

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members

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

Date: September 4, 2020

Regarding: Reporting COVID-19 Absences in Schools

Date: September 2, 2020

Memorandum to: Directors of Education
Centre Jules-Léger Consortium
School Authorities

From: Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister of Education

Subject: **Reporting COVID-19 Absences in Schools**

As referenced in the *Monitoring and Managing COVID-19 in Schools* memo sent August 27, 2020, we indicated that school boards must report on a daily basis any [confirmed cases of COVID-19](#) within school to the Ministry of Education via an online tool. The expectation is that the reporting will be completed by the school Principal or their designate (i.e., Vice-Principal, Administrative Assistant, etc.) by 10:30 a.m. every day once school opens. The purpose of collecting this data is to monitor the potential impact of COVID-19 across schools in Ontario.

The COVID-19 School Absence Online Reporting Tool can be accessed via a portal called “Go Secure.” Principals and/or their designates will require a “Go-Secure” account to access the COVID-19 School Absence Online Reporting Tool. Instructions on registering for Go Secure access are provided in the attached *Go Secure Registration Guide*. Where possible, we have created accounts for the school Principal based on contact information that your board has provided. If the Principal or designate has difficulty logging in, contact information has been listed in the guide. It is important that all school Principals and/or their designates ensure that they can access the COVID-19 School Absence Online Reporting Tool before the start of school.

Please note that the absence data collected will not be for the purpose of contact tracing. No personal information will be collected by the Ministry of Education. Any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the school must be reported to the local public health unit to support case management and contact tracing and other activities in accordance with all applicable legislation, including the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#). Public health officials will determine any additional steps required, including but not limited to the declaration of an outbreak and closure of classes and/or schools.

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We would also like to make you aware that we are working with the Ministry of Health to develop an online tool that parents can use to screen their child for symptoms of illness each day and determine whether they should send their child to school or keep them home. We expect that this tool will be available later this week. We are aware that some boards are developing their own screening tools. Once the provincial tool is available it will be important to ensure that advice is aligned and families are receiving consistent direction about their child's attendance.

Please share this information with your schools' Principals. For the purpose of COVID-19, your main point of contact will be the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education's Field Services Branch. As we shared with you recently on a Director of Education teleconference, the Ministry of Education Regional Offices have been re-aligned with Ontario Health boundaries to support COVID-19 outbreak monitoring. Regional offices will be liaising with school boards daily to follow-up on the monitoring and managing of COVID-19 in schools. Please direct any questions about COVID-19 school absences reporting to your Regional Manager.

Thank you for your support and commitment to learning as we prepare for the safe reopening of schools in Ontario.

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

Attachments

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, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
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)
Executive Director, Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO)
Executive Director, Ontario Principals' Council (OPC)
Executive Director, Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes (ADFO)

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

- c. *ETFO TVTL Released Officers*
Terry Card, President, ETFO Thames Valley Occasional Teacher Local