

March 10, 2022

Alexander Brown  
Chair  
Toronto District School Board  
5050 Yonge Street  
Toronto ON M2N 5N8

Dear Alexander Brown and TDSB Trustees:

I am writing on behalf of the Elementary Teachers of Toronto to express alarm at the Minister of Education's announcement that mask mandates will end in Ontario's Public Schools effective March 21st.

While the waning of the winter COVID-19 surge is a welcome development, the zeal with which the Minister of Education announced to immediately revoke mask mandates is being met with significant trepidation and concern by both educators and parents alike. COVID cases are certainly on the decline, but we are not yet out of the woods, and the yet unknown implications of the nascent surge in the BA.2 sub-variant should give the TDSB pause.

In light of this reality, and in response to this government decision, a host of scientific and medical experts have lined up to oppose the government's announcement and to urge a delay in eliminating mask mandates in schools, including the CEO of SickKids, Dr. Ronald Cohn; Chief Medical Officer of Canada, Dr. Theresa Tam; and the head of Ontario's Science Table, Dr. Peter Juni.

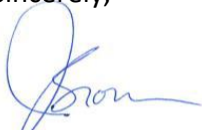
Against the backdrop of this expert medical advice, it is hard not to question the motivation and timing of the provincial government's announcement. With an impending provincial election, sadly, it appears that they are prepared to sacrifice the gains of the last few months on the altar of political expediency.

We hope that TDSB Trustees will take a more cautious and responsible approach.

Out of an abundance of caution and in the interests of good governance, the Elementary Teachers of Toronto implores the TDSB to maintain mask mandates in all schools until it is deemed safe to do otherwise by medical experts.

Throughout this pandemic, the TDSB has not been afraid to take positions that differ from the provincial government. On this critical issue, we expect no less, and we look forward to TDSB Trustees making the right decision for all educators, parents, and students.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Brown  
President

JB/dd