

Memo #15

Date: February 1, 2022

To: Members

Re: **Booster Disclosure; Posting Asynchronous Work; March Break Travel Message: OTIP News**

Booster Disclosure

We have received some questions about the Board's January 21st email to all staff titled: COVID-19 Booster Shot Attestations

The Ministry of Education required school boards to update the vaccination status of their staff.

However, the board's message does state:

We are now requiring all staff to update their Vaccination Attestations to include any boosters you may have received.

The word "may" implies that the booster is not a requirement - at this point in time - for education workers, and therefore there is no requirement to receive your booster and/or update your status.

Posting Asynchronous Work

When teachers and students returned to in-person learning on January 17th, the Board put in place Temporary Online Learning Support where teachers would post asynchronous work to their Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and then those students accessing the asynchronous work would be able to access "live" teacher support at two separate times (of an hour and a half in length) each day.

As of Monday, January 31st, the Temporary Online Learning Support has stopped, but the Board is still requiring teachers to post asynchronous work to their VLE.

We have heard from a number of teachers about the extra work and the added stress and anxiety. We have had a number of conversations with the Board (and OECTA Provincial), but the direction from the Ministry is that teachers should be maintaining their VLE. In other Catholic units across the province that don't have the Hybrid model, their teachers are expected to post asynchronous work to their VLE.

Following our discussions with the Board, I can share the following pieces of advice:

- Post minimal work
 - Keep it simple
- Don't try to recreate work from the day (face-to-face)
 - Creating work that simulates what was done F2F
- No requirement to communicate with students at home during the school/work day or after the school/work day

The goal is to not create a third option of learning, and by providing multiple pieces of work, and support, will only encourage families to keep their children at home, and possibly more to stay home.

We understand the extra work and stress and anxiety, and the wish that OECTA would shut this down. As stated above, this is a province-wide/Ministry driven directive, but what was not provided by

the Ministry was what subjects to be posted, how much work to be posted, etc. You are in charge of your VLE, use your professional judgment and ease your stress levels.

If you are being asked by your administration about the type or amount of work you are posting, please feel free to get in touch with the Unit Office. Principals are only asking because parents are contacting them. They have been provided the same information you have, but instead of supporting you, they are trying to get parents to stop contacting them - which is not a great strategy.

March Break Travel Message

Members should be aware that on December 15th the Federal Government issued a global travel advisory cautioning Canadians to "Avoid non-essential travel outside Canada, regardless of your vaccination status."

The Government of Canada travel information website is linked [here](#).

Members should be cautious when considering out-of-country, non-essential travel plans over the March Break. There is no guarantee that the employer will grant access to paid leave in the event that you fall ill, test positive, or are required to quarantine as a result of being selected for random border screening.

We have discussed this with OECTA Provincial, and they have obtained a legal opinion on this topic:

Boards wouldn't have to pay teachers if they needed to quarantine after non-essential travel especially if there were advisories about travel or if there was any direction about not traveling. "An arbitrator looking at that is going to conclude that if you ignore that advice that is your choice but you don't get paid. If it is not essential travel as defined, an arbitrator is likely to find that the appropriate balance is that you can go but you just don't get paid if you have to quarantine."

At this point, there hasn't been a change to the Government of Canada travel information, and the Board has not provided any direction.

OTIP News

Leasing vs. buying a car: What's best for me?

Both leasing and buying have their benefits and drawbacks, so the right choice all depends on your budget, driving needs and lifestyle. We've outlined some of the key factors to consider when deciding between leasing versus buying your next vehicle to help you determine which option is best for you. Read more at www.otip.com/article135.

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