

Ministry of Education

Minister

315 Front Street West
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Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

315, rue Front Ouest
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Dear parents,

For the first time in nearly a generation, our government successfully negotiated agreements with all teachers' unions and averted strikes in schools. This allowed us to deliver on our promise to parents to bring stability to classrooms and keep kids in class.

As kids benefit from three more years of uninterrupted learning, I have heard from many of you, teachers and students alike, about concerns about the alarming rise of youth vaping in schools and the persistent use of cellphones as a distraction from learning in class.

That is why we are rolling out Canada's most comprehensive plan to counter these threats.

To help reduce distractions in our schools, starting this September, we are denying cellphone usage during instructional time so that students can focus on getting back to basics and learning foundational skills like reading, writing and math.

Our youngest learners in kindergarten to Grade 6, who may have phones, will now be required to keep phones on silent and out of sight for the duration of the day.

For students in Grades 7 to 12, phones can be with the student. However, they will only be permitted during instructional time if explicitly allowed by the educator.

We will also commit to having report cards include comments on students' distraction levels in class. We recognize that some parents want to communicate with their children during school, and the policies listed above will still permit that during non-instructional time or when an educator gives permission.

When it comes to cellphones, Ontario's policy is: out of sight and out of mind.

We are also removing social media websites from all school networks and devices to help strengthen in-

parents on how best to manage this change. I encourage you to read the updated [Provincial Code of Conduct](#) that outlines these changes.

No matter how strong the policy is, we can't do this alone.

To truly change behaviour, we are asking for your support and collaboration to hold conversations at home about the new expectations and the importance of respecting school staff and the rules as we head into September.

Change will come when we all work together and stand by teachers, principals, and education workers as they implement these new measures. Your co-operation will help ensure students can get back to basics, focus on their studies, and prepare for the jobs of tomorrow.