

**To:** ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members  
**From:** Craig Smith, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)  
**Date:** May 21, 2021  
**Regarding:** Summary of Meeting with Deputy Minister of Education/Affiliates (Shared with Local Presidents)

Presidents, below please find my summary of today's discussion:

1. Planning for September – The Deputy Minister advised that direction was provided to school boards early this spring so that they could commence planning for the fall. The Ministry continues to be cautious about health and safety considerations as they don't know where they will be with vaccinations, uptake on vaccinations etc. Boards have been asked to plan for in-person learning but parents still have the choice of remote learning. The expectation is that 300 minutes of instruction occurs. In elementary, cohorting will continue. There will be allowances made for itinerant teachers to teach in classrooms and for students requiring out of class support (ESL, remedial, special education supports) to be withdrawn. The Affiliates asked the question about bussing and how the Ministry will address this in relation to cohorting. In addition, the Affiliates asked for clear direction to school boards that compliance with collective agreement provisions is required. Andrew Davis, ADM, responded to state that "their interests are aligned" on this issue. All of the Ministry communications have clearly indicated the need for c.a. compliance and this includes supervision and preparation time.
2. Vaccination Update – The Deputy Minister provided a brief update on the vaccination roll-out plan. The plan is moving forward. All education staff are now eligible and the uptake has been great. The Ministry is now turning to youth vaccinations. Pfizer has approved a vaccine for students 12 and over. The roll-out of the student vaccination plan is now underway. It is happening in some locations and will continue to expand across the province. The Affiliates asked for assurance that educators and students will be vaccinated by the middle of August in preparation for a return in September. Dr. Tepper indicated that they are aligned on this point as well. He stated that if the supply continues, they are hopeful that this can be done.
3. Airborne Transmission/Ventilation – The Affiliates asked the Ministry for support to encourage boards to address ventilation issues over the summer period. The Deputy Minister advised that the Ministry is tracking that all ISIP investments (over 1,700) are in place and that all HEPA filters are ordered and in place. The Ministry will continue to work with boards on this issue to ensure that all investments and upgrades are incorporated. Dr. Tepper also advised that they are working closely with the Health Experts and the Science Table on this advice on this topic. They are keenly engaged on the issue of ventilation.

4. Consultation re Safety Protocols for September – The Affiliates asked about how educators will be consulted on the issue of safety protocols required for September. The Provincial Working Group on Health and Safety has requested additional meetings for this purpose but the request was declined. Andrew Davis advised that a notification is coming shortly for a meeting in early June with the PWGHS to discuss safety protocols as well as the results of the survey on vaccinations. Two additional meetings will be held over the summer as well to keep the dialogue going.
5. Math Proficiency Test – The Affiliates raised concern about the implementation of the MPT. Discussion about the angst and anxiety for teachers who are required to write the test during a pandemic when it is has not been properly implemented. Space is limited, there are glitches with the technology, there are access issues with respect to technology and accommodation. The Ministry was asked again for assurances that no teacher will be negatively impacted if unable to write the test before the deadline. Ministry Staff responded to say that they are tracking this situation very closely. They were not aware of access issues or issues with technology. Staff will follow up on this issue. According to the Ministry, there were close to 6,000 sessions booked as of May 18. They are showing 700 vacant spots but 150 people are on a wait list. They are not clear on why individuals are on a wait list if there are spaces available. However, when names are waitlisted, additional sessions are scheduled. The Ministry will continue to monitor this situation.
6. PPM 165/Board Hiring Processes – The Affiliates raised concern about the manner in which boards are rolling out their hiring processes. Some examples were provided where boards violated existing c.a. requirements, cut and pasted preferred areas of the Ministry guidance and eliminated others, created new requirements (hoops to jump through) in order to be hired. The Ministry supports that these policies must comply with c.a. provisions. If individual situations occur that cannot be resolved locally, the Affiliates can raise these with the DM. If not, the grievance process will need to be invoked in order to protect current entitlements.

Sharon O'Halloran  
General Secretary

For more information regarding this *summary* please contact the ETFO Local office by phone at 519-474-3150 or by email at [etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com](mailto:etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com).