

Delegation-Ottawa-Carleton District School Board-Return to School Plan

I'm particularly concerned about the "plan" that the Ministry released for the return to classes and the CMOH's suggestion that we should "normalize COVID in schools", even as we learn more about the long term impact that even mild cases of the disease can have on youth. With the Delta variant and a fourth wave upon us and kids under 12 ineligible for a vaccine, the idea of unmasked indoor interactions (phys ed, singing), and other parts of the plan, is making me very worried for the safety of my 10 year old.

I'm writing to ask what the Board's plan is for this fall.

1. Will there be another opportunity to switch from in-person to online learning? I truly hope so. In June, when we had to make our decision, we did not know how virulent Delta is. It is unreasonable to ask parents to send kids to school when it is not safe. The plan proposed by the Province will not make schools safe.

2. Will the Board be fully implementing the province's guidance? I certainly hope not. These guidelines are risky and ignore the needs of our most vulnerable populations. I would like to see strictly enforced cohorting, masking throughout the school and no return to singing and wind instruments in school, among other evidence-based measures.

3. How will the Board deal with families who choose to have their child(ren) opt out of certain activities that they feel come with too great a risk (e.g. unmasked indoor phys ed; mixed cohorts at recess, etc,)?

Finally, there has been much talk of improving ventilation in schools. Are you able to direct me to a resource that explains what is the current status of our school's ventilation system? We are at Connaught PS.

Many thanks,

Jennifer Salahub