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## Memo #15

Date: December 28, 2020

To: Members

Re: **Ministry Announcements for January**

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### **Ministry Announcements for January**

With last weeks announcements, the Ford Government again illustrated that it will seize any opportunity it can to disregard the work of education workers in this Province. Making education announcements on the first two days of a much needed and deserved Christmas Break heightened stress and anxiety and caused worry and anger on the very days that Teachers across this Province were beginning to exhale. All indications were that the Ministry was planning an announcement in advance of the break. There was no reason this announcement could not have been made prior to the break commencing. While making the announcement, the Premier indicated that the break would be extended until January 11th. This is false. Provided below are the key elements of the announcement regarding school closures:

- Elementary and secondary school students province-wide will participate in remote learning from January 4-January 8, 2021. In-person instruction will not be permitted during this period.
- Elementary school students can return to in-person learning on January 11, 2021 - unless extended by the provincial government.
- Secondary school students will continue learning remotely until January 25, 2021, at which point they can resume in-person learning.
- Remote learning will be provided for all students in alignment with [Policy/Program Memorandum \(PPM\) No.164: Requirements for Remote Learning](#). Synchronous learning is part of the 300-minute instructional day during which teachers **remain available** to students. Educators should use their professional judgement to provide some flexibility to students on an individual basis when students are unable to participate in synchronous learning.

Questions remain regarding students with special education needs as the memo indicates:

Boards must also ensure that plans are in place to support students with special education

needs to learn remotely that leverage the capacity of education workers and board professionals (e.g. behavioural experts, speech language pathologists, and other professionals) to support remote learning [...] boards will be required to make provisions for in-person support for students with special education needs who cannot be accommodated through remote learning based on student needs.

Additionally clarity is also required regarding access to school/work locations - specifically, are teachers able to report to their work location to engage students in remote learning? The Board believes there may be further information coming from the Ministry, and teachers should anticipate further communication from the Board this week.

We hope to meet with the Board this week to seek clarification and discuss options. Further information will be provided later in the week.

If you have any concerns, please contact the Unit office at 705-733-9625 or 1 800 558 4815