



April 8, 2021

The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education  
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health

To the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education and Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health:

At the April 7, 2021 meeting of the Board of Trustees for the Halton District School Board, the following motion received unanimous approval:

Be it resolved that the Chair be directed to write a letter to the Minister of Education and the Province's Chief Medical Officer of Health within one day to express the critical, urgent imperative of vaccinating all education workers at the beginning of the Phase 2 vaccination rollout,

Be it further resolved that the letter include the request to direct public health units to utilize the April break to vaccinate education workers, to ensure timeliness for staff and efficiency for boards.

Minister Lecce and Dr. Williams, you have emphasized that it is of the utmost importance for student well-being that schools remain open for in-person learning in Ontario. It has also been noted with gratitude that elementary/secondary school staff are listed as priority groups in the Phase 2 rollout of vaccines.

The Trustees of the Halton District School Board were grateful to learn today that education workers who work with students who have special education needs will be vaccinated beginning next week. In school settings, there are many additional staff who work with students who have difficulty utilizing personal protective equipment efficiently and appropriately. Trustees therefore urge the government to immediately begin the vaccination process of all education workers during the upcoming April Break.

A provincial-wide mandate to facilitate vaccination of all school staff over the Spring Break is in the best interest of staff, students and the entire province. Vaccinating in hotspots is a good start, but it must be expanded to prevent additional hotspots from emerging.

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Vaccinating during the break is preferred because school operations could be compromised as staff cannot simply leave their posts to attend vaccination appointments. A large portion of vaccination appointment times occur during educational time. Maintaining learning time and reducing the number of coverage staff that class cohorts are exposed to should be prime considerations in staff vaccination procedures. Securing education worker coverage is already a challenge, which will be exacerbated if Boards must determine coverage for thousands of staff attending vaccination appointments.

This is compounded by the fact that many of our staff do not live within our region and under the current system would be forced to return to their home regions for vaccination. Without a provincial mandate, a patchwork of vaccine timetables will emerge across various public health units for elementary/secondary school staff inoculations.

In order to facilitate efficient and effective inoculation scheduling, board facilities could be utilized as vaccination hubs for education staff during the break, including providing space for mobile units.

The Trustees of the Halton District School Board recognize that schools provide important stability and social support for students and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, we urge the government to take immediate action on this initiative.

Sincerely,



Andréa Grebenc  
Chair of the Board of Trustees, Halton District School Board

Cc: Dr. Hamidah Meghani, Medical Officer of Health, Halton Region  
MPP Ted Arnott,  
MPP Stephen Crawford,  
MPP Parm Gill,  
MPP Jane McKenna,  
MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos,  
Ontario School Board Chairs (English Public, English Catholic, French Public, French Catholic)  
President Cathy Abraham, Ontario Public School Board Association