



October 15, 2020

Dear colleagues,

I understand that you are very busy and under a lot of stress right now. I wanted to take a few minutes to update you on a few important issues.

Close daycares and classes

As many of you are parents I know that a huge issue for you right now is having your child's daycare or class closed. Unfortunately, there is no current mechanism for you to be paid for the two weeks that your child is home. However, there are some ways where you can at least be paid for part of the time. You have six sick days that can be used for family responsibilities. In addition, you are entitled to take unpaid days. If you have been teaching with the board for more than five years you may also have sick days in your sick bank. There is also the possibility of accessing some government funding where you would be paid up to \$500 every two weeks for staying home with children, under the CRCB. For more information on this please follow this link:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/news/2020/10/the-government-of-canada-launches-applications-for-the-canada-recovery-sickness-benefit-and-the-canada-recovery-caregiving-benefit.html>

Negotiations information session

On Monday October 19th at 4:00 PM there will be an information session on negotiations and mobilization. This is your chance to have a say in what is happening. Further details were sent out by email yesterday and are also available on the ESTA website. Please note that you must pre-register for the Meeting. The registration link is available in your email, the ESTA website and will be posted on the ESTA Facebook page later today. I look forward to seeing you there.

Survey on cleaning and PPE

Early next week there will be a survey sent to all members concerning cleaning in your building as well as PPE that is available to you. It will be a short survey and should not take long to complete but will provide ESTA with important information on where there are problems that need to be corrected. The deadline for completing the survey will be Friday October 24th. Thank you for your participation.

ESTA executive elections

As you may remember last spring the executive elections were postponed due to school closures. The executive elections will be held in early November. The nomination period will begin at the end of October look for further information in your school.

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Red zones

Fortunately for now all of our schools are in yellow or orange zones. However, there is a chance that this could change. It is important to note that there are changes that will have to be implemented within 48 hours of becoming a red zone. Most importantly is the regulation about secondary four and five students only attending school in the physical building every other day, as this will of course require careful planning on the part of the schools. Additionally, students will either have to eat lunch in their classrooms or in a lunch room where tables are a minimum of two meters apart. This applies to students at all levels. Secondary students will have to wear masks at all times while on school property, except when they're eating or drinking. Staff will be required to wear procedural masks at all times. Keep in mind that these new regulations only apply just schools that are in red zones.

Report cards

Last week the MEES announced that there would only be 2 report cards this year. One to be sent out in January and the other by the beginning of July. Each report card will count for 50% of the school year. A communication must be sent home by mid November. This communication can be the communication that would normally be sent home by October 15th. If your October 15th communication has been completed there is no need to send home an additional communication in November. However, teachers must be available to meet with parents by phone or virtually at some point in November. In order to limit the spread of the virus it is recommended that you not have these meetings in person.

Value added program

ESTA has received your value added requests. They were all reviewed by the ESTA Executive and your school will receive information on your requests next week. Some requests had to have the category adjusted. For the most part all requests were approved. However there were a few requests that did not fit within the current covid parameters and therefore had to be refused. Next week each school will receive a letter with all details pertaining to the requests from their school in. In cases where categories had to be changed it is important that when you fill out the paperwork in April you use the category indicated by the executive. If you have any questions once you have received your letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

A quick reminder that I am available to you in the afternoons. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact myself or your school delegate. Keep in mind that I cannot fix problems that I am not aware of. Continue taking care of yourselves and your families and stay safe!

Best wishes,
Gillian O'Rourke-Garrett
ESTA President