



Fwd: [External Sender] 2019-20 School Year End & Summer Learning Opportunities Memo for School Boards | Note de service à l'intention des conseils scolaires sur la fin de l'année scolaire 2019-2020 et les occasions d'apprentissage pendant l'été

1 message

Tue, May 19, 2020 at 5:12 PM

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From: **Ministry of Education (EDU)** <MinistryofEducation@ontario.ca>

Date: Tue, May 19, 2020 at 5:08 PM

Subject: [External Sender] 2019-20 School Year End & Summer Learning Opportunities Memo for School Boards | Note de service à l'intention des conseils scolaires sur la fin de l'année scolaire 2019-2020 et les occasions d'apprentissage pendant l'été

To: Ministry of Education (EDU) <MinistryofEducation@ontario.ca>

Memorandum to:

Chairs of District School Boards

Directors of Education

Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

From:

Stephen Lecce

Minister

Nancy Naylor

Deputy Minister

We are writing to provide you with an update on plans for the remainder of the school year, next steps on developing a re-entry plan for 2020-21 and summer learning.

Minister Lecce has announced that Ontario's publicly funded schools will remain closed until the end of June 2020.

Over the last two months, we have all witnessed the extraordinary steps and flexibility school boards have shown to continue the learning journey for Ontario students. We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to Ontario's teachers, education workers, school board administrators and trustees for their leadership and innovation in ensuring continuity of learning under the current circumstances. We also recognize that parents and students have had to adapt to unprecedented changes to their learning environment.

While schools remain closed until the end of June, guidance provided to date for Learn at Home will continue to apply. School boards should continue to follow the guidance provided on March 31, 2020 regarding the hours per student, per week, and the suggested areas of curriculum focus by grade groupings. Additional guidance was provided on May 5, 2020 in support of synchronous learning, as part of the range of modalities used in the continuum of learning between educators and their students.

In light of the extended closure, we encourage schools and educators to use board approved tools to allow students to have access to their teachers, their classmates and their support network. Additional clarification and direction for assessment and reporting for June will be shared in the coming days.

Please note that the Ministerial Order continues to allow for temporary access to schools under certain circumstances. The order now specifically permits temporary access to schools so that students, parents and staff may retrieve belongings or return materials.

The ministry is also turning its attention to how Ontario will reopen schools for the 2020-21 school year.

A plan for re-opening schools needs to consider how we welcome back all students, including supports for students with special education needs and supports for mental health and well-being, as well as taking into consideration learning gaps and learning refreshers. We will need to consider how our schools adapt programming, physical space and transportation, as well as robust cleaning, safety, and operating protocols. We are being mindful of the lessons learned from this period and how we can ensure our school system can more fluently and rapidly move between in-person and remote learning as needed in the future.

In the coming weeks, the ministry will be seeking advice from students, parents, all education partners and health experts, to establish guidance on re-opening schools.

The ministry is establishing a process for formalized input and will also work with a number of advisory tables that have been established during the school closure period to invite input and advice.

Summer Programming Opportunities

In order to mitigate the impacts of the school closure period and learning loss that may typically occur during the summer, school boards will be supported as summer learning opportunities are expanded, including, summer school, course upgrading, and targeted programs for vulnerable students, students with special education needs, and Indigenous students.

School boards are asked to continue to plan for remote teaching and learning, as the COVID-19 outbreak continues. Should emergency measures be lifted or eased during the summer, additional guidance will follow. We recognize that summer programming may look different across the province as school boards develop innovative, creative, and flexible programming to meet the needs of students.

School boards are encouraged to continue to offer the International and Indigenous Languages Elementary (IILE) program for students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 and the Adult Indigenous Languages non-credit program, as part of their regular summer learning offerings.

We will also be asking school boards to continue to work with us and be ready to provide our child care partners with access to schools over the summer as the reopening plan for child care and camp programs are considered in the context of the government's plan to reopen the province. These will be critical supports for children and families.

Expanded Enrolment in Summer – Credit Programs

Summer School - To accommodate student demand for summer credit courses, school boards should plan to expand existing summer school credit programming through remote teacher-led learning, online learning, and through correspondence/self-study. Credit recovery courses for secondary students and Reach Ahead opportunities for elementary students should also continue to be offered. We know that school boards will be seeking qualified applicants for summer school positions. Boards have existing hiring processes for summer programming, and we encourage boards to, where possible, robustly leverage occasional teachers in these expanded summer offerings.

Independent Learning Courses - School boards can continue to enroll interested students in TVO's Independent Learning Centre (ILC). Students and families seeking to take ILC courses during the

summer should be encouraged to connect with their guidance department and/or school principal to discuss next steps.

Opportunity for Learning Consolidation and Upgrading

New Upgrading Courses - For summer 2020, school boards will be able to offer students in Grades 9 to 12 the opportunity to review and strengthen key learning in a course they passed during the school closure period in the 2019-20 school year. Upgrading courses can be offered in a 55-hour learning format and may include remote teacher-led learning while emergency measures continue, or online courses (including correspondence/self-study).

This opportunity will allow students to improve their marks and consolidate their learning. The summer school teacher will review key concepts and overall expectations in a flexible, accelerated manner that allows students to demonstrate knowledge and skills. If a student upgrades a course, both marks will be entered on the student's Ontario Student Transcript (OST). The ministry is working closely with the postsecondary sector to encourage fair consideration of students retaking or upgrading a course as a result of school closures.

