

Ministry of Education

Ministère de l'Éducation

Capital and Business Support
Division

Division du soutien aux
immobilisations et aux affaires

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2022:B06

Date: February 22, 2022

Memorandum to: Directors of Education
Senior Business Officials
Secretary/Treasurers of School Authorities

From: Didem Proulx
Assistant Deputy Minister of Education
Capital and Business Support Division

Subject 40,000 Additional Standalone HEPA Filter Units

Thank you for your continued collaboration with the ministry to improve ventilation and filtration in schools as part of our collective efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 so that we can keep children learning in-person. With various measures implemented across all schools, there have been significant improvements made as a result of the sustained focus and work in this area.

Since August 2020, the government has provided over \$600 million in federal and provincial funding to improve ventilation and filtration in schools, resulting in improvements to existing ventilation systems, deployment of over 70,000 standalone HEPA filter units and other ventilation devices, upgrades to school ventilation infrastructure and increased transparency for students, parents and staff.

Acting on the advice of medical and public health experts, including Public Health Ontario, Sick Kids Hospital, and Ontario's Science Advisory Table, standalone HEPA filter units were first prioritized for learning spaces without mechanical ventilation and in all kindergarten classrooms.

The ministry is now moving forward with the next phase, which will allocate HEPA units for **mechanically ventilated schools** that have systems that can only operate using lower-rated MERV filters in their mechanical ventilation systems and **not able to use MERV 13 rated filters**.

At the end of December, the ministry announced an additional 3,000 standalone HEPA filter units for school boards through the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services.

Based on information provided by school boards about the type of ventilation and placement of HEPA units in schools, the ministry announced yesterday an additional 40,000 HEPA filter units for school boards to deploy to mechanically ventilated learning spaces without MERV 13 filters.

To support deployment of the additional units, the ministry has notionally allocated these units to school boards and school authorities. These allocations reflect that school boards are implementing strategies that respond to the diverse ventilation needs in schools across the province, e.g., some boards have already deployed HEPA filter units in learning spaces with mechanical ventilation.

We have pre-populated information in the attached and are requesting that you review the information in your relevant row and confirm or correct:

- Number of additional (net) HEPA units required to cover all occupied learning spaces, including classrooms, portables, gyms, libraries and lunchrooms **with mechanical ventilation** but **without MERV-13 filters** that **do not already have HEPA units**
- Central **delivery location details**

Please note that child care operators had the opportunity to provide information about their additional HEPA filter unit needs to the Early Years and Child Care Division of the Ministry of Education.

Once these additional units are deployed in schools the ministry will request that school boards provide updated school-level information on HEPA filter unit deployment.

Finally, a reminder that last week's announcement of 2022-23 school year Grants for Student Needs funding included an additional 3.15 per cent cost update to the non-staff portion of the School Operations Allocation benchmark to support the increased costs related to the need to run ventilation systems longer and replace filters more frequently.

Please submit the confirmed/corrected spreadsheet by Wednesday, March 2, 2022 and direct any questions to CAPITAL.POLICYBRANCH@ontario.ca.

Thank you.

Didem Proulx
Assistant Deputy Minister

Attachment: HEPA Filter Unit Allocation Confirmation

C: Executive Director, Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO)
Executive Director, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
Executive Director, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
Executive Director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
General Secretary, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
General Secretary, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
Chair, Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW)
Chair, Education Workers' Alliance of Ontario (EWAO)
Co-ordinator, Canadian Union of Public Employees – Ontario (CUPE-ON)
Executive Director, Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes (ADFO)
Executive Director, Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO)
Executive Director, Ontario Principals' Council (OPC)
Ontario Association of School Business Officials
Facilities Managers