

## **CPCO Statement on the Premier's Announcement Regarding the Remainder of the School Year**

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

TORONTO, Ontario, June 3, 2021 – The Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO) understands the government's decision not to reopen schools for face-to-face learning after the Ministry consulted with public health experts and education stakeholders.

"In response to the Premier's May 27, 2021, letter to education stakeholders and the medical community, CPCO reiterated its position that the safety and physical and mental well-being of students, administration and education workers remain our primary concern," said Blaine MacDougall, CPCO President. "However, when considering the different impacts COVID-19 has had on the diverse regions of our large province, CPCO has advocated for a more regional approach to reopening schools. CPCO also welcomes the efforts to accelerate the rate of immunization over the summer for students, administrators and education workers, and has strongly advocated this to CPCO members. This will help ensure a safe return to the classroom in September."

CPCO members will continue their unwavering commitment to implement mental health and learning support plans prior to the summer break. This will allow students to be well supported prior to the end of the school year and better prepared when they return to the classroom in September. For students attending special education programs, Catholic school Principals and Vice-Principals will continue to make every effort to ensure that the recommended protocols and measures are in place to keep them safe.

In regards to outdoor graduations, CPCO believes that it will be very difficult to hold outdoor graduation ceremonies before the end of June. With just a few weeks left in the school year, schools have already made plans to celebrate their graduates in consultation with and using guidance provided by local public health units. These plans have already been approved by school boards and an attempt to pivot from them, while social distancing restrictions are still in place, is impractical and unrealistic at this point in the year.

CPCO continues to work with government and all education partners to provide constructive solutions that support administrators in their efforts to create a safe learning and working environment for all members of their educational community.

- 30 -

*CPCO represents 2,100 Catholic Principals and Vice-Principals, who lead over 1,300 schools in 29 Catholic district school boards in Ontario.*

### **For more information, please contact:**

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