



Mark Fisher, Director of Education and Secretary

2021 October 5

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
438 University Avenue, 5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2A5

Dear Minister Lecce:

This is a letter to inform you of a motion approved by Trustees of the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) at its September 8th, 2021, regular meeting of the board. The motion relates to the provision of Health Canada approved respirators for daily Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) use:

"The Minister provide to all education staff Health Canada approved respirators for daily PPE use. That Education staff that obtain their own Health Canada approved respirators be permitted to wear these in the workplace, provided staff follow the application and removal guidelines stipulated by the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS). Staff will continue to be supplied with the Ministry approved PPE."

Thames Valley is committed to the health and safety of staff, students and families. Working with our local public health units we continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation, including ongoing risks related to the incidence of variants of concern (VOCs), and adjust our health and safety procedures as necessary.

As stated in the Ministry's COVID 19: Health, Safety and Operational Guidance for Schools 2021-22, there is not one specific measure that will prevent transmission from occurring in schools, but rather there are multiple elements that contribute to making schools healthier spaces and reduce the risk of infection to in-person attendees.

According to the World Health Organization, properly fitting respirators filter out at least 95% of particles in the air, including large and small particles, and provides the wearer with a more reliable level of protection as compared to medical face masks.

As such, providing education staff with Health Canada approved respirators for daily PPE use would increase staff and student safety and help keep our schools open to in-person learning. We are committed to training and supporting staff in the proper fit and use of respirators should they wish to wear them as part of their PPE.

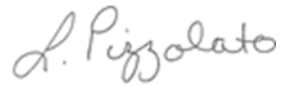
Thames Valley District School Board - Office of the Chairperson

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We build each student's tomorrow, every day.

We appreciate the extraordinary costs brought on by the pandemic and would appreciate the Ministry adding respirators to the list of provided PPE equipment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L. Pizzolato".

Lori-Ann Pizzolato, Chair
Thames Valley District School Board

cc Trustees
M. Fisher, Director of Education