

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members

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

Date: October 22, 2021

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

Presidents, today we had a brief meeting with the Deputy Minister and Affiliate GSs. The issues discussed were as follows:

1. The Affiliates asked for an update on the vaccination rates of education staff. The Deputy Minister indicated that they are in the process of preparing a board by board table that can be shared. The data is separated between full-time and occasional staff. The vaccination rates for full-time staff are much higher than those of occasional staff. The reasons for this may include: occasional staff are on multiple lists, occasional staff may not be accepting assignments at this time, occasional staff are not always as responsive due to access issues. The current statistics reveal that 85% of education staff are fully vaccinated. Some staff have not responded. A letter is coming to the GSs from the Chief Medical Officer of Health asking for union support to encourage education staff to be vaccinated.
2. A discussion about the vaccination for students between the ages of 5-11 took place. The Ministry is hoping to roll out a vaccination plan very soon that will include school-based clinics. The hope is to have student first doses before the winter break. Second doses would be scheduled by Family Day. The timelines are tight to make this happen. The Ministry is doing some research re parent acceptance of the student vaccine. A question was asked about whether the vaccine will be added to this list of required student vaccinations. The Deputy Minister indicated that it was unlikely to happen this year. More information is required before taking this step.
3. A question was asked about the antigen testing that is occurring at the school/board level. Is the Ministry monitoring the processes that boards are following to ensure that the testing is occurring? The Deputy Minister reiterated the expectation that boards must carry this out. A memo is coming to the system to remind boards of these obligations. There have been a few issues with the app that they have heard about and they are discussing ways to address the concerns.
4. A brief discussion occurred on the issue of assessment and evaluation. The Ministry discussed this issue at the Affiliate Workgroup table. There are some inconsistencies with what is occurring and what Growing Success requires. The Affiliates requested a memo to the system to highlight some of these issues and to address issues regarding student learning occurring in a modified learning environment.

5. Directors of Education received a memo recently regarding international travel. Clarification was sought on whether the memo is specific to students who may be travelling internationally with their parents or if it also pertained to staff. Ministry Staff confirmed that the memo was specific to students only. Students under the age of 12 may travel with vaccinated parents and are exempted from federal quarantine. The purpose of the memo was to clarify that the federal requirement does not mean that they are exempt from the requirements that govern return to school. The Ministry acknowledged the need to provide some advice to staff on this issue prior to the winter break.

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