Targeted Programs for Vulnerable Students

School boards are also encouraged to expand their numeracy and literacy summer supports programs in 2020 through remote learning and in partnerships with delivery agents, such as the **CODE Summer Learning Program, Frontier College**, and through remote delivery of school board non-credit Literacy and Math programs (**Learning Outside the School Day**). In planning these programs, it will be critical to explore the use of diverse teaching and learning tools and modalities that engage students and include the use of synchronous, interactive, inclusive and accessible technologies, where face-to-face is not possible. Please note that the Frontier College program is only offered in English, but French-language students are welcome to participate.

For school boards that run the **Focus on Youth** program, we are pleased that you continue to make efforts to adapt and plan your program in innovative ways to meet the needs of your vulnerable target student population. Similarly, for school boards that run the **Graduation Coach Program for Black Students**, graduation coaches will continue to establish programs and offer culturally-responsive supports to Black students over the summer with the aim to help improve student well-being and academic achievement.

Targeted Programs for Indigenous Students

Programs will continue that ensure Indigenous students are supported through the summer months with culturally responsive programming that enable continuity of learning. For example, The Ontario Federation of Friendship Centres will continue to support urban Indigenous students through its Alternative Secondary School Program (ASSP) in the 11 sites that the ASSP operates throughout the province. In addition, students currently participating in the Indigenous Graduation Coach Program will continue to be supported through the summer to ensure that students have what they need to successfully transition into the next school year.

Supporting Students with Special Education Needs and Mental Health Needs

Supports for Students with Special Education Needs - To support students with special education needs in summer program offerings, the ministry will be providing additional one-time Priorities and Partnership Fund (PPF) funding to school boards. This funding will be in addition to funds already provided through the Continuing Education and Other Programs Grant of the Grants for Student Needs (GSN), to school boards providing summer school programs in 2020. Boards will be able to use their allocation for additional staffing resources (e.g. special education resource teachers, educational assistants), to support students with special education needs in both expanded and new summer program offerings.

School boards will have the flexibility to determine where these resources are best allocated, and funding may be used to support students with special education needs in both credit and non-credit granting summer programs.

New Summer Transition Program – In addition to the summer programming outlined above, school boards will also be provided with a one-time allocation to provide summer transition programs for students with special education needs and/or students with mental health needs.

School boards may use this funding to support students with high special education needs and mental health needs to re-establish familiarity with the school environment once emergency measures as lifted, and the re-establishment of routines as well as gap closing in skills development and learning.

Mental Health Supports – Funding will also allow for the ongoing provision of mental health support to students over the summer months who are struggling with mental health concerns. Providing a connection to school-based mental health professionals will also help to facilitate a smooth transition back to school for students for whom a return to school would be challenging. In addition, School Mental Health Ontario will provide training to mental health professionals, educators and system leaders to equip them with the information and resources they need to support the mental health of students with the return to school.

School boards have flexibility to develop and design programs and supports based on local need, staffing costs and other local factors. We continue to encourage school boards to unlock all available mental health supports during this unprecedented time.

After-School Skills Development Programs (ASSDPs) - These programs provide students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) with additional targeted skills development opportunities, outside of the instructional day, to better equip them for classroom success and to achieve other outcomes such as improved social and communication skills. This summer, to support students with ASD in their transition to school in September 2020, schools may use their 2019-20 allocations to operate

their ASSDPs during the summer in remote or face-to-face formats based on public health guidance.

Additional Guidance on Cooperative Education

Cooperative Education - In summer 2020, should school closures continue past June 30, 2020, cooperative education courses must only be offered with virtual placements, in alignment with *Cooperative Education, Grades 11 and 12 (2018)*. If a virtual placement is not feasible, cooperative education courses cannot be offered. School boards and schools must ensure that there is a process in place and resources available to support teachers in finding and assessing cooperative education opportunities that offer educationally rich and safe learning experiences for all students.

Volunteering in the Summer

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Students who wish to support the COVID-19 efforts in their community may wish to volunteer.

School boards can encourage students to find specific volunteer initiatives that support their communities' response to the COVID-19 outbreak, and these may include remote volunteer opportunities during emergency measures, such as letter-writing campaigns to seniors. School boards are encouraged to consider how these activities can meet their policies to be eligible to count towards a student's 40-hour community involvement requirement. Students should be encouraged to check their school board's website for a list of eligible and ineligible activities, as well as resources to help them record hours and find volunteer activities, including browsing **SPARK Ontario** and asking their principal or guidance counsellor for more information.

Students under 18 years old should consult with their parents to plan and select their community involvement activities.

Learning Refresher of High School Course Content

The ministry is working to adapt the Learn at Home website to outline the key learning that takes place in high-demand and pre-requisite secondary courses (e.g., Math, Science, English/Français, etc.). This key concept mapping will be accompanied with free, online resources to help students independently refresh their learning in preparation for the 2020-21 school year.

The COVID-19 outbreak has impacted the lives of students by displacing regular routines, and removing protective factors such as sports, clubs and other social activities. In response, the Learn at Home website will also include free well-being resources for students and families to access throughout the summer months.

We encourage you to share these resources with students and families in your school board.

Summer Enrolment and Funding Instructions

The GSN is the primary funding source to support school boards in offering summer programming. Additional technical information regarding student enrolment will be forthcoming.

More information will also be available regarding PPF funding for targeted programming for vulnerable and Indigenous students, and one-time funding through PPF for programming to support students with special education needs and mental health needs.

We look forward to working with you to continue and expand summer learning programs so that every student, should they wish to participate, has the opportunity to do so. Thank you once again for your collaboration and commitment as we work together to continue to support Ontario's students.

Sincerely,

Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Ministry

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