

October 23, 2020

The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
5th Floor
438 University Ave
Toronto, ON
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Dear Minister Lecce,

I am writing today to support the letter you received from the Halton District School Board regarding the need for rapid COVID-19 testing.

Increased testing and rapid results are vital to keeping COVID-19 from spreading in our schools and broader communities. Families need to be able to access a testing facility and their results quicker than the current timelines.

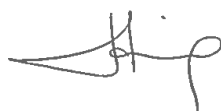
Last month, in Waterloo Region, our drive-through testing facility reached capacity by 7:30 am. Families started to line up in the middle of the night to get tested. The demand for testing was so high our local hospital had to close the testing centre because the staff were experiencing harassment and threatening behaviour.

Recent changes to priorities on who should receive testing have helped with our local testing capacity. However, families are still waiting for extended periods of time for results. This lag in receiving results can extend the time spent away from the classroom and for parents or guardians out of the workplace while they wait for results.

Convenient and easy access to rapid testing would alleviate these issues in our community and across the province. We must work together to keep our students in schools and give families the ability to go to work. Please consider the Waterloo Region District School Board if any pilot programs for rapid testing are in need of participants.

Trustees of the Waterloo Region District School Board and the Halton District School Board urge you to make rapid COVID-19 testing a priority in Ontario.

Sincerely,



Jayne Herring
Chairperson of the Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board

CC:
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