

# Important ETFO Update #10: Responding to COVID-19

June 26, 2020

In Update #10 on COVID-19 related issues, you will find further information on: Employment Insurance; new math curriculum; student mental health; and anti-racism tools.

Keep reading, stay safe, and please wash your hands!

**Need a refresher on ETFO's most recent COVID-19 update?**

[Download a PDF version of FAQ update #9](#)

**Stay informed at [etfo.ca/link/covid19](https://etfo.ca/link/covid19)**

## Frequently Asked Questions

**I usually apply for Employment Insurance in the summer. Can I apply this year?**

Occasional members (DECE/ESP/PSP members) may apply for Employment Insurance (EI) through Service Canada as usual this year. Once approved, they will automatically be moved to CERB. Bi-weekly reports will still need to be filled out. Once the CERB entitlement ends, members will automatically be transitioned back onto their EI claim if they have not returned to full-time work.

The number of hours to qualify for EI have been reduced as they are calculated based on regional unemployment rates. A search by postal code can be done on the [Service Canada website](https://srv129.services.gc.ca/ei_regions/eng/postalcode_search.aspx) [https://srv129.services.gc.ca/ei\_regions/eng/postalcode\_search.aspx] to determine the number of hours needed in a member's region.

The CERB program has been extended to allow for two more 4-week periods of entitlement, for a total of six 4-week periods. If a member does not have enough hours to qualify for EI, they may still qualify for CERB. The details of qualifying factors and how it applies to various scenarios are outlined on the [Government of Canada website](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html) [https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html]. The eight week

extension of CERB specifically allows applicants to receive the benefit if they are out of work due to COVID-19 or are eligible for EI or have exhausted an EI claim between December 29, 2019 and October 3, 2020.

Members who are unsure if their individual circumstances will allow them to qualify for EI or CERB over the summer should reach out to Service Canada.

### **With so much uncertainty, how can I prepare to teach mathematics in the fall given the new math curriculum?**

Member should familiarize themselves with the [government's new math curriculum](https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum/elementary-mathematics) [https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum/elementary-mathematics] and get new information for the grade or grades they teach. There are new strands including Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Skills in Mathematics and the Mathematical Processes, and Financial Literacy. Some strands, like measurement and geometry, combine to become Spatial Sense. Former strands like Number Sense and Numeration, Patterning and Algebra and Data Management and Probability become Number, Algebra and Data. Coding is now introduced in grade 1. With these changes, members should review what current resources they have to teach the material and what can be modified to match the revisions. Supports and professional learning to help learn and program for this revised curriculum will be coming from school boards, administration consultants and/or administration.

The government has released some [initial resources](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/math.html). [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/math.html] on the new curriculum. It is also planning to offer webinars commencing on August 19 for those who are interested and wish to participate. Participation is voluntary. ETFO, along with the other affiliates, continue to lobby for a deferral of the implementation of the new curriculum until September 2021.

ETFO is also advocating for textbooks, professional learning and ongoing support for the implementation of the new math curriculum. Introducing a new curriculum **requires** time to become fully familiar with the content and to determine instructional strategies. The ministry of education has indicated that teacher training will be available but no specific details have been shared to date.

### **Will there be more ETFO FAQs related to health and safety about school reopening?**

Yes. ETFO is undertaking an analysis of the Ministry of Education's guidelines on reopening schools. Preliminary advice has been shared with local leaders and health and safety representatives to assist them in discussions with school boards. For more information on topics related to COVID-19, please visit [ETFO Health and Safety Infection Prevention and Control](https://etfohealthandsafety.ca/site/infection-prevention-and-control/) [etfohealthandsafety.ca/site/infection-prevention-and-control/] and the [Workers Health and Safety Centre COVID-19-Resources](https://whsc.on.ca/Resources/Publications/COVID-19-Resources) [whsc.on.ca/Resources/Publications/COVID-19-Resources].

## **Will DECEs be included in the Kindergarten Classroom in September if there are only 15 students allowed onsite due to COVID issues?**

Yes, the educator model of a teacher and a DECE will continue in Kindergarten classrooms in September in accordance with the central agreement provisions. The Ministry has confirmed that the actual class size will include all students on the register, not just those who are physically on site for learning on alternate days or alternate weeks.

## **How can members support student mental health with the proposed return to school in September?**

Members will have to plan curriculum while anticipating learning communities that may be virtual, in-class or a combination of both. Parents will have to consider child care options as they return to work while students will have to adapt to new ways of learning in classrooms that may look very different.

Members should prioritize their own [mental health](#) [etfo.ca/SupportingMembers/Employees/PRSMattersBulletin/Pages/Member%20Mental%20Health.aspx] as they navigate the 'new normal'. In planning for September, members can embed mental health strategies to ease student anxieties with the following resources:

- [School Mental Health Ontario](https://smho-smso.ca/covid-19/educators/) [https://smho-smso.ca/covid-19/educators/];
- Black Emotional and Mental Health ([B.E.A.M.](https://www.beam.community/tool-kits-education)), [ https://www.beam.community/tool-kits-education] an American resource that has useful tips to support Black students; and
- Canadian Mental Health Association Resources to [Support Indigenous Students](https://ontario.cmha.ca/documents/mental-health-and-wellness-services-for-indigenous-children-and-youth/). [https://ontario.cmha.ca/documents/mental-health-and-wellness-services-for-indigenous-children-and-youth/]

ETFO resources to support student mental health include:

- [Everyday Mental Health Resources](http://www.etfo.ca/supportingmembers/resources/pages/everydaymentalhealthresource.aspx) [http://www.etfo.ca/supportingmembers/resources/pages/everydaymentalhealthresource.aspx];and
- The webinar: [Student Mental Health in partnership with School Mental Health Ontario](https://etfo.adobeconnect.com/_a826516892/pmsnqq2vqmo/?proto=true)

[https://etfo.adobeconnect.com/\_a826516892/pmsnqq2vqmo/?proto=true]

## **What anti-racism tools can members use to address the significant rise in racism that has impacted some marginalized communities?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated historical and societal disparities of class, race and gender. In particular, systemic racism and an increase in racist attitudes and behaviours towards Asians and people of Asian descent have impacted the health, well-being and safety of educators, students, families and communities. As schools re-

open, members need to be empathetic to the realities that their colleagues, students and families are facing.

Educators can continue to be pro-active and intentional in addressing racist and discriminatory incidents through curricular intervention and responsive strategies. Members can challenge racism and support inclusive spaces by:

- listening to the experiences of marginalized groups;
- learning about the resources that your school board, local communities and ETFO offer to support anti-racism and anti-oppression education;
- exploring the role of bias and how it shapes stereotypes;
- engaging in essential and age-appropriate conversations with students about race, gender and other identities;
- encouraging diverse perspectives in learning communities;
- courageously engaging in uncomfortable discussions about race, racism and other issues of oppression with school staff, administrators, parents and communities; and
- learning about the challenges certain marginalized communities have experienced during this challenging time.

ETFO resources include:

[White Privilege Lesson Plans](http://www.etfo.ca/SupportingMembers/Resources/Pages/White%20Privilege%20Lesson%20Plans.aspx)

[<http://www.etfo.ca/SupportingMembers/Resources/Pages/White%20Privilege%20Lesson%20Plans.aspx>]

[Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy](https://shop.etfo.ca/products/91-179)

[<https://shop.etfo.ca/products/91-179>]

[365 Black Canadian Curriculum](http://www.etfo.ca/supportingmembers/resources/pages/365.aspx)

[<http://www.etfo.ca/supportingmembers/resources/pages/365.aspx>]

[Black Canadian Calendar](http://www.etfo.ca/supportingmembers/resources/pages/blackcanadiancal.aspx)

<http://www.etfo.ca/supportingmembers/resources/pages/blackcanadiancal.aspx>

[Social Justice, Equity and Environmental Calendar](http://www.etfo.ca/BuildingAJustSociety/EquityResources/Pages/SJEEcal.aspx)

[<http://www.etfo.ca/BuildingAJustSociety/EquityResources/Pages/SJEEcal.aspx>]

[Asian Heritage Month Resources](http://etfo.ca/buildingajustsociety/equityresources/pages/asianheritagemonth.aspx)

[[etfo.ca/buildingajustsociety/equityresources/pages/asianheritagemonth.aspx](http://etfo.ca/buildingajustsociety/equityresources/pages/asianheritagemonth.aspx)]

[Virtual Professional Learning Recorded Webinars and Resources Related to Equity](http://www.etfo.ca/SupportingMembers/ProfLearning/Pages/distancelearning.aspx#/)

[<http://www.etfo.ca/SupportingMembers/ProfLearning/Pages/distancelearning.aspx#/>] that include recorded webinars on anti-Black racism, COVID-19 equity issues, how to start a GSA during remote learning, ETFO FNMI resources and more.

## Resources and Financial Support Links

[Apply for the Provincial Child Benefit](#). Eligible parents will receive \$200 for children up to 12 and \$250 for children with special needs up to age 21.

[Apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit Program](#)  
[Learn more about the CERB at etfo.ca/link/FAQ-CERB](https://etfo.ca/link/FAQ-CERB)

[COVID-19 Self-assessment Tools](#) tool to determine what steps you should take should you exhibit symptoms.

For updates, please check ETFO's dedicate webpage at [etfo.ca/link/covid19](https://etfo.ca/link/covid19)