

Continuation of emergency remote learning a disservice to Ontario students

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The announcement that the government is forcing all school boards to implement emergency remote learning for the next school year is irresponsible and makes no sense. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) supports a cautious approach to public health measures, especially for this school year, but Doug Ford needs to answer why this government is not planning to get all students back to in-person learning in September.

“The government cannot be allowed to equate remote learning with the instruction that students receive in-person in the public education system,” said ETFO President Karen Brown. “It is the government’s responsibility to create a safe learning environment for all students in schools, but instead of making necessary adjustments, they continue to stretch education resources and put added pressure on school boards, teachers, and education workers by requiring them to provide online learning in the coming school year.”

ETFO firmly believes that in-person learning is the best, most equitable way for students to learn. Instead of extending the reach of online learning in our public schools, ETFO calls on the government to implement the systemic changes required to create safe learning environments inside all Ontario’s schools, including smaller class sizes, adequate supports for students and special education students in particular, ventilation improvements, and a commitment to in-person learning for all students.

Remote learning, implemented as an emergency measure during a global pandemic, should not be a continued option for the future. It does nothing but further exacerbate the inequities that exist across our province, as a result of poor decisions made by this government.

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