

**February 10, 2022**

**Memorandum to:** Directors of Education  
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

**From:** Nancy Naylor  
Deputy Minister

**Subject:** **Support for First Nation Students in Provincial School Boards**

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Thank you for your ongoing partnership and commitment to support the success and well-being of students in Ontario during a very challenging time in Ontario's education system. Your efforts have been critical to establish safe and enriching learning environments for all students and to support them in continuing with their education during periods of disruption. The purpose of this memo is to highlight the specific needs of students in First Nations communities and to identify key considerations for school boards in supporting the education needs of First Nation students.

As you know, First Nation communities may have put in place public health measures that differ from other parts of the province. Some are at varying stages of lockdown or, at minimum, facing restricted access in and out of their communities. As a result, there are First Nation students who are unable to return to in-person learning. It is school boards' responsibility to continue to work with First Nation students and their communities through your Indigenous Education Board Leads to support the continuity of learning. As you continue this important work, the ministry is requesting that you consider implementing the following measures:

- Providing the option of remote learning as outlined in [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 164](#);
- Ensuring access to devices and internet connectivity supports (e.g. rocket sticks);
- Supporting student learning hubs in First Nation communities;
- Not marking students absent if engaged regularly through asynchronous or print package learning and;
- Support flexible due dates for assignments and other student obligations.

The engagement of First Nations communities in this process is vital and school boards are encouraged to work with First Nation communities on supports needed for First Nations students, including the co-development of student education plans that reflect the context of the community where they live.

I appreciate your collaboration in our shared commitment to supporting First Nation students. We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with First Nation partners and the federal government to support First Nation students in Ontario.

Sincerely,

Nancy Naylor

Deputy Minister

- c: Executive Director, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO)  
Executive Director, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)  
Executive Director, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)  
Executive Director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)  
Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)  
Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)  
General Secretary, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)  
General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)  
General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)  
Chair, Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW)  
Chair, Education Workers' Alliance of Ontario (EWAO)  
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Elaine Johnston, Chair, Indigenous Trustees Council, Ontario Public School Boards' Association  
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