



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

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Cathy Abraham
President

W.R. (Rusty) Hick
Executive Director

March 25, 2021

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education

Dear Minister:

As we welcome spring, the promise of better weather, and the school year moving into its last quarter, we find ourselves at a crossroads in the COVID-19 pandemic. Even as Variants of Concern are becoming the dominant form of the virus across Ontario, we have room for much hope as vaccination efforts are set to ramp up significantly in the coming weeks.

With that, I would like to make a request of the government on behalf of our 31 member boards and 10 school authorities – that our province's education workers be vaccinated as soon as possible in Phase 2, especially in areas and communities with high COVID-19 case numbers.

As the Toronto District School Board has suggested, the March Break being moved to April 12 to 16 provides an optimal opportunity to maximize the number of education workers who wish to be vaccinated.

Vaccinating education workers would ensure we are supporting their health, safety and well-being, while also minimizing absences from the workplace. This in turn helps keep students in the classroom. We would also suggest that those staff working in school-based child care centres also be part of this vaccination blitz. School bus drivers and any other staff connected to a local school could be invited to get their vaccine at this time as well.

In addition, we join our member boards in asking for consideration with regard to the urgent vaccination of all staff who work closely with students with complex medical needs. Ideally, this would happen now, sooner rather than later, during Phase 1 of the vaccine distribution implementation plan.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or wish to discuss this issue further. Perhaps you could address this during the upcoming call with school board Chairs.

Respectfully,

Cathy Abraham
President

CC: Nancy Naylor, Deputy Minister
Chairs of English public school boards