

Ministry of Education

Minister

315 Front Street West
Toronto ON M7A 0B8

Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

315, rue Front Ouest
Toronto ON M7A 0B8



December 10, 2021

Dear Ontario Parents,

Nothing is more important than the safety of Ontario's children. Thanks to the combined efforts of students, school and public health staff and parents – supported by high rates of vaccination – we have increasingly made our schools safer for in-person learning.

In-person learning is critically important for the mental and physical health of our young people. To promote a safer return to school in January, our government is adding another layer of protection for our children by distributing a total of 11 million take-home rapid antigen screening test kits to all public and interested private and First Nation schools. This means that if your child has been learning in-person, they will receive a kit of five rapid antigen tests for use over the holidays leading into the return to in-person learning in January 2022.

It is recommended that students conduct rapid antigen tests every three to four days over the holiday break, beginning December 23, until all five tests have been used. These tests are simple, safe, easy to use, and allow you to know the outcome within 15 minutes. Please view [this video](#) to learn more about at-home rapid antigen testing. This video will also be available in 15 other languages as of Monday, December 13. Participation in this rapid antigen testing program is entirely voluntary, but we know that rapid antigen testing is another way that we can help limit the spread of COVID-19 and support a safer return to school after the holidays.

Students should only use these tests if they are asymptomatic (they do not have any symptoms of COVID-19) and have not been exposed to a confirmed case. Anyone who has symptoms, or is identified as a close contact of a case, should follow public health advice and get a [PCR test for COVID-19](#). While testing is important, vaccines remain our best defence and eligible Ontarians aged 5 and up can [book a COVID-19 vaccination appointment now](#).

This Christmas and holiday season, I encourage you to safely enjoy your time with family and friends so that we can continue to keep schools open for students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Lecce'.

Hon. Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kieran Moore'.

Dr. Kieran Moore
Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health