect and will be adhered to by Members, the Board and its Agents.
- The plan for *Continuous Learning* will remain in effect only for the duration of the school shutdown.
- While Members discharge their teaching duties in this new environment, it is critical that the professional boundaries found in the *Education Act, Ontario Colleges of Teachers Act* and the *Teaching Profession Act* be observed closely and followed rigorously.

Weekly Meetings

- Without prejudice or precedent ETFO has agreed that Members may participate in weekly virtual staff meetings to be held on Mondays within the established instructional day during the period of the school shutdown.

Hours of Work

- The work of Members should be completed within the established instructional day and that the instructional day is aligned to FTE.

Hours of Learning for Students

- The hours of learning for students is outlined in the Ministry of Education Guide for Continual Learning.
- Hours refers to the approximate amount of time students spend on assigned work.

Itinerant Teachers

- This applies to ETFO Members in LTO assignments.

Assessment and Feedback

- Formative assessment is to be used to provide feedback and not for the purposes of generating marks for reporting.

Final Report Cards

- The Minister of Education has indicated that final report cards will be produced at the end of the school year.
- The Ministry of Education/Teacher Affiliate workgroup will establish a plan for report cards which will be shared with school boards and ETFO Members in due course.

Regular Communication with Parents and Students

- Under the Education Act ETFO Members have a duty to communicate with parents and should be in regular contact with parents during these uncertain times.
- Communication with parents should always be undertaken mindful of the fact that all families are under real pressure caused by the global pandemic.
- ETFO TVTL Members should not be pressured to contact students individually or to cross professional boundaries that would otherwise not be crossed. It is the view of ETFO TVTL that contact with students should be through group access via parents and not individual interaction.

Virtual Learning Platforms

- ETFO Members should use professional judgement when determining how to provide students with learning materials.
- Use of Virtual Learning Platforms may include but should not be limited to Brightspace and Google Classroom.
- Some families will need to be provided with learning materials in a print format. It is not the job of ETFO Members to provide these print materials. It is ETFO's understanding that this will be managed by TVDSB and costs associated will be borne by TVDSB.

Expectations related to distance learning include:

- Teachers should maintain a record of communication with parents and document work assigned to students.
- Online training for Brightspace and Google Classroom will be available online during the established instructional day.

Supporting Students

- ETFO Members are profoundly concerned about the well-being of student, particularly in these uncertain times.
- Given the challenges presented by distance teaching and learning, ETFO Members will make every reasonable effort to meet the learning needs of all students under the circumstances pertaining.

Week-at-a-Glance

- ETFO Members should share weekly plans as directed understanding that Monday, April 6 marks the beginning of soft implementation not its end.

Access to Schools:

- Access to schools is limited to Teachers who need to retrieve teaching materials to support Continuous Learning.
- Public Orders made under the authority of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act limits grouping to a maximum of five (5) people.
- Access is limited to a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes.
- Access to school should be arranged with the Principal.
- Access will be granted one time only.
- ETFO TVTL Members cannot be mandated to access schools.

Advice to ETFO TVTL Members:

- This is the soft implementation phase of the plan for Continuous Learning, borne of an emergency caused by a deadly pandemic. We need to focus on what is important and be patient as we move forward.
- Use professional judgement and observe professional boundaries always.
- Contact ETFO TVTL by phone (519-474-3150) or by email (etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com) as needed. We are here for you.

The Local will continue to provide information to Members that is clear, concise and timely.

Members are thanked profoundly for all that they are doing in these challenging times.

For more information regarding this Communiqué please contact the Local office by phone at 519-474-3150 or by email at etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com.