

From: [Santos, Claudine](#)
To: ["snadon28@hotmail.com"](#); ["rob.campbell@ocdsb.ca"](#)
Cc: ["president@viewson.ca"](#)
Subject: **Urgent** Regarding direction given to teachers of specialized programs
Date: Saturday, September 5, 2020 8:18:57 AM
Attachments:

Good morning, Sonia and Rob;

I apologize for writing you on Saturday of a long weekend but there is an issue of great urgency to talk about.

I was made aware that teachers of specialized programs were informed this week that they would be expected to juggle in-class and online learning.

Immediately, this creates two distinct levels of education – so-called “typical” students will have access to dedicated teachers at online schools, while children in specialized programs (already needing a greater amount of attention) will be forced to have a teacher whose attention is unfairly divided. Teachers have told me that this would make meeting the requirements for daily synchronous and asynchronous learning under PPM 164 “impossible” to achieve.

The Board has suggested that the solution lies with live-streaming the in-class learning. However, this has major implications for the privacy of students and families. Under this new direction from OCDSB, we are potentially looking at private moments such as toileting accidents and behavioural flareups being exposed to an audience that could never be guaranteed to be controlled.

The students in these programs are the most at-risk students in the Board. Yet it seems that OCDSB has taken steps that could lead to their challenges being broadcast into the homes of their peers, with whomever is present bearing witness to their most private moments.

This is not fear-mongering or an overstatement, this is the truth as told to me by parents and teachers alike.

On Friday, September 4, 2020 at 9 p.m. I received a surprise call from Education Minister Stephen Lecce and we quickly added his Deputy Minister to the conversation. I explained that Boards need direction, support and funding from the Ministry. I have been invited to provide policy advice on meeting the needs of students and am hopeful that we will see some change on that front in the coming weeks.

However, I am keenly aware that the resumption of school is at hand and that there is

pressure to provide services. Yet, this pressure cannot be met with decisions that overly burden parents or put children at risk. Any discrepancy in the level of learning afforded to children with disabilities, and any policies or procedures that encroach on a student's right to privacy and security, is unacceptable.

I hope that you will join me in searching for solutions that enable teachers to do their jobs and assure parents of children with disabilities that their children matter just as much as any other child. This direction from the Board to all teachers of specialized programs to teach both the in-person and online classes needs to be reversed.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this further with you. I can be reached via email or via mobile at 613.601.1184.

Best,

Claudine



Claudine Santos

DIRECTOR OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS | DIRECTRICE DES AFFAIRES PARLEMENTAIRE

SENATE OF CANADA | SÉNAT DU CANADA

Office of the Hon. Senator Dennis Patterson | Bureau de l'hon. sénateur Dennis Patterson
502-140 rue Wellington Street | Ottawa, ON K1A 0A4

t: 613-996-1839

dennispatterson.ca

