



Office of the Chair of the Board

16 February 2021

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Minister of Health
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2J3

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
438 University Ave, 5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1N3

Dear Ministers Elliott and Lecce:

This year, education workers have been tireless in their efforts to support the safe operation of schools. This pandemic has reinforced our collective responsibility to prioritize keeping schools open - for students, for families, and for the economy. At this time of year, school districts are actively engaged in planning for the next school year. These plans must be built on our shared understanding that in Ontario we prioritize the safety of our students and staff. An important demonstration of that commitment is vaccinating education workers.

On behalf of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, I am writing to ask that you recognize the immediate need for Ontario to prioritize vaccinations for education workers. We want our schools to be open, but we need to do everything we can to ensure our staff is safe, particularly those engaged in in-person work in schools, and especially supporting our most vulnerable high-needs students.

Education workers have worked hard to keep our schools safe using the safety precautions available. The vaccine represents a new level of protection and education workers need that protection. The emergence of more contagious strains of the virus adds more uncertainty to our efforts to keep schools open and prevent further disruptions in our children's education. A formal public commitment to vaccinating education workers as part of Phase 2 is not just an important contributor to the strategy for containing COVID-19, but it is also an essential part of the provincial strategy to prioritize the opening of schools.

We respectfully request a formal public statement that acknowledges the prioritization of education workers as part of Ontario's COVID-19 vaccination

program.

With much appreciation for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Lynn Scott
Chair, Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

cc: Dr. Vera Etches, Medical Officer of Health, Ottawa Public Health
Alex Munter, President and Chief Executive Officer, CHEO
Cathy Abraham, President, OPSBA
W.R. (Rusty) Hick, Executive Director, OPSBA
Trustees, Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
Senior Staff, Ottawa-Carleton District School
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