



**Public Health  
Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

May 28, 2021

VIA EMAIL [Premier@ontario.ca](mailto:Premier@ontario.ca)

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford:

**Re: Return to in-person learning in Ontario – Premier's consultation**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the question of a return to in-person learning in Ontario.

As the local Medical Officer of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts, I am most qualified to comment on the region I serve.

Locally, I issued a letter of instruction under the Reopening Ontario Act, requiring area schools to transition to remote learning effective March 15, 2021. I did this after careful consideration of our local COVID-19 epidemiology, public health and health care system capacity and consultations with area Directors of Education. The decision was a difficult but obvious one: we no longer had the capacity to maintain in-person learning and the health risks outweighed the many benefits of learning face to face.

Our area is in a vastly different situation now with COVID-19 seven-day case incidence rates of under 10 per 100,000, public health system and hospital capacity much improved, and a vaccination rate that is on track with provincial goals.

I fully support a return to in-person learning and the comments and conclusions of the May 20, 2021 letter to you from the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health and the Hospital for Sick Children.

**Sudbury**

1300 rue Paris Street  
Sudbury ON P3E 3A3  
t: 705.522.9200  
f: 705.522.5182

**Elm Place**

10 rue Elm Street  
Unit / Unité 130  
Sudbury ON P3C 5N3  
t: 705.522.9200  
f: 705.677.9611

**Sudbury East / Sudbury-Est**

1 rue King Street  
Box / Boîte 58  
St.-Charles ON P0M 2W0  
t: 705.222.9201  
f: 705.867.0474

**Espanola**

800 rue Centre Street  
Unit / Unité 100 C  
Espanola ON P5E 1J3  
t: 705.222.9202  
f: 705.869.5583

**Île Manitoulin Island**

6163 Highway / Route 542  
Box / Boîte 87  
Mindemoya ON P0P 1S0  
t: 705.370.9200  
f: 705.377.5580

**Chapleau**

34 rue Birch Street  
Box / Boîte 485  
Chapleau ON P0M 1K0  
t: 705.860.9200  
f: 705.864.0820

**toll-free / sans frais**

1.866.522.9200

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Public Health Sudbury & Districts is prepared to support schools to transition as quickly as possible to in-person learning and to lead effective case and contact management should COVID-19 cases emerge in our schools in the month of June.

Thank you again for this opportunity and for the tireless hours you and your team are dedicating to the health and wellness of all Ontarians.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

Dr. Penny Sutcliffe

Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

cc: R. Lapierre, Chair, Board of Health, Public Health Sudbury & Districts  
Dr. P. Roumeliotis, Chair, Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health  
J. B nard, Director of Education, Sudbury Catholic District School Board  
N. Blaseg, Director of Education, Rainbow District School Board  
M. Gauthier, Director of Education, Conseil scolaire public du Grand Nord de l’Ontario  
P. Henry, Director of Education, Conseil scolaire catholique du Nouvel-Ontario