

November 13, 2020

**Memorandum To:** Directors of Education  
School Authorities  
Principals of Private Schools  
Principals of First Nation/Federally Operated Schools

**From:** Jeff Butler  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Student Support and Field Services Branch

**Subject:** Ontario K-12 readiness to welcome international students

I am writing today to provide an update on requirements for welcoming students to Ontario from outside of Canada for the 2020-21 school year.

Ontario has been participating in ongoing discussions with the federal government on how to confirm and support school boards' readiness to welcome international students that hold study permits issued under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Canada). In July, the federal government issued some guidance and direction and on August 7, 2020, the Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health, received a letter from Health Canada setting out further requirements to be met by Designated Learning Institutions (DLIs) in order to welcome these students.

The direction from Health Canada required that some additional criteria be demonstrated as part of plans for schools, and that both provincial and local public health authorities have a role in determining whether schools are ready to accept students from outside Canada.

In order to meet federal requirements, the ministry sent a memo on August 28, 2020, and a follow-up memo on October 9, 2020, informing that school boards and private schools intending to accept international students with study permits must have plans in place that include specific details about how they will meet the provincial and federal criteria to demonstrate readiness.

Please note that Immigration, Refugees, Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has recently clarified that they are not requiring provinces and territories to submit the names of individual private schools and school boards whose quarantine and operational plans have been approved by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and local public health units. **Instead, IRCC is seeking confirmation of sector-wide readiness from provinces/territories of their respective K-12 sectors. As such, Ontario has indicated to the federal government that our K-12 sector is ready to receive international students.**

However, any school boards or private schools that receive students from outside of Canada must continue to adhere to all federal and provincial requirements. In addition,

in order to accept international students for in-class instruction, a school board/private school must have a COVID-19 plan that has been approved by the Minister of Education. School boards/private schools with an approved plan will be listed on the [provincial list of schools](#) that may accept students who hold a study permit issued under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada)* for in-person instruction in 2020-21.

Please note that amendments to regulations under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020*, have recently been made which require that a private or public school operates in accordance with a COVID-19 plan that has been approved by the Minister of Education in order to provide in-person instruction for students who entered Canada on or after November 17 with a study permit. Any schools that do not comply may be subject to fines or other penalties under the Act.

The amended regulations are available on e-laws.

- <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r20642>
- <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r20641>

Please note the following:

- Schools that have not yet submitted their plans to the ministry and wish to accept international students with study permits for in-class instruction, are required to submit to the ministry the attached **completed and signed attestation**, along with their readiness plan to [international.education@ontario.ca](mailto:international.education@ontario.ca).
- Schools that have already submitted their plans but have not yet received approval, are encouraged, but not required, to submit the attached completed and signed attestation, in order to streamline the approval process.
- Schools that do not wish to enroll international students for in-class instruction in the 2020-21 school year, are not required to submit a plan/attestation to the ministry.

Any questions regarding the above should be directed to [international.education@ontario.ca](mailto:international.education@ontario.ca).

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of all students and staff in Ontario.

Jeff Butler  
Assistant Deputy Minister

c: Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)