

**February 11, 2021**

**Memorandum to:** Chairs of District School Boards  
Directors of Education  
School Authorities

**From:** Stephen Lecce  
Minister of Education

Nancy Naylor  
Deputy Minister

**Subject: Ministry of Education Update**

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Thank you for your continued support for students, staff and families.

As you know, our greatest priority is the safety and well-being of our students, staff and their families. We are encouraged by the support you have shown as we have reopened schools across the province following the Winter Break, with remaining schools in Toronto, Peel and York opening on February 16, 2021.

With a continued focus on the safety of our returning students and staff, we introduced additional health and safety measures. These include enhanced screening protocols, masking for Grades 1-12, including outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained, discouraging staff and student congregation, and the expansion of targeted testing.

We know that the 2020-21 school year has been challenging for our students and staff. We understand how important it is for students to be learning in-person – alongside their peers – to support their well-being, mental health, and development. We also recognize that all sectors, including our education sector, play an important part in stopping the further spread of the virus.

We will continue to focus on supporting the health and well-being of students, families and staff in what has been an unprecedented year. That is why, based on advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, we will be deferring March Break for the 2020-21 school year.

We recognize the importance of providing students, staff and families with an opportunity to rest and recharge. This is why we will be moving the planned break to the week of April 12, 2021.

Boards are asked to communicate their updated 2020-21 school year calendars, reflecting the above direction, with parents and families as soon as possible.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership as we continue to ensure the safety of students and staff in this unprecedented school year.

Sincerely,

Stephen Lecce  
Minister

Nancy Naylor  
Deputy Minister

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