

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members

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

Date: November 19, 2021

Regarding: Summary of Meeting with Deputy Minister of Education/Affiliates (Shared with Local Presidents)

Presidents, please find my update from today's meeting with the Deputy Minister and Affiliate GSs below:

1. An announcement is coming later this afternoon on the Ministry's overall approach to testing. The Minister will speak to expansion of testing in all elementary and secondary schools that includes:
 - a. PCR take-home tests being available in all schools in Ontario for students going home ill or for use in schools with COVID outbreaks.
 - b. In addition, the Ministry plans to provide 5 rapid tests to every student in Ontario (11 million tests) to take home before the Festive Break. Students will be encouraged to use them over the break and before their return to reduce the likelihood of transmission in the new year.
2. A memo is coming from the Ministry to advise boards that normal semestering in secondary schools will be allowed commencing in January 2022.
3. The Affiliates raised several concerns about the Sexual Abuse Prevention Program that OCT members are mandated to complete prior to August 31, 2022. An email went out to members yesterday from the OCT and many members may have deleted the email or ignored it as it was not expected. There appears to be no coordination with school boards or the Ministry on the roll out of this new requirement. In addition, concern was expressed that no time will be provided to members to complete the program which requires up to 3 hours of their time. The Ministry responded by indicating that they will follow up with the OCT to inquire about what other future communication plans are in place. Ministry staff reviewed that this is a new requirement for all applicants to the OCT after January 1, 2022. New applicants will be required to complete the program prior to certification. Current members of the OCT will be given until August 31, 2022 to do so. The module can be completed over multiple sessions and does not need to be done in one three hour block.
4. A brief update occurred on e-learning at the secondary level. The Ministry is doing some work to develop and release a PPM on the 2 crediting and opt-out processes.
5. The Deputy Minister advised that they continue to be concerned about a teacher shortage. They will be writing another letter to OTF to canvass interest in extending the OTPP 50-day rule.

6. The Ministry was asked about the status of the FAQ on antigen testing. Dr. Tepper indicated that he would follow up on this to ensure that it is shared.
7. The Affiliates asked about whether the provincial COVID 19 protocols will be updated to reflect new changes from the Public Health Agency of Canada re masking. The Ministry indicated that they would look into this issue.

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.

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