



NEWS

Teacher union president takes issue with minister's training statement

Trillium Lakelands OSSTF's Colin Matthew 'strongly objects' to school board sharing letter in which Stephen Lecce claims all educators received mandatory training for online teaching

By [Catherine Whitnall](#) Kawartha Lakes This Week
Friday, January 8, 2021

Trillium Lakelands secondary school union president Colin Matthew is not only offended by a statement made by the province's Minister of Education but 'strongly objects' to the school board repeating it to parents.

Matthew takes issue with Stephen Lecce's statement in a province-wide letter -

shared verbatim with parents of students by the Trillium Lakelands District School Board - that "every teacher in this province received mandatory training on remote learning, before the school year began."

"This comment by the Minister is demonstrably false. No such mandatory training occurred," said Matthew adding the school board has done an excellent job assisting educators with transitions from in-school to online. "But I think it's irresponsible to repeat a statement that isn't true. What Lecce is saying, simply did not happen."

Matthew notes that teachers hired specifically for distance learning did receive training where necessary. The delayed start to the school year facilitated this between Sept. 8 and 11, he said. Teachers were also "directed" to have some type of online resource available in the event it was needed, but that's not the same as training; voluntary or otherwise.

Many have opted to use the Google Classroom platform, but an unexpected problem arose when the province chose to extend the holiday break; local in-class elementary students return to school Jan. 11 with high school students returning Jan. 25.

Headlines newsletter

Top stories delivered to your inbox.

[Sign Up](#)

Teachers can't do attendance using Google Classroom. It requires an extra plug-in which costs money, said Matthew. There is also no feature provided for compiling marks. Staff have been doing both manually.

"I don't blame the board on this. This is the responsibility of a Ministry that seems to only react when it wants to," said Matthew, noting the summer break was the perfect time to address gaps but the province "squandered" the opportunity. "It's working for the time being because teachers are making it work. All of these problems have solutions. They just cost money."

Trillium Lakelands director of education Wesley Hahn notes the board's success in pivoting lays in people, not dollars.

“When I look at what we’ve done with the money that the province has given us and our own reserves, we’re making it work,” said Hahn. “This isn’t the model of learning that any of us want to be in right now. But kids are learning and, if teachers need support, we’ve been able to provide it.”

Catherine Whitnall is a reporter with MyKawartha. She can be reached at cwhitnall@mykawartha.com. Follow her on [Twitter](#) and MyKawartha on [Facebook](#)

Tags: [Hyper Local](#), [Human Interest](#), [News](#)

REPORT AN
ERROR

JOURNALISTI
C STANDARDS

ABOUT US

You might be interested in



NEWS

OPP search for suspect after items stolen from vehicles near Peterborough

On Dec. 29, 2020 members of the Peterborough County OPP were called to investigate a theft incident which allegedly occurred at a residence on Parkhill Road East. On Dec. 18, 2020 at approximately 4 a.m., the suspect entered three unlocked vehicle

24 minutes ago

NEWS

Kawartha Lakes OPP make impaired arrests over weekend

31 minutes ago



NEWS

Norwood man arrested after child luring investigation

54 minutes ago